

Making Music and Making Place: Mapping Musical Practice in Irish Small Towns

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Abstract

This thesis examines the co-constitutive relationship between music-making and place-making in Carlow, Wexford and Kilkenny City, in the south-east of Ireland. It argues that musical practice creates meaningful experiences, memories and emotional responses that gather and weave into places. It also finds that all music- and place-making are influenced by the rhythms of everyday life and the social, cultural and political realms at local and national levels. These rhythms interact with those of musical practice in complex ways, resulting in the creation of places as polyrhythmic ensembles.

The thesis develops a specialised theoretical framework and methodology, 'musicking geography'. The theoretical framework introduces four strands central to emplaced musicking: gathering and weaving of places, 'musicking fields of care', 'the work of musicking', and rhythms. The methodology centres on collaborative, equitable, empowering research practices, and develops three methods in Cultural Geography: musicking mapping, musicking ethnographies, and musicking-composition.

Musicking fields of care were created in otherwise banal locales in all three towns, including schools, churches, pubs, hotels, commercial venues, civic and community centres, and theatres. Through the work of musicking, musicians were nurtured, sustained and cared for in particular places, work which led to personal fulfilment, well-being, learning and social bonding. Musical practice was structured by the rhythms of the working day, week and year, seasonal events and festivals, local non-musicking events in sport, business and other sectors, and national policy.

Musicians created opportunities for successful musicking events and experiences, but also encountered challenges or arrhythmias.

By emplacing musical practice, the PhD enhances Geography, engaging with music as a lived and experienced spatial practice that contributes to creating healthy places to live. It offers a place-based theoretical framework, and participatory and empowering methods that may be adapted by other practitioner-geographers. It also analyses recent artistic policy in the Irish context, and offers insights to how policymakers might adapt their work to support musicians in their vital place-making work.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AC – The Arts Council of Ireland

CCC – Carlow County Council

CI – The Creative Ireland Programme

ETB – Education and Training Board

GAA – Gaelic Athletics Association

IMRO – The Irish Music Rights Organisation

KCC – Kilkenny City Council

MGAW – Making Great Art Work

MG – Music Generation

WCC – Wexford County Council

Chapter One: Making Music and Making Place: An Introduction

I formed Carlow Young Artists Choir 22 years ago in September 1997 [...] Little did I think back in '97 that the choir, [since 2009] known as Aspiro, would develop into one that would capture the hearts and minds of so many people here in Carlow, Ireland and abroad [...] Those of you who have been part of this journey, no matter how short or long, know that the two main aims of the choir right from the beginning have been the belief in the innate singing ability of every individual, and accessibility (Mary Amond O'Brien, Artistic Director of Aspiro, from fieldnotes, 13 May 2019).

1.1 Introduction

Music is a rich art form that is widely practiced, regarded and enjoyed; it is a central part of our everyday lives, and has a close relationship with how places are made and experienced. Pianos, now publicly available in transport hubs around the world, invite people to enjoy small interstitial musical moments of joy and diversion in their otherwise busy journeys and lives. In Irish towns, children learn music from their youngest years in schools and cultural venues, just as adults frequent community centres, hotels, pubs, churches and commercial hubs; theatres and arts venues are all teeming with music and all sorts of social encounters. Moreover, through social media, it is now possible to listen to and enjoy music from almost any artist, anytime and anywhere. Indeed, music accompanies some of our most memorable and poignant moments, celebratory and sorrowful alike, and it

articulates the vivid emotions these memories evoke. As Yi-Fu Tuan (2004a: 52) describes, music is the 'supreme art' through which geographers may evoke and understand sensorial imaginations and perceptions of place and its rhythms.

The opening statement highlights the musical practice of Mary Amond O'Brien, musical practitioner and educator, and founding director of Aspiro, a choral organisation based in the small Irish town of Carlow. Emerging from a volunteer choir that began twenty years ago, Aspiro provided opportunities for children, teenagers and adults of all ages to participate in choral singing on a weekly basis, from their base in Éire Óg Gaelic Athletics Association (GAA) Clubhouse in the town centre. Their programmes, previously supported by the Arts Council of Ireland, welcomed all musicians, regardless of musical ability, by providing opportunities to perform in a vast range of choral repertoires that take place in local, national and international contexts. Similar to other community ensembles I researched, Aspiro musicians developed skills, made friends, and experienced personal fulfilment through their participation in the group, while local professional practitioners, as facilitators of their programmes, taught and performed music from the established choral music canon, and worked on innovative original commissioned works. The choir brought their performances to diverse venues across Carlow and much farther afield, and also provided rich and memorable experiences for their audiences.

Despite this extensive and valuable work, in the past three years Aspiro suffered irreparable damage through the loss of significant funding supports. Memberships also decreased, a trend possibly related to the local saturation of opportunities for musicians to participate in lower cost and quick return musical

programmes in different musical genres in recent years. The result is that by the conclusion of writing this thesis, Aspiro ceased operating, the impacts of which will be felt keenly by those musicians whose lives were so enhanced by their participation. The town of Carlow will also be negatively affected by the closure of Aspiro, as a significant part of their work included making creative and musicking fields of care, processes which contribute to nurturing and healthy places to live.

I begin this PhD with Aspiro's story because it demonstrates that, like all the musical practice this thesis describes, music is experienced, situated in, and tied closely to particular places. Musical practice is a lived, embodied experience. Indeed, Aspiro's director, Mary Amond O'Brien, quoted above, believes that everyone has an in-built musical instrument in the voice, and that all humans can harness this instrument to enrich our lives through song and music in immediate and accessible ways, no matter our age, background or abilities (see also Amond O'Brien, 2018). She claims also that Aspiro captured 'the hearts and minds of so many people' in Carlow and beyond because music acts as a conduit for emotional responses and place-based attachments that have meaning for musicians and audiences alike.

A central objective of this thesis is to demonstrate how emplaced musical practice, or 'musicking', does 'work' in the world, which includes, significantly, making nurturing places. I argue that Aspiro's work, like all of the musical practices this thesis describes, is a vital part of the experiencing and making of Carlow town as a meaningful place to live and visit, and contributes to creating sustainable social structures for the inhabitants of Carlow. Aspiro's story shows that musical practice has significant meaning for musicians and audiences alike, shaping lives and the

places where music is experienced and made. But musicians must navigate different economic, social, and related life challenges to engage in the work of musicking at local and national levels, and often need to be supported in their endeavours to overcome these challenges. Without that support, musical practice and its accompanying place-making cannot flourish.

This thesis aims to highlight, document and analyse the interrelated processes and 'work' of musicking and place-making by examining how musicians in small Irish towns nurture the everyday lives of communities, sustain social infrastructures and contribute to making healthy places to live. Another central objective of this study is the development of what I call a 'musicking geography' theoretical and methodological framework. I maintain that geographers must attend to musical practices as place-based processes, rather than merely treat music as an object or artwork. Thus, the PhD aims to provide place-based concepts and methods for understanding music as a spatial process, for scholars of music, geography and related fields. To this end, my research on musicking and place-making addresses the following central research questions:

- What are the geographies of musical practice in small Irish towns, and what geographies does musical practice create?
- How does musical practice contribute to the ways in which musicians in small Irish towns experience and make place?
- What challenges do musicians face in building and sustaining their musical practices, and their accompanying place-making work?

To answer these questions, this research provides an in-depth exploration of how musical practice and experience can contribute to cultural geographers'

understandings of place and place-making. If musicking geographies are understood as contributing to the lived rhythms and making of places, I contend that scholars must also conduct research about small places, not only global cities.

The remainder of this introductory chapter provides the larger contextual overview for this study. In Section 1.2 I identify the six main contributions this thesis makes to Geography and musicking scholarship. In Section 1.3, I turn to the research context itself, introducing the small towns of this study. I conclude in Section 1.4 with an overview of the chapters that follow.

1.2 Musicking Geography: Research Contributions

This section provides an overview of the ways in which this thesis enhances the fields of Geography and musicking scholarship more broadly, as well as to empirical knowledge about emplaced musicking and arts policy in Ireland.

First, I provide a detailed analysis of musical practice as lived, place-based and place-making processes. In this research, I understand ‘musical practice’ as the processes of creating, sharing and learning music (Kenny, 2016). My focus on musical practice addresses overly static and simplistic understandings of music in Geography (Carney, 1998; Duffy, 2009), described above, by paying attention to the actions undertaken in the creation of a musical experience, which may include: composing, performing, learning, and listening. It also includes the ways in which music is experienced by audiences as well as performers, students, and other participants.

My all-encompassing approach to music considers all types of experiences and actions, direct and indirect, involved in creating music, before, during, and

indeed after it is performed and heard. To refer to this broad-ranging sense of musical practice, I draw on Christopher Small's (1998) specialist work on *musicking*, a comprehensive term that incorporates all manner of experience of or engagement with music, for instance performing, composing, listening, learning, or dancing. As such, my PhD's major addition to geographic scholarship on music is an examination of musicking as complex spatial and rhythmic processes rather than analysing music as an object or product with its own geographies. As I argue in this thesis, musical practice shapes and is influenced by place.

My second contribution provides scholars from various disciplines interested in musical practice with a theoretical framework for studying musicking and its relationship to place-making, including concepts that emerged through my empirical research. In Chapter Two, I introduce a conceptual framework, what I call *musicking geography*, that analyses how musicking is a part of places, contributes to place-making, and is influenced by lived experiences of particular places. I discuss the central theoretical significance of place and place-making processes, drawing upon a range of scholars writing from humanistic and cultural geographical, phenomenological and relational fields.

As part of broader discussions about the 'becoming' of place, in my theoretical framework, I specifically describe how places move from being musicking venues or locales to becoming *musicking fields of care*. Developing insights from Small, Tuan (1979, 1977), Till (2012) and Klinenberg (2018), I define musicking fields of care as nurturing places built through repeated meaningful experiences that support and sustain musical practices where they take place. For each of the towns I studied, by creating and sustaining musical fields of care,

musicians also cared for themselves, for each other, and for place. I discuss empirical examples of the becoming of musicking fields of care that are common to the three towns of this study in Chapter Four.

To understand how musicking fields of care form, I also propose the concept of *the work of musicking*, drawing on Harriet Hawkins' (2013) research, as well as work by Rice (2003) and Pitts (2005) from musicology, music education and community music perspectives. This concept describes the effects and meanings of musicking for those who experience emplaced musical practice, including personal fulfilment, well-being, learning, and social bonding. As I describe, these qualities have been documented by musicking scholars, but not according to the significant ways that musical and more-than-musical experiences help form and sustain nurturing musicking fields of care, and lead to gathering and weaving processes of place-making more broadly. I develop these insights in Chapter Five.

To capture the mutually constitutive processes of musicking and place-making, I propose understanding place as a *polyrhythmic ensemble*, made of the range of rhythms of musicking as related to and interacting with the multiple rhythms of social, cultural, civic, political and economic life in and beyond particular places. This concept of polyrhythmic ensemble extends insights from Buttner (1976), Lefebvre (2004), and Edensor (2010), who assert that an effective way to understand everyday life in place would be to study how it is shaped by rhythms and their interactions. As I describe in Chapters Five and Six, based upon my empirical research, I found that musicians enacted rhythms that weave through, respond to, and interact with the multiple rhythms experienced by them in particular places and imposed through state and other structures, such as arts

policy. In some cases, these interactions formed eurhythmias, leading to positive outcomes, and in other cases musicians experienced arrhythmias, or challenging outcomes. My definition of place as polyrhythmic ensemble offers an effective theorisation of rhythmised life in place and as part of emplaced musicking, as well as a practical way to apply concepts of rhythm in research. The musicking geography framework overall brings to Geography a specialised approach for studying musicking as lived and emplaced practice that both contributes to place and is shaped by it.

The third contribution my research makes is to scholarship on musicking, by offering a comprehensive study that attends to the emplacement of musical practice and its role in place-making. As I assert in this thesis, musicking is an important and meaningful aspect of how individuals and collectives experience place; at the same time, musicking contributes to making healthier places to live. Drawing on Eric Klinenberg's (2018) work about the central role of social infrastructures for enabling healthy lives through social bonding, I contend that musicking is closely tied to the places where it happens. Klinenberg defines social infrastructures as supportive, meaningful and accessible places that foster collective activity, and I argue that emplaced musicking can be considered as a social infrastructure. In developing this research, I drew on a number of valuable studies that have examined musical practice in particular towns, cities, or practice contexts, including Kenny (2016), Hogan (2016), Mangaoang and O'Flynn (2015), Finnegan (2007), and Pitts (2005). However, none of these works consider the importance of place as a specialised and complex concept. Indeed, most of the other relevant research in musicking scholarship treats place as a passive backdrop

or location for musical practice. In other words, a place-based approach to musical practice enhances musicking scholarship by connecting music to the places that are fundamental to its making. In this thesis, therefore, I bring together an array of scholarly literatures on musicking with geographic theory on place through the musicking geography framework. I outline these literatures in Chapter Two.

As part of my musicking geography framework, I also develop a set of specialised research methods, the fourth contribution of this research.

Notwithstanding recent developments in art and creative geographies, there is a lack of specialist methodological development for attending to living, processual musical experience in geography (Duffy, 2009), part of which, as I have argued above, includes making healthier places to live. This may be because geography has placed a strong emphasis on the visual (Smith 1994, 1997; Rose, 2003; Driver, 2003; Hawkins, 2013). With the exception of Kearney (2009) and Morton (2009, 2005), few geographers have researched musical practice from the perspective of experienced musician. I argue, however, as a geographer and musician, that the latter brings specialist perspectives to research about musicking.

The musicking geography methodology is an immersed approach in which the researcher collaborates with music ensembles and individual musicians through three engaged qualitative and participatory research methods, what I call: *musicking ethnography*, *musicking mapping*, and *musicking-composition*. Each of these newly developed methods allowed me to use my skills and knowledges as a musician to examine musicking from as many perspectives as possible. The musicking geography approach examines the full set of roles and activities that make up musical practice, which are not confined to composing or performing

alone, but include the wider range of experiences by all involved in music as a spatial process, including audiences and learners. Thus, through the fieldwork I found myself performing, analysing, teaching, rehearsing and listening to music with other professional, community and audience musicians to gain insights into their diverse experiences. I discuss the possibilities and challenges of conducting research as a musicking geographer in Chapter Three.

From the outset, I was also firmly against conceptualising musical practice according to 'amateur' versus 'professional' notions. I understand musical practice instead to exist along a continuum from amateur to professional, and follow Ruth Finnegan's (2007) valuable work in this decision academically. More personally, I also draw on my professional experience prior to my research experience as a geographer, where I recognised the value of all musicking, whether among professional musicians or musicians who made music for enjoyment or without payment. As such, I aspired to conduct my research in an ethical, engaging, collaborative and empowering way, so that the musicians with whom I worked would gain from the research experience. Having achieved these aspirations in this study, the musicking geography methodologies I developed, when taken together, contribute a carefully developed, wide ranging, egalitarian and effective approach to studying processual and emplaced musicking and place-making, and to valuing the insights of musicians and their work. My musicking geography methodology therefore further enhances Geography and participatory qualitative research methods, by offering a framework to work with musicians of all ages, musical backgrounds, genres, and musicking contexts, to acknowledge and document their

stories and experiences, and to recognise them as the experts in the musicking and place-making knowledges produced.

My fifth contribution is empirical: a comprehensive study of the processes and practices of musicking, and musicking's role in making and shaping places in the everyday settings of small towns rather than global cities. The places where one studies musicking matters, as this study clearly demonstrates. Across Geography and music disciplines, very little empirical research exists about musical practice and place-making at the scale of small towns and cities. I conducted musicking geographical fieldwork in three small towns and cities in south-east Ireland – Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford – from 2016-2018. As described in the chapters that follow and presented in Table 1.1 below and Tables 3.1 and 3.3 in Chapter Three, each of these small towns has extensive, diverse and complex histories of musical practice. I describe the particularities and commonalities of musicking in these towns according to the empirical results of my research in Chapters Four to Six.

My sixth and final contribution is a close reflection on recent Irish arts policy and its translation into practice in small towns, with a view to making recommendations for improving policy-making and its application in the future. Although Ireland finds itself in an intriguing policy moment that seems to speak to some of these complexities, the translation of policy ideals to practice has so far not been straightforward, as discussed in Chapter Six. The challenges, or arrhythmias (following Lefebvre, 2004), raised by the musicians in all three towns during this research indicate that new policy must do more than centre on enhancing the art and commerce relationship, or on creating an image or 'brand Ireland' to market internationally (Ó Conchúir, 2017). Indeed, I believe that the cultural policy

aspirations of recent times cannot be achieved without attention to the ways in which musical practices are embedded in places. My research offers such an examination, as well as reflections on how policymakers might improve the formation and implementation of arts policy to better take this into account.

In sum, through musicking geography, I propose a comprehensive approach, both a theoretical framework and specialist methodology, through which geographers and others may research musicking and place-making in all its richness and breadth. I now introduce the case studies of this research.

1.3. Research Context: Musicking and Arts Funding in Small Irish Towns

According to Finnegan (2007), little scholarly attention had been paid to musical practice in small towns. Indeed, she argues that traditional musicology has often focussed on musical practices ‘far away or long ago’, but does not research ‘modern grassroots musicians and music-making across the board in a specific town’ (p.5). In general, no scholars in Geography and few from music studies more broadly have recognised the valuable insights that may be gained from examining small Irish towns. While Kenny’s (2016), Hogan’s (2016) and Kearney’s (2009) work addresses musicking in Irish places outside of Dublin, these attended to areas in the west and south-west of the country.

Despite their rich and vibrant musical lives, no research has been conducted about any of the towns in the south-east I studied from any disciplinary perspective, with the exception of one discussion of the Wexford Opera Festival in the early 2000s (Quinn, 2006). Moreover, no study to date has examined musical practice in the places where I have built my practice as a musician. As such, my

thesis contributes a deep empirical exploration of the musical lives, practices, and places in small Irish towns and cities, and more broadly, about the ways in which music- and place-making co-constitute each other in Ireland.

This section introduces where I undertook my ethnographic research: Carlow town, Kilkenny city, and Wexford town. Each of these places has rich and vibrant musical practices, yet they also face similar challenges, for example those related to their size and scale. Before introducing my case studies, I should make one disclaimer. Kilkenny is locally understood as a city, given its medieval history, and receives state funding at the level of a city council. For ease of discussion, in this PhD I refer to Kilkenny as a small town, together with Carlow and Wexford. Technically, all three can be defined as small towns or settlements as their populations are less than 50,000 people (Knox and Mayer, 2013). While Kilkenny is slightly more populous than Carlow, when considered by its proportion to its county's overall population, it constitutes only 27% in comparison to Carlow's 46% (see Table 1.1). Nonetheless, I wish to acknowledge that Kilkenny participants and those from Kilkenny reading this study do not self-identify as belonging to a small town, and appreciate their understanding when I generalise about all three case studies as small towns.

There are no scholarly parameters for defining musical towns, but, taking guidance from Finnegan's (2007) research, when selecting my case studies, I included the following criteria. Each town would have: arts and education services, formal arts and music venues, community musical practices, annual festivals, and access to annual funding supports. I summarise these common features as well as unique musicking features for all three towns in Table 1.1 below. As one may

ascertain from this table, each town has: numerous annual festivals; for-purpose arts and performance venues; enduring music education histories in schools as well as in traditional Irish music via Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann; and has received annual Arts Council of Ireland funding for local arts officers based in each county council. However, all three case studies also have unique characteristics, as I also detail in the chapters that follow. For example, historically, musicking and tourism are closely associated in Kilkenny, which has resulted in a diverse range of festivals that happen there each year spanning a wide variety of music genres and art forms, as indicated by the examples in Table 1.1. Wexford's musical rhythms centre to a significant degree on the annual opera festival, founded in the town in 1951, which receives the largest single annual allotment of Arts Council funding for a specific project nationally (The Arts Council, 2018b) and is now considered the largest opera of its kind in Europe. Indeed, Ireland's National Opera House is located in Wexford town, and, as I found in my fieldwork, it is a central place for all kinds of musicking in the town, not just opera. In the past decade, Carlow has carved out an important role in the Panceltic art and music scene, having hosted the International Panceltic Festival (founded in Killarney, Co. Kerry in 1971) four times in that period, and competed for and secured the opportunity to do so again in 2020 and 2021. Carlow also founded and annually hosts the Irish National Panceltic Song Competition.

Table 1.1: Overview of Case Study Towns

	Carlow	Kilkenny	Wexford
Population (2016)	24,272 (town) 56,392 (county)	26,512 (city) 99,232 (county)	20,188 (town) 149,722 (county)
Festivals	Carlow Arts Festival; International Panceltic Festival (not annually); National Panceltic Song Contest; Summerfest Carlow	The Kilkenny Arts Festival; Tradfest; Rhythm and Roots Festival; Kilkenny Gospel Festival; Kilkenny Country Music Festival	Wexford Festival Opera; Wexford Fringe Festival; Wexford Spiegel tent Festival
Venues	VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art and the George Bernard Shaw Theatre	The Watergate Theatre; The Set Theatre; The Hub; Ballykeeffe Amphitheatre	National Opera House; Wexford Arts Centre
Music Education	Music Generation Carlow est. 2011; music programmes established in some schools; three privately operated music schools; several practitioners working independently; Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann operate local branches for traditional music education and activities	Music Generation Kilkenny, announced 2018 (not operational during fieldwork); music programmes established in several schools; two privately operated music schools; several practitioners working independently; Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann operate local branches for traditional music education and activities	Music Generation Wexford, announced 2018, (not operational during fieldwork); music programmes established in some schools; one privately operated music school; several practitioners working independently; Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann operate local branches for traditional music education and activities
Arts Council Funding to Local Authority (2014-18)	€67,000-€73,000	€54,000-€59,000	€76,000-€82,000

Moving away from the specific case study towns and towards the national arts and policy context, *The Arts Council of Ireland* (AC) is the most significant and influential state body in Irish artistic practice. The AC was first established through the Arts Act of 1951, later The Arts Act of 2003 (Government of Ireland, 2003: 6), which outlined the role of the state in promoting arts within and beyond Ireland. As implemented through the Minister for the Arts, local authorities and, where appropriate, other governmental departments and public bodies, the AC works relatively independently to: promote and stimulate public interest in the arts; improve and develop the arts; and work in collaboration with relevant government bodies to support the arts sector (*ibid.*: 14). The AC also funds and works in collaboration with arts offices in each county and city council, each of which has an appointed arts officer (The Arts Council 2018a). Arts officers develop and implement strategies for the promotion of the arts, taking into account government policies, and may also distribute funding and supports for arts in their areas. Appendix 1 details other arts bodies that operate at a national level and support music, community arts, and music education.

When this PhD was first proposed, the AC had recently published their new strategic development plan for 2016-2025, *Making Great Art Work* (MGAW) (The Arts Council, 2015). I discuss and analyse some of the stated goals, priority areas, and objectives in Chapter Six. Another significant government initiative on arts, creativity and cultural participation was *The Creative Ireland Programme* (CI), which was published in 2016, and aims to 'promote individual, community and national wellbeing' (The Creative Ireland Programme, 2016: 7) by supporting activities that encourage cultural participation. MGAW and CI were launched at the start of my

research; their effects have yet to be studied, and indeed could not be comprehensively studied in my fieldwork because of their age. However, my analysis of the stated goals of these programmes in Chapter Six indicates how governmental bodies view artistic participation and how they situate the role of art in their broader agendas. For both MGAW and CI policies, strong links between artistic and cultural life are suggested with what I as a geographer understand to be aspects of place, be this as 'sense of place', as community, as environment, or as Ireland as a whole. However, these policies do not attend closely or carefully enough to what 'place' means as geographers understand it, or its crucial role in and relationship with artistic and creative practice.

In contrast, my empirical research provides a validation of the extent and richness of musicking practices and their relationship to place as they developed and thrived before these national policy imperatives were announced. The research also proves that, even with established aspirations such as those these policies describe, the unique polyrhythmic ensembles of musicking and place-making that I discuss are complex. Irish musicians living in small towns face specific arrhythmias that will not be easily remedied by national policy aspirations that do not understand these place-based complexities. Therefore, the critical reflections on arts funding made in Chapters Six and Seven of this PhD based upon my empirical research offer a valuable contribution to future policy development.

1.4 Conclusion and Overview of Thesis

This chapter introduced the aims and aspirations of this PhD, which examines the co-constitutive processes of musicking and place-making in small Irish towns. I

detailed six contributions the thesis makes to art, cultural and creative geographies, to music scholarship, to empirical research about musical and artistic practice in Ireland, and to arts policy agendas. The PhD also provides scholars from a range of fields with a specialist theoretical framework that includes new concepts for studying musicking and place-making, and a set of engaging, immersed, egalitarian and ethically-mindful methods. I then provided an overview of the three towns researched and broader national arts funding contexts. I conclude by offering a brief overview of the chapters to follow.

In Chapter Two, I present a literature review of place and place-making, particularly from humanistic, phenomenological and relational perspectives. I situate the musicking geography theoretical framework in the context of geographical scholarship on music, art and culture, and musicking scholarship more broadly. I then outline the four central strands that form the musicking geography theoretical framework – gathering and weaving of place, musicking fields of care, the work of musicking, and rhythms. Chapter Three offers an in-depth description of the musicking geography methodology, including a review of key precedents in ethnography, creative geography and deep mapping that inspired my approach. I describe the underlying ethos and philosophy of the musicking geography methodology, and introduce the three main methods I developed for this study: musicking ethnography, musicking mapping and musicking composition. I also provide a detailed discussion of my positionality as a musicking geographer, and describe the ensembles and artists with whom I worked in the fieldwork in each case study town.

Chapter Four is the first of three empirical chapters. Largely based on the results of mappings, it discusses the becoming of musicking fields of care in each town, and how otherwise mundane venues are nurtured by and nurturing to musicians, becoming special and meaningful places of musical practice and experience. The chapter highlights common types of places across the three towns, including schools, churches, pubs and hotels, and gives exemplars of the place-making processes studied and uncovered in this research from each town. Chapter Five describes the important work of that musical practice and experience for those who participate in musicking, including social bonding, well-being, personal fulfilment and learning, which all contribute to the weaving of musicking fields of care and of place. It also details the ways musicking is shaped by rhythms in each town, both musical and non-musical, providing rich empirical detail from musicking ethnographies and mappings. Chapter Six continues this theme of rhythms, exploring the arrhythmias in music- and place-making uncovered during the fieldwork, and the ways in which musicians attempted to navigate and circumvent these to sustain their practice. Included in this discussion is a critical reflection on the arts policies introduced above, and their relationship with the arrhythmias uncovered. Finally, Chapter Seven draws the thesis to a close, bringing together the research findings on the polyrhythmic ensemble of place and reiterating key contributions of the thesis. It also provides critical reflections on arts policy and on the musicking geography framework and methodology, and proposes policy recommendations to support the existing musicking social infrastructures, fields of care, and work of musicians.

To begin this journey into musicking geography, I now turn to my literature review and theoretical framework.

Chapter Two: Musicking Geography as Theoretical Framework

‘Place is latitudinal and longitudinal within the map of a person’s life. It is temporal and spatial, personal and political. A layered location replete with human histories and memories, place has width as well as depth. It is about connections, what surrounds it, what formed it, what happened there, what will happen there’ (Lippard, 1997: 7).

2.1 Introduction

Place is the core geographical concept with which this research is concerned.

Indicating its complexity, in the quotation above, artist and writer Lucy Lippard (1997) asserts that place has depth as well as width, made of layers of memories, histories and encounters, connected always to what surrounds it and what makes it, a product of time. All things, animals and people live in and move through places as part of their being and becoming in the world (Casey, 1996; Malpas, 2001; Ingold, 2011). According to geographer and phenomenologist David Seamon (2012: 3), ‘the phenomenon of place is a multivalent structure sophisticated and complex in its existential constitution’.

For humans, places are contexts of value, conducive to meaning-making and providing support and nurturing (Tuan, 1977). Places may have positive or negative meanings that are rooted in personal and/or group experiences or symbolic connotations, which, taken together, impact how places are made (Seamon, 2018a, 2014; Smith, 2018a; Lippard, 1997; Tuan, 1977). As a process, place is made and remade by people who experience and respond to the material things, settings and

nonhuman natures that also constitute a place. Places are uniquely situated in relation to other places, peoples and things (Massey, 2005; Malpas, 2017), so are not bounded in a fixed sense within Cartesian space. Places therefore are not merely locations, or portions of space, but are dynamic entities that have flexible boundaries, sometimes porous, sometimes territorial, that elucidate how they connect and relate to other places and regions (Malpas 2017, 2012, 2001).

However, as indicated in Chapter One, musicking research to date has not yet made the valuable connection between musicking and the places where it happens, nor recognised that the two are in fact co-constitutive. Yet as I argue in this and the following chapters, the musicking shaped by the multiple rhythms happening in particular places in each town studied contributed to the weaving together of these places, while the places in which musicking happened supported, cared for and sustained musicians in their work. As such, I find that musicking and place-making are closely related to each other, and the coming together of these processes and their rhythms make places as ‘polyrhythmic ensembles’, a concept I develop in the next section. There I also introduce the ‘musicking geography’ theoretical framework and its four strands, arguing for a place-based approach to the study of music as lived musical practices rather than static object. I have drawn on a variety of literatures from both geography and musicking research to develop this new conceptual framework, which I discuss in Sections 2.3 to 2.7. In the conclusion of this chapter, I indicate how this theoretical framework contributes to recent disciplinary developments in art and geography, and to musicking scholarship more broadly.

2.2. Places as Polyhythmic Ensembles: The Musicking Geography Framework

One way we can understand how places constantly adapt and change, while also remaining familiar and meaningful, is to pay attention to the distinct rhythms that play out in and across places (Buttimer, 1976). I draw on Anne Buttimer's valuable ideas around studying the 'dynamic wholeness of lifeworld experience' (Buttimer, 1976: 279). Lifeworld describes 'the prereflective, taken-for-granted dimensions of experience, the unquestioned meanings, and routinized determinants of behaviour' (*ibid.*: 281). Buttimer brings together place and lifeworld, and argues that, by interrogating the rhythms that organise and influence how we live our everyday lives, often taken-for-granted and preconscious facets of the lifeworld, we might gain insight into what place is, and how it is made and experienced. I follow Buttimer in drawing on literatures about both place and lifeworld by using rhythms to study place-making and place experience.

This PhD introduces the idea of place as *polyhythmic ensemble*.

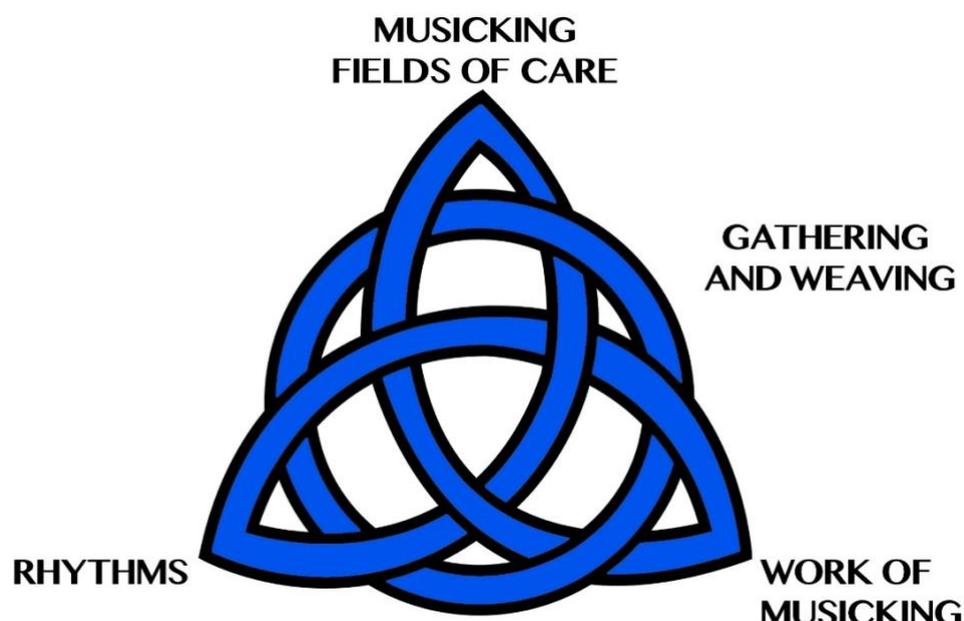
'Polyhythmia' describes the occurrence and interaction of two or more rhythms concurrently (Lefebvre, 2004). I contend that places form as polyhythmic ensembles through the gathering and interaction of the rhythms of everyday life and of musical practice there, as well as the rhythms imposed on places from outside, including those of artistic funding and policy in the case of this research. I also believe that, through place, 'where meanings and understandings emerge through tacitly known and emotionally experienced processes of becoming' (Wood et al., 2007: 885), we might better understand musicking.

To study how places become polyhythmic ensembles through the relationship between music- and place-making, I have created what I call the

musicking geography framework and methodology. The conceptual framework, outlined in this chapter, is made up of four key strands: gathering and weaving processes of place-making, musicking fields of care, the place-based work of musicking, and the rhythms of place-making. I consider *gathering and weaving* as central processes in musicking geography, and study how these unfoldings happen through and are prompted by musicking. The experiences, memories and affective responses generated through musicking are gathered and woven together to form *musicking fields of care*, sustaining places where the work of musicking is fostered. This *work of musicking* refers to the rich experiences and responses that are generated through musicking, including social bonding, learning, personal fulfilment and well-being. Finally, all musicking and place-making, including the gathering and weaving of musicking fields of care and the work of musicking, is influenced by and part of *rhythms* that play out in and shape our experiences of place (Buttimer, 1976; Lefebvre, 2004; Mels, 2004), such as at festivals, events, and the working year, as well as through rhythms imposed on musicians and places from farther afield, including policy and funding cycles. The unique interactions of these rhythms gathered and woven together in each place designate places as polyrhythmic ensembles.

These four aspects of musicking and place-making draw upon interdisciplinary scholarship that attends to place, artistic and social practices and their geographies, which I discuss in detail below. Figure 2.1 illustrates these themes and provides the conceptual structure for my framework.

Figure 2.1: Musicking Geography Theoretical Framework Key Strands



The four strands of my musicking geography framework are constantly linked to and reinforce each other. None takes precedence in how musicking influences the making of place as polyrhythmic ensemble; the polyrhythmic ensemble is the coming together of all of these parts. As such, following Seamon (2018b), the musicking geography framework takes a synergistic approach to studying place and place-making. The polyrhythmic ensemble is, following Malpas' ideas, 'constituted through a gathering of elements that are themselves mutually defined only through the way in which they are gathered together within the place they also constitute' (Malpas, 2006: 29). Seamon (2018b) contrasts this synergistic understanding to 'analytic' ways of studying places, which break places up into components and linkages without attending to the nuances and complexities of the relationships between these parts that make places, which are reciprocal and co-constitutive. Experiential and relational perspectives, emphasised by Seamon in his synergistic

approach, are also crucial to musicking geography and studying places as polyrhythmic ensembles.

Seamon also recognises that, for analytic reasons, one must tease out the parts that come together to make place, while still acknowledging the indivisibility of the parts and of place itself. As will become clear from the discussion of each strand of musicking geography that follows, as well as the empirical chapters, each of the four strands is made by and simultaneously a part of the polyrhythmic ensemble as a whole. To provide a foundation for this theoretical framework and the empirical research, in Section 2.3 I first situate the musicking geography theoretical framework in the context of existing geographic scholarship. I then review literatures on each of the four strands of my musicking geography framework in Sections 2.3-2.6. I conclude the discussion of musicking geography as theoretical framework in Section 2.7, moving onto the discussion of the methodology in Chapter Three.

2.3. Situating the Musicking Geography Theoretical Framework

As indicated in Chapter One, one of the larger objectives of this study is to introduce a more practice-oriented and place-based approach to the understanding of music in Geography. To provide disciplinary grounding for the framework, and to contextualise musicking geography, I first outline briefly the ways geographers have researched music to indicate how my work contributes to this existing subfield. To that end, following a discussion of Geographies of Music, I describe how my work can be situated within Creative Geographies.

Music is not a new topic of study in Geography. Indeed, as Carney (1998) describes, the first article about the geographies of music was published in 1968, and interest in the topic continued to grow from that point. From the late 1980s and into the 1990s, 'music geography' became what Carney calls a legitimised 'cultural geography subfield' (*ibid*: 2), with increasing publication of research in the area in core human geography text books as well as respected international journals. However, as Carney's account suggests, some geographers seem to have taken static and essentialist views of music, failing to recognise its dynamic, constantly evolving nature (also Duffy, 2009), as well as the processual nature of place itself. Equally, geographers lacked the appropriate methods to study music's lived, processual and immediate nature (*ibid.*, Wood et al., 2007).

Beyond the music geography approach, there has been a considerable body of research by geographers on music and sound in recent years. Geographers have considered music as an important part of belonging, and an aspect of the shaping of identity (Gilmartin, 2015; Duffy et al., 2011; Wall, 2009; Wood et al., 2007; Jazeel, 2005; Connell and Gibson, 2003; Duffy, 2005, 2000; Cohen, 1995). They have studied music in relation to tourism and place-marketing, including the economic development associated with tourism generated through music in particular places (Long, 2013; Kaul, 2009; Kruse, 2005; Gibson and Connell, 2005; Gibson and Davidson, 2004; Kneafsey, 2002). Geographers have also examined music's urban geographies and the economics of music production especially in cities (Jucu, 2018; Watson 2015, 2008; Brandellero and Pfeffer, 2011; Krims, 2009; Jones, 2005). Further, geographers have turned to the ways in which music, sound and politics interact (Revill, 2016; Manabe, 2015; Minuchin, 2014). Sound, when understood as

noise in a negative sense, is a contentious issue in terms of the control of space, for example, and geographers have considered how sound production is regulated and policed (Manabe, 2015; Homan, 2003). Scholars also analyse the 'soundscape' of spaces and places as a diverse and rich acoustic environment that has affective power (e.g. Bell, 2017; Berrens, 2016; Jones and Fairclough, 2016; Gallagher, 2016).

Despite these more recent works, the lack of attention to musicking's processual and practiced nature, and lack of appropriate methodologies to effectively study musical practices spatially, remain to a large degree. For this reason, I have broadened my focus to scholarship on Art and Geography, particularly in the more recent growing subfield of Creative Geographies, to elucidate the concepts and approaches on which I draw to make my own contributions about musicking places and the musicking geography approach. Geographers have studied art with increasing interest over the last number of decades, but the discipline's engagement with art and creativity goes back several centuries (Hawkins 2016, 2013). Indeed, sketching, journal writing and map making have been fundamental field techniques in Geography since its foundation, and are inherently creative (Hawkins, 2016).

Later, humanistic geographers examined literature (Tuan, 2004b) and cultural-historical geographers studied landscape paintings (Cosgrove and Daniels, 1988), leading to a growing interest in studying art as part of a broader 'cultural turn' (Cook et al., 2000). With the 'new cultural geography' (Rose, 2016), geographers' interest in art included research about the ways individuals and social groups made meanings in/of the world (Kirsch, 2012), how identities were performed in places and social spaces (Rose, 1997), and embodied knowledges,

experiences and practices (Pain and Bailey, 2004). With the introduction of postmodernist and poststructuralist theories, geographers also reflected upon and problematised the ways in which cultural practices were researched and represented (Cosgrove, 1984), and how power relations shape all forms of cultural experiences (Keith and Pile, 1993). Later, with non-representational theory, other art forms, such as dance, were also considered (Revill, 2004; Thrift, 2003). Still, the broader perception of what art could offer geographers largely came about through scholarship focussing on literary and visual works; there was a lack of attention to music as a practice or set of processes in cultural geography that remains to this day.

As Hawkins (2013) describes, much of this work in the 1990s and later continued in a more humanistic direction, taking artworks not as empirical depictions of form, but as conveying the ways that people experienced and perceived the world. As such, and resonating strongly with the present research, studying art became 'part of the appreciation of place as in process rather than as fixed and static' (*ibid.*: 29). This attention to art by humanistic and cultural geography is important for situating the formation of my musicking-geography approach.

The more recent Creative Geography approach developed by Harriet Hawkins is a formative precedent for my research. Hawkins (2013) details the 'increasingly common conceptual ground' and 'growing set of shared practices between geographers and artists and art theorists' (p. 1) in recent years. For example, just as geographers have been concerned with a variety of artistic media and art forms, including participatory art (Diprose, 2015), place-based theatre (Till,

2018), sound art (Gallagher et al., 2016), film (Jacobs, 2016), and dance (Ó Conchúir, 2017), practitioners have concurrently taken ever-increasing interest in the work, central themes and insights offered by geographers (e.g. Kwon, 2002; Biggs, 2011, 2006). These crossovers have, naturally, led to new and innovative collaborations between artists and geographers. In Ireland, some prominent examples of these collaborations include work by the Mapping Spectral Traces Network (Mapping Spectral Traces, n.d.) based at Maynooth University and the Ómós Áite- Space/Place Research Network (Ómós Áite, n.d.) based at the National University of Ireland Galway. These developments indicate far more than merely a search for new sources or ideas, but demonstrate geographers' recognition of the increased value of and room for artistic and creative research approaches in their own work.

Hawkins' work is a thorough reflection on the relationship between art and geography, rather than merely on how geographic themes might be enriched by studying art. She recognises the processual nature of art, which is always doing work in the world and whose encounter holds the potential to shape how we experience the world, as well as the fact that art enacts its own diverse geographies. Creative Geography thus makes room for the immersed research I wished to undertake of musical practice as a set of processes rather than as end-products, and the work it does, including making place. For Hawkins (2013), art is never simply produced and consumed, with a predefined meaning to be 'read' by the audience or viewer, but instead exists in 'an event of poesis in all parties involved: artwork, artist, audience' (p. 13). This valuable perspective enriches my research, while my musicking geography approach also contributes to creative

geography, introducing a specialised theoretical framework and methodology to study musicking and its geographies. I return to Creative Geography in more detail in Chapter Three.

Having situated the theoretical framework in the context of geographical scholarship, I next detail the four strands of this framework, and the geographical, sociological and musicking scholarship that has shaped their formation.

2.4 Processual Place-Making: Gathering and Weaving

In Section 2.2, I introduced the four interwoven strands that constitute the musicking geography framework. The first of these refers to the processual nature of place-making, in particular those of gathering and weaving. Places gather (Casey, 2001; Seamon, 2015; Malpas, 2001), while those who make places do so through weaving the threads of their experiences in and through places (Adams et al., 2001; Ingold, 2011; Lippard, 1997). Furthermore, there are elements of gathering and weaving in each of the three other strands. Musicking fields of care are created through the gathering and weaving of meaningful musicking experiences; the work of musicking leads to the generation of these meaningful musicking experiences, which are then gathered and woven into musicking fields of care; and rhythms interact, gather and are woven together to form place as polyrhythmic ensemble.

In this section, I discuss experiential and relational perspectives on place and place-making to consider how places gather and are woven of experiences, memories and emotional responses. These processes in turn allow places to be related to and embedded in other places (Malpas, 2017). Lippard's (1997) view of place as both latitudinal and longitudinal, having breadth and depth, suggests the

need to attend to experiential and relational perspectives; the former resonates with the depth of place, while the latter considers its breadth. As flagged above, Seamon (2018b) also indicates that the synergistic approach to studying place considers each part of place is in terms of its relation to the other parts and to the whole.

In terms of the experiential aspects of place, in humanistic geographical and phenomenological approaches, place is understood as so fundamental to everyday life that something as seemingly insignificant as an armchair can become a special place of belonging and meaning (Tuan, 1977; Casey, 1996; Seamon, 2017b, 2014, 2013). In short, 'places are centres of felt value' (Tuan, 1977: 4), where this value comes from those encounters and experiences gathered and layered (Lippard, 1997) from childhood and into adult life. According to Casey (2001, also Malpas, 2001), all things are always in place, or are said to be emplaced, and places gather and hold these things. Similarly, Seamon (2015) asserts that if all things are always emplaced, places in turn gather things by their very existence, including, following Tuan (1977), histories and experiences, and even thoughts and languages (also Lippard, 1997; Casey, 1996). The things in places are held in such a way that, though they are individual things, their configuration joins the form of the place with the things themselves (Casey, 1996), and the synergistic approach to studying place recognises and attends to this (Seamon, 2018b). Because of what is gathered and held there, a place remains sufficiently similar such that, when returning to it, one returns to the place as opposed to merely its location, with remnants of what the place once was still there to discern (Massey, 2005). For Tuan, it is from this

familiarity, with the meanings and stories attached to known places despite their changing over time, that we venture into unknown spaces.

Just as places gather, those who journey through life, for example through musicking, weave their experiences, memories and responses into places (Ingold, 2011; Adams et al., 2001). These woven or entwined (Lippard, 1997) threads of experience and memory become 'knotted' (Ingold, 2011) with what has been gathered in places, lending them new depth and meaning. These threads also relate places to other places, and so weaving is also shaped by connectivities and contestations playing out at multiple scales, resulting in places that are never fixed but constantly changing, with influences exerted from within and beyond places themselves (*ibid.*; Massey, 2005, 1991). Thus, one must also attend to how places are made relationally, including to how power and political influences affect place-making (Massey, 1991). While formed at a given time as a result of movement, exchange and communication (Massey, 2005, 1991), the linkages between places are also historically and spatially layered outcomes, speaking to the importance of attending to experiences and memories generated over time in understanding how they are formed.

These metaphors of place as processes of gathering and weaving are helpful in the sense that they convey the layered complexity and textured uniqueness of each place tied to the experiential, and the fact that places can be embedded in and related to other places (Massey, 2005). In pondering how places are related to each other, and indeed how the fact of their relationality is a part of their making, I believe Malpas' (2017, 2012) ideas about the embeddedness of place are critical. Malpas asserts that places are at once embedded in networks of other places and

have other places embedded in them. He further argues that places both shape and are shaped by the places to which they relate. I feel that this view also resonates with the synergistic approach to studying places for which Seamon (2018b) advocates, because it recognises the complexity of relations between parts. I discuss the ways in which musicians related their musical experiences to other places in Chapter Six in particular.

As I describe in more detail in the empirical chapters, musicking enacts the processes of gathering and weaving that come together in and make place, creating place as polyrhythmic ensemble. In each of the towns I studied, the places gathered and woven by musicians and their musicking were nurturing, supportive and sustaining to their work and to place-making, discussed in the next section as musicking fields of care and detailed in Chapter Four. In Chapter Five I detail how the work of musicking (Section 2.6 below) generated the responses and memories that were gathered and woven into musicking fields of care. In Chapters Five and Six, I outline the many musicking and non-musicking rhythms that gathered together to form the polyrhythmic ensemble of place. For now, I detail the second strand of the theoretical framework, musicking fields of care.

2.5. Emplacing Musical Practice: Musicking Fields of Care

At first glance, musicking places may appear as taken-for-granted spaces with vastly different functions, intended purposes and meanings, like schools, pubs, hotels, community centres or sports clubs. Yet through repeated, meaningful musicking experiences, supportive and nurturing places for musicking were gathered and woven in each town over time. These special musicking places in turn allowed

musicians to care for themselves and others, and develop their practices. I understand these banal social locales as *musicking fields of care*, and develop this concept below and in detail in Chapter Four. I define musicking fields of care as nurturing, supportive and sustaining places of diverse musical experiences and practices without which musicking could not happen as richly as it does in towns and cities. This is the second strand of the musicking geography theoretical framework, and in this section I outline the development of this concept. I build on theories of place-making described above, and draw on Tuan's (1979) idea of fields of care. I additionally consider other ways in which scholars in geography and elsewhere have conceptualised places and their caring and supportive roles in social life.

Tuan (1979: 416) defines two types of places: 'fields of care' and 'public monuments'. Public monuments are places with intended meanings and purposes, for example public memorials. Fields of care are seemingly mundane places that, while not apparently distinctive in the landscape or significant in terms of state power, come to nurture and care for those who create and experience them in important ways. Fields of care are formed when layers of meaningful memories, experiences and responses are gathered and woven through these apparently ordinary locales to become meaningful places over time. These nondescript, commonplace buildings or venues come to sustain people and practices in ways for which they may not even originally have been intended (also Seamon, 2017a). Adams (2018) further identifies the 'restoration, validation, and transformation' (p. 227) that can happen in these caring places, which I parallel in my framework in its third strand, the work of musicking, discussed in the next section.

Geographers other than Tuan have considered the ways in which places can care for and nurture people and practices in different ways. For instance, Power and Smyth (2016) describe enabling places that provide security through reciprocal networks in which people can live in an increasingly detached, neoliberalised world (also Timm-Botos, 2017; Duff, 2012). Echoing the idea of fields of care, enabling places form and endure because of people's sustained interest in and passion for the community activity in which they participate there. Power and Smyth (2016) underline the importance of places where the development and building work behind community-based practices happens. For example, 'ordinary' places such as individual homes open out to and gain a special significance for those whose collective endeavours allow the community-based practice to come to fruition, and as a result often become enabling places.

Similarly, geographers have studied 'therapeutic landscapes', recognising how 'healing processes can be embedded in places' (Finlay et al., 2015: 97). This literature often deals more specifically with outdoor spaces, especially green and blue spaces (also Foley and Kistemann, 2015), and accompanying practices such as swimming and associated healing and therapeutic properties (e.g. Foley, 2010). Broadly speaking, these literatures point to the potential for places to have an affective impact on the lives of those who experience them. Scholars recognise that not all so-called therapeutic landscapes are indeed healing and positive to all people. For example, as Finlay et al. (2015) cite, for some a public park might be a therapeutic landscape, while for others it might represent an unsafe, threatening, or inaccessible place. It is important to keep this issue in mind, and indeed it has also emerged from my own work. Another significant distinction I read between the

therapeutic landscapes for example and Tuan's fields of care is the sense to which the former are sometimes planned with and intended to some extent to have healing and caring roles or associations.

In reality, however, places are not often experienced according to the visions of those who planned or built them, but according to one's own histories and perspectives (Till, 2011), as I have found overwhelmingly in this research. I find Karen E. Till's (2012) work on 'place-based ethics of care' (p. 3) valuable in understanding these nuances of the relationship between musical practice and the formation of musicking fields of care. Through caring for places, people can care for each other. Caring for places can help to create more just and sustainable futures, and as such Till delineates four ways in which places can be cared for (*ibid.*). Drawing on Tronto (1993), she argues that 'caring about places' draws attention to their personal and social importance (Till, 2012: 11). 'Taking care of place' means recognising that one can do things to help and improve places, things as simple as picking up litter or hosting neighbourhood events (*ibid.*), or indeed providing opportunities to participate in musicking 'Giving care' results in feelings of competency in oneself resulting from the care given to place (*ibid.*). As Till details, this can result in gaining confidence, skills and respect for one another, paralleling the work of musicking I will discuss below. Last is 'receiving care', where, through ensuring that places have been cared for, one experiences a responsiveness which prompts a recognition of the need to care for oneself too (*ibid.*).

Till's theory is developed in response to fieldwork in places that have experienced trauma, places she terms 'wounded cities' (*ibid.*: 3). As such, she mobilises these concepts of care in the context of complex responses to traumas

that have deep roots in historical events as well as their continuing present-day ramifications. While my research does not centre on places that have recently experienced such overt state-perpetrated violence, nor on the structural legacies of colonialism, it does seek to empower locally-based musicians – whether ‘voluntary’ community musicians, ‘professional’ practitioners or audiences – to share their stories and experiences as a way to understand how, through their work, musicians contribute to and shape place-making.

The notion of care in creative and artistic practices has been taken forward by Price and Hawkins (2018), who describe three ways in which creative practices are a form of care (p. 238). Firstly, by attending to their practices skilfully and with precision, creative practitioners as ‘makers’ are attentive and careful. Secondly, care is expressed through the products or objects made through creative practices, which I would consider to include musical experiences, in the context of this research; those created works in turn do their own work (the work of musicking). Thirdly, ‘making practices’ more broadly cultivate care within the communities in which they happen, creating opportunities to share and work together. The authors emphasise the need to remain cautious and critical of this care through making, however, because not all making has positive results all the time, nor are making practices straightforward or without their own challenges (*ibid.*). I remain mindful of Price and Hawkins’ insights moving forward into my analysis of the musicking fields of care mapped in each town as well as of the work of musicking, careful to examine the challenges musicians experienced there as much as their more positive and caring facets, in Chapter Six.

In addition to these valuable insights from Geography, I lastly draw on the work of urban sociologist Eric Klinenberg (2018, 2015) in forming the concept of musicking fields of care. Klinenberg asserts that local places play crucial supportive roles for people to live healthy lives. Seemingly banal public and private locales, including public libraries, book shops, barber shops, schools, community gardens, churches, supermarkets, medical centres and sports grounds, as well as neighbourhood areas and open spaces around residential apartment blocks, form 'soft' but significant 'social infrastructures' (Klinenberg, 2018). They function as places of safety and support well beyond their predefined roles for people and groups. Klinenberg discusses their role in shaping life in a number of U.S. cities, and helping communities work through broader difficult issues, such as social inequalities resulting from racism, social health issues such as loneliness, and, as stated in the book's cover, 'the decline of civic life'. Social infrastructures are defined as 'the physical places and organizations that shape the way people interact' (*ibid.*: 5). It is especially important to attend to social infrastructures in small town contexts, since these are often lacking due to budget cuts following austerity or economic recession (Knox and Mayer, 2013).

While Klinenberg's research does not explicitly discuss artistic practice, it nonetheless centres upon place in a way that I found highly valuable when conducting my research, and resonates strongly with Tuan's notion of fields of care. Similar to the musicking fields of care described above, social infrastructures often have very clearly defined and planned functions, yet come to represent important supportive and caring places for people facing significant challenges in trying to build healthy lives. The result is that they come to mean far more for local

communities, working often beyond the ways they originally were intended to function. For example, in Chapter Four, we shall see that schools are not just state institutions of learning during the day: they are also places of extra-curricular musicking activities in the evenings and at weekends. As a musicking field of care, the place becomes more than a school. It becomes important in how people build their lives, and cares for them during their musical work.

Scholars discussing social infrastructures and fields of care recognise that the social and cultural processes that happen in locales are both constitutive of and constituted by these particular meaningful places. This sort of co-constitutive relationship is at the heart of my research and indeed of the musicking geography theoretical framework. That being said, I feel that Tuan's concept better conveys the idea of reciprocal relationships of care and support between people and places (per Till, 2012), with Klinenberg's emphasising how social infrastructures foster healthy lives in what I read to be a more unidirectional way. As such, I have adopted Tuan's term to advance my own emplacement of musicking through the concept of musicking fields of care.

As I have suggested in this section, musicking fields of care support and nurture musicking, providing accessible, practical and supportive places for musical practice to develop and be sustained, and for musicians to care for each other and for the places they make. In order for musicking fields of care to be gathered and woven, for the meaningful experiences and memories out of which they are made to be fostered, I attend in my theoretical framework to the work of musicking, addressed in the next section.

2.6. The Work of Musicking

For musicking fields of care to form, musicians accrue meaningful memories and responses during their experiences in particular places, which are gathered and woven together to form supportive and nurturing places for musicking. As musical practice prompts these experiences and responses, I argue that musicking itself does work. This *work of musicking* fosters, among other things, social bonding, personal fulfilment, enjoyment, well-being and learning. Examining how this work of musicking comes about and its meaning in the making of places is the thematic focus of Chapter Five. Here I detail the means through which musicking itself becomes meaningful to musicians, and the ways in which this musicking affects their lives and their places.

My concept of the work of musicking follows Hawkins' (2013) arguments about 'the work of art' (p. 10). Hawkins argues that at the heart of Creative Geographies is a need to explore what art can do in the world, 'art *as something*' (*ibid.*, emphasis in original). As indicated above, this moves geographic research on art away from merely interpreting what it might mean, and instead acknowledges that artistic experience is about processes that impact the world in diverse ways (also Price and Hawkins, 2018). According to music sociologist Tia DeNora (2000), musical participation and experience has a range of possible meanings and purposes for individuals and groups depending on their own situation and life context, as well as the context in which the musical participation happens. Pitts (2005) is clear on the extent to which musical participation can add to musicians' lives, emotionally, socially, cognitively and in terms of well-being. Lum (2011) urges music educators to 'appreciate the multifaceted functions of music, of which

musical skill development is sometimes hardly significant' (p.194). Bracken (2015) and Goodrich (2013) similarly underline the equal (and sometimes greater) significance of apparently non-musical aspects of musical experience.

From my perspective, I believe that both more traditionally 'musical' and 'more-than-musical' aspirations are at the centre of musicking practice (following Rinde and Schei, 2017), and both are constituent parts of the place-making via musicking that I researched. In contrast to Bracken and Goodrich, who seem to conceptualise musical and *non*-musical outcomes of musicking, I think that the 'more-than-musical' work of musicking, including the learning, social bonding, well-being and personal fulfilment this research uncovers (Chapter Five), is highly dependent on and thus tied to the 'musical' parts of the practice. As such, I believe that they are not at odds but are partners, and so my research understands musical and more-than-musical facets of the work of musicking. I venture, in terms of place-making, that each of the musical and more-than-musical aspects of the work of musicking elucidates how musicians make and experience musicking fields of care and place more broadly.

The work of musicking also draws upon Yosso's (2005) concept of 'community cultural wealth' (p. 69) and Lo's (2015) idea of 'unrecognised cultural currency' (p. 125) and. Community cultural wealth describes the often unrecognised but highly valuable skills and knowledges built by marginalised groups, which include forms of 'aspirational, navigational, social, linguistic, familial and resistant capital' (Yosso, 2005: 69; also Yosso and Garcia, 2007). Similarly, unrecognised cultural currency includes the competencies built by those who might more often be considered oppressed, but that are crucial to navigating the

challenges or oppression they face. While both of these concepts stem from research on the experiences of marginalised or oppressed people, experiences my research participants did not overtly share, they are nonetheless valuable indicators of often hidden but nonetheless central aspects of social life. The musicians with whom I worked experienced particular financial, personal and other challenges resulting from building their practices in smaller towns and more peripheral places in the Irish arts scene, which required them to build and develop the sorts of competencies these theorists describe, which I explore in Chapter Six.

I value the ways in which Yosso and Lo emphasise the need to examine positive experiences and responses in their works, as I do in the work of musicking, rather than focussing on what is missing or what needs to be developed. It is for this reason that I have chosen not to adopt Bourdieu's (1984) idea of social, cultural or economic capital in my framework. Bourdieu argues that possession of these capitals lends one more distinction and thus influence in a hierarchical 'field', such as the arts. Yosso (2005) critiques this hierarchical understanding, arguing that due consideration is not given to the sorts of less visible knowledges and capitals that are developed by others in this hierarchical system, which do not fit into Bourdieu's limiting categories. Instead, these others are viewed as a dominated lower class with 'cultural deficiencies' (*ibid.*: 70), whose best hope of advancing in the field is to acquire capital through education. Nonetheless, many scholars of artistic practice adopt Bourdieu's theory in some form. For example, Becker's (1982) seminal work on art worlds examines how networks and systems of art production are shaped by the distribution of social, cultural, economic and symbolic capitals. While Bourdieu's theories are valuable for examining tensions and power struggles in

social space in particular (Painter, 2000), I feel that they are also overly deterministic, and cannot adequately attend to the complexities of the musicking and place-making I have studied. While replete with tensions and struggles, the work of musicking is also brimming with innovation and creativity at individual and collective levels, for which Bourdieu's theories seem inadequate to account (cf. Holt, 2008).

Alternatively, as both Yosso (2005) and Lo (2015) advocate, I view the knowledges and responses musicians described in the work of musicking as positive results of meaningful interactions and experiences that equip them to make healthy places to live and thrive. The musicking geography framework still acknowledges the challenges musicians face, which are related to power tensions and issues of scale (Massey, 2005), but attends to these instead through rhythms, discussed in the next section. I thus contend that, through their supportive work, musicking fields of care play a caring and nurturing role for musicians in place, and the result is a range of meaningful and enriching experiences and responses that together I term the work of musicking. These responses are diverse and highly significant; indeed, beyond the actual geographies of musicking I mapped with musicians, they most often spoke about what musicking meant to them, and how that work and practice enhanced their lives. Concurrently, rich and diverse musicking fields of care continue to form through gathering and weaving of the experiences and responses generated and sustained by work of musicking. The outcomes of healthy musicking fields of care and the work of musicking might be considered as sustaining social infrastructures. Klinenberg (2018) asserts that the importance of social infrastructures is in their ability to foster social engagement,

participation and bonding, and all of the positive offshoots of these that help in building healthy lives and places to live.

As will become evident, musicking scholarship recognises the work that musical participation does, and the themes of social bonding, learning and well-being I describe in this section are addressed to some extent in the majority of scholarship on musical practice and experience I have studied. However, beyond Hawkins' concept of the work of art (also Price and Hawkins, 2018), many geographers have not fully recognised the musical or more-than-musical role of musical practice and experience in making places and experiencing the world. In fact, speaking on craft and making, Price and Hawkins (2018) assert that geographers need to 'attend carefully to exactly what kinds of transformations occur through making, through what practices, to whom and with what temporalities and spatialities' (p. 234). As such, in proposing the concept of the work of musicking, I respond to this call for geographers to interrogate the work that art and its practices does in the world, as well as calls from Yosso (2005) and Lo (2015) to examine crucial, hidden, but valuable competencies and knowledges. Additionally, mine is a specialised contribution in line with my research's emphasis on musical practice as process.

I now review scholarship on musical practice and participation to describe how researchers outside geography have understood what I term the work of musicking.

2.6.1 Musicking and Social Bonding

Participation in musical ensembles and projects, as community or professional musicians, means the coming together of many people to make music. In the context of community, voluntary musical participation in particular, research attests to the positive socialisation experiences yielded by this participation. These experiences not only strengthen existing social connections, for instance in neighbourhoods or among family or friend groups, but can also see the building of new bonds, even across generations. For instance, Langston (2011) describes how a sense of connectivity to family and friends is a component part of positive community music experience. Fröelich (2009) similarly underlines how feelings of connectedness are important for building relationships in community musical practice. However, as Kenny (2016) points out, where there is a group or collective formation, there is also the danger of exclusion.

This social component of community music in particular can form a core aspect of a group's activities (Haskett, 2013; G. Howell, 2013). For instance, Balsnes (2017) describes how the music group she studied opened the rehearsal room 30 minutes before the rehearsal so that the participants could chat and socialise, described as 'checking in' in another study of community music (Bolden, 2012). Furthermore, social media is found to foster communication among musicians (O'Flynn, 2015). The social component of musicking can also extend beyond the musicking context itself, to social outings outside rehearsal room or performance, for instance (Jenkins and Southcott, 2016).

For older people, community-based music projects such as choirs provide a means of socialising where other opportunities may be short in supply (e.g.

Söderman and Westvall, 2017; Wei, 2013; Lee, 2013; Hallam et al., 2012).

Intergenerational community music projects also have positive impacts, including valued experiences of bonding and socialisation across the spectrum of participant ages, improved attitudes and responses to other age groups, and feelings of personal value and fulfilment, for older participants especially (Ruisen, 2011; Varvarigou et al., 2011; Bates, 2012).

Pitts et al. (2015) finds that group dynamics are important in sustaining musicians' interest and continued participation in music groups. However, it is important also to recognise that musical experiences are not always positive, and can sometimes have negative impacts. For instance, where people already have friends or know people in the group, newcomers can feel excluded, for instance where cliques have formed (*ibid.*). I suppose that this is a part of all realms of life, and it is important to recognise in the context of the current discussion.

2.6.2 Musicking and Learning

Learning is a second more-than-musical outcome, closely associated with musical participation and experience in a variety of contexts. For instance, in the formal education system in Ireland, curricula are set out for music as a subject at primary and secondary levels, as well as policy recommendations at preschool level (Chapter Four). Indeed, music education is itself a specialist discipline, and I draw on many music education scholars in this research, particularly Ailbhe Kenny (2016). My interest however is less specialist, as it focuses on the learning that happens across age-groups and musicking contexts, which are related to musical skills specifically or to wider elements of learning and growth, such as gaining

leadership skills or confidence. Indeed, Folkestad (2006) points to the various types of unconscious learning that happen through musical participation and practice, and how formal (e.g. school-based music) and informal (e.g. voluntary and community-based ensembles) musical practices should not be separated. Instead, they should be placed on a continuum, as they interact and influence one another (Rimmer, 2015).

For older musicians, music participation can lead to learning new skills and repertoires, and allow interests that it may not have been possible to explore in youth to be taken up (Jenkins and Southcott, 2016). Similarly positive outcomes were also found for intergenerational music projects among the musician-participants (Varvarigou et al., 2011; Lee, 2013) and indeed their facilitators (Lane, 2012). For younger people, musical participation provides opportunities not only to learn music, but also to enhance learning in other ways. For example, *Aistear*, the early childhood curriculum framework in place in Ireland, prescribes musical activities for supporting the development of communication, self-expression, creativity and imagination (NCCA, 2009). However, musicking and learning are also highly context dependent, which does affect place-making possibilities. Pitts et al. (2015) and Pitts (2005) argue that musicking environments that feel insecure or unfamiliar do not foster learning. This is an important consideration in terms of musicking fields of care too.

2.6.3 Musicking and Well-Being

One might posit that all of these experiences contribute in the main to a sense of well-being. The issue of health and well-being specifically also presents across

literature on musicking. In music therapy, for instance, composing one's own music can form a means of reflecting on both positive and negative experiences, and promote well-being and healing (Kumm, 2013). Beyond music therapy specifically, Onishi's (2014) study of participants' experiences of drumming circles demonstrates how a broad range of positive effects can come from musical participation. These include stress relief, working through negative experiences or feelings, and general personal growth. Similarly, in a study of the experiences of an ukulele ensemble, Kruse (2013) describes how participants experienced healing, and were able to reflect on and work through memories, through their playing. For children, playing and learning musical instruments aids in brain development, the development of fine motor skills, and behavioural and emotional well-being (Habibi et al., 2016). Boon (2015) details a community music project working with disadvantaged children with disabilities in Turkey. The children's parents described the happiness and pride they and their children experienced, and their children's desire to continue to make music and perform even after the project had ended. Bugos (2014) discusses how musical participation can positively influence rehabilitation efforts and promote healthy aging (also Söderman and Westvall, 2017, Onishi, 2014). Indeed, people are living longer and aging more positively today, and so the need to pay more attention to older musicians' experiences is apparent, a point I also address in Chapter Six (Balsnes, 2017).

To conclude this overview of the work of musicking, existing literature indicates that musicking contributes to musicians' lives by fostering feelings of well-being, learning and personal fulfilment. I take valuable insights from these literatures, which shape how I understand the work of musicking and its

relationship to the formation of place as polyrhythmic ensemble. It is through the work of musicking that the meaningful experiences, emotional responses and memories that are gathered and woven into places are generated. The fourth strand of the musicking geography framework attends to rhythms and their role in making places as polyrhythmic ensemble, and the following section explores theories of rhythm in geography.

2.7. Place-Making and Rhythms

Anne Buttimer (1976) calls for geographers to examine the ‘orchestration’ of rhythms in places. She argues that, by attending to the ways in which rhythms come together and interact in shaping everyday life, geographers may gain insight into the tensions and discord that impact how we live our lives in places. As a musician, I find it important to interrogate the use of musical metaphors to describe place and time-space trajectories by geographers and social theorists. In response I offer my fourth strand of musicking geography, which seeks to understand how the rhythms of place are gathered and woven together, and how they interact and shape how places are made and experienced. After defining what I mean by rhythm, I discuss Buttimer’s, Lefebvre’s, Relph’s and Edensor’s insights, as well as critique these according to musical practice. I bring Buttimer’s discussion of the rhythms occurring in and shaping everyday life together with the categories of rhythm outlined in Lefebvre’s (2004) *Rhythmanalysis* to provide a set of helpful analytical categories for geographers to understand aspects of the interactions, gatherings and relational qualities of place. I then consider Relph’s and Edensor’s discussion of the rhythms of place according to musical metaphors to develop a

new musical metaphor – the polyrhythmic ensemble -- to conceptualise the rhythms of place as a whole, including its open bounded interactions and gatherings.

I argue that places are made by and experienced through an ensemble of rhythms, those associated with musicking and otherwise. Some rhythms work with each other, some against, with musicians as place-makers, practicing in, against and around these rhythms. The result is the creation of polyrhythmic ensembles, such as the musicking places of this study. For Massey (2005), 'multiplicity, antagonisms and contrasting temporalities are the stuff of all places' (p. 159), and I use ideas of rhythm here to access and understand the tensions and antagonisms to which Massey refers. I understand rhythms as patterns of repetition, such as recurrent events. Rhythms may form regular or irregular sequences. It is the fact of this repetition that indicates rhythm. Even arrhythmia, where repetition does not occur at regular and predictable intervals, is a form of rhythm. I argue that the forces interacting in places – musicking and otherwise - all have their own rhythms which, in turn, affect interactions and gatherings in places. Musicking rhythms, in other words, affect how places are made and experienced in particular ways.

Buttimer finds that everyday life could be seen as a set of tensions between rhythms of order and organisation, and adventure and change. These tensions become apparent most obviously when problems arise, for instance illness. Different aspects of life are characterised by their own rhythms, and rhythms from outside oneself can impose on the individual, for instance rhythms of work and production, which might come into tension with one's own rhythms, such as a quest for silence or rest. Buttimer goes on to describe how one could record the

various rhythms that a person participates in and acts upon them, and note incongruences. One example of incongruences according to Mels (2004) is how power inequalities affect the rhythms of everyday life (cf. Massey, 1991). Mels (2004) develops this structural element of Buttimer's perspective as a response to critiques of the humanistic geographical approach of the 1970s and 1980s, which some scholars argued lacked theoretical depth in its interest in description. In her account, Buttimer (1976) asserts that life could be understood as:

‘an orchestration of various time-space rhythms: those of physiological and cultural dimensions of life, those of different work styles, and those of our physical and functional environments. On a macro level one is dealing with the synchronization of movements of various scales, taking a sounding, as it were, at the particular point where our own experience has prodded us to explore’ (p. 289).

Signalling her move beyond Hagerstrand's time-space geographies, Buttimer calls for further research about rhythms to provide insights into concrete, everyday experience, which might otherwise be difficult to grasp or describe.

Subsequent work by Mels, 2004; Tuan 2004a, 2004b; Ley, 2004 has responded to her call for further research. However, I feel that Buttimer's use of the term orchestration resonates with more colloquial parlance as the bringing together of multiple components in pursuit of some end goal. For musicians, however, orchestration is defined as ‘the art of combining the sounds of a complex of instruments (an orchestra or other ensemble) to form a satisfactory blend and balance’ (Grove Music Online, accessed 14 July 2018). This description further suggests that ‘to orchestrate’ is to arrange a piece of music for a given instrument

or set of instruments, indicating a sense of the predetermined and pre-configured. In other words, the music performed is already decided to a significant degree by some force other than the musicians themselves. While there are exceptions to this in contemporary classical music (to say nothing of other types of music), and while musicians themselves always bring their own interpretations and ideas to their performances, and not all forms of music follow the definition of orchestration given, the more widely understood meaning of orchestration for musicians suggests elements of the pre-arranged.

For my own work therefore, such a metaphor is problematic. I feel that, while Buttimer's use of this musical metaphor describes the power of rhythms acting on and around individuals, it does not adequately capture the importance of individuals' own actions, and how musicians may play with and around these rhythms in many ways. These tensions, between rhythms enforced on musicians and their efforts and strategies to counter these impositions, are a crucial facet of understanding places as polyrhythmic ensembles, and in Chapters Five and Six I visit them in much more detail. I acknowledge, following Massey (1991), that power is not distributed equally, and that there are strong and pervasive rhythms working on musicians and the places and contexts in which they work over which many have little control. However, what is needed is a metaphor that better captures the simultaneous if unequal working of rhythms outside musicians' and their worlds, and the rhythms these musicians and worlds themselves enact and create - a dynamic that cannot be predefined, and that resembles Massey's notion of a progressive sense of place, in ways.

While I have problematized and developed the idea of ‘orchestration’ specifically, I nonetheless find Buttimer’s understanding of rhythms highly useful in studying place. I also draw on Lefebvre’s (2004) theory of rhythmanalysis in my conceptualisation of place, and it is from Lefebvre’s work that my idea of polyrhythmic ensemble emerges. Rhythmanalysis provides a useful set of concepts to understand ‘everyday rhythms as affective conduits sitting between the contextual and the live’ (Simpson, 2008: 824). Lefebvre (2004) argues that rhythms occur in any instance where a place, a time, and an energy expenditure interact. Rhythms are characterised by the repetition of movements, situations, and differences on the one hand, and the interferences of linear and cyclical processes on the other. Lefebvre identifies cyclical rhythms, originating in nature, such as day and night, seasons, months and so on, and linear rhythms, coming from social practice and/or ‘imposed structures’ (*ibid*: p. 18). Both cyclical and linear rhythms interact with and affect each other, and both were in evidence throughout my fieldwork. But it is Lefebvre’s three types of what I consider place-based gathering and weaving rhythms that have proven immensely useful in my research. First, *polyrhythmia* describes a number of rhythms playing out together. Second, in *eurhythmia* rhythms interact consonantly and produce positive results, while thirdly in *arrhythmia* there is discord between them, and thus potentially negative outcomes.

I believe that polyrhythmia, eurhythmia and arrhythmia resonate with Buttimer’s perspective as they each designate the fact that multiple rhythms occur and interact at once, from those imposed to those chosen to be practiced by the self, and that some of these interactions work well and some not so well. When

rhythms become discordant, such as during times of stress, for financial reasons, or for reasons of health, negative outcomes can result, and places of calm and care become important, a point that I return to below.

Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis has been adapted in research on both everyday life and cultural practice more specifically. Simpson (2012, 2008) has used participant observation and time-lapse photography to study street performance, while Borch et al. (2015) describe the use of novels, textbooks and other academic works, participant observation and interviews in examining the rhythms of marketing practices. Vergunst (2010), Goh (2014), and Wunderlich (2008) examine temporalities, rhythms, and politics in the city through walking. Kern (2016) explores the changing rhythms and tempi brought about by gentrification, and Kitchin (2019) discusses the rhythms of the smart city and their effects on everyday life. Paiva (2016) and Lager et al. (2016) analyse the lives and experiences of older people in place through the lens of rhythms.

From these studies, it is perhaps clearest that Lefebvre's account is, as Simpson (2008) describes above, a set of concepts rather than a method of analysis. Pinning down an exact means of deploying rhythmanalysis per Lefebvre is difficult (also Simpson, 2012). In terms of the current project, in the next chapter, I introduce a musicking geography methodology which offers an alternative. Moreover, I believe that the three categories of rhythmic interaction specified in Lefebvre's project – eurhythmia, arrhythmia, and polyrhythmia - provide a suitable means of conceptualising the rhythms of musical practice and experience that emerged during my fieldwork in each of the towns I studied. Small towns are often characterised or marketed for their slower life rhythms (Brody, 2015; Knox and

Mayer, 2013), and so having a set of rhythm concepts to apply to the small towns I am studying is a necessity.

Relph (2004) also uses musical terminology to describe Lefebvrian eurhythmic and arrhythmic ideas. For Relph, sets of rhythms ‘possess harmony, tone and melody’, making for more concordant rhythmic gatherings than those that are ‘staccato, irregular and discordant’ (p. 118). While harmony, tone, and melody in Relph’s argument seem to suggest something pleasant or affective, in a musical sense these are simply concepts within themselves that are not automatically “good” or “bad”; they are components of music itself. Equally, for music to be staccato, irregular or discordant does not make it necessarily “bad” or less musical; indeed, these are characteristics of musics in and beyond the classical canon for some time. Thus, while Relph’s point is made, I do not take on the musical idioms he has used to conceptualise them.

Instead, I argue that Edensor’s (2010) notion of the ensemble of rhythms in places approaches a more appropriate musical metaphor to understand and conceptualise place and the complex rhythmic interactions that gather and weave there. An ensemble merely suggests a group of individuals coming together to undertake any action or actions in any way, with or without pre-determined parameters. As used in music, when I reflect on the various configurations of music ensembles with which I have performed in my own practice, I can scarcely recall a better word to describe the sense of the closed and open elements of musicking and musical practice that played out in the towns I studied. Additionally, the notion of place as ensemble recalls for me Massey’s (2005) description of a ‘throwntogetherness’ (p. 150) quality to places, which I feel is also well-captured by

this much less prescriptive metaphor. It too acknowledges that places are made through the coming together and interaction of multiple things, but that the ways in which this happens, or the extent to which it is governed by forces outside places, cannot be predetermined and may be unique to each place.

In Chapters Five and Six, I examine the rhythmic gatherings and ways in which the towns I studied emerged as polyrhythmic ensembles, bringing together all four strands of the musicking geography theoretical framework for studying the co-constitutive relationship between music- and place-making.

2.8 Conclusion

Place is a complex concept replete with different meanings and interpretations. While it is understandable that music scholars might not necessarily pay attention to place, I follow Casey (1996) in understanding that musicking, like every other human practice, is always emplaced. As such, my research about emplaced musical practice bridges the valuable perspectives and insights of both music scholarship and Geography. In this chapter, I discussed my concept of place as polyrhythmic ensemble to introduce the four strands of the place-based musicking geography theoretical framework on which this research is based. In Section 2.3, I situated the framework in the context of geographic research on music, art and creativity. In Sections 2.4-2.7, I then discussed the framework's four key strands – gathering and weaving, musicking fields of care, the work of musicking, and rhythms - in detail. Each strand responds to gaps in scholarship on musicking, while developing theoretical discussions about place from geography and related fields. Through bringing together these four key strands into a theoretical framework, I have

developed a way to study places as polyrhythmic ensembles, understanding how both musicking and place-making are inherently processual, layered, rhythmic, and relational.

This theoretical framework, along with new concepts related to the four strands, considers musicking as spatial processes rather than music as a fixed product, enabling scholars to study the perspectives of a range of musicians along the amateur-professional continuum, and to tease out the ways in which musicians could be supported in their practice to sustain their valuable place-making work. To deploy this theoretical framework in practice, in the next chapter, I discuss an innovative research methodology in musicking geography, which is made up of two key research methods, musicking mapping and musicking ethnography, and a third reflective exploration through musical composition.

Chapter Three: Musicking Geography as Research Methodology

A map is a composite of places, and like a place, it hides as much as it reveals. It is also a composite of times, blandly laying out on a single surface the results of billions of years of activity by nature and humanity (Lippard, 1997: 81).

3.1 Introduction

'Musicking mapping' is one of a set of innovative methods developed in this research for learning about, questioning and constructing narratives about the musical lives of places as polyrhythmic ensembles. As a composite research practice, mapping uncovers the breadth and depth of places, and their many layers and complexities, as Lippard's quotation above indicates.

My in-depth research over the course of four years completing this PhD included 27 months of fieldwork collaborations (March 2016 to June 2018) with 429 musicians in total in the three small Irish towns selected for this study. Musicking geography draws from a diverse array of perspectives to understand the formation of places as polyrhythmic ensembles. Such an approach attends to the processes of gathering and weaving that make musicking fields of care, which is sustained by the work of musicking, and is shaped by the rhythms of musicking, places, and wider policy and financial rhythms. In this chapter I describe musicking geography as a methodological framework that studies the dynamic set of four processual strands in place-making and musicking practices outlined in the last chapter.

In Section 3.2, I introduce the ethos of the musicking geography methodology by focussing on its engaged, participatory and collaborative approach. My musicking geography methodology is a considered ethical, equitable, and reflexive collaborative research approach. The precedents for this research design included ethnography, creative geography and deep mapping. In Section 3.3, I introduce my research design and the research methods used for each. I developed three innovative research methods, musicking ethnography, musicking mapping, and musicking composition, to study the co-constitutive processes of music- and place-making in each of the small towns researched. The first two methods, discussed in Sections 3.4 and 3.5, emerged out of my extensive literature reviews of previous research and the practical insights resulting from my pilot study. In Section 3.6 I discuss my positionality as a musicking geographer, after which I detail my data analysis methods in Section 3.7. Following completion of the fieldwork and analysis, I piloted a third, reflective and experimental method, musicking composition, which I explore in Section 3.8. I collaborated with a composer to create a musical piece that explored and intonated the research findings and process more broadly.

3.2 The Musicking Geography Methodology Ethos

Two main related principles underpinned this research, which I consider as keystones of the ethos of musicking geography as methodology. Firstly, I understood the musicians with whom I worked as local experts (McLucas, n.d.), whose insights and stories allowed me to study the work of musicking that went also into the making of places as polyrhythmic ensembles. Secondly, I believed that

I as the researcher should become immersed in and part of the processes of musicking and place-making to understand the unique, rich and complex co-constitutive relationships. This influenced how I approached my research design, which sought to create possibilities for ethical, egalitarian and engaged research collaborations with musicians from the three towns of this study. After briefly discussing these key principles, in this section, I introduce existing research design approaches in the social sciences and arts more broadly that provided formative precedents for my approach. All of these are central to the musicking geography methodology.

3.2.1 Research Keystones: Collaborating with Musicking Experts

I sought to establish respectful research collaborations with musicians across all three towns. I wanted at all times to conduct research ethically, which meant not only following professional Geographical and Maynooth University research standards, but above all acknowledging the expertise of the musicians participating in the research. I further wished to create accessible, engaging and useful research experiences for the musicians with whom I collaborated, such as by inviting musicking experts to reflect upon their practices and the places they were part of and created in ways productive for participants as well as this study. I refer to examples of these goals below and in the following chapters.

As indicated in Chapter One, I understand musical practice to exist along a continuum (following Finnegan, 2007), and refer to a range of musicians in this study as practitioners, community musicians and musical audiences, rather than using the labels 'amateur' and 'professional' as oppositional categories. This choice

of terminology is explained more fully in Section 3.3 below. I also wanted the research experience to be mutually beneficial, for the musicians with whom I worked as much as for my research. I hoped that participating in the research would be useful, memorable and enjoyable. When working with professional practitioners for example, I wanted our collaborations to provide useful arenas for them to reflect on their work and share ideas and resources mutually. For community musicians and audiences, I wanted their participation to foster the sharing of musicking stories and memories, learning about each other and about place in enjoyable ways, and engaging with maps in new ways as well. In all cases, I wanted musicians to feel that they could share their critiques and aspirations for what supported and could better foster the work of musicking, place-making and care for musicians.

3.2.2 Methodological Precedents

In developing the musicking geography methodology, I drew on three established research approaches: ethnography, creative geography and deep mapping.

Ethnography is a qualitative research methodology through which relationships between the researcher and 'researched', insider and outsider, and self and home, are continuously negotiated (Watson and Till, 2009). This negotiation is central to the musicking geography methodology and it influenced extensively how the fieldwork played out, as detailed below. As Watson and Till (2009) also indicate, geographers use ethnography to understand how places are experienced and created, as well as to explore topics that could not be researched adequately through quantitative approaches. Geographer-ethnographers typically bring

together a range of research methods, including participant observation, fieldnote writing, sketch maps, interviews, focus groups, and others (*ibid.*). I similarly adopted this multi-method approach. More recently, geographer-ethnographers have begun to deploy artistic methods in their work, often in combination with these more traditional methods (Kavanagh and Till, forthcoming). My musicking geography research methods contribute to these new developments.

The second methodological precedent is creative geography (Hawkins, 2013), which studies 'the nature of art encounters' (Hawkins, 2013: 15), including how researchers engage with artistic works and processes, and the work that this art does in the world, including the geographies created through art encounters. The approach recognises all types of artistic and creative practices, whether enacted by professionals or hobbyists (also Hawkins, 2016 and Price and Hawkins, 2018). I valued this because, as already mentioned, a key desired outcome of this project was all-encompassing and equitable insights into musicking. The approach also resonated with my research topic because it is concerned with artistic and creative processes, including everyday practices in places of all scales (Hawkins 2013, 2016; Price and Hawkins, 2018). Creative geography was thus an ideal approach upon which to draw when developing new methods to study music as a complex set of spatial processes that exist in small towns as well as global cities.

Hawkins (2011: 464) conceptualises the research design of creative geography around 'doings' and 'dialogues' (also Hawkins, 2013). In the former, geographers adopt creative and artistic methods for their research, sometimes even developing their own artistic practice, as curators, artists, or poets, for example. Hawkins describes how rich and extensive insights are yielded through

geographic doings because scholars see the world in new ways, such as paying attention to things, people, places and processes that might be overlooked if confined to standard research approaches (Hawkins, 2015). In creative geographic ‘dialogues’, geographers examine artworks and practices to enhance understanding of geographic themes, using their suite of existing research approaches.

Developing creative geographic doings and dialogues allowed me draw on my existing music skills, knowledges and experiences, to study musicking in a variety of specialist ways from a variety of perspectives (Small, 1998), and my research is the first of its kind in geography to do this. Ultimately my methodology has blended doings and dialogues, and I believe they exist on a continuum; indeed, Hawkins asserts that they are often ‘entwined’ (Hawkins, 2011: 464). Throughout the research, I was always a musician and always a geographer, no matter the type of fieldwork encounter, and I drew on these knowledges simultaneously throughout. As such, though I separate the musicking research methods below for the purposes of discussion, I wish to emphasise that they developed concurrently and iteratively.

The third research approach on which I drew in forming my musicking geography methodology is deep mapping. Deep mapping involves the rich exploration of a (small) place, combining several methods, including art work (Bailey and Biggs, 2012; Biggs, 2010; McLucas, n.d.). I was first introduced to the idea of deep mapping during my MA studies through Dr Silvia Loeffler, a postdoctoral researcher and artist in our department who conducted a deep mapping of place attachment in Dún Laoghaire Harbour in County Dublin (see also Loeffler, 2015). I admired the extent of Loeffler’s collaboration with local people

and organisations; her beautiful artistic renderings of the themes uncovered indicated the effectiveness of combining artistic methods and outputs with place-based research as a means of eliciting and depicting the rich stories and histories resulting from the project. The overarching philosophy deep mapping seemed to have, of collaboration and involvement, communication, reflection and artistry, resonated with me.

Indeed, Smith (2015) suggests that deep mapping is itself a form of place-making or transformation. While I do not believe that the towns where I conducted my research were necessarily transformed by my research (though hopefully at some point they might be), I wanted to give musicians an arena to remember, tell their stories, and name and shape their musicking places in their own way through participating in the research, which is at the centre of the ethos of musicking geography as methodology. Additionally, McLucas (n.d.) argues that deep maps provide opportunities for exchange and confrontation between a variety of perspectives, and can be political and partisan (also Lippard, 1997). To ensure that every musician was allowed to share their opinions about all aspects of musicking and place-making, the musicking geography methodology and research methods also needed to be open to this contestation.

3.3 Musicking Geography Research Design and Methods

As mentioned in Chapter One and detailed in Table 1.1, the three towns researched in this thesis share similar facets, but each has a unique individual musicking ecosystem with its own musicking rhythms, community music and music education programmes, venues, and funding supports. In the social sciences, case study

research aims to build an in-depth understanding of a particular setting with an emphasis on thick description (Yin, 2014; Campbell, 2012; Cousin, 2005). Yin (2014) describes comparative case study research as conducting a number of case studies to draw comparisons between them. However, because I wanted to highlight common place-making and musicking processes in each town, while also paying attention to how these processes created distinct polyrhythmic ensembles, I call my research design a ‘musicking geographical approach’ rather than a comparative case study one. The goal is to offer a diverse picture of musicking and place-making in multiple small towns by studying the work of a range of musicians, the becoming of musicking fields of care, related musicking places and networks, and musicking eurhythmias and arrhythmias across and within each town.

To reiterate, my rationale for selecting the three towns of this study is based on a few important factors. First I wanted to conduct research as both a practicing musician and geographer, or what I call a musicking geographer (which I discuss below). This meant I would participate as an active musician in a number of musicking roles. Second, given the time constraints of this study, I used a modified snow-balling approach by selecting towns where I was either already involved in musicking projects or had established connections and rapport through previous practice. The practicality of conducting fieldwork in places in which I was already known as a musician meant I could rely on the rapport and connections I had built through my professional experience through the course of the fieldwork. While I have worked in several places in Ireland, I had the longest professional connections in each of these towns. Third, I drew on my Masters case-study research in Carlow

as a pilot, to develop methods described below that generated new qualitative data about musicking and place-making.

For each town, I selected three examples of musical practice for close examination, one each of: a larger musical community or group; a smaller ensemble or collective; and an individual practitioner. Table 3.1 illustrates the participating artists and ensembles for each town, their broad age groupings, and the specific methods used. Taken together, I refer to these as 'musicking ethnographies' and discuss these and musicking methods used in more detail in the next section. As far as was possible, I wanted to include musicians practicing in different genres. Though this was not a research focus for the project overall, I wanted to capture the characteristic diversity of musical practice in Irish small towns (Finnegan, 2007). In keeping with the ethos of the musicking geography methodology, these examples of musical practice ranged across the continuum of amateur-professional practice, and across age groups, allowing for this diversity of perspectives. As such, I had an overarching aim of having a teenage, adult and retiree component within each set of ethnographies.

Table 3.1: Musicking Case Studies and Specific Methods Used for Each Town

Case Study	Musicking Ethnographies and Specific Methods Used		
Town or City	Community ensemble	Small ensemble	Individual artist
Carlow	<i>Aspiro</i> Community choral organisation operating ensembles for children, teenagers and adults. I participated directly in a performance.	<i>Four Lakes Productions</i> Performing ensemble operated by three Carlow-based practitioners, two men and one woman, in their 40s-60s. I participated directly in a performance.	<i>Niall Toner</i> Singer-songwriter and radio DJ in his 60s. I analysed a recently released album.
Kilkenny	<i>Kilkenny Community Orchestra</i> Community orchestra for musicians of all ages – participants are adults in their 30s-60s. I observed a rehearsal.	<i>SOLA</i> Ensemble of three women in their 20s. I attended a performance as an audience member.	<i>Mick Hanly</i> Singer-songwriter in his 60s. I analysed a recently released album.
Wexford	<i>Wexford Male Voice Choir</i> Community-based choir for men of all ages – participants are mostly in their 50s and above. I observed a rehearsal.	<i>The Carty Sisters</i> Ensemble of three sisters in their 20s. I attended a performance as an audience member.	<i>Sue Furlong</i> Composer, conductor and teacher in her 50s. I analysed a suite of choral music.

During my work for this PhD, I discerned three subgroups of musicians. First are those I term 'community musicians' whom I met during my fieldwork through ensembles, such as choirs and instrumental groups. These ensembles mostly drew their membership and audiences from the town or city in which they were located. Though participating voluntarily (and some even paying memberships or fees to do so), community musicians' practices were extremely rich, and invaluable to this research. More general understandings designate community musicians as practitioner-facilitators of community-based ensembles of voluntary participants (e.g. Creative and Cultural Skills, 2019). However, I adopt the label 'community musician' rather than 'voluntary' or 'amateur' musicians for this group to avoid any misreadings of their work as somehow less skilful or artful because it was done on a voluntary basis. Secondly, those musicians who made their living wholly or in part from musical practice I termed 'practitioners'. I similarly prefer this label to avoid creating a value judgement. Moreover, using the term practitioner captured the broad spectrum of roles played by these musicians, including as: performers, composers and songwriters, recording artists, teachers, and facilitators, among others. The third group I worked with I term 'musical audiences', who participated in the musicking mappings I conducted in public places in each town.

I invited each musician who participated to identify their own status. Table 3.2 below gives the breakdown of the three groups of musicians who participated in musicking ethnographies and musicking mappings in each town.

Table 3.2: Musician participants by town and type

	Carlow	Kilkenny	Wexford	Totals
Practitioners	15	12	21	48
Community musicians	117	92	102	311
Musical audiences	23	29	18	70
Total	155	133	141	429

To maintain anonymity for community musicians and musical audiences, I did not record more specific identifiers when conducting mappings and ethnographies. Following a session, I tried to record a general gender and age bracket for each participant in the research. When relating findings to age groups, life stages, or gender in the empirical chapters, I thus provide only summary estimates of those categories. Community musicians under the age of 18 years who participated in the musicking mappings did so only with written consent from their parents or guardians. I describe them in this study as ‘young musicians’ or as teenagers. I use the term ‘adult musicians’ to refer to musicians over 18 up to around the ages of the early 60s, or retirees. I use the term ‘older musicians’ to refer to retirees, about in their 60s and above. I am aware, and acknowledge fully, that this is a flawed system, and that I risk blurring age groups and boundaries (one might choose to retire in their fifties, their eighties, or indeed not at all). My recording of general categories relied on my own perception and ability to take notes accurately under high pressure. However, so as to be respectful by not impinging on participants’ right to anonymity, which was my primary ethical consideration, I found that it was neither practical nor polite to ask participants these details, especially during the musicking mappings. Doing so, especially in the

context of group mapping activities and conversations emerging from these, may have made participants feel uncomfortable. Having detailed this musicking geography research approach and clarified my terminology, I now turn to a discussion of the musicking ethnographies and specific methods used for these.

3.4 Musicking Ethnographies

The first of my specialist research methods was creating musicking ethnographies that aimed to gain in-depth insights into musical practice from a variety of perspectives, through close, immersed engagement with musicians based on their work over a number of months. When selecting the ensembles and musicians with whom to work on musicking ethnographies, listed in Table 3.1, in addition to meeting each of the criteria described above, my previous connections with the musician(s) were important. The rapport already built with some and broader musical networks to which I belonged through my musical practice and fieldwork collaborations meant that I had established colleagues and contacts on whom to call for advice, reaching new practitioners, and participation (Sherif, 2001; Cunliffe and Alcadipani, 2016). Other recruiting techniques to reach out to musicians across the three towns included using email, phone and social media messaging, as well as face-to-face interactions, such as during the course of my musical work or participation as a member of a musical audience. I relied on social media in recruiting mapping participants as well, particularly to advertise the public workshops (Section 3.5 below). For these events, I also used local newspapers and radio programmes for this purpose. I reflect on the dual importance of social and more traditional media forms in Chapter Six. I joined emailing lists and subscribed

to newsletters for the arts services in all three towns, and attended workshops and networking meetings where opportunities arose and it was possible to do so. All of this extended the reach of my project, built my familiarity with the wider arts contexts of these towns outside of my own work, and helped to connect with groups and individuals for both ethnographies and mappings.

Similar to other ethnographic research approaches, for each musicking ethnography, I used different methods of engagement drawing on existing qualitative methods in geography. As indicated in Table 3.1, these traditional methods were adopted and enhanced by my musicking roles for each ethnography, which included performance collaboration, audience observation, and analysis of recorded works and scores (Moss, 1992; Kneafsey, 2002; Morton, 2005; Kearney, 2013; Astley, 2016; Brownrigg, 2007; McDowell, 2015; Rosetto and Andrigo, 2018). While I did not use the same methods to generate primary data or collect secondary data for each ethnography, together they provided a 'blended' approach of musicking doings and dialogues and allowed me as a musicking geographer to study musical practice from various perspectives. I specify the stages of this approach below.

3.4.1 Stages of musicking ethnographies

Building the musicking ethnographies involved a number of stages, a pattern that was established during my pilot study and is described in the existing literature utilising case studies of musical practices (Kenny, 2016; Finnegan, 2007; Pitts, 2005). When the PhD was initially proposed, I projected working in each town for six to eight months sequentially, completing all fieldwork in one town before

moving to the next. However, opportunities for ethnographies presented themselves outside of this 'neat' scheme, first in Carlow based on my own musical practice, but then in both Wexford and Kilkenny, within months of beginning fieldwork. Musicians are busy and very mobile in their practice, as Chapter Six describes, so I felt it important to take opportunities to engage them whenever possible, and, most crucially, when it was easiest and most practical for them to do so (Muhammad et al., 2015). Furthermore, musical practice happens during certain seasons and as such has its own rhythms, as detailed in Chapters Five and Six. The timing of opportunities to carry out ethnographies and mappings was therefore further influenced, and limited in some ways, by these timings. Moreover, I found that the themes and ideas emerging from fieldwork were better developed when it was conducted in the three places simultaneously.

Once initial contact had been made, and more information given about my project, I discussed the possibility of building a musicking ethnography with that particular individual or ensemble with the musicians or gatekeepers of larger ensembles. We discussed what this would involve in terms of visits to performances or rehearsals, or, for composers, choosing a work(s) on which to focus, as well as logistics of conducting the research. Practitioners chose what example of practice we would work on, though I asked them to consider an example of work which might be illustrative of practice, and, if possible, would also allow us to explore connections to place. Additionally, we went through the research ethics information sheet (Appendix 2). It was important to me that the full process was made clear to the artist/s in question before our work together began, and I felt that this created an open and collaborative dynamic between us.

The next stage of the ethnography was my engagement with the musical practice in action. For individuals, I listened to, analysed and responded to musical works in the fieldnotes. Here I considered the lyrics, harmonies, instrumentation, and overall 'feel' of the music to me as a listener, fellow musician and teacher. This was not necessarily a thorough musicological analysis, which I felt would not have proven especially useful or applicable here, but provided points for me to discuss with the composer in as informed a manner as suited. For the community-based and smaller ensembles my engagement with practice involved attending, observing and participating to some extent in either a performance or rehearsal, and taking fieldnotes. For performances, I noted choices of repertoire, staging, location, and any other artistic decisions, and considered how the performers interacted with each other, the audience, and the room at large. I also paid attention to the narration or dialogue between musical pieces, the background or context of the performance, and aspects beyond the performance itself, such as connections with local groups or businesses and so on (reflecting on themes arising through my literature review).

During two of the ethnographies I actually performed as part of the concert (Figure 3.1). As my reflective fieldnotes following performances indicated, active performance and observation simultaneously meant that I got very rich insights into the practice from the performer's perspective. However, it was difficult to observe other aspects of the performance, for instance the audience experience, and I may have missed points I could have picked up on from a different viewpoint.

Figure 3.1: Performing as part of musicking ethnography with Aspiro, 30 March 2016. Photo: Dermot O'Brien.



In the case of two smaller ensembles, I attended performances as an audience member. Here I got a very good experience of the whole room, and the experiences and actions of performers on stage as well as the audience and other people working in the room (Figure 3.2). I also got a better idea of the sound of the performance, because the sound on stage is never a true balance of sound in the room. However, this did not yield the same richness of experience from a performer's viewpoint.

Figure 3.2: Observing a performance by SOLA as an audience member, 29 May 2018 (photo by author).



Lastly, for the large community music groups in Kilkenny and Wexford, I attended and observed a rehearsal, as this was more suitable for the ensembles at that point in the performance year. I actually found this rehearsal experience the richest and most enjoyable mode of engagement with musical practice. The rehearsal room for The Wexford Male Voice Choir itself was a treasure trove of stories and history (Figure 3.3), and told me as much about the choir as any performance could, proving the aptitude of this method for understanding musicking fields of care (Chapter Four). Additionally, I got to observe the dynamic among the choir members and their director, which can be more relaxed, at ease and ‘normal’ in a rehearsal context than in the more pressurised situation of a performance. Conversing with the musicians after the rehearsal proved fruitful too

(also Kearney, 2009 and Cousin, 2005). This is something I also tried to do at performances but not always with the same level of success, because musicians were busy, tired, meeting and chatting to people, or hurrying away to travel home after performances.

Figure 3.3: Collected photographs, newspaper clippings and prizes in The Wexford Male Voice Choir Hall, 8 February 2018 (photo by author).



As stated above, observing practice and engaging with the musicking from these many stances and in many modes allowed for the fact that musicking is made up of many roles and different perspectives coming together. I gained a diversity of insights accordingly. While the modes of engagement differed slightly among the ethnographies, the results yielded were not only rich and diverse, but covered the broad set of musicking experiences from across the perspective of as many musicking roles as it was possible for me as an individual, musician, and researcher, to cover. As also mentioned above, both artistic doings and dialogues (Hawkins, 2013) were catered for in this approach.

I maintained detailed fieldnotes from the very beginning stages of each musicking ethnography which I very frequently revisited throughout the entire fieldwork phase of the study. I drew on Emerson et al. (2011), who describe descriptive, reflective and interpretive note-taking, wherein the thick description characteristic of ethnography can be recorded, but also the feelings, reactions and thoughts of the researcher in relation to these, and possible emerging themes or ideas of interest. I also referred to and drew comparisons and parallels between other ethnographies and mappings in my fieldnotes, such that the entire fieldwork journey, from beginning to end, was one of simultaneous fieldwork, reflection, and analysis. I adapted Emerson et al.'s ideas of descriptive notes while directly engaged in musicking in active ways, and reflective and interpretive notes when I was working on the fieldwork but not directly in the field. I also wrote descriptive and reflective notes in the preliminary stages of each musicking ethnography and musicking mapping, where I gathered preliminary data from secondary sources such as webpages and social media pages, local newspapers, and radio. I ensured

during every aspect of the fieldwork that I had the time and space to reflect before and after fieldwork encounters, and indeed these reflections were constantly added to over the course of the fieldwork, as I engaged sporadically with each of the musicians and ensembles with whom I had collaborated in the research.

After my active engagement with the musicking, and time to reflect and write further on the experience in my fieldnotes, the next stage of a musicking ethnography was an interview with the musician(s) in question. I found detailed, open-ended conversations with musicians immensely valuable in my pilot study. For the large community ensembles, I interviewed the facilitators or their committees, whichever they chose. These interviews covered a wide range of topics, from the interviewee's own musical life and the development of their musical practice through to their experiences of working in music in that particular town and in Ireland, and also to how the musical work analysed exemplified their practice. Interviews with practitioners offered a rich insider perspective on the everyday workings of musical practice, as well as the influences of wider contextual themes (Le Menestrel and Henry, 2010). They also offered insights into the sense of agency and influences of wider institutions and forces that shape practice (*ibid.*), a theme which is fundamental to my understanding of places as polyrhythmic ensembles (see also Chapters Five and Six). In terms of my own experience of these interviews, I found these conversations rich, engaging and enjoyable.

To summarise, through musicking ethnographies I gained a focussed and immersed insight into the breadth and depth of the polyrhythmic ensemble of each town built over time through the experiences of the musicians with whom I worked. Constantly blending doings and dialogues, musicking ethnographies, often

conducted in tandem with the musicking mappings, allowed me to use my knowledges and skills as a musician, and a range of existing qualitative methods to study the experiences of these musicians. I now describe how the musicking mappings enhanced and effectively partnered the musicking ethnographies.

3.5 Musicking Mappings

Musicking ethnographies were immensely effective when it came to gaining a close and detailed insight into musical experience and place-making through the eyes of individual artists or ensemble musicians across the amateur-professional continuum and across age groups. One might say they were especially useful for capturing the depth of place to which Lippard (1997) refers. However, in sketching a wider picture of the music- and place-making relationship within and between the small towns, I wanted also to include the breadth of these practices and processes, as well as their depth for each town (*ibid.*). I needed to develop a method that could bring together musicians of all ages and genres, encompassing professional practitioners, community musicians, and musical audiences alike to understand their place-based musicking meanings and experiences. Other methods used by social scientists to reach larger numbers of participants, such as questionnaires or focus groups, do not bring together the breadth and the depth of place as polyrhythmic ensembles. Equally, these methods would not have been as effective in creating an engaging, equitable, sharing dynamic, the ethos of the musicking geography methodology discussed in Section 3.2. Instead, I developed participatory musicking mappings for each town, which I detail in this section. After outlining the inspiration for this method in the arts, I describe the practicalities of

making maps and accommodating the more than four hundred mapping participants of this study. I highlight how, by being given the chance to tell the stories of their musicking places through the collaborative creation of maps of musicking, the musicians with whom I worked were empowered in an egalitarian way.

3.5.1 Conceptual beginnings

Mapping is a staple research technique in Geography, though there is not room here to describe the range of its application (e.g. Willment, 2012; Kitchin et al., 2013; Dodge, 2017; Merchant, 2017). In the arts, Lippard (1997: 76) suggests that local map-making practices allow local people to give honest accounts of the places where they live and their own direct experience and memories; these maps are 'cultural and even individual creations that embody points of view' (*ibid.*: 78). Additionally, Tuan (1991) argues that the act of naming places draws attention to and gives significance to them, and mapping allows this to happen.

During my MA studies, I learned about a mapping project developed by the artist Rebecca Krinke (2010) which invited passersby in public spaces to map where they personally experienced joy and pain in the cities in which they lived, Minneapolis and Saint Paul, Minnesota, USA. Krinke used a wooden base with a political map of these cities lasered into it, and offered participants two colours of pencil, gold for joy and silver for pain, to locate these places. The map was set up in public parks, near state museums, on campuses, and in other venues to attract participants walking by. If they decided to participate, Krinke found that some

people mapped quietly, whereas others talked to the other participants. She was available also to talk to people or offer more information.

This project offered me an example of a method which could bring a diverse range of people together to share their stories and relate them specifically to their towns as places. It tapped into experiences, opinions and emotions centred on place. It also seemed much more interesting and memorable than any focus group or questionnaire I had participated in, and I imagined that, were I to take part in such a project, I would enjoy the experience. Similarly, I read about community mapping projects and noted how local people in particular places were invited to explore and share their stories in unique and interesting ways (e.g. Common Ground 2016a, 2016b).

Mine is not the first research to map music. French (2017) details research mapping the development and diffusion of rap music, and how contextual aspects, such as historical factors, could be used to understand the themes emerging from the mapping. This sort of mapping of music echoes early developments in Geography in the realm of music geography, which similarly looked to mapping the sources and sites of musical genres and styles, and their diffusion (Carney, 1998; Duffy, 2009). More recently, a project funded by Fáilte Ireland mapped music in Dublin (Mangaoang and O’Flynn, 2016). This sought to understand the venues, styles, provision and accessibility of live popular music in Dublin, using observation and analysis of resources such as webpages, media and social media as well as mental mapping with audiences to culminate in the drawing of a map of Dublin highlighting music of interest to tourists. Equally, Cohen (2012) has mapped music venues in Liverpool.

Where my mappings differ from each of these is in their attention to musicking practice as lived experience. I did not simply wish to understand where musicking happened, or the intricacies of different musical styles or genres. I wanted a full picture of musicking as it happened in each town and as a component of place-making there, its breadth and depth, no matter how messy or contested that picture might become. It was also about accessing the layers (cf. Lippard, 1997) and memories of musicking in times gone by, as well as aspirations for musicking into the future.

3.5.2 Development and Design of Maps

McLucas (n.d.) underlines the time needed for mapping projects to adequately develop. I allowed four months for each mapping, with a goal of reaching at least five community groups and coordinating at least one public mapping in which musical audiences could share and add their stories to the map. This time period also allowed for networking and outreach on my part. Particularly where ensembles were not familiar with me or my work, this was a crucial step that took considerable time.

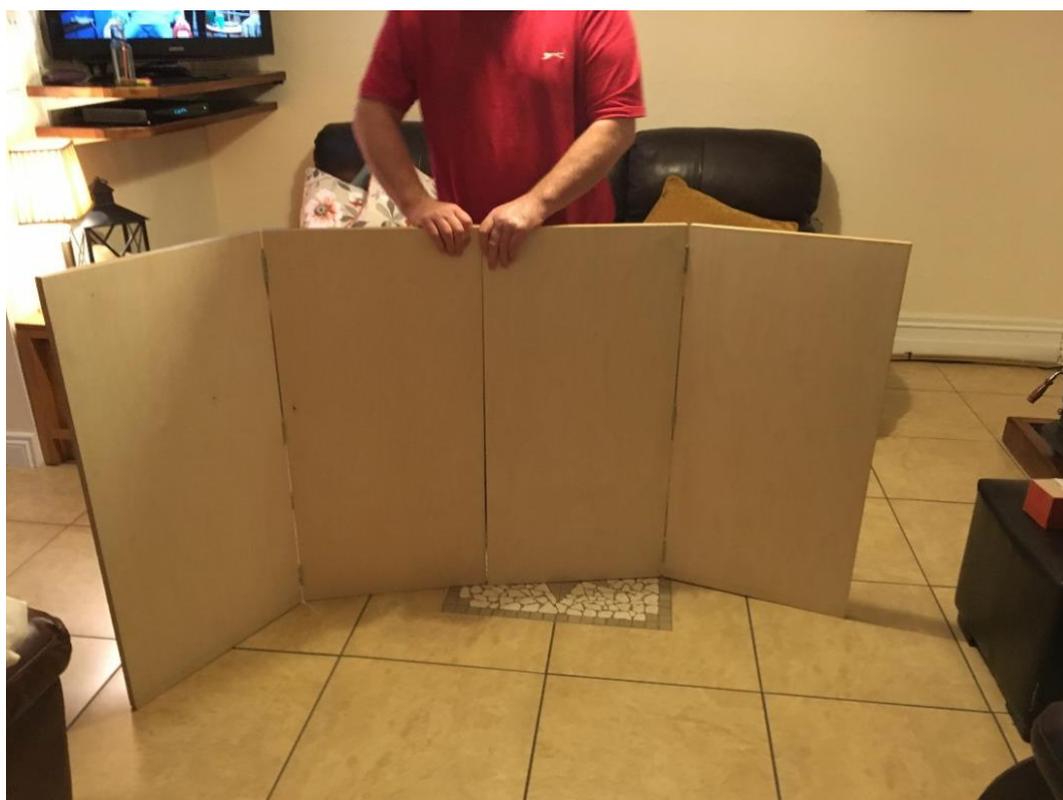
In terms of the design of the maps, there were several key factors. The maps had to be as accessible and practical as possible in communicating the aim and objective of the exercise to people across ages and backgrounds, who may or may not have had experience of participatory projects such as this, or of reading maps. In this sense, standard political maps would be too cluttered and busy, and would not give prominence to the markings added by participants, which in the mapping were added in metallic colours. I also needed to adapt the scale of the maps, to

allow enough space between buildings to accommodate people's markings, as well as clear space for people to add their own individual places or markings if they wished.

For my pilot study, I used a paper base map which was laminated after the end of the process, but I knew that I needed a more robust material for a larger study, and considered wood, per Krinke's design. I was fortunate that my father, an engineer and carpenter, was able to design three base maps. Each was made up of two sets of two leaves of birch plywood which fitted together, to make a map of about two metres long (Figure 3.4). The birch timber is a light colour, meaning it could be drawn and written onto. The leaves could be folded inwards, protecting the map when it was not in use. The map had to be practical for me to transport, lift and set up, and to not take up too much space in rehearsal or performance spaces, which were sometimes quite small. However, even with the lightest design possible to maintain robustness, the map was still very heavy, which meant I needed someone to assist me with lifting and setting up the map whenever possible.

Similar to Krinke's map, I found pencil was the easiest, cleanest and quickest means of adding participant markings to the map. However, the colours and writing placed onto the timber faded, and this meant more maintenance and revision were required on my part. Additionally, once the four-month mapping period had passed, the maps had to be sealed with a water-based lacquer, and so they could not be revisited thereafter. Similar mapping projects in the future could revise this design, to explore means of maintaining the vibrancy of map markings.

Figure 3.4: Map base boards, 8 February 2017 (photo by author).



To invite participation, the maps had to be colourful, engaging and accessible to read; an example is provided in Figure 3.5. Making the map by hand meant that I could choose a vibrant and contrasting colour scheme, which also made allowance for people who might have vision difficulties (e.g. Webster and Roe, 1998; Tutuncu and Lieberman, 2016). The map was scaled to the purpose of the project, and designed for the musical context in question. Only buildings of relevance to musical practice (concluded from the pilot project and literature review) were added to the map, and their scale was not always maintained. For example, in the Carlow map, a number of neighbouring buildings in the centre of the town received significant emphasis in the pilot, and so for the PhD map, these were spaced farther apart to allow room for the participants' markings. The result was that the map was less cluttered and offered more space for participants to add

markings and depict other places not on the map, such as participants' homes. Additionally, participants identified outlying villages and towns, as well as neighbouring cities and counties, and these were added to the map edges, again not to cartographic scale.

Figure 3.5: Completed Carlow base map with adjusted scales in town centre, 20 February 2017 (photo by author).



Ultimately, mirroring the philosophy of the musicking geography methodology, the maps had to embody openness and inclusiveness, treating participants as the local experts (following McLucas, n.d.). It would have been relatively easy to design a base map on GIS software and have this printed to use as a base map. However, I felt that, because the map was drawn by me, complete with crooked lines, colour exceeding the edges of site boundaries, and one spelling mistake, the overall aesthetic of the maps did not declare me as the 'expert

researcher', and subtly promoted a sense of equality. As I explained, I was a fellow musician with similarly interested eyes, wending my way through musical practice too, interested in learning from fellow musicians, building a picture of their place with them. And while there were some raised eyebrows, and even a few comments from a small number of community musicians about the 'amateurishness' of the hand-drawn map (in comparison I presume to political maps), it fitted best with my larger philosophy. I would certainly take the same approach in future participatory mapping research.

3.5.3 Mapping workshops

Mappings with community music groups and other ensembles all took place during rehearsal times, in their rehearsal spaces. I detail the ensembles with whom I conducted musicking mappings in each town, as well as the location of the public musicking mapping workshop in each town, in Table 3.3 below.

Attending rehearsals was the best option during the pilot mapping, because it was an easy setting in which to connect with the musicians, and was the best for them logistically. It was difficult in some ways however, because rehearsal spaces were sometimes quite small and quite noisy, making the resulting mapping recordings very difficult to transcribe. The windows of time in which to speak to musicians were also often limited, for instance only a short rehearsal break or the period of time before the rehearsal began. This meant that mapping conversations sometimes took place among very large groups (e.g. Figure 3.6). As a result, not alone were recordings of mapping conversations sometimes difficult to decipher,

but I did not always get the opportunity to ask follow up questions, or explore particular musical stories in more detail.

Table 3.3: Musicking Mapping Participant Ensembles

Carlow	Kilkenny	Wexford
Aspiro Youth Ensemble	Kilkenny Musical Society	Wexford Festival Singers
Carlow Voices	Jesters Stage Academy	Wexford Male Voice Choir
Aspiro Inspired Ensemble	St. Patrick's Brass Band	Valda
Carlow Gospel Choir	The Kilkenny Choir	Rowe Street Choir
Carlow Youth Orchestra	St. Canice's Junior Choristers	Bride Street Choir
Carlow Cathedral Folk Choir	Kilkenny Community Orchestra	Wexford Sinfonia
VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art (public mapping)	Market Cross Shopping Centre (public mapping)	The Wexford Arts Centre (public mapping)

This issue of limited time is not easily overcome. Ensembles were extremely generous in opening up their rehearsals, providing space, allowing me to bring the map, and sharing their stories with me. I chose not to be disrespectful or overly demanding by requesting more rehearsal time, which was often precious and in limited supply coming up to performances. But this is undoubtedly a limitation worth revisiting if this method is adapted in future research.

Figure 3.6: Mapping with a large group of musicians from the Wexford Sinfonia, 19 November 2018 (photo by Shane Hennessy).



My opening question to the majority of musicians I met over the course of the mappings was about their musical lives in their town. If asked to expand, I offered prompts such as where they might have learned music, or where their first musical memories were. I endeavoured to make conversations as open-ended as possible, and often found, with adults and retirees especially, that I did very little prompting after my opening questions. I wanted musicians to share their stories with me and the others gathered, and felt that the method was very effective in promoting this sharing, in a friendly and enjoyable way. I recorded the sound of these conversations and subsequently transcribed them, while also writing fieldnotes about how the mappings had been carried out and my own reflections and thoughts. These informed how I conducted subsequent mappings or how I

shaped mapping conversations, for example, as well as influencing the way in which the fieldwork and analysis progressed more broadly.

I also conducted a public musicking mapping workshop at the end of the fieldwork period in each town. This was a new aspect added to the method I had not piloted, and as such was of varying success. I felt that it would work well to reach out to musical audiences in artistic venues (which I understood through the research as important musicking fields of care, as detailed in Chapter Four), and so I held my first public mapping in the theatre and gallery in Carlow on a Saturday afternoon in the summer. While the event was a success in the sense that I spoke with 31 people across a range of age groups, many knew me and came to the event more because of their connections to me. Only a few of the participants became involved 'organically' simply by virtue of being in the gallery.

In the next public mapping, I chose to hold the event at a different time, midday on Wednesday in January, and near a much busier place in an arts setting. I set up outside a busy café that is part of the Wexford Arts Centre. 19 people participated, far fewer than I had reached in Carlow, and their age range was much narrower. For the last public mapping which was in Kilkenny, I dispensed with the notion that I needed to map in an arts space. It had emerged by that point that many types of places, including commercial venues, are musicking fields of care, and some are more popular than arts settings. Because of this, I held the event in the courtyard area of an open-air shopping centre on the town's main street, on another Saturday afternoon in the summer (Figure 3.7). This was the most successful of the three public workshops, attracting 29 participants, only two of whom knew me previously, and drawing from a diverse range of age groups, as well

as the insights of people not from Kilkenny and indeed not originally from Ireland. I thus conclude that, while the public workshop element of each musicking mapping was, in my eyes, an effective way to reach musical audiences in each place and yielded rich insights, it would have benefitted from a pilot project to tease out the issues of location and timing. I also conducted the majority of the workshops with only one person to help, when in reality several research assistants would be needed to invite participants, describe the project and distribute information sheets, and converse with them over the map. Nonetheless, the public mapping workshops contributed to the rich stories and perspectives gathered across the musicking mapping projects in all three towns, yielding extensive insights into music- and place-making there.

Before discussing methods used to analyse data gathered through musicking ethnographies and mappings, I first reflect on the influence of positionality as a musicking geographer in these methods.

Figure 3.7: Musicking Mapping public workshop, Market Cross Shopping Centre Kilkenny, 9 June 2018 (photo by Shane Hennessy).



3.6 Positionality as a Musicking Geographer

My relationship to the musicians with whom I worked during the fieldwork was complex. Throughout the research I had to think about the many roles I held and my position relative to the musicians with whom I worked, and how that influenced our collaborations. In all cases I let participants know I was doing this work as a researcher who sought to learn from them, indicating that from our collaborations I sought to gain new knowledge. Some participants already knew me as a colleague, music participant, former student, friend, acquaintance, or 'friend of a friend', while for others I was a stranger. The ways collaborations formed differed according to already existing interpersonal relationships.

The existing knowledges I had accrued as a musician were immensely valuable in forming the research, as described above. However, these knowledges also required me to remain carefully reflective during the research process. Muhammad et al. (2015) argue that the many layers and dynamism of one's identity influence how research is formed and carried out (also Ali, 2015). Kusek and Smiley (2014: 157) further call on researchers to reflect on the 'betweenness' of their identities relative to the research context and participants, rather than the polar opposites of insider and outsider identity. Given my history, experience and base in Carlow (my hometown), I felt the biggest sense of being what one might call an insider there. This was compounded by my having worked with so many practitioners and ensembles on whom I called for both the musicking ethnographies and musicking mappings. I was unfamiliar with only one of the musicians who participated in a musicking ethnography. By comparison, in both Wexford and Kilkenny, I did not know most of the musicians I met prior to this research, and thus might be characterised overall as more of an outsider than an insider.

However, I maintain that, by virtue of my shared interest, expertise and experience in musicking across the community and professional sectors, I had issues of commonality with everybody I met, and in this sense was, to some degree, an insider (also Nettle, 2013). No matter their level of familiarity, the musicians who participated understood that I too was a 'fellow musician', and this way of interacting played a critical role in my reaching out to and collaborating with individuals and ensembles, and their willingness to participate. I believe that in all instances, collaborating together as fellow musicians meant that, regardless of my

position or insider/outsider status and whether we knew each other or not, we all gained something from participating in the project, whether by sharing stories, reflecting, learning from each other, or being exposed to new geographic ideas.

To maintain reflexive research practices, Muhammad et al. (2015) also call on researchers to consider how decisions are made and power shared, and secondly to reflect on the representation of findings and the voices therein. As already mentioned, I sought to work with musicians to make our collaborations as convenient, practical and useful as possible. Thus, I left many of the scheduling and practical decisions to the musicians, and provided full and comprehensive information about the project and collaborations before, during and after our work together. I was always available to discuss any concerns musicians might have at any point. Further, researchers should not seek simply to eliminate contradictions and imbalances in their work, but instead to openly acknowledge and address them, maintaining a constantly reflexive and dynamic approach to research throughout (Luttrell, 2000, cited in Muhammad et al. 2015). Luttrell foregrounds honesty in an effort to create 'good enough' research approaches and experiences (*ibid.*: 499), important advice that I have tried to follow in cases when my positionality as a colleague, friend, or employee of some of the musicians with whom I worked may have been influenced or changed after our fieldwork collaboration. Till (2001) similarly reflects on the ways in which 'returning' to a place of fieldwork or to a role or relationship that existed before the research can result in tensions because of changed or changing perceptions and obligations (also DeLeyser, 2001).

Muhammad et al. (2015) also discuss the politics of representing findings and voices. As outlined above, an underpinning facet of the musicking ethnography methodology was collaborating with musicians in engaging, empowering and equitable ways. 'Giving back' to my participants was therefore important to me, in terms of maintaining ethnographic ethics, demonstrating my gratitude for their help and time given during the fieldwork, and maintaining connections that were valuable to me and hopefully to the musicians with whom I worked. There can be different ways to give back in research depending on the context (Sasser, 2014). Fiorella (2014) and Gupta (2014) describe everyday ways in which researchers can give back, and similar opportunities presented in my case because of my position as a musical practitioner. Where I was not a continued collaborator, I kept in touch with the musicians I had interviewed and encountered (forming friendships with a few), shared resources and information about funding and crowd-funding with a few, attended performances, spread social media postings, and shared written pieces and other works created after our collaboration. I intend to continue these practices moving forward and will share the completed thesis with participants when it is possible to do so.

By way of concluding this section, I reflect here upon instances when my age and gender may have affected power dynamics or interpersonal/group relations. First, I was unsuccessful in forming fieldwork collaborations with youth music groups in Wexford, where I was not known by their gatekeepers. Having worked as a teacher and facilitator to children and young people, I understood why this happened, and I now reflect that my outreach and rapport-building with ensembles in Kilkenny and Wexford especially should have begun much earlier than I

anticipated. Kennedy-MacFoy (2013) similarly points to the shifting power dynamic between researchers and gatekeepers in schools, which affects access and the manner in which research encounters take place.

When working with teenagers during the musicking mappings with youth music groups in Carlow and Kilkenny, although I called on my experience as a music teacher and facilitator to make interactions as open and friendly as they could be, I still felt sometimes that these conversations were a little stilted. I reflect that I would have felt shy speaking to an unfamiliar person during my adolescence too. On the other hand, when I collaborated with unfamiliar musicians who were closer to me in age, I felt that interactions were more open, and a sense of comfort and familiarity seemed to develop quite quickly during these collaborations, even if I did not previously know the musicians in question (Ali, 2015, suggests similarly). I seemed to share the experiences and challenges of building a musical practice as a younger person, and these interactions were often the most enjoyable as well as informative.

My age was again a consideration when conducting research locally. I was 22 years old when I began my PhD studies. In Carlow particularly, people who had previously known me as a younger person, voluntary musician or student having only recently developed a professional practice still carried some sense of me as a younger person. While their collaboration and assistance was invaluable, and indeed the rapport my younger self built in Carlow was crucial to the completion of the fieldwork, I still felt that I had to work hard to make a case for the project in my hometown (Kavanagh, 2019). Further, presenting myself as a PhD student, with the accompanying long and detailed research ethics information and consent forms for

musicking ethnographies (see Appendix 2), may have made me seem more removed and formal than I would ever have wanted to be perceived. I reflected in my fieldnotes at different points that the required form-filling was a source of anxiety for me, often creating a strange dynamic between myself and the musicians. Having said that, we always recovered from this too. In contrast, in Kilkenny and Wexford I did not have the same 'history', and so I felt that I was seen as an interested researcher and fellow musician only, which made aspects of fieldwork like reviewing consent forms much easier. However, my lack of existing personal connections here, despite commonalities in musicking, made the process of building fieldwork collaborations longer and more challenging too.

In terms of gender, I did not often perceive being a relatively young woman to be a very influential factor in how fieldwork interactions played out. However, I do recall when working with the Wexford Male Voice Choir, a choral ensemble of mostly middle-aged and elderly men, that some of the choristers expressed amusement at being asked about what music and musicking meant to them in their own lives, which I address in the theoretical framework as 'the work of musicking'. One joked that this was not something they would generally talk about, and perhaps being asked about these feelings by a young woman was strange too. However, none were so discomforted that they did not open up to me; most did discuss these emotional geographies and for some, feelings and emotions were communicated indirectly, such as when recalling particular memories or performances that were meaningful. When I first met the choir, they joked about the fact that I was only the second woman in the room, the other being their piano accompanist, but this banter did not make me feel awkward or different, just very

welcomed. I responded that my vocal range is near that of a tenor, and I'd love to join in if they needed tenors, which showed that I enjoyed their humour, fostering a familiar and open dynamic at the outset.

My interactions with The Carty Sisters and SOLA, both ensembles of women around my age, may have been influenced by my also being a young woman, but I did not in truth feel that this was a very important point at the time. My similarity in terms of experience and age was more important, as detailed above. It must also be said that, in general, I encountered far more women than men in the music mappings, the exception being Wexford because of the aforementioned male voice choir. Indeed, in one of the ethnographies, a point of discussion was the difficulty in recruiting male singers, especially teenagers, to a choir. It is interesting that movements emerged at a more national level during the course of my research which sought to address the invisibility of female musicians' work (e.g. *Sounding the Feminists*, 2019; also Gannon, 2019). While it is beyond the scope of this project, I think there could be some valuable research done comparing gender equality in musical practice at different scales and in different genres.

3.7. Data Analysis Methods

After completing the fieldwork in each town, which spanned about eight to nine months in each case (with overlap between the fieldwork in two towns at any one time), I conducted a thorough analysis using coding. According to Watson and Till (2009), coding is used in ethnography to understand the given research phenomenon in context, which I think is essential in any study of place and place-making. Charmaz (2006) describes the origins of coding in Grounded Theory,

wherein categories and themes are identified and used to inform the creation of a conceptual frame for the entire study. Coding does not seek to apply a fixed set of ideas on the data, but allows them to emerge iteratively. There are two types of coding: initial coding and focussed coding. The former is more open, and involves reading and analysing the data without predefined categories and themes (*ibid.*). Trends begin to emerge through which main themes and subthemes can be placed into a coding frame, subsequently informing the focussed coding, where these given codes are applied to all of the data again following initial coding.

I conducted initial coding on my fieldnotes after I completed all aspects of the fieldwork in each town. The ideas that emerged shaped how I conducted my subsequent fieldwork, helping both to refine the questions I asked and themes I considered, and also the way I deployed the methods themselves. Then, once the data for all three towns were gathered, I undertook another round of initial coding to ensure that I had not missed anything, and then from this constructed a set of themes and subthemes through which I conducted a round of focussed coding. On this second round I had six main codes, with a total of 43 subcodes. I reconfigured these in the next round of focussed coding, and consolidated small codes or codes that were very similar. Five main codes remained, and these structured the findings in Chapters Four to Six, while the subcodes were contracted, with 23 subcodes, some of which also had smaller subcodes, and another code relating more specifically to the methodology than to the findings of the research.

I chose to use software to do this analysis so that it remained manageable and could be easily and safely backed up (my fieldnotes totalled some 500 pages). Opinions of using software for analysis are mixed. Among the most striking critiques

of using software for qualitative analysis is the view that it creates a feeling of needing to generate many codes or subcodes, turning the exercise more into a quantitative venture (Sohn, 2017). Another critique is that examining fieldnotes through software decontextualizes them. Sohn reflects on phenomenology in particular too, arguing that an overemphasis on coding, which the software may encourage, move the researcher's focus away from writing and reflecting, from being-in-the-world of the research (Sohn, 2017: N/A). However, as Sohn argues, software does allow the close, line-by-line reading for which phenomenology calls, and so 'the sense of discovery, exploration, and wonder that is supposed to drive phenomenological inquiry' (*ibid.*: N/A) is not lost through using the software. If anything, my use of the software encouraged even more writing and note-taking in my subsequent fieldwork. In terms of practicality and ethical data protection, it was imperative to back-up and securely store the coding results. Here, the ability of coding software to allow me to open the programme and view my evolving coding frame in exactly the layout and colour-coding as I had last left it was invaluable, especially because I did quite a bit of travelling during the fieldwork between the three towns, and to the Maynooth University campus, for supervisory meetings, using the library and departmental research events.

In addition to this analysis, I also piloted a final method, more for reflection than to investigate the findings, to round off my journey towards becoming a musicking geographer. During my undergraduate studies in music, I learned that a coda in a musical work brings the piece to a close while also looking back on it. Accordingly, I term this method a 'coda' to the research.

3.8 Musical Coda: Collaborative Musicking-Composition

One of my favourite codas in a musical work is in Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture*. After the chaos and drama of the music prior to the coda, it is reminiscent and reflective. Without wishing to make the completion of this research sound as dramatic and tumultuous as Shakespeare's story, I similarly felt that the collaborative composition project I undertook provided an opportunity to pause, reflect and gather the research findings and conclusions through musicking. This also allowed me to try a creative geographic 'doing' through unfamiliar artistic media (Hawkins, 2015). Hawkins (2013) also describes how geographers and artists can collaborate in undertaking creative research, and how each can learn from and enhance the work of the other. In her 2015 piece, she details her experiences of learning to draw during ethnographic research with a visual artist, which helped her to learn how to observe and see 'a-new'. I valued the opportunity to experience musicking a-new, to gain a new perspective I previously did not have, and to trouble any taken-for-granted assumptions, possibilities of overlooking things, or complacency that might have grown over the course of two years of fieldwork. I also thought trying out an unfamiliar musical practice would be an excellent way for me to look back on my findings away from the computer or the desk, through musicking.

Composing became the way in which I could 'musick' a-new. I had only ever composed in my undergraduate studies, in response to assignment briefs rather than as any genuine artistic expression or exploration on my part. Moreover, to my knowledge there have been no specifically place-orientated compositions by geographers. Through Maynooth Geography I became aware of authors (e.g. Rob

Kitchin), curators (e.g. Karen Till), dancers (e.g. Fearghus Ó Conchúir) and visual artists (e.g. Silvia Loeffler), but have yet to come across a geographer who is also a composer, and so in undertaking this method I also contribute this new string to Geography's bow!

I conducted a composition pilot to establish its viability and potential during my first year of PhD studies, when artist Silvia Loeffler, on whose deep mapping I drew when developing the methodology (see Section 3.3 above), asked me to perform some music at the launch of her final exhibition. I in turn offered to compose a piece specifically for the occasion and worked with a composer colleague of mine, who served as a mentor and guide in this new process, generously giving of his time to help develop my own research. We analysed materials provided by Loeffler, including photographs, pieces of writing and hearing her speak at conferences. After meeting several times to discuss what the main foci of the composition should be, we went about composing using instruments we ourselves played, as we felt most comfortable and familiar composing through improvisation and interaction with and over the instruments. This proved highly successful, and this sort of improvisation approach formed for me a criterion for the final composition project. We created a short instrumental work for viola (myself) and synthesiser, and created a final shorthand leadsheet-type score, though we never recorded the piece.

What became clear from the pilot process was that, despite the research we did for the composition, neither of us had been 'close' to the project over an extended period, as Hawkins had been during her drawing experience, nor had we been directly involved in carrying out research. Thus, while the pilot composition

established that the method would be a useful way to reflect on a piece of research about place from a new perspective, it would be more fruitful for myself and a composer-collaborator to have direct experiences of the entire research project and process. Critical for me then was to work with a composer who had extended exposure to the project, which was a big ask, coupled with the fact that I was unable to offer a commission for the work. I left the idea of the place composition method for a while to attend to my ethnographic fieldwork and mappings.

A year later, as research got much busier, my partner Shane Hennessy, also a professional musician specialising in solo guitar, and a performer, song-writer and composer, began to attend my mappings to help out with the practicalities. Shane was present at most of the musicking mappings, and helped distribute information sheets and explained the project to people who approached the map. He also came to some of the performances that formed parts of the musicking ethnographies. He thus had extensive experience of the project and agreed to pilot this method with me.

Shane is a member of the Irish Music Rights Organisation and his original compositions have received wide recognition, in Ireland and abroad (e.g. IMRO, 2017; Business to Arts, 2018). I asked him about the possibility of the collaboration about a year into the fieldwork and he agreed to participate and mentor me in composing an instrumental piece for violin (my instrument) and guitar (his). We composed the piece throughout August 2018, when I had done coding and knew what themes and findings I wanted to convey and reflect on in the composition. More personally, I felt pride, relief and exhaustion that I had managed to complete all of the fieldwork, and excitement and trepidation for what was to come. It was

important to acknowledge both academic and personal emotional geographies tied to this project, because, as I indicated in the opening sections of the chapter, I was always a musician and a geographer through the process, and my positionality influenced how the research played out.

Shane and I worked together, blending an improvisation-conversation approach with composing through Logic, a computer programme Shane uses as part of his own practice. The piece, *An Fíodóir* ('The Weaver'), is just under four minutes in length, written in three sections that aim to convey some of the main themes of the research as well as my own journey to becoming a musicking geographer (see Appendix 3, Chapter Seven and the attached audio file for further details of the piece). We subsequently recorded a guide track, a sort of rough draft of the composition, on which I could write. Our schedules did not allow for a proper, produced and mastered recording of the piece, though I hope to undertake this after the thesis is completed.

Above all, I felt, the composition process allowed me to reflect on the fieldwork process, main themes and emerging findings in a different and novel way. Ultimately, I did see things from a different perspective, as Hawkins pointed out. Having music as a means through which to bring together and express the project's ideas seemed like a 'new' language at a time when I was just moving out of two and a half years of intensive fieldwork, writing, reflection and analysis. It was strange because playing and improvising around music was familiar and comfortable, but the composing element was so different for me as a musician. As such, I did place myself in a new position, having to embrace learning something different. To what extent the entire experience influenced this thesis itself is difficult to say, though it

did help significantly in bringing together the strands into a coherent whole, and provided an opportunity to step back from the rote and regular routines of my academic life up to that point. It also allowed a sense of adventure that was as much a breath of fresh air as it was an analytical or reflective experience, and I believe that this sense of refreshing oneself as a researcher is important too. In fact, I think it is an essential facet of the intensively immersive, collaborative and reflexive methodology I formed in musicking geography. I mention it again in the concluding chapter of this dissertation.

3.9 Conclusion

In tandem with musicking geography as theoretical framework, the methodology and methods used in this PhD formed an innovative approach to studying musical practice as processual, lived experience and practice, rather than music as static and fixed object (Duffy, 2009; Wood et al., 2007). The methodology developed for this study therefore makes a considerable contribution to both creative geographies and qualitative methods in Geography. Other scholars conducting similar studies using ethnographic, creative geographic or deep mapping methodologies in particular might adopt facets of my approach for future research.

In the context of this PhD, developing the musicking geography methodology contributed to understanding the processual gathering and weaving processes of place as polyrhythmic ensemble in each of the towns studied. The methodology grounded immersive, participatory and collaborative work with musicians of all ages, genres and musical backgrounds, respecting these musicians as the experts in the knowledge produced. As a musicking geographer, my

positionality and fluid identity in the research necessitated constant reflection using the very methods developed for the methodology. While a lengthy and sometimes challenging process, building the musicking ethnographies and musicking mappings in particular provided extensive, rich and diverse insights into all aspects of musicking in and through place, allowing the four strands of the musicking geography theoretical framework to be studied in all their breadth and depth. In addition, the collaborative musicking-composition method made room for me as musicking geographer to reflect and look back on the project and musicking and place more broadly in new and valuable ways.

In the chapters that now follow, I chart the empirical findings that emerged from the methodology described in this chapter. I next discuss how the musicking fields of care emerged as special, supportive, nurturing and meaningful places for musicking in each of the towns I researched.

Chapter Four: Musicking Fields of Care

4.1 Introduction

I open this first empirical discussion with a detailed excerpt from my descriptive fieldnotes for my first visit working with the Wexford Male Voice Choir. It describes their rehearsal hall, where I worked with them throughout our ethnography and musicking mapping collaborations. I came to realise that the material presence of their rehearsal hall was more than a functional space for practice: it was what I would later define as a musicking field of care.

‘On each wall there are several photographs, framed and unframed, in colour as well as older, black-and-white photographs. There is a mahogany case on the wall, numerous trophies and plaques placed inside [...] Beside this trophy case is a notice board, covered in photos and newspaper clippings. Among these are memorial cards, remembering deceased gentlemen who had been in the choir at some point [...] I notice a poster promoting mental health, with contact numbers for mental health outreach services in Wexford [...] On the opposite side of the entrance door way is an open doorway to a small kitchen. I see perhaps 30 cups standing on the countertop. Finally, behind the choir I see a glass case which houses what appear to be very old, handwritten letters. These remind me of the sort of old letters I’ve seen in museums, and I wonder what their story is’ (fieldnotes, Wexford Male Voice Choir, 18 May 2017).

The Wexford Male Voice Choir rehearse and prepare for performances in this hall every Thursday evening. The hall, however, is not only where they make music, it is also where the musicians socialise, explore a pastime, learn new skills, meet new people, enjoy some relaxation, and remember those who helped to build the choir and the hall itself, but are no longer there to participate. As my fieldnotes reflect, the depth of memories and connections the choir has to the people and place of Wexford surround the choristers as they work, and is a fundamental part of why the hall is so important to them. The choir must also feel a sense of pride and comfort in the material fabric of this hall, as it embodies their years of effort to raise funds and pay a mortgage to buy the hall that began in the 1990s. In other words, the hall supports, nurtures and sustains the choir's work throughout their working year, especially during the challenging and hectic times, and it cares for each of the choristers so that they can continue their roles in caring for each other and contributing to Wexford as a place and community.

Throughout my fieldwork, I found that the material spaces of the various venues in which musicking took place were very important. Despite the apparent absence of this important link in previous musicking literature (excepting Cohen, 2012), I felt musicking locales were worthy of special consideration. In this chapter, I discuss the material settings and functional spaces of musicking, and reflect on the ways in which these venues become sustaining and caring places for musical practice through the work of musicking – including place-making – in the towns I studied. For many of the musicians and practitioners I encountered, these *musicking fields of care* were meaningful and supportive places for musicians, formed through the gathering and weaving of meaningful experiences over time.

Exploring musicking fields of care contributes to understanding how musicking builds places as polyrhythmic ensembles, and as such is a key strand in the musicking geography framework. In this chapter, I outline how essential musicking fields of care are formed in locations which might apparently have very different meanings and different roles on the surface. As Chapter One indicated, previous research on musicking most often views where it happens as static locations or containers for practice, rather than considering how musicking places are made and shared through the work of musicking. Such scholarly literatures lack detailed and nuanced considerations of the importance, influence or power of places within musicking as a whole. The notable exception is Sara Cohen's (2012) work, which describes how musicians think about, reflect on, inhabit and experience the material urban environments of their work, making them 'sites of memory, mythology and imagination' (p.146). My research builds on Cohen's contribution, but rather than use the Cartesian concept of 'site', it draws upon the geographical and related literatures on place (Till, 2008). With Cohen, I respond to this gap in research on musical practice more generally by emplacing musicking in specific and specialised ways through the concept of musicking fields of care.

As indicated in Chapter Two, in forming this concept, I draw on Tuan (1979), who describes two categories of places: public monuments, which are designed to represent or convey a particular purpose and meaning to outsiders and fields of care, often more banal, everyday sites that come to hold significance and meaning over time for the people who work, use, and inhabit them. While both public monuments and fields of care may nurture and care for people (Till, 2012), fields of care can do so in very specific ways for people, practice, and place. For this reason, I

maintain that fields of care are more unique, and possibly richer types of places, because of the taken-for-granted manner in which they are constructed – through direct encounters that prompt affective responses and the making of memories. I additionally draw on Klinenberg’s (2018, 2015) valuable work on social infrastructures. Klinenberg maintains that open, accessible and supportive community and civic places, such as libraries, schools, sports clubs, and churches, foster essential face-to-face connections and social cohesion. In my reading of his work, social infrastructures enable meaningful experiences and social bonding to be gathered and woven together to make place. Klinenberg further points to the fact that everyday locales are important in creating healthy and sustainable cities and towns in which to live. I respond to his ideas, enriching the discussion with particular and specialist reference to musicking.

The musicking fields of care I detail here are also formed from an enthusiasm for and commitment to music-making, as fostered by the work of musicking that I will discuss in Chapter Five. Both ‘traditional’ musical outputs, such as performances and teaching and the ‘more-than-musical’ affective, emotional, embodied responses that make memories contribute to the weaving and gathering of places. Without the formation of musicking fields of care, I argue that musical practice could not happen as successfully as it does in each of the towns I studied; without this musical practice, an important component of the everyday experiences and rhythms (Chapters Five and Six) that weave together in and are gathered by places to form the polyrhythmic ensemble would not exist.

In this chapter, I describe five categories of types of place that were the most frequently identified by mapping participants in each of the three towns of

this study as locales of musical practice. For ease of discussion I detail these as categories of musicking fields of care, which are listed in Table 4.1. As I highlight in this chapter, all of the venues identified may become musicking fields of care, but not for all participants. Moreover, some may shift between public monuments and fields of care, following Tuan's (1979) distinction above. Table 4.1 also illustrates the overall number of times that participants mapped each category of musicking field of care in each town. As is clear from the table, there were some similarities between the towns in terms of the emergence of the most and frequently mapped musicking fields of care, but less clarity between the others. The findings of this chapter rely heavily on the results of musicking mappings, even though all aspects of the fieldwork inform this discussion.

I classified the most frequently mapped types of places as 'Institutional Musicking Fields of Care', including places of education, such as primary and secondary schools, and places of worship, mostly Catholic churches. Next are 'Formal Performance Venues', some of which are state-supported and some privately operated. The third category is 'Commercial Musicking Fields of Care', including pubs, hotels and shopping areas. I collapsed some types to create a fourth category of 'Community, Civic and Outdoor Musicking Fields of Care', which includes: halls and libraries, local landmarks, tourist and historic sites, sports clubs and outdoor spaces. Lastly, and least frequently mentioned were 'Homes'; some were participants' own and some belonged to others, including family, friends, and music educators in which they had experienced musicking in whatever form. The home is a place that can be both nurturing and restrictive (Tuan, 1977), and is an increasingly important part of the geographies of creativity and creative practice

(Hawkins, 2016). Though I have identified these five categories for the purposes of analysis and discussion, I recognise that, just like the towns themselves, there are relations and overlaps between them. For example, sports clubs are most commonly used as community locales, but they also have institutional histories and policies, such as the Gaelic Athletic Association, and some receive national funding supports.

As another important note, I also reflect here on the fact that the 'darker' or more negative sides of these places needed to be prompted through this method. Because participants were asked to map their places of musicking experience, they did not always think to include the more negative stories associated with certain places (including those that received very positive reports by other participants). These nuances emerged as the stories of places, and the arrhythmias of practice in particular (discussed in Chapter Seven), were explored.

Table 4.1: Incidence of Venues Mapped According to Musicking Fields of Care Categories

Category of Musicking Field of Care	Carlow	Kilkenny	Wexford	Total
Institutional (schools, churches)	487	247	259	993
Formal performance venues (state-supported and privately operated)	111	98	123	332
Commercial (pubs, hotels, shopping centres)	116	140	103	359
Civic, Community and Outdoor (community centres, civic buildings, tourist and outdoor places, sports clubs)	185	116	183	484
Homes	22	8	18	38

Before discussing these categories and responses, I make a few observations about how participants responded to the maps. As outlined in Chapter Three, the large base maps for each town included local landmark buildings and places where I knew musicking happened through my pilot study and preliminary research. The vast majority of musicians identified the places I had drawn onto the map, though I encouraged anyone who wished to add venues that were not on the map. Building on my pilot study, I also created a map 'legend' of functional categories where musicking typically took place. Each had a different colour, including: educational, religious, sports, outdoors, community, landmark/historical, and commercial spaces. Upon reflection, I found that the landmark/historical category was too broad, encompassing too many important subcategories, and did not prove useful analytically (though it remains on the maps). Further, not one mapping participant consulted the map key or categories of functional musicking spaces over the many sessions I conducted. Instead, musicians were drawn directly to the map through the particular places based on their names or locations.

As described below, musicians used place names in their accounts, or used names to refer to a building or structure that might previously have been had a different purpose or name. This behaviour suggested to me that, for these participants, such places were fields of care because of the memories gathered and woven there rather than because of their functionality nowadays. Once a place was named, I invited musicians to tell me the story behind their choice. It is in these stories that the depth of the musicking fields of care emerged. After each individual identified places important to them, I drew a coloured circle onto the map that

corresponded to their story. Practitioners' circles were coloured teal, community musicians' were coloured gold, and musical audiences' were coloured silver, so that I had the ability to analyse the potential differences between their accounts later. I reflect on these differences in terms of the work of musicking, musicking eurhythmias and arrhythmias, discussed in Chapters Five and Six. The final maps produced are provided in Figures 4.1-4.3 for Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford respectively.

In the remainder of this chapter, I discuss each the five categories. In the next sections, I outline how these places became meaningful, nurturing places for the musicians who mapped, and also interrogate their deeper histories to consider how special musicking experiences are gathered and woven together with the existing histories and meanings of these places to form musicking fields of care.

Figure 4.1: Carlow Musicking Map



4.2 Institutional Musicking Fields of Care

Institutional musicking fields of care encompass educational places such as schools, and religious places like churches. The adjective institutional means ‘having the character or function of an institution; furnished with institutions, organised’ (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019). Drawing on Kavanagh and Till (2020), I understand institutions as managed spaces of cultures, discourses and networks that influence and organise the daily actions of those who use them. Both educational and religious types of places mapped by participants were established to a significant extent on the governance and resources of larger governing bodies, and as such I understand them as institutional bodies. After briefly discussing those histories, I detail how schools and churches emerged as significant musicking fields of care for most participants of this study.

4.2.1 *Musicking in Places of Education*

The centrality of educational places in all three towns is not surprising when considering existing research in music education. Music is provided for in the formal education system in Ireland in preschool, primary and post-primary levels (NCCA, 1999, 2009; Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Department of Education and Science, 2012). This provision has a long history, with a strong rationale for music at primary school level supported for over half a century (Fleishmann, 1952). However, The Arts Council’s 1982 Report *Deaf Ears* argued that music education in primary schools had weakened significantly since the 1950s, with little access at all for those living above a line drawn from County Clare to Dublin City (Herron, 1985; cf. Music Generation, 2016). Moreover, in-school music

offerings often prompt extra-curricular musical activities not mandated in the curricula, though these are not universally offered and are more likely to be available in schools that have the personnel and resources (Smyth, 2016). The state-led Music Generation (MG) programme, launched in 2010, has a specific aim of providing specialist music education for children beyond potentially prohibitive music schools and allowing for flexibility according to what is needed in each area (Music Generation, 2016). As of 2019, there were 20 Music Generation programmes established across the Republic of Ireland, providing instrumental and vocal tuition and performance opportunities to children at primary and second levels, both in partnership with, and outside of, schools (Music Generation, 2019). Beyond these formal education fora, private music tuition was a popular route for young people in the fieldwork, with music schools and individual music teachers providing individual and group tuition on a fee-paying basis. At third level, music is offered as a study route at undergraduate and postgraduate levels in a number of institutions, and partner ensembles and groups also operate in these institutions (The Arts Council, 2005, 2008).

Thus, it is clear that musicking in school settings, and as associated with learning and education more broadly, is already a central part of Irish musical life, and as such it was expected that these types of places would be frequently mentioned by participants. Mapping discussions add depth to the general overview above, interrogating the dynamics of school musicking, including the factors that shape its positive or negative experience. I should briefly note at the outset, however, that as of the completion of fieldwork for this study (July 2018), a Music Generation programme had operated in Carlow for a number of years, while

programmes in Kilkenny and Wexford were only announced in 2018 and beginning roll-out in late 2019 (Music Generation, 2018b, 2018c). As such, the fieldwork in the present project reflected a timeframe before these programmes, which are often based in schools, existed in two towns of the study.

A first key finding from young musicians' stories was that their experiences of musicking in school were quite uneven despite the curricular provision of music. This finding confirms Smyth's (2016) observations in the *Growing Up in Ireland* study, which found that the provision of curricular and extracurricular activities in schools, including music, sometimes suffered because of: lack of interest; emphasis on other outlets; limited resources; and/or the ability to pay fees. Overall, many of the young people I met did have access to school musicking, though its extent and their enjoyment of it varied according to their own schools, indicating that imbalances exist.

On the one hand, some young people enjoyed access to teachers they considered to be good, as well as opportunities to learn and perform within and beyond school hours. Annual opportunities such as school shows and musicals, performing at annual events or ceremonies, and competitions were features of school musicking for many young people I met. Such opportunities were most often available where there were administrators, dedicated teachers and parents with the enthusiasm and resources to operate activities after school hours, as there seemed to be little room in the curriculum to accommodate them. On the other hand, a smaller proportion of young people, about 20%, did not share these opinions, and felt that musicking was confined to the classroom, where it was sometimes not felt to be of the quality it could be. These findings are troubling, as

stories about happy memories, socialising, and personal development and building confidence – all part of the work of musicking I discuss in the next chapter – were often associated with good instructors and additional opportunities. In other words, not all schools were musicking fields of care for young musicians, even if musical programmes were available.

Adult and older (retiree) musicians who mapped also described their schooldays. Some did not have access to music education, and often concurrently extra-curricular music, at all in school. As a result, the chance to fulfil a desire to participate in musicking came only later in life for some. I was particularly struck by this fact in Wexford, when many of the gentlemen of the Wexford Male Voice Choir told me that there had been no chance to participate in music in the boys' secondary schools in the town, though many mentioned music in primary school. Some who wished to participate were sometimes allowed to go to a girls' secondary school in the town to learn.

As another example, the musicians in Kilkenny Community Orchestra came from a range of musical backgrounds, with a majority closer to the amateur end of the continuum, including those who had only taken up their instrument in the last number of years. In general, it seemed that many adult women experienced musicking in school during their youth, with a number of schools founded by religious orders faring well here (specific religious sisters were mentioned in a few cases, for example). Men did not mention musicking in school as much. However, I note the imbalance in two of the mappings especially, with many more women than men having participated in the Carlow and Kilkenny mappings, and so I make this point with caution. Overall, I argue that, even with the imbalances I have

outlined above, when comparing young peoples' accounts to their older counterparts', there seems to be an overall sense of development and progress in the provision of musicking in schools. Further, as I have indicated above, some recent policy imperatives aim to address access and provision. Subsequent research may develop these findings.

Based upon participants' responses, a second key argument is that existing initiatives created by schools and communities, and the sort of 'ethos' a school has, have both been positive influences on musicking provision and success. The sense of history which, for some schools, includes a tradition of music education, plays a significant part in their becoming musicking fields of care. I noted, for example, that St. Canice's National School in Kilkenny, which was frequently mentioned during the fieldwork there, has a thriving orchestra and instrumental tuition programme, with an instrument bank and specialist teachers. Though now funded by Music Network and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the programme was established at the school itself rather than through any wider programming or policy initiative (St. Canice's Music Programme, 2018). In a conversation with a member of The Kilkenny Community Orchestra, the origins of the music programme in St. Canice's school was attributed to 'one particular nun who came [to Kilkenny] in 1964' (fieldnotes, Kilkenny Community Orchestra, 21 November 2017). The same musician advised me to 'go and see the school now, to see the level of outreach and tuition that now takes place' (*ibid.*). This discussion suggested a former student's sense of pride at the history and development of the music programme at her alma mater, and a desire for me, as a scholar interested in emplaced musicking, to know more about this.

In Carlow and Wexford too, I saw the strong presence of music at schools, including those I attended, which was attributed to individual teachers who had worked there. As one older lady told me: 'I was taught by a very great lady, and anybody who sung, she taught them. And unfortunately she died comparatively young. But she was a brilliant teacher' (WXM2.2, musicking mapping, 5 October 2017). The point these examples highlight is that schools have individual legacies and histories that have shaped how they became musicking fields of care. Klinenberg (2018) similarly describes the important legacies of social infrastructures, whose staff must ensure that their programming and ethos is supportive and nurturing of social bonding.

Beyond the more obvious curricular component discussed above, there are a number of processes and reasons why educational places are significant musicking fields of care for musicians not currently enrolled as students. With musicking in school curricula and new MG initiatives, it is unsurprising to learn that practitioners very often named schools places of employment. A colleague of mine in Carlow mapped the majority of schools in the town and county, listing a variety of reasons for each, including teaching, accompanying exams, and playing at or going to see school shows. Practitioners mostly spoke of teaching in primary and secondary schools as a steady source of income, in contrast to other more precarious forms of employment tied to musicking. In addition, a handful of young musicians mentioned their positive school experiences in forming and influencing their future plans to pursue music at third level and/or as a career (cf. Prior, 2015), and the influence of teachers they had met during their time in school.

Schools also offered spaces of regular rehearsal for a variety of community musical ensembles, often becoming musicking fields of care because of their practical affordances. I conducted five of the eighteen musicking mappings with ensembles in schools, but never as part of curricular music education. A choir in Carlow used the choir steps in the assembly hall of a local primary school to rehearse in their performing positions, and used the piano (older and somewhat out of tune, but already in place!), the photocopier, and the staff canteen. All of these rehearsals took place out of school hours, when the school was available for use. A conversation with a symphony orchestra in Wexford was particularly resonant. Musicians described how the school in which they rehearsed had: an assembly hall big enough to hold the ensemble comfortably, a good acoustic in which to rehearse, and smaller adjoining rooms where they could hold rehearsals for individual orchestra sections. Other valuable assets included the kitchenette for coffee breaks, and a photocopier. When describing another school they previously rehearsed in but that became unusable following changes made to the assembly hall that affected its acoustics, these musicians noted that finding a suitable and accessible rehearsal space in town was one of the most significant challenges they faced, other than recruiting musicians. One member said:

‘What we’re short of is a good rehearsal space where we could keep a permanent library and store instruments, that’s what we really want rather than moving [...] We’ve to carry everything all the time, we’ve no permanent library space or photocopiers. And I know that all of the other music organisations are the same. If we had a large

central area, a kind of performance centre we could all use, that's what we want' (WXM5.1, musicking mapping, 19 November 2017).

Finally, audiences identified schools as musicking fields of care in terms of their memories, such as places of musical learning during their youth, or as places where their family members or children may themselves participate in musicking. Overall, however, other places were identified as more important in audience accounts, including places of worship. Religious institutions are the second institutional musicking field of care, which I describe in the next subsection.

4.2.2 Musicking in Places of Worship

Similar to schools, I mapped with five community music ensembles based in four Catholic churches and one Church of Ireland. As the majority of church musicians I met were based in Catholic churches, it is worth reflecting on the history and role of the Catholic Church in musical practice. The Church has played a role to some extent in shaping Ireland's musical history, including during the lifetimes of the many musicians I met in the fieldwork. As Hogan (2014) describes, the Church's role was also significant in shaping and limiting perceptions of music and music consumption in the earlier and mid-twentieth centuries. For instance, the popular showband scene that emerged in the 1950s and became influential on Irish musical practice in the 1960s was not welcomed by the Church (*ibid.*). From 1935 with the Public Dance Hall Act, gatherings of dancing, music and socialising, popular in the earlier twentieth century in Irish homes, were banned, and could only take place in licensed venues, such as parish halls, under the scrutiny of parish priests (*ibid.*). However, as musical influences reached Ireland from elsewhere through radio

broadcasts and developments in recording technology, the Church's influence began to decline.

For direct musical participation in Catholic worship, The Second Vatican Council of 1967 provides extensive guidance on church musicking as part of the liturgy in *Musica Sacram* (Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, 1967). This lengthy document emphasises the spiritual experience of the congregation, singers, and musicians, and recommended choral music ensembles in churches, singing in vernacular languages, and the use of traditional instruments adaptable to church music, including music that could be sung by the congregation. The Irish composer and musician Seán Ó Riada was especially influential in forming new church music in Ireland following these developments, and his setting of the Mass is still performed and revered by church musicians and congregations (O'Keeffe, 2017). Today, choirs are a fixture in most churches and parishes, and are counted by The Arts Council (2008) as part of the Irish choral music scene.

The church choirs with whom I mapped had long histories and cultural rituals in their parish churches stretching back decades; some musicians had been singing with them for several decades too. The personal ties and associations choristers and their facilitators had with church communities through their own families or personal histories became evident in mapping conversations, exemplifying the sense of collective history and memory woven into all musicking fields of care. Families might have memories of events and ceremonies, for example weddings, while local schools or community groups might also have ties to the chaplaincy of particular parishes or churches. These personal histories become

connected to centuries of church histories through the physical structures of these places of worship.

During a mapping with St. Canice's Junior Choristers, a small ensemble of teenaged musicians based in St. Canice's Cathedral in Kilkenny, I learned how musicking was part of the very fabric of the church stretching back many centuries to its foundation in the thirteenth century. I also heard, however, that it was becoming more difficult to sustain choral music there in recent times, due to dwindling interest and aging choristers as well as a smaller worshipping community. Efforts were strong nonetheless to continue the church's long choral musical tradition, with parents encouraging their children to become involved and the church also offering a scholarship and residencies for students studying vocal performance at third level to perform with the choirs.

Aside from direct associations with religious life, a significant, but again not surprising, finding was that churches were important musicking fields of care for non-religious musical practice. Churches hosted memorable performances by local ensembles, visiting artists, and during festivals, such as St. Canice's described above, which was a focal point of musicking for the broader Kilkenny community as much as for the choir based there. In this sense, the Cathedral seemed to be a fondly held musicking field of care for its religious community as well as Kilkenny as a whole. For outsiders such as tourists, who are unfamiliar with these local and personal associations, its impressive medieval structure can be considered a historical landmark and public monument. Experiencing a musical performance there at a festival may also provide important personal memories to share with friends not familiar with Kilkenny or even Ireland.

Musicians in all three towns told stories of memorable performances they had attended in churches, both for religious and non-religious events, and in playing, singing or working in non-religious performances. The vast majority of practitioners who discussed performing in churches mentioned the very favourable acoustics in most churches for choral performances, meaning that sound systems were not needed. Certain restrictions were also recalled by mapping participants regarding the use church spaces for musicking. Musicians who use the church are responsible for ensuring the protection and upkeep of the church and its fixtures (e.g. Carlow Cathedral, 2018). Further, the staging and content of a concert, and the dress code of those who perform and attend, must be respectful (*ibid.*).

During my musicking ethnography with Aspiro in Carlow, I performed in a large concert they put on in a small local church as part of the International Panceltic Festival happening in the town. I observed the church's wonderful acoustic, where only the person introducing the pieces of music needed a microphone. I was also fascinated by the use of the choir gallery, which in the church in question was quite large, built along three of the four church walls. During the performance, two of the unaccompanied choral pieces were performed from the gallery (Figure 4.4), and the audience could only observe the performers if they turned in their seats and looked upwards.

Figure 4.4: Aspiro rehearse in the choir gallery, St. Mary's Church of Ireland, Carlow, 30 March 2016 (photo: author)



In my fieldnotes, I expressed my amazement that so few audience members felt the need to actually move to look at the musicians; by the middle of the performance I could not see one audience member turned around. Because the musicians were singing from a more elevated point in the church, their sound seemed to travel upwards into the ceiling, and reverberate through the church, rather than being directed outwards towards the audience. I discussed this staging decision with the choir's director during our interview, and was fascinated to learn that she actually planned for this sort of new encounter for the audience. She sought to challenge them to experience the performance only through its sound, rather than having the sort of 'aid' that visual presentation would also provide:

‘It was so amazing to see the audience reaction when the music was coming from up around them, and I was kind of hoping that would happen ...I was hoping, because I don’t think the audience was ever going to look back to see where the music was coming from [...] It gave them the chance to concentrate on the aural and what they were hearing’ (Aspiro, interview with author, 13 April 2016).

The choir balcony was discussed in other fieldwork too. In Carlow, I mapped with a folk choir based in a large church there, who highlighted how memorable their very early experiences of performing in the church were, singing from the elevated gallery at the very back of this very tall church, a practice which was subsequently discontinued, with the choir now singing from pews placed beside the altar. In Wexford, I had to bring my maps up some very narrow and windy stone steps to reach the two church choirs I mapped with. In the end these were novel experiences for me, as I had never before been in the bell tower of a church, where our mapping conversations ended up taking place, and the ropes with which the church bells are rung actually hung down from the ceiling in these rooms. The choirs in question sang in the choir gallery, which could only be accessed through a door in the bell tower room, underneath part of the organ, out to the gallery. As I set up for these mappings, the choir was still performing, and the sound in the tower was immense.

Older participants dwelt upon the changes they had seen in practice manifested in the placement of musicians in churches. *Musicam Sacram* details the placement of the church choir in such a way that the choir is part of the whole congregation but with a special function, that is best suited to it fulfilling its

liturgical function, and that its members can still fully participate in the liturgy.

While I did not focus on the issue of choir placement in my fieldwork, the observations by older musicians are perhaps indicative of rhythms of change at work in church musicking, explored in Chapter Five, and of the continued influence of institutional history on churches as musicking fields of care.

Additionally, through the course of my fieldwork in Carlow, I learned that in the Cathedral parish (town centre), admission to the church must remain free and open to all (Carlow Cathedral, 2018). As such, ensembles are not allowed to charge admission to church spaces for performances on the door, though may ask for donations against the costs of the performance (*ibid.*). This rule also means that raffle tickets cannot be sold, another popular means of boosting income during performances. Outside of my fieldwork, I performed in a charity concert in a church in Co. Kilkenny in late 2018, and was amazed to see a small tent which was set up at the church gate, in which tickets and raffle tickets were being sold and collected. I did not think to ask at the time, and so cannot be sure, but I wondered after if this was to do with the same Canon Law, and if so, this seems to have been a very clever navigation of the rules, while still remaining respectful of the place itself.

4.3 Musicking in Formal Performance Venues

The second most frequently mapped musicking locales were formal performance venues, including permanent theatres and arts centres, as well as ‘pop-up’ temporary venues. I consider the former to be musicking public monuments that may become fields of care for some. The intended and initial purpose of formal performance venues is most pointedly to do with cultural and artistic experience,

for performers and audiences alike. Publicly funded venues overlap with the institutional category, as they are funded by national and local arts agencies with specific accompanying policies, aims and initiatives, and privately operated venues overlap with the commercial categorisation. Finally, some of the temporary performance spaces I discuss vary between these categories, such as venues for festivals, which may be publicly funded, privately sponsored or run independently. I felt that it was important to consider these places within the current category, however, since they are most obviously intended for musical performance. Though the function of these places should appear to be clear and their role was not unsubstantial in the mappings of each town (see Table 4.1), their perception by the musicians who mapped in each place was much less straight-forward than might initially have been expected. I return to this issue in more detail in Chapter Seven.

4.3.1 Formal Theatre Venues

In each of the three towns studied, at least one dedicated formal theatre-type space exists, as outlined in Table 4.2 below. Each was purpose-built to hold live performances; is equipped with the staging, seating, sound and lighting facilities, has greenrooms and rehearsal rooms; and has house supporting services, such as ticket sales and advertising, administration, and sometimes also bar and restaurant services. These elements are all important in holding successful musical events.

Formal venues vary in terms of state funding supports, some receiving annual AC and local arts office grants, some for one-off projects, and some for construction, restoration and maintenance. The ethos and programming of venues, and thus musicking experiences are shaped, at least in part, by these financial obligations.

Table 4.2: Formal performance places and funding status in each town

	Venue	Partial funding/Private operated
Carlow	George Bernard Shaw Theatre (with VISUAL Centre for Contemporary Art)	State supports
Kilkenny	The Watergate Theatre	State supports
	The Set Theatre	Privately operated
	The Hub	Privately operated
Wexford	Wexford Arts Centre	State supports
	The National Opera House	State supports

Purpose-built for musicking and performance overall, these venues already hold associations with and meanings of musicking experience, and the accounts of experiences there by musicians as performers, audience members or facilitators attested to this. However, I contend that these venues only became musicking fields of care when participants identified their experiences in them as having special depth, according to memories and other associations. For example, as illustrated by my musicking ethnography with SOLA, a small ensemble with whom I worked in Kilkenny, The Watergate Theatre was a musicking field of care formed because of special memories. SOLA held their first performance in the café of the theatre, and recalled this to be a very positive experience. The café was a small, familiar and relaxed room, suitable for their then small audience. It was also a venue known to them, as they had previously performed there as part of another community ensemble.

‘We organised a gig in a café that used to be above the local theatre [Watergate], just to bring a few family members and friends to that.

It was a big step to actually just do it for the first time, you know?’

(SOLA, interview with author, 29 May 2018).

This group chose the theatre café because it was a familiar, small space to try out their fledging ensemble. But most important were the fond memories of what they described as a ‘little, unplugged’ (*ibid.*) concert shared with family and friends, which signified for them the successful start of their group.

Another group of young musicians in Kilkenny similarly described their annual performances in the Watergate Theatre with pride. For them it was an achievement to perform in this large public venue, and they associated their accomplishment with the hard work and preparation put into the run-up to the performances. They viewed their performances in this official venue as manifesting the confidence and skills acquired during years of community music participation. Thus the formal theatre became symbolic of the work of musicking that includes pathways of other musicking fields of care, including their rehearsal spaces, along the way. The importance of personal growth and development as a significant part of the work of musicking is described in the next chapter.

A number of choirs I met during my Wexford mappings also spoke fondly and proudly of their experiences of singing in the chorus for the annual opera festival in the National Opera House. Indeed, one choir was even preparing opera repertoire during the rehearsal in which we mapped together. The opera house was proudly viewed as an asset within the town’s musical life, though in mappings, it was more often cited as a place of audience musicking than of performance. In saying this, I note here that many musicians across genres and age groups had some performing experiences in the venue. Despite its designated purpose as an

international venue for opera associated with the annual festival, and its designation as the National Opera House for Ireland, the venue still serves a role within Wexford's wider, non-opera community too. This was not necessarily the case elsewhere, which I think is a very positive reflection on the musical practice community in Wexford and the opera house's operators. As a musicking field of care, the Wexford Opera House, as the most renowned and recognised opera public monument in the country, supports the breadth of musical practice in the town to a range of musicians and audiences, even as it receives national funding to promote its international, outward face. Klinenberg (2018) identifies this sort of commitment as a key facet of building social infrastructures to support healthy place-making.

An interesting example of a privately operated formal performance place I heard about during my fieldwork in Kilkenny was the Ballykeeffe Amphitheatre. As it is not within Kilkenny city itself, I did not include it on the initial base map, though as the mapping progressed musicians of all types mentioned it frequently, most often for audience musicking. They used various terms including its actual name but also 'the quarry', and I was perplexed at first to learn about it as I had not heard of it before. The very last person to map in the Kilkenny public mapping discussed how, once the quarry ceased to function, there was investment into the acoustics, furniture and infrastructure of the quarry space to turn it into a performance space. The resulting development seems to be a very positive addition to Kilkenny and has become a musicking field of care for those who described it:

'Ballykeeffe was the only [venue] that put forward that if you were an artist, regardless of whether established or up and coming, if you

sent them some information and demos, they'd get back to you with support and different ideas' (KKMPub.26, musicking mapping, 9 June 2018).

In addition to these examples, audience members I met during mappings noted venues where they attended memorial performances by local musicians in their town's formal performance venues. They highlighted school groups, community ensembles, and artists known nationally and internationally. These participants communicated a generally positive feeling about the formal venues in all three places, though some young people said that programming could better cater to their interests.

The formal performance venues in each town were not without their challenges, however. A handful of audience participants mentioned the cost of admission to performances in these venues, which could at times be quite expensive. Further, a lack of adequate advertising was mentioned in Carlow, with one audience member saying that a system to alert interested audiences about available tickets in the run up to concerts might encourage more people to attend performances last-minute. Practitioners in Carlow also argued that it was difficult to meet the cost associated with hiring theatre spaces, so held their performances in churches, hotels, halls and other venues that emerged in the mappings. For example, Four Lakes Productions, who based their practice in a local hotel, said that their projects would not be sustainable if they used the local theatre because of the rental cost. This, despite the fact that they had been incentivised to use the theatre through an offer of a small local authority grant. Further, they felt that the mood or atmosphere of the theatre was not welcoming for their concerts, indicating that a

hotel offered a more welcoming, relaxed and better catered for environment for their audiences, who also socialised at their performances.

From mappings with ensembles in Carlow and Wexford, musicians also pointed to the difficulty of attracting a large enough audience to make performances in formal venues viable. Beyond financial sustainability, as I learned in Wexford, the desire to have a full and receptive audience meant that musicians preferred smaller venues. So musicians were faced with an odd paradox, as one practitioner articulated during a mapping in Carlow. If formal venues were to offer the use of their spaces to locally-based musicians and groups at a more accessible rate, they might better be able to fill their audiences, which could actually work in their favour overall. If local performers were subsidised reasonably to use professional performance facilities more often, these formal venues would foster better connections with the local community. This musician did say that the theatre in Carlow do offer a community rate, but even this reduced rate is difficult to afford, a sentiment similar to that expressed by Four Lakes Productions above.

4.3.2 Temporary Formal Performance Venues

Temporary performance venues are developed and operated by arts organisations or bodies specifically to hold short-term performances. These venues include outdoor locales during festivals which are not a permanent feature of a town, that are temporarily fitted out with professional sound, lighting, staging and seating to accommodate these special events. An excellent example of a temporary performance venue about which I heard a great deal is The Spiegeltent in Wexford. This venue resembles a circus tent in shape and construction, and is set up along

the harbour in Wexford town each year. The venue is accompanied by its own festival, The Wexford Speigeltent Festival, which in 2018 ran for 17 days in October, overlapping with the Opera Festival (Speigeltent Festival, 2018). A noteworthy 21% of those who mapped in Wexford, including community musicians, practitioners and audience members, mentioned musicking in The Speigeltent.

Members of the Wexford Male Voice Choir, for example, mentioned their performance in the Speigeltent as part of their annual calendar, noting that it was often one of their best attended performances of the year, where new audiences and potential new choir members often came to see them. As one committee member relayed to me:

‘In the Speigeltent this year we had a very good attendance. We reckon we had 280 people turn up, ... which is a very, very good attendance’ [...] We were singing in the Speigeltent and a man had heard us a few times and contacted us. He said he was singing with a choir, he was the only male member, and maybe he’d like to join us.’

(Wexford Male Voice Choir, interview with author, 8 February 2018).

In addition to this choir member’s description of this temporary venue becoming a musicking field of care that gathered people, both audiences and prospective new members, another member of the Male Voice Choir mentioned how The Speigeltent cared for the community. This was an important point made by the choir’s accompanist during our first meeting, and still remains powerful as an example years later. She mentioned that the Opera Fringe Festival events, which include the happenings in The Speigeltent, were very accessible and community-oriented, and a big part of the town’s annual calendar of events.

Temporary outdoor performance places were also mentioned in Carlow and Kilkenny too, though received much less emphasis than in Wexford. Most interesting in Carlow was a multistorey car park on one of the town's main streets, around which a pop-up choral performance was held during two of the annual arts festivals. I mapped with two of the choirs who were involved in these events, and the musicians mentioned particularly meaningful and memorable experiences there, and the large audience the performances attracted was made up of many families and friends of those who performed. Additional arts festival performances took place at the town's courthouse and the local park, where sound systems were set up for amplifying large ensemble performances. Two community musicians in Carlow lamented how performances like this were no longer part of more recent festivals. They felt that a change in management at the festival in recent years had led to a movement away from projects involving Carlow-based artistic ensembles, potentially accounted for this change in programming.

In Kilkenny, I learned about concerts that take place in public and tourist garden spaces around the city scheduled during the week of the Kilkenny Arts Festival. The garden performances are:

'... 15 minutes [in duration] but you don't know what's going to be on. It could be a musician, it could be a poet, it could be spoken word, and you just go along at the set times and a performer shows up, and it's free. ...[D]uring the festival, the concerts are expensive so it's a great way to get some free culture' (KKMPub.17, musicking mapping, 9 June 2018).

Such examples demonstrate the great potential for creating novel and meaningful musicking experiences by making use of venues which usually have very different purposes and meanings. These temporary performance venues are formalised in the sense that their use for musicking is part of a formal set of events, such as an arts festival, with advertised, organised events and performances that are part of a larger programme. Further, their association with large, regularly held events by established organisations such as festivals means that the additional requirements of successful performance spaces, such as a sound system, audience seating, and advertising, are also met. In the sense that these everyday types of places, from car parks to gardens, become special environments of memorable musicking encounters, they become musicking fields of care even as they normally function otherwise, and remain so by virtue of the continued memories held of them in this form by locals and guests.

4.4 Commercial Musicking Fields of Care

Hotels, pubs and other commercial venues offer what Sandiford and Divers (2019) call a 'mundane welcome' (p. 5), an environment that one can expect to be welcoming and hospitable, forming a sort of escape from everyday life. Klinenberg (2018: 75) similarly asserts that 'in all neighbourhoods, commercial establishments are important parts of the social infrastructure'. His arguments are resonant here, but it is important to add nuance to this quotation. Public commercial places that impose time limits or minimum spend on their customers will not be as accessible or open, and thus not as supportive as other types of places in the social infrastructure (*ibid*). Undoubtedly, this is an important consideration in terms of

hotels, pubs, local businesses (some mapped musicking in restaurants) and shopping centres mapped as musicking venues which may become fields of care.

4.4.1 Hotels

Hotels are important performance venues, as evidenced by the fact that one of my musicking ethnographies and two interviews associated with ethnographies were held in such places. One musicking mapping occurred in a night club (which wasn't open at the time!) on the second floor of a hotel, which was used by a large ensemble for their weekly rehearsals. Hotels perform many of the management and administrative functions carried out in formal venues, including ticket sales, scheduling, and advertising and promotion, though personnel in formal venues may have more specialised expertise. Hotels have large rooms, offer a range of settings, and can be set up to accommodate performances and audiences of varied sizes. Further, hotel guests and patrons might be interested in attending performances during their stays. As such, there are practical affordances offered by hotels that make them ideal musicking venues in terms of mounting performance projects and reaching audiences. Their multiple functions in an area, as well as their specific histories and physical settings, mean they may also become musicking fields of care.

As previously mentioned, the Carlow-based Four Lakes Productions worked from a local hotel. This environment was a central part of how their practice had developed from its very beginnings. I participated in a performance with this collective, with whom I have been involved since they began, and so got a good sense of how performers and audiences alike experienced the hotel as a musicking

field of care. To begin with, the set-up of the ballroom in which the performance took place closely resembled a formal theatre space. It had a large raised stage, an off-stage green room, seating for the audience, and could accommodate full sound and lighting systems. However, many of these facilities were not fixed, and as such had more of a temporary appearance. Getting the balance of the sound right for performers and audience required more time too, which meant a much longer sound check than in a theatre, making gig days long and difficult. On the day of the performance with Four Lakes, for example, I commented in my fieldnotes that we had 'played the entire set through once at least before the gig even started' (fieldnotes, Four Lakes Productions, 1 September 2016). From a performer's perspective, despite the longer preparations, the performance felt largely the same as it would in any for-purpose venue.

From an audience perspective, I saw more clearly the assets the hotel space offered in their musicking experience compared to formal venues. Before the performance, I walked around the bar, restaurant and foyer of the hotel, and saw audience members sharing meals and socialising over drinks. These facilities can be assets for performers too, not often matched in formal venues. Inside the ballroom, there was a bar, and groups of people continued to gather and chat, the flat floor making it much easier to easily move around and see people in the crowd. The hotel's bar neighboured the room, meaning people could easily move around for refreshments, and carry these back to their seats.

All of these observations came up in my interview with the production team of Four Lakes Productions, who described the hotel as 'the most comfortable place' for their performances (interview with author, 20 January 2017). The hotel's

previous manager had been very helpful and supportive in building up their concert series, which influenced the ensemble's decision to base their work there. In the year or so following our ethnography interview, the ensemble moved their performances to another hotel in Carlow town. I learned from one of the producers in conversation that the original hotel had seen a change of management, and was no longer as supportive or helpful, in the run up to or during events.

Musical audiences attended performances in hotels by memorable guest artists and local groups alike. While many of the hotels in each town were mentioned in this vein, some seemed to have special reputations for live music. For example, audiences frequently mapped Langton's Hotel in Kilkenny, where well-known artists had appeared. Interestingly, the Set Theatre mentioned in Table 4.2 above is also part of and operated by Langton's Hotel, and when I performed there I saw that audiences often gathered for food or drinks before or after performances. In Wexford, White's Hotel seemed to have the best reputation for live music: 'There's lots of stuff in White's, a lot of country and western' (WXMPub.16, musicking mapping, 10 January 2018). Finally, young people frequently described community musicking or school performances in hotels. It makes sense that hotels would equally host these more locally-oriented performances; their programming is not particular to realising artistic goals only.

I am also reminded of my interview with Niall Toner as part of our musicking ethnography in Carlow. Our focus was on his most recent album release, but we also discussed his recent performance in Carlow in the upstairs function room of a local hotel. He lamented what he considered a very close connection between audiences going out to hear music and drinking. In short, he felt that he did not

enjoy performances as much when audiences were less interested in the music, and more so in drinking:

‘What I really enjoy is when people come to listen to the songs, as opposed to the slightly boozy people you tend to get, even, in smaller venues. ... I don’t at all object to people going out to have a good time, but I think that if you pay to go into a music gig, you should really pay attention to what’s going on’ (interview with author, 30 June 2017).

There is, undoubtedly, a close connection between social drinking and live music in Ireland; the very existence of pub music scenes in part speaks to this. Niall’s comments are interesting because they relate to audiences at pay-in gigs in hotels, as opposed to music provided in pubs free of charge, where you might expect a less attentive audience.

Niall’s comments prompted me to consider the negative aspects of apparently supportive places for musicking, as well as the extent to which alcohol played a part in the musicking experience there. It is true that one of the assets of hotels is the fact that they can provide a bar, which can be attractive for audiences, as Four Lakes Productions pointed out. One performance I observed as a member of the audience took place in a hotel, and thus the audience could drink if they chose to, which many did. They were attentive but also chatted and socialised in this less formal sort of performance environment. I return to this point in my discussion of pubs below.

Although hotels, as commercial, not institutional spaces, do not build a reputation associated with artistic practice per se, my research indicated that they

reached as many audiences and musicians as do formal venues. Given the relative cost-effectiveness of running music events at hotels, and the perceived more welcoming, less formal environments for audiences overall, hotels have become established and important musicking fields of care for practitioners, community musicians and audiences alike in each town.

4.4.2 Pubs

Similar to hotels, pubs are everyday types of places to which people form unique, particular and sometimes very strong attachments. In rural Irish places, Cabras and Mount (2017) describe how pubs foster community building and support economic development. Their role in Irish cultural life is widely acknowledged, they argue, though is lessening in more recent times due to tightening drink-driving laws, rising taxation, cheaper home entertainment, and cheaper alcohol availability in off-licenses. They find that the atmosphere of pubs, including the live music often available, offers customers incentives to visit. Pubs also function as places for other community-based activities, for example GAA and charity gatherings and events, which often take place in adjoining or upstairs function rooms. These spaces are often used for holding small music gigs, including traditional Irish music sessions (*seisiúin*).

The very banality and familiarity of pubs, as cited above from Sandiford and Divers (2019), is part of their enduring appeal, and the complexity and strength of the attachments formed by people through different experiences in pubs resonates with both the routine nature and depth of emotions associated with musicking fields of care explored in this study. While pubs were mapped by participants in all

three towns, they featured most prominently in Kilkenny's musicking stories. In fact, there were so many pubs on the Kilkenny map by the end of fieldwork that I had difficulty differentiating one from the other in certain areas, particularly on main streets. The variety of music available in these pubs on any night of the week was a positive point for audience members who mapped musicking places. Community musicians also gathered in pubs to listen to music and socialise after rehearsals or performances. Notably, the variety of pub music in Kilkenny was also recognised during a mapping in Carlow: 'Kilkenny is a fantastic city for music, there's music in every little pub along the whole [main] street' (CWM6.13, musicking mapping, 31 May 2017).

Pub musicking seemed to have its own rhythms too, and I heard that pubs often provided even more music, and more variety to their programming, during festivals and high season for tourists. One participant noted that pubs were:

'... upping their game then in the summer, [with] more concerts, [...] trying to get people in, [through] tourism, because they're [tourists are] coming in ... for traditional music in whatever pub. But then they'll go out of Kilkenny for other music, you know?' (KKMPub.26, musicking mapping, 9 June 2018).

'Upping the game' of music in pubs was seen as a positive development not just in terms of chasing tourist Euros, but for local audiences too. They felt that they could enjoy even more variety while still being able to access more local musicians within their own town. Similar to hotels, some pubs in all three towns seemed to have particularly strong reputations for music. For instance, in Kilkenny, one mapping participant described their favourite pubs for musicking:

‘Tynan’s on the Bridge. That was closed for a while; it’s one of the oldest pubs in Kilkenny. But it’s reopened and the music is there now big time. And of course Kyteler’s – that [pub] stands alone (KKMPub.16, musicking mapping, 9 June 2018).

For practitioners, ‘upping the game’ meant more demand for them to perform: ‘A lot of the pubs want that kind of music every night, there’s a lot of tourists, so they want live music. So it is a good place to be a musician’ (SOLA, interview with author, 29 May 2018). SOLA, for example, believed that the pub music scene in Kilkenny was a very vibrant one, and, once they had been brave enough to enter into the scene and to seek gigs in the town’s pubs, they had been successful in securing quite a few regular weekly performances. However, they also reflected that there were, in a sense, relationships of loyalty between pubs and musicians, especially in what they felt was a relatively small and, to an extent, insular scene, which could make it difficult to grow or expand a musician’s practice. One SOLA musician noted that the Kilkenny pub scene is: ‘kind of small. Everyone supports each other, yes, but then you also have your loyalties, and you worry are you leaving someone behind’ (*ibid.*). A Kilkenny practitioner who mapped at a different point held a similar view about Kilkenny pubs:

‘They’re all about the local bands, so it’s very hard for outsiders to come in. So unless you’re established and you know somebody who knows someone within that pub, they’re very reluctant to let people in to gig in the more family run pubs’ (KKMPub.26, musicking mapping, 9 June 2018).

Even after gaining access to pubs, because the physical layout for each is unique, musicians cannot rely on the same sorts of given standards in terms of space facilities as might be the case in hotels or other musicking fields of care (though some pubs function and are built as excellent music venues too). I attended a performance by SOLA in a pub in Kilkenny city centre for their musicking ethnography. The performance was quite busy, and the area in which it took place quite small. SOLA did not perform on a formal stage but in a specific area set up for musicians which, unfortunately, did not have extra lighting, and so it was difficult to make out the details of the performance. Equally, given that people meet to socialise in a pub as much as to hear music, it was also much more difficult to hear the entirety of the music being performed. I reflected in my fieldnotes (9 March 2018) on how challenging it must be to perform in the pub environment I experienced with SOLA, especially when coupled with managing one's own sound system, as they were doing that night, noting the small amount of feedback and needing to adjust the sound system mid-song.

But I also pondered how musicians probably learn a great deal from such performances; I know that I have, in the past. In our later interview, SOLA musicians said that their practice had only really begun to develop as an ensemble in the past year at that point, and they had learned 'on the job', for example learning to set up their equipment and sound system. SOLA also described learning how to interact with each other and the audience while performing in that environment, and structure their performances around their own repertoire and covers of other popular songs to keep the audience's interest. They felt that they could only have

learned these things while out performing, and that their own rehearsals could not prepare them in the same way.

In addition to current pubs, mapping participants told me about pubs no longer in existence, where musicking had been a very popular feature. For instance, in Carlow, musicians discussed a pub called 'Manoeuvres', where musicians in their forties and fifties had spent their youths listening to their favourite local bands. 'The Ritz', a former pub and nightclub, was recalled with great fondness by many older retired musicians I met during the Carlow mappings, as a 'favourite haunt' and place for international celebrities. As one participant noted:

'And then there was The Ritz as well – that was my favourite haunt.

My sister begged my mother to let me go when I was 16, and she let me go, but I never stopped going after that, and I'm still dancing

[laughter]' (CWM6.13, musicking mapping, 31 May 2017).

Changes in cultures of pub musicking over time were also evident during a mapping conversation with a community musician who had grown up in a pub. Her account suggested a set of musical practices built around familiarity which, though not totally absent from pub-life across the board, are not often encountered in the towns I studied anymore:

'I grew up, we had a pub when I was little. And my memory is that ... there was very often an impromptu kind of concert. And customers had their own song [...] And it wasn't a case of what would you sing. You were always told, there was always a request [...] There were always other customers who could play the spoons, the tin whistle, the accordion, and you know, musical instruments just appeared out

of nowhere. There was never anything organised, it was always just impromptu' (CWM6.15, musicking mapping, 31 May 2017).

Audiences in pub settings, who may also become musicians in an impromptu set, are not bound by the same sort of (tacit) conventions as they would be in a theatre, for example, to sit quietly and observe attentively. As detailed above, Niall Toner felt that audiences could sometimes be as or more interested in drinking as in listening to music. For others, such as The Carty Sisters, whose first performances had been in pubs and who continue to play in them, the pub setting did not seem to pose a problem. It provided them a chance to meet new people and audiences, and to connect with existing ones.

Meanwhile, in the other musicking fields of care I have detailed, alcohol plays a much less prominent role: for example, in schools and churches it is absent, while in the formal performance spaces and outdoor musicking settings I describe below, it is either absent or very tightly restricted. I am led to conclude, all things considered, that if one chooses to hold performances in hotels or pubs, they do so in the knowledge that the conventions expected of the setting are different than in other performance contexts. What cannot be denied is that pubs and hotels form musicking fields of care that are often more accessible than other venues for mounting performances for some musicians (cf. Cabras and Mount, 2017). That being said, they are not without their obvious challenges, some of which I have mentioned.

4.4.3 Shopping Areas

Hotels and pubs are commercial businesses with particular social, hospitality and tourist functions, so I expected to find that musicking would feature in these places. However, the richness and variety of ways in which shopping centres and local businesses supported musical practice in the towns I studied was surprising. Musicking here ranged from listening to music passively in the background while shopping, which is also used strategically used to influence shoppers' behaviour (Coughlan, 2017), to active performance. Musicians most frequently described carol singing at Christmas time in commercial places, especially shopping centres. Choirs and ensembles associated with schools went carol singing, and I noted that this response came overwhelmingly from teenage musicians and adults in their twenties, indicating that it is a relatively new practice. In contrast, adult and older participants mentioned carol singing among their children or family members or more generally as part of the musicking they had spectated at as audience members in commercial places. More importantly, I learned that businesses and companies formed partnerships with musicians to provide unexpected musicking venues and relations, which supports the Irish Music Rights Organisation's (IMRO) campaign to highlight the importance of music in retail and business, and the need to adequately reimburse musicians for the use of their music in this way (IMRO, 2016; Coughlan, 2017).

Seventeen mostly teenage musicians mentioned busking on main streets and in commercial areas in the three towns. In general, patterns emerged whereby busking took place in central business areas, mostly the main streets of each town.

One lady I met during the Kilkenny public mapping had very fond memories of busking on the main street:

‘My whole life, when I was younger, was music. ... [O]ne of my first memories is sitting with [other musician] busking down on the Butterslip (area off of Main Street). And I sat with her. She was the singer, and I was in awe – I was only a young one! [laughter]’

(KKMPub.6, musicking mapping, 9 June 2018).

A very strong historical connection to commercial places came with the Wexford Male Voice Choir members, who told of their long associations with former factories in the town. Indeed, the choir was founded by a prominent individual in the town to provide a social outlet and pastime for the factory workers in the town. One member mentioned learning of the ‘...factories in Wexford, a steel works, an iron works, a gas works, and other industrial sites’ from a fellow member. I wrote about my conversation with this musician in my fieldnotes:

‘... Dr George Hadden, of the Hadden family who had department stores in Carlow (still operating) and other places, was the founder of the choir. [Hadden] had trained as a doctor in Edinburgh, where he sang in the college choir, and then gone as a missionary to China. When he returned in 1941, he went to the different factories and industries and asked the men to sign up for the choir, and this is how the choir was formed’ (fieldnotes, Wexford Male Voice Choir, 18 May 2017).

The factories no longer operate in the town, though their histories, shared by the choristers and their audiences, have influenced the work of musicking that the choir

does, and their legacies continue to shape the rhythms of musicking there.

Similarly, musical practice in Carlow was influenced to some extent by the shared histories of industry in the town, with community musicians lamenting the loss of the local Greencore sugar plant and Braun, around which, surprisingly, some elements of musicking had centred. Indeed, employees and family members of the sugar factory even competed in the annual 'Tops of the Town' competitions in previous decades.

Another association with commercial premises came in the form of fundraising through bag-packing, through which some community music ensembles had raised funds for their continued operation. Indeed, in a musicking ethnography with The Kilkenny Community Orchestra, I learned that bag-packing was one of the ensemble's central means of raising funds. In this sense, as with carol singing and 'flashmob' performances, shops and commercial places also form supportive spaces for fundraising opportunities, which can help sustain musicking fields of care elsewhere.

I was struck by the unexpected ways in which two shopping centres in Kilkenny had become places of musical performance and spectating. During the public mapping, which took in the shopping centre on the main street in the town, the centre's manager told an interesting story about holding: 'a couple of Battle of the Bands [competitions] there a few years ago. I hired jazz musicians in every Thursday night or Saturday, so various bits and pieces. You'd have various things here in terms of music' (musicking mapping, 9 June 2018). I reflected after the mapping that it was perhaps this manager's personal interest in music, which was clear throughout our conversation, as well as her role in the centre, that prompted

these musicking events. This indicates a kind of personal drive that comes from the work of musicking to sustain practice in a town. Likewise, the town's other shopping centre was mentioned as a site of this 'Battle of the Bands' competition in other mappings, as well as for dancing competitions.

Lastly, businesses and commercial spaces came up in mappings and ethnographies alike as collaborators and sponsors for musical events. Indeed, musicians built collaborations with local businesses in order to overcome challenges they sometimes faced in financing and resourcing musicking projects. I detail this further in Chapter Six.

4.5 Community, Civic and Outdoor Musicking Fields of Care

This broad category encompasses community and civic places, including community centres, public libraries, public parks, sports clubs and civic buildings, and outdoor spaces. These types of places were of roughly equal significance in each of the towns studied, and musicians shared similar experiences of musicking there. Additionally, these locales share common characteristics in terms of being public spaces, so arguably relate to the social and civic life of a given town (cf. Klinenberg, 2018), even though their defined purposes are not related directly to musicking per se. Similar to most of the locales described in this chapter, such places can become musicking fields of care, rich with meaning and memory.

4.5.1 Community and Civic Centres

In each town, participants identified community centres and halls as musicking fields of care, noting that musical practice was often programmed alongside other

activities such as art, dancing, crafts, and networking events. Community centres often housed weekly rehearsals by community ensembles, and weekly music lessons for music students. In Carlow, a practitioner who runs a private music school in the town said that she rented rooms in two local community centres to expand her school's practice as demand exceeds what she is able to cater for at her own premises. Also in Carlow, a local youth service held weekly music lessons, performances and competitions as part of their work, and so this space was quite popular with some young people who mapped. In Kilkenny, I mapped with a youth musical theatre ensemble who held their weekly rehearsals in the Scouts Den, which functioned as a sort of hub for many community-based activities. A number of activities were happening simultaneously in different rooms of the centre during my mapping visit.

Community centres also once hosted live music performances, and some adult and older participants said these were very memorable. In my pilot and this study, I learned about what is now a derelict and abandoned building, known colloquially as 'the old youth centre', in Carlow. I was only in this building once, to play a basketball match when I was in primary school. Mapping participants in their forties to sixties across the Carlow mapping mentioned attending performances in this centre, which is now all but derelict. I learned of a similar story told of the Dún Mhuire centre in Wexford. In fact, one attendee at the public mapping in Wexford could not believe that I did not know about this centre, only 'forgiving' this faux pas upon learning that I am not from Wexford:

'Oh, right! I won't hold that against you I suppose [laughter]! Dún

Mhuire would be one of the oldest places in Wexford. It would have

been historically for bands and live music. Many years ago, some of the biggest bands, the likes of Thin Lizzy and all that would come down and play a big concert in Wexford. This was 30 or 40 years ago, but it was unheard of at the time that these big bands would play in Wexford' (WXMPub.6, musicking mapping, 10 January 2018).

Learning of these examples made me wonder if this fundamental role community centres once played in hosting gigs that would have attracted young people had to do with the legacy of ballrooms and showbands that were popular in previous decades (Holohan, 2018, 2013). In any event, a sense of shared histories and memories was associated with community centres, and consequently their weaving into musicking fields of care. As unlicensed premises, I also reflect that perhaps the changing relationship between alcohol consumption and musicking among different audiences noted in previous sections may explain why these sorts of gigs no longer happen in community centres. It was beyond the scope of the research to address this issue further.

Elsewhere, musicians described musicking events in public libraries that were often associated with local festivals, or part of the library's own programming of events. Klinenberg (2018) reflects at length on the value of public libraries as social infrastructures that provide safe and accessible places for all people to engage and participate in group activities. In doing so, locals build social connections and networks which are vital for the health and well-being of communities and places (*ibid.*). Though his study area is so different, it is remarkable that I have also found libraries to be nurturing places for musicking in this study in Carlow and Wexford. Indeed, I was even advised in Wexford to hold

my public musicking mapping in the town's library, as it has such a rich programme of cultural events. The building that now houses Carlow library was once a secondary school, and I reflect that some musicians marked that building in the context of their school years. Despite this change in the purpose of the building, its previous meaning as a school where musicking took place remains for those who with those experiences, demonstrating how the traces of histories and memories of musicking gathered in places make them endure, even when the materiality of a building and its purpose changes.

In Wexford too, I was fascinated to learn that many musicians had performed in the local county council building, another type of civic place. When explored further, I heard that the building had been designed with performances in mind, as members of the Valda ensemble recounted when describing their decision to move their annual concert to the county council building:

WXM4.5: 'The county council were kind of looking for more stuff [performances] there, and one of us were talking to someone up there and they said, "Oh you would be perfect!"'

WXM4.2: 'And we've sung there about five times'.

AK: 'Oh, so the building must be very good, acoustics-wise?'

[general agreement with nodding heads]

WXM4.2: 'And it's free. And people have parking and stuff'

(members of Valda, musicking mapping, 13 November 2017).

Parking, costs, and acoustics are very basic considerations for mounting any performances in community centres or civic buildings, including access to the kitchen and photocopier mentioned in an earlier section in relation to schools as

rehearsal settings. With Klinenberg (2018), I argue that understanding these practicalities is just as important as understanding the shared histories that feed into the gathering and weaving of musicking fields of care.

4.5.2 Sports Clubs

I did not foresee, at the outset of the fieldwork, that sports clubs would play as significant a role in musicking. When musicians mapped sports clubs, I learned not only about musicking associated with sports events themselves, but also of collaborations between sports bodies and musicians, and the use of sports spaces for musicking practices themselves. Similar to community centres and schools, sports clubs also have practical affordances that make them supportive musicking fields of care, like large multi-purpose rooms and parking facilities.

Sports clubs were of most significance in Carlow, and I should point out that two of the mappings and one of the musicking ethnographies took place with an organisation whose base is in a GAA clubhouse in the town. Additionally, the local hurling, rugby and rowing clubs were frequent musicking spots for adults speaking about their youth, but also by a small number of younger musicians, who had attended teenage discos in the hurling and rugby clubs. In fact, after my fieldwork in Carlow concluded, the rugby club in the town hosted 'Summerfest', a festival of country music over a weekend in mid-July (Summerfest Carlow, 2018). In Kilkenny, Nowlan Park, a GAA ground on the outskirts of the city, has been the site of large music concerts for quite some time; musicians there frequently mentioned a performance by Bruce Springsteen in recent years as a highlight. In addition, for all three towns, community musicians mentioned socialising and musicking in the local

golf clubs. In fact, the Wexford Male Voice Choir have an annual social event for their choir members and families each year in the golf club there.

4.5.3 Tourist and Outdoor Places

Previously, I mentioned outdoor places as ‘temporary formal venues’, including The Wexford Spiegel tent, the Kilkenny garden concerts during the annual arts festival, and performances in the street and college grounds during Carlow Arts Festival. I considered these as formal performing venues because they are developed and equipped specifically for this purpose, often by festivals or local bodies. However, musicking also happens in outdoor places in everyday, unexpected ways. In Carlow, I met two siblings who played at the farmer’s market held in a public car park in the centre of the town each week. This same car park houses a local landmark, ‘The Liberty Tree’, a sculpture and fountain musicians identified as the starting point for the annual St. Patrick’s Day parades in which they had marched and played music with school bands and out-of-school music ensembles. In Kilkenny musicians from the brass band mapped the main street in the town as the starting point for their parade. Musicians from The Carlow Youth Orchestra recalled performing in a tourist landmark, Oak Park, which is now also a Teagasc research site, when the annual National Ploughing Championships were held there. Similar performances took place when the championships were again held in Carlow in September 2019.

Another often-recollected outdoor place for musicking was the annual Christmas market held by Carlow County Council in a local tourism landmark, Duckett’s Grove, which is the ruins of an old house and adjoining stables and forest. The council now operates a café and some small exhibition and work spaces for

artists, and the site is used for events run by the council each year. They invite community music ensembles to perform at the Christmas market there each year, and these are the memories musicians most often recounted. It is unsurprising that events hoping to draw customers and crowds would engage local groups to perform, since they will often naturally bring family and friends with them as audience members, as I learned during my fieldwork. Busking, discussed already with regard to commercial spaces, came up in a small number of the mapping conversations in terms of main street areas.

In Wexford, the Male Voice Choir told me of their annual performance at a memorial Mass at the Paupers' Graveyard, where many people who died in the Great Irish Famine are buried. They viewed this performance as part of the service they undertook in the town and surrounding areas each year. As another example, they also detailed their performance at the annual Mass in Rosslare, County Wexford, for the Irish Coastguard based there. Similarly, St. Patrick's Brass Band in Kilkenny were regularly called upon to perform at memorials and civic events, and when I met them, their next performance was to be at the unveiling of a monument in the city centre.

For Niall Toner, the landscape and outdoors around his home in rural County Carlow were of extensive influence on his composition and practice, and I reflect on several examples from our interview. He used the surrounding mountain ranges in the outdoors around his home as inspiration for pieces on many of his albums. The theme music for his radio show is *The Burren Backstep*, named after the river that flows near his house:

‘The Burren rises very close to our house on the Blackstairs Mountains, flows down all the way into Carlow town where it goes down into the Barrow here, just down the road. And I was thinking about that, and about the people who lived along the Burren river. And it turned out to be an instrumental, but it’s got a kind of, it’s got Irish and roots/bluegrass feel about it. And I just dedicated it to the people who live along the River Burren’ (Niall Toner, interview with author, 30 June 2017).

What is more, he chose to make his current home in Carlow, having previously been based in Dublin and other parts of Ireland, because of the peace, calm and inspiration that came from working in the outdoors in Carlow:

‘We converted a cottage there, did some additions, maintained the old cottage and added on to it. And we have guest accommodations, so brought singers, musicians, song-writers there over the last 12 or so years, to write with me. It’s been a great success’ (*ibid.*)

Niall’s comments are as much about his home as they are about the outdoors, and they aptly illustrate the nurturing capacity of the last musicking field of care I discovered – the home.

4.6 The Home

During the course of the mappings, I invited musicians to add new and different places to the map if they were not already there. In Kilkenny and Wexford, I learned about a handful of places which were important for musicking but with which I was not familiar. Not being from these towns, I was grateful for these additions, which

often acted as valuable prompts for musicians who subsequently mapped. By and large, however, musicians who chose to do add new places added their own homes, or homes in which they had experienced musicking. I was surprised to see that musicians of all ages had experienced musicking in the home, since I would have most expected this from the older generation, whose youths would have been spent in a period when musicking in the home was more often a part of everyday life.

Ó hAllmhuráin (2016a) posits that traditional Irish music was commonly performed in the home before 1935, before the changes in law detailed above. Traditional music was also passed between generations, and the home formed an important place for this communication and learning, though the influence of recordings and incoming music genres such as jazz and popular music began to influence style as time wore on (*ibid.*). Across the age groups I encountered, musicians similarly identified the home as a place of musicking. For older people more particularly, vivid childhood memories of musicking most often originated from the home, and this ties to the often formative and influential role of the family in shaping musicking:

‘I learned my first song from my mam, the first song I ever remembered at home. So musicals played a big part in our house [...] when I think of my family, it’s always music that comes to mind first, always’ (CWM6.17, musicking mapping, 31 May 2017).

These early memories were described far less frequently by young musicians who mapped. However, the home continued to be a place where people who learned musical instruments practised. Musicians sometimes described music lessons taking

place in individual homes, and marked either their own homes or the homes of their music teachers. I met some musicians who formed small ensembles which rehearsed in people's homes, especially teenage musicians. They described rehearsing with their friends to form bands, or for performances they were preparing for their classmates or school events.

I also twice met ensembles of adult musicians who rehearsed in their director's homes in Wexford, and I even mapped with one of these ensembles, Valda. For them, the home space was the best option for rehearsal and preparation, and also fostered the social component of their ensemble musicking, which for them formed an important part of the entire experience. Indeed, when I visited they rehearsed and chatted equally around the kitchen table, the rehearsal seeming much less formally organised than in a larger ensemble, and suited to the home environment. Interestingly for me, visiting them in that home space, but not being familiar with them, I found the mapping experience challenging. Unlike the more public places where I conducted other mappings, I think the familiar relationships built between the ensemble within that home setting were amplified, which contrasted more sharply to my lack of familiarity with the members of the group. In my post-mapping fieldnotes I commented:

'I was extremely grateful to [...] [ensemble director] for allowing me into her home. This fact, that it was in somebody's home, was a new feeling for me, not as "neutral" a space as a rehearsal or performance room, which is naturally more public [...] It just was a new and not easy situation to find myself in' (Valda, fieldnotes from musicking mapping, 13 November 2017).

Conducting a mapping in someone's home, also reminded me of Hawkins' (2016) description of the home as a place of creative labour and economic activity, now that technology allows for working and connecting to others remotely. Working in home spaces brings together the more personal, emotional and familial elements of oneself with the creative work. It also allows artists and creators who might otherwise be unable to work (perhaps due to family commitments) to conduct their creative practice on their own terms. Indeed, my own music teaching practice, built in my own home for ease, access and cost-effectiveness, exemplifies this.

Hawkins' emphasis on creative economic activity highlights the money-making side of creative practice in the home. Though important, this is only part of the reason that homes emerged as musicking fields of care for those I met during my fieldwork. Equally, music teachers I met during the mappings acknowledged that working from home can also be isolating, as well as disruptive to one's home family life. I reflected on the solitary nature of the music teacher's life with the director of Aspiro during our interview, and we agreed that having a position within a musical ensemble can play an important social as well as collaborative musical role for practitioners:

'I think even from my point of view, because my job is so solitary – instrumental teaching is probably one of the most solitary forms of teaching you can get -- ... it's nice to be able to work with fellow musicians, colleagues, friends, fellow Carlow people... And the banter and fun and everything around that is important as well'

(Aspiro, interview with author, 13 April 2016).

This is similar to Hawkins' additional point about the role of proximity for creativity and innovation, generated by 'the buzz' of being surrounded by fellow practitioners.

I also interviewed two musical practitioners for musicking ethnographies in their homes, in their own for-purpose music rooms or offices. The first was Aspiro's director. I had been in this room a number of times before through my work with the ensemble, and so in some senses I think that I did not pay the room the attention it deserved. In contrast, when I interviewed composer Sue Furlong for my musicking ethnography with an individual artist in Wexford, I took in so much from the room in which we met, which she referred to as her office.

I noticed the bookshelves lining two of the walls, though I did not get to see the detail of the books or folders they held. We chatted at a round table beside the window at which there were three chairs, but there was also a piano, music stands, another desk with a computer, and corkboards on some of the walls. There was a comfortable sofa, and the window, which filled one wall of the room entirely, was uncovered, letting in all the sunlight that shone that day. Sue was, as one would expect, incredibly at ease in this room. She indicated around the room at different points, to her computer and piano when talking about composing, to the bookshelves when mentioning specific pieces of work, to the score I carried and referred to when we discussed her musical practice. When she referred to her family too, Sue gestured in towards the centre of the house, towards what I would presume was the kitchen and living area.

This room was more than an office per se. It was a very special musicking field of care for Sue. It held many artefacts and memories of her musical practice

and life, and she seemed to be so in tune with them as representations of those facets of that life that she indicated to them as she told her story. This was the room in which she worked, composed, refined, and rehearsed her craft, as well as carried out all the other non-musical parts of her practice, for example administration, on which we reflected in the conversation too. This room was a nurturing and caring place for her. And indeed, as Sue, who passed away in January 2018, wrote in her final blogs, this supportive and comfortable 'bubble' was her happiest place to live and make music (Furlong, 2017).

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have identified five broad categories where musicking takes place, arguing that within this wide-ranging variety of locales and venues, some may become musicking fields of care for some musicians and audience members but not for others. I have discussed the practical qualities needed to support and nurture musicking, the individual and/or collective experiences or memories formed in these places, and the specific histories for each particular category. Examples illustrated how different types of place and venues become musicking fields of care. For instance, within the category of institutions, I demonstrated how musicking experiences and attachments are uneven in schools.

What is important to understand, I suggest, is firstly that musicking fields of care more broadly play an essential nurturing and sustaining role in the music-making that happens in the towns studied. These fields of care were clearly significant in how these towns are made and experienced as places by the 429 musicians that participated in this study. They allowed musicking to happen in

accessible and sustainable ways for practitioners, community musicians and audiences alike. I identified five broader categories, which ranged from schools and churches; to formal and temporary outdoor performance venues; to hotels, pubs and commercial venues; to community and civic centres, and tourist and outdoor spaces; to people's own homes. A number of locales I expected in the context of Irish small towns, including schools, churches, formal venues and pubs, but many were surprising, such as sports clubs, businesses and tourist places.

Secondly, in order to understand their formation and to support their sustainability, the processes through which apparently banal places are gathered and woven into nurturing musicking fields of care must be studied. If only formal performance venues were to be researched, the richness of the stories about the value and experiences of *most* of the musicking fields of care described in this chapter would be overlooked, as indeed might the very musicking practices themselves. For instance, Four Lakes Production's concert series, developed and performed entirely in a hotel, or Aspiro's weekly work, based in a GAA clubhouse, might never be known about if only formal venues, as the public monument places for musicking in each town, were studied. This result would be a much less comprehensive understanding of how musicking makes places, and indeed how the places where musicking happens are a fundamental part of it too. I suggest that attending to everyday musicking fields of care and the emplacement of musical practice more broadly needs to become more central to arts policy and funding in Ireland, a point which I develop in Chapters Six and Seven.

After over two years of conducting mappings and ethnographies, two musicking fields of care stand out to me, and neither was a type of place in the

most frequently mapped categories. The first is Sue Furlong's music room, which I described in the previous section under 'The Home'. The second is The Wexford Male Voice Choir's hall, which I described at the start of this chapter, and which remains the most memorable musicking field of care I visited. Within this small hall, I got a glimpse into the supportive environment where the choir accomplished so much of their musical learning, sharing, socialising and remembering – all of which are associated weaving and gathering processes of place and place-making that this work of musicking enables. And while the hall lacked in some respects – you could not hold performances there, most obviously – holding a mapping activity with the choristers there demonstrated how important it is for musicking to have nurturing places in which to develop and thrive. Such places allow musicians to continue to care for each other and for place in turn (Till, 2012). The value of the concept of musicking fields of care is found in this fact, and its contribution to both place and musicking scholarship is thus clear.

As I have indicated above, musicking fields of care are woven through and gather together the meaningful and memorable musicking experiences that happen there over time. These responses and experiences are generated by 'the work of musicking' and are shaped and influenced by the rhythms of musicking and daily life in places and more broadly. I move to these key strands of the musicking geography theoretical framework in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: The Work of Musicking and Rhythm in Place-Making

The power of music for myself was my *raison d'être*. I can't imagine being without it, I cannot imagine my life without it [...] I never write songs to actually, if you like, what would we say, cure something in a person's life. I write songs that affect myself, that might describe a situation that was painful for me or joyful for me, and hope that would connect with something that you had experienced as a painful thing, and realise that you're not alone (Mick Hanly, interview with author, 25 September 2017).

5.1 Introduction

Mick Hanly, a Kilkenny-based singer-songwriter I long admired, was generous, reflective and humorous during our interview. Like all of the musicians I met during this study, Mick shared his positive and negative experiences, the highlights and the challenges he faced through his career, and the fluctuating rhythms of his practice across his life. I enjoyed discussing his music, but the highpoint of our conversation was what his musical practice meant to him and the powerful *work of musicking* in Mick's life. This work resulted in both musical and more-than-musical outcomes, including performances, recordings, personal fulfilment and expression, all of which were fundamental to how Mick made his journey through life and musical livelihood in a variety of Irish towns and cities, including Kilkenny.

In the previous chapter, I described how musicking fields of care for individuals and groups come into being through the repeated practices, experiences, memories and emotions that gather and are woven together in

particular places by musicians, which, over time, gain depth and richness (Lippard, 1997). As special and supportive places where all kinds of musicking gather and flourish, these places develop out of otherwise seemingly banal and ordinary locales, such as schools, churches, hotels, pubs, community centres and outdoor settings. But how and why do such places become caring and sustaining for musicians in their varied practices? In this chapter, I argue that it is the work of musicking that is fundamental to creating the meaningful experiences, emotional responses and memories that are gathered that help create and sustain musicking fields of care.

In Section 5.2, I define the work of musicking as the musical and more-than-musical outcomes resulting from participating in or experiencing musical practice. The most often mentioned and significant outcomes identified by the participants of this study were the more-than-musical outcomes, which I consider as forms of unrecognised cultural currency and community cultural wealth (Lo, 2015; Yosso, 2005). Four overlapping main types emerged in my research: health and well-being; social bonding; learning; and personal fulfilment. While these categories are recognised in community music and music education (e.g. Pitts, 2005), these more-than-musical outcomes are not as clearly recognised in geographical research on music, despite their importance for personal and group well-being, and the maintenance of healthy places (cf. Klinenberg, 2018). At the same time, community music and music education scholarship has not yet considered how these benefits might be fundamental and indeed embedded in that central relationship musical practice has with place-making. I argue that, by attending to the work of musicking, scholars may more fully understand how the experience of musical participation

and practice generates meaningful and nurturing responses through which places are made, and how those places also foster and sustain these responses.

Section 5.3 describes the specific rhythms of musicking described by musicians in each of the towns studied, and how other rhythms, such as those of school and work, annual festivals, special events, feast days and celebrations shaped and influenced the work of musical practice. Following Buttner (1976) and Lefebvre (2004), I analyse these patterns, interactions and tensions of rhythms in musicking places, following Hawkins' (2013) arguments that geographers should consider 'the implication of artistic production within networks of power, and to reflect on art as enrolled, but also as potentially intervening within, political and socio-economic considerations' (p. 7). I consider a range of rhythmic interactions. 'Eurhythmias' occurred when the rhythms of musicking interact effectively without clashing with rhythms of place, everyday life, and broader economic, social and technological processes, yielding positive results for musicians and places equally, such as supporting practice and enhanced musical experiences. Sometimes these interactions affected the programming and planning of musicking practices in each town. Finally, in Chapter Six, I discuss arrhythmias, which occurred when musicking and other rhythms clashed discordantly, resulting in negative outcomes.

5.2 The Work of Musicking

The work of musicking is one of the four key strands of the musicking geography theoretical framework and is central to the experiential, emotional and memory-making responses that are woven and gathered to make healthy musicking places. As outlined in Chapter Two, I understand musical practices as always in process,

and doing work in the world, I extend Hawkins' (2013) call for geographers to consider 'art as something, something that produces effects, produces difference [...] always producing: worlds in progress, knowledge in the making, subjectivities to come' (*ibid.*: 10, emphasis in original) by focussing on musicking. Always producing places, knowledges and subjectivities, musicking cannot be 'measured' according to traditional understandings of music as an object, such as recorded songs on a CD. Instead, I argue that, through the concept of the work of musicking, the outcomes and effects of musicking participation for people and its role in place-making can be understood. These outcomes directly influence the gathering and weaving of musicking fields of care and of place as a whole.

In this research, I also include what I define as 'more-than-musical' outcomes, such as learning, socialisation, personal development, belonging, well-being, reflection and escape. When conducting mappings and ethnographies with musicians, I treated the technical 'musical' work as an entry point to discussing musicking. Some musicians did speak about musical outcomes, but the more-than-musical effects were often the most memorable and meaningful facets of musicking for most participants. Indeed, nearly 80% of all musicians who mapped discussed these more-than-musical aspects of musicking experience as part of their mappings. Rather than treat these outcomes as 'non-musical' as is done in some existing music scholarship (e.g. Bracken, 2015; Goodrich, 2013), I believe that these aspects of musicking experience help explain why musicians commit their time and efforts to participating in and building musical practices. For this reason, I consider these as both inherently musical, while also being about more than the 'production' of 'music' per se.

I further consider the more-than-musical outcomes of musicking as forms of unrecognised cultural currency (Lo, 2015) and community cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005), rather than forms of the more commonly used concepts of cultural and social capital, as defined by Bourdieu (1984). As I detailed in Chapter Two, I find Bourdieu's concepts limited in understanding the work that musicking does in the places I studied. Bourdieu's reliance on ideas of social class hierarchies does not make room for the ways in which musicians responded to and navigated their polyrhythmic ensembles in innovative ways, using the very skills and strategies they developed through their practices and because of the work of musicking. In contrast, Lo's and Yosso's less deterministic concepts emphasise the 'hidden' or non-dominant skills and knowledges built by communities who share particular experiences, face challenges, and develop strategies to navigate these.

Below I consider the more-than-musical outcomes of the work of musicking according to four categories: health and well-being, social bonding, learning and enrichment, and personal fulfilment. These categories held consistently for music participants across age groups, gender, and social class (see Livesey et al., 2012). They emerged from coding and analysing musicians' responses to musicking ethnographies and mappings, as detailed in Chapter Three. I also considered insights from existing research on musical participation and experience. Joseph and Southcott (2018) find that there are three aspects to the more-than-musical: social connection, musical engagement and a sense of well-being, all of which have emerged here. Livesey et al. (2012) describe 'perceived benefits in social, emotional, physical, and cognitive domains' (p. 10), each evident in the themes I detail below. Batt-Rawden and Anderson (2019) identify enjoyment, social

connection, social inclusion and the idea of singing (on which their research focuses) ‘for survival’ (p. 1). I now discuss each of my four categories of the work of musicking.

5.2.1 Health and Well-Being

Musicians talked extensively about the positive sense of health and well-being they experienced through their musicking. Research on musical participation and health benefits is diverse and wide-ranging (cf. Goodrich, 2013). As examples, specific health and well-being benefits are identified for adults living with chronic or long-term illness (e.g. Dingle et al., 2012; Reagon et al., 2017; Tamplin et al., 2013; Abell et al., 2017), and people facing mental health challenges (e.g. Williams et al., 2018; Souza Caetano et al., 2019; Clift and Morrison, 2011). That being said, this vast scholarship has never considered how these benefits might also relate to place-making.

The sense that musicking can provide a means through which people found relief or escape from the difficulties of everyday life became apparent in 58 instances during my fieldwork, echoing recent research by Lynch and Wilson (2018). For example, as one community musician in Kilkenny described:

‘It’s [singing] thoroughly enjoyable, good for the brain cells, good to be part of a group of people doing something, and I just love music’
(KKM4.1, musicking mapping, 25 February 2017).

Not surprisingly, the important work of learning how to breathe when singing, and its positive impacts outside musical practice, was picked up by a number of choristers in relation to feelings of well-being, including mental health:

‘The calm you get [performing] is really beautiful. Or you come down to choir of a Thursday night, giving out for 20 minutes, why am I doing that [participating in the choir]? And then you come down and it’s like a workout. I think it might be the breathing or whatever, it is like a work out’ (WXM6.2, musicking mapping, 19 November 2017).

This idea of improved health associated with musical practice is echoed across a spectrum of literatures, including Gimenes Bonilha et al. (2009) and Skingley et al. (2014).

Moving away from community musicians’ experiences specifically, I met a small number of practitioners participating in community music ensembles during the mappings. They viewed this participation as a means to perform and connect with musicians in a different way to their own professional work, and as a way of escaping the pressures of their professional musical practice and returning to the enjoyment of music. It is striking that these practitioners associated more enjoyment and escape with musicking that was *not* tied to professional obligations and accompanying pressures, as Abeles and Hafeli (2014) similarly find. It flagged for me what would later become an important emerging arrhythmia, to which I return in Chapter Six: the challenges of making a living in a healthy and sustainable way through professional musical practice. Indeed, the many mental health and well-being challenges working musicians face today is highlighted in scholarly research (Gembris et al., 2018; Gross and Musgrave, 2016) and by The Arts Council (2010).

5.2.2 Social Bonding

Socialising through musicking was mapped 49 times, the benefits of which included meeting new people, building lasting friendships, going out more, and feeling cared for; musicking enhanced or was tied to important friendships in 43 instances.

Scholarship on group music participation underscores the importance of social bonding and benefits that accompany musicking (Williams et al., 2018; Lamont et al., 2017; Pearce et al., 2016; Goodrich, 2013). Group musicking, for instance in a choir, is a collective endeavour, and often means the coming together of like-minded people with a common interest (Kenny, 2016). Indeed, Jacob et al. (2009) found that common interest and purpose was a motivating factor for choristers to continue their participation in community music (also Southcott and Joseph, 2013). In addition, research by Southcott and Joseph (2017) and Dabback (2015) found that the strengthened social bonds within music communities positively impact both those in the communities and society more broadly.

Making time and space for socialising and sharing was an important aspect of the weekly rhythms of some of the musical practices I encountered. For the Wexford ensemble Valda, whose rehearsal was based in their director's home (where I also conducted a mapping as relayed in the last chapter), the gathering I attended at first seemed mainly social (fieldnotes, 13 November 2017). Only after greetings, getting caught up, and exchanging stories did the group begin their musical work. Similarly, during my fieldwork with other groups, including the Wexford Male Voice Choir, Aspiro, and the Kilkenny Community Orchestra, I noted the centrality of the coffee break in the middle of their weekly rehearsals.

Musicians shared refreshments and snacks often provided by members on a rota

system, which is a form of responsibility and care for one another. With the sharing of food and drink in a familiar place, they chatted, got to know new people better, and built friendships.

The routine of caring for one another through socialising is an important one, especially for larger musical ensembles. In such groups, musicians perform in different sections, which can mean that some people may get to know a smaller group very well, but do not have the chance to get to know other musicians outside their section so well. When I observed the coffee break during The Kilkenny Community Orchestra's rehearsal, however, I found that the whole orchestra dispersed around and outside the room: no one stayed in the clusters in which they performed their instrumental parts during the rehearsal. I also learned during my work with the Wexford Male Voice Choir that, as an outcome of conversations at weekly coffee breaks, a smaller ensemble of choir members had formed to make music together for enjoyment.

A small number of community musicians also recounted stories of smaller and larger social gatherings which may have resulted from pre-work socialising, but occurred outside of their routine musicking rhythms. Musicians fondly mentioned attending concerts together, holding gatherings and meals in peoples' homes, and even excursions that required more planning. Those who ran community music groups especially seemed to recognise the value of these social, extra-musical gatherings, noting how strong bonds were fostered between their members as a result. For example, during my interview with the committee of The Wexford Male Voice Choir, I heard that:

‘Every year after our festival concert we have, I like to call it, our “wrap party”. We have a great night after the concert [...with] food, a few drinks, and then a mighty sing-song after that. ... [T]he Christmas one is always fantastic, because they’re [the choristers] in great form, and they’ve been out on the town in the cold [carol singing], and they come over and drink a few hot whiskeys. And everybody’s in great order. At the end of the day they all love singing’ (interview with author, 8 February 2018).

Another example was how, regardless of the town, young musicians described making friendships with people from different schools, when they might not have gotten the opportunity to do so but for their musicking experiences.

I got the clearest insight into the socialising aspect of the work of musicking towards the end of my work with Aspiro. In May 2019, Aspiro made the difficult decision to cease much of its programming due to ongoing financial challenges. At the meeting to announce this decision, a shocked parent commented that, without participating in the choir, her child would never have socialised beyond their own school circle, and would not have built the strong friendships they currently enjoyed. Moreover, the members of Aspiro’s adult ensemble shared their relief at the fact that their ensemble would not be winding up. The cup of tea on a Friday morning would continue, as the director put it.

I learned throughout the fieldwork that older musicians also valued their musicking for getting out and about and mixing with other people. Teater and Baldwin (2014) similarly find that community music participation is a valuable way for older people to combat social isolation (also Jenkins and Southcott, 2015).

Indeed, Klinenberg (2018, 2015) has described getting out and socialising as ‘life-saving’ activities for the elderly, providing safe social infrastructures for them in times of extreme need, such as during heatwaves. During another mapping in Carlow, an older lady who had recently moved to the town described joining the choir to get to know people, and how successful this had been. On one memorable occasion, another lady from Wexford illustrated how important her choir friends had been during her illness: ‘that camaraderie[...] you know, they [her choir friends] came in and visited me, they came up and visited me in the hospital in Dublin’ (WXM3.1, musicking mapping, 12 November 2017). The musicians cared for each other because of and as part of the social bonding that their shared musicking interests fostered.

Finally, for musical audiences, music often formed the focal point for social gatherings or outings, and, in terms of spectating at live music, participants most often recounted memorable moments with friends or family. In a special and memorable moment during the Wexford public mapping, an older married couple marked a local dance hall. Smiling, they told me that this is where they had their first date. Similarly, during the Carlow mapping, a few participants connected with my partner Shane, who was there to assist me, as they or their parents had attended gigs played by his father’s family, who were a well-known band in the 1970s and early ‘80s in the south-east. This illustrates that the social bonding afforded by musicking experience can influence musicians’ lives in lasting and memorable ways, and contributes to the weaving of special and memorable musicking fields of care as a result.

5.2.3 Learning

Apart from the benefits of well-being and social bonding, musicking also allowed those with whom I worked to develop new skills and knowledges, particularly because of the hands-on nature of musicking participation. Learning through musical practice was identified 35 times, while music lessons were mentioned 56 times. Indeed, every young (teenage) musician who mapped described learning music in some way, such as by attending music lessons outside of school, studying music for state exams in school, and/or participating in extra-curricular activities, such as choirs, orchestras and musical theatre. The vast majority of young participants' experiences took place in learning contexts (hence the prevalence of schools as musicking fields of care in Chapter Four), but no one lamented this. However, the unevenness in school musicking mentioned in the previous chapter indicated that rich learning experiences are not always guaranteed in all school situations.

Beyond formal education settings, learning and gaining new skills through musical engagement has been highlighted by the scholarly literature for different ages and in a variety of contexts (Mittelman and Papayannopoulou, 2018; Joseph and Southcott, 2018; Kenny, 2016; Koops et al., 2014; Heyning, 2010; DeNardo, 2001). At 29 points, participation in community music meant returning to a pastime or passion that had discovered at an earlier point but left behind. Some also mentioned having the chance to explore an activity they may not have had the opportunity to as a younger person. In my fieldnotes during observations with the Kilkenny Community Orchestra, during a conversation with one of the musicians I noted that:

'The majority [of the orchestra members] are playing music as a hobby. [Orchestra member] tells me she took up the cello again at the age of 50, having given it up at 22. Another lady says she took up the violin again, having also given it up in her youth (fieldnotes, Kilkenny Community Orchestra, 21 November 2017).

Returning to or learning music as a beginning adult or older person sometimes posed special challenges for both learners and teachers. Each community music facilitator with whom I spoke, for example, reflected on the ways in which they mindfully planned and facilitated their rehearsals to foster learning and development among their musicians, regardless of age. For instance, the Aspiro director described her approach when working with the adult ensemble, the majority of whom were retirees, who some might argue should not be challenged in terms of difficult repertoire or new skills:

'...I'm still challenging [the adult and retiree choristers] equally as I challenge all the different ensembles [younger choristers]. Because they're older adults you might sometimes say, "They're not able for this," or "They're not able for that" (interview with author, 13 April 2016).

This quote again indicates the care that goes into the work of musicking by a facilitator, to empower and enable musical learning for all participants. Coffman (2009) describes the value of such attentive programming and planning for the success of musicking participation among adults and older people. The participants acknowledged this work and the enrichment they experienced because of it. During a musicking mapping, for example, a chorister from Aspiro's adult ensemble

described how the learning of repertoire formed part of a whole process. The final performance represented a special and memorable achievement for her:

‘You would be amazed, you know, we just go right in there and do it [learn new repertoire], then, suddenly when you’re standing somewhere and doing a concert, and you know it’s all coming together, that’s the amazing thing’ (CWM3.10, musicking mapping, 28 April 2017).

The director of the Kilkenny Community Orchestra explained that she chose repertoire that could provide adequate interest but not be so challenging as to discourage adult musicians, the vast majority of whom were community musicians with minimal training. She was also aware that musicians had other time-demands, so developed an approach that would not require too much of a time commitment for additional preparation or practise on their part.

Practitioners also highlighted their continued learning and development through their practice. For The Carty Sisters and SOLA, both bands made of three young adults each, learning in different contexts was an intrinsic part of their everyday work, as previously mentioned in Chapter Four. Both ensembles described discovering their own musical and artistic styles and approaches, but also about how to navigate the rhythms of musicking and social life in their towns, as well as economic and policy rhythms of arts in Ireland more broadly (the latter of which I return to shortly). As one of The Carty Sisters recounted, this could lead to a certain sense of keeping oneself guarded, taking small steps rather than big moves as one finds one’s way: ‘We’re still at that stage where we don’t want to put forward too

much of ourselves -- we're still learning' (The Carty Sisters, interview with author, 18 March 2017).

I believe from my own experience that many valuable working knowledges of the music profession are gained through experience and practice, rather than formal music training prior to work. In an excerpt from my own reflective fieldnotes after performing with Four Lakes Productions, I considered the skills I had gained in performance versus in the classroom:

'I have come to really enjoy these folk and country styles of playing music, and have learned an immense amount from them. I can see the improvement not alone in my playing technique, but also in my ability to improvise music, to play with other people, and to understand the technicalities of music, far beyond anything I learned during my classical training or in university, and this is something I particularly value about this experience' (fieldnotes, Four Lakes Productions, 1 September 2016).

Like all of the musicians I met along the amateur-professional continuum, I am still gaining the skills and knowledges needed to be a musician, in the musical and more-than-musical sense, and this has informed my work as a musicking-geographer too.

Three practitioners in the study pointed out that higher education and professional qualifications in music were increasingly expected by arts funding agencies. Indeed, one Aspiro practitioner returned to education during the fieldwork period in partial response to this perception. Another Aspiro practitioner confirmed the perceived emphasis on formal training:

‘I don’t have the qualifications that other people have, but I have the experience. People don’t see [that]: they want to see “Do you have the piece of paper [diploma]?”’ (CWM3.22, musicking mapping, 28 April 2017).

As such, I conclude that this experiential learning could be supported in formal training for musicians. Indeed, reflecting on her own career, Sue Furlong said that she would like to see improvements to how young people are trained for professional music careers, because there are so many skills needed that go beyond music, including business and financial know-how, the ability to network, and learning social media and online skills. She mentioned having to ‘get a sense of business’ behind your music and your creativity, skills she learned as she built her career:

‘...you can’t survive in the arts world now without having a business sense behind you. And certainly you can’t not be prepared to push it, [with] all that social media ...’ (Sue Furlong, interview with author, 16 March 2017).

Like Sue, Four Lakes Productions argued that business skills were necessary to their musicking work, which included marketing research to gauge demand for their concerts, skills in advertising and social media, and understanding funding and grant systems and conventions. These are all skills that Thomson (2013) similarly finds are essential in building successful working musical practices. Four Lakes stated that cultivating these skills for the project was a process that had taken years and that they were still refining these abilities through their practice, and as such they were learning through and alongside their musicking work.

5.2.4 Personal Fulfilment

My fieldnotes above working with Four Lakes Productions also convey the enjoyment that was part of their musicking work. Personal fulfilment and enjoyment came up 40 times during my fieldwork conversations, another theme emphasised in musicking literature (Southcott and Joseph, 2013; Harkins et al., 2016, Kenny, 2016; Abeles and Hafeli, 2014; Pitts, 2005). I observed the pleasure and passion of musicians as communicated through body and musical languages during rehearsals and performances. Ultimately, I argue that without experiencing enjoyment and personal fulfilment when musicking, musicians would not commit to or invest so much of themselves into their practice that so evidently contributed to the gathering and weaving of the fields of care I researched. Despite the challenges musicians encountered, as outlined in Chapter Six, their passion for musical practice critically sustains the healthy musicking practices and places in each of the three towns I studied.

The pride musicians felt participating in community ensembles and performing on stage was described 24 times. As one community musician recounted:

‘There’s a sense of pride, there’s a great satisfaction to be got from something that’s really hard, and at the end of the process when you can perform something really well, that’s beautiful’ (WXM3, individual voice could not be identified, musicking mapping, 12 November 2017).

At a personal level, the sense of confidence gained through performance was also mentioned by ten musicians. For example, I shared with a group of young Kilkenny

musicians during a mapping that I was afraid of performing as a soloist because I felt so exposed onstage. But they shared with me their perspective, that their annual stage productions were a highlight of their musicking year, and that they had, in fact, gained a lot of confidence from and looked forward to performing onstage.

Parents nearly always gave as much description of their children's musicking as their own, demonstrating, I believe, a less overt but nonetheless important sense of achievement. As they witnessed their children learn music, grow and perform on stage, they were probably aware of the fears their children faced in doing so, and the accomplishments they made in the process. As one example, a parent described a recent major performance in which her child was involved as 'a proud moment, seeing everyone perform, and even seeing [her child] learn; I never got the opportunity myself' (CWMPub.10, musicking mapping, 17 June 2017).

Self-esteem also manifested very specifically in relation to the work of musicking as contributing to the positive associations with a town. I heard during my initial fieldwork with the Wexford Male Voice Choir that they were seen as a sort of 'institution' in the town, as the choir had been established for such a long time. The idea of being an institution was not only due to the conventional musical work of the choir per se, but also to their voluntary contributions to the town, including through charitable voluntary work, heritage performances at commemorations and historic events, and representing Wexford town in other places in Ireland and abroad. Another example mentioned by participants was the long history of the Wexford Opera Festival, and how this had prompted so much

musical development in the town, that the town was now a focal point for music nationally and internationally.

In Carlow, Aspiro's director stated in my pilot study that the choir 'put Carlow on the map' (also Kavanagh, 2015). When I asked about this idea again in a later interview, she responded:

'I suppose, for me, the basis of thinking, and maybe knowing, that [Aspiro] puts Carlow on the map, is I have spent my whole life myself in Carlow. And it is really important to me, through the work that I do[, ...] that you don't get caught up in your own work with regard to the outcome musically. But you also are connected to, maybe, what this music can do to help put Carlow on the map' (interview with author, 13 April 2016).

She believed that, by the choristers of Aspiro travelling and performing in other parts of Ireland and indeed internationally, they were demonstrating the artistry and skill developed by a musical ensemble from the town. Similarly, she considered an upcoming major performance in Carlow as an opportunity for the choristers to show their home audience their achievements. Subsequently, I commented on the fact that her entire staff come from Carlow, which she felt was a further point of pride in the town and empowering the musicians that come from it. At the same time, in our earlier conversations, she also lamented the fact that this pool of talent is under-recognised: 'I think Carlow is a very strong musical town, as you've shown through your own mapping as well. And I think probably it's not appreciated, not known' (*ibid.*).

Four Lakes Productions were also proud of their town's rich history, and wanted to celebrate and spread its story through their work, as evidenced by the development of their concert series, which they titled 'Follow Me Up to Carlow' after a well-known song of the same name, and their collaborations with local businesses, organisations, and musicians. However, they also lamented that it was perhaps because they tried to base this concert series about Carlow in the town itself that they faced challenges in building audiences and gaining financial backing. Kearney (2009) echoes the idea of local audiences not necessarily sharing in the town's musicking sense of place pride to the same extent as visiting audiences, based on his work in Tralee, County Kerry.

In this discussion, I have illustrated four categories of the work of musicking stemming largely from the more-than-musical facets of musical practice and experience. This often under-recognised work of musicking is, I argue, an important form of cultural wealth, as it generates the meanings, emotions and memories that are gathered and woven together to make musicking fields of care, and contributes to the sense of place for the towns more broadly. In the next section, I discuss rhythms and their interactions that influence how musicking and place-making is shaped at multiple scales.

5.3 Rhythms and Musical Practice

When I spoke with musicians about their musical lives, careers and experiences during my fieldwork, it was inevitable that memories and accounts of different points along their musicking journeys would be structured by what I now understand as the rhythms of life. Indeed, both the musicking mappings and

ethnographies were forms of story-telling, a powerful process tied to place-making (Basso, 1996). But as the examples in the previous sections suggest, it was not only stories about practitioner's personal lives, but also about families and groups across generations, and histories of the towns in which they lived, that were relayed to me. Indeed, it is only with unfolding of time that the weaving and gathering processes of place happen, processes that provide both depth (Lippard, 1997) and change (Massey, 2005).

Musicians in the fieldwork worked hard to coordinate seasons, schedules and routines to facilitate this work. The concord and positive result of these interactions between rhythms is described by Lefebvre (2004) as an example of eurhythmia. Concurrently, wider developments in technology, social life and education were evident in the fieldwork accounts, emerging through discussions of the work of musicking and musical practices. Sometimes musicians faced discord between rhythms, or arrhythmia (*ibid.*). Examining these sets of changes offers initial insights into the ways that the rhythms of musicking, places and wider social, economic and political forces interact to form particular places as polyrhythmic ensembles.

In my research I also wanted to attend to the everyday, weekly, and other micro-scale temporal rhythms that emerged during the fieldwork to consider the ways in which musicking plays out in and shapes places and people's lives. The remainder of this chapter focuses on such interactions structuring everyday musical practice in places as well as eurhythmic interactions associated within dominant musicking seasons. I then describe how broader social, educational and technological rhythms interacted with musicking, and how these have shaped the

work of musicking over time. Although I do mention some examples of arrhythmia below, I defer most of this discussion to Chapter Six.

5.3.1 Musicking Seasons and Weekly and Everyday Rhythms

From what has emerged from the fieldwork, musicians established clear rhythms to their practices that interacted with the rhythms of other facets of everyday life in places. The result is that for each town studied, musicking had somewhat similar annual and seasonal rhythms. Notably, there is little literature on the scheduling and planning rhythms of local musicking practices and their close association with rhythms of local places, despite their close connections. More existing research relates to broadcast media, including music, rather than to musical practices. For instance, Mano (2009) found that the scheduling of music programming on Radio Zimbabwe was influenced closely by the rhythms of daily life of its listeners. Murray (2013) argues that the scheduling of media broadcast by Raidio Teilifís Éireann, Ireland's national broadcaster, is viewed as a powerful strategic tool for maximising cost-effectiveness, resulting in stymied creativity. However, the everyday practices of musicking in small towns, and the ways in which musicians carve out special rhythms for their practices, has not been attended to.

In the three towns I studied, musicians structured their practices according to regular 'seasons' of musical practice that were related closely to the school and academic terms, the working year, and annual events and celebrations such as Christmas and St. Patrick's Day. Scheduling their work ensured the creation of as many musicking eurhythmias as possible. For example, community music ensembles rehearsed only during the autumn, winter, and spring/early summer

months, with the end of the work or academic year (May or June) culminating in a special performance or project following months of work. Community music facilitators held their rehearsals and performances during evenings and weekends – the most conventional out-of-work times – to fit into the working rhythms of the majority of their members. Practitioners shaped their everyday rhythms around their multiple working roles, so that they could for instance work in schools and see to their administrative duties during the day, and perform or facilitate community music at night. This presented arrhythmias in balancing their work and life commitments to which I return in the next chapter.

Audiences were also more likely to attend musical events during gaps in school and work scheduling, and at conventional ritual times, so support for community musicians and practitioners was often relatively easy to build when they held their performances during these times. Musicking learning for young people was often shaped by the rhythms of exams, whereas social bonding happened when people gathered to make or listen to music together in more relaxed contexts, outside working patterns. Practitioners and community music facilitators capitalised on these opportunities, when audiences were often more likely to attend concerts, shaping their own rhythms by holding performances or fundraisers. For example, the vast majority of ensembles who mapped held annual performances at the end of the academic year and at Christmas, and sometimes also during St. Patrick's Day celebrations. Ensembles that had religious associations often held other performances at feast times too.

The majority of ensembles also mounted performances at annual local festivals, especially since these could better guarantee established audiences as

well as new ones, as visitors to the town would likely already be in attendance at the festival for other events. These regular annual performances afforded opportunities for the musicians to showcase their year's work, fundraise, and advertise to potential new members, creating important eurhythmias. Musicians understood these occasions as sustaining their work over the longer term.

Additionally, during musicking ethnographies and mappings, participants mentioned their collaborations with local businesses, tourism bodies, and sports organisations for seasonal events. For Four Lakes Productions, for example, one of their most successful performances came about as a result of collaboration with the national GAA body, who held their annual congress in Carlow at that time. Through this project the group came to understand that by collaborating with an organisation in the community, they could improve support for their performances, capitalising on the GAA's network of supporters and established rhythms of events and outreach. The result was the creation of a broadened audience and additional resources for their own work. Four Lakes continued to adopt this collaboration route over the course of my research, and I noted that their performances were better attended, and costs met much more easily. Despite their innovative approach, however, the extent to which collaborations could provide additional resources was limited and the result in this case was extreme: Four Lakes unfortunately had to cease their practice in late 2018. I observe that only a certain number of organisations in a small town have the means and following to resource large scale performance projects. Perhaps this indicates that supports from local arts offices and bodies is crucial in small towns as a result, whereas in larger cities there are comparably more organisations with whom to build collaborations.

Rhythms and their interactions are complex, and a eurhythmia in one sense can be an arrhythmia in another. For instance, the Wexford Male Voice Choir described how their very busy schedule of performances and rehearsals created clashes or arrhythmias between their musicking rhythms and daily life. However, most mentioned prioritising these frequent performances, especially collaborations with local organisations and charities, since these are a crucial way of recruiting new members and raising funds (a musicking eurhythmia). In addition to everyday working rhythms of musicians, I also discerned broader rhythmic interactions across time that shaped the work of musicking in each of the towns studied. Their discussion will form the remainder of the section.

5.3.2 Rhythms Influencing Musicking Over Time

I found that musicians mentioned how recent developments in religion, social life and education; live musicking; and technology created new rhythms, and interacted with and affected those of musicking and place-making in each town. By attending to how the practice and work of musicking adapted to, was influenced by, or clashed with the new and changing rhythms in these realms of place and society, we may more fully understand how places are (re)made through musicking.

5.3.2.a Developments in Social Life, Education and Musicking

As my findings around musicking fields of care in Chapter Four demonstrate, schools and churches were the most widely cited musicking fields of care in each town. I noted how many musical practices once central to the musicking lives of the towns studied were linked to religious practice (Hogan, 2014). These roles have

diminished or shifted over time. For example, musicians mentioned particular feasts as related to religious musicking practices that have all but disappeared. An excellent illustration was presented by one lady during a mapping in Carlow, who told the story of her family members having worked as professional keeners, people whose role was to sing and wail during wakes and funerals. Another lady asked what this meant, having never heard of it, which started a whole conversation about memories of keeners at different points in some of the choristers' lives. Another example was when a participant mentioned Corpus Christi, a Roman Catholic Holy Day, which prompted other forgotten musical practices:

'...[M]yself and my sister, on Corpus Christi, we would come out from the school with our first Communion frocks, and the Legion of Mary would lead us. This was a kind of a thing we had to do years ago' (CWM6.21, musicking mapping, 31 May 2017).

In addition, church musicking was an introduction to learning and performing music for some adult and older musicians, who often mentioned church musicking on a weekly basis as well as for special events and religious feasts.

A much smaller proportion of the young musicians with whom I mapped participated in music through a religious context. Their experiences of musicking in religious settings were also different to those of adult and elderly musicians. Young musicians most often talked about church musicking in the context of one-off events, such as at First Holy Communions, where they might sing with their school choir. Equally, churches were still musicking fields of care for young musicians as performance venues (religious and otherwise), as I detailed in Chapter Four.

Especially for younger people, these examples illustrate how the work of musicking in churches has shifted from a central to more infrequent institutional presence in their lives through religious worship (and all it entails), and a more neutral role of providing venues to perform. While it was beyond the scope of this research to investigate these changes in religious practice more closely, I discern parallels with the fact that people were more likely to practice religion regularly in times past than now, which of course is related to a swathe of changes in social life and its rhythms, and might also be to do with more recent developments particularly with regard to the Catholic Church in Ireland.

This moves us to the partnering changes in school musicking. It is arguable that young people now have more formal opportunities to participate in musicking than in the past. As outlined in Chapter Four, music has become a more central part of the musicking lives of education settings. It is part of preschool, primary and secondary school curricula, though not offered universally in secondary schools, and the new state-led music education initiative Music Generation was either being rolled out or in operation for most towns across most of the country as of the completion of this thesis. Since music education was not part of formal curricula until more recent times, older musicians could not be guaranteed the breadth of music learning opportunities through schools as young people now realise. This is not to say that older people did not describe musical experience during their school days, but to indicate that its provision was more highly uneven than is the case for students today.

Furthermore, as discussed above, music education research has made clear the benefits of musical participation for personal growth, and to enhance teaching

and learning. As such, the work of musicking and learning has actually expanded towards a more holistic view of music's role in enhancing education, and as including more-than-musical skills. The rhythms of this expansion parallel developments in education curricula and policy.

To summarise, while the work of musicking in churches and schools has changed over time, their extensive role as musicking fields of care in each town continues. In addition, based on the range of age groups of musicians with whom I worked, participation in community music and learning music tended to decrease as people moved into their adult lives in each town. Perhaps this is because of the increase in challenges of reconciling the rhythms of musicking with work and family life, as detailed above. It might also reflect the lack of musical education and access for adult learners, when compared to the provision of music in schools, at a policy level (see Chapter Six). Equally, while church choirs today tend not to exclude people based on age, they perhaps do not seem as attractive to young people as before, and so cannot provide avenues to explore and learn music beyond the school setting as they once did.

While I cannot dispute the availability of community music ensembles for adults in each town, these ensembles often operated almost entirely independently of existing institutions, and so lacked many basic resources afforded to schools and churches, for instance. Thus, one cannot equate institutional musicking opportunities for adults with community musicking ensembles. While community groups are currently attempting to fill the gap created by the lack of funding, infrastructure, and other resources, this is not sustainable, as evidenced for

example by Aspiro's demise in the last months of the research. This particular arrhythmia I return to in Chapter Six.

5.3.2.b Live Musicking

The nature of live audience musicking has also changed significantly over time in terms of its availability and uptake in local places. According to the adults and retiree musicians who mapped, attending live music performances by local musicians in local venues was a much more common feature of everyday life in the past. Nowadays, I found that it is a less frequent part of everyday life at a local level, despite the continued strength of hotel musicking in general, and pub musicking I noted for Kilkenny in the previous chapter. Historically, as relayed to me by adult and older musicians, going to see showbands, and dancing and music in local halls, was often a central part of a town's social and musicking rhythms. I also heard about performances by much bigger and more well-known acts in the three towns I studied in the past. In Carlow for example, musicians described going to gigs by Eric Clapton, Johnny Cash, U2, Cliff Richard and The Dubliners in a now disused youth centre, an abandoned hotel and a local pub in the town. Though these artists were likely less well-known then than now, it nonetheless seems that well-known artists were more willing to travel to smaller places to play gigs than they are nowadays. As a result, the rhythms of musicking and social lives for audiences of all ages at that time were more focussed on their own towns than they are today, and the social bonding and personal fulfilment that is part of the work of musicking was better fostered there as a result.

As I detail at length in Chapter Six, live musicking arrhythmias emerged in each town, particularly for young audiences, who more often travelled to other cities to attend live music events. As a result, it is possible that these young audiences do not experience the work of musicking that contributes to the weaving of special live musicking fields of care for them as meaningfully as they could. That being said, younger musicians often mentioned supporting their friends' performances, but primarily because of their relationship with their friends rather than out of interest in the music. This again illustrates how social-bonding rhythms coincide with those of musicking. I return to live musicking and audience arrhythmias in Chapter Six.

5.3.3.c Technology and Musicking

The last set of changing rhythms I found were around technology and musical experience. Technology and social media have developed across the lives of the musicians with whom I worked, as well as changed how people listen to and engage with music, thereby affecting everyday musicking rhythms. For example, and as I further detail in Chapter Six, a movement from radio to streaming music over the internet has changed everyday music consumption, and practitioners must constantly work to stay in touch with the online and social media worlds in order to meet the constant demand for an up-to-date online presence (also Hawkins, 2016).

In my fieldwork, I found that adults and older people talked about LPs, radio stations (including then-illegal ones like *Radio Luxembourg*), and cassette tapes – media that are very different from the near ubiquitous smart phones and streaming

services of much music listening today. For example, some of Niall Toner's most formative early music moments surrounded listening to music:

'I was listening to Radio Luxembourg, to the American Forces Radio on Radio Luxembourg. Kind of clandestinely because it was forbidden to do it. And RTÉ was very conservative [...] I heard Elvis Presley singing on the radio network, songs like 'Blue Moon of Kentucky'. And I was amazed by the sound, very excited by it. And I couldn't wait to tell my friend across the road. And when I told him, he said, "Wait til you hear the original!" And I said, "What does that mean?" I didn't understand the term, so he brought me into his house. And he had a vinyl collection, vinyl records' (interview with author, 30 June 2017).

Niall spoke about this whole experience with a kind of reverence that I find typical of people who collected and treasured music collections of their own (Sonnichsen, 2013, Vachhini, 2013 and Schuker, 2010 argue similarly). It took time, resources and patience to build up a music collection. I remember my father telling me how his uncle bought him a cassette recorder, and he would listen to the radio for hours in order to record his favourite songs to be able to playback at will later. He still has all of these cassettes; they are so precious that he will not part with them, even though we do not even have a means of playing them back now.

In contrast, the few young people who did reflect on listening to music mentioned their phones and iPods, and were much more nonchalant about listening to music generally. It seemed that, for them, listening to music has become a much banal practice in the sense that it is incredibly portable – even in

comparison to the Discman players or gigantic iPod classics of my own teenage years! The listener has much more choice over what they listen to, being able to access almost any type of music from anywhere at any time, a sort of perpetual eurhythmia. I also ponder whether this ability, which Bull (2010) likens to creating a constant, personalised sound world, has rendered listening to music a less important, taken-for-granted practice for which a person does not create a special time and place, in contrast to the reverence with which music collections were built and enjoyed in the past. Being able to listen to one's favourite artists, or discover new music at the touch of a button, is not a novelty, but a part of the life rhythms of listening to music with which these young musicians have grown up.

Indeed, I reflect back on a few public mapping conversations especially, where people were actually holding their phones or earphones in their hands, or a few wearing headphones around their necks, and yet did not mention listening to music as an important element of their musicking lives in place. I only had one lengthy conversation with a young person about listening to music. Interestingly, she said that she listened to music 'all the time', such that she felt that most places on the map were, for her, musical. She recounted a funny story about becoming lost in the music she was listening to while walking in a public place:

'I listen to a lot of foreign music, like K-pop and everything. And I was standing there [in a public place] listening to that, and I was doing one of the choreographies to one of the songs, and someone caught me, and I was like "Oh, god no!", and I literally ran away! [laughter]' (KKMPub.8, musicking mapping, 9 June 2018).

Watson and Drakeford-Allen (2016) and Bull (2010, 2005) argue that listening to music via mobile technologies changes how we experience space. Technologies have also changed community and professional musical practice. Community musicians sometimes made recordings on their mobile phones during rehearsals with which to work on their music at home. Others used social media and email to circulate resources, with YouTube providing easily accessible recordings. I return to social media, and its role in practitioners' work to overcome arrhythmias they face in building their practices, in Chapter Six. To close this discussion on rhythms and the work of musicking, I reiterate that the value of studying rhythms in musicking and place-making is in the ability to elucidate the interactions and tensions between the many forces and influences that make places polyrhythmic ensembles.

5.4 Conclusion

My insights on the work of musicking in this chapter contribute to geographical understandings of the important co-constitutive relationships between the work of art (Hawkins, 2013), in this case of musicking, and place-making. While places gather the depth of memories and emotions, as described in the last chapter, the work of musicking is critical in creating meaningful, embodied personal and social experiences in musicking fields of care. In this chapter, I argued that the work of musicking is extensive and includes not only the more traditional 'musical' outputs of practice, such as performances or compositions, but also the more-than-musical aspects of musical experience. I described four main outcomes that come from musical experience and participation, detailing the benefits in health and well-being, social bonding, learning, and personal fulfilment.

Although music education scholarship acknowledges similar more-than-musical outcomes, my attention to the work of musicking as emplaced experiences contributes to this existing literature by recognising the significance of place and place-making. Making these links through the insights of this and the previous chapter, and indeed through the musicking geography theoretical framework overall, is a valuable contribution to musicking scholarship. At the same time, attending to these more-than-musical aspects of musicking enhances the understanding of how places weave and gather experiences, peoples, and matter. Through the social relations and personal forms of development fostered in the work of musicking, which I consider as forms of emotional capital and cultural currency, musicians also create nurturing and sustaining fields of care where musical practices develop and flourish.

As such, my findings support those of Klinenberg (2018), who argues that meaningful social bonding and collective experiences need to be fostered to create healthy places to live. I further extended these insights by also considering the interactions between the rhythms of musicking, everyday life and broader social, cultural, economic and political life, which affect the ways in which the work of musicking is experienced, and thus how places are made. Some of the ways in which rhythms interacted in each place yielded positive results. Practitioners planned their projects around annual, seasonal, and festival rhythms, helping to build larger audiences and create meaningful opportunities for both community musicians and musical audiences to experience music. Facilitators of community music ensembles planned their practices around the working and daily life rhythms of their ensemble participants, helping to ensure that the enjoyment, learning and

well-being fostered by participation as part of the work of musicking could continue to be supported.

Rhythms of broader societal, educational and technological transformation also influenced the work of musicking. Developments in education curricula and policy have led to more widespread and meaningful musicking engagements in schools, thus fostering learning and related personal development skills. Simultaneously, churches continue to play a role as musicking fields of care, though the nature of their role has shifted significantly in tandem with changes in religious practices. Live musicking rhythms are now stretched across larger cities and towns rather than their previous concentration in small towns. And technological advances mean that listening to any music at the mere touch of a button is now commonplace for many via smartphone and streaming technologies.

This chapter has helped provide empirical evidence for my conceptualisation of places as polyrhythmic ensembles. Some of the main rhythms in musicking, everyday life, society and particular towns that emerged during the fieldwork were eurhythmic, as this chapter has described. However, musicians also faced challenges related to their inability to reconcile musicking and other rhythms. These and other significant arrhythmias were also raised by musicians during the fieldwork. I turn to the arrhythmias and strategies to overcome these that were presented to me by participants during the fieldwork in the next chapter.

Chapter Six: Musicking Arrhythmias in the Polyrhythmic Ensemble

‘It’s a very hard life, it’s a very hard life. I think... there are a couple of centres in Ireland – Dublin, Cork are brilliant, big centres. Smaller places like us now – Wexford, Carlow – you have to kind of spread your wings a bit. But it’s a very hard life ... It’s not an easy life financially to support a family. But there’s something in there [gestures to her heart] you can’t deny’ (Sue Furlong, interview with author, 16 March 2017).

6.1 Introduction

As the Wexford-based composer Sue Furlong describes above, it can be very challenging to build a successful musical practice and career, especially in smaller towns in Ireland. While the musicking fields of care and work of musicking discussed in the previous chapters indicate that musical participation and experience contribute to social spaces of towns and enrich the everyday lives of musicians and inhabitants in a range of positive ways, not all aspects of musicking were so positive. As Sue indicated in our interview, making a living from music, while living in their hometown of Wexford and supporting her family, made for a very hard life.

Musicking scholarship recognises the need to examine both positive and negative aspects and perceptions of musical practice and experience (Kenny, 2016; Schippers, 2016). In this chapter, I argue that the opportunities and difficulties of musicking must also be considered from a place-based perspective. This chapter

identifies the challenges the musicians in this study faced, the strategies they deployed to overcome them, and considers possible future policy and arts supports that can better sustain musical practice and place-making processes in small Irish towns. In Chapter Five I detailed how the musicking I studied was shaped by rhythms, including of work life, festivals, local events, and celebrations, to name a few. When musicians weaved and gathered their musicking practice into concord with the rhythms of everyday life in the towns in which they lived, those interactions were called eurhythmias, yielding possibilities for sustaining musicking fields of care. In contrast, arrhythmias occurred when musicking rhythms did not interact with these other rhythms harmoniously, and even limited or negatively impacted practice. Taken together such outcomes can negatively affect the function of musicking, including as providing healthy social infrastructures for towns. I argue that considering these arrhythmias as part of the networked, multiscale polyrhythmic ensemble of place yields a critical analysis of social and power relations, such as those of arts governance, in particular towns. I argue that understanding musicking according to a relational (Massey, 2005) and polyrhythmic understanding of place is key to fostering the weaving and gathering of musicking fields of care, which in turn supports and sustains healthy place-making processes. Supporting musicking, in other words, supports healthy places to live.

This chapter analyses two related sets of arrhythmias that emerged during fieldwork, which I describe according to the perspectives of musical practitioners, community musicians and audiences. I discuss the difficulties these musicians faced and some of the ways in which they sought to navigate them, extending some points briefly flagged in the previous chapter too. Section 6.2 addresses musicking

and life arrhythmias. Complications in balancing the rhythms of life and musicking for professional practitioners resulted from limited opportunities, which affected their daily lives negatively. Secondly, community musicians found it difficult to develop their memberships to sustain their ensembles, because the conflicting schedules between their participants' work and family lives sometimes limited their ability to fully commit to community music ensembles. Thirdly, audiences described the limited availability of live musicking they wanted to go to in their own towns, which meant travelling elsewhere (often to cities). The second set of arrhythmias is discussed in Section 6.3, and relates to the costs and financial challenges in developing, participating in or experiencing musicking. Professionals outlined difficulties in making a living from their practice, meeting the costs of developing projects, building audiences, and navigating the funding system. Community musicians detailed such financial problems as meeting their running and project costs. For audiences, issues of cost associated with attending live musicking also emerged.

Section 6.4 reflects on these arrhythmic challenges through the lens of national and local arts funding contexts. In Chapter One, I introduced two significant policy documents in Irish arts and cultural life that were launched during the course of the fieldwork. These exemplify the policy rhythms through which the musicians in the fieldwork practiced, and also elucidate the state's position on and supports for arts and creativity. I return to and analyse these arts and cultural policy documents, and how practitioners (as professionals looking to finance working practices, facilitate community ensembles and mount events for audiences) experienced the possibilities and limitations of policy rhythms. As I detail, in

general, all practitioners flagged difficulties in navigating this funding system. I conclude the chapter in Section 6.5, and return to questions about the lessons learned in this PhD to make recommendations for future policy in Chapter Seven.

6.2 Musicking-Life Arrhythmias

This first set of arrhythmias relates to the ways in which musicking rhythms conflicted with everyday rhythms of work, family, and social life for the musicians in all three towns. First, I discuss practitioners, who had limited opportunities to make a sustainable living, so worked long and unsociable hours, negatively affecting their personal lives. Next I turn to community ensembles, whose biggest challenge was to develop and maintain their memberships, as commitment to ensembles was often difficult to coordinate with musicians' other life rhythms. Finally, for audiences, a perceived lack of live music availability meant they could not experience the work of musicking as fully as possible in their own towns.

6.2.1 Arrhythmias in Professional Musical Practice: Getting a Healthy Work-Life Balance

As indicated above by Sue Furlong's opening quotation, for professional musicians it is difficult to build a practice, develop opportunities, and make a living, especially in small towns like Wexford. Like Sue, nearly all practitioners I talked to in the fieldwork flagged difficulties in building viable professional practices through which they could make an adequate living in small towns. Over 90% of practitioners in this study held multiple roles. As a result, they faced pressures in their personal lives because of these demands. Such arrhythmias in their work-life balance had

significant impacts on their artistic and personal lives. In the small town contexts of this study, my research found that those challenges are exacerbated by reduced opportunities and resources for artistic development and networking. Existing research on small towns similarly highlights difficulties in attracting investment, challenges in maintaining infrastructures and amenities, and outmigration of young residents who move away to seek better work opportunities (Demazière, 2017; Brody, 2015; Knox and Mayer, 2013; Powe and Hart, 2009). While none of this research examines artistic or musical practices in small towns, the similarities in respect of limited work opportunities and outmigration to find better opportunities resonates with my empirical findings, as will become clear during these discussions.

For the practitioners of this study, there was a sense that the hours and opportunities of paid work varied widely and were quite uneven; to take advantage of job opportunities, their personal lives were often negatively affected. For example, because most voluntary community music ensembles rehearsed in the evening time, the practitioner-facilitators of these ensembles had to shape their daily lives around that schedule. Music teachers who gave private lessons also often did so in the evening time or at weekends to accommodate their students' availability. But these are times when their own family might need care, or opportunities to socialise presented, or they simply needed downtime after working in different music roles during the weekday hours, and practitioners faced the issue of trying to reconcile all of these rhythms.

These findings resonate with existing popular and research studies for musical practitioners and artists in general. A recent article in *The Irish Times* headlined: 'If you want to be an artist with a career, don't have children' (Keating,

2018). It detailed the difficulties Irish artists faced in trying to balance family life and caring responsibilities with artistic development, and career building. Similarly, Hawkins (2016) describes the 'precariousness' (p. 54) of artists' and creative practitioners' lives, who have uncertain work opportunities, which are often unregulated and poorly remunerated. Artists may feel as though they are always 'at work' (Kitchin, 2019), or feel the need to hold other jobs to overcome this precariousness (Morgan, Wood and Nelligan, 2013). This was also the case for the practitioners with whom I worked in this research.

As a result of these work and life arrhythmias, a few practitioners described how they often did not get to socialise or experience live gigs themselves because they were often working. The Carty Sisters, who were studying while performing professionally, also pointed to the fact that their university commitments often clashed with professional opportunities; Ann Small (2009) also noted this of her practice. The Carty Sisters indicated how prioritising their study responsibilities negatively affected their standing with promoters and music agents:

'If I turn around and say I've an exam this week, I can't commit [to a performance opportunity], then I have to pull out. And then [music promoters] are going to say we need 100% from you' (The Carty Sisters, interview with author, 18 March 2017).

Similarly, the members of SOLA each worked full-time during the day, and performed evenings and weekends, because their musical practice was only recently developed. They described an anxiety at knowing when it would be wise and viable to move into working in music without keeping other jobs (interview with author, 29 May 2018). They felt they could not develop their practice as fully

as possible when they were tied to other jobs, and spoke about their exhaustion when performing during the week after a long work day. Sometimes they felt it was simply not worth trying to continue in music due to clashes with the rhythms of reliable employment.

Additionally, in this context of limited paid opportunities, practitioners were not always able to take advantage of unexpected rhythms that punctuated the more 'standard' musicking rhythms of performances and rehearsals. For example, during festivals, when events sometimes took place across the day, new scheduling conflicts emerged for practitioners. As such, they may not have been able to capitalise on one-off festival musical jobs in one role (as a performer, composer, director, singer, or other) because of other existing work responsibilities. For example, Aspiro's director described her efforts to capitalise on new audiences and collaborative opportunities with visiting audiences during a festival happening in Carlow (interview with author, 13 April 2016). Her goal at the time was to hold a lunchtime concert to fit into the festival schedule – an attempt to create a eurhythmia. However, due to the working rhythms of the community musicians she facilitated, a full choir and balanced performance was not possible, so she did not go ahead with the concert.

My data indicates that professionals often worked in multiple roles, alone and in groups, and made their practices mobile, as ways to make a sustainable living. These strategies were essential for overcoming financial difficulties, to which I return below. I now move to community musicians' musicking-life challenges.

6.2.2 Community Music Arrhythmias: Balancing Musicking Commitments and Life Rhythms

Recall that community music ensembles are comprised of voluntary members mostly interested in enhancing their lives and contributing to the community through music. As I detailed in Chapter Five, the majority of these participants took up community music because of the work of musicking: to enjoy it, to learn, to relax, to practice a pastime and so on. However, to experience community music meaningfully or fully, an ensemble member needs more than just being interested, as Rottsolk (2000) also identifies. The time and scheduling commitments needed to accomplish the aims of the programmes set out by community music facilitators may lead to difficulties, or arrhythmia, with some members' personal life schedules. Thus, community music ensembles identified similar challenges as practitioners in balancing musicking and life rhythms, including building viable practices. There were nonetheless at least two distinctive challenges these ensembles faced: maintaining and developing memberships, and competing with other community ensembles or newly developed musicking programmes, many of the latter of which ran shorter-term projects. Community ensemble strategies in response included creating smaller groups, sometimes in a path of progression.

Community music facilitators across 17 of the 18 ensembles with whom I mapped noted fluctuating numbers in their programmes, and the difficulty of attracting new members; the eighteenth was a small vocal ensemble and so did not require large numbers. This was a very pressing concern for a number of ensembles specialising in youth or older-aged music in particular, where members naturally moved on once they reached a certain age, such as when they left school in the

case of the former, or feeling unable to participate due to fatigue or other reasons for the latter. For some of the older musicians, there was a sense of responsibility to ensure the viability of the ensemble. During my first meeting with The Wexford Male Voice Choir, for example, I was told that some had 'stayed on' in the choir long after they had felt they were no longer able to participate fully, to ensure that 'replacement' singers could be found to fill their vocal parts and keep the choir going. I was struck by their sense of duty to the choir, which came from years of experiencing the meaningful work of musicking and weaving musicking fields of care. But this dutifulness was difficult to instil in new members, and may not be attractive to those looking at joining the group as a hobby, which might seem by definition more easy-going.

To participate in the community music ensemble in the longer term, new members had to make room in the schedules of their own lives. The rehearsal and performance agendas of an ensemble might not mesh with the complex rhythms of people's lives, which meant that some individuals gave up quite quickly after joining an ensemble. Interestingly, one community music facilitator of two choirs in Wexford felt that in the first six months new members might be at risk of leaving, but if they stayed beyond this point, they usually stayed for the longer term. These new members may have needed this time to experience the work of musicking fully and to adequately become interwoven into a nurturing musicking field of care. Taag (2013) urges community music facilitators to recognise the many commitments members will have, and to be as understanding of and flexible around this as possible. Speaking of her U.S.-based practice, A. Small (2009) also describes the challenges young community musicians in particular faced in balancing their

musical participation with school, sport and other pastimes. She found that, when it came down to it, musicking often suffered.

The wide availability of community musicking opportunities in all three places also presented challenges in maintaining membership. Multiple membership of community ensembles was discussed 77 times in the fieldwork. In Wexford, adult community musicians in two ensembles described a sense that, once they joined one community music group, they wanted or were sometimes invited or persuaded to participate in others. They noted feeling that they sometimes felt stretched too far, a sort of arrhythmia whereby they did not have enough time to meaningfully experience and enjoy these multiple ensembles, resulting in their departure from some and/or electing not to join others. One musical practitioner who facilitated a number of community music ensembles in Wexford spoke at length about this issue in a town that seems to have so many community musicking avenues (a eurhythmia):

‘We’ve got access to music at every level. The downside of that is that all of us that are in music are in a number of different things, and we’re spread quite thinly [...] On the one hand, you could say the place is completely awash with music, but it [the availability of music] does stress [recruiting members] from the point of view of the availability of good singers’ (WXM3.4, musicking mapping, 12 November 2017).

Similar views were expressed by a handful of adult community musicians in Carlow and Kilkenny. Young musicians in Carlow and Kilkenny who mapped described being involved in many different ensembles, but only a handful said that this presented

challenges in balancing musicking with their other life rhythms. As mentioned in Chapter Five, for these young musicians, their enjoyment of participation and the social bonding it allowed in particular seemed to outweigh the difficulties in fitting everything in.

During this research, Music Generation (MG) programmes existed in all three places, with Carlow's being well established and the others just launching at the time of writing. The gap that might once have been filled by community music organisations in terms of providing opportunities for young people to participate in group music may now be somewhat addressed through MG programmes, though research has not yet been undertaken to assess the extent to which state-supported community music efforts mesh effectively or otherwise with existing ensembles in places. However, it is possible that what may now become an eurhythmia for some younger people – wider provision of musicking opportunities in education – may have already created arrhythmias for facilitators of established community music ensembles outside the school setting, who now face new competition to attract members. While I will not indicate specific people, I met two practitioners across the fieldwork period who suspected similarly.

Moreover, existing members of ensembles may become oversaturated with musicking because of all the new opportunities presented, state-led and from other avenues. For instance, speaking on wider music availability overall (not specifically on MG), Aspiro's director pondered the issue of wide availability of community musicking when announcing the organisation's wind-down:

'The landscape of provision and participation in group singing activities in Carlow has changed dramatically over the last ten years

with more options than ever now available to parents for children to engage in free group singing activities during school as well as short-term after-school local theatre based projects' (Aspiro, fieldnotes, 5 May 2019).

This comment also highlights the changing nature of community music projects, especially the general move towards short-term projects, a trend I witnessed to a remarkable degree in the final months of my studies (see also Jones and Warren, 2016). As I did not research such projects during my fieldwork, future work will need to address this new trend. However, it is possible that participation in short-term community musicking projects may be less demanding for participants to balance with other life schedules, as the time (and sacrifices) required may be only weekly or seasonal, when compared to the time needed by longer-term community music ensembles. However, as Jones and Warren argue, ideas of short-term work stand in direct opposition to the time needed to develop creative work, and so a significant arrhythmia presents. Research on this issue in the Irish context is extremely limited, perhaps because it seems to be a new phenomenon, though Kenny (2016) similarly indicates that long-term funding of community musical practice is optimal.

As for responses to these challenges, some community music ensembles attempted to set up a sort of longer term eurhythmia by operating smaller groups based on musicians' ages. For some, this meant that a progression path was created through which musicians could travel through different age-specific groups in the ensemble, helping to guarantee committed members in the longer term. For example, at the beginning of our ethnography collaboration, Aspiro had smaller

ensembles for preschool age children, primary school children, teenagers, and adults and retirees. The last ensemble was the newest, but the others had existed for years previously, and many of the choristers I met when mapping with the teenage ensemble had started out in the choir as pre-schoolers or during primary school. Similarly, Carlow Youth Orchestra, The Wexford Sinfonia, St. Patrick's Brass Band in Kilkenny, Jesters Stage Academy in Kilkenny, and The Kilkenny Community Orchestra all built paths in their work, or collaborated with other community music ensembles to create a sort of chain of progression between ensembles. Such pathways capitalise on the eurhythmias of commitment already woven into musicians' lives to solve the arrhythmia of difficulties in attracting new members. Small (2009) also details her work in developing relationships with schools and other organisations for young people, to build memberships for her choir; she says that these efforts must be constantly made by community music facilitators to ensure their ensembles' viability.

However, developing progression paths was not always successful or possible for these groups. The Wexford Male Voice Choir attempted to create a youth choir for teenagers in the town, but uptake was too small to run it. For St. Canice's Junior Choristers in Kilkenny, though their ensemble had some very strong and enthusiastic young choristers, facilitators found it difficult to encourage these younger members to continue on into the adults' choir. When asked about this, the facilitators at the mapping talked about the time musicians needed to give to the choir for rehearsals, practise and performances, and also the fact that the style of music – religious, classical, and sometimes quite old – did not always appeal to young people. Samuel (2013) and O'Halloran (2004) similarly argue that the type of

music offered by community music ensembles is an important component in developing their memberships.

Though clearly having merits, the model of multiple smaller groups required more time, facilitation, resources and funding than singular ensembles. Forming intergenerational community music ensembles might solve this issue, and such efforts might also foster the work of musicking in new and valuable ways. Indeed, Harris and Caporella (2019), DeVries (2012), Smith and Sataloff (2013) and Conway and Hodgman (2008) all argue that participation in intergenerational music-making fosters social bonding, learning, and fulfilment – all aspects of the work of musicking central to place-making, as discussed in the previous chapter.

Significantly, I also reflect on the fact that not one of the community music ensembles with whom I worked deployed specific strategies that I could see for recruiting new members across socio-economic, ethnic, minority or nationality groups. Investigating the role of membership diversity in sustainability was beyond the scope of this project, but future research could fruitfully attend to how targeting specific groups to develop memberships might help with arrhythmias faced by these ensembles. Indeed, a pilot music project working with asylum seekers in direct provision commenced early 2019, with a showcase event in June (Irish Refugee Council, 2019), and the findings of this work might well prove highly useful in addressing this challenge faced by community ensembles. Having reflected on these community music arrhythmias, the next subsection charts audience perspectives in each town.

6.2.3 Audience Arrhythmias: Meaningful Live Musicking in Small Towns

As outlined in Chapter Five, part of the work of musicking is to provide an outlet to relax and enjoy oneself, and an opportunity to socialise and share. However, a main finding of this research, based on the public mappings in all three towns, was a lack of live music of interest to young audiences in their own towns. Above 90% of young musicians who mapped explained that they had travelled to larger towns and cities, such as Dublin, to enjoy live musicking of interest to them. Only a handful of adults and older musicians felt this way to the same extent, though over half had travelled to Dublin and other larger places to see one-off performances too. In contradistinction to this finding, however, a second finding was that for Kilkenny, convenors noted there was an oversaturation of the live music scene, which resulted in smaller than expected audiences.

This geographical pattern of audience experience has knock-on effects on live musicking rhythms locally. It means that the young audiences who flagged this issue had fewer opportunities to attend live musicking, and so the rhythms of their social lives as audiences did not interact effectively with the rhythms of musicking in their towns. This further impacts the rhythms of local practitioners and community musicians, who must work harder to attract and rejuvenate audiences, and the rhythms of the local economy, since the money that these audiences would spend at live music gigs goes elsewhere. Indeed, research on the live entertainment industry in Ireland in 2017 found that, for each Euro spent on tickets to live events, an additional €6.06 is added to the economy beyond this (Courtney, 2017). While these figures relate to all live art forms as opposed to music alone, they are noteworthy nonetheless.

As evident from my research, an uneven mix of music genres and types existed for live musicking in all three towns, and this influenced audience's experience of live musicking in each place. Indeed, as I have indicated previously, Finnegan (2007) argues that small towns rarely sustain individual musical worlds based on a singular music genre, and are actually characterised by a melange of musical styles to varying degrees. Young audiences in Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford all identified concerns regarding the availability of live musicking opportunities suitable for or of interest to them. More than 90% of all young musicians who mapped in this study described feeling that their own genres of interest were not very well catered for in their town. Many more often mapped live musicking in other places, particularly Dublin, where they had travelled to see favourite artists or shows. This was because both the types of music and particular artists they wished to see did not to perform in smaller towns. Indeed, based on figures from 2017, 63% of live music attendees travelled more than 20km to attend live music, while of the 2.26 million attendees at live music events that year in the Republic of Ireland, 1.86 million attended events in Dublin alone (Green, 2017). Given the fact that, historically, well-known artists have performed in the towns studied, as I described in Chapter Five, it is also worth considering why artists choose not to perform in smaller towns today. While beyond the scope of the present research, I note that small towns must also compete for investment (Brody, 2015; Powe and Hart, 2009) and perhaps they also face an uphill battle in competing with cities for opportunities to stage large scale productions by well-known artists.

Interestingly, the second arrhythmia in terms of live musicking availability for audiences might seem to contrast this first finding. Kilkenny's wide variety of

pub music, an apparent eurhythmia, sometimes left audiences spoiled for choice. One practitioner who was involved in music promotion in Kilkenny city told me that even bringing artists of some international standing to Kilkenny could not guarantee a good audience turn-out, because there was so much live music available, often for free, in many pubs (KKMPub.16, musicking mapping, 8 June 2018). In other words, in one of the towns researched, because live musicking was over-saturated, its experiencing became somewhat devalued. This is another interesting example of an apparent eurhythmia translating into an arrhythmia on-the-ground and in practice for some musicians.

In this section, I considered a broad set of arrhythmias around balancing musicking with daily life and work rhythms. When musicking could not be brought into concord with other rhythms of place, negative outcomes inhibited the meaningful experiences of musicking and the gathering necessary to create fields of care. In the next section, I address conflicts emerging around financing musicking in each town.

6.3 Musicking and Financial Arrhythmias

Ireland's economic recession and austerity policies since the global economic crash of 2008 created a tumultuous financial climate for the arts more broadly (Ó Conchúir, 2017; Barry 2017). Not surprisingly, financial arrhythmias were highlighted in musicking accounts of all musician types in all three towns. Below I discuss these challenges in detail. Firstly, the specific arrhythmias described by practitioners included reduced incomes due to decreased audiences and sales, and difficulties gaining work opportunities in local places, especially for musicians

whose music genres were not especially popular. In response, they worked in multiple musicking roles, for instance as performers, teachers and community music facilitators simultaneously, and made their practices mobile, such as through travel and through social media presence. Community music ensembles similarly found it difficult to cover the costs of running their programmes, and aimed to do so by fundraising and charging memberships. Finally, audiences described high costs of attending live music, choosing to travel to larger cities like Dublin to see one-off performances instead of attending local performances more frequently.

6.3.1 Financial Arrhythmias in Professional Musical Practice

During my fieldwork, the professional practitioners I met had worked in a post-crash economic context that was particularly difficult for a number of years. While all alluded to financial issues in some way or another, most professionals felt and continued to feel monetary pressures resulting from reduced audiences, including decreased concert and merchandise sales, and a lack of fair payment for streaming music. Such challenges made it more difficult to cover basic performance costs, let alone provide income from which to make a living. Strategies to make ends meet included working as professionals in multiple music roles and/or jobs, and making their practice mobile to access expanded work opportunities and to grow new audiences. However, not all individuals and groups were able to survive this economic downturn.

Firstly, professionals faced the effects of the downturn of consumer spending due to global and national economic rhythms of recession that resulted in reduced ticket sales and attendance at concerts. As such, both their earnings and

the ability to meet the cost of musicking performance projects were affected. Four Lakes Productions spoke most often about this issue. Their main goal throughout my fieldwork with them was to sell more tickets and attract larger audiences. They wanted to cover the costs of their performances and to make back the money they themselves invested. To combat the reduced income from their small audiences, they often worked with local businesses to run a raffle to raise extra money, and ran competitions on local radio for free tickets. As I described in the previous chapter, the biggest successes for Four Lakes came through collaborations with local charities, which helped them build audiences and cover basic costs. These strategies were used in the hopes of attracting increased interest from online and radio listeners to become audiences of their live performances, but ultimately the ensemble ceased their practice in late 2018.

Another financial arrhythmia emerged around sales of merchandise. This finding contradicts recent research on music merchandise sales globally, which have increased year-on-year over the course of this research (Licensing International, 2019). However, Browne (2018) details how sales of CDs specifically have decreased, while sales of other merchandise, such as T-shirts, have increased, a finding similar to my own here. In this research, Mick Hanly detailed how, where audiences might once have bought CDs as a sort of memento of the performance experience as much as for the music itself, this no longer happens; his overall earnings for live performances have been negatively affected as a result. I should note that this has as much to do with the change in music consumption rhythms as it does the cost of buying CDs. But his observation is an important one nonetheless,

since merchandise sales are often the main means of boosting musicians' income from live performances.

Mick and Niall Toner each also argued that it has become difficult to make back the money invested in creating albums if audiences do not wish to buy them, or radio stations do not wish to play them:

'The recording process can be very expensive, and at the end of the day, you wonder: "What's the result of this? Is it going to bring in more gigs? Are the royalties going to help towards it?" And I find it very difficult with my music to get it played on radio' (Niall Toner, interview with author, 30 June 2017).

As Niall describes above, getting airplay on Irish radio stations for new music outside of popular genres is also critical, but has become even more difficult to realise (see also Nialler9, 2019a; Barry, 2014). On top of this, the issue of being paid fairly for plays of original music on streaming services, such as Spotify and Apple Music, is significant, as Mick similarly described. This topic is not unique to the Irish context. As Dredge (2015), Maleney (2017) and Cronin (2019) argue, it is now a pressing concern across the globe for many artists.

The work of musicking has been influenced by the rhythms of technological change, as detailed in Chapter Five. But because laws have not yet been put in place to ensure that musicians receive fair payment for their work, these technological changes in the listening of and payments for music, that have created eurhythmias for listeners, have resulted in arrhythmias for practitioners who wish to make a living from releasing original music.

However, I noted that the seven practitioners in their twenties who produced original music did not identify this arrhythmia. Instead they were more focussed on optimising their practice for social media users and followers, as detailed above. Thus, I sensed that, for those who had enjoyed longer careers in good economic times, changes in merchandise and listening practices presented more extreme financial difficulties. On the other hand, practitioners whose practices developed in poorer economic times, but when new audience technologies developed, had a better aptitude for social media promotion, and were more accepting or robust in overcoming this arrhythmia. While the issue of fair payment for streaming music was important for younger practitioners too, those with whom I spoke were more keen to work around it than necessarily focus solely on fighting it. Moves to legislate for fairer remuneration practices for streams as well as copyright protection have been made in recent months particularly (e.g. Carswell, 2018; Ingham, 2019), and future research on this issue in the context of arrhythmias in professional music practice in small towns would be highly relevant.

To attempt to overcome financial arrhythmias, practitioners adopted two strategies. The first, as I have already mentioned in response to other arrhythmias, was working in multiple roles to earn more income. Thomson (2013), Hawkins (2016), Linehan (2017) and Haldane (2018) also note how professional musicians in their research worked in numerous roles. Further, Tarassi (2018) posits that the multi-jobbing approach professional musicians in her research in Milan adopted was a manifestation of the many entrepreneurial skills musicians developed to make their work viable.

Practitioners in this research worked in many roles, for instance as performers, teachers, and facilitators simultaneously, and concurrently developed a variety of skills to maintain these roles. For example, Niall Toner, a performer and songwriter, also presented a seasonal radio programme and taught music lessons to young people. Niall said that, while it is not easy to have to juggle these many positions and undertake work that is less enjoyable than say song-writing, he found satisfaction from some of the work, especially teaching. On the other hand, he found it difficult to take jobs as a session musician at functions, since his own music was not always what the audience wanted to hear. As he explained:

‘An hour into a wedding gig, there’ll be people coming up to know when are you going to do some Abba, when are you going to do some Madonna, a few Rolling Stones and so on. And it’s not that I couldn’t do those musics, but I don’t. I’m there trying to do my own music’ (Niall Toner, interview with author, 30 June 2017).

Niall’s views about mixing his roles as a performer of original music and a session musician were shared by other professional musicians in this study too. Indeed, as already stated, I seldom met a practitioner in any of the three towns who did not hold several roles, often in numerous places, or split their time between working in music and in another sector. Sue Furlong, who I quoted at the start of this chapter, for example, worked as a performer, teacher, composer, facilitator and piano accompanist. Though she did enjoy each of these five musicking roles, she nonetheless felt that she was being ‘spread too far and wide’, and that she was ‘the jack of all trades and master of none’ (interview with author, 16 March 2017).

The second strategy practitioners developed to overcome financial arrhythmias was making their practice mobile. There were at least two ways in which they did this. The first was to travel to capitalise on work opportunities elsewhere. Historically, musicological scholarship in particular has paid significant attention to travelling working musicians, a prevalent practice without which many could not have built their practices (e.g. Absher, 2019; Nieden and Over, 2016; Johnson, 2014). But research on the effects of this practice and lifestyle in the present-day is less prevalent. Considering other scholarly literature about the negative health impacts on health and lifestyle when travelling to work over time (Fry and Bloyce, 2017; Berglund, Lytsy and Westerling, 2016), I suspect that the same is true for musicians.

Practitioners in this research travelled regularly for their work, a few on at least a weekly basis. During my Carlow musicking mapping, for example, one practitioner described how fundamental they felt mobility was to building and sustaining their practice:

‘I don’t think I’d be able to make my living if I worked solely in Carlow. [...] I don’t think for the purposes of what I want to achieve with music, which is generally to further my own career and play original music, I wouldn’t be able to do that just staying in Carlow [...] If you want to make a living in music you have to get out of Carlow and do it all over the country. And generally, now, all over the world’
(CWMInd.1, musicking mapping, 10 March 2017)

Echoing these points, a handful of practitioners I met worked in musical genres that necessitated travel to other parts of the world where their audiences would be

bigger or opportunities more readily available. Niall Toner described how touring in the United States was ideal for him, since his type of music (Roots and Americana) originated there, and thus the best opportunities to build his practice were found there. Taking another example, The Carty Sisters had performed extensively in Carlow and Kilkenny (and elsewhere) and comparatively less in their home place of Wexford. They felt that the music scene in Wexford emphasised other types of music over theirs, and so they felt less able to expand their practice as a result. Towards the end of the fieldwork period, they moved to Florida to take up a residency for one year, which was a very big move considering that they are quite young. When I last met them, during their trip home for Christmas in 2018, they believed that this would be a longer term move, and viewed it as a stepping stone toward more expansive touring in the United States, where they felt had more potential for their practice to grow. The move thus solved the issue of lack of opportunities in Ireland.

These cases demonstrate that, as some practices began to grow and expand in the towns I studied, they simply could not 'fit' concordantly into the polyrhythmic ensembles of those towns as easily as others, by virtue of the type of music and the demand for that music among audiences there. Indeed, for practitioners working in genres of music that are in higher demand in Ireland, they did not have to move as far or as often. For instance, SOLA detailed how they had planned to move to Galway for a summer to perform and write new music, while Four Lakes Productions developed performances in neighbouring towns. Scholars have taken up this idea in the concept of music scenes. For instance, Bennett (2004) describes music scenes as clusters of musicians, other players in the music industry

like promoters and journalists, and audiences, developed around particular musical genres. Typically applied to particular settings or locations in which particular genres thrive, for instance the Nashville Country music scene, the concept also applies to genre-specific musical settings across locations, including internationally and virtually (*ibid.*). As argued in Chapter One and reiterated above, although musical genres were not a focus of this research, they may be an important aspect of the polyrhythmic ensemble of each town even if the town itself did not have a large enough concentration of any type of music to be considered a music scene in their own right.

In addition to travelling, the second way practitioners made their practices mobile was through social media. Practitioners disseminated their work, connected with their audiences and with other musicians, and linked themselves to other peoples and places through social media, creating eurhythmic musicking networks. Using social media has now become an established part of building a professional music practice (Krause et al., 2018; Barnhart, 2018; Haynes and Marshall, 2017; Wang, 2016). At the time of writing, the most recent available figures for Irish social media usage are for 2017: 65% of Irish people over 15 years of age had a Facebook account and 32% had an Instagram account (Ipsos MRBI, 2018). I expect these figures have likely risen in the past two years, indicating the potential exposure Irish musicians' have nationally and around the world. One practitioner in Carlow well encapsulated musicians' use of social media presence to overcome some of the challenges of being based in a small place, and, by extension, Ireland. This participant explained how both the town and country were considered small players in the wider music industry:

‘The whole online side of things has made it all much easier. I could be based in the deepest rural part of the country or in Dublin and I don’t think it would make that much difference to me, because the focus is online [...] in terms of promotion and dissemination, I could live on the other side of the world and it would still be the same’
(CWMInd.1, musicking mapping, 10 March 2017).

However, Hracs and Leslie (2013) argue that the need to maintain and sustain social media outreach can significantly increase musicians’ workload, because they have to work to stand out, and to constantly present a certain image and idea of themselves. This all takes time, energy and skills to accomplish. They further assert that the continuous efforts to manage social media pages often extends beyond the normal work day (Kitchin, 2019), which echoes my findings in terms of arrhythmias in practitioners’ working and daily lives detailed above. Hawkins (2016: 58) states that this additional work and pressure can lead to a ‘corrosion of creativity’, wherein energies are taken away from the musical elements of practice and put into the curation of a social media presence. Indeed, Barnhart (2018) specifies the need for consistent, polished, professional looking social media profiles as well as snippets of performances, promotion of merchandise, regular updates to events, and video footage or photographs of musicians working ‘behind-the-scenes’.

My fieldwork supports the existing scholarly literature that indicates that building and managing social media entails additional work. SOLA reflected on the significant time they spent planning and creating photographic and video content for social media posts. They felt the need to do so because they felt that audiences were less attracted to blocks of writing, and gravitated towards visual content. I

was also fascinated to learn, having observed the frequency with which they used a small sunflower emoticon in their social media postings, that they had made a decision to make this a sort of 'brand', and in this way make their posts more recognisable and memorable.

Nonetheless, not all practitioners were able to use social media so adeptly, especially middle-aged and older musicians. Sue Furlong, for example, lamented her lack of experience in technology and social media, and argued that those studying music should receive formal training in this area, as well as in related marketing and business skills, as previously noted. Four Lakes Productions similarly felt that their lack of training or experience in marketing and social media had contributed to some of their issues in terms of growing their practice. While they did establish a social media presence, they continued to depend to a significant degree on local radio, print media, and their texting service.

I also encountered musicians using more locally-oriented media throughout the fieldwork. In fact, I met a local radio host during the Kilkenny mapping who told me that their radio station regularly interviewed and featured musicians who were visiting Kilkenny for one-off performances, as well as doing features on local musicians. In the case of Four Lakes Productions, who also used local radio, newspapers and a texting service, it is understandable that a multifaceted media approach was taken to mobilise musicking locally as well as farther afield, creating as many eurhythmias as possible. I thus reflect that, in as much as social media can have a wide and pervasive reach, there is still significant value in the more traditional forms of media targeting local audiences in the places I studied. I also

suspect that social media usage is notably lower among some audiences than others, for example older people.

Whether or not the importance of local media outlets, like local newspapers and radio, in smaller cities and towns is less clear. Harvey et al. (2012) argue that creative clusters in smaller places often end up being very embedded in the lives of their local places, and perhaps the role of local media I encountered demonstrates this claim. There are fewer radio stations and newspapers in smaller places than in cities, and so the percentage of local listeners and readers may be higher. At the time of writing, the most recent available figures for radio listenership are for the second half of 2018. They indicate that, on average, among those aged 15 years and over for each of the case study towns, the range was between 33-41% of those surveyed (Ipsos MRBI, 2019). In comparison, national radio listenership fluctuates between 20-30%. As such, I conclude that professional practitioners effectively used both traditional media and social media forms to help address arrhythmias.

6.3.2 Financial Arrhythmias in Community Musicking

Similar to practitioners, and again not surprisingly in the economic context of this research, the majority of community music ensembles with whom I worked faced severe challenges in financing their programmes. The costs of running music programmes can be broad, and encompass not only paying personnel to facilitate musicking, but also the cost of hiring a venue, with associated utility bills in some cases, as well as the expenses of insurance, equipment, instruments and music scores among others (Tagg, 2013). This is to say nothing of the costs that can also

accompany individual projects, like transportation, venue hire, staging, sound and lighting hire, costumes, purchasing rights to perform music, or hiring session musicians (*ibid.*).

As a case study, I got the most sustained insight into financial arrhythmias during my work with Aspiro in Carlow, who, towards the beginning of our musicking ethnography collaboration in spring 2016, lost significant funding support from The Arts Council. For over a decade before, their running costs and obligations were met through AC funding and other contributions, and so they were able to sustain their practice and indeed grow their ensemble and vision for the group. Following this funding loss, Aspiro moved into contingency mode. Their staff began working entirely for free, creating arrhythmias in their own lives. Aspiro's weekly programmes and performance projects were curtailed, meaning the work of musicking could not be achieved to the same extent. As a stopgap, they held a number of memorable fundraisers, including a 'dream auction' of items donated by local businesses, and a ticketed dinner-dance, which also had the benefit of bringing together past-members of the choirs. While these efforts proved somewhat effective in the immediate term, without a regular funding stream Aspiro continued to face financial issues. They were forced to continue on a project-by-project basis by the beginning of the 2018-19 academic year, trying to access small amounts of funding to cover once-off works, a trend of artistic practice noted above (also Jones and Warren, 2016). Their sustainability remained in question throughout, however, because their musicking work required more time than these small projects allowed to be done successfully. Additionally, membership seemed to consistently dwindle around the same time frame (since 2016), indicating the

other major arrhythmia in community musical practice noted above. In May 2019, Aspiro's director announced the wind-down of three of the four choral ensembles in the organisation, and as of the writing of this thesis, programming in the fourth has not resumed.

Similar to Aspiro, many of the community ensembles who sought funding supports via local authorities or nationally through The Arts Council held fundraisers. Some ensembles I worked with charged a membership fee or subscription, and these individual contributions were pooled together to meet the costs of running programmes as a whole. The Wexford Male Voice Choir, for example, detailed the importance of these contributions to sustaining their work, which in their case also meant paying the mortgage on their practice room. However, as Smyth (2016) argues, the cost of memberships can be prohibitive for some ensembles. While none of the community music ensembles with whom I worked operated for-profit – indeed, some had charitable status – the fact still remains that facing a bill for community musicking may well influence someone's choice not to become involved or to cease their involvement in a group.

Further, raising the funds needed to run a community music ensemble via memberships alone would be impossible, as I found out through my fieldwork with Aspiro. I return to the issue of fundraising and seeking funding supports in Section 6.4. In the next subsection, I discuss audience accounts of financial arrhythmias.

6.3.3 Financial Arrhythmias in Audience Musicking

For audiences also, the issue of high costs and resulting inaccessibility of live musicking arose in each town. Those who flagged the issue of cost said that while

tickets for concerts can be expensive, the added extras costs, like transport, babysitting and food and drink, made a trip to see a performance very costly. As a result, as I was told during the fieldwork, audiences felt the need to be very selective and did not attend everything they might have wanted to. Equally, though I did not hear about this in the fieldwork but venture from personal experience, the expense incurred to attend large-scale productions by well-known artists in cities, including expensive tickets plus the additional costs previously mentioned, might well be prohibitive for many, and limit the frequency with which audiences can attend live music events as they must be so much more selective. However, this expenditure and indeed investment might seem somewhat more 'worthwhile' because one gets to see a well-known and admired artist.

It is difficult to know how this problem might be addressed for both audiences and other musicians. Four Lakes Productions were creative in their attempts to build audiences by offering tickets which covered the cost of a meal as well as the concert, as well as the radio competitions I described above. They also provided free bus transport from two villages outside Carlow town so that audiences would not face the cost or hassle of transport. But theirs were the only measures I saw in my research to try accommodate audiences in this way, and these required resources, time and planning, which may not necessarily be available or prove a savvy investment in the longer term for supporting live musicking.

Barnhart (2018) indicates that one way in which musicians can effectively use social media for promotion of live events is to hold giveaways for merchandise or tickets, which can generate interest. They can also create 'event' pages that can

keep audiences updated on upcoming performances. I observed these strategies in a few cases, though they were not prominent, and I could not say to what extent they proved effective. Of course, musicians can now pay for their social media posts to be promoted and have wider reach among audiences (*ibid.*; Davies, 2018), but this requires additional investment of funds that may not be affordable, yet another financial arrhythmia.

As these discussions illustrate, in addition to the unique arrhythmias faced by each type of musician, there are financial challenges to musicking in each of the towns for all types of musicians. Given the prevalence of financial arrhythmias in musicians' accounts in each town, as well as arrhythmias faced in accessing this funding I discuss in the next section, I now critically assess recent arts policy and its relationships with the musicking for each town researched.

6.4 Arts Policy and Funding Arrhythmias in Local Musicking Practice

At a national level, state agencies provide supports and funding for music and other art work, including some supports in each of the case study towns, as indicated in Chapter One. There are also allocations made to local arts offices, who subsequently award funding at a local level. One of the most striking findings of this research, as discussed in this section, is that the musicians researched rarely felt able to access these reliable streams of arts funding and supports for their musicking practices and work. Moreover, this was the case even though two significant policy documents were released during my fieldwork. Therefore, in this study, I conceptualise obtaining arts grant funding as a specific set of arrhythmias. To contextualise the musicians' accounts, I first critically analyse state arts and

culture policies, and the practices of the musicians with whom I worked, using policy documents and the perspectives of the musicians researched. Following this, I describe four funding arrhythmias that emerged by practitioners (the primary group eligible for and interested in accessed funding). These included difficulties in navigating the funding application system, a perception of cliquish networks at work in adjudicating and awarding funding, a lack of awareness of available supports, and a belief that categories of funding were unfit and overly narrow. I then move back to consider additional arrhythmias resulting from my analysis of the arts funding policies, including the overemphasis on provision of musicking opportunities for young people without similar provisions for adults and older people, and the potential imbalance between existing music ensembles in each town and state-supported ones. In the conclusion of this chapter and in the next chapter, I build upon the analysis presented here to consider how arts policy makers might form and implement funding mechanisms more effectively to address these arrhythmias, and better support musicking and its accompanying place-making processes.

6.4.1. Analysing 'Making Great Art Work' and The Creative Ireland Programme

In Chapter One, I introduced the Arts Council of Ireland's current strategic development plan published in 2015 *Making Great Art Work* (MGAW) and, following the success of governmental culture programming to mark the centenary of the 1916 Rising, a new programme, *The Creative Ireland Programme* (CI) launched in 2016. Both plans have five key pillars, detailed in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1: Overview of Key Arts Policy Documents

	<i>Making Great Art Work: Leading the Development of the Arts in Ireland</i>	<i>Creative Ireland Programme</i>
Launched	2015	2016
Timeframe	2016-2025	2017-2022
Five Pillars	1. The Artist 2. Public Engagement 3. Investment Strategy 4. Spatial and Demographic Planning 5. Developing Capacity	1. Enabling the Creative Potential of Every Child 2. Enabling Creativity in Every Community 3. Investing in Our Creative and Cultural Infrastructure 4. Ireland as a Centre of Excellence in Media Production 5. Unifying our Global Reputation

As indicated in Chapter One, because the development and publication of these policies paralleled my fieldwork, my research could not assess their efficacy or impact in direct ways; future research will need to consider how their ideals were realised in practice. To contextualise the practitioners' perspectives regarding funding, I briefly analyse these policies using Bacchi's (2012) 'What's the problem represented to be?' approach (*ibid.*: 21). Bacchi's model prompts the researcher to question policy in a reflective and critical way by recognising that the problems and solutions that form and constitute policy can themselves be laden with other implicit or explicit assumptions about the group/s being targeted by the policy in question (*ibid.*). It provides a directed discursive analysis framework for analysing social policy through six questions, which are outlined in Appendix 4. These questions consider not only what the policy proposes to do, but how the state or agency portrays problems to be solved, or indeed sometimes created, to justify its actions. Using this approach, I critically analyse the MGAW and CI policy by

focussing on the key points of these policies, and the perceived or portrayed roles of state arts agencies for local artistic practice, including musicking.

I begin with *Making Great Art Work* (The Arts Council, 2015). The national Arts Council (AC) states that, while Irish art is of high quality, more needs to be done to create higher quality art that can contribute to Ireland's international standing. This can be achieved by developing what it terms 'arts infrastructure' (*ibid.*: 36), which includes built aspects, primarily venues, and structural aspects. The latter are described by the AC as strategic collaborations between: state arts bodies and partners in business and other sectors; local authorities and The Arts Council; and between and among artists themselves.

In MGAW, the AC asserts that state arts agencies have been central to building Ireland's already vibrant and high quality arts environment, and are the key to developing it further. The framing of this document begins with a working assumption that the historical legacies of state arts funding is entirely positive, and does not acknowledge possible disadvantages for artistic development outside its remit, or indeed the fact that its past and current supports may not have been universally accessible to all forms of artistic practice. Specifically, MGAW does not recognise vibrant and rich artistic practices that have developed and thrived without intervention from The Arts Council or other state bodies, such as some of the musicians and ensembles with whom I worked during the fieldwork. Further, the emphasis on what counts as quality art also relates to recognition by an international arts market and state funders, such as the AC.

The MGAW document recognises the challenges faced by professional artists in making a living, and again portrays the AC's role as pivotal in addressing

this. It commits to supporting artists, including providing more funding and creating new funding programmes, 'strategic and sustainable' investment, (p. 36), working with government councils and agencies to develop social welfare supports for artists. Though this proposal may well succeed in helping practitioners with the challenges of making enough to live, the existing 'social welfare for artists' scheme, piloted in 2017 (Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, 2019), is problem-laden, most obviously because of its limited understanding of who artists are, having until very recently only been available to visual artists and writers (*ibid.*; Bardon, 2017). A more recent pilot is extending this scheme to other artists, including musicians and opera singers. However, as eminent Irish music blogger Nialler9 (2019b) notes, qualifying for this scheme requires artists to meet a broad set of sometimes contradictory conditions. For instance, artists must be registered as self-employed, which may not be the case for many who have worked in other jobs (for instance services or retail) to supplement their music income (*ibid.*), as I have found to be the case for some practitioners in this research. They must also have made at least 50% of their income in the previous year from their practice, again a challenge given that poor income from artistic practice is at the heart of the issue (*ibid.*) and as indicated in the research outlined in the sections above.

A third notable point is the AC's attention to 'spatial and demographic planning' (The Arts Council, 2015: 14). However, the geography of Ireland is treated in a simplistic fashion, as an isotropic plane with locations, rather than understanding place as a process of weaving, gathering and sustainable healthy communities and publics. At a fundamental level, the lack of attention to what is clearly an issue of geography is thought-provoking. The data on the two sets of

arrhythmias I have already identified in this chapter for small towns indicates that not all audiences in all places can be catered for by a generic, 'one size' and 'one type' of national level planning policy for musicking. As discussed in my research presented thus far, while there may be some general spatial patterns for supporting the development of musicking fields of care, both the benefits and the complexities of the work of musicking requires attention to what happens on-the-ground and the support given to social infrastructures in particular places (also Klinenberg, 2015, 2018). Thus, more systematic research is needed at multiple scales to document already existing musicking social infrastructures, access, eurhythmias and arrhythmias, among other factors, that might foster musicking fields of care for Irish towns, cities and regions before introducing possible 'rational' or other social-spatial planning approaches to enhance arts availability.

MGAW also claims support for 'diversifying audiences' (*ibid.*: 25) to develop well-planned and equitable opportunities for arts participation across Ireland. I have already noted the problems of availability for audiences engaging live musicking opportunities in my fieldwork above. However, O'Flynn and Fitzgerald (2014) posit that the AC rarely supports projects in genres such as popular music, so it is difficult to imagine how broadly the demographic appeal of this increased provision would extend, and also at what scales spatially. Similarly, Keogh (2017) feels that The Creative Ireland Programme, explored below, has also overlooked popular music when providing funding opportunities. I interpret another presumption that the art supported and recognised by the AC as 'great' will de facto appeal to and enrich the lives of all audiences everywhere.

I note that MGAW recognises and indeed commits to ‘championing’ ‘voluntary and amateur participation and practice’ (The Arts, Council, 2015: 24-25), including its value in the broader Irish arts scene, and commits to developing and sustaining this sector. However, this document places community arts in the same category as public engagement rather than recognising the art created through community ensembles in their own right. Thus, the plan assumes a hierarchical approach to types of arts and artists rather than adopting a holistic or equitable view of community arts, as I have attempted to do in this PhD. Instead, the AC constructs audiences and voluntary arts participants as a single public served and enhanced by the artwork identified as valuable and developed by state arts agencies. Such assumptions not only tend to reify the status quo, but also stand in direct opposition to what has been found in my research, wherein practitioners, community musicians and musical audiences are considered equally fundamental to the weaving and gathering of place-making through their musicking. At issue here is a problematic assumption of art as an object that can be measured by experts and consumed by a general public, rather than understanding musicking as a complex spatial-social process enacted by many people and roles.

The second national policy analysed is *The Creative Ireland Programme* (CI), launched in 2016, which echoes a number of MGAW’s themes and working assumptions, including: a commitment to collaboration between state bodies, a drive to increase public participation in and access to cultural experiences, and a quest to build Ireland’s international reputation. CI presents an Ireland where there are a number of national culture institutions whose work helps in providing meaningful cultural experiences, but that these efforts need to be brought together

under one set of measures. They assume that doing so will help to develop 'individual wellbeing, social cohesion, and economic success' (Creative Ireland Programme, 2016: 5), placing Ireland on an international stage in terms of having a suitably creative and cultured workforce, and will furthermore help to craft a 'unified' image of Ireland that reflects this (*ibid.*: 30). For CI, sustainability most strongly emphasises future generations: the document underlines the importance of childhood creative experiences and commits to ensuring access to drama, music, art and computer coding for every child. To achieve this access to music, the plan commits to supporting the development of Music Generation programmes in each county, to which I return below.

Similar to MGAW, CI presumes that the role of state agencies nationally and at local authority level is to coordinate efforts and programming, and that their doing so will be the most effective way to ensure that people's lives continue to be enhanced by arts and culture in lasting ways. CI stresses the importance of the intellectual enhancement and development of younger learners by developing valuable skills including creativity, communication and adaptability. This is reminiscent of Florida's (2002) discussion of the creative class, where creativity is marketed as a way to bring investment to large cities (not small towns) as part of a neoliberal agenda that pays little attention to creativity beyond the workplace, or artistic practices as important place-making processes that contribute meaningfully to life in place (McArdle, 2019; Lawton et al., 2013; Boyle, 2006). The role CI perceives it has in revolutionising arts in education ignores already existing practices. It further pays too little deference to the value of artistic learning and participation at all ages, as evidenced by the valuable work of community arts

ensembles, such as social bonding, well-being, learning and personal fulfilment, described by the numerous middle-aged and older participants of this research, as well as their younger counterparts (Chapter Five).

Secondly, and similar to MGAW, the plan does not recognise the diverse projects and practices that have developed in particular towns, rural communities, and cities to ensure that a range of populations can have access to and participate in arts and culture. Further, CI's second pillar, 'enabling creativity in every community' (*ibid.*: 21), suggests an attention to scale, notable in the context of this research, but it once again fails to recognise the richness of cultural life that might already have developed there, and its impact in enabling creativity. Neither the uniqueness of places or of particular types of artistic fields of care, nor importance of place-making processes as intertwined with artistic practice, enter into the plan.

In both documents, I am struck by the overarching view that state agencies 'know best', and that their measures are the most important and effective for enhancing artistic practice and experience for all groups at all scales everywhere. Through the use of languages such as 'collaboration', 'arts infrastructure', and 'creativity skills', the plans leave little room for inputs beyond the circles of the mentioned state agencies and partners, specifically businesses and investors in MGAW. These narrow understandings of expertise, collaboration, and publics limit an appreciation of the important work of musicking, including place-making. Indeed, one of the arrhythmias I describe below is a feeling among some musicians I met that one had to be 'in the circle' in order to access state arts funding supports. Yet, as I have argued, these musicians alienated by arts funding may well hold the key to achieving the aspirations set out in MGAW and CI – increasing participation,

spatial reach, engagement and personal enhancement. Part of the problem here is that both documents fail to fully recognise the valuable work already done in schools and other musicking fields of care, and through community music ensembles, for instance, for small towns and cities, where many Irish people live and work, as illustrated in this research in Chapters Four and Five. While CI's emphasis on education may certainly help in easing some of the unevenness in arts in education I identified in Chapter Four, measures will either succeed or fail on already-existing infrastructures and visions of arts participation and education that exist in many of these places. As such, its omission of these sorts of collaborations as a fundamental part of its own mission is significant.

Having reflected on some of the key points I take from these policy documents, among the most significant and influential national arts policy realm to appear during the course of the research, I now move to the perspectives of musicians on state arts supports and funding during the fieldwork.

6.4.2 Practitioners' Perspectives on State Arts Funding

Stemming from musicking ethnography interviews and musicking mappings, the main four funding arrhythmias mentioned by the practitioners of this study were: a perception of cliquey networks, difficulties in navigating the application process, unfit funding categories, and lack of awareness of available funding and supports. I discuss each in sequence in this subsection. However, I wish to clarify the limitations of this research for my discussion. To begin with, I discuss practitioners' perspectives since these are the musicians who facilitate and operate the practices that may benefit from these funding and supports. To respect and protect their

right to privacy and good standing for potential future funding efforts, I do not relate themes in this discussion directly to musicians or groups by name, and do not use direct quotations in this section. Moreover, given the limited nature of the case studies researched, I emphasise that views described here are not representative of the entire body of practitioners with whom I worked, and in many cases relate to only a singular or handful of instances. Of the nine musicking ethnography cases in the three towns of this study, only three said that they had previously received state arts funding supports, either nationally (through the Arts Council and associated organisations) or through their local authorities, one in each town studied. Moreover, at the time that I conducted the musicking ethnographies, even these three were not in receipt of long-term funding supports, though two of the three had recently received small project grants. Of the 18 community music ensembles with whom I mapped, all had received some element of arts or non-arts financial supports from local authorities or organisations, mostly as once-off awards, and two had been in receipt of state arts funding in the past.

The first funding arrhythmia mentioned by musicians was a sense that, at local and national levels, the arts funding system was closed off to them because they did not feel they had connections with influential individuals in these councils or with other artists or individuals who were already 'in the circle'. Practitioners felt they needed to be recognised by this clique for their work to have a chance to get funding, but that to break into this small circle was itself extremely difficult. As a result, this perception prevented many from even applying for funding, given the already existing limited amount of time they had to balance work, everyday life and musicking demands. It is important to keep in mind that this view, shared by a

number of musicians, was based on a certain set of perceptions that did not come from direct first-hand experience of the local funding system, but assumptions about how the system worked.

For those who did apply to funding, there was a perceived sense that they were disadvantaged because of the small circle of people specialising in either a given artform or even in a place. One had applied for state funding, but felt they had a less than fair review because the adjudication panel for the state funding scheme for which they applied included a fellow musical practitioner they knew. This person stepped out when their application was being reviewed due to this conflict of interest, but as a result, there was no musical expert left in the room to assess the applicant's case on its own merits. Instead, it was left to experts in other art forms to adjudicate and ultimately the application was refused. The applicant found out about the adjudicating panel and conflict of interest only after the applications were reviewed and awards announced. I note once again that the applicant came to the conclusion that the refusal was based on this situation rather than from feedback by the funder directly. Nonetheless, the example demonstrates the fact that, in a country of four and a half million in total, much smaller populations in the small towns I studied, and even smaller numbers of musical practitioners in each, the actual number of people involved in artistic networks can be quite small, which can result in negative implications and perceptions when it comes to funding.

The second funding arrhythmia was the difficulties surrounding the application process. A few practitioners described applying for arts funding as navigating a complicated and legalistic system for which they felt ill-equipped. As

mentioned previously, musicians identified the broad set of necessary skills in accounting, marketing, business and policy, that they also felt were needed to apply for funding, which they did not feel adequately prepared for. Others felt that they needed to devote more time and energy to developing these skills in the hope of better success in funding. In the scholarly literature, Jones and Warren (2016) similarly flagged the difficulties of the application process as a barrier to arts funding accessibility.

One case demonstrated the details of these hurdles to applying and successfully obtaining funding. The musician in question had gone to great lengths to meet the demands of funders, including establishing long-standing collaborations with other practitioners and extensive professional development. Funders often hold workshops in the run-up to deadlines for funding applications, including at local level, though it must be said that these workshops are more often held in cities and larger urban areas, presenting further barriers and costs for musicians based outside these areas. I return to this issue in Chapter Seven.

The third funding arrhythmia related to the limited categories of national arts funding, which some musicians felt were unfit and imprecise. Kenny (2016) and Ó Conchúir (2017) have made similar arguments. Projects such as those crossing multiple genres of music, including multiple art forms, targeting particular audiences, and/or having goals beyond creating 'contemporary' or 'high' art, such as community or audience engagement through what might be perceived to be 'simpler' genres of music, might not meet the criteria for any single funding category. Indeed, the feeling that only 'high art' could qualify for arts funding even

if a project did fit a funding category was expressed strongly by at least one practitioner.

During my reflections on this conversation, I realised that the concerns raised related to a much larger question of who decides exactly what qualifies as 'art' or artistic practice, and for whom. I note that MGAW did not define art in the document, but rather assumed it, despite its aspiration to make great art. CI defines creativity, placing heavy emphasis on its ability to 'bring additional value to human activity' (Creative Ireland Programme, 2016: 10).

The fourth funding arrhythmia was a lack of awareness amongst some practitioners regarding possible funding streams and state supports available for them, especially for musicians producing original music. This lack of knowledge about existing state support for musicking surprised me because there are local arts offices in each town, while AC and similar national bodies have strong social media presences and email newsletters. Local events held by arts agencies also get clear billing. For example, in one case the musician(s) in question may have been eligible to register with and make use of the resources of IMRO for part of their work, and I found myself explaining the work and opportunities this national organisation offers. Some indicated that they had not given arts funding much thought, and so were not aware of the range of funds possibly available to them. There could be a number of reasons for this lack of awareness, though I did find it hard to imagine that local channels did not reach local musicians at least some of the time. Given CI's emphasis on creating culture teams in each local authority, one would presume that outreach of this sort would be quite effective, but this finding suggests that this may not yet be the case.

I have outlined four arrhythmias explicitly mentioned during my conversations with musicking practitioners. In the next subsection, I call attention to additional challenges that should be addressed by arts councils if a priority of is to sustain and support place-making and musicking.

6.4.3. State-Led Musicking Provision: Future Arrhythmias?

Following my fieldwork and analyses, I pondered the possibility that wider existing and changing social policies extending beyond arts funding specifically into other sectors, such as educational policy measures (including CI), might also have negative effects on existing musicking efforts in places, or on developing programmes beyond those historically funded and supported by the state. In my reflections on MGAW and CI in Section 6.4.1., I argued that these policies undervalued the existing rich and vibrant arts scenes beyond their own remit and without state arts institutional funding and influence. Here I wish to consider how this lack of recognition may possibly lead to arrhythmias between nationally-funded programmes and musicking and artistic practices already in existence outside of these. For purposes of anonymity and limiting risks, I once again do not indicate the specific cases referred to in this section.

I begin by considering the Music Generation programmes introduced in 2010, that developed out of 'local music education partnerships' between local expert and interested groups and the local authority or Education and Training Board (Music Generation, 2016). Working together, this group applied to be part of the first phase of programmes, which were rolled out in eleven counties (Music Generation, 2019). In this sense, it must be said that collaboration with existing

musicking ensembles and organisations has been an expected part of the introduction of MG programmes, if not always the long-term outcome.

There is a balance between collaboration and competition however, and if this balance is not or cannot be maintained as programmes develop, it is natural that one party will be more or less successful than the other given time, especially where there are similarities between what they provide. Added to this, where there is an element of fee-paying involved, it is understandable that parents might opt for the less costly option. However, musicians with whom I worked argued that, in the case of ensemble music for children for example, the sort of specialist, out-of-school programming that many existing community music organisations provide, though sometimes fee-paying, is sometimes more effective than in-school options which are naturally less time-intensive, with larger classes and less direct contact time for individual students.

I remained aware throughout these conversations that individual cases do not necessarily reflect a representative sample, and that this is also a highly emotive issue, especially for musicians facing trying economic times. Indeed, my research demonstrates that each of the three towns studied have at the same time similar and uniquely specific eurhythmias and arrhythmias. I mention these cases as examples of challenging extensive provision for a limited demographic group, namely children and young people, because doing so can lead to imbalances when not matched by similar provision for adults and older people, and to responses and changes in what might have become very sustainable and healthy musical practices in some towns. In general, while I lament the diminution or loss of any musical practice, I remain cognisant of the constancy of change and evolution in artistic

practice as well as place. What I am emphasising here is that a balance should be maintained between the quest for development and new programming on the one hand, and the recognition, value and support of what already exists as good practice. My research contributes to documenting and analysing the range of already existing practices, places and infrastructures for musicking in these towns. National policies such as MGAW and CI need to advance such research before affecting already existing musicking ecosystems.

My second related reflection is regarding the sustainability of state-supported efforts in the longer term, both financially and in terms of creating populations who will be equipped to add to the growth of the Irish economy and 'brand Ireland' (Ó Conchúir, 2017), such as CI, but also to continue to participate in and enrich Ireland's artistic and musical life in their own towns and wherever they might journey in life. While CI's particular focus on children and youth is admirable for many reasons, I have already indicated that accompanying efforts to make meaningful musicking and artistic participation opportunities needs to be available to people as they grow older. Indeed, both MGAW and CI make clear their aims of increasing participation and access to these experiences.

I first considered the issue of equitable efforts to support musical participation, particularly community music for adults, during a conversation with an adult I was sitting beside while playing as a guest musician with a youth orchestra. We chatted about the orchestra, which led to a discussion of my PhD. S/he was involved on-and-off with the orchestra through young relatives, who were regular participants. They expressed frustration at how difficult it was to find a classical instrumental ensemble that catered for adults within an easy travelling

distance, in comparison to all the funding efforts put into similar opportunities for young people. As they said to me, time and money is spent training young musicians in a variety of musical skills, but little thought is given to how their musical skills will be fostered or enjoyed beyond their youth other than for industry or economic gains.

It struck me that, even in terms of CI's investment in youth arts, surely an aspiration should be to support future creative and arts practice, alongside creating a creative, adaptive and knowledgeable future workforce. Indeed, since MGAW also includes public participation as one of its five central pillars, it would only make sense to broaden efforts, and create avenues for adults to participate meaningfully in musicking. Pitts (2012, cited in Kenny, 2016) argues that long-term musical engagement is one of the goals of music education as a discipline, and I think that similarly it would make sense for this same type of long-term engagement to be a more pointed goal of policy, particularly given the investment in arts education for children and young people that CI details. Adults faced numerous arrhythmias and constraints in participating in arts programmes as I have detailed in this and the previous chapters. However, the level and extent of adult musicking about which I have learned through my research demonstrates that adult community and professional arts can be, and indeed have been and are, successful, providing meaningful and engaging experiences for those who participate in them, weaving and gathering places in important ways. My discussion of the work of musicking in Chapter Five powerfully demonstrates this fact.

The tendency to wield artistic learning and participation in narratives of economic gains is not unique to Irish policy, but is seen all over the world (e.g.

Jones and Warren, 2016). However, I think it fails to recognise two fundamental points, demonstrated by both MGAW and CI. First, I think that creating more easily accessible, attractive and varied opportunities for adults to participate in community music as a pastime fosters the work of musicking, and place-making, as this research has uncovered. Policy-makers who fail to recognise this work run the risk of not only diluting the healthy place-making labours and outcomes resulting from musicking, but also of losing out on the investments made in the arts for young people in the longer term, and of disconnecting from the very taxpayers whose monies they allocate.

Second, participatory musicking does not necessarily need extensive investment, as my discussion about social infrastructures, which resonates with the work of Klinenberg (2018). As my research has documented, community music ensembles for adults successfully fundraise through memberships and other strategies, and build and maintain musicking fields of care. While they face challenges, many develop their rich practices without extensive input from funders, in innovative and proactive ways. Supporting them in some additional small ways could yield significant returns, making musicking more equitable for all, achieving the public engagement both policies aspire to, and continuing to foster the weaving and gathering of healthy places.

Having analysed and critiqued existing arts council funding in this section, I wish to make a final argument in the next section. Tasking national-level policies and programmes with achieving local-level artistic development may well overlook the intricacies of each individual place, including the work of musicking. The complexity of building more locally-oriented collaborations, as mentioned in my

research, suggests a broader, synthetic geographical approach to arts policy initiatives that seek to sustain more inclusive artistic practices as well as developing new ones. In the final section of this chapter, I highlight additional strategies developed by musicians to sustain their work to advocate a geographical, rather than a sectoral, approach to supporting sustainable musicking and place-making practices.

6.5. Local Strategies? Towards Place-Based Arts Policy

In this chapter, I have argued that examining the arrhythmias musicians face is essential to understanding the making of the polyrhythmic ensemble of place. As such, I have explored in detail the musicking-life balance and financial arrhythmias described by practitioners, community musicians and musical audiences. These aspects of the co-constitutive music- and place-making relationship indicate the ways in which that the gathering and weaving processes of places through musicking need to be supported.

I first described a set of arrhythmias around balancing musicking and the rhythms of daily life, and secondly around financial arrhythmias. Practitioners encountered the challenge of balancing work-life rhythms when faced with making an adequate living, sustaining members, and/or enjoying specific musicking opportunities as audiences. I illustrated how practitioners navigated the financial arrhythmias they faced by adopting multiple working roles and by making their practice mobile across places and through social media. Community musicians encountered difficulties in balancing their commitments to their ensembles with their other life rhythms, and financing programmes. Some community ensembles

built progression-path membership structures to sustain their membership. Lastly, musical audiences described issues of availability and variety of interesting live musicking experiences at local level for young people in particular, as well as affordability and cost issues. Many opted to travel to experience live musicking of interest to them.

Due to the frequent financial arrhythmias encountered, I also highlighted the arrhythmias musicians described around national policy and funding systems. While the latest of these, MGAW and CI, are designed to foster musicking and artistic practice, including by distributing funding supports, the fact that musicians found it difficult to navigate funding systems, knew little about them, and perceived them to be cliquish, are pressing concerns. Especially notable were the handful of cases in which some musicians could and did choose to develop their practices nearly totally independently of this system. I wish to close this chapter by considering how musicians developed novel or unexpected ways to navigate the financial challenges they faced, moving beyond, and even flourishing totally without, the national arts funding system.

I have reflected at different points in this chapter on the ways in which the musicians I met raised funds for their musicking endeavours. I encountered examples of funding obtained by practitioners from non-arts state sectors, including local charities, tourism, sport and business collaborations, which enabled the musicians and ensembles to flourish. I have focussed less on state bodies outside of the arts whose role in musicking was highlighted by some of the musicians I met. These bodies are broad, and over the course of my fieldwork I learned about supports from Irish language, (adult) education, amenity

development, community outreach, and structural and investment development sectors.

When faced with the arrhythmia of being unable to meet the requirements of arts funding bodies, musicians adapted and turned their attention to these other bodies, who had the resources to fund their work and a set of requirements musicians could meet. In my research I found that there were a variety of possible state sectors outside of the arts whose supports musicians levered in their everyday practice. All of these collaborations happened at the town level, mostly through local organisations, and I learned that some musicians worked to foster relationships with local politicians and officers in the course of their work because of this. Their efforts resulted in the creation of a eurhythmia which allowed musical practice to develop and flourish. As an example, funding might be available for promoting the Irish language which would allow musicians to establish an Irish language-based musical event, meeting the criteria of promoting the Irish language and allowing their musical event to happen. This sort of 'outside the box' thinking is not necessarily complicated, but illustrates the adaptability of local artistic practice, and how musicians develop flexible strategies to access necessary supports in other (not directly artistic) realms.

Another noteworthy development and tool for financing musicking outside state sectors that has gained significant momentum over the course of this project was online crowdfunding. Essentially a group or project group sells forward their work via pre-defined awards for which patrons pledge specified amounts. Economic geographers studying 'creative cities' have noted how crowdfunding has become a very popular, successful and somewhat more democratic way for artists and

community organisations in a range of sectors in different cities and towns around the world to raise money for individual projects or to support their operations (Langley and Leyshon, 2017; Langley, 2016).

As I have argued, musicians and ensembles across the fieldwork used the internet and social media as a tool to extend their practice, to reach new audiences and members, and to overcome the arrhythmias which practicing in particular places might present for global audiences. They also used these platforms to disseminate content and share resources in the towns that I researched. Social media also presented a potential eurhythmia between existing social media promotional practice and a potential new funding source, that is, crowdfunding. So, while none of the musicians I worked with through my fieldwork had yet used crowdfunding for a project, some were considering it. As Gamble et al. (2017) argue, the success of crowdfunding campaigns depends heavily on strong, savvy, up-to-date social media presences by the musicians running them, which means they will likely be more successful for musicians who have already developed social media working rhythms. Mendes-de-Silva et al. (2016) and Wang (2016) similarly highlight the influence of musicians' networks (online and otherwise) in the success of crowdfunding campaigns. At a personal level, my work with the Carlow-based musician Shane Hennessey on his crowdfunding project, which happened mid-way through the fieldwork period in early 2017, taught me much about how the internet and social media can be a very successful fundraising tool (Hennessey, 2017). His campaign was phenomenally successful, and through it he also established collaborations within broad networks across the world out of it that continue to impact his career in positive ways.

Several crowdfunding platforms now exist globally, including some specifically for music projects. Fundit.ie, an Irish crowdfunding platform operated by Business to Arts in collaboration with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and The Ireland Funds, has numerous live projects across art forms, and as of 2017 had seen over 1400 projects to successful completion (Fundit.ie, 2017a). Gamble et al. (2017) foresee that crowdfunding will continue to grow and influence the music industry in significant ways. Perhaps it will also prove especially significant in overcoming arrhythmias in financing and funding musical practice in small towns too, as future research might well uncover.

I have suggested here that musicians in this study improvised eurhythmias between their work and the rhythms of other local authority or state entities who had supports or collaborations to offer. However, given that state arts agencies are tasked with allocating taxpayer monies appropriately to support arts, I believe the arrhythmias musicians flagged that led them to turn from the arts funding system need to be addressed, in the interests of equitability as well as effective policymaking. I say this while also keeping in mind that, based upon the richness and diversity of the strategies discussed above, an over-emphasis on state arts supports for artistic practice may render less visible the already existing and possible collaborations, both local and global, which support artistic development, as well as the strategic – and creative! – ways musicians accessed funding in sectors beyond the arts for support.

By way of conclusion, I reflect on some other memorable and striking points musicians raised about financing their practices. One practitioner had chosen not to seek any sort of sponsorship, funding or financial support because they did not

want to be seen to be in need, or, to paraphrase their take on it, 'with begging bowl in hand'. This principle held by this musician has continued throughout the building of their practice. This practitioner described their work outside of their musical practice, which took a range of forms, and allowed them to supplement their income from their musicking work, ultimately allowing their practice to continue to develop. For another practitioner, luck was important; they argued that, despite one's best efforts and hard work, one had to have luck on their side, and luck often provided the best opportunities. Lastly, some described a sense of constant drive and aspiration, no matter what level they were at in their practice, that always accompanies their musicking, and feeds their unwavering commitment and hard work, despite the arrhythmias they might face; see Rhodes (2013) and Linehan (2017) for similar viewpoints.

These examples demonstrate the very human traits and values that underpinned the efforts of many of the wonderful musicians I met. No matter what circumstances they found their practices in, or what arrhythmias they faced, they could not envision their lives without musicking.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

'This is my homeland, my heart is here

These are the voices I long to hear

No matter how far I may roam

I have a homeland, I have a home

I have a homeland, I have a home.'

(Mick Hanly, *Homeland*, 2016)

7.1 Introduction

Homeland is the title track of Mick Hanly's most recent studio album, released in 2016. It is a beautiful folk song, in verse-chorus structure, with a gentle instrumental accompaniment and rich vocal harmonies provided by friends of Mick's and choirs from Kilkenny. The above chorus of the song communicates Mick's love of place, his homeland, which includes the many Irish places where he has lived, worked and built his life. Mick expressed these attachments throughout the songs on the album, reflecting on aspects of his homeland that he took for granted and missed when he emigrated, such as storytelling, history, having familiar people around with familiar voices, and even the rain.

When I completed the primary fieldwork and subsequent analyses for this PhD, I reflected that Mick's complex relationship with but ultimately love of Ireland as a place resonated with much of what my empirical research had uncovered. I return to describe Mick's song later in this chapter, but feel the chorus above also speaks to the larger narrative arc of this PhD. As such, it is an appropriate way to

begin the final chapter of this thesis as it resonates with my larger arguments about musicking and place-making in three small Irish towns and cities.

This PhD emplaces musicking by bringing geographical scholarship about place and creative geographies into conversation with scholarly works about musical practice. I understand music to be more than an object, commodity, or performance. Instead, I have studied music as a set of diverse, vibrant practices that generate and contribute to the making, weaving and gathering of meaningful experiences, memories and emotional responses. These all contribute to the making of complex and dynamic places with layered depths of histories and encounters that are constantly being made and shaped, rather than as a static locations or physical sites only. My research highlights the central roles of places that become musicking fields of care in which musical practice happens, develops and flourishes, and in turn positively affects the towns in which musicking takes place. I have further argued that the nurturing work of musicking, which includes learning, social bonding, well-being and personal fulfilment, are at the heart of the making of places as healthy polyrhythmic ensembles. The work of musicking prompts and generates all that is woven and gathered to make supportive musicking fields of care.

A critical addition I make to the place literature is introducing the idea of place as polyrhythmic ensemble. Unlike Buttimer's (1976) discussion of the orchestration of place rhythms, the term 'ensemble' denotes many rhythms that interact with each other as an ensemble, but avoids predefining these interactions as 'good' or 'bad'. My all-encompassing approach to place echoes other place scholarship that accounts for both positive and negative aspects and experiences

(Tuan, 1977; Relph, 2019). It also extends Small's (1998) understanding of musicking to consider the ways that musical practices co-constitute place-making processes, including the gathering and weaving of people, memories, experiences, things, natures, and emotions to make places.

My research offers a theoretical and methodological framework to understand these interrelated everyday processes of musicking and place-making. In the first three chapters of the thesis, I outlined the reasons for adopting a synergistic, processual approach (Seamon, 2018b) to musicking and place-making. I detailed the four interrelated strands of my musicking geography theoretical framework in Chapter Two: the gathering and weaving processes of place, the becoming of musicking fields of care, the work of musicking, and the rhythms of musicking and place-making. In Chapter Three, I explained my position and approach as a musicking geographer, wherein I outlined a methodological framework for researching the lived, processual and embodied musicking and place-making processes of these towns in collaborative and empowering ways.

The three empirical chapters were based upon the geographies of musicking from participatory mappings and musicking ethnographies in the three towns of this study. Chapter Four detailed how musicians formed supportive, nurturing 'musicking fields of care' that sustained musicking through the gathering and weaving of experiences and memories in particular types of places. Chapter Five examined the 'work of musicking', analysing how place-based musical practices provided a source of well-being, learning, personal development and social bonding through which meaningful experiences were created and sustained. I paid attention to rhythms of musicking, including how musical practice in each of the case study

towns was shaped by the routines of particular places, working life, and social and political change in technology, social life, education, among others. Musicians worked to bring their musicking rhythms into concord with these everyday rhythms, and when they created eurhythmias positive musicking experiences resulted. Chapter Six focused on the arrhythmias musicians experienced, where and when they could not bring their musicking rhythms into consonance with the rhythms of daily and working life, policy, or economics, and the negative effects this had on their musicking and its accompanying place-making work. I also included the rhythms of arts policy and funding, and concluded in the last chapter that a place-based, rather than a project-based, approach to policymaking for arts and culture would be more effective to encourage more equitable and accessible supports, that help to sustain musicking and creating healthy places to live.

In this final chapter, I draw the thesis to a conclusion. In Section 7.2 I reiterate the main contributions this PhD makes to geography, musicking scholarship, and research about musicking in small towns and in Ireland more broadly. In Section 7.3, I reflect upon the empirical findings of this PhD according to the main three research questions of this study. In Section 7.4, I develop some of the points made at the end of the last chapter and propose some ways in which policymakers and funders might adapt their work in the future to help with some of the arrhythmias this research has uncovered about everyday musicking practice in small Irish towns. Following this, in Section 7.5 I consider my reflections on musicking geography as a methodology and research approach, and discuss the third piloted method, musicking composition. I suggest avenues for future research and bring the thesis to a close in Section 7.6.

7.2 Main Arguments and Contributions

In this section, I outline my main arguments and contributions to scholarship. In complementing Small's (1998) concept of musicking with a geographical approach, I argue that musicking is processual, concerned with experiences and actions, and is always enplaced. Heretofore, in much of the music geography research, music is assumed to be a sort of object that resulted from and contributed to geographies that formed around it, for instance the music industry as contributing to the development of global cultural cities (e.g. Watson, 2008). However, as this thesis demonstrates, music is about more than objects or commodities: it is a set of diverse, vibrant practices that achieve much more than simply producing a performance or recording. Further, musicking enhances and changes everyday life in places in significant and long-lasting ways. As such, I drew on a range of valuable musicking literatures to extend Geography's approach to musicking.

Yet as I detailed throughout the thesis, much scholarship on musicking has not recognised the important link between musicking and the everyday places where it happens. As an aspiring geographer, I have learned about place as one of the discipline's most central concepts. The specialism afforded by my training in geography, as much as my existing knowledges and skills developed during my professional musical practice, allowed me to bring place into my study of musicking in specific ways, particularly through the concept of musicking fields of care, mapping those places where musical practice is fostered and sustained, and its relationship with those places and how they are made. The result of my interrogation of the co-constitutive relationships between musicking and places as processes will enhance current and future scholarship about musicking on the one

hand, as well as on musical practice in geography, sociology and related fields on the other. As I explore later in this chapter, bringing together insights from geography and musical scholarship, along with my empirical research, also has relevant policy implications for arts council funding and research.

My holistic approach therefore brings insights from musical *and* geographic scholarship to bear on place-based musical practices and processes more broadly. At the same time, I have argued in this thesis that, when adopting a place-based approach, one must adopt ethical, respectful and empowering methods to studying musicking processes and practices. In my research, I included a full range of musicians critical to emplaced musicking, from professional practitioners to community musicians to musical audiences. My enriched view and understanding of emplaced musicking therefore also contributes to existing research and practice in art and geography, creative geographies, cultural geographies, and qualitative methodologies more generally.

Taken together, these unique and valuable contributions will add to geography as a discipline in lasting ways. My hybrid musicking geography theoretical framework and methodology is intended to provide future scholars, practitioners and policy specialists with conceptual and research tools to conduct research about place-based musical practice. To develop this framework, I drew upon literatures in experiential and relational theories of place-making, creative geographies, and research in music education, musicology and music scholarship more broadly. While remaining mindful of the close-knit, co-constitutive relationships between the four strands of musicking and place-making, and also of the polyrhythmic ensembles of places as a whole, through the theoretical

framework, geographers and indeed scholars in other disciplines may now better attend to the practices and processes of musicking, and their co-constitutive relationship with place-making.

The methodology I developed to partner with this theoretical musicking geography framework responds to geography's previous lack of specialised methods for studying musicking as process. It allows geographers to apply the theoretical framework in practice, by adopting the multiple perspectives of musicking, becoming immersed in the research context, and collaborating with musicians in their everyday practice in egalitarian and ethically-mindful ways. Musicking geography has three methods – musicking ethnography, mapping and musicking composition. When used together or separately, they can be modified to achieve a participatory, respectful and ethical research design, and as such, they are a valuable addition to musicking and geographical practice and knowledge production.

Empirically the study also makes important contributions. To date, no extensive research on musical practice in any of the three towns in which I worked had been undertaken, despite the long and rich histories of and reputation for music Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford each have in terms of annual festivals, established ensembles, venues, and funding supports. Beyond the specifics of the towns and of Ireland, the research also yields a new understanding of musicking in the context of smaller towns, in contrast to much emphasis on music in cities in previous research. Specifically, for each town I have created participatory musicking maps that gathered stories and memories of musicking in everyday locales that might well have gone untold or forgotten otherwise. Many musicians of all ages and

musicking backgrounds were given the chance to share their experiences with me and with others, and to express their views on what needed to change about musicking in their towns too.

The empirical chapters were loosely organised according to the four strands of the musicking geography theoretical framework. As the empirical data and findings are original and provides a baseline for future research, I describe these in further detail in the next section. Here I wish to mention two points. First, while providing new empirical data, the study had its limitations. This data-rich research was not intended as a representative account of musicking in all Irish small towns, nor was it a comparative case study analysis. Instead, the study highlighted the specificities of musicking and place-making for three towns, while acknowledging commonalities across them. Second, I argue that researchers need to be attentive to the intricacy and uniqueness of towns as polyrhythmic ensembles that weave together everyday life, and social infrastructures and social bonding (Klinenberg, 2018). Musicians create musicking fields of care that gather memories and experiences, providing opportunities for personal and social development in growth in ways that create healthy towns and communities.

A final contribution, which is addressed below, is based on arts and cultural policy formation and implementation. In Chapter Six I provided some critical commentary on two key arts and cultural policy documents, *Making Great Art Work* (MGAW) and *The Creative Ireland Programme* (CI), and discussed the arrhythmias musicians identified with regard to arts funding in the context of their work. In Section 7.5, I make policy recommendations for arts agencies to consider in the

future for bringing their processes for supporting the arts into closer concord with the rhythms of musicking in small towns.

7.3. Main Empirical Findings

As summarised above, the broad aspiration of this research was to study the co-constitutive relationship between music- and place-making in three Irish small towns through egalitarian, collaborative and ethical research practices. In this section, I consider my three research questions outlined in Chapter One to reflect upon additional theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions of this PhD.

My first research question was: *What are the geographies of musical practice in small Irish towns, and what geographies does musical practice create?* This question was intended to elicit descriptive data since, as already mentioned, little to no systematic research had been conducted to date on the three towns of Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford. As richly described in Chapter Four, the musicking mappings established that musical practice flourished in a diverse range of places for each town of this study, ranging from: institutional types of places, like schools and churches; through to formal and informal arts-specific venues, like theatres and for-purpose outdoor venues; to commercial places such as hotels, pubs and shopping centres; to civic and community places like libraries, community centres, historic landmarks and sports grounds; and even reaching to more intimate places, like the home. In each town, musicians discussed how they participated in musicking in different and often unexpected ways in these types of places. Through their work of musicking, many of these otherwise mundane functional types of

places were transformed into musicking fields of care. For example, hotels and churches formed important venues for live performances. Sports clubs facilitated weekly rehearsals as well as fundraising and sponsorship events. And shopping centres provided places for interstitial moments of musical enjoyment through carol singing and flash mobs.

Through the work of musicking, as discussed in Chapter Five, the meaningful and sustaining musical and more-than-musical facets of musical participation resulted in feelings of enjoyment, well-being, fulfilment and learning. As the maps, stories and overall research findings demonstrate, the micro-geographies of musical practice are widespread and extensive in each of the three towns. Indeed, almost every building on each of the musicking maps held memories or experiences of musical practice for at least some of the musicians who contributed to this study. While musicking scholarship also confirmed some of my findings, my specific focus on the emplaced work and practices of musicking called attention to what I call the becoming of musicking fields of care. Otherwise mundane venues became significant, and even life changing, places where musicking memories, experiences, emotions, and meaning were gathered and woven together. A wide-ranging group of musicians, in turn, came to form meaningful attachments to and feelings for these particular places, and some began to care for each other, these places, and even themselves through these musicking and place-making practices.

These geographies of musicking were also influenced by the rhythms of musical practice and everyday life in each town and for each place. Practitioners described how musicking fields of care came into being as places of special significance at certain times of the year, such as for churches which hold special

concerts at Christmas or Easter, schools that hold annual end-of-year concerts in May and June, and outdoor pop-up venues that appear during annual festivals. Those seasonal rhythms were overlain by and intersected with musicking temporalities associated with commercial or other venues. For example, pubs and hotels often came into their own during tourist seasons, and so practitioners found themselves with more gig opportunities at these times than they might during the academic year, when, depending on the ways they balanced their multiple working roles, musicians may have focused more on teaching, facilitating community music or even touring abroad.

Changes in social life, education and technology also influenced the rhythms and geographies of musical practice in each town. For example, older people remembered fondly attending live music, socialising and meeting people in musicking venues that no longer existed or no longer functioned as fields of care. In contrast, younger musicians' experiences of audience musicking expanded into other towns and cities because of changing routines associated with live musicking availability and interests. Similarly, technology, in particular the presence and geographies of social media, has changed how, when and where people listen to music. Music in theory is now accessible to listeners as well as performers anytime and anywhere, resulting in new challenges and opportunities. From this research, at least from an audience perspective, for example, the cultures, social spaces and individual practices of listening and enjoying music appear to contrast to those more prevalent for some in times past, including experiences of collecting music or listening to music on the radio.

The thesis also established that while some of the same types of places have become musicking fields of care for all three towns, the geographies of musicking can be highly uneven, even within the same town. For example, not all schools fostered musicking for young musicians to the same degree, due to differences in provision, resources or quality of teaching. Some pubs or hotels had better reputations for music than others; not all musicking events were affordable to attend or participate in. Thus, while there are commonalities between each of the towns, as identified in Chapter One and established through the research, the intricacies and nuances of each town and its own geographies of musicking differ.

My second main research question asked: *How does musical practice contribute to the ways in which musicians in small Irish towns experience and make place?* As my research illustrates, the gathering and weaving of musicking fields of care were the most significant processes that influenced musicking and place-making happenings. As unique supportive and nurturing places for musicians, these fields of care held, attracted and knitted together the meaningful work and musical encounters of musical practice. When participating in musicking in whatever form, musicians experienced a range of responses, including enjoyment and fulfilment, well-being, learning and social bonding. The memories, emotions, learned skills, imaginative geographies, and socialising felt and perceived by these musicians affected how they made and became attached to musicking fields of care. These became special places, that, in turn, influenced how they experienced and responded to, and in some places felt like they belonged to, their towns as places that nurtured and celebrated musical practices too.

However, as described above, not all venues fostered the work of musicking for all musicians. Where musicians identified arrhythmias or unevenness, for example, when places did not or no longer nurtured their musical practices to the same extent, their experience of and feelings of attachment to these places changed. In these instances, for these musicians, musicking fields of care moved to a more functional type of place, or physical venue that may or may not support their work. Equally, the experience of musicking, and thus place, changed over time. For example, adults who did not have access to music education during their youths often did not map schools as meaningful places of musicking. Many of them only experienced the work of musicking as learning later in life, when they joined community musicking ensembles as a hobby. On the other hand, this study found that young musicians all had access to music to some extent in school, though as detailed above, the opportunities, resources and types of musicking were uneven. This meant that some younger musicians experienced their schools as musicking fields of care and others did not. The stories told about why or why not a younger person might map a school provided nuance, even if this finding might not necessarily be apparent in the visual depiction of general trends resulting in the maps.

Musicians also contributed to the artistic and community life of their towns through their work, which affected how they made and lived in the towns as places too. Performances during annual festivals, at civic and community events, and through outreach in nursing homes, schools, hospitals, and in collaboration with local charities, all illustrated the multiple ways their musical practice touched the lives of their fellow residents and shaped their experiences of place. For example,

the Wexford Male Voice Choir performed annually at a number of memorial events across the county, and they felt that this was an important aspect of what they did, calling it their 'service' to Wexford as a place. Community ensembles across all three places gave similar accounts. As such, musicians gave back to the places and communities that nurtured their practice in valuable and caring ways.

The final research question this study sought to answer was: *What challenges do musicians face in building and sustaining their musical practices, and their accompanying place-making work?* Following Lefebvre (2004) and Buttner (1976), I conceptualised the opportunities and challenges musicians faced according to the everyday intersecting rhythms of place and musical practice. Arrhythmias occurred where and when musicking did not come into concord with the stage-of-life, financial or other demands of daily life in place, and/or of wider policy or funding bodies. Musicians of all sorts identified difficulties with balancing musicking and life rhythms, and financing musical practice.

Practitioners identified issues around making a sustainable living from their work and accessing working opportunities locally, which required them often to work in many musicking roles and to mobilise their practices. This affected how they balanced their work rhythms with the rhythms of their everyday lives. For example, several practitioners described the need to maintain and constantly update their online presences, which elongated their work days and rhythms. Musicians also described challenges in accessing artistic funding supports. Community music ensembles outlined difficulties in developing their memberships, which was critical to ensuring their sustainability. The costs of running ensembles, including paying staff, insuring and renting premises, and administration, affected

their everyday practice, while project costs such as renting venues, transport and technicians placed additional strain. In response to financial constraints, some community musicians used extensive fundraising as well as charging membership fees in some cases. On the other hand, musicians described difficulties in balancing their commitment to community music ensembles given the other demands of their working, family and everyday lives. Finally, musical audiences described how limited live musicking of interest was in their own towns, and often opted to travel to other towns or cities to experience live musicking. They detailed the expenses associated with experiencing live music, which limited their exposure to the work of musicking.

Each of these arrhythmias presented barriers to musicians in different ways. Given that my research has established that the relationship between music- and place-making is co-constitutive, it thus follows that these arrhythmias also affected how musicians made and experienced places. Where and when they faced arrhythmias, the work of musicking was not the same. One pattern, already mentioned above, was that the musicking fields of care identified by some were unsupportive, inaccessible or uninteresting to others. Of course, as I have theorised, both eurhythmias and arrhythmias, as concordant and discordant rhythmic interactions respectively, are part of the weaving and gathering of place as polyrhythmic ensemble. However, to sustain and support musicking means also to sustain and support meaningful and nurturing place experiences and social infrastructures (Klinenberg, 2018). As such, identifying the most pressing arrhythmias is an important contribution to understanding musical practice in small town settings, but also for arts policy, as I will in the next section. Knowing about

and being able to recognise these arrhythmias will empower musicians to address them in the future, and also equip policymakers and agencies tasked with supporting musicians with valuable knowledges of key issues that need to be addressed.

7.4 Policy Reflections

In Chapter Six, I analysed *Making Great Art Work* (MGAW) and *Creative Ireland* (CI), and highlighted the four funding arrhythmias identified by musicians. First, I argued that there is a neoliberal, econometric set of assumptions driving MGAW and CI, which inhibits a broader and more inclusive range of collaborations. Further, these assumptions ignore already existing practices that, if supported, would more quickly and over a longer term enhance accessibility to the arts. Relatedly, when art is assumed to be an object, musicians become clients, audiences become consumers, and the state and private enterprises are funders and patrons of art. Such assumptions are problematic.

Based upon my empirical findings and analysis of these policies, I posited that a place-based rather than project-based understanding of artistic practice would result in more inclusive understandings of musicians, audiences, and funders. Such a shift would result in acknowledging the complex spatialities, forms and media of artistic practice, would also move beyond narrow definitions of artistic forms. More equitable and accessible financial and structural support would better help sustain and develop the rich and diverse musicking and place-making this research uncovered. The result would enable a broader range of collaborations that support more diverse and emerging artistic practices in smaller Irish towns. Those

place-based practices might not only be sustainable, but also in the longer term, highlight the distinctiveness of existing and future work, thereby fostering international attention.

In this section, I extend this discussion by first noting some additional specific problematic working assumptions about arts expertise and partners, drawing upon Kenny's (2016) arguments that local expertise needs to be acknowledged and financially supported by state arts policy and programming. I then offer some policy recommendations for arts administrators.

7.4.1. Broader Policy Thoughts: Supporting and Collaborating with Local Experts

Two additional underpinning assumptions of MGAW and CI are crucial to address for the future of musicking and place-making in the towns I studied. As emphasised in Chapter Six, while both MGAW and CI emphasise collaboration in achieving their goals, they define collaboration as being primarily between possible funders. This econometric bias means that to advance the arts in Ireland, only arts organisations, businesses and investors are legitimate partners. This highlights a second, related working assumption: MGAW and CI do not recognise the rich and diverse existing artistic practices that have developed informally, even though their programmes will likely depend on these existing artistic practices to succeed and to be rolled out in situ.

My point here is that it would be more prudent and inclusive to acknowledge the existing and ongoing creative work of those who practice beyond the active work of arts agencies, including many of the musicians and groups this research details. Building collaborations with emplaced musicking experts, as well

as learning from them, would be a first step in making arts funding more accessible and diverse. As my discussion of the initial development of Music Generation programmes in Chapter Six illustrated for example, state-developed arts initiatives like MG often initially rely on existing artistic practices in places to build their own programmes. Collaboration ought to acknowledge and reward this, and to be as equitable and all-encompassing as possible. As Kenny (2016) also asserts, public policy needs to capitalise on and recognise local expertise and resources, and to build relationships with local practice. Based on my empirical research and analysis, the current policy documents simply do not suggest this sense of inclusion to me.

The second related point, also flagged in Chapter Six, is that these policies privilege the relationship between the aspirations of state arts policies and a particular notion of economic growth. CI in particular makes close connections between advancing cultural participation, arts participation, Ireland's reputation for arts, and economic development. The specific language of the document discusses 'unifying our [Ireland's] global reputation' (Creative Ireland Programme, 2016: 29) to respond particularly to competition for investment, export markets and tourism. This will apparently result in the creation of 'a single proposition based on Irish culture and creativity that represents a considered, compelling and imaginative view of how we wish to be seen by the outside world' (*ibid.*), all of which will ultimately produce 'direct and indirect economic and social benefits' (*ibid.*).

The most obvious issue with this idea, as Ó Conchúir (2017) also indicates, is the reductionism and essentialism it would lead to. There can be no 'single proposition' to represent Ireland as a place or the people in it, nor of any place or people. It discredits the diversity of the population and of the place to attempt to

present one. Indeed, my research demonstrated this fact by charting the rich variety and diversity of musicking and place-making practices in just three small towns. The other significant point, I feel, is that the overemphasis on creativity as part of arts participation narrowly emphasises economic gains. As described previously, this goal assumes much of the neoliberal agenda of Richard Florida's 'creative class' thesis (Florida, 2002), without considering the critiques of that agenda, such as the limited group of people that would benefit. While CI does acknowledge the benefits of arts education for children and cultural experiences for well-being in communities and society, I feel that more balance and nuance is needed. I argue that this economic, class and geographical bias of promoting the arts through a Floridian notion of the creative class cannot provide fair and equal attention to the benefits they yield for people and for places, especially in smaller towns and rural settings. My research has proven this through the work of musicking in particular (Chapter Five).

The state's investment of taxpayer money needs to be justified according to some rationale and potential for 'growth'; part of this is acknowledging the economic benefits of the arts is important for policy development. But what type of growth, over what time frame, where and for whom are the benefits? When art and creativity are used as tools for a limited understanding of economic growth and spatial planning, other social, cultural, health and personal benefits, such as fostering enjoyment, learning, personal fulfilment and development (the work of musicking), are not acknowledged as increasing people's ability to contribute to a society's economy. Yet clearly these benefits directly lead to happier, more stable, and healthier places to live as my work and that of others', such as Klinenberg

(2018), demonstrates. Indeed, my research has found that musicking, as contributing to the social infrastructures of place, means also supporting the people who pay taxes, providing avenues for future vocations and careers in arts or other sectors, and sustaining healthy places to live more generally.

A more holistic and place-based perspective of arts practice and its benefits is needed, I conclude. As President Michael D. Higgins recently told young philosophers, education is about more than 'being useful', in contrast to narrow perspectives in education and policymaking that advance an agenda of educating and equipping young people with skills for the future workforce (cited Humphreys, 2019). I believe this sentiment similarly applies to artistic and cultural participation: if art and artistic experiences are reduced to being primarily an add-on to 'economic man,' we lose sight of our humanity and the places that we inhabit.

This holistic and place-based approach would also attend to the longevity of the goals of ensuring arts participation in the longer term. As I have argued, policymakers need to understand artistic participation as more than a way to achieve economic growth. As such, a goal of arts policy should also be to foster opportunities for meaningful and active long-term direct arts participation, as opposed to the more passive ideas of cultural experiences and exposure these policies espouse. It is undemocratic and short-sighted to overlook the provision of such opportunities for adults and older people to participate directly in arts and culture, when, as I said in Chapter Six, they are the very taxpayers who sustain the systems through which state arts funding and programmes are allocated and developed.

Place-making via music-making happens among all musicians of all ages, and in order to ensure that we continue to build healthy and happy places to live through musicking, we must recognise this at a policy level. It should not be left to individual ensembles and musicians, often already navigating challenging arrhythmias, to do this work on their own. I argue that future policy formation ought to reflect on this. I now outline specific ways in which policy makers can begin to work more holistically to encourage sustainable place-based arts practice.

7.4.2 Addressing Arrhythmias in Funding

In the last chapter, I summarised the four main hurdles identified by the practitioners with whom I worked in terms of funding their practices: difficulties in navigating the funding system; perceived cliquish funding networks; inappropriate funding categorisations; and a lack of awareness and knowledge about available funding and supports. In this part of my discussion, I provide specific recommendations to address those challenges for policymakers who wish to implement policy regarding local outreach; developing practice, sharing and networking opportunities for local practitioners and artists; ensuring equitability on adjudication panels for funding applications; and increasing local awareness of available funds and supports.

First, to enable a broader range of applications and collaborations that include a diversity of artistic practices, more frequent outreach to artists and practitioners on a local level would assist musicians in understanding funding opportunities that support their work. As previously mentioned in Chapter Six, city-based artists and practitioners already enjoy a greater level of access to these

supports by virtue of their location, as most workshops for other funding and support organisations, such as IMRO, are also more often concentrated in Dublin or larger urban areas. Providing such a service at the town level would be resource intensive, but not impossible, as each county council has trained and experienced personnel working in their arts offices, as well as culture teams created through the CI programme, and so an infrastructure already exists for this sort of local outreach. Indeed, some workshops of this kind are already held at local level, though in my experience these are quite sporadic. At a workshop I attended, the guest speakers had direct experiences of navigating the issues many musicians in the room wanted help with, suggesting that if musicians and artists based in smaller towns could get support locally, such outreach would increase the overall number and geographic diversity of funding applications.

Local arts offices might also create opportunities for musicians and artists based locally to come together on a regular basis, to share their own knowledges and experiences and build professional networks as well as personal ties. I recall for example how Sue Furlong found networking difficult because she was shy and did not enjoy putting herself forward with new people (interview with author, 16 March 2017). Opportunities to network in a more local and familiar context might provide a bridge to the sort of national outreach events that already exist in the arts world in Ireland. As mentioned in Chapter Five, the solitary nature of the musical practitioner's life was also raised during an interview with Aspiro's director (13 April 2016), and I think this is a feeling other practitioners share, certainly around more solitary roles in their practice. While practitioners used social media throughout their work, including to connect with other practitioners, social media cannot

totally replace face-to-face interaction. Aside from sharing professional advice and networking, local gatherings for artists could provide avenues for building friendships and supports. These are especially important considering the arrhythmias many practitioners described in consolidating their working rhythms with the rhythms of everyday life. Building such support groups or networks would really resonate with the spirit of collaboration that is so central to both MGAW and CI too.

Moving to the arrhythmia of perceived cliquish funding networks, some of the suggestions above would begin to address this alleged bias. However, the conflict of interest I described in the last chapter, of one case whereby the specialist could not adjudicate an AC funding application, is a significant issue for a small national population: how applications and awards allocated should be reviewed. Panels might include other experts with experience in the arts, including academics in related fields and a broader range of practitioners.

Currently, the AC's guidelines specify that nominees for adjudication panels must meet three criteria which relate to their professional arts experience and expertise in a particular art form, as well as ensuring that there is no conflict of interest between those who make the nominations and the nominees they propose (The Arts Council, 2017). The ways in which the panels are then composed for adjudicating applications in a particular art form or funding stream is not detailed. There is also no conflict of interest statement for funding applicants and adjudicators. If panellists are all from or based in a particular context or area, in particular large cities, they cannot have the same understanding of the dynamics and complexities of building artistic practices in different settings, like the small

town context this research addresses. Having larger adjudicating panels might help to alleviate conflicts, even though this may be costlier. It is notable that, even as a relatively young musician, and relatively inexperienced in the professional arts realm beyond my own work, I know a number of the people listed on The Arts Council's most up-to-date list of panellists (The Arts Council, 2019a). Undoubtedly applicants with longer professional histories and more experiences would have many more existing connections with people who appear on these panels, and so it is understandable that conflicts would arise. As this thesis demonstrates, place matters in musicking, and I contend that attending to matters of place in how adjudication panels for funding applications at national level are composed, might help to better centre the importance of place in this process, and help to address the perceptions that funding networks are cliquish.

The issue of the appropriateness of funding categories, and difficulties in fitting into these categories, is the third challenge to address. Mine is not the first research to flag this sense that options available to local musicking organisations for funding are too narrow. As identified previously, O'Flynn and Fitzgerald (2014) argue that Irish arts funding has in general been biased in favour of Western Art music. I believe that addressing this might also help the issue of narrow categories. While music genres specifically were not at issue in this research, I can assert, based on the views of those with whom I worked, that the way funding streams are currently categorised and set up does not meet the needs of musicians at local level, and remains inaccessible to them.

A place-based approach to arts funding, along with longer-term funding programmes, would help immensely in addressing this issue of unfit funding

categories. Kenny (2016) similarly argues that there need to be flexible and long-term options for funding and supporting local musicking in sustainable ways. For example, Aspiro's experience, with more than a decade of consistent annual awards, suggested to me and indeed to my Aspiro colleagues that the programme seemed to meet and indeed exceed the AC's requirements year on year, building up a reputation for their work as well as devising programmes that were deemed worthy of support. Further, Aspiro managed to achieve this even after the 2008 economic crash, when numbers and audiences reduced. While the AC made clear that their funding was never guaranteed from year-to-year, I concur with the Aspiro's director that there should be a point, perhaps after a number of years of consistently successful applications, that successful arts ensembles are moved into a longer-term funding stream. This stream would continue the consistent reporting and analysis that MGAW emphasises for all funding relationships, and could also perhaps incorporate mentoring or professional development to ensure that the investment into a given programme in the longer-term continued to develop meaningful and sustainable work, and not stagnate. While AC funding did allow for rich, diverse and place-enhancing musicking to happen for so long, enriching so many people's lives, one cannot help but feel that this significant investment into Aspiro has now somewhat gone to waste, since the programme has all but collapsed.

In saying this, in the final weeks of preparing this thesis, the AC, perhaps in response to such stories, published a set of guidelines for funding applicants that advised that multi-annual awards will become available in the 2020 round of funding (The Arts Council, 2019b). While this is a positive development, and goes

some way to addressing this arrhythmia, it is 'too little too late' for ensembles like Aspiro and other artists whose practices have ceased or changed significantly due to the current funding system. It will be for future research to address the efficacy of this multi-annual funding programme, and it may well go a long way to addressing this arrhythmia.

Finally, there is the arrhythmia of awareness of available funding and supports. I again feel that, were local arts offices to consider building networks and facilitating more regular and accessible workshops and outreach about available funding and supports, this issue might be addressed. I cannot fault the social media presences of the local arts offices of all three towns I studied, nor of national arts organisations more broadly, and so online development might not necessarily be the first port of call in addressing this arrhythmia. However, as this research has found, local musicians balanced their use of social media for outreach with more traditional media like newspapers and radio, so that those who do not have social media accounts might also be reached. While I know of no musical practitioner who does not have a social media presence, and indeed this research finds that social media is a tool through which musicians mobilise their practice to overcome arrhythmias, I have found that not all believe themselves to be as savvy or capable at using social media in their work. Thus, arts agencies need to attend to this issue of outreach and awareness beyond online platforms too. Equally, building local level networks and outreach supports, as described above, would further assist in increasing awareness and knowledge of funding and supports.

Having made policy recommendations, I now turn to discuss future directions in researching musicking geographies.

7.5 Remaining Reflective: Musicking Geography as Methodology

As a musicking geographer, in this project I foregrounded the importance of reflection and positionality. I maintained reflective practices throughout every aspect of the research, from planning and design, through to fieldwork, analysis and write-up. In this section I consider how the research methods worked in practice, the ways in which my positionality affected the research, and include some reflections from my piloting my third method, musicking composition.

I worked with and learned from a diverse range of musicians of all age groups and musical genres and abilities, across the amateur-professional continuum. Their rich stories have contributed to building a comprehensive account of musicking and place-making in each of the towns studied, and I believe that the musicians valued the opportunity to share their stories, since, to my knowledge, no avenue for sharing musicking stories has ever been provided to such a diverse array of musicians in each of the towns. I felt that they were empowered, given the chance to tell the story of musicking in their own places from their own perspectives, challenging existing narratives or ideas that might have been established about these places by others (cf. McLucas, n.d.).

With practitioners I additionally perceived that we mutually benefitted from reflecting on building a professional musicking practice in Ireland, and the challenges one faces in achieving this. Some of the most memorable moments of the fieldwork were practitioners' reactions following our interviews, when the audio recorder was switched off. Sue Furlong commended me on the questions I asked her, but I learned only afterwards that she had really enjoyed and valued our interview, a way for her to look back and reflect through the prism of her own

achievements rather than her ill-health. Niall Toner encouraged me to be confident in my own musical abilities, having faced similar issues himself, an exchange that was incredibly touching. The moments I shared with The Carty Sisters and SOLA, ensembles of young women who were similarly trying to make their way in the sometimes unreliable, multi-jobbing, gig economy that is musicking in small towns in Ireland, will stay with me beyond the completion of this PhD. My new friends in the Wexford Male Voice Choir were gracious and helpful throughout, and I was as humbled to witness their work in their own musicking field of care as they claimed to be in being included in my research. I am glad and proud to say that each and every ensemble with whom I worked in the musicking mappings was positive about their participation, some even writing to me afterwards to express how much they had enjoyed the experience. The smiles, laughter, and remembering shared around the maps were just as important as the stories told or 'data gathered', I believe.

I worked with 429 musicians in total, indicating that I did in fact succeed in collaborating with many diverse musicians, more than I could have anticipated at the outset of the research. However, it was at times a monumental struggle to reach all of these musicians, and I sometimes feared that I would not succeed in reaching comparable numbers of musicians in each town. For example, as I indicated earlier, because of my lack of connection to a community music ensemble for teenagers in Wexford, I did not have the chance to gather comparable numbers of young musicians' accounts of musicking and place-making in that town. My participant numbers, while still significant, were lowest in Kilkenny, and I think that a combination of having the fewest long-term professional connections there and my own increasing exhaustion coming to the end of a very long and intensive 27

months of fieldwork may have contributed to this. Overall, I reflect that, even though I sought to gain as all-encompassing a picture of musicking as I could in each of the three towns, perhaps I ought to have narrowed my targets, maybe confining the mappings in each town to fewer ensembles for example. Equally, taking more time to build rapport in Kilkenny and Wexford, where I was less well-known, may have helped, as I indicated in Chapter Three. Though I did go to great lengths to do this, I reflect now that more could have been done, and earlier.

As detailed in Chapter Three, I encountered difficulties during the musicking ethnographies when introducing information sheets and consent forms into fieldwork conversations with colleagues who knew me well. They sometimes found the change in my tone, from one of a sort of easy familiarity to a more removed formality, strange and uncharacteristic. Though none took issue with signing the form, I sometimes felt uncomfortable for a little while after, only really becoming settled again once the interview had gotten underway. Nevertheless, I recognise the value of thorough written information and consent forms, a copy of which can be retained by participants, and of adhering strictly to ethics procedures in research, which are in place for the best interests of participants and of researchers (Iphofen, 2018). As such, this may be an issue that will always present to some degree for researchers working with colleagues or friends, but could nonetheless be reflected upon in future adaptations of the methodology. Similarly, the issue of recording identifiers such as age group and gender in mappings presented, as outlined in Chapter Three, and future adaptations would need to consider ways in which this might more effectively be undertaken while maintaining ethically-minded and egalitarian research.

My final reflection here is on the timing of the research within the broader context of Irish arts policy. As I detailed in Chapter One, this research was carried out during an interesting and busy time in the Irish arts policy realm, with important new frameworks and strategies being developed and rolled out during the fieldwork period. This meant that, while the research was and remains necessary and valuable because of these developments, it could not assess their effects to any great extent on the ground, and it will be for future research to attend to this. This does not change the importance of my research, as one of the most pressing issues in Irish arts policy, I believe, is the lack of attention first to place as a concept and second to the particular complexities of artistic practice in small towns as indicated in the previous section. Those who research musicking in small towns in the future might find practices that are further supported and sustained because of those recommendations.

I conclude this section by reflecting upon the final methodology piloted in this study. The *musicking-composition* method was itself an important reflective tool in terms of research findings and the research experience as a whole as well, and I feel that it was effective in many ways in achieving this. As I indicated in Chapter Three, composing was an unfamiliar mode of musicking for me, and as such presented a way for me to step into an unfamiliar role as a musician, and disturb any complacency that might have come with researching using professional skills and knowledges with which I was so attuned. I drew on Hawkins' (2015) valuable insights with regard to learning how to draw in her research, and how she felt that this allowed her to see things in a new way, and to see things that might otherwise have been taken for granted.

7.6 Coda: Musicking Composition

Composing as a *method* itself is new to geography, but this idea of adopting a new way of looking at the world speaks more to the *methodology* of musicking geography as a whole. Other practitioners may have similar modes of reflection; for instance, writers might try a new style, or activists might try new ways of contributing to their causes. Speaking more broadly then, it represents an opportunity taken by me as a practitioner-researcher to interrogate things that might have gone taken-for-granted. As a specific method, composition is a way for musicking geographers to reflect in a new way, while also creating a new piece of music which is a novel research output too. In terms of giving back through research, this might open avenues for musicking geographers in the future to give back, perhaps by commissioning composers to work with them to create the piece, or by working with musicians in performing the piece.

Because composing as a method was new to me as a musician, it prompted me to reflect back on the experiences from a less 'comfortable' vantage point, and to interrogate some of my own responses to doing the research as a whole. Moving away from trying to write about emplaced musicking, and instead using the sort of language and devices of music with which I am quite adept, helped to form the relationship between these strands, the synergistic understanding that Seamon (2018b) also espouses. Before that point, my problem had been in how to understand the ways in which the strands related to each other, and whether there was some sort of hierarchy to them. I tried to do this before that point with mind maps and other diagrammatic devices, but never got very far. Paper always seemed too 'quiet', too two-dimensional, when in reality I knew that the four strands were

not a process but a relationship of four virtually inseparable parts happening dynamically and simultaneously. Taking away words and images, the composition of a piece of music allowed me to conceptualise this in an active and dynamic form, because all of the parts – rhythm, melody, harmony, dynamic change and so on – come together and happen at once.

A guide track recording of this composition, which was made during our work creating the piece and has not been mixed or mastered, is included as an additional file with this these. There are also extensive notes on the process available in Appendix 3. As those notes describe, different musical devices represent different aspects of the main themes of the thesis, and creating the work helped me to piece them together into the understanding that has been detailed in the preceding chapters. For instance, weaving and gathering were represented by the constancy of quaver or semiquaver movement in the guitar part, which plays throughout the piece and gives foundation to the melodic ideas. This indicates that weaving and gathering were a part of the other three strands and indeed all of the aspects of the polyrhythmic ensemble. The rhythmic ideas in the violin melody line sometimes synchronise with the guitar part and sometimes work against it, conveying the different eurhythmias and arrhythmias that come together to make the polyrhythmic ensemble. Indeed, by virtue of the many rhythms and going on in the two instruments simultaneously and changing metres, the piece is itself ‘polyrhythmic’. The piece is in three parts, and the melodies that make up the first and third parts suggest expressive and even nostalgic ideas, illustrating the memories and emotional responses that were woven into and gathered by musicking fields of care, and generated by the work of musicking. The melody in the

middle section is quite different, and this contrast in the feel and ideas of the sections suggests the fact that there were many different perceptions and experiences of musicking in each place.

This middle section is also fast, even 'hectic', and also conveys the busyness of the fieldwork period. I found it very challenging to balance the fieldwork and more desk-based aspects of doing a PhD, certainly coming from the much calmer points of the pilot study and development of the PhD project in year one. I experienced a particular anxiety at the beginning of each mapping project, worrying about whether ensembles would wish to participate, and whether the project would be a success. This middle section reflects this, through the faster tempo and busier melodic line, as well as moments of clashing harmonies that are quite jarring to listen to but necessary to convey that the process was not always straightforward. This section also has moments of pause, representing points when I finished mapping in one town and moved to another (which always marked the celebration of a small achievement for me personally), and so things seemed to get easier. Before the music moves from this second to third section, there is a simple waltz-like melody that forms a beautiful dialogue between the guitar and violin. This reflects the relief I felt personally that the fieldwork was completed (it having seemed at times along the way like an almost insurmountable task) and a contentment and anticipation I felt moving forward from the fieldwork into analysis and writing the thesis. It also acknowledges the central role Shane had in the research, as not only my composer-collaborator but also his assistance during most mappings, as well as providing personal support.

The final section reiterates ideas from the first section, but this time in a higher key, with a sense of assurance and certainty via a deeper and richer guitar accompaniment. The melodic line forms a rising sequence towards the end giving a sense of anticipation and something building. We wanted to convey the fact that the four strands would continue on, like place, even though they will also constantly change. This tension between constancy and change is an important part of place-making, as I have described in Chapter Two and the empirical discussions. But all the aspects detailed above, like the constant guitar accompaniment representing gathering and weaving and the different rhythmic ideas in the melody representing arrhythmia and eurhythmia, remain, conveying the fact that, having gone on this research journey and analysed the findings, this is what I now understood the framework and findings to be in a more certain sense.

It was critical to acknowledge my own role and journey in the research as much as work through the findings, because my positionality was so central to completing the research as a musicking geographer, as discussed in Chapter Three. Using music allowed me to use the one 'canvas' to explore the framework and the research process simultaneously. In reality, it would have been difficult for me to separate these out, and indeed would not have been in the spirit of musicking geography, as both framework and method, to do so. Furthermore, I feel that Seamon's (2018b) synergistic understanding of place research, which I ultimately followed to understand the relationship between the four framework strands in the academic context, was effectively teased out in music. Unlike on paper, when a relationship often seems to me like a process because of the nature of reading (e.g. left to right or top to bottom), the melodies, harmonies, rhythms and interactions

between the instruments each exist as their own little facets of music, but are clearest and most effective when heard together.

As also described there, had my circumstances not been so favourable, with my partner willing to give his time to the method, it could not have happened, and so this must be kept in mind for future applications of the method too. Equally, I reflect that the piece of music itself cannot convey the things it helped me to work through; listeners would need me to interpret it for them to understand its role in the research. This is not to say that the piece has to function in this way – it is itself a piece of music that can be played or listened to and enjoyed – but given that its origins are in a specific purpose, I am led to conclude that its transferability as a research output is not complete without text interpretation.

I now move to conclude this chapter and indicate additional future directions in emplaced musicking research.

7.7 Conclusion and Future Research Directions

Throughout the songs on Mick Hanly's album *Homeland*, quoted in the opening of this chapter, Mick reflects on parts of Irish life that he took for granted while here and missed when he moved away. As he told me in our musicking ethnography interview, he personally wanted to reconcile the tensions and tumultuous relationship he had with Ireland during his career, having previously written highly charged political music that often decried the many things Mick felt were wrong in the country at the time (interview with author, 25 September 2017). As he said, many of the problems about which he wrote persist, and have been joined by many new ones as well. But despite these tensions, that formed a focal point in his earlier

practice, he still reflects on Ireland as his homeland with fondness. The last song on the album is a short reprise of *Homeland*, reiterating that, despite where he travelled to or the problems he saw in Ireland, it would always be his homeland, just as places change but always maintain their special role for those who weave them.

Mick's songs are a weaving of historical events with his own personal memories, a gathering of the tensions he himself felt are an inherent part of Ireland as a place and his relationship with it, and a recognition of the fact that these tensions may well exist, but Ireland is still a place that has nurtured and sustained him as a musician. And the album formed a way for him to express this, and share it with others. Unfortunately, as Mick told me towards the end of our interview, this album did not enjoy a great deal of success, and he was already working on planning a new album to try to recoup losses at that time, which was about a year after it was released (interview with author, 25 September 2017). Added to this, he was finding it more and more difficult to get opportunities to perform the work live, and audiences were buying fewer albums, with very few music shops left to sell them either. Despite the love for Ireland as a homeplace Mick felt in his music, and its role in shaping him as a musician, he found that it was also a difficult place to sustain his working practice and living.

Mick's story speaks to the fact that, even though this research has made a valuable contribution to geography and musicking scholarship, and to policymaking and empirical knowledge of musicking and place-making in Carlow, Kilkenny, and Wexford, there are always challenges to face and issues to address. As such, I now provide some avenues for future research which I feel will enhance the insights

provided in this research, and continue to work to sustain and support the vital music- and place-making that happens in small Irish towns every day.

Attending to the impacts of CI and MGAW in the longer term is the first and most obvious recommendation to make out of this research. Additionally, as the Music Generation programmes were only in their infancy in both Kilkenny and Wexford during the fieldwork, future research of this type would also gain a better insight into their role in music education and the work of musicking in schools in particular too. This is an important future consideration, because Music Generation is a part of The Creative Ireland Programme's goal of providing access to music education to every child in Ireland by 2022. The intricacies and uniqueness of each polyrhythmic ensemble means that the realisation of nationally planned programmes at local level will require close attention to issues of place.

Additionally, in Chapter Three I described how I felt that my positionality had influenced how the fieldwork proceeded in certain ways. While I did not feel that my gender impacted the research in any negative ways, I am nonetheless conscious that gender is most certainly an issue in the music industry, and is garnering increasing attention in Ireland as much as everywhere else (e.g. *Sounding the Feminists*, 2019). I did not set out to address issues of gender in the research, though I perceived an unevenness in community music participation especially, to which many community music facilitators alluded in our conversations too. Future research on musicking in small towns could interrogate why this is the case, and my research is a valuable starting point from which gender issues in musicking might be researched and addressed at local level.

As detailed in Chapters Five and Six, musicians use social media extensively, whether as practitioners building support networks, community music ensembles sharing resources, or audiences listening to music via streaming. I additionally discussed how crowdfunding is now increasingly used by musicians in Ireland and across the world to help in financing their work and overcoming financial arrhythmias. I venture that crowdfunding music, and the use of patronage membership services like *Patreon* that similarly allow musicians to finance their work through membership subscriptions and rewards, will become even more significant in the coming years, and will become an important theme for future research on musicking and finance in particular to address.

The issue of musical genre, while not a central concern at the outset of the research, nonetheless emerged as an important aspect of some musicians' practices. As I have established and Finnegan (2007) asserts, small towns often have a mix of musicking, and do not often sustain singular music scenes to any significant degree. However, Chapter Six illustrated how some practitioners worked in genres that required them to mobilise their practices to other parts of the world in order to overcome the arrhythmia of lack of opportunities locally, or in Ireland. Practitioners who worked in genres that are more popular in Ireland still mobilised, but comparatively less. As such, issues of genre are important and future research might attend to the specific complexities of genres in musicking in small towns. Indeed, understanding how genres figure in small town musicking to a greater extent than was feasible here might help in overcoming some of the arrhythmias this research has uncovered too.

At the close of this project, I now move on from researching musical practice and place-making in these three wonderful towns, returning to my professional musical practice full-time for the time being, but also looking forward to bringing my musicking geographer knowledges and perspectives to whatever context in which I work in the future. I look forward keenly to returning to music teaching, and indeed to some special future performance collaborations with young practitioners who I actually taught as teenagers. I cannot wait to travel and indeed collaborate with my partner Shane, as he builds his flourishing professional practice across the world, helping him to navigate the musicking eurhythmias and arrhythmias he meets along the way.

But it is with sadness that I also reflect that many of the musicking roles I once held have changed drastically over the span of this research. Four Lakes Productions, with whom I worked from their very beginnings, ceased productions in 2018. Carlow Gospel Choir, of which I was also a founding member and voluntary facilitator from their very first rehearsal, no longer exists. The Carty Sisters, with whom I enjoyed some hectic but memorable gigs, have moved abroad to build their practice. Sue Furlong is no longer with us. And Aspiro, with whom I have built some of my most valued and treasured collaborations as both researcher and musician, is drastically changed.

Of course there are positive developments that have occurred even by stepping away from professional musical practice to complete this research. In returning to my teaching practice, I updated my knowledge of, training in and adherence to child protection policy. This process is now much more straightforward since it can now be completed, in the main, online. More social

media groups and websites have been established for advertising session music and lessons, and new online networks for supporting and sharing resources among music tutors have also cropped up. More music education initiatives have developed in many places in Ireland, working towards ensuring more equitable provision for all young people to experience the work of musicking in their schools, central musicking fields of care for music students and their practitioner-tutors alike.

All of this demonstrates the constantly changing and yet enduring sense of places and their rhythms I have uncovered in this research (Massey, 2005). In ways these places are still the same, and in ways they will never be the same, but this is a manifestation of the 'dynamism' of places (Buttimer, 1976: 277), the gathering and weaving that has always happened and will always happen there. In undertaking this research I have hoped to even partially tease out the 'knots' (Ingold, 2011) of places to understand their composition as polyrhythmic ensembles and the role of musical practice and experience in this. Through musicking geography, I hope that geographers and all scholars of and practitioners working in musicking will be equipped to uncover the rich place-making through processual musical practice that happens every day, in even the most ordinary and unexpected places.

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Appendix 1: Irish National Arts and Music Bodies

Create works to develop collaborative arts in the community, advocating for artistic partnerships with partners and audiences. (Create, 2018a). It encourages work outside the traditional gallery or theatre context (*ibid.*). It was founded in 1983 as 'Creative Activity for Everyone', and works in partnership with AC and a range of civil and arts organisations (Create, 2018c). It holds events and provides development opportunities and supports for artists and groups, as well as operating the Artist in the Community Scheme, an Arts Council funding stream for projects by artists in community settings (Create, 2018b).

Music Network works to promote live music for audiences across Ireland (regardless of location), and to develop musicians' practice (Music Network, 2018a). It has funding schemes for tours and the purchase of instruments and resources, for both professional and non-professional musicians and groups (Music Network, 2018b). It also operates Music Generation (described below) as a subsidiary company (*ibid.*), one of several partnerships it maintains in carrying out its work. It is supported in part by AC, and is a charity (Music Network, 2018a).

IMRO, the Irish Music Rights Organisation, plays a number of roles. It collects and distributes royalties for original music which is broadcast or used by businesses (from whom it collects a license fee), represents music creators and rights holders, and sponsors and promotes live music (IMRO, 2018a). It also holds workshops, networking events, and showcases for music creators (IMRO, 2018b).

The **Contemporary Music Centre** is an archive and resource centre for composers, supporting new music in Ireland and Northern Ireland (CMC, 2018). It also works in audience development, and provides continuing professional development supports for composers (*ibid.*). It is supported by AC and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland (*ibid.*).

First Music Contact is an information and advice resource service, operated for free, which also runs events, workshops and showcases for musicians, especially in the contemporary music genres (First Music Contact, 2018). It is supported by AC (*ibid.*).

Raidio Telifís Éireann (RTÉ) (translated as Radio Television Ireland) is the national public-service media operator in Ireland. It provides free-to-air multi-media services in Ireland and internationally (RTÉ, 2018a). Radio broadcasting began on 1 January 1926, while television broadcasting began on 31 December 1961 (RTÉ, 2018b). Though this did not initially happen with the direct intention of promoting music or culture more broadly (a strong element of nationalist political motive was clear), it shortly became recognised that such an entity could aid education, particularly music education (Mullaney-Dignam, 2008). Radio broadcasts initially had little spoken word content, mostly focussing on music mostly performed live with some performances from outside Ireland also broadcast. The first station was in Dublin and another opened a year later in Cork (RTÉ, 2018b). Radio and television channels expanded in number in the 1970s, and technological developments meant that FM and stereo radio services could be introduced. Ireland's first Eurovision win, in 1970, was broadcast on RTÉ television. Lyric FM, which broadcasts music and arts (with an emphasis on art music), was launched in 1999, and the development of online service provision began in the 1990s.

The **Royal Irish Academy of Music (RIAM)** was founded in 1848 (and is thus Ireland's oldest music institution) in Dublin to provide "systematic instrumental tuition" (RIAM, 2018a, 2018b). It became a state institution in 1889, and has provided music tuition in-house (fee-paying) since its foundation, as well as administering diploma, degree and higher degree options. Its work also expands outward, providing an examination framework for music students in local centres (also fee-paying), examining 40,000 students annually (RIAM, 2018b). The RIAM operates a number of performance ensembles, and in recent times has also developed a presence among the wider practitioner community via an online teaching and learning network, and accompanying annual conference (RIAM, 2018c). The RIAM is supported by several benefactors, memberships, and has charity status (RIAM, 2018d, 2018e).

Ceolmhtas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCÉ) (translated as Gathering of Musicians in Ireland) is a non-profit organisation which seeks to preserve and promote Irish traditional music through local branches around the world, founded in 1951 (CCÉ, 2018a).

Their activities include Irish language, music and dance classes run by local branches, music sessions, touring groups, the annual *Fleadh Cheoil* competitions in each county (branch), province and all-Ireland, and operating an archive and shop for music resources (*ibid.*). CCÉ is funded partially by memberships, proceeds from fleadhanna, and grants from the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Culture Ireland, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (CCÉ, 2018b).

Appendix 2: Example of Information and Consent Form and Ethical Approval for Research

My name is Aoife Kavanagh, and I am an Irish Research Council funded PhD student in the Department of Geography at Maynooth University. I am conducting research into the relationship between musical practice and place-making in the small Irish town context, under the supervision of Prof Karen Till. As a professional musical practitioner based in Carlow, I have a strong professional and personal connection to music-making in smaller Irish towns, and am keen to learn about your experiences and perspectives of practice in this context. This information sheet gives an overview of the project, and my contact details.

I am interesting in learning about the role of place in your professional practice, and, in turn, how your practice has a role in shaping place and attachments to place. To do so, I would like to learn more about your artistic practice, through observations and compositional analyses, and through open-ended discussions/interviews. I will ask you about the ways you design, plan and undertake your performances, about the artistic decisions you make, and about how these are reflective of your broader work. In terms of composition, I will ask you about how you develop and undertake these compositions, and about the compositional decisions you make therein. I will also ask you about how you feel that your work impacts upon your town and the people living there, how it shapes their attachments to that place, and the ways the town is supportive to your practice.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. There are a number of ways to participate depending on the nature of your work. Where your work is based around performance, we might consider my undertaking observations of your performance and some interviews. On the other hand, if your work is based on composition, we might consider undertaking some analysis of your composition work and some interviews. During this process, you can answer as many or as few questions in any way that you wish. As these will be open-ended discussions, you can also talk about related topics and ideas. Please feel free also to use whichever means of response is best for you – including playing instruments, drawing or any other medium. If there are any questions you cannot or wish not to answer, that is fine; we will move on to the next question or you can change the question asked. Please also feel free to ask questions. You may withdraw from the study at any time.

I will do my best to maintain confidentiality and anonymity during the research process and in subsequent research outputs. Unless you wish your name to be identified, all personal information for the study will be masked. I will keep the data

in an encrypted format in a secure place at the Maynooth University Department of Geography, for ten years following the end of this study. If I wish to use the data for comparative studies or follow-up projects (for instance post-doctoral research), I will inform you about this and you can decide if I can use the data generated from your participation. *It must be recognized that, in some circumstances, confidentiality of research data and records may be overridden by courts in the event of litigation or in the course of investigation by lawful authority. In such circumstances the University will take all reasonable steps within law to ensure that confidentiality is maintained to the greatest possible extent.*

The results will be used in the completion of my PhD dissertation, as well as other publications, scholarly articles, presentations and for teaching purposes. I am happy to send you a digital copy of these outcomes if you provide me with your email address.

If during your participation in this study you feel the information and guidelines that you were given have been neglected or disregarded in any way, or if you are unhappy about the process, please contact the Secretary of the Maynooth University Ethics Committee at research.ethics@nuim.ie or +353 (0)1 708 6019. Please be assured that your concerns will be dealt with in a sensitive manner. You may also contact my supervisor, Prof Karen Till, at karen.till@nuim.ie, or at the Department of Geography, Maynooth University, Maynooth, Co. Kildare. You can contact me any time (aoife.a.kavanagh@nuim.ie).

If you wish to participate, please sign two copies of the consent form below. One form you can keep and the other I will keep for my records. Please indicate if you give permission for your name and images of performances to be used and if I have permission to record the interview.

Sincere thanks for your generosity and time.

Aoife Kavanagh

CONSENT FORM

I have read the information form provided and agree to participate in this study.

Name (printed): _____

Name (signature): _____

Date: _____

I would like my real name to be used: Yes No

I would prefer to have a pseudonym used: Yes No

I agree to have the interview digitally recorded: Yes No

[Please note that after the interview is transcribed, your name will be masked unless you chose to use your real name (as above)]

I agree to have pictures taken of my performances: Yes No

Pictures may be taken, but please mask my identity: Yes No

If there is a follow up study (for instance postdoctoral research, as per above), I consent to allowing the retention of my contact details, so that I may be contacted in future instances to seek approval for the use of my data:

Yes No

Please provide an email address and/or phone number, which will be stored securely by me, so that I may contact you in future to approve the use of your data.

Many thanks for your engagement and cooperation.

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY,
MAYNOOTH, CO. KILDARE, IRELAND



Dr Carol Barrett
Secretary to Maynooth University Research Ethics Committee

20 May 2016

Aoife Kavanagh
Geography
Maynooth University

RE: Application for Ethical Approval for a project entitled: Making Music and Making Place: Mapping Musical Practice and Metaphor in Ireland

Dear Aoife,

The Ethics Committee evaluated the amendment for the above project and we would like to inform you that ethical approval has been granted.

Any deviations from the project details submitted to the ethics committee will require further evaluation. This ethical approval will expire on 30 November 2019

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carol Barrett".

Dr Carol Barrett
Secretary,
Maynooth University Research Ethics Committee

C.c Dr Karen Till, Department of Geography

Reference Number SRESC-2016-033

Appendix 3: Musicking Composition Notes

***An Fíodóir* (Shane Hennessy and Aoife Kavanagh, August 2018)**

An Fíodóir is an instrumental composition for violin and guitar. We composed the piece in three parts, in an ABA1 structure. This is a ternary form, indicating that part A1 is a developed reiteration of the initial A theme and ideas. It is four minutes long.

The aspiration of the composition was to provide a means of reflecting and looking back on the research process as a whole, as well as the themes that emerged in the findings and their relationship to each other. Our notes from early in the composition process list our thoughts before beginning to compose, and what we felt the music might do in order to convey these ideas:

‘Themes – rhythms, many, varied speeds, some constant, some changing

A sense of weaving, or threads working their way through – themes working together but also independently – perhaps one on violin, two on guitar? Or keep it simpler, one each?

A sense of history and the past, as well as a looking to the future
Development and change - perhaps this could be represented by a motif which develops while remaining in some senses the same
Memory, recollection, nostalgia

Positives and negatives, and tensions between successes and setbacks for Aoife as a researcher. Also conveys the relationship between eurhythmias and arrhythmias all as part of the polyrhythmic ensemble of place

Emotions – familiarity, security, fondness, happiness; challenges, problems, unfamiliarity, change

Rootedness and connection to place, but also mobility, relationships to other places both here and gone. This could be conveyed by the returning developed A theme

Change in keys, tempi and meters, articulations – reflective of different moods and emotions

Slow, fast, slow – reflective of the research journey, which started for Aoife as something less developed and less certain, but grew in intensity as the fieldwork took off and many ideas emerged simultaneously. As she got into the rhythm of managing this fieldwork, desk work, and music work, things stabilised, which might provide the transition back into the returning A theme?

Nostalgic tone of the waltz versus the driving feel of reel

Development (not just alteration) and return – things changing but underlying similarities that speak to the continuity of place in some ways even as it changes in others; nostalgia, memory

Dissonances and consonances – arrhythmias and eurhythmias. These might also be developed very obviously in the rhythm itself, perhaps through syncopated entries or 3s-against-2s?

Meandering end – all of these processes continue without end --- end on a dominant as opposed to tonic chord? Has a cadential feel without being a closing cadence

Meandering motifs and ascending sequences – roots carved/wayfaring without necessarily having a predefined path, merely similar paths that you can model your own path on'

(fieldnotes, 14 August 2018)

The description below was written in May 2019, before the Conference of Irish Geographers, where I spoke about the piece and the process of composing it as part of Creative Geography. It is difficult to put all of the ideas around the piece and the various choices we made during the composition into words. Indeed, because we composed it through

improvisation there may well be musical ideas here for which we had clear rationale at the time that we simply couldn't remember afterwards.

Nonetheless, I feel that it illustrates at least some of the ways the composition process allowed me as a geographer to reflect on the research from theoretical, methodological and empirical standpoints, and to be challenged to really *look* at everything that had happened over the course of (at that point) nearly four years of work, away from my desk and computer, through a new and unfamiliar medium.

We did carry forward many of these ideas to the composition itself. As indicated above, it is written in ABA1 form, which helped to convey the arc of my experience as a researcher, starting out developing the project, finding my feet, and then entering into an initially very hectic and challenging time as the fieldwork commenced and developed. The A theme is loosely based on a waltz, which is usually in triple time, but it moves between quadruple and triple time in the guitar and violin as the theme develops, which begins to introduce the polyrhythmic idea that is so central to the definition of place as polyrhythmic ensemble that the research espouses. This also happens when some of the rhythmic motifs in the violin sometimes sync with and sometimes work against the guitar part. The melody here is not necessarily nostalgic but certainly has more 'feeling' than the B section, suggesting the memories and emotional responses that gather into musicking fields of care. This waltz, while tonal, does not have a set key, and meanders at points between F major and D minor. These are related keys, and so not overly jarring to the ear, but still convey some sense

of shifting and change, which are important themes of the research and indeed part of the research journey. In this section, the violin carries the main melodic line of the waltz, but the guitar part is more than accompaniment. It begins to suggest how interwoven or locked together the four key themes that became the musicking geography theoretical framework would be, but they do not yet have full clarity because the fieldwork hasn't happened yet! As such, the guitar part is played more quietly than the violin's melody. The guitar has a constant quaver and semiquaver movement – it represents gathering and weaving, which underpin all of the strands.

The transition between this waltz (A) and the faster reel (B) is marked in the violin part by a descending melodic idea written in sequence, which suggests a sense of pattern but also ascent higher in pitch, creating a tension and idea of something to come. This is followed by a sustained high note on the violin while the guitar takes over, followed by a set of slightly dissonant chords between guitar and violin. These aren't necessarily intended to be unpleasant to listen to, but to signify a change in the music from a gentler waltz to something more dynamic, and the transition in the research between desk and field, which was a very new experience for me. As we move into the reel, the guitar takes on a more aggressive movement, and adds the harmonic depth to the violin's melodic line. This line is based on a mixture of rising and ascending step-wise movement, and "jagged" interludes of smaller ascents and descents. This conveys the new ideas that emerged rapidly in the field, which happened in intervals as I moved

between towns and between musicking ethnographies and mappings. This all meant that the stories being told and ideas being uncovered became more solidified as time went on, but also developed uniquely for each town in ways too. Overall, the B section is slightly louder and much faster and “busier” than the waltz of part A, and has two independent ideas weaving together effectively simultaneously – the reel melodic line in the violin, and a syncopated accompaniment part in the guitar that adds rhythmic interest, shifting between on- and off-beat emphases.

Shane’s central role in the fieldwork beyond mentoring me in this composition was in supporting me personally, but also playing a crucial research assistant role in the musicking mappings especially. As such, before the A1 idea returns, the music thins, and there is a dialogue of 8 bars between the violin and guitar. First, the violin plays a four bar idea while the guitar is reduced to single chord strokes on every beat. Then the guitar takes the four bar idea while the violin plays the same bare chordal accompaniment. This represents for me the essential part Shane had in ensuring the success of the mappings in particular practically, but also as my equal and partner in a very necessary and vital sense personally.

After this brief dialogue interlude, the reel is played again; fieldwork in three towns provided plenty of ups and downs! But the similarity of the music here to the previous playing of the reel illustrates how the themes that were emerging, that went on to form the empirical findings of the research, had now been developed and nuanced for each place (there are very slight changes that only the most attentive listener might hear!), and

sat well with each other, and with the polyrhythmic ensemble ideas that were emerging as a whole. All of these themes could be separated, but by themselves they would not sound as rich or full; this is how we conveyed the 'synergistic' relationship between the key themes of the framework, drawing on Seamon (2014).

The transition between the reel (B) and the returning developed waltz (A1) is formed through what I can only describe as a "nostalgic" melodic line on the violin, and a simple waltz accompaniment on the guitar. It also conveys a sense of achievement and anticipation I felt about moving into the final stages of the research. This is a new melody of only four bars (repeated) in the same key as the reel, and provides for a transitioning into the returning waltz, now written in predominantly in C major, and at a slightly higher pitch as the waltz. There is more clarity to this version of the waltz than the first. The intricate rhythms remain in the guitar part, and the shifting triple and quadruple rhythmic movement remains in the violin. The guitar embellishes the violin melody with some small melodic movements, nuances that reflect how we now saw each of the places we studied with new eyes ourselves, and how we (most me!) had been changed by the research process as a whole. The final sixteen bars are an ascending idea on violin and in the guitar accompaniment, representing the final climb to bring the discoveries made on this journey together towards the conclusion of the project, but also a kind of recurring and almost cyclical idea, showing how places endure despite the changes they see, and the towns we studied, while the same in many ways, are changed for us, and may even be changed

for other people because of their participation in the research. The final notes are sustained in both instruments. Contrary to our initial ideas about closing on the dominant chord (which would have suggested an open ending) I elected to end on the key chord of C. After all of the chaos and competing rhythms, melodies and harmonic ideas at different points in the tune, I felt this was best for conveying everything coming together in the culmination of the research.

Appendix 4: 'What's the problem represented to be?' (Bacchi, 2012) - Table of Questions

What's the problem represented to be? Questions (from Bacchi, 2012: 21)
1. What's the 'problem' (for example, of 'problem gamblers', 'drug use/abuse', 'gender inequality', 'domestic violence', 'global warming', 'sexual harassment', etc.) represented to be in a specific policy or policy proposal?
2. What presuppositions or assumptions underpin this representation of the 'problem'?
3. How has this representation of the 'problem' come about?
4. What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? Where are the silences? Can the 'problem' be thought about differently?
5. What effects are produced by this representation of the 'problem'?
6. How/where has this representation of the 'problem' been produced, disseminated and defended? How has it been (or could it be) questioned, disrupted and replaced?