Interiorities in Oral Cultural Landscapes
In / Between - Traditional Irish Music and the Made Landscape of Ireland

A project submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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September 2016
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Declaration

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Steve Larkin September 2016
 Acknowledgements

Buíochas ó chroi le Aoife agus Cuán.

Thanks to the staff at RMIT, Melbourne and Barcelona, and to the PRS research community. Thanks to Alice Casey, Andrew Clancy, Cian Deegan and Colm Moore for support and gentle ribbings.

Thanks to Deepka Abbi, Alice Clarke and Zunairah Ansari for assistance.

Thanks especially to Donal Siggins, Frank Tate, Aki Aro, PJ Brady and Simon Doyle.

My deepest thanks to Prof Richard Blythe and Prof JoVan Den Berghe for their generous observations and encouragement from the beginning.

And finally, to Prof Leon van Schaik, with gratitude for his continuous and enduring insight and support.
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1.

General Theory of Practice
Introduction

At the beginning of my Ph.D research there were certain characteristics of practice I understood. They were vague but nonetheless valid. It was two-sided. On one hand my practice, in music and architecture, grew from an emotional relationship with music and landscape; on the other it was a technical practice that prepared for active participation in those musical and cultural landscapes. This practice, begun in music, evolved into a rich conversation with other musicians in a shared and supportive exploration of a culture. The particularities of place and landscape played an important role. Formative music making often took place in the homes of exceptional musicians in regional localities where music styles, people who play, people who listen, space and landscape were all experienced together in a condensed cultural episode. This built a sensitivity to regional culture, space and landscape that went beyond an abstract enjoyment of landscape or its artefacts.

It has become clear from my research that I continue to work from the perspectives of culture and landscape. A significant part of the research explores the processes I use to develop an intuitive response to these in a contemporary music and architectural practice. These processes have their foundations in a practice that shares musical and architectural perspectives and evolves connections between them. It is by observing these connections that the research makes its most significant discoveries about how I work in response to landscape and culture and this points towards future potential research.

It is also worth saying that, at the outset, I thought this research would predominantly involve the architectural side of my creative practice and not the musical side. However, the influence of musical practice quickly became evident at all layers of thought and this discovery was important for the research and for me personally. A principle reason for this initial assumption was a belief that traditional Irish music, as an oral musical culture, was beyond the scope of critical discursive reasoning. While this remains the case to a degree, I have found ways of making deeper observations in music especially in the connections with architecture. This is not done by analogy or metaphor but by representing the real processes side by side and allowing them speak for themselves. I am excited by observations brought about by my examination of Irish traditional music. It has, I believe, offered the opportunity to examine this music critically outside simple collection and dissemination in an ethnographic sense. It has also established a research methodology that can study the aesthetic structures of traditional Irish music as a vibrant creative practice. This I believe can also offer scope for future research.
In November 2013 I began structured research into my creative practice through RMIT’s Invitational Design Practice Programme. This research developed from research strategies associated with the RMIT model well described in van Schaik’s ideograms especially the cone diagram and generally outlined in ‘The Pink Book.’ (van Schaik, Johnson, 2011, p. 26) The diagram explains a process of looking back, down and forward and then three tranches.

The research model is explained as “investigating enchainments by looking back, by looking at current work in progress, and by speculating about future practice.” (van Schaik, Johnson, 2011, p. 26) The process is further outlined by the “cone of research: at the base of the existing body of work, above it tranches of work conducted in the light of examining the mastery of that work, and a concluding tranche speculating on future practice.” (van Schaik, Johnson, 2011, p. 26) The cone diagram is also represented as a bar chart in the accompanying diagram.

The research across the course of the Ph.D aligns with this description. In early research, outlined in this chapter, I examine the body of work that had gained peer recognition in exhibitions, awards and publications or as van Schaik outlines ‘demonstrated mastery’ (van Schaik, 2005). This corresponds with propositions and enchainments in the bar diagram or the bottom ring of the cone diagram. Also, at this early stage I make significant observations on the nature of practice and the tendencies or ‘urges’ (Blythe, Forthcoming) that drive it.

I examine enchainments2 (van Schaik, 2005, p. 106) and communities of practice3 across a practice that includes music and architecture. This is a projects, literature and music review that places the work in communities of practice. These communities are broad due to the two disciplinary fields and includes musicians and their music-making in oral musical culture. I will explore this in more depth later in this chapter.

The case studies outlined in chapter 2 represent both a projects review and case studies of seminal tunes in my repertoire. As influential elements of my repertoire they act as agents in the work, challenging it, mentoring it; a cultural history acting through its artefacts. They also constitute case studies. As they are part of my repertoire the tunes represent tendencies, ‘urges’ in my practice. This mounts an interesting ambiguity in practice, the exploration of inherited artefacts and authorship in their development. This will be a continual theme in the research.

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1 This cone diagram is developed in later publications.
2 Leon van Schaik in Mastering Architecture, Great Britain, Wiley, 2005 p106. “I take the term enchainment from Randall Collins, and use it to mean the processes by which individuals align themselves with the players in a knowledge domain. We do not enter a domain as a solitary originator. Consciously or not we situate ourselves in the field of all the players of whom we are aware. I see this awareness factor as what distinguishes between our earlier ‘provincial’ reaching out to mastery and our later metropolitan search for validation of our innovation.”
3 The term ‘community of practice’ is derived from enchainment set out by Leon van Schaik in Mastering Architecture, p. 106–108.
Communities of practice are referred to continually across the research, especially in chapter 4 and chapter 7 as more definitive observations brought about by the research are made. The broad and re-iterative nature of communities, especially those brought about by the Ph.D process itself, are recognised. Significant observations and identification of gaps in the research begin to direct the subsequent ‘tranches’ signalled in the cone and bar diagrams. This is supported by personal reflection on the work, the review process, supervisor support and peers in the Ph.D community. Each particular ‘tranche’ provides further observations or material for reflection and further gaps emerge. The development of each subsequent tranche of research is influenced by the process and by those gaps.

The research is structured by two Practice Research Symposia annually. These are formal and informal peer review weekends where candidates and critics from all over the world converge to review and discuss the research. The centre-point of these weekends is a presentation of research to a panel of supervisors and external critics. As outlined in ‘The Pink Book’, “Typically the initial Research Symposium presentation scopes the propositions arising from the candidate’s review of past work; the second Research Symposium provides, through project and literature reviews, a survey of enchainments in which that work was conducted; a series of intermediate Research Symposia cover tranches of project work devised in a penultimate Research Symposium - prior to their completion seminar at the final Research Symposium - candidates present the outlines of their catalogues, research catalogues, or ‘durable visual records’ together with their design for their final presentation through exhibition, web, film or performance.” [van Schaik, Johnson, 2011] Audio recordings of these panel sessions support further reflection and become important to the development of the research.

This research is framed in my ‘mental space’ [van Schaik, Johnson, 2011, p. 21] or ‘spatial intelligence’. [van Schaik 2008] This was especially pertinent to this research development due to the particularities of a creative practice linked to physical and oral cultural landscapes. It was coupled with a tendency to work in immersive interiors of architecture and music, each with their own interior quality. It was especially important in the research that this interiority was made evident in both the processes of practice and in the work itself.

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4 See Community of Practice and Hejduk, Chapter 4 - p. 187.
5 See New Knowledge and Communities of Practice, Chapter 7 - p. 271.
The definition of the ‘mental space’ of the practice frames the working methods clearly. ‘Anthropological’ working methods are extensively articulated in the creative practice and constitute an important body of the research. This is one contribution to knowledge about design practice and suggests future research and creative practice directions.

The research was carried out ‘in the medium itself.’ [van Schaik, Johnson, 2011, p. 23] This is particularly important in the research associated with oral music practice. This was a different approach to the usual ethnographic tendencies used in traditional Irish music and outlines scope for development. It provided real observations about a particular creative practice that operates, with similarities in conceptual and intuitive creative tendencies, across both fields. We will see a direct example of this in the research presented in chapter 4 and 5. This builds towards the interior mental space already outlined.

Validations Procedures

The supervision feedback, PRS sessions and the supporting ADAPT-r research have played an important role in the development of research strategies and in a systematic validation of the research.

The Practice Research Symposia and subsequent supervisor meetings were at the centre of the research validation process. At the PRS, research was presented for different forms of validation, for example peer, up-liner and academic in accordance with McNiff et al. (McNiff et al. 1996)7 These validation procedures became increasingly important as later research strategies developed specific to this research.

Self validation also played a crucial role and was the basic critical layer constantly at work in the research. I sought to establish rigorous research strategies that could explicate legitimate research findings for presentation in the PRS and supervisor sessions. In order to protect against subjective and biased opinion in self validating procedures, I built, as much as possible, multiple methods of review into the research strategies. This would allow different perspectives on the same problem and I would then be potentially able to separate real findings from biased findings. This is evident across the two creative practices, but also in specific case studies like music or projects where multiple points of view were accommodated. These were in turn placed before PRS and supervisors in order to test them further.

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6 See Chapters 2 & 3.

7 Reference cited by Jo van den Berghe, Theatre of Operations, or Construction Site as Architectural Design, RMIT University, 2012, Smallbook 7, p. 29.
Peer validation continued in conversations in and out of the PRS weekends. This occurred across the ADAPT-r community with other architects on the programme in conferences and meetings. I also share professional office space and teach in university with other candidates on the RMIT Ph.D programme and this offered a critical review platform around - leading up to and after - the PRS weekends. There were also the extremely valuable PRS weekends when research could be shown and discussed directly with the community.

The most rigorous up-liner and academic validation occurred in the PRS panel reviews and at supervisor meetings. These were the most prominent validation procedures in the process where I could demonstrate the research and assess weaknesses. Supervisor meetings took place before and after the PRS weekends. These meetings would carefully assess the research and review both the weaknesses and strengths. These were vital to the process and enabled us to develop legitimate and rewarding paths through the research.

ADAPT-r Research

During the research I was awarded a 13 months fellowship as part of the innovative ADAPT-r Marie Curie Action - Initial Training Networks fellowship programme with RMIT Barcelona with responsibility for delivering ADAPTr work packages 1.1 (Case Studies) and 1.2 (Community of Practice). Those work packages, which substantially included the research presented in this chapter, carefully developed primary research methodologies. Both CoP and Case Studies are developed in drawing methodologies that allow explication of precise data and the organisation of this data in relationships. The research findings were included in outreach and dissemination packages including participation in symposia, exhibitions, publications and master classes.

Early research was based around research methods and results that normally emerge from that research identified in the ADAPT-r work packages as follows:

- Case Studies
- Collate evidence of the collective community of practice
- Identify transformative triggers
- Identify public behaviours including trans-disciplinary impacts
- Explicating tacit knowledge about innovative practice
- Refinement and explication of methods

Training and dissemination took place, not only at the PRS sessions but also at separate conferences and exhibitions such as ADAPT-r days in host universities, interviews, exhibitions etc. Training included research and method training, personal development and supervision while dissemination included outreach activities, exhibitions and conferences.

The research done at this time was not only relevant to work packages 1.1 & 1.2 but evidence results across all the ADAPT-r work packages. For example, following the comparative analysis of case studies from architecture and music, I was able to identify a clear reliance on ‘tacit knowledge’ [Blythe, Stamm, 2017] in practice. This was important as it provided insight into conscious and subconscious processes of practice and highlighted the need to develop research methods that could explore this tacit knowledge. I was also able to identify a number
of ‘transformative triggers,’ [Blythe, Stamm, 2017] that deepened understanding and supported research development. Identification of these transformative triggers highlighted their significance in the research and they became stepping stones in the research development. ‘Transformative triggers lead to refinement and explication of methods’. [Blythe, Stamm, 2017] We build upon the transformative observations and develop new research methods particular to these observations. Many of these methods, like research case studies9 or analysis of practice processes10 are in continual development in the research community and the PRS reviews are an opportunity to see them at work. Both of these research methods are used here. We will see this in an analysis of practice in the wall-score development11 and in research case studies, like “An Páistín Fionn and Galway Bay” and “The Gutter Book” which are explored later.12

In my particular practice public behaviours operate on a number of levels. One such behaviour is the development of practice in Ireland and abroad as a means to develop public recognition for the work. This is evident in lectures, awards and projects listed and is especially evident in ‘The Irish Pavilion’ at the London Festival of Architecture in collaboration with the Irish Year of Design, a collaborative project between Clancy Moore Architects, Taka Architects and Steve Larkin Architects.13 The Practice Research Symposia is a significant public behaviour aimed at the development of critical thinking. As outlined in ‘The Pink Book’ “The research symposium is the public behaviour of the invitational program.” [van Schaik, Johnson, 2011] A third category of public behaviour is the cultural engagement in the repository fields of music and architecture. This is at the core of the practice in music and architecture, to be in conversation with landscape and oral musical culture. In this shared cultural forum work can contribute meaningfully to the cultural landscape, in turn developing and enriching the work itself.

This introduction to the various work packages identified in the ADAPT-r programme will be developed over the course of the research.

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9 We can see a number of examples of transformative triggers across the research. I will not outline them in depth here as they are necessarily observed, and expanded on, in the research document. We can cite some headlines however to evidence the validity of the point made here. Obvious ‘transformative triggers’ were the connections between music and architectural practice. This continued to evolve across the whole body of research. Other examples in early research were the identification of a repository field or anthropological field as it would eventually be termed (see chapter 3); identification of the importance of ‘object’ and ‘interior space of composition’, identification of the communities of practice across the full practice; anthropological process in practice etc. 9 Research Case Studies are an important tool for Jo van den Berghe with examples like ‘The Ph.D Designs’ contributing significantly to the research findings in his work. Jo van den Berghe; Theatre of Operations, Construction Site as Architectural Design, RMIT University, 2012.

10 In ‘An Epistemology of ‘Venturous Practice’ Richard Blythe (Blythe, Forthcoming) points out a similar ‘practice based’ research method with reference to work by Deborah Saunt, Orbits and Trajectories; Why Architecture Must Never Stand Still, RMIT University, 2014 and Martin Hook, “The Act of Reflective Practice: The Emergence of Ireland, Pederson Hook Architects.” RMIT University 2008. Hook and Saunt in their PhDs, adapted the spider diagram used as a tool in categorising wines according to qualitative characteristics to unpack (as Hook describes it) the qualitative values of each project and to then map these in a comparative way across the practice.

11 See later in Chapter 1 - p. 36.

12 See Chapter 5.

13 See later in Chapter 1 for a full review of this project - p. 54.
1.1 Early Research

In the initial stages of the research I made a number of observations. At the first PRS I claimed that my architectural practice was interested in ‘the poetic or metaphysic of architecture’. Although this was a naive statement, it did place an emphasis on the inter-relational patterns of meaning in the language of architecture and in the ability of architecture to have cultural meaning for different societies. I understood that I was interested in engaging in a conversation with the tradition of architecture, its metaphysical structures and characteristics.

My research will look heavily at ‘processes’ in the practice of music and architecture and draw conclusions from there. I am very aware that there are many potential research strands have not been examined here and offer potential for future research. These will be pointed out in the research document. Here, I have followed the modes of analysis that became apparent in the course of this research based on the intellectual shifts that occurred at each stage.

Introduction to Traditional Irish music.

It is worth introducing my musical practice here in order to understand its relevance in the early research. I will examine music, through case studies, in more detail in Chapter 2.

Traditional Irish music is an oral culture. It is learned through tunes or songs, committed to memory and exchanged directly between people. It is a history that is passed on with incredible precision through objects (tunes and songs). As Sean Crosson notes; “While there are many definitions of traditional music they almost always share an emphasis on the oral, and aural, characteristic of the music as it is “passed on by mouth and by ear, not by written word or musical notation.” As Micheál Ó Súilleabháin notes “[t]raditional music has come out of an actual meeting of bodies in space, you know, people communicating; and I think it always has that immediacy and root and warmth as a result.” [Crosson, 2008, p.13] Creative history in an oral traditional culture has established very distinct anthropological processes in my practice in music and architecture. This is an important discovery in the research as we will see.

Space in traditional Irish music is both real and meta-physical. It can be separated into three categories, the physical, the regional and the meta-physical.

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14 PRS 1 Barcelona, November 24, 2013.

15 See Chapter 2, Oral Culture of Traditional Irish Music.

16 I will explore these spaces in music in more detail in Chapter 2. This is an introduction for the purpose of Chapter 1.
The physical category describes the actual spatial quality of where it is played. Music sessions work best in kitchens and small rooms that support people playing music together in small ensemble, spaces that support conversation and build distinct communal and acoustic atmospheres. These spaces are also closely linked to landscape and local culture, often located in rural out-of-the-way places, in turn supporting congregation and spatial atmospheres. This physical space of Irish music has been important to the development of my spatial intelligence. (van Schaik 2008) in the hothouse environment of many tight music sessions, I have developed a sensitivity to space, that includes, music, acoustics, congregation, culture and landscape. This leads to an interest in the atmosphere or presence of interior space, a balance between open-ness and closed-ness especially relevant to acoustics and to spatial atmosphere that is in turn tuned to the choreography and sensitivities of congregational music making.

The ‘regional’ spaces of traditional Irish music have traditionally been very linked to landscape. These form regional styles in the music, for example the fiddle music of Donegal or Clare.\(^\text{17}\) Physical and temporal characteristics of a landscape and its people are captured in the regional styles that evolve over time. Those styles and their landscapes become interwoven to make a rich complex tapestry of place. This influences my creative outlook, my practice and my relationship with landscape.

An oral culture also exists in the ‘meta-physical’ space of a collective imagination. It collects hundreds or thousands of years of folklore, music and myth into this space which is continually shared and contributed to by its musicians, storytellers and poets. It is a vast archive of experience, thought, cultural history. This archive is accessed through the artefacts - the tunes - that exist as cultural objects. It is beyond written record; a fluid dynamic and changing culture exchanged between people. Yet it is an incredibly precise and permanent record. We see this in traditional Irish music where many old songs and airs have survived outside any written record.

Every category supports, and is supported by, the others. Kitchens and small pubs build communities and condense attitudes and particularities. Regional environments, landscape and society influence congregation. All build towards the meta-physical culture associated with place. It is a self perpetuating cultural environment.

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17 See examples later in Chapter 1 - pg 13, 14 & 15.
Landscape and Artefact

There is a deep interest in landscape, particularly the Irish landscape, in my practice. This is not a picturesque or romantic view but rather a physical engagement with a cultural landscape, to work with it, shape it, using the objects or artefacts that make that landscape.

The relationship between landscape and artefact arose from a prolonged and intimate relationship with the ‘made’ rural landscape of Ireland. I grew up on a small farm, in a rural community in the hills of Co. Wexford and worked on this farm until I left for university. This meant having a direct hand in the manipulation of that landscape through planting crops, making hedgerows, manipulating ground, reclaiming bogs, tending livestock, etc. I developed an appreciation for the robust ‘made’ character of the Irish rural landscape, an appreciation for the subtlety and seasonality of its spaces and how these can be manipulated economically. I developed a love of this ‘made’ cultural landscape that represents a living working community. Landscape is a register of a culture in a particular climate, society and natural landscape. This is supported by my practice as a traditional Irish musician where landscape is seen through the lens of its temporal cultural artefacts, such as tunes and songs. These capture the aural, physical, historical or mythical characteristics of that landscape.

Artefacts or objects18 are mediators that allow us to engage in conversation with a cultural landscape. Our relationship with landscape is brought into view by the objects that we place in it. These objects can be sparse and light, for example a photograph construction [Blythe, 2008] mirroring the raw natural qualities of the landscape or a remote outpost. Alternatively they can be gargantuan constructions only registering characteristics of landscape beneath a dense network, like a city. Ireland has artefacts that are especially sensitive to a natural sacred19 landscape that has formed in the cultural imagination over millennia.

There is a symbiotic relationship between artefact and landscape. Landscape plays a fundamental role in the generation of artefacts and becomes the anthropological field where they are deposited. Artefacts construct our relationship with landscape, they become its DNA, forming it and representing its natural qualities on many different levels. My work in a cultural landscape relies heavily on an exploration of its artefacts. By examining artefacts, manipulating or developing them and placing them in new relationships their character can begin to be tested and accordingly the character of the landscape and culture. This runs deep into the heart of my design process and is the principal subject of this research. It is a type of anthropological practice20 that collects the artefacts of landscape and develops reasoned and intuited responses within a design process.

18 Although definitions of ‘object’ and ‘artefact’ vary I use these terms in accordance with my description in Chapter 1, p. 42. ‘Object’ refers to the real and intentional objects. This will be situated in more detail as we proceed through then exegesis. Artefact describes objects that have accrued cultural meaning in some way or other. Another term, Compositional Objects, outline ‘art’ objects that are defined by their own compositional interior rather than cultural meaning.

19 I refer to the ‘sacredness of nature’ [Schama, 2004, p. 18] as outlined in Chapter 7, p. 266. Also I refer to the pagan traditions of landscape as outlined in Chapter 7.

There is a resurgence in critical thinking on objects. I will introduce a literature review around this that has helped to clarify and develop certain research directions. However, my practice principally engages with object as artefact, although not exclusively, in a type of anthropological process of exploration, development and composition rather than exploring their nature. The philosophical questions of our perception of objects, while pertinent, is a wider conversation in my practice. The research here offers a contribution as a creative practice that can contribute real processes and concrete examples to these areas of critical thinking.

Landscape and Space

A second principal category in my research is termed the ‘interior space of composition.’ This is balanced between two categories of space. The ‘real,’ as it is shared in landscape and the ‘compositional,’ the subjective interior space. These qualities merge to form the cultural experience of the landscape as it is formed over time.

Compositional space, or the subjective interior space, is formed by intra-compositional relationships, the development of patterns of cultural and compositional meaning in the work. This space is present in both music and architecture. I rely on multiple objects or artefacts in an anthropological design process to develop the compositional spatial character. In this way I borrow from the cultural landscape, its communities, oral cultures, literature, artefacts and belief.

Real space emerges as interior compositional space is positioned in the shared cultural space of landscape. In this way landscape continues to be formed from the multiple efforts of individuals in a shared cultural community. Our interior space, or spatial intelligence, develops in the cultural landscape and return real spaces that contribute positively to this living cultural landscape. We can develop our understanding and learn to read the delicate nuances of our landscape. We can then return real spaces rich with the inheritance it offers and strengthen the cultural space of landscape.

The historic cultural landscape is seen from two perspectives in my practice. It is seen from the perspective of oral culture through objects and artefacts in music, songs and stories. It is also seen from the perspective of the physical landscape from the objects and artefacts of material culture. My creative practice exists in the middle ground, between the oral and real objects of landscape. In practice it intuitively tries to make this middle ground more apparent, in music or architecture.

21 Object Ontology and Speculative Realism are obvious examples.
Regional Styles and Landscapes

This middle ground is conjured in these next 3 examples. The landscape is captured as a google map image with an accompanying audio file of music associated with that area. The first example is the landscape of Donegal and the audio example is from the great itinerant Donegal fiddle player John Doherty (1900-1980). The second example is the landscape of Clare and the audio example is the Clare fiddle player Junior Crehan (1908-1998) playing his own composition ‘The Mist Covered Mountain.’ The last example is Sliabh Luachra, on the Cork/Kerry border with Julia Clifford playing O’Rahilly’s Grave.22

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22 See Analysis of O’Rahilly’s Grave, Chapter 2 - p. 64.
Introduction to Projects and Initial Observations

I will introduce some architectural projects presented at PRS 1. This will introduce the practice and help outline some initial observations made at the beginning of the research. I will return to these case studies throughout the research.

Initial observations were best captured in four architectural case studies as follows:

- House for Musicians at Carrickfin by Donaghy Dimond Architects - Project Architect Steve Larkin.
- House at Bogwest by Steve Larkin Architects.
- House at Baile Eamoinn by Steve Larkin Architects.
- Sounding Boxes by Steve Larkin Architects in Collaboration with Donal Siggins and Daire Bracken

We can see similar concerns across the four case studies and this serves to introduce the early research.
House for Musicians at Carrickfin
Completed 2007
Donaghy Dimond Architects
Project Architect Steve Larkin

Fig 1.6: House for Musicians, Carrickfin, Photograph by Steve Larkin
This is a project for friends who are traditional Irish musicians. As a graduate architect I brought this commission to Donaghy Dimond and collaborated on the design as Project Architect. The two principal drivers are firstly its relationship to landscape and culture and the atmosphere of the interior especially through sound.

Setting in Landscape and Building on Rugged Ground

The site is on a granite island that is now linked to the Donegal mainland by a sandy isthmus. It is located on an east facing promontory with immediate views south and east across the confluence of two estuaries, one which is the mouth of the Gweedore River. The topography of Gweedore, Ranafast, Anagaire and Braade surround the estuaries with the cone of Errigal Mountain in the distance. These cardinal points organise the plan around a central kitchen embedded in a hollow in the site framing views out to the surrounding topography.

The ground is a post glacial landscape of roches moutonées and drowned estuaries. The building knuckles into this ground of hard granite and sand and straddles a cleft that faces south up the estuary. The sitting room breaks free onto a lower rock on the shoreline foregrounding the estuary sands. The setting changes from sand to water and back again as the tide ebbs and flows. A raft or plinth forms the ground under the house in this uneven terrain.
Collecting Artefacts

Local cultural artefacts inform the construction and contextualise the work. A large chimney anchors the building in the landscape, organises the plan and incorporates light wells and sound chambers. Heavy walls emphasise interiority and shelter while a lime and local sand render dissolve the house into the colours of the sandy estuary. Sod roofs dig the house into the landscape and offer continued natural habitats for flora and fauna. Fireplace is at the centre of the house emphasising the place for making music. Sleeping lofts become the structure for the roof and the lighting clerestorey that brings light into the centre of a deep plan.

These cultural artefacts do not serve as nostalgic or pastiche elements but develop their own life in the project and contribute meaningfully. Here, for example, the sod roof is lifted towards the sky to make sheltered banks in the ground surface. Similar examples, like Skara Brae on the Orkney Islands, deepen our perspective through the prism of time. The construction detailing tries to emphasise the characteristics of the built elements that emerge from the compositional process. Traditional or local construction techniques are developed for contemporary building with detailing that is direct, robust and executed with precision.

Interior Character

 Principally the house is a place for tradition Irish music, a place for musicians to congregate and play together. This determines the plan and spatial quality of the house. It is derived from the 6th century church at Ravenna. The plan has a centralised main space, the kitchen, and a necklace of secondary spaces with open acoustic properties.

Fig 1.9: House for Musicians, Carrickfin, Section with Tuned Standing Waves, by Steve Larkin

Fig 1.10: House for Musicians, Carrickfin, Photograph by Philip Lauterbach

Fig 1.11: San Vital, Ravenna, Italy (526-547AD), Plan.

Fig 1.12 San Vital, Ravenna, Italy (526-547AD), Interior.
The geometry and sizes of the secondary spaces develop their own natural resonances that contribute to the timbre of the central acoustic. A number of these are also tuned to resonate with particular notes for a subtle type of singing along. The walls, floor and ceilings are stepped, angled or profiled to minimise predominant standing waves. The materials are selected based on their properties of reflection and absorption. This produces colourful and generous reverberation time to produce a pleasant or warm acoustic appropriate to small ensemble playing in traditional Irish music.

The acoustic leads to an interior spatial character of one large space where visual privacy is achieved, where required, behind walls, up steps, or under roofs within the larger interior. This leads to a prevalence of interior spatial landscapes across many of my projects as opposed to collections of closed rooms. Naturally my ear has become tuned and the sound of the space, which include natural resonances when there is no noise source. This has evolved from a history of performance in multiple types of spaces where I naturally incline towards interiors where my instrument sings. Therefore interior spatial landscapes that are predominantly defined by the acoustic has evolved as an important attribute to the atmosphere of space.

The following clip is from a programme called Soundstories, by RTÉ23 where RTE RADIO 1 conducted interviews in Carrickfin and recorded a number of tunes there.

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House at Bogwest
Completed 2011
Steve Larkin Architects

Fig 1.15: House at Bogwest, House in Landscape, Photograph by Alice Clancy
This building was commissioned in 2008 for Paul Conlon and Clare Williams, who were relocating to Wexford from Dublin. It was completed in 2011. Again we see similar interests at work in the project. Differences within these themes relate to context, landscape and brief. Principally the atmosphere of the interior which is determined more by landscape in this project.

Setting in Landscape and Building on Made Ground

The landscape of South Co. Wexford is low lying slightly undulating farmland. The site is a ruined farmyard enclave approximately five kilometres from the coast and is surrounded by well established arable farmland in a network of hedgerows, roads and lanes. The house is positioned within this old network of ruined haggard walls. The relationship of the house to the wide landscape is emphasised in the section. The cellular spaces (private bedrooms) are at ground level within the privacy of haggard walls, hedgerows, crops and topography. The living areas, at first floor, develop horizontal relationship across the broader landscape above the level of the topography, hedgerow and crops. An roof oculus centres this horizontal spatial character and frames the spectacular night sky.

Here the ground is ‘made’ in contrast to the geological nature of the previous project. It is a network of spaces made by the topography, the fields, haggards, hedgerows, lane ways, stone walls etc. The surface of the ground is heavily manipulated and important to the spatial character. Subtle cut and fill, often only between 200mm and 400mm, have significant spatial and material consequences in the low lying landscape. There is the seasonal character of the surrounding farmland changing from open ground to standing crops, from frozen clay to summer meadows. The project builds on these characteristics.
with cellular spaces dug into the ground layer while the main interior space is elevated above the ground looking out into the broad landscape.

Collecting Artefacts

Again we see a reading of cultural artefacts in the process. The influence of the classical house of the middle size, as categorised by Maurice Craig [Craig, 1976], and its derivatives, is evident. This type of house, often developed by prosperous farmers and merchants, is common in the locality. Key architectural aspects of this type of house loosely influence the project such as the relationship to landscape, spatial planning, Piano Nobile and an ordering based on classical principles. Individual elements within the project, like the chimney, parapet, wall thickness, steps etc. also develop their own voice within the project as we have seen in the previous project. For example the chimney becomes a roof light and develops the interior spatial geometry or the wall thickness that provides for all necessary services and allows bay windows within the wall thickness. We also happily use imported cultural artefacts. A plinth that controls the ground and provides elevated and axial relationships to landscape similar to the Villa La Rotonda by Palladio

Again the construction detailing emphasises the multiple compositional layers of the project from structure to lining to furniture. Simple details that develop characteristics found in cultural artefact are carefully developed to emphasise compositional balance rather than an expressive detail. There is a farm-like robustness in the details which support an unfussy and economical character that prioritises material and local building techniques.
Interior Character

There is an emphasis on an interior spatial landscape and similar to the last project the emphasis is on one large resonant space rather than a series of closed rooms. Private cellular rooms are accommodated in the conceptual plinth at ground level opening up the potential for an open interior landscape at first floor level. Vertical spatial connections, from ground floor to oculus, develops the three dimensionality of the space. Subtle modulations are achieved with fitted furniture and the fireplace.

In this project the spatial condition is derived from light and the spatial connections to landscape. The first floor spatial condition is defined predominantly by N, S, E & W windows and the oculus. This allows light to comb the space throughout the day. Linings are chosen to lightly reflect the light and provide a subtle kaleidoscope affect. The space captures expansive views to landscape on all 4 side and to the Co. Wexford sky. Thick wall and coffered ceilings reinforce the interiority of the space that would otherwise bleed fully into the landscape.
House at Baile Eamonn
Completed 2012
Steve Larkin Architects

Fig 1.24: House at Baile Eamonn, House in Landscape, Photograph by Alice Clancy
This building was commissioned in 2007 for Breandán and Máire Mhic Cormaic. It was completed in 2011. The main principles are again present: Landscape, culture and the atmosphere of the interior. In this case the interior extends into the surrounding field and is held by the hedgerows. This ambition has a significant impact on the project.

Setting in Landscape, Fields and Hedgerows

This site is on middling quality agricultural land at the foot of the Wicklow Mountains. It is a windy site with a cold prevailing wind from the southwest. It is in a butterfly shaped field with mature hedgerows and trees accessed from a beautiful high lane way space. This long house is positioned at the pinch of the field geometry with the gables close to the hedgerows to divide the field in two. The resulting external spaces between house and hedgerows are connected to the interior spaces through colonnades that flank both sides of the house. In fact the permeability of these walls become a key focus in the project. This results in ambiguous interior / exterior spatial relationship is framed by the hedgerows. Furthermore, wings concrete walls and utility rooms extend in to the field spaces in an attempt to strengthen this internal external relationship and modulate the space of these external rooms. This is set in the broader topology of the Wicklow mountains.
In this project the ground is conceived as fields and hedgerows. Field ground within hedgerow extend into the interior of the house with ambitions, over time, for a wild wood to the south and wild garden to the north. The level field surface is brought continuously through the house at GF level combed by the colonnades. These colonnades open up fully, with vertical sash windows, to let the ground, wood and gardens through.

Collecting Artefacts

This project identifies with this process most fully of the three case studies here. The primary influence is the long farmhouse type prevalent in the area. This develops the site planning and spatial relationships. A second gatehouse, that supports the character of the farmyard collective relevant to the type, was planned for the project but this remains unbuilt. As we move into the detail we can see the continued influence artefacts especially in the colonnade and the classical sliding sash window which in turn evolve independently to establish their own characteristics in the project. Other elements emerge in the process such as as chimney, gutter, gable and pitch, hopper and down pipe and their development can also be traced through the project.

Detail again emphasises the multiple compositional layers of the project but especially in the permeability of the interior and exterior spaces. Concrete floor and column open the house spaces and continue the ground from one garden to the other within the hedgerow zone. A second layer of timber structure provides the floor above. The detailing reflects this with varying degrees of finesse ranging from the robust to the fine for the various compositional layers. A mechanical character is brought to the project, with the sash window mechanisms, derived from farm objects.
Interior Character

The space of the interior principally seeks to connect the exterior field into the interior atmosphere of the house so that main interior spaces feel part of the field space. A garden ‘interiority’ will evolve over time as hedgerows develop and trees mature. The balance of interiority, of sound and light, which I feel are currently too open, will be very much part of this development. Development of the colonnades was key to this and they modulate the spaces through the dissolved wall. This is supported with a system of vertical sliding sash windows that disappear into the wall above the colonnades. A narrow plan, that minimises depth in the interior, and the avoidance of coffered ceiling space minimises the interior spatial character. This is a significant attempt, by comparison to the previous two projects, to position the space in landscape without an particular emphasis on interiority of the house itself.

An interest in the sound of the interior returns. In the Carrickfin project the sonic quality developed as a single resonant atmosphere modulated by secondary spaces, materials and geometry. In this project the spatial arrangement is more cellular, especially upstairs due to brief requirements. There is an attempt to build a harmonic collection individual acoustic chambers based on Pythagorean proportional geometries. However, in the built project, these remain imperceptible to the naked ear due to size, low reflective properties of the room surfaces and, in some rooms, acoustic bleed.

Also the narrow plan reduces the resonant quality of the house and the important role played by depth in the interior is made apparent. It was expected that the overall acoustic timbre of the house would be influenced by the proportional rooms...
outlined arranged in acoustic enfilade. However, the narrow plan makes a resonant internal acoustic less apparent, with reduced reverberation time, proximity of the external noise and the strung out nature of the rooms. It is clear that the centrifugal plan evident in Carrickfin is necessary to raise domestic scaled space into a resonant environment and make it apparent to the naked ear.

Again the consequences of the spatial ambition, the interior space in landscape, is reflected in the acoustic atmosphere. The external sonic atmosphere of birdsong and insects is the predominant acoustic atmosphere rather than resonant interior space. This acoustic proximity to the meadow is very pleasant but it is a particularly ‘exterior’ acoustic. An amplified resonance associated with interior spaces is less perceptible. I miss this reverberant interior acoustic although the visual and spatial characteristics of the project, derived from the narrow plan, are successful especially from the landscape perspective. It is clear that, for me personally, a reverberant of ‘interior’ acoustic is an important ingredient to the harmonic balance that I seek in projects. A type of base note that constructs a compositional balance for a project in landscape. However I expect that as gardens mature and wildlife increases the sounds of the garden will provide a rich, colourful and significant acoustic landscape for the house.
Sounding Boxes
Completed 2009
Steve Larkin Architects in Collaboration with Donal Siggins, Daire Bracken and the Sounding Boxes team

Fig 1.33: Heinrich Schutz in the Palace Chapel Dresden [Forsyth, 1985, p. 4]
Sounding Boxes was an acoustic pavilion for the ‘Now What’ exhibition in Dublin in 2009. It developed a principal idea that sound in space can become part of architectural exploration. We wanted to see if we could make a powerful sound experience in a type of built musical instrument. It examines standings waves in interior space. It comes in 3 parts. A proposition to make a pavilion tuned to the g harmonic scale, making the pavilion itself and then developed a number of compositions for the spaces with associated visualisations.

It seeks to make a pavilion that is tuned to the G harmonic scale. A standing wave occurs between reflective parallel surfaces when a frequency is the same as the dimension between opposite walls. The sound wave amplifies and increase in volume and duration as the sound wave doubles back on itself in reflection. A perfectly rectangular room has the potential for 3 standing waves in the x, y and z coordinates. We sought to make three such rooms that joined at a point in the middle where the listener could stand. Each room would have three x, y and z notes giving a total of 9 notes. A pavilion was developed that related to those 9 frequencies (notes). The 3 rooms with potential for 3 standing waves per room (x, y and z). A person would stand in the listening spot at the centre and experience the sound all three rooms at once. We then sought proportional wavelengths that would be sympathetic to each other and chose the G Harmonic Scale. Not the equal tempered scale as this would not have been a perfectly harmonic system due to the de-tuning required for modulation across keys.
Fig 1.39: Drawings showing the calculation of proportions for standing waves in G harmonic scale and associated frame
We established an architectural method for making the three rooms. We developed the 1st room to three wavelengths, and this made the first frame which ran across the three rooms. We developed the second frame that sat within 2 parts of the first frame and then a third that sat within the last third of the frame. In these way we established three overlapping orders. This would allow us to fill in the parts of the frame required to make a range of interior spaces. The enclosing surfaces (to make internal rooms within the frame) could be adjusted depending on priority of notes. The proportional system established, through first principles, the pythagorean proportional systems evident in classical architecture.

A number of musical (sine wave) compositions were then played (chamber specific) in the soundbox allowing visitors to experience spaces filled with standing waves. A type of sound sauna. Standing wave phenomena in the chambers were recorded and replayed into the chambers exponentially to amplify the experience. The effects were visualised with a series of real time animations projected onto nearby wall. The effects were recorded and visualised.

Noise burst played into the space, was recorded in the room and then played back into the room again. This technique developed by Alvin Lucier in his seminal sound piece ‘I am sitting in a room’ [Lucier, 1968]. The emergence of the standing waves were recorded using record and playback techniques and we can hear the emergence of the standing waves. Chords of the relevant notes were played into the spaces and the resonances mapped. See the grey areas. Descending note was played into the composition to demonstrate phasing.
1.1 General Theory of Practice

Fig 1.43: Sounding Boxes Animation, White Noise Bursts (vertical lines) with Resonant Tones Emerging (horizontal clouds), By Donal Siggins

Fig 1.44: Sounding Boxes Animation, Sine Wave Tones with Clouds of Standing Waves, By Donal Siggins

Sound Clip: PLAY AUDIO - Rec 1.5
Sounding Boxes. Noise recordings.

Multiple tones: harmonic series of structure based on G - 43.99Hz

Harmonics: 4 6 2 9 5

Noise bands are played into a mounted sniper and recorded. The recording is then played back and re-recorded, and this process is repeated so that resonant frequencies of the sniper reinforce themselves, with the sound gradually becoming that of waves. A crossover filter was used to alternate perceived harmonics. Rhythmic durations are based on frequency multiples.
Conclusion

This concludes an introductory presentation of the main themes of practice through 4 architectural case studies. These were originally presented at the beginning of the research. I would now like to explore early research and begin to outline the first key shift in my thinking brought about by the research. I am very conscious that this introduction is presented through architectural case studies. This reflects my own bias at the beginning of the research. The role of my music practice becomes quickly apparent in the next early stages. I begin to discover the connections between my practice as an architect and practice as a musician. I begin to discover the influence of my music practice on process and on my intellectual understanding of the creative process.
1.2 Early Research Observations in Practice: Object and Interior Space of Composition

Fig 1.51: Wall Score Research Study, Presented at PRS 2

Fig 1.52: Recognition of 'Urge' or tendencies, By Richard Blythe. Framework for Practice Based PhD’s, https://vimeo.com/90515214
Observations made in the initial case studies were helpful in identifying tendencies in the two sides of practice and in the design process. There were shared tendencies in music and architecture especially in the role of landscape and artefact. I sought to test these characteristics across creative practice to see if they were fundamental to the full geography of practice.

The first shift in research emerged from early research methodologies where key projects, or influences, in music and architectural practice were collected and mapped on a timeline. This methodologies evolved from RMIT research methodologies outlined by Richard Blythe in "Framework for Practice Based Phd's" [Blythe, 2014] and again in "An Epistemology of Venturous Practice Research." [Blythe, Forthcoming]

Blythe's diagram describes a process of examining projects from practice and identifying ‘urges in practice [...] tendencies that drives the practice in a particular direction’ through multiple projects.24 The research method was developed directly from this description as it seemed like a good starting point. I gathered visual representations of what I perceived as key moments in practice in both music and architecture based on the methodology outlined. Blythe also outlines similar research methodologies in past RMIT doctoral research.25 [Blythe, Forthcoming]

24 Blythe, Richard, Framework for Practice Based Phd's, https://vimeo.com/90015214. Blythe explains this well: 2.29 "Begin to look at the collection of projects which have made up that practice over a period of time. And to begin to try an understand those and the links between them. We invite candidates to think about how you could group these particular projects into sets. And you might call this a grouping into sets based on something like familial resemblances (a term used by Marcello Stamm) in describing the sorts of characteristics and, if you like, the DNA of each project which links it to the next project where we can recognise some similarity and also see instantly the individuality of each project [...] And what we are looking for is not necessarily any absolute groupings of sets but useful sets that will help us understand better the practice itself. Another colleague Leon van Schaik calls this playing "happy families" with the back catalogue of projects." 3.48 [...] 5.10 "What is the urge that runs through a sequence of projects over a period of time. An ‘urge’ is an interesting term because it refers to something that is not yet completely explicable. Its not necessarily describable in words but its a tendency that drives the practice in a particular direction. As Marcello Stamm points out, it drives towards singularities and its this very combination of this drive and this singularity that is particular to this kind of research and produces new knowledge through the identification and articulation of singularities rather than general theories. We ask candidates to think about how this notion of the ‘urge’ might also be traced through a lineage of project and of course these can emerge in all sort of different directions. And sometimes these can be quite useful in understanding the basic themes of the practice itself and what drives the practice and other times of course it can lead to dead ends and things that are not so useful. But sitting at the core of this is the idea that for every practice there is some notion of wonder, an interest in something, or as my colleague Jo van den Berghe has pointed out, a sort of ‘fascination’ that compels the creative practitioner to move in some sort of direction and the direction of that movement tends to be consistent between projects and this is what becomes the handwriting of the practice. And this research is really focussed on trying to explicate what is going on in those moves, in those urges, and what is at stake in relations to this notion of wonder." 7.18.

25 Richard Blythe, An Epistemology of Venturous Practice Research, Forthcoming outlines how other past candidates have used similar techniques in the past. "Hook and Saunt in their PhDs, adapted the spider diagram used as a tool in categorising wines according to qualitative characteristics to unpack (as Hook describes it) the qualitative values of each project and to then map these in a comparative way across the practice."
Using this research method I was able to track these initial 'urges' with clarity towards 'singularities' [Marcello Stamm][28] rather than general theories of practice. Initial observations were made as to what compelled the creative practice to move in a particular direction and ensure that this was consistent in projects. I developed categories based on familial resemblance[27] or shared DNA.

This early research led to a catalogue of tendencies or vague fascinations[28] shared across the two fields of practice. These were analysed in a number of frameworks and eventually categorised into two conceptual perspectives, 'Objects' and 'Interior Space of Composition'. It revealed a conceptual lens through which observations were made in the anthropological fields of music and landscape as we will see.[28] These two categories would allow a deep exploration of the connections between the creative practices of music and architecture.

The development of a framework organised key moments in practice into a visual structure. I used a musical scoring technique as an established method of mapping relationships. The practice history examples were recorded on a timeline on four horizontal clefs and were organised vertically based on their perceived areas of practice. These clefs represented what had been identified in PRS 1 as the important themes of practice: 1. Music / 2. Landscape / 3. Spatial Intelligence and 4. Architectural Thought / Material Culture. The more temporal activity (music practice) is placed to the top of the score and the physical manifestations (objects) are placed to the bottom with landscape and spatial intelligence forming the middle ground. This was open to interpretation and there is much cross contamination across these.

General themes were distilled into four categories brought about by the mapping process. It was possible to trace the tendency for conceptual thinking to move across the fields of practice. Music and architecture practices were operating in similar conceptual [or thinking] fields with significant and multiple overlapping characteristics. There were two static repository fields, the cultural and physical landscape; material and oral culture. This was a direct working into a history written in a cultural landscape. This process allowed me to separate the thinking and repository fields; subjective conceptual thinking from the anthropological[29] field of practice. This was the first glimpse of the cultural landscape as a repository of cultural artefacts, a type of anthropological field and the conceptual compositional interior. The blue lines trace the tendency of conceptual thinking in music and architecture to move across the full landscape of practice. The degree to which this occurred was unexpected and illustrated the influence that music and architectural practice have on each other.

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27 Stamm, Marcello, CITE REFERENCE.
28 Van Den Berghe, Jo, PRS, April 2014, Cian Deegan / Alice Casey.
29 Chapters 2 & 3.

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30 See Chapter 3 - p. 104.
It was also possible to track a number of characteristics or ‘urges’ in the work, shared characteristics grouped in clusters across the principal themes. These characteristics were mapped in two stages. Firstly the broad characteristics and then more precise overall categories. The main archipelagoes of interest emerged with the following categories; Interior in Landscape, Landscape as a Collection of Interiors, Material Culture, Cultural Elaboration / Distillation, Made Artefact (geometry, melody, rhythm etc). These seemed quite random but they were moments of correspondence to past observations. Also there were many anomalies outside the classification.

As this analysis developed I began to observe that, even though some of these classifications were broad and inconsistent, they could be organised into two camps or modes of practice, ‘objects’ and the ‘interior space of composition.’ Object as artefact (embodied knowledge) and spatial composition (relationships composed). These are consistent with discoveries from the framework (Material Culture and Landscape). This was observed in a process of mapping patterns of thinking through the wall score.
This was a critical moment. The research framework made these modes apparent of practice for the first time, even though in hindsight they are obvious influences on practice. The two characteristics become immediately apparent across all of the preceding research. Once these were identified the research turned to speculation about the characteristics of those two modes, how they have evolved in practice and how they work in the design process. They developed the research directions.
I will briefly outline characteristics of these cornerstones of practice. In subsequent chapters these will be examined in much more detail, defining them more closely and outlining their consequence to the process and thinking of practice.

1. Objects; I study context, culture and meanings through objects and use the objects themselves in an improvisatory design process. This is a process that has evolved from my oral musical background where objects, like tunes or poems, are transferred from generation to generation retaining complex sets of information. They exist as the artefacts of the culture.

2. Interior Space of Composition; objects enter relationships to build an 'Interior Space of Composition,' a subjective compositional interior made from the real artefacts of the cultural landscape. In other words our perceived spatial worlds. This compositional space has real and metaphysical characteristics, with associated cultural meanings and characteristics. This is an interior shared in culture, developed in the laying down of relationships in space over time.

Objects, real and intentional objects, compositional objects with compositional meaning or artefacts with cultural meaning, are explored as they are brought into the design process. They are studied, developed and placed in new compositional relationships. This is the genesis of a type of anthropological architecture. It is not seeking an 'object' driven architecture.

It may be worth further clarifying how I will use the terms object and artefact in the text. I will generally use the word 'object' to describe real and intentional objects, psychic, physical, metaphysical etc. or to which thought can be directed. An important subset of objects for this text are Compositional Objects with their own compositional interiors described fully in chapter 2. I will use the term 'artefact' to describe cultural objects - like a tune or a material object - that is still a perceptual object, or compositional object, but has accrued cultural meaning.

'Interior space of composition' leads to the development of new work in existing landscapes. It relates to the development of a subjective intra-compositional space. This is the aesthetic interior shared in art, architecture and music. It also includes our subjective experience of exterior space, the physical spatial construct, a rural community, a city etc. We bring our individual interior spatial imagination to these physical environments. When they emerge into the real world they merge with the spatial imaginations of others to build the real inhabited spatial environment.

Our inhabited cultural landscapes evolve over time as our spatial imaginations congregate and build the world inhabited by humans. We recognise and share meanings already laid down in those inhabited landscapes through our interior space of composition. This is shaped by our understanding of those cultural landscapes. Only the pioneers who walk in a natural landscape for the first time, see it through the eyes of their own interior space of composition, their imagination, their spatial intelligence. I can only imagine what this primary experience of the natural landscape must be like and the need to capture and share this experience with others.

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31 See Oral Objects, Anthropological Process, Chapter 2 - p. 70.
32 See also Chapter 1 - p. 10. The classification between 'perceptual' objects, compositional objects and artefacts will signify differences between Cultural, Compositional Meaning and Presentational Meaning identified in Chapter 2.
Conclusion

In this research I looked back at past projects and the evolution of the design practice in order to understand how critical thinking has evolved. It is a type of anthropological architecture\textsuperscript{33} that we will explore in more depth later. On one hand I collect and explore ‘objects’ or ‘artefacts’ that have come into the orbit of the design process. These are edited, developed and improvised to develop new objects and positioned in new compositions. These emerge as distinct new objects in the cultural landscape. By collecting and embedding objects in the design process I bring my intuitions about these objects into the process and maintain a type of ‘oral’ technique.

Objects or artefacts are repositories for ‘oral’ cultural thought. They embody continuities in cultural thought which are adapted in time by the evolving culture. Much of what they embody can only be intuited from the object or artefact itself, they cannot be logically or consciously conceived. This is central to their character or poetic as we will explore. My sensibility for ‘objects’ is brought about by practice in a traditional oral culture and is an important discovery in my research as we will see.

The repository field or cultural landscape from which objects are collected and in which they are placed is important. This is my anthropological field. Like an anthropologist I select defined cultural landscapes for study. These are two separate but overlapping cultural landscapes, traditional Irish music and the physical Irish landscape. It is from here that ‘objects’ or cultural artefacts, repositories for oral cultural thought, are collected. Through the design process, new objects emerge that are also placed back into the repository fields as representations or developments of that cultural thought. In this way I continue to work in an oral cultural tradition, to explore and contribute to old complex cultural landscapes through objects.

The early research outlined above was a backward looking study of creative practice. In the subsequent research I look forward, to current projects, and carry out research in the process of creative practice. This includes musical projects and architectural design projects. This opens up further, more refined observations about the creative practice.

Many research drawings or diagrams evolve in these studies. This drawing process is an intuitive way of extracting information about working creative process. It provides a way to realise information that is so central to creative process that it is difficult to see. By drawing I can position this information in a drawing object, and then think about it more consciously. A kind of accompanying process to conscious or discursive thought. Many observations on a drawing are made that only are understood consciously afterwards.

\textsuperscript{33} van Schak, Leon, supervisor meeting, Dublin 2015.
1.3 Community of Practice

The research programme outlines the necessity, in the practice based research model, of trying to understand the communities of practice that the practitioner themselves are in. Richard Blythe outlines; “It not simply a matter of reflection on ones own work but then there is a responsibility […] to begin to associate these key moments in the work itself with other projects and other communities that are critical in terms of the practitioners own thinking about their practice and their work […] in traditional research methodologies this is often referred to as establishing a literature review. But because in creative practice work it is not just text but also drawings and works and so on, and also including texts, we refer to this as the communities of practice that surround a particular creative practice.” [Blythe, 2014, 10.29-12.54 excerpts]

As the relevance of two creative practices, music and architecture, became apparent I felt that it was important to identify and record my communities of practice in both fields. It was difficult to organise, edit and draw conclusions from a large and diverse community across these two practices. I developed a mapping system, or drawing, that allowed me to position the communities of practice visually in order of their relevance. This allowed me to reflect on, edit and refine the CoP (communities of practice) map over time. Early sketches mapped broad patterns of community. As this record developed it grew from initial sketches, to a practice ‘World View’ and then to a single project ‘Coppenagh.’

This made significant observations about an overall community across two practices. Most significantly it introduced two hemispheres of practice, in close proximity but very definitely distinct from one another with only a small degree of overlap. Also, significantly, it introduced a ‘masterpiece sphere’ which was free from enchainments and which I review later in this chapter. Project based communities of practice, seen later in in the ‘Coppenagh’ example, shows how a specific community

34 The term ‘community of practice’ is derived from enchainment set out by Leon van Schaik in Mastering Architecture, p. 106-108. “I take the term enchainment from Randall Collins, and use it to mean the processes by which individuals align themselves with the players in a knowledge domain. We do not enter a domain as a solitary originator. Consciously or not we situate ourselves in the field of all the players of whom we are aware. I see this awareness factor as what distinguishes between our earlier ‘provincial’ reaching out to mastery and our later metropolitan search for validation of our innovation.”

35 Leon van Schaik in Mastering Architecture, Great Britain, Wiley, 2005 p106. “I take the term enchainment from Randall Collins, and use it to mean the processes by which individuals align themselves with the players in a knowledge domain. We do not enter a domain as a solitary originator. Consciously or not we situate ourselves in the field of all the players of whom we are aware. I see this awareness factor as what distinguishes between our earlier ‘provincial’ reaching out to mastery and our later metropolitan search for validation of our innovation.”

36 See Chapter 1 - p. 51.
builds up around each project. This is an observation also made in Belinda Winklers research [Winklers, 2014] as pointed out by Richard Blythe. [Blythe, 2016]

I reviewed my practice in relation to enchainments37 apparent in my communities of practice. In developing this framing methodology I developed categories for “Peers, Challengers and Mentors.” This was in order to develop awareness of practice position in a tri-polar environment as outlined in van Schaik’s essay on differentiation “The fifth fan is the fan of enchainments. [Randall Collins, 2000] No one works alone, everyone works in the context of what others are doing, have done. People are aligned with or opposed to a constellation [Stamm]38 of peers, mentors and challengers. Mapping these helps designers articulate their positions. We now know that ‘tri-polar’ environments of practice are the most fruitful environments for intellectual change and therefore for exceptional creative practice that pushes the boundaries of a discipline.” [van Schaik, Ware, Fudge and London, 2014]

Mapping Methodology

I sought to develop a methodology that could organise the relationships to practice. A mapping technique was developed to position the communities of practice (CoP) according to their mode of practice (architecture / music), the strength of their influence and categorisation as peers, mentors or challengers. [van Schaik, 2005] The practice is located in the centre. The Eastern hemisphere relates to the practice of architecture and the western hemisphere to music practice. Members of the CoP are also arranged in accordance with there degree of influence. The closer to the centre the more influential. There are 3 dials (peers, mentors and challengers). These allow overlap to enable positioning of the references in 1, 2 or 3 dials depending on if they are a peer, a challenger or a mentor or combinations of these. In the sketch archipelagos of influence are formed that might link a number of names together in a family or culture which in turn can be then considered as a community of influence.

In the architectural hemisphere, and as predicted by van Schaik39, two categories became most prominent. An important community of peers was identified consisting of Taka, Clancy Moore Architects and Ryan Kennihan (some of whom also enrolled in the research program). These are peer practices of young architects in Dublin who share offices and

37 Leon van Schaik in Mastering Architecture, Great Britain, Wiley, 2005 p106. “I take the term enchainment from Randall Collins, and use it to mean the processes by which individuals align themselves with the players in a knowledge domain. We do not enter a domain as a solitary originator. Consciously or not we situate ourselves in the field of all the players of whom we are aware. I see this awareness factor as what distinguishes between our earlier ‘provincial’ reaching out to mastery and our later metropolitan search for validation of our innovation.”

38 Stamm CITE REFERENCE.

39 Leon Van Schaik outlines that “While everyone aims for all three, invariably one or other is in front of mind, and takes the lead.” - [van Schaik, Ware, Fudge and London, 2014].
conversations about architecture. This shows a community established in Dublin that makes the space of practice. They engage as peer, challenger and mentor and are positioned within these dials. This is an important community that builds a space of practice in Dublin. We will see this develop through the research. As we move out of the peers category we can see the influence of wider Irish practice on the work. Towards the 5-6 o’clock position we can identify the challengers, or influential practitioners. Challengers are seen in these early diagrams, not as critical voices but as those who ‘challenge’ work in the context of what the practice is trying to achieve. They are critical ‘friends’ in the history of practice or ‘mentors’ in van Schaik’s categorisation.

Van Schaik describes this type of influence on practice as follows: “You pick your mentors. [...] You choose them, they don’t choose you. [...] For now every one of us should have a mentorship chart and review it regularly. Whom we admire shapes the way in which we master: towards tradition or towards creative innovation.” [van Schaik, 2005, p. 108] [...] This is more apparent in the communes of practice in architecture that in music (although it was apparent in music 15-20 years ago). The challenge of striving towards mastery, captured in the mentors, is what is evident in these early drawings.

A different landscape exists in the music hemisphere, somehow appropriately the western hemisphere. There are significantly less individual influences or ‘challengers’. Musical influences are predominantly archipelagoes of regional culture with practitioners embedded within these cultures. As these archipelagoes move towards the centre they include less, but more significant practitioners. The practitioners close to the centre and represent a peer community.

There is only slight crossing between the hemispheres of architecture and music at the 6 o’clock position. It predominantly excludes the practice of traditional Irish music from the architecture hemisphere except for a couple of examples. This illustrates the perceived separateness in the early stages of the research. As the COP diagram develops the relationship between music and architecture evolves and the links between them become clearer.

40 During the course of the research this will extend to an actual project completed together in the Irish Pavilion in the London Festival of Architecture. I posit that this was due to a strengthening of this peer community by conversations brought about in the research symposia and associated conversations.

41 Jo van den Berghe in conversation, April 2016.

Fig 1.58: Sketch of Communities of Practice in Music and Architecture, Presented at PRS 2

Fig 1.59: Accompanying ‘Key’ to Communities of Practice Sketch
Observations World Map

This initial sketch developed to become a kind of CoP world map. The same methodology is used, where influences in my community of practice are positioned in orbit around a centre point, my creative practice. The world map become a work in progress, a helpful ongoing record mapping the diverse community over time.

There are musical and architectural influences in almost equal quantity across the two hemispheres but there are differences between them. On the architecture side, there is a precise group of peers and mentors and intellectual challengers in very specific areas. It points to a particular set of interests in architecture. On the musical side there is a larger community of peers and mentors that emphasises a broader, more generalised, musical landscape or culture. The community of practice in both hemispheres evidence an interest in the characteristics of long cultural traditions which was no surprise. Peers and mentors provided a important supportive cultural communities in both architecture and music. ‘Challengers’ identified in this drawing (mentors as outlined by van Schaik) represented works that I found influential, that had a deep cultural intelligence, an affecting presence, independent of writing or theorising.

Object and Space in Communities of Practice

Generally the CoP was split into two camps. The practitioners who made objects with strong character in ‘oral’ material culture were indicated as red on the drawing. Practitioners who developed relationships between things or objects in the metaphysical space of composition or in real physical space were indicated as blue on the drawing. This evidences and confirms the two modes or practice, ‘objects’ and ‘the interior space of composition’, identified in the early research.

This distinction is reinforced in later research. We will explore the role of objects in the work, in the anthropological design process. We will also understand how spatial relationships evolve in the work in composition and syntactical structures. The CoP points to ways that certain architects and musicians influence my creative practice based on the early research findings. These are categorised in the tables below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objects or Artefacts</th>
<th>Western Hemisphere</th>
<th>Eastern Hemisphere</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tangible character - individual worlds (children’s songs, fugue universes, microcosms, airs)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tangible character - cultural artefacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporal objects. Melody as artfact</td>
<td>The shape of things, real and metaphysical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvisations on objects. Shaping and exploring</td>
<td>Embodied knowledge (cultural intelligence, craft, feeling, beliefs) moving toward artefact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperfection - striving in the world</td>
<td>Completeness - constituent parts forming a whole - coming to object - moving toward artefact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference - towards meaning and cultural understanding</td>
<td>Weathering - the artefact in the world</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interior Space of Composition / Tapestry</th>
<th>Western Hemisphere</th>
<th>Eastern Hemisphere</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moving out of noise towards harmonic silence</td>
<td>Moving out of noise towards an interior spatial silence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural / Landscape Tapestry (collective intelligence / place)</td>
<td>Cultural field (collective intelligence)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composed space (proportion and measure)</td>
<td>Order - understanding (materials/ geometry/relationships) - grammar proportion and measure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrapuntal Relationships (multiple objects)</td>
<td>Contrapuntal Relationships (multiple objects)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space in time</td>
<td>Open-ness and closed-ness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversational Music Space</td>
<td>Landscape - perceived field in time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Practice

Composed Space / Proportion and Measure

Imperfections

Tangible universes based.

Mentor is continually shifting the objects or artefacts, pushing the objects.

Improvisation in circles.

Very Melody

Artefact

Quality

Music

Objects (weathering)

Difference

Towards

Failure

Indicate

Object

Set

In

Wander

Space

Carries

Reach

Object

or

A

Aid to Music

JS Bach

Ronan Galvin

Arvo Part

Brien

MUSIC

Breda

MENTORS

Port Na bPucai

Lewerentz

St Vital

Bawa

Katsura

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Sophie Lewerentz

Clancy

Willie

Canny

Rachmaninov

Vespers

Glassie

Aiden

The Bunch of

Casey

Bobby

Eileen O Dowds

Tommy Peoples

Padraig O Keefe

Julie Langan

The

Failure

Indicate

Object

Set

In

Wander

Space

Carries

Reach

Object

or

Aid to Music

JS Bach

Ronan Galvin

Arvo Part

Brien

MUSIC

Breda

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Port Na bPucai

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Sophie Lewerentz

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Vespers

Glassie

Aiden

The Bunch of

Casey

Bobby

Eileen O Dowds

Tommy Peoples

Padraig O Keefe

Julie Langan

The
Masterpiece Sphere

A critical moment of understanding arose in the development of the masterpiece or transcendent sphere. Despite the unimaginative naming, it is a valuable and significant discovery. This shows a community of objects, or masterpieces, that are the impetus for practice or the driving force behind the work. They are often adopted as cardinal points of practice, free from the enchainments and significances of their authors. Practice seeks to engage with these objects, to enjoy aesthetic experience through them, in music making or by making architecture. It is through these, and their associated meanings, that I begin to understand geographies of cultural history. The community of practice sits below this, a community at work in the world seeking to understand these complex objects of balance and beauty. They are easy to identify, especially in particular projects, as they are much more stable anchors than the fluid CoP.

This observation about the masterpiece sphere is brought about by musical practice. It is populated by tunes, whose authors are now forgotten. They become the standards in music practice and we have life long relationships with them, continually exploring their characters and meaning in culture over a lifetime’s practice.

The transcendent hemisphere represents the potential of objects to become embedded in cultural history and transcend authorship. It recognises their value. To remain embedded in a community of practice is to risk substantial enchainment, to follow cultural norms, practice techniques and ambitions. The masterpiece sphere recognises that the relationship with objects themselves is a way to avoid these enchainments. It establishes a simple relationship with these transcendent objects, author-less objects of culture. It then invites, from simple aesthetic experience, a natural and creative exploration of these compositional objects or cultural artefacts. From here new work can emerge, naturally and creatively exploring music or architecture, developing themes, improvisations and ideas borrowed as a natural part of personal creativity.
I began mapping influence of objects or artefacts on a case study in the research. This tests the observations in early research about an oral or anthropological practice that explores cultural landscape, architecture and music through objects. As process embeds objects or artefacts in the design process, it would be possible to map this, in the real time of a current project.

A similar mapping technique, established in the CoP drawing, carefully records objects and artefacts in the ‘Coppenag Case Study’, a case study used to explore the process of ‘Collecting and Assembling Objects’ the design process. The general structures of the peers, mentors and challengers remain in the drawing. The music hemispheres is no longer present as we concentrate on a particular ‘architectural’ project. As before, the fundamental themes are identified by proximity to centre and size while the background themes are located further out. The specific characteristics of the objects are described in each entry.

We can see a clear landscape of objects that influence the project. How objects contribute to the thought processes in the project are identified in ‘object’ and ‘compositional space’ categories. We see that many of these objects are named, for example a wall or eaves etc. This naming or categorisation of objects is important and points to the building of what I call ‘associative sets’ in subsequent chapters. This allows understanding through association with other similar objects and points to significance compositional objects or artefacts.

A general anthropological field of practice evolves with similar objects appearing and reappearing across all projects. Objects in Coppenag appear in other projects like Bagnelstown and Kimmage. The same landscape of objects get explored again and again. Compositional objects and artefacts become archetypal forms of landscape, or at least my landscape of practice, as subjective significance is applied. With each new project we understand them better. Concerns embodied in these objects and artefacts are shared with mentors from the CoP. We see Siza, Markli, Corb and others exploring similar artefacts, pouring over old relationships and challenging our perception of them. In this drawing analysis of a case study we can see them clearly in the specificity of a project.

It remains surprise to me that I did not understand the role of my oral musical practice on my overall creative practice. It is now clear that my oral archive and oral processes are a fundamental part of my creative practice. This oral technique becomes a way of seeing, of exploring that would evolve to run through all creative practice. My CoP has helped evolve my oral and spatial history by offering me some understanding of objects and artefacts in their domain. Cultural artefacts are the primary inheritance, rich complex networks of cultural and compositional meaning. The community of practice continues to support the cultural space around the objects but the real development is a personal relationship with the object.

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42 See p.42
43 Objects help our process of seeing and categorising landscape. Artefact helps categorise cultural or compositional significance.
44 See Chapter 4 Collecting and Assembling Objects.
45 See Chapter 3, General Theory of Architectural Practice.
1.3 General Theory of Practice

Fig 1.61: Communities of Practice or Objects relating to House at Coppenagh, Post PRS 2
PhD Research Community

My Ph.D supervisors and the research community that gathered at Practice Research Symposia now forms a very influential, and appreciated, part of my communities of practice. The drawings presented here, carried out at PRS 1 & 2, are early research drawings that tended to look backwards at practice history. They do not record the seismic shift in my CoP as a result of the research. These shifts have been brought about by a wider peer group, the wonderful PRS review sessions and side room conversations and especially the generous and insightful comments of my supervisors, mentors and challengers, Leon van Schaik, Richard Blythe and Jo van den Berghe. We will see chapter 7 the prominent role played by the PRS research community in my Community of Practice.

A literature review builds around many of the observations made in the research which have found rich and common ground in history of contemporary thought. This has been an enlightening aspect of the research. Especially relevant are Kant’s speculation about ‘noumena’ and ‘phenomena’. He points out that ‘to think an object and to know an object are by no means the same thing’ [Kant, 1787/81, B146/A110 / Weigelt, 2007, p. 142] This speaks directly to my experience of working within an oral culture where I commit objects to mind and establish relationships with them that are more intuitive than reasoned. Understanding can then evolve over time. This has been directly influential in developing a process that understands, that seeks to know objects, through intuition, beyond the spectrum of thinking objects.

Fig 1.62: Sketch of PRS 2 presentation by Richard Blythe, Ghent April 2014

This is developed in a conceptualising or symbolising process that allows us to understand how I think about objects in design practice. It points to a conscious approach to architecture that allows circumvention of the problems associated with a cultural and contextual practice like falling into tropes or pastiche. We can begin to understand the expressive character of objects and understand how we might seek these more consciously in our own practice.

46 See New Knowledge and Communities of Practice, Chapter 7 - p. 271.
Conclusion

Development of the CoP drawings has allowed a review across the full creative practice. It evidences a supportive and influential community of peers, challengers and mentors and position then in relation to practice. It reinforces, and deepens understanding, across the research. Enchainments [van Schaik, 2005, p. 106] are evident in the community. The cultural space that supports practice can also contain the scope of practice. The cultural landscape, the work of mentors or challengers are important and will continue to support practice development. However, they are understood as signposts for practice; we learn from them, gain general insight rather than follow their specific practice tendencies. With this understanding I can develop the differences in my creative practice so that we can continue to make new work. I can understand more clearly the nature of practice in the cultural landscape and between my practice and my closest peers. This is well captured by Leon van Schaik in his essay ‘Difference rather than shared competence’. [van Schaik, Ware, Fudge and London, 2014]

The most influential members of my communities of practice are intuitive practitioners, both in music and architecture. They make distinctive work captured in the character of their objects. Observations, brought about by the research, are made Chapter 4.47 This was apparent in music where so much of the creative practice is based on instinct at a subconscious level. But it had remained a difficult question in architecture, one posed by those early ‘challengers.’ How do I accept and accommodate intuition in the design process? How do I use intuition in the process of music and architecture? Is it built into the creative processes that I rely on? This questions go to the core of this research and are at the centre of a literature review.

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47 Chapter 4, Collecting and Assembling Objects, Summary Landscapes, Conclusion. I discuss a refined CoP of architectural practitioners who relate to later research observations. This is a refined and concluding CoP. See Hejduk, Chapter 4 - p. 182.
BIG RED

One of the significant developments in my communities of practice was brought about by the Ph.D research community. A number of practices from my peer group in Dublin, namely Taka and Clancy Moore Architects, are participating in the research. Although we are friends from university, participation in the research community gave us a open and generous forum to discuss our individual practices on a deeper, more involved level. We also visited each others work on a field trip with our supervisors, Leon van Schaik and Richard Blythe, which strangely had not occurred before this.

In 2015 Taka, Clancy Moore Architects, Hall McKnight and Steve Larkin Architects were commissioned, by Irish Design 2015, to design the Irish Pavilion for the London Festival of Architecture 2015 as part of the New Horizon series. As outlined in the press release:

“As part of the London Festival of Architecture 2015 Ireland has been selected as the international country of focus. This honour coincided with the Irish Year of Design 2015 and so under the title of New Horizon curators Ray Ryan and Nathalie Weadick asked a number of Irish architects to make a series of exhibitions in London. This document describes one of these - a pavilion sited at the north end of Cubitt Square in King's Cross, and designed by Clancy Moore Architects, Steve Larkin Architects and TAKA Architects.”

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39 07th April 2014.
The making of a temporary pavilion should be an opportunity to test new ground. When we were individually invited to participate our first instinct was to pool our resources. Although our practices have an engaged conversation on many levels this collaborative working is new to us, but is suited the site and the brief. As the city is a collective work, so might be our pavilion.

As young practices this is by far the most explicitly public commission any of us have had to date, and so we were testing this new way of working on work of a type that was also new ground. Very early on we agreed that we would build our design conversation around the ideas of incidental public space, that our structure would seek to be a background to the life that surrounds it and fills it.

A work process developed which sought at all times to engage opportunistically with the constraints proposed by the project. Using a shared territory of reference and pragmatic engagement we built the design through a 3 month long conversation about the city between our practices.

The decision, by Taka, Clancy Moore Architects and Steve Larkin Architects, to collaborate on a single pavilion project was facilitated by the conversations that were evolving from the PhD research community at that time. We also brought this design conversation to the PRS seminar in Ghent, April 2015 to explore how this collaborative process might be extended in the supportive open conversations of the research community. This is evidence of the success of the research community in developing an international supportive engaged community of research practitioners.

The project is described as follows:

“We started by thinking about the facade as a public space. The facade is the place where the relationship between the individual and the collective is made most explicit. It is not thin, but a thick space with implications for the city and the inhabitant. Windows to private quarters make the walls to public rooms. We wondered at what point a deep facade became a thin building. We thought of the facade as a theatrical backdrop to Cubit Square, with props to the north to hold it up. We elaborated these props to make a room, sheltered under a roof. This made us think of market halls and public rooms and we thickened the rhythm of the facade, drew it back to give order to this space. In the space between the hall and the facade there was room to make a gallery that overlooked the square. We lined it with park-benches and a deep cill. We liked the way this might be a place to hide away while at the same time could allow people gather in small groups. It makes a soffit to the public hall. Our engineers told us that our building might blow away and we wondered how to hold it down. We thought about how infrastructure is the most important public space of
all and decided to use heavy concrete sewer pipes to make a low verandah to the north. We liked the way these fat columns make a more domestic face to the green space beyond. We thought of how doorways, niches and thresholds of buildings are good places to linger in and made a deep arcade between our hall and the square. We painted it red as like the phone box it is a public room in the city. Caught somewhere between furniture and infrastructure. We offer it to the people of London to make of it what they will. We hope that its temporary life might produce some lasting memories in these new spaces of King’s Cross.”

A significant point in the development of the project was a conversation based around the references in the project. This is very similar to the processes in the research and shared in this peer community. In these references we see a collection that relate completed to architectural culture.

This also highlights a method of working in conversation. Once the framework of the pavilion is established each practitioner designs different aspects of the pavilion, returning to the central conversation with the development of individual objects in the overall design. This is significant for my practice as it points to development of process that I observe later in the research where individual objects can be developed and returned to the design project.

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51 See what a tender set wants to be Chapter 4 - p. 181.
Fig 1.67: Model of Big Red, by Deepka Abbi, Steve Larkin Architects, June 2015

Fig 1.68: Big Red, London Festival of Architecture 2015, photograph by David Grandorge
2.

Oral Culture of Traditional Irish Music
The case studies outlined in this chapter of seminal tunes in my repertoire represent ‘case studies’ and a ‘projects review’. As influential elements of my repertoire they act as agents in my work, challenging the work, mentoring the work and sharing cultural meanings and insight. As part of my repertoire the tunes represent tendencies, ‘urges’ in my practice. This mounts an interesting ambiguity in practice, the exploration of artefacts and their authorship. This will be a continual theme in the research. We continually return to this community of practice across the research, especially in chapter 4 and chapter 7 as we make more definitive observations brought about by the research. We recognise the broad and re-iterative nature of the community especially brought about by the Ph.D process itself.

This was a challenging case study review that benefited from the development of research methodology based on RMIT strategy, but adapted to suit the requirements of the study. A full review of these case studies necessitated a number of slices through the studies. The first analysis method was to review a number of specific tunes and performances that were important to this practice. These were analysed orally and visually, in a drawing technique developed specifically for the research. This drawing method was developed to provide a new perspective on these pieces and served to underline observations made orally. It is not a score. Observations in the case studies were analysed in a literature review. This formed a community of practice around these observations and positioned them in the research. This built bridges to connections and observations made in other parts of the research. They represented a breakthrough in terms of the development of research methodologies appropriate to this research.

Difficulties in design research have been pointed out by Richard Blythe “We talk about this in our practice based research model as trying to understand the communities of practice that the practitioner is linked to. Of course these are always evolving and sometimes linked to each particular project. [...] in traditional research methodologies this is often referred to as establishing a literature review. But because in creative practice work it is not just text but also drawings and works and so on, and also including texts, we refer to this as the communities of practice that surround a particular creative practice.” [Blythe, 2014] This is compounded in this research with the addition of an oral musical culture in a second field of practice.

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1 Collecting and Assembling Objects - p. 125.
2 Landscape and Conclusion - p. 287.
General Introduction

Oral cultural practice usually constitutes three key elements.

1. Engaging with that oral culture through its tunes and songs. Thinkings and practicing creatively through objects.
2. Developing our own processes to help us learn tunes and songs, to understand and develop them in a creative practice.
3. Practice in an overall oral culture, in the space of traditional Irish music and seeing associations and contexts evolve across the whole cultural landscape.

These elements of oral cultural practice have affected my creative practices in music and architecture and will be the predominant themes of the research.

Fig 2.1: Session at the Cobblestone, Dublin 2015, photograph by Richard Blythe.
Practice in an Oral Culture

Observations in music practice, identified at the start of the research, have become central to the research across creative practice in both fields. My observations on creative practice in music have deeply informed my observations on how my practice in architecture actually works.

Traditional Irish music is predominantly an oral culture. It is learned ‘by ear’, or typically transmitted from one generation to the next by playing music together. Very little of its character is written down or represented in musical notation. These tunes or objects are the basis of the oral culture and carry its substantial cultural and artistic history. As a musician I have a direct relationship with these objects in this oral musical culture.

Oral culture therefore exists through these memory objects. Tunes are short form pieces, like poems, that can be memorised and shared between musicians. Each have their own character which allows it to be learned, recalled, conceptualised and projected amongst hundreds of tunes at the disposal of the musician. Over time this character is nuanced or developed by the style of the musician. This character engages the imagination of the musician and the listener. It is vital for the music to be a living developing art form rather than dry historical study.

Character is a subjective and difficult question and one that I will explore in this research. It is intuitive and difficult to conceptually pinpoint as it is often outside conscious or logical conceptual reasoning. Compositional and melodic form are important aspects but it goes beyond these. It is most evident in the object or artefact itself, rather than in representations, as nothing is lost in translation.

Tunes become cultural and artistic reservoirs over time with all sorts of personal, historical, geographical, social data encoded into them. Performances, regional styles, associations etc all contribute to the evolving character of each individual tune as it exists in that culture. All of these qualities are assumed into the object in culture, colouring it, making it more complex over time.

Developing Process

The processes we use to learn and understand these objects are developed through years of oral music practice. The research will look at these in detail as they show us much about the nature of objects, how they influence our understanding of composition and our creative practice processes in music and architecture. I will look at five musical excerpts and examine their range of cultural and compositional meanings. This will be explored in more depth across creative practice in the subsequent chapters.
The Space of Traditional Irish Music

Space in traditional Irish music is real and metaphysical. It can be separated into three categories, the physical, the regional and the metaphysical as I outlined. The physical space are inhabited social spaces in landscape described as kitchens and small rooms in chapter 1. They are also closely linked to landscape as I have already outlined. The physical space of Irish traditional music extends into landscape in layers of aural, social, cultural, historical and geographical characteristics. A significant example can be found in the regional characteristics of traditional Irish music already seen in the examples in chapter 1. These will be explored later in this chapter. These regional spaces in Irish traditional music add to the rich complex tapestry of social and cultural landscapes. They evidence characteristics of the place and its people are captured in the regional styles that have evolved out of a cultural conversation, in a place over time. The archive of traditional Irish music exists in meta-physical space of a collective cultural imagination as we have seen.

This oral culture is an overlay on landscape. Our perception of music and landscape is coloured by each of them in turn. Associations to folklore, music and place exist side by side in the physical landscape. This leads to landscape with multiple dimensions of nature, history, folklore, myth and imagination. The oral and physical landscape of Ireland builds a part physical - part meta-physical landscape. A strong pre-christian relationship to landscape remains in the artefacts of music and folklore. Much of the folklore is derived from pagan traditions with strong associations to the physical landscape, its seasons and its rituals. It teaches us of the sacred dimension to landscape.

For a practicing musician, as hundreds of tunes are learned over time, a picture of a culture emerges. A culture with all of the fantasy and imagination given by music beyond logical or conscious discourse; a real, mythical and emotional understanding of history, culture and landscape. Understanding is derived, not from written history, but as anthropological collection; a history read through artefacts. It is the artefacts of an oral culture and the physical landscape that together make the space of landscape in my practice. I have one foot in the invisible and one in the real.

Introduction to Music Section - How to Read

I will look at five musical excerpts that represent different characteristics of how we think through objects or artefacts. Observations associated with these musical examples are significant for the later research. These observations are sketched alongside the musical examples.

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3 See Chapter 1 - p. 11.
2.1 Objects and Introduction to Meaning

A relationship with objects is at the centre of my creative practice. Processes have developed that support creative practice from cultural and compositional objects, building on and developing their complex sets of information. I work creatively through objects, conceptualising consciously and intuitively, developing and improvising, thinking and feeling my way to new iterations of those objects based on their character and meaning. Creative practice is a way of examining culture through its objects and in turn making new contributions to our oral and material landscapes. It is a conversation with tradition.¹

In order to understand an object led creative practice the role of symbolisation must be examined. Symbols allow us to conceive objects, to think about them abstractly, we conceive an object as a symbol for that type of thing. It is through the conception of an object, the symbol of an object, that we can think about them. It is through the subjectivity of that conception that the object has meaning. This subjectivity is cultural and personal and at the centre of the creative practice.²

Most meaning eludes the literate mind, picked up by instinct or by association. Our imaginations or intuitions understand the associations the object or tune might have in folklore and landscape. We understand relational or compositional patterns of meaning in intra-musical relationships in music like melody, harmony or cadence. In oral music we naturally look for the patterns of meaning in these objects. This is very similar to the anthropological processes outlined by Henry Glassie; “We seek pattern. Patterns imply intentions and carry us towards meaning... Things and words are empty in isolation, arbitrary. Arbitrariness leaves them as they gain places in systems of interrelation.”[Glassie, 1999, p. 47]

Patterns of meaning are not simple A to B relationships. They are functionally interdependent structures as outlined by Susanne Langer; “A function is a pattern viewed with reference to one special term round which it centres; this pattern emerges when we look at the given term in its total relation to the other terms around it. The total may be quite complicated... The meaning of a term is, likewise, a function; it rests on a pattern, in which the term itself holds the key-position. Even in the simplest kinds of meaning there must be at least two other things related to the term that “means”, an object that is “meant,” and a subject who uses the term.”[Langer, 1957, p. 55] We can use a musical chord to elaborate on this as Langer does; “For instance, a musical chord may be treated as a function of one note, known as the ‘written base,’ by writing this one note and indicating its

⁴ A conversation with tradition is not a ‘traditional approach,’ or conservative outlook. It is an enquiry into the deeper meanings of a particular tradition. This is outlined in more depth across the dissertation and especially in Chapter 4, p. 183.
⁵ Leonard B Meyer explains this with a rock. As a symbol, a rock will ‘mean’ something different for a farmer than it will for a geologist. [1961, p.34] Meyer defines meaning as follows ¹... anything acquires meaning if it is connected with, or indicates, or refers to, something beyond itself, so that its full nature points to and is revealed in that connection.”[1961, p.34] He then further explains that “Meaning is thus not a property of things. It cannot be located in the stimulus alone... The same stimulus may have many different meanings... Nor can meaning be located exclusively in the objects, events, or experiences which the stimulus refers to, or implies.”[1961, p.34]

Returning to the example of the rock; “The meaning of the rock is the product of the relationship between the stimulus [the physical rock] and the thing it points to [our conception of rocks].”[1961, p.34] Our conception of rocks is cultural, societal and tells us who we are. We can examine parts of ourselves through the meaning of our rocks, as I expect any anthropologist will agree.
Cultural and Compositional Meaning

There are multiple patterns of meaning in oral artefacts and performances. If we take a simple example like Julia Clifford’s playing of O’Rahilly’s Grave7 we can point out the patterns of meaning associated with origin, folklore, compositional form and improvisations. We understand the connotations with history, for example the death of Aogán Ó Rathaille (c.1670-1726), the Irish language poet from Gneeveguille, Sliabh Luachra, and the associated changes in culture and society at that time. Compositional meaning is found in multiple complex intra-musical relationships; differences and similarities to other types of tunes within the tradition; to our understanding of melodic structure based on scale, mode, timing, phrasing, cadence etc. There are also the patterns of meaning in Clifford’s performance. We can hear a style of fiddle playing associated with Sliabh Luachra and can unravel meanings into that landscape and society. We can hear the intra-musical meanings that that style of fiddle playing emphasises in the tune. This reflects a regional conception of the composition, and potential improvisations, that might be very different to other regional styles, for example Donegal or East Galway. This is to not to mention the artistic sensibilities of Clifford herself, one of the finest fiddle players of her generation.

As we experience the tune we conceptualise it with as much associated meaning as our sensibility allows. If we experience the tune repeatedly we see the tune in multiple adumbrations,8 with multiple landscapes of meaning. This provides a depth of experience that allows us to perceive complex pattern of meanings that potentially shift and change around the artefact with every new performance.

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7 Julia Clifford recorded on The Mountain Lark, RTE at CCÉ, Monkstown, 29th May 1985.
8 Graham Harmon in ‘The Quadruple Object,’ 2011, p.24. refers to what Husserl calls Abschattung or Adumbration. ‘The tower [object] is always encountered through a specific profile... these adumbrations are not the same thing as the intentional objects they manifest’ Harmon notes that “an intentional object is no bundle of adumbrations... Intentional objects always appear in more specific fashion than necessary, frosted over with accidental features that can be removed without the object itself changing identify for us.” I have fallen into the habit of using this word to explain how tunes have multiple profiles in thousands of performances.
As illustrated above meaning generally falls into two categories; 1. Cultural Meaning and 2. Compositional Meaning. Cultural meaning is prevalent in artefacts and relates to meanings that have evolved in a society. These can be applied meanings from folklore or intra-musical meanings born of that society (like regional styles). They provide a rich cultural landscape and tell us much about our shared humanity, in place and time. They are a fertile ground for exploration and through them, as Glassie has outlined, we can “understand the acts that left us the artefact.” [Glassie, 1999, p. 65] Cultural meaning is the basis for the anthropological processes in my own practice, collecting music and material artefacts and exploring them in creative practice. Compositional meaning relates to the compositional structures of the object, the intra-musical meanings seen above, the abstract arrangement of ideas, forms and principles. Through compositional meaning we can adapt, highlight and establish new patterns of meaning and new aesthetic experiences in old cultures. There is significant overlap between these two categories but the designation is helpful in terms of my research.

Meaning in composition is not the purely subjective presentations of a performer, poet or musician. They are not subjective, they exist independently in culture we share them in culture and art practice. As De Sola Morales points out “… in contemporary thought the objective and the subjective are not different and opposing fields but constitute what he calls “folds of a single reality.”” [De Sola Morales, 1997, p. 69] This is obvious in music-making where musicians who have just met find that they can share, with pinpoint accuracy, the complexities of meaning in music. By understanding meaning we can begin to understand, as Leonard B Meyer has observed, that “though the perception of a relationship can only arise as the result of some individual’s mental behaviour, the relationship itself is not to be located in the mind of the perceiver. The meanings observed are not subjective. Thus the relationships existing between the tones themselves or those existing between the tones and the things they designate or connote, though a product of cultural experience, are real connections existing objectively in culture.” [Meyer, 1961, p. 34] We are developing and responding to meanings that exists in culture. Cultural shifts and strong subjective visions by artists and musicians push the edges of cultural meaning slowly over time.

Cultural and Compositional meaning are vital to my creative practice. They contextualise practice in culture and most importantly establish the compositional structures in the work. These fundamental principles which will be explored in the musical case studies and in the creative practice research through case studies.

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1 Similarities to Meyer’s categorisation of ‘Embodied and Designative Meaning’ [Meyer, 1961, p.35] in musical practice can be seen here. Embodied meaning is established by intra-compositional meaning while designative meaning points outwards to beliefs and associations outside the composition itself in culture. As outlined by Meyer; “[meanings that] musical stimulus ... point to are not extramusical concepts... but other musical events which
Presentational Symbolism

‘Presentational Symbolism’ is a term put forward by Susanne Langer. [Langer, 1957] She uses this term to define a type of symbolism which can begin to understand expressive character and feeling in art practice. She emphasises a symbol theory that moves beyond the boundaries of a discursive logical philosophy. She believed that the ‘logical beyond’, to use her term, is not a “sphere of subjective experience, emotion, feeling, and wish, from which only symptoms come to us in the form of metaphysical and artistic fancies” [Langer, 1957, p. 87]. Rather, she believed that “We are dealing with symbolisms here, and what they express is often highly intellectual.” [Langer, 1957, p. 87]

Langer therefore proposed a philosophy based on a broader semantic. One that included the symbolisms beyond linguistic conception, symbols that articulated in art or musical practice. As she outlined “I do believe that in this physical, space-time world of our experience there are things which do not fit the grammatical scheme of expression. But they are not necessarily blind, inconceivable, mystical affairs; they are simply matters which require to be conceived through some symbolistic schema other than discursive language.” [Langer, 1957, p. 88] Langer understood that symbolic expressiveness in art or music was equally complex, if not more so, as the syntactical composition or grammar of language. Objects in culture, music or art were often whole representations, non-linear, grasped in a single act of vision. These objects can be complex hierarchical symbolic structures of compositional meaning, ordered by syntax like in discursive meaning. They can also can be whole representations, like a painting with “presentational symbolism.” [Langer, 1957, p. 97]

As she explains “Consider the most familiar sort of non-discursive symbol, a picture. Like language it is composed of elements that represent various constituents of the object, but these elements are not units with independent meanings. The areas of light and shade that constitute a portrait ... have no significance by themselves... They are a thousand times more numerous. For this reason the correspondence between a word-picture and a visible object can never be as close as that between the object and its photograph. Given all at once to the intelligent eye, an incredible wealth and detail of information is conveyed by the portrait, where we do not have to stop to construe verbal meanings” [Langer, 1957, p. 94] She continues; “Clearly, a symbolism with so many elements... cannot be broken up into basic units... Photography, therefore has no vocabulary ... Since we have no words, there can be no dictionary of meanings for lines, shadings, or other elements of pictorials technique... It has no fixed meaning apart from its context... Non discursive symbols cannot be defined in terms of others, as discursive symbols can.” [Langer, 1957, p. 95]
We can identify two characteristics of objects here that are important. The painting is an indivisible thing with presentational symbolism. This emerges from the intra-compositional symbolic structures and cultural associations in the subjective cultural mind. This presentational symbolism has a character, caught between our culturally derived understanding of the ideal and actual nature of that type of object. This presentational symbolism can be conceived at all scales of object, from the gargantuan to the molecular. This is central to creative practice in an oral culture as we will see.
Meaning Generally

Practice in an oral culture is a mixture of compositional, cultural and presentational meaning. A tune is broken down and studied in terms of its compositional elements and associated meanings in a culture. Each object, at every scale of object, is conceptualised as an object with presentational symbolism, or overall character and expression. This character is understood in the context of general cultural associations. Therefore artefacts that are presented in oral musical culture are complex symbolic schema with tendencies in cultural, compositional and presentational symbolic modes. The processes that we develop in our creative practice allow us to intuit and understand the construction of symbolic meaning these objects. They are then manipulated and reconstructed to make new objects with new symbolic expressiveness. They are developed on old patterns of meaning; new meanings are developed from old objects. Much of this happens, through conceptual instinct arising from intuition, beyond discursive or logical consciousness.

Perception of Objects

Objects are at the centre of meaning. As practitioners in an oral culture, we trade in objects. We collect them in anthropological processes and study their meanings, their characteristics at first hand. They are whole objects given to us in context, with their rich layers of conscious and subconscious information formed by multiple hands in culture. This object, with its complex sets of information, brought alive in its cultural context, is immediately present and available to our sensibility. This is an important characteristic of oral culture and sets it apart from literate traditions where objects may be detached from context and represented from particular conceptual viewpoints. Over time, the multiple perspectives of a culture is exchanged in multiple performances of the tunes and songs of the tradition with all of the associated complexity. Given in their totality, in context, these objects are rich with presentational symbolism or character.

It is worth outlining briefly some thoughts on the perception of objects. I am very conscious that this is a very broad and complex field and do not wish to get into a philosophical inquiry best left to more able thinkers. However I think it is helpful to frame my perspective briefly in the context of an oral cultural practice. This will help clarify how I believe we think through objects in an oral culture, especially relevant to my practice and this research. Also this is an area that can form the basis of future research as I believe that perspective from an oral culture can provide a unique perspective on objects, a debate that is particularly current in contemporary philosophical thinking.
Langer outlined that we hypostatise objects from a “world of pure sensation, so complex, so fluid and full, that sheer sensitivity to stimuli would only encounter what William James has called “a blooming, buzzing confusion.” Out of this bedlam our sense-organs must select certain predominant forms, if they are to make report of things and not of mere dissolving sensa.” [Langer, 1957, p. 89-90] These forms, construed by the mind, are “at once an experienced individual thing and a symbol for the concept of it, for this sort of thing.” [Langer, 1957, p. 89-90] A. N. Whitehead similarly believes, as outlined by Steven Shaviro, “there is no ontological difference between what we generally call physical objects, and what we generally call mental or subjective acts. Whitehead is in accord with William James... in rejecting “the radical dualism of thought and thing.” [Shaviro, 1993, p. 4] Objects can be physical, psychological and meta-physical entities. Whitehead points out that “Actual entities’ are the final real things of which the world is made up... God is an actual entity, and so is the most trivial puff of existence in far-off empty space.” [Whitehead, 1978, p. 18]

For Kant all knowledge is given to us through objects. “Our knowledge springs from two fundamental sources of our mind; first to receive representations, the second is the faculty of knowing an object through these representations. Through the first the object is given to us [intuitions], through the second the object is thought in relation to that representation [concepts]. Intuition and concepts constitute, therefore, the elements of all our knowledge.” [Kant, 1787/81, B75/A51 / Weigelt, 2007, p. 85] Intuitions are very relevant. For Kant, intuitions are representations, given in sensation, that provide the material (the starting point) for all cognition. But intuition takes place only insofar as the mind is affected by representations in some way. Our capacity to obtain representations, so that our mind is some wise affected, is called sensibility. Kant goes on to define sensibility and understanding as follows; “We call sensibility the receptivity of our mind to receive representations as it is in some wise affected, while the understanding, on the other hand is our faculty of producing representations by ourselves, or the spontaneity of knowledge.” [Kant, 1787/81, B76/A52 / Weigelt, 2007, p. 86]

It is worth bearing in mind that our faculty of understanding, of knowing an object given in intuition often occurs, not in the forefront of our conscious minds, but in the background. This is especially the case in oral musical culture where the process of understanding is predominantly subconscious but emerges in music practice. It is difficult to fully conceptualise, or think objects fully, in conscious modes of thought, such as in a score or a verbal description. It is more possible to think in relation to the musical representations given to us in culture through the conscious and subconscious processes of the music itself. This, in turn, deepens intuition and sensibility for the perception of objects. We must develop processes that allow for direct experience of whole representations of objects in creative practice. We must trust our sensibility and intuition in that direct creative practice rather than rely on a purely conscious conceptual process. This is the value of oral practice.
Oral Objects / Anthropological Process

To participate in an oral culture is to engage in an anthropological process of collecting, memorising and examining object or artefacts and to have relationships with them over time. Objects or artefacts are collected with a set of associations, cultural, personal or musical. They can be ordinary associations based on the place the tune is from, from whom it was learnt, the particular place and time, or even compositional associations based on the version of the tune, other tunes and particular performances etc. As we collect more and more objects into our anthropological field we begin to understand their characteristics as artefacts more fully by these associations or multiple perspectives. As we hear them again and again in different scenarios, with different musicians we understand more about their characters. We gain better understanding of their aesthetic, their connections to culture. It is through these associations that we understand the meanings.

A tune, as its exists in oral culture, is the sum of every conceptualisation of that tune in that oral culture. When we learn a tune we develop a particular conception of the tune. From this base we understand other representations of the same object in other performances, regional styles etc. In collecting objects we do not seek to overly conceptualise any single representation and discard the rest. Instead we allow them to exist loosely in our imaginations mindful of all representations in our knowledge, while still being able to conceptualise it with accuracy. The oral culture becomes a type of cloud, an extension of the intelligence of any single practitioner. As we play music with others we can adapt our conceptualisations in sympathy with other musicians and see the artefact again with more depth.

The compositional scope of any one object in an oral culture is limited as they must exist as objects capable of being memorised. It is the overall culture that becomes the vast symphonic masterwork contributed to by all of its musicians. It is through our anthropological practices that we contribute and learn from oral culture and explore its artefacts and their associations.
2.3 Cultural Meaning

Over time, as hundreds of tunes are learned we begin to read a culture as anthropological collection. Through a collection of artefacts we see patterns of meanings that stretch through place, people and history.

Key to understanding cultural meaning in artefacts is in their associations or relationships with context. Meaning in texts become apparent when we examine them in rich and vibrant contextual fields that are packed with opportunities for these meanings to resonate. We must build contextual fields in practice by exploring, collecting and understanding context and "to learn enough to imagine the texts wild life of meaning." [Glassie, 1999, p. 63]

Glassie outlines the importance of cultural meaning. "Meaning is the sum of the relations between objects and people... objects beam us deep meanings from other human beings. In other contexts, we see reflections of our own tired faces." [Glassie, 1999, p. 59] In making work we must try to understand and explore the meanings in the objects of our culture. In this way we can explore and share our deepest human experiences in history and continue to communicate these in our work.
Case Study - Learning Caoineadh Uí Neill

A tune is not constructed in memory note by note. We learn it by understanding the differences between the new tune and other tunes in our anthropological collections that are similar and easily recalled to memory. This significantly speeds up the learning and memorising process as we just need to remember the differences or associations. This also points towards the development of associative compositional intelligence in oral culture where all objects are reviewed in the context of other similar objects. Glassies outlines a similar anthropological method of 'text and context' already observed. [Glassie, 1999, p. 61]

In order to illustrate this process I will introduce an aural case study, “Caoineadh Uí Neill”. This is an unedited audio example of this learning process. Here, I am learning Caoineadh Uí Neill, from a recording of Denis Murphy,12 the great Sliabh Luachra13 fiddle player. I have recorded the actual process so that the exact nature of the process is evident. In the recording you will hear me playing along with Murphy developing and learning the phrases as I listen to him play.

The reader (and listener) should be able to hear an emphasis on the exploration of the character of the phrases rather than a more performative projection of the melody. As a consequence the emphasis is on the looser structure and free rhythm of Murphy’s playing. The phrasing is the primary organising framework for the development of the main melodic motifs within the tune. These are the initial motifs and I recognise the primary melodic structure readily by ear. These motifs then structure a number of melodic developments. The character of these developments is close to the original motifs but refer to similar developments in other slow airs, especially from the Sliabh Luachra area.14 Through these associations I can very quickly identify the geography of the tune and the melodic nuances in the recording.

The structure of the melody is loosely as follows. The first phrase establishes the initial motif with a modal ambiguity on the 3rd. The second phrase repeats the beginning of the motif but establishes a development emphasised initially by a move to the 7th at the end of the motif and then developing a new section that steps in and out of mixolydian and major modes. The development ends on a cadence similar to the original motif. The second part is longer initially starting with a new motif that resolves to a 4th and is then repeated resolving to the 1st. As we repeat the motif for the 3rd time a series of developments occur in the phrase, extending the phrase in a loose timing structure and bringing us to the end of the B part. We are returned to the beginning of the tune form. The cadence structure emphasises the phrasing and cyclical nature of the tune and this will be examined in more detail later.

12 Murphy, Denis, The Music of Sliabh Luachra, CD, track 5, Caoineadh Uí Neill.
13 Sliabh Luachra is a Gaeltacht area on the Cork and Kerry border in the Southwest of the Ireland.

14 One of these is O Rahilly’s Grave played by Clifford in the example above.
I do not, in any way, conceptualise the tune like this in the learning process. This compositional structure is constructed in memory by placing the phrases of the tune in associations with each other, remembering which phrase follows which in the overall structure. I also listen to how Murphy paces them, maintains silences and rolls them into each other in a way that builds a synthesis in the tune while retaining the character of the individual phrases. In this way a traditional Irish musician builds an oral understanding of the compositional structure, the grammar or order of the tune.

There is also another process of learning at play. Developing an understanding of the ‘feel’ of the tune, i.e. the emphasis and nuance brought about by Murphy’s playing. These are not present in the compositional structures of the tune but are painted by minor inflections in intonation and timbre, bowing patterns and ornamentation that produce multiple shades of ‘plaintive’ character. Pauses and intonation shifts, coupled with simple bow strokes, emphasise a ‘swing’ in almost every phrase of Murphy’s playing that is balanced with a restraint and melancholy that tempers over-emphasis on any single characteristic of the tune. This is a master who has learnt from, and carries in his playing, the rich Sliabh Luachra tradition and all this depth can be heard in his performance of the tune.

The overall tune is reconstructed from the compositional form and the nuance in the performance. Particular attention is given to the synthesis of the overall piece. The tune must be conceived as a whole and considerable artistry is required to balance the various characteristics into an overall character. What is the overall character of the tune that you would like to emerge? It is vital that it doesn’t remain simply a collection of phrases.

The folklore or history associated with the tune can locate the tune in landscape and history. This context can deepen our understanding of its musical character and the landscape from which it came. Caoineadh Uí Neill was part of the repertoire of the Sliabh Luachra fiddle master Pádraig O’Keefe from whom I assume Murphy would have learned it. Adrian Scahill points out that “it has the scale and grandeur of associated with the so-called ‘big songs’ of the sean-nós tradition,” and could be linked to to the Gaelic Uí Neill defeated by Elizabethan forces in 1607, but not collected until the 1950’s.

As evident from the case study, my process breaks down the overall tune into smaller objects or, to use Langer’s term, I hypostatise smaller objects. These occur at various scales from phrases, to minor and major sequences, to cadences, etc., all in accordance with my sensibility or understanding. As I reconstruct the tune, the compositional meanings or logic, associated with these intra-musical relationship becomes

15 Very closely associated with the fiddle player Pádraig O’Keefe who would have been very influential in maintaining or even developing this tradition.

clearer. This is understood by association with other tunes in the tradition. We can also see the grain, colour or character of individual objects, their presentational meaning within the broader cultural landscape. From this 'collecting' process one representation emerges. As we return to the tune, in this recording and in other performances we see new versions of the same tune. We build our understanding of the tune in culture based on the multiple ways in which it is represented.

The learning process is a type of anthropological process that evolves based on cultural associations. We can easily see the role of the perception of objects, based on sensibility and understanding of the musician. Compositional, cultural and presentational symbolism all play their role in the development of understanding. All of these lead to the eventual character of the the tune and the performance. This case study outlines summary observations of all of these various constituent parts. In order to examine them in more depth I will look at each part in detail, using particular case studies which explore the scope of each character.
2.4 Compositional Meaning

Compositional Meaning relates to the intra-musical structures of the tune, the abstract arrangement of ideas, forms and principles. Meyer categorises this as embodied meaning. [Meyer, 1961, p. 35] Here we will examine compositional meaning structure and then explore improvisations within that form.

Tunes in Irish traditional music are complex objects in simple poetic form; melodies crafted from a number of simple, often beautifully elegant, phrases. As a result they are democratic objects accessible to anybody interested in the music. However, they can be understood at a range of depths based on the musicians sensibility, their ability to see the complexity in the representations. As a musician matures they hear with more understanding and intuition. Mastery brings a sensibility that allows the object to be conceived and presented with a complex landscape of meaning.

Two creative contexts can be imagined. The first is compositional form with its distinct characteristics and patterns of meaning that allows it to be recognised, remembered and projected again and again by practicing musicians. The second are the performances associated with the compositional form (past and present). This becomes a record of permanently established deviations or improvisations that change old tendencies in the object and allow for continued growth. These ensure continued life and embed contemporary meaning. We will examine the second context, Improvisation and Articulation, later in this chapter.

In compositional form meaning derives from expectation. Here we have an expectation about how the compositional form is likely to evolve based on other tunes. Tendencies and relationships between particular motifs are established, inhibited and resolved in meaningful ways within the tradition. Irish traditional music does this subtly in melodic composition, in cadences, cyclical forms and ambiguity.

17 Leonard B. Meyer outlines how expectations and tendencies are used in music and introduce us to meaningful musical composition: “Musical experience differs from non-musical or, more specifically, non-aesthetic experience in three important ways. First, affective experience includes an awareness and knowledge of the stimulus situation... Second, in everyday experience the tensions created by the inhibition of tendencies often go unresolved. They are merely dissipated in the the press of irrelevant events. In this sense daily experience is meaningless and accidental. In art, inhibition of tendency becomes meaningful because the relationship between the tendency and its necessary resolution is made explicit and apparent... Third, in life the factors which keep a tendency from reaching completion may be different in kind from those which activated the tendency in the first place. The stimulus activating a tendency may, for example, be a physical or psychic need... while the inhibiting factors may simply be a series of external circumstances which keep the organism from satisfying the need. Or the situation may be reversed; that is a tendency activated by an external stimulus may be inhibited by the psychic processes of the organism... In music, on the other hand, the same stimulus, the music, activates the tendencies, inhibits them, and provides meaningful and relevant resolutions.” [Meyer, 1961, p. 23]
Case Study - My Love is in America

To begin with I will examine the standard compositional structure of a tune, ‘My Love is in America’. The tune is a hornpipe\(^{18}\) in Richard Michael Levey’s Dance Music of Ireland, 2nd Collection (1873) and is also in the Dance Music of Ireland collected by Capt. Francis O’Neill (1907). It has a simple enough form but a colourful character that makes it popular across the cultural tradition. I will present the tune visually in an unorthodox method of drawing. The reason for this is to allow a visual reading of the compositional structure of the tune, the shape and structure of the individual phrases, to non-musicians. It is not a score. I will also present audio examples of the piece.

The drawing shows my interpretation of the general form of the melody “My Love Is In America”. The tune is in D Modal. It is helpful to note that Irish traditional music is not a vertically structured harmonic music in the western ‘classical’ music sense. It is a melodic form, with an implied harmonic structure in that melodic form. As seen in the previous case study, Caomheadh Uí Neill, logic is established by internal sub-melodies or motifs and emphasised by the phrases, modality and cadences within the implied harmonic structure. Here the form is AA/BB. The melodic character of the individual phrases communicate within this form.

We can see from the diagram how the tune is constructed from a number of motifs. The shapes of the phrases are clear, elegant and defined. They are musical stimuli that establish, inhibit and resolve the patterns of tendency in the object. These are the building blocks and establish implied harmonic relationships in time. We can examine the compositional form in context of the implied harmonic relationships and mode.

A Part

Phrase 1a establishes the melodic character of the tune based on a note relationships (323, (456) 7(6)88 & 7588). The melodic structure of phrase 1a is the first musical stimulus or motif that opens a “patterns of reaction … arouses expectations, some conscious and other unconscious, which may or may not be directly or immediately satisfied.” [Meyer, 1961, p. 25]

In Part A there are 2 subsequent musical stimuli, phrase 1b and phrase 1c, that operate within the patterns of tendency understood from perspective of the cultural tradition. Phrase 1b restates the beginning of the phrase but develops to make an ending cadence thereby resolving the end cadence of the initial musical stimulus. However this does not resolve the start of the phrase and, due to an understanding of the overall AABB form, we expect the development in the following phrase 1c. This phrase develops the melody across a longer period to introducing a new stepping melodic character. The longer development provides a more complete resolution of the first musical stimulus and the overall part. Not all expectations however are resolved as we enter part B and this ambiguity is maintained by the beginning of the phrases in Part A which are not fully resolved by the cadences.

\(^{18}\)A type of tune in 2/4 time.
B Part

The phrases in the B-part start with a type of inversion of the first musical stimulus. This balances the ambiguity left over from the first part. The phrase then completes with the same ending cadences. The form mirrors the A-part fully to prioritise this symmetrical relationship resolving tendencies in the same way across the part. At the end of B-part we are again left with the ambiguous expectation found at the end of the A-part. We again find a balance to this ambiguity on our return to the A-part.

The modal relationships clearly contribute to the character of the tune and the expectations established. Phrase 1a starts with an emphasis on the major third (red) and ends with an emphasis on the minor seventh (blue). This creates the modal tension of the tune - major third contrasting with minor seventh. Phrase 1b returns to the major third in the ending cadence. The development in Phrase 1c is a stepping pattern structured around the major third seeking to resolve the modal characteristics established. However the modal characteristics never fully resolve again maintaining distinctive ambiguity in the compositional form contributing to the character of the tune. Symmetrical modal characteristics evolve in the B-part again balancing the inhibited tendencies across both parts.

The overall effect is to build up a subtle suspense in the tune. Any ambiguity or uncertainty is balanced between the two parts and a flat suspense evolves over the course of the tune. It establishes patterns of tendencies that remain elevated and balanced. The suspense is always in the background and tension is maintained at a level below which release is required. The construction of the tune is beautifully, deceptively simple but establishes complex tendencies, ambiguities, resolutions and balance within it. The melodic character and modal relationships establish a particular set of expectations that are resolved in different ways by the compositional form. The initial musical stimuli in both parts are never fully resolved due to the character of the sub phrases. The tune forms a type of equilibrium over time by oscillating between part A and its symmetrical brother, part B, ending on a form of balance rather than resolution. It is therefore the balance between full and inhibited resolution, especially in the implied harmonic structure and modal relationships, that gives it its distinct character. This composition, constructed from its phrases, builds an aesthetic experience with its own distinct character within the patterns of the tradition.

As Meyer points out "or if our expectations are... inhibited, then doubt and uncertainty as to the general significance, function and outcome of the passage will result." [Meyer, 1961, p. 28]

The ambiguous characteristics here maintain an uncertainty balanced across the overall form of the tune leaving a type of resolved cyclical ambiguity. These "ambiguous resolutions" develop a significance or meaning within the tradition and build much of the character of the tune in the context of the tradition.

These characteristics establish the character of the compositional form in culture. In an oral tradition tunes cannot be characterless and diffuse. Every musical object must have a distinct character so that they continue to be learned, remembered and projected in the oral tradition. Wide soundscapes can be built from improvisations on the object but one must start with the object. This is in comparison to scored western classical music where landscapes can be conjured in orchestral works even before the melody is introduced. Therefore we understand the oral culture of traditional Irish music to be a landscape built of objects.
My Love Is In America - D Modal

My Love Is In America

Fig 2.4: Visual representation of 'My Love is in America.'

Fig 2.5: Sheet Music 'My Love is in America,' source https://thesession.org/tunes/77

2.3 Oral Culture of Traditional Irish Music
Syntax

As illustrated the compositional structure of ‘My Love is in America’ is formed from a number of phrases or motifs, each with their own presentational meaning or character. The relationships between these objects are equally important. It is these relationships, or musical syntax, that develop the patterns of meaning in the composition, the hierarchy of compositional structure. The character of the objects is bound in the musical syntactical structures to form the compositional whole. Cadences, modes, melodic shape etc. all establish tension and release as we move away from, and towards, dominant and subdominant resting points. These syntactical patterns occur across all scales in compositional structure.

While there is much creative scope to develop the objects in traditional Irish music, much of the creative practice is in the manipulation of objects within the patterns of musical syntax. We can introduce new objects with new conceptual meanings into existing syntactical structures. Also, subtle manipulations of syntax can allow us to see old objects in new ways; they can allow new characteristics to appear. We learn much by exploring the traditions of objects and syntax through creative practice.

It is in syntax that we see the migration of meaning or conceptual thought from one art form to another. The rule of syntax is cultural and can be independent of objects of any particular art form. Sean Crosson brings forward an interesting excerpt from Ciaran Carson as follows; “Carson has spoken of what he considers the “connections between the procedures of [Irish traditional] music and those of the poetry.” [Brandes, 1990, p. 82 quoted in Crosson, 2008, p. 243] and in the following remarks, the poet indicates the alleged source of some of the distinguishing characteristics of the work: “The skill in traditional music is how you move from the end of one unit to the next - the beat may be withheld, or extended […] It’s all got to do with creating suspense, or little surprises within a form which is very fixed and traditional. So in the poetry, the line breaks are important; they’re meant to draw the reader on, or pull him up short. Often they’re a joke, and traditional music is full of humour too. The line is supposed to upset your expectations […] but the talky voice is simultaneously lulling you into security. So, in traditional music, it’s a beautiful thing when you hear a tune you think you know backwards, and someone gives it a wee personal twist, and it becomes something new and fresh minted. I’d like to do that in my poems. If the poems have any virtue, I hope it’s that kind of humour.” [Brandes, 1990, p. 82 quoted in Crosson, 2008, p. 243] Not only does this give us an understanding of the potential of syntax to cross disciplinary boundaries but it also illustrates the way that we can use adjustments in musical syntax to inform the work over and above the objects, as understood through our cultural sensibility.

I use the term syntax as an analogy with linguistic structure. It is the process of ordering terms in hierarchical structures. The Carson example shows that syntax, or this ordering have similarities across art forms. They themselves are established within patterns of meaning. We can see from the example
above that there are similarities in music and language. These extend into architecture also we will see in the work of Xenakis in chapter 4.19

Courageous, avant-garde practice in Irish traditional music often occurs in the syntax or the intra-musical structures rather than the motifs or objects of the dominant scale. This is often hard to perceive as the motifs or objects of compositional meaning sound like the usual objects of the culture: they sound traditional. Contemporary practice, that describes itself as pushing the boundaries of traditional music, often misses the intra-musical potential for compositional meaning. It often simply ‘jazzes up’ the motifs themselves while building compositional relationships that are one dimensional.

An example of the avant-garde within the music itself can be heard in Tommie Potts’ performance of ‘My Love is in America’ presented in the case study below. This is a performance which shows mastery of the basic compositional ideas in the tune as well as potential patterns of meaning that can evolve in musical syntax. He uses both to construct beautiful, complex and deeply meaningful compositional and improvisatory structures.

Compositional Structure

The compositional structure of a tune and expectations based on patterns within the tradition are complex affairs and difficult to fully describe outside of music. However, we might build a theoretical model, that could partly show how patterns of compositional meaning are established in a tune, based on Meyer’s descriptions of “Hypothetical Meanings, Evident Meanings and Determinate Meanings.” [Meyer, 1961, p. 38] We will see that these are helpful in understanding improvisation and creative processes.

Meyer introduces the complexity of compositional meaning as follows; “The words “consequent musical event” must be understood to include: (1) [the] consequences which are envisaged or expected; (2) the events which do, in fact, follow stimulus,… (3) The more distant ramifications or events which, because the total series of gestures is presumed to be causally connected, are considered as being the later consequences of the stimulus in question. Seen in this light, the meaning of the stimulus is not confined to or limited by the initial triadic relationship out of which it arises. As the later stages of the musical process establish new relationships with the stimulus, new meanings arise. These later meanings coexist in memory with the earlier ones and, combining with them, constitute the meaning of the work as a total experience.” [Meyer, ’61, p. 37]

He then defines the following terms; ““Hypothetical Meanings” are those which arise during the act of expectation. Since what is envisaged is a product of the probability relationships which exist as part of the style and since these probability relationships always involve the possibility of alternative consequences,
a given stimulus invariable gives rise to several alternative hypothetical meanings… “Evident Meanings” are those which are attributed to the antecedent gesture when the consequent becomes a physico-psychic fact and when the relationship between the antecedent and consequent is perceived… “Determinate Meanings” are meanings which arise out of the relationships existing between hypothetical meanings, evident meanings and the later stages of the musical development. In other words, determinate meaning arises only after the experience of the work is timeless in memory, only when all the meanings which the stimulus has had in the particular experience are realised and their relationships to one another comprehended as fully as possible.” [Meyer, 1961, p. 38]

If we use these terms, and Meyer’s formula; S1...... C1S2........ C2S3........ etc. [Meyer, 1961, p37] to build a diagrammatic model we can begin to see how ‘evident’ & ‘hypothetical’ meanings exist on “several architectonic layers.” [Meyer, 1961, p. 38] A stimulus (S) leads to a consequent (C), which is also a stimulus that indicates and is actualised in further consequents, S1... C1S2...C2S3 etc. Evident meaning arises not only out of the relationships between S1 and C1 but also out of the relationships between S1 and all subsequent consequences. This diagram also shows how evident meaning born from expectation is always coloured by the potential of hypothetical meaning.

The diagram offers us a glimpse of the spatial structures of compositional meaning. Evident meaning and its hypothetical shadow(s) always exist together based on our understanding through cultural knowledge. The hypothetical meanings relate to our tendency to abstract evident meaning, to symbolise, to idealise, to contextualise and to explore new possibilities or potentialities for that particular meaning. This allows the development of other articulations in improvisation. The determinate meaning of a performance is the overall presentational character formed out of the intra-musical compositional meaning of that tune in culture.

The development of compositional meaning is both conscious and instinctive. In music it is a conscious matrix of symbolic construction, where one musical term relates to another. They then establish evident meanings and insinuate hypothetical ones. All of this takes place in a cyclical arrangement of the melody that builds up to a three dimensional compositional interior.

The process relies heavily on instinct. Stimuli enter relationships in various ways based on immediate instincts in music making. Objects or motifs may have a conscious intellectual meaning but more-so they have intuitied characters. This is especially the case in music where often the best decisions are made ‘under the fingers’ in music making.

Fig 2.6: Diagram of Evident, Hypothetical and Determinate meaning [by author - based on formula by Meyer]
2.5 Improvisation & Articulation

The following case study explores the articulation, improvisation and development beyond the compositional form. This is central to creative practice in traditional Irish music. Objects or tunes in oral culture are, generally speaking, standard compositional forms. These tunes are played by many different individuals in different social or geographical regions, with slight or significant articulation, differences or deviations. Each musician deviates to a lesser or greater extent from these fixed patterns. These articulations and deviations contribute significantly to the artistic practice and I would say are the most significant aspect of its aesthetic. It is in these articulations and deviations that meaning is most evident and can be developed further from intra-musical perspectives.

Personal Interpretations

I tend to call this improvisation in Irish traditional music. It can often have an extremely broad reach on a simple theme. It is easily identifiable in the music of Tommie Potts but it is also present in subtler ways in ornamentation used by other musicians. Used well, single moments of ornamentation can ripple through the fabric of the tune and change our overall understanding of it. They can reshape all of the objects and relationships in the functionally interdependent patterns of the composition. Sometimes, the style of playing changes to such an extent that new ones develop. Regional styles share ornamentation and improvisation in common amongst the musicians.

In traditional music, as we have seen above, intra-musical meaning can be understood by looking at standard tunes in the repertoire and the normative patterns of the musical tradition. Stimuli evoke expectation and may then, through improvisation, be inhibited, developed or resolved to evoke meaning. Improvisation establishes meaning through deviation from the expected patterns of the tune or the tradition.

These improvisations can develop concepts in the objects themselves or the patterns of syntactical relationships. Musicians reshape them, invert them, extend them etc. This can evolve in many different ways as the case studies will show. We can move from the evident meanings of a composition into

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20 Meyer points out new styles in jazz music such as bebop, "the degree and manner of deviation may change, bringing new styles into existence." [Meyer, 1961, p. 68]
the hypothetical shadows in performance. Mastery is often evident when alternate hypothetical meanings are developed into expansive improvisatory landscapes which are then manipulated back to the original evident meanings, the original musical standard, with ingenuity and depth.

Improvisation and ornamentation have huge scope but must build from the compositional and cultural meanings in the tune to remain coherent. They can render meanings intuited in the artefact more apparent, surface the deeper meanings in the patterns of tradition, highlight existing meanings with a renewed sense. They can be weak, or fake, when they are artificially imposed. Deviations that disrupt the patterns of the tradition for the sake of novelty do nothing to explore the embedded meanings in the culture that might allow us to better understand either our culture itself or society. These improvisations are meaningless outside of novelty and we see this frequently in music and architecture.

This interpretive improvisational process is perhaps the most important creative part of folk traditions. It creates a much broader landscape through multiple representations of its cultural objects. It allows the practitioner to balance creativity with anthropological exploration. To develop a creative anthropological practice that can subjectively explore the patterns of meaning in musical culture, a creative archaeology that explores our deeper psychic structures through its artefacts. Such practice contributes back into the cultural landscape; this shared repository. Our next case studies examines two ways that improvisation and articulation create diverse cultural meaning from standard objects. First in Tommie Potts’ performance of ‘My Love is in America’ and second in an examination of regional styles.
Case Study - My Love is in America by Tommy Potts

The next drawing examines Tommie Potts’s performance of the standard “My Love is in America”21 examined earlier in relation to compositional form. Tommie Potts (1912-1988) was an original and inventive fiddle player from a well-known musical family who were prominent in the practice of traditional Irish music for over a century. He is famous for his development of elaborate and compositional complex improvisations on standard tunes. He released a single celebrated commercial recording “The Liffey Banks” in 1978 although other non-commercial recordings have been made. Here the performance is examined in the context of personal or individual improvisation (outside a regional style) on the standard tune or cultural object. It evidences the potential for new objects to be incorporated into the artefact within the compositional structures. It also shows improvisational development of the object and the relationships within the tune.

I will use the same drawing technique as before to present the tune visually. The improvisations become especially clear visually when compared with the original tune also included. I also include an audio excerpt of the piece.

The following diagram seeks to make explicit the range of melodic variation in the Tommy Potts’ performance of the A part. The graph represents the standard melody in blue and Potts’ actual performance in red. This clearly sets up tensions between the ‘evident’ musical stimulus and ‘hypothetical’ musical stimulus referring to my earlier diagram developed from Meyer’s formula. Tension and release, geometrical inversions, stretched time, new melodic patterns born from hypothetical pattern in the melody are all born in Potts’ improvisations as can be seen in the diagram. Meanings are established not only in the usual relationship on the harmonic structure of the tune but also in the tensions and overlapping caused by the improvisations which would be evident to anybody familiar with the original melody.

Again the tune is on a graph, thereby visually representing the tune and its melodic shape. The diagram represents the first 8 bars of standard version as shown earlier. It then represents the first round of Potts playing the tune. We can see from the diagram that initially Potts’ version is quite close to the original with some minor variations that mostly have to do with emphasis and ornamentation, small inflections on the original melody and phrasing. In particular we can see a distinctive lead into the tune where he introduces it with a downward melodic intro that falls into its melody. We can also see a small syncopation in bar 3 of the tune where the main accent at the start of the bar is replaced with a rest and the fiddle comes in on the second note.22 Potts then goes on to repeat the 2 no double A parts as a series of development of the tune. Although

21 My Love is in America by Tommie Potts, from the commercial recording “The Liffey Banks”, Label Claddagh Records.
22 This syncopation is described in an interview between Potts and Micheal Ó Súilleabháin; “POTTS: Well, there’s nothing terribly radical or alarming about that because flute players do it. And when a flute player loses the breath you see them playing - and in the inhale there is the note, but they come back in, and that’s syncopation on the flute.”
23 [Speech Transcriptions, p. 36 see Ó Súilleabháin 1987] Potts is here referring to the traditional flute technique of breaking the line to take a breath in such a way as to phrase the melody in an individual and interesting manner. Even here, however, missing the main accent is not common, and a typical example of a normal approach may also be seen in Ó Súilleabháin 1984, p5. (Ó Súilleabháin, 2010, p. 7)

[Speech Transcriptions, p. 36 see Ó Súilleabháin 1987]
there is ambiguity here as the B part is quite similar to the A part and he may be deliberately using this ambiguity.

In the first 4 bars of the double A part we can immediately see substantial variation. An improvisation with an inverted melodic shape descents into a improvisatory melodic pattern that crosses both phrases and establishes a beautiful contrapuntal melody to the original melody, only imagined in the listeners ears but evident in this diagram. It is a beautifully constructed improvisation on the original counterpointing both melodic shape, pattern and phrases.

In the second 4 bars of of the double A part he stretches the phrasing again into the second round of the double A part. This becomes an 8 bar motif manipulating the overall form of the tune. At the start of this phrase the melody in the performance is close to the original elegantly resolving the substantial improvisation from the previous bar. As we enter the third bar of this phrase a long and stepping improvisation, with a pure shape emerges that engages a slightly syncopated shift and then finally and elegantly resolves to the original cadence at the 8th bar of this phrase. The centre of this improvisation is in a very extended pattern but is resolved very neatly with considerable elegance. The final 4 bars of this double A part are relatively close to the melody by comparison and anchors the tune before the next double. In the last double shown we can see similar improvisational development with equal elegance.

Not only do these improvisations create a tension or counterpoint within the original tune but they are also complex harmonic improvisations in their own right establishing relationships and emphasising the mode and cadences in the tune.

Micheál Ó Súilleabháin’s analysis (Ó Súilleabháin, 1996, p187) of this tune also touches on many similar points. In addition he makes a comparative analysis of 4 recordings of the whole tune and the melodic alterations used by Potts. He also illustrates the role of musical borrowing in Potts’ music. (Ó Súilleabháin, 1996, p. 194) Interestingly he identifies, in conversation with Potts, one of the direct borrowing used by Potts, a pop song, Mambo Italiano recorded by Rosemary Clooney in 1951, which he incorporated outside the scope of my example. This is something he did continually, shaping those new improvisations or borrowings to the syntax or order of the music and using them to introduce or highlight particularities of the tune and its meanings.

The developments and improvisations in this case study are constructed on a thoroughly sophisticated understanding of the compositional meanings of the tune object. Even in the early part of his performance, when he is playing the tune relatively simply, we see Potts identifying the elements of meaning framed in his subtle concept of them. He is suggesting the ground on which he will start to develop his improvisations. As his improvisations unfold we see the development of these terms in the tune. He is building around the meanings in the tune, importing new meanings that build patterns within the compositional structures of the tune. There is a very subtle understanding of syntax or order of the tune. The new improvisations are folded expertly into the existing rules of syntax. These improvisations, although extensive in melodic variation, time and phrasing are integrated flawlessly into the order of the tune thereby highlighting the tune itself and its construction.
Fig. 2.8: Visual representation of excerpt from Tommie Potts performance of 'My Love is in America'.

Sound Clip: PLAY AUDIO - Rec 2.3
My Love is in America
Played by: Author
Rich and Diverse Oral Culture - Regional Interpretations

This is one example of one performance in the culture of Irish traditional music, albeit in my view a special one. The culture is a rich and diverse landscape. Over a lifetime of participation hundreds of different adumbrations of the same tunes will be heard. A range of meanings associated with each artefact is gathered, presented by multiple individuals. As more and more representations of objects are collected we begin to understand the artefacts and the culture more thoroughly. We continue to contribute to the contemporary cultural landscape through these tunes or artefacts.

Different perspectives not only exist in individual performance but also exist as regional styles in individual communities in varying geographical locations. Ways of playing the tune, improvisations or versions, can become fixed in local communities. Patterns of performance and meaning naturally emerge based on geographical containment, shared sensibility, shared experience etc. Regional styles, with fixed patterns of meaning, indicate the characteristics of that community. They contain much information about the history and society of these communities. They have characteristics shaped significantly by their rural landscapes and society. I have previously referred to the very rich and distinctive Sliabh Luachra style, evident in Murphy’s and Clifford’s playing. In recent years, due to recordings and improved communication, these regional styles have become available to musicians outside their geographical locations and musicians choose or develop styles or aspects of styles based on their own sensibilities.

Case Study - The Morning Star

This case study examines four regional performances of the same tune, ‘the Morning Star.’ It is worth noting that many regional styles have a distinct repertoire based on cultural history or tendencies in repertoire. Individual regional styles also share many standards in common with other regional styles. For the sake of comparison I have chosen a standard tune ‘The Morning Star’ played in four regional styles. It is also important to say that I have selected distinct voices within these styles. I do not suggest that these performance typify the exact characteristics of any one style. This can be said of all musicians within regional style classification. The best we can say it that regional styles suggest certain tendencies in the music.

The first version is played by Mary Ellen Curtin23 and illustrates the structure of the tune. It is followed by an illustration of performances by three fiddle players whose music is characterised by distinct regional styles; Denis Murphy from Sliabh Luachra in Co. Kerry, transcribed in diagrammatic form by the author from the album ‘The Star Above The Garter’.24

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24 The Morning Star by Denis Murphy, On the Commercial Album Recording The Star Above The Garter by Denis Murphy and Julia Clifford, Label Shanachie.
8.8 The Morning Star played by four musicians

Fig 2.9: Visual representation excerpt from ‘The Morning Star’ played by Mary Ellen Curtin, Denis Murphy, Martin Hayes and Tommy Peoples

Sound Clip. PLAY AUDIO - Rec 2.4
The Morning Star played by four musicians
Played by:
In the version by Tommy Peoples we see a tripping dynamic version where an embedded rhythm in the tune is brought to the fore. This is excellent stuff in my view emphasising phrasing, melody and rhythm in a unique way that reveals profound characteristics in the tune. He uses unique ornamentation, playing methods and considerable skill to convey a highly individual perspective and allows characteristics in the music to emerge with urgency, dynamism and belief.

Again we can see the role of improvisation and ornamentation in creating new patterns of meaning in these old artefacts. In the Potts example, we saw a distinctive creative voice working with the artefact to create new, personal, compositional structures. In this case study we see compositional structures emerge that respond to regional culture, society and landscape. In regional styles we find patterns of meaning that are layered up in the artefacts by many hands over time. They describe meanings that relate to the landscape, the society or geographical region, translated in the intra-musical and cultural relationships.

These regional patterns of meaning exist along with each musicians’ own accomplished musical personalities. The musician works in, and is enriched by, their context. They make significant discoveries about the meanings in music as well as in our culture and society. Regional diversity adds to the cultural richness of the tradition and should be supported in creative practice. Universes can be found in the specific and much insight can be gained by working into the microscopic detail of a particular context. It is often in specific details that rich veins of meaning are discovered rather than the hackneyed generality of a main order.

Martin Hayes from Co. Clare, transcribed from the recording “Martin Hayes” and Tommy Peoples from the Donegal fiddle tradition transcribed from the recording ‘The Iron Man’ with Daithi Sproule.

In the version by Denis Murphy an emphasis of a dynamic ‘swinging’ bowing pattern with slight melodic variation is evident. This is typical of his community of musicians in his own geographical area. This recording emphasises the swing or lift in the tune, a good humoured character.

In the version by Martin Hayes we can observe melodic simplification to highlight the cadence structure of the melody. This is further emphasised by the bowing pattern and by sliding the pitch of certain notes to accentuate the potential in the cadences or modulations in the melody. This in turn showcases the beauty of the contour of the melody. Micheál Ó Súilleabháin points out this characteristic also “Hayes is well known for the emotive flow within his musical style. For him it seems to be expressed through a focus upon the slow tempo and the ‘nea’ or emotive voice of his native East Clare especially as revealed in a telling upwards glissando at times (presumably the ‘nea’ itself) which evokes a kind of yearning somewhat akin to similar glissandi in a jazz or ‘blues’ style. But Hayes is content to lean on this emotive voice already present within the tradition without disturbing its standard forms.” [Ó Súilleabháin, 2010, p. 7]
Improvisation can form thoroughly original artworks which deeply explore cultural meaning to form affecting presences. This method of exploring artefacts of culture through improvisation; of exploring their meanings and characteristic through creative practice; of turning, stretching and reforming them in various ways to realise these meanings; is a valuable method of making contemporary work. It has a strong and legitimate artistic history in music (traditional Irish music, jazz, classical variations etc). The possibility of conversation with cultural traditions and of exploring their meanings through compositional re-ordering and improvisation forms a central belief in my creative practice. This is at the core of the research and is illustrated by the case studies.
2.6 Presentational Meaning & Character

Earlier in the chapter I introduced presentational symbolism [Langer, 1957, p. 97] associated with the whole representations of objects in art or musical practice. Presentational symbolism applies to all the scales of object in a composition, from objects in the molecular structures to the objects of a landscape. We can see this in our case studies. The overall tune and the various phrases in the composition have their own meaning or character, and it cannot be analysed by breaking down compositional structures.

Meaning or character of whole representations in music or art is particularly apparent in oral culture where we relate to objects themselves. It is also through practice that we can pinpoint, or best describe, specific character in examples and point to its relevance. It does suggest future research areas not possible to explore fully here. Possibly from the point of view of Langer’s description of presentational symbolism or Whiteheads construction of character.

As outlined earlier Langer introduces the difference between relational meanings (logical discourse in her example) and single presentational meanings through an example of a photograph. She suggests that these whole objects, like paintings or tunes, are expressive symbolic objects with presentational symbolism. [Langer, 1957, p. 97] Langer’s theory of presentational symbolism illustrates the potential for whole objects to be meaningful, to be emotionally expressive, to be characterful in their own right outside compositional and conscious thought structures. Artefacts or objects can have personalities that we intuit in our oral experience of objects.

As Mary J Reichling, writing on Langer, notes; “Music is a presentational symbol and “articulates forms which language cannot set forth.”[10] As an articulate but non-discursive symbolic form, music has import (meaning which is not fixed) but without conventional reference. It, therefore, presents itself not as a symbol in the ordinary sense, like words that have a reference fixed by convention, but as a “significant form.” Such forms are logically expressive and are symbols for the articulation of the dynamism of subjective experience, “feeling, life, motion and emotion.”[11]” [Reichling, 1993, p. 4] Reichling continues to say that “The symbol is a form which is in turn an abstraction and complex presentation of aspects of subjective life. [20]... It presents the semblance of feeling directly and immediately. [21]... Form with respect to the musical symbol is a sonorous appearance of feeling in an imaginatively perceptible symbolic projection. This form is in a sense an apparition or illusion and is given to imaginative perception.” [Reichling, 1993, p. 5-6] Once presentational symbolism is defined as significant form it becomes easier to accept and understand in the context of creative practice.

Reichling also points the difference between “the meaning of the “art symbol” [another term for presentational symbols] and

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20 Langer outlines; “The meanings given through language are successively understood, and gathered into a whole by the process called discourse; the meanings of all other symbolic elements that compose a larger, articulate symbol are understood only through the meaning of the whole, through their relations within the total structure. Their very functioning as symbols depends on the fact

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that they are involved in a simultaneous, integral presentation. This kind of semantic may be called “presentational symbolism,” to characterise its essential distinction from discursive symbolism, or “language” proper.” [Langer, 1957, p. 97]
the meaning of the symbol in art where meaning is derived from the medium. The “art symbol” is the expressive form. As Reichling outlines; “[T]he symbol “does not point us to a meaning beyond its own presence.” [35]... The meaning is “perceived as something in the work.”[36] [Reichling, 1993, p. 8] And one last point that Reichling points to in discussing Langer, “She writes: “Its [the symbols] function is expression, in the logical, not the biological, sense...” “What it expresses is not an idea of some other thing, but an idea of a feeling.” Such expressiveness, she states, has endless degrees [44] [Reichling, 1993, p. 10]

This begins to outline the significance of the whole representation of the actual object in oral culture. Presentational meaning as an art symbol, with its expression and presence is captured along with the range cultural and compositional meanings and associations already outlined. This presentational meaning has symbolic form with import without conventional reference. In other words, it has ‘feel’ or ‘character.’

Shaviro outlines that “Whitehead... posits what he calls ‘eternal objects.’” These are “Pure Potentials” (22), or “potentials for the process of becoming” (29). If actual entities are singular “occasions” of becoming, then eternal objects provide the ‘qualities’ and ‘relations’” (191) that enter into, and help to define, these occasions. When “the potentiality of an eternal object is realized in a particular actual entity,” it “contributes to the definiteness of that actual entity” (23). It gives it a particular character. Eternal objects thus take on something of the role that universals (48; 158), predicates (186), Platonic forms (44), and ideas (52; 149) played in older metaphysical systems.” [Shaviro, 1993, p. 18]

We can see the development of ‘feel’ or ‘character’ from Langer’s presentational symbolism. This is relevant throughout the research. We will explore the development of character in musical and architectural case studies. We will return to this term and make further observations derived from the practice based research.

A complex tune is offered as a unity, a lasting entity, an object of an oral culture, an artefact rather than sensation. We retain an oral picture of its character, an ability we hone through practice. In this projection, from actual experience to a subjective consciousness, the presentational meaning and character is experienced. Most of this spectrum of understanding, or expressiveness, operates below conscious understanding at the forefront of our minds. We must be responsive to their weak meaning and find ways to amplify it.

Presentational meaning and character can also build to form structures. Individual objects each presenting their own meanings are placed side by side to build a character shaped from the individual units. This is not relational but rather composite, a block of individual presentations; a complex multifaceted character.
Character is realised in presentational meaning, import outside logical reference, and the ‘definiteness’ of the actual object from the hypothetical ideal. The search for universals and the enjoyment and acceptance of the humanity of objects are born of the same impulse, the potential for the process of becoming. Both lead us towards character. In practice we also look sideways in our cultural context at the range of characters. We recognise consistent failure to reach the transcendental and this allows us the chance to share in our humanity. We remain damned to the earthly realm of applied logic [Kant, 1787/81, B77/A53 / Weigelt, 2007, p. 87] as evident in Tommie Potts’ lifelong search for the “unbroken music of heaven” [Ó Súilleabháin, 1996, p. 176] as he put it.

In my practice, much of the expressiveness of art symbols derives from the failed ‘definiteness’ of the actual object. This is shaped by powerful forces of the world, such as landscape or the transcendental. These powerful forces can push against each other forming mythical objects in the real world. These characters become shifting personalities in the work. We will see an example of this in our next case study Port na bPúcaí. This is a masterpiece, a lean perfectly balanced object in its tendency towards the ‘ideal’ and in its own ‘real’ nature.

Case Study - Port na bPucaí

The slow air Port na bPúcaí can show us presentational meaning and character in the artefact. It is a tune that is expressive of a culture and place. Cultural meaning is evident in the folklore associated with it but it is also evident in its compositional patterns. Through the object we intuit information about the culture and place that is not always possible to discover through written history. This evolves as we become more intimately acquainted with the object.

Like many tunes, ‘Port na bPúcaí’ (music of the ghosts) is associated with landscape and the culture or society born of this landscape. It originates from the Blasket Islands off the west coast of Kerry and is sometimes credited to the Kerry Musician Muiris Ó Dálaigh. A recording of the tune can be heard played on fiddle by Seán Cheaist Ó Catháin, on “Beauty an Oileáin: Music and Song of the Blasket Islands”. Ó Catháin was born on the island and was, with all of the islanders, relocated to the mainland in the in 1953. Ó Catháin introduces the tune in Irish. The translation below is from the CD liner notes and is by Ríonach Ó Ógáin.

There were people from the Great Blasket who were living in Inis Mhic Ui bhleáin many years ago, about eighty years ago, and they were herdsmen looking after stock for a landlord who was living in Dingle, and they went to stay on the island every

29 Beauty an Oileáin, Music and Song of the Blasket Islands, Claddagh Records CC56CD, 1992.
year. Then one winter’s night they were in bed, asleep, and the old woman was the first to hear the sound and she thought it was the sound of birds or something like that; that the sound ... the sound was coming nearer all the time until at last she realised that it was music and she woke the old man beside her and both of them listened to the sound for a long time until they were able to remember it and it has been on the Blasket ever since, ‘The Fairies’ Lament’. That has been on the Blasket ever since that time.

Fearghail Mac Amhlaoibh describes another association “for those who don’t believe in fairies, have another explanation and say that it might have been the sound or the cry of a whale.” and possibly relates to the story that it “was first heard by Pádraig Ó Dálaigh, a fisherman, while sheltering in a hut on the deserted Inis Mhic Aoibhlein (Inis Mhic Úibhiléin), off the Great Blasket.”

In both descriptions the cultural meaning of the tune tells us much about the character of the landscape in which it was composed. A natural enough phenomenon for a rural oral culture. To my ear this character is clear in the music.

The analysis drawing is a transcription of a performance for a commercial recording by the Donegal Fiddler, Tommy Peoples. This allows us to clearly see the relationships within the tune structure. Again we see that the tune is constructed from a number of sub melodies or phrases that establish implied harmonic relationships in time. Again these are musical stimuli that illustrate patterns of tendency in the object within the context of the culture. In the analysis diagram we can see the construction of the phrasing, cadences and overall form. The blue points indicate the relationship between cadences setting up the tension and resolution in the tune. The minor points establish the points of minor emphasis in the tune. The shape of the sub melodies represent movement and stasis.

30 Na Blascaod, Ceol na nOilean, TG4, 2009, 20:02.
31 O Riada, Port na bPúcaí, Gaeil Linn, 2014, Notes track 5.
32 Port na bPúcaí by Tommy Peoples, from the commercial recording “An Exciting Session with one of Ireland’s Leading Fiddlers”, CCE Label, 1976.
Fig 2.11: Visual representation of Port na bPúcaí

Sound Clip: PLAY AUDIO - Rec 2.5
Port na bPúcaí
Played by: Tommy Peoples
The pattern is established immediately in the opening phrase with the starting motif based on a D'-C#-A (8-7#-5) progression and then established a pattern of inhibition / tendency around a cadence F#-G (3-4) in the centre of the phrase and then progressing to A-B-C-C (5-6-7natural-7natural) and resolving to the first phrase cadence BAGBA (654 655). It is unusual tune never resolving to the 1 except in one phrase. It establishes a serious of expectations that are never fully resolved with each phrases ending on either the major third, the fourth or the seventh. The one phrase that resolves to the 1 at the end is positioned within the middle of the form of the tune (end of first half if part B). It establishes a pattern of expectation throughout the tune that are never quite resolved but rather balanced by the form of the tune. As we have seen in previous examples we again find the balance in the composition through the cyclical nature of the tune.

The changing modal relationships in the tune clearly contribute to the character. Phrase 1a starts with an emphasis on the major seventh on the introducing motif. In the second phrase on the important 4-6-7-7 progression outlined above the 7th is minor adding a blue quality to the tune in this central point of the composition. This is emphasised with the length and repeat of the second not here. It then resolves to the cadence outlined. This is the only minor seventh in the composition. In the second part the seventh is central to the composition establishing the important cadence at the end of the cadence but always remains a major seventh. The establishment of the minor 7th in the first part establishes the blue character throughout the composition adding significant influence to the melody with elegant means. The cadences build on this character throughout the remainder of the piece.

In the performance of the piece by Tommy Peoples we can begin to examine how this musician responds to the compositional character of the artefact. We can see little melodic improvisation outside the composition itself. However there is significant nuance at the molecular level of the performance that emphasis character and implied meanings in the tune. Cuts\(^{33}\) (that suggest the sonic landscape), the quality of the notes, whether vibrato is used or not, the slight fluctuations in pitch below or above standard pitch are all used intuitively. The melody affects the performance and causes the musician to react intuitively based on his understanding of the tune. This performance renders the tune with sincerity, respect and without over-dramatisation or melancholy.

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\(^{33}\text{Cuts are a type of improvisation on the fiddle. They are general a short rhythmic ornament on or between notes in the melody in order to provide a slight emphasis in the melody or rhythm. The technique involves a fast placement of an alternative finger to that playing the principle melody.}\)
Port na bPucal - Overall Art Symbol or Character

The tune, as a whole representation, presents with an expressive character that is not captured in the compositional structures. It presents as an ‘art symbol’ as discussed by Reichling with all the expressive meaning and character. It has an overall meaning that captures its own expressive nature and the expressive nature of landscape. This is a character that appears to be brought out strikingly in Tommy Peoples performance played here.34

Landscape Meaning in Port na bPucal

Landscape is described in the tune and it also becomes a symbol for that landscape. It is an example of a tune that become a nucleus of memory that associatively recalls landscape and its groups of impressions. It has become an artefact that points to a particular landscape and culture.

It also has a sonic quality characteristic of the landscape. Fearghail Mac Amhlaoibh’s description of the sound of whales testifies to this. Subconsciously this soundscape is present in the artefact. The Donegal fiddler Jimmy Campbell describes Donegal fiddle music as “wild and mountainy music.”35 He describes how he was drawn to the music in his youth; “It’s the rhythm of it and the nice notes of it. That’s what brings you to it especially when [if you’re] younger, I would go home and I would nearly at night time dream of it. And especially the next day if you were standing beside the river or any noise the tune would come back to you like that.”36 The sonic landscape is a recurring theme in traditional Irish music. Many tune composers report that compositions were influenced by rivers, birdsong etc. and sometimes record this in the tune title.37

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34 Peoples, Tommy, An Exciting Session with one of Ireland’s Leading Traditional Fiddlers, CCE, 1976, track 02.
35 South Donegal Fiddle, Interview with Jimmy Campbell, BBC, Part 1 of 4, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZ6yMevo4, time 0:20
36 South Donegal Fiddle, Interview with Jimmy Campbell, BBC, Part 3 of 4, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZ6yMevo4, time 0:20
37 The Morning Thrush was reportedly written by James Ennis in 1913 or 14 inspired by a thrush singing in his garden. https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=RD6n9VZ6TLY&v=ILe9etQ0iwQ
2.7 Weak Meaning

We can easily recognise the indeterminate or weak meaning in the case study Port n bPúcaí. Ranging from the various stories associated with the tune in folklore to our own subjective experience of the tune and concepts brought about by personal intuition. This weak or indeterminate meaning is valuable in culture and for the creative practitioner. Weak meanings provide space for fantasy, for imagination, that would not be possible if meaning was always carefully or precisely defined.

We intuit weak meaning from the weaker parts of the representations of the artefacts. It is often invisible and associative, constructed in our minds rather than in physical hard fact and shared with others in our culture. Glassie outlines the anthropological tactics required when looking for meaning in more obscure places; “meaning... revealed through the tidy, bright techniques that work in compositional analysis,...[with] courage as much as rigour, [with] a willingness to grope in the dark, using the expansive, intuitive tactics of the novelist as well as the reductive, systematising procedures of the scientist... [to] search widely for unpredictable and astonishing associations.” (Glassie, 1999, p. 63)

Oral culture can carry weak meaning where literate traditions cannot as weak meaning exists outside the foregrounded consciousness that records history. Weak meanings in folklore, myth and fantasy. Objects or tunes particularly have the ability to carry weak meaning. In music making we can share, amplify and build our observations in weak meaning with others. We observe the same weak meaning in the multiple perspective of shared music making and we grasp that, build on it, in the making of music. Musicians can draw out weak meanings making them more visible to an audience in performance.

Weak meaning can become an important defining force in creative practice. Crosson points to this in literary theory where the “movement from text to reader has meant that text itself has come to reflect, in some respects, an indeterminacy associated with music.” (Crosson, 2008, p. 40) He goes on to cite John Neubauer who notes that theories of literature have found the “work in itself” diffuse rather than organically coherent and meaningful. Their sensitivity to the ‘fuzziness’ of literary texts may actually move literature closer to music, for it attributes a kind of elusive semantic content to literature that has traditionally been considered typical of music [...] That artworks have a ‘weak identity’ is an idea that informs such widely differing conceptions as Gadamer’s hermeneutics, Wolfgang Iser’s ‘Leerstellen,’ Umberto Eco’s ‘open works of art,’ Roland Barthe’s ‘scriptable texts,’ and various formulations of ‘expression’ including Nelson Goodman’s definition of it as ‘metaphoric exemplification.’ All of these writers imply today’s critical commonplace that art works are inexhaustibly interpretable, but they draw different consequences from it.” (Neubauer, 1992, p. 7 referenced by Crosson, 2008, p. 41) This is also taken up by Ignasi de Sola - Morales “It is precisely through the aesthetic that we recognise the model of our richest, most vivid, most “authentic” experiences in relation to a reality whose outlines are vague and blurred... Aesthetic experiences constitute, in some sense, the most solid, the strongest model...
of - paradoxically indeed - a weak construction of the true or the real, and thus assume a privileged position within the system of references and values of contemporary culture.* [de Sola-Morales, 1997, p. 57]

A good example of indeterminacy might be “An Damhsa” by Gearóid Mac Lochlainn [Mac Lochlainn, Vallely, 2004, p. 89] also used by Crosson [Crosson, 2008, p. 253] to evidence influence of musical patterns and rhythms in the poetry of Mac Lochlainn. As outlined by Crosson “Mac Lochlainn’s poetry also occasionally adopts rhythms he attributes to the influence of traditional music. Mac Lochlainn says “It aims to juggle with sound and sense and hopefully, in places, to imitate or echo, reel, jig and other dance rhythm patterns.” [Mac Lochlainn, Vallely, 2004, p. 89] The verse is as follows; “with heel to the toe and a berley o / is rinneadh damhsa domhsa39 / And 3, 6, 9 the goose drank wine / Is rinneadh damhsa domhsa / and kick the tin and swing the lamp / is rinneadh damhsa domhsa.” [Mac Lochlainn, Vallely, 2004, p. 89] The translation of rhythm and phrasing is clearly ambiguous but present. This harnessing of weak meaning or indeterminacy is a useful tool in the construction of the verse.

We will see in the research that weak meaning is apparent in objects and in syntactical relationships. This is especially relevant for syntax where much weak meaning can be intuited across artistic and cultural practices as we have seen in “An Damhsa,” by Gearóid Mac Lochlainn. This allows us more understanding of the role of anthropological process in creative practice. It makes a type of creative anthropology. Meanings are drawn out by placing objects in relationships with other objects in compositional patterns or structure in anthropological methods. An anthropology of showing rather than description. Like the anthropologist, I collect objects with careful diligence to describe culture with precision and care. However as a creative practitioner I am not seeking to build perfectly factual anthropological or ethnographic histories. I can be looser, leave room for fantasy or indeterminacy, for imagination. This then fuels development of intuited meanings, things that are difficult to consciously prove and leads to further transformation.

Interestingly Marcello Stamm uses indeterminacy in the RMIT research model. Richard Blythe outlines “Marcelo Stamm employs a useful notion of pointing to better understand the limitations of categorisations. [...] Stamm’s concept of pointing allows for indeterminacy, that if the actual location is in some way not fully knowable, not meaning less precise but simply indeterminate, then the Portalan chart is not useful in the sense that to be overly fixed or precise is limiting to the extent that it creates a kind of falsehood. Instead what we can do is indicate from various positions, to point from here and from there, to in a sense map out in a three dimensional manner, a topology which through its indeterminacy remains open, choric and productive.” [Blythe, Forthcoming]

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38 Translates as ‘the dance’.
39 Is rinneadh damhsa domhsa translates as dancing is made for me.
2.8 Final Observations & Conclusion

Balance of Scale of Object

Conceptualising, or hypostatising objects occurs at various scales as seen in the case studies. Each object, regardless of scale, presents with a character at that particular scale which packages complex sets of information. The objects can be shaped or manipulated on the basis of their own character, as a whole representations at that scale. We can also break down the object and study its constituent objects, its composition and ornamentation etc. We have seen these two perspectives throughout the case studies and this is central to practice. Objects are examined, upwards and downwards through various scales in the interior space of composition, from the perspective of the whole and its constituents. I call this the balance of the scale of objects in composition.

The subjective hypostatising of objects in tunes, or composition generally, is remarkably consistent in culture. The objects in my case studies are generally perceived by most musicians with slight nuances or differences. As we conceptualise objects, naturally packaging complex sets of data into them, we find differences due to the individual sensibility of the musician. This allows us to share them meaningfully and delight in any changes.

Each musician must at some stage encounter the basic or fundamental objects of the composition. They are packages of information that cannot be broken down further by our own individual sensibility. This fundamental layer is the bottom horizon of objects. Beneath this horizon we are given sense data which we then conceptualise as an object, and in turn as some type of object. As we deepen our sensibility the bottom horizon lowers and we can perceive smaller objects, details which contribute further to our understanding. With understanding in music or architecture the molecular structures become more apparent and the bottom horizon drops further.

There are also the top compositional entities, the large compositional assemblages that collects all the constituent objects into one entity. We can easily understand this as the tunes in the case studies presented. However the tunes themselves are constituent objects in the real and the metaphysical landscapes of traditional Irish music. They form constituent objects in the symphony of oral culture. These compositional assemblies form the top object horizon. With understanding the connections back into the cultural landscape become more apparent and we widen our conceptual space. As we see more connections outwards we lift the upper horizon.

Both horizons are based on our sensibility and understanding.
Spatial Objects - Unfolding Objects

The complex sets of information and meaning all come together in the objects of an oral culture. They are not stories or narratives, collecting and organising information sequentially, in a discursive mode. They are not pieces of written history, with a singular fixed perspective trying to relate historical incident through conscious fact. Rather they are objects given to us by culture with accumulated meanings, symbolic representations of that culture. Glassie describes this in the context of material culture, “artefacts... are created in time and shaped to cultural pattern... The story belongs to temporal experience. It moves in one direction, accumulating associations sequentially. The artefact belongs to spatial experience. It unfolds in all directions at once, embracing contradictions in simultaneity, and opening multiple routes to significance.” [Glassie, 1999, p47] Significant artefacts in the tradition, tunes like Port na bPucal, The Gold Ring or Garret Barry’s Jig, position themselves spatially, as cardinal points, in the oral cultural landscape. Each object also has their internal spatial character, multiple overlapping compositional layers established in relationships to one and other, appearing and disappearing within the spatial composition of the object.

Conclusion

These case studies in music helps us understand the value of working in an oral culture where the whole object or artefact is experienced. We are trading in objects and retaining their complexity. We construct hierarchical structures from objects inherited from the cultural landscape. We can then retain their character and meaning while shaping them to the needs of contemporary practice. This runs to the heart of my creative practice in music and has been transplanted into architectural process.

This is an introduction to the observations made in the research on practice in an oral culture. I now turn to the processes I use in practice to make work with all the intuitions of practice. Two principal processes have become the main areas of research: 1. Process of collecting and assembling objects - the creative anthropological process. 2. Detail improvisation - the manipulation of objects in the compositional strategy.
3.

General Theory of Process - Architecture
Introduction

The cornerstones of practice, Object and the Interior Space of Composition, were sketched from observations in early research methodologies and communities of practice in chapter 1. In this chapter we review a general theory of process that developed from these early observations. This formed a framework for consequent research. Many of the observations here will correspond with, and build on, observations made in the music case studies in Chapter 2. This is an early attempt at understanding the practice process. They remain, for the most part, quite valid. However, some developments, based on consequent research and observations, will be outlined in Chapter 6.
3.1 Early Design Process Drawing

Figure 3.1 shows a series of drawings that were presented at PRS 3. It sets down early observations about the design process. There are deficiencies in this early drawing but it remains an important staging post. It is developed in the later stages of research where new and corroborating insights on process can be seen. The drawing is also represented in an animation on the following page.

The drawing identifies the progression through a typical design process. It illustrates the key stages in the design process in four parts; the start of the process, two intermediate stages of development and the final synthesis. It begins with collecting objects in the anthropological field. These are objects that are potentially relevant to the project. They are collected from the cultural landscape or other frames of reference based on personal intuitions for the project.

Once objects are collected into the anthropological field of the project a two tier process begins. They are assessed in the context of ‘associative sets’ and ‘compositional sets’ as shown. ‘Associative sets’ are other objects that might deepen understanding of the collected object by association. This might be context, other similar types of objects or objects with shared properties. In ‘Compositional sets’ we examine the potential of the collected objects to form resonant or compatible relationships with the other collected objects in the design field. Other compositional objects, from culture, music or art, with patterns of relationships that might be appropriate for this composition, circle this space influencing development.

Two other significant areas are described. One is the disappointment chain shown in red, which return us to the start of the process when the attempted development of a new object is unsuccessful. The other shows a sphere that indicates a successful design conclusion, sketched at this stage (with poor terminology) as the ‘free compositional interior’ or ‘transcendental sphere.’

The iterative nature of the process is evident in the animation. The animations shows the process of collecting objects in the anthropological field. The process goes through a number of cycles of the design process. The last frame shows the design conclusion. A pattern of compositional meaning emerges (in red) and we see strong links back to the ‘associative sets’ and the ‘compositional sets.’ This indicates strong cultural and contextual relationships as well as strong compositional relationships. The new compositional object emerges connected into the ‘free compositional interior’ or ‘transcendental world sphere.’

This diagram is a construct; an artificial representation of the design process, a helpful meditation on the relationships of objects in the design process. Although it is artificial it is surprisingly accurate as we see from subsequent research and the later review in Chapter 6. It has informed the research, helped us reflect on the characteristics of the anthropological objects and the parameters by which they are reviewed and has helped plot a path for the research.

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1 PRS 3, Barcelona November 2014.
3.1 General Theory of Process - Architecture
3.1 General Theory of Process - Architecture

Fig 3.2: Animation of Early Design Stage Process Drawing, 4 parts
3.2 Introductory Principles

A direct relationship with objects, in music and architecture, allows the opportunity to work with complex objects in multiple subconscious levels rather than a singular concept led design process. This exploration and development of cultural objects allows the practice to explore cultural consciousness rather than singular conceptual musings. The direct relationship with the object engages intuitive intelligences that otherwise cannot be used. This was evident in oral music practice where the character of the object or artefact was revealed both consciously and intuitively through a direct engagement in practice.

Anthropological Process

The early theory of process drawing (fig. 3.1) evidences an anthropological process of collecting and examining objects. Multiple objects are collected in the anthropological field based on intuition and in response to cultural, contextual or personal motivations. I search for compositional patterns and strategies that can embed these objects in an appropriate compositional structure. This develops an ever increasing anthropological field, developing cultural understanding, as objects come and go into the process. A design process evolves that is a circular, re-iterative process, as can be seen from the animation or drawings. This was termed an ‘anthropological design process’ by Leon van Schaik.²

This anthropological process³ is both a conscious and intuitive process and delivers the first instincts on the project. Objects are allowed to unfold and develop into new compositional assemblages. They are stretched, dissembled, assembled, changed into new compositional structures. Meanings are maintained, repositioned or amplified in the developed contemporary forms. In this way meaning or cultural context can be retained in contemporary practice. The anthropological process allows us to explore meanings in culture, with its ‘pattern in mind, inward, invisible and shifting... [through the] ...material things [that] stand solidly out there in the world’ [Glassie, 1999, p. 42].

² In conversation with Leon van Schaik, Dublin, April 2015.
³ The term ‘anthropological process’ is used to indicate a process of collecting and assembling artefacts in culture. I am aware of, and very much respect, the rigorous processes used by trained anthropologists. I do not suggest that I am expertly developing such processes for each project. Rather the creative practice itself is a process that seeks to understand text and context in active participation. Therefore the term here indicates similarities with methods applied by anthropologists. This method is used in both sides of practice but especially in creative practice born from traditional Irish music practice.
Perception of Objects

As outlined in Chapter 24, we ‘hypostatise’ objects from a world of pure sensation. Kant [Kant, 1787/81] describes a capacity to receive representations as intuitions through our sensibility, and following from this, we have the capacity to understand or know these representations through concepts. This is formulated in a number of simple diagrams.

As we conceptualise or symbolise these objects, we ‘think’ these objects. Langar observes “[they are] at once an experienced individual thing and a symbol for the concept of it, for this sort of thing.” [Langar, 1957, p. 89-90] Kant is also helpful here; “There are two conditions then, under which alone knowledge of an object is possible; firstly, intuition, through which the object is given, though only as appearance; secondly, concept, through which an object is thought that corresponds to this intuition.” [Kant, 1787/81, B125/A93 / Weigelt, 2007, p. 118]

Kant’s description is helpful. The anthropological process, develops ‘sensibility’ to the nuances of culture and landscape. This supports a capacity to receive ‘intuitions,’ to observe ‘representations’ in more detail and understanding. Separating ‘intuition’ (through sensibility) and ‘understanding’ (through concepts) allows us to see how subconscious and conscious characteristics of objects are perceived. Multiple adumbrations depend on evolving sensibility and understanding.

In our perception of objects we can reasonably assume that the “things which we intuit are not in themselves what we intuit them as being.” [Kant, 1787/81, B59/A42 / Weigelt, 2007, p. 75] We can see the degree to which objects are mis-conceptualised even within the parameters of our understanding. For example, in music our first conception of a tune is usually miles apart from later conceptions. But this does not mean that we remain forever distant without understanding. As Kant outlines, “it remains completely unknown to us what objects may be in themselves and apart from all this receptivity of our sensibility” [Kant, 1787/81, B59/A42 / Weigelt, 2007, p. 75] but we explore them so that we might understand how we relate to them through our humanity and culture.

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4 See Chapter 2 p. 68
5 Again I am using Husserl’s term Adumbration. See Chapter 2 pg 64. I will use this term frequently as it has become a helpful touchstone in thinking on objects.
Collecting Objects

Objects are rich and complex things and we can transplant much of their intuited character and expression into new objects in the creative process. Representations of objects are collected into the design field of the project, from physical, cultural and personal landscapes with their phenomena (characteristics, meanings, physical, mental and psychological) intact. These objects, or intentional\(^6\) representations, are allowed to float in the subjective design space as various conceptual adumbrations. These represent the object as various types of things, in conscious and subconscious understanding. This allows the opportunity to observe that object, in various ways in respect to culture (outwards), and the other objects in the design field (inwards). Cultural and compositional meanings can then be established in different ways. Through this analytical design process I consider the object in various manifestations in respect to culture and other objects. My understanding unfolds more thoroughly with respect to it. This in turn causes new adumbrations and relationships to evolve. We return to them again and again in creative practice and they reveal more over time. As we encounter similar objects, we build associative sets around them through the countless representations in culture.

Intuition and Sensibility

A significant role is played by intuition and sensibility in this collection process. By collecting objects, intuitive subconscious processes are allowed to influence the development. It is helpful to define these in more detail and again Kant assists here. He points out that intuition is the means by which “the mind is affected by the object in a certain way. The capacity (receptivity) to obtain representations through the way we are affected by objects is called sensibility. Objects are therefore given to us [from intuition] by our sensibility. Sensibility alone supplies us with intuitions.” [Kant, 1787/81, B33,34/A19,20 / Weigelt, 2007, p. 59] He continues; “These intuitions are thought through the understanding, and from the understanding there arise concepts.” [Kant, 1787/81, B33,34/A19,20 / Weigelt, 2007, p. 59]

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\(^6\) Harman renames the intentional object the sensual object to avoid ambiguity as he points out “many philosophers have used intentionality to refer to the object lying outside the mental field.” Harman, G. (2011) “The Road to Objects”, continent.3.1, p. 173.
Whole Representations

The whole representation of an object is collected as much as possible. Any one conceptualisation of that object is suspended allowing the role of intuition and sensibility to have a more supportive ongoing role. Actual intentional representations of objects given by intuition, with characteristics outside a conscious understanding, gather in the design space. This allows the potential to explore the object intuitively in the design process and involve parts of the object that are outside conscious understanding. It embeds ‘weak meaning’ in the design process as outlined in chapter 2.

Representations of objects are captured with as full a range of information as our sensibility allows. We develop this ability in practice to ensure an accurate recording is captured in our oral memory. We have observed this in the music case studies. Conceptualising the object can then be done from multiple perspectives rather than being focused on a single conceptual representation. We also rely on the cultural landscape to broaden our understanding by reminding us of the multiple representations possible for that type of thing. We will see the re-iterative nature of these evolving adumbrations in the design process in chapter 4. Objects are retained in memory so that we might have lifelong relationships with them.

All representations are given to us by our sensibility and it is important to develop this. This is evident in the musical case studies where more colour is experienced as the ear develops. The anthropological field of practice develops our sensibility in the cultural landscape, material culture etc. as it builds over time.

As we conceptualise representations given by intuition we develop conscious and subconscious understanding. Conscious understanding clearly builds in the logical parts of the mind. Subconscious levels might be described as the ‘feel’ of the object. An experience of the actual object is important so that we might conceptualise them on these multiple levels of consciousness. The subconscious characteristics are often lost in notational representations where a predominantly conscious conceptualisation is all that is possible. This is the significant advantage of oral culture seen in chapter 2. It gives us the thing itself, the actual performance rather than a representation. It prevents the loss of intuited subconscious information that can be an important wellspring in new work.

I seek to develop a similar process in architecture. A process that explores ideas through actual objects, either in cultural context or architectural history, rather than in extended theorising. In other words we think through material objects in the same way as we think through tunes in an oral musical culture. This doesn’t mean that I need to have a collection of objects to hand, rather it refers to a process of thinking through the objects of culture. I use the term an ‘oral’ architecture to describe this process.

7 Until now ‘intentional representations of objects’ have been described here simply ‘objects’. I think it is helpful to be more precise but will return now to the shorthand. Except where otherwise noted ‘objects’ will of course mean intentional representations of objects from the ‘blooming buzzing confusion’ to reuse William James’ memorable description.
Conceptualising Objects / Meaning

As the design process evolves the collected objects are conceptualised in different ways. A symbolising process occurs here. I think about them as certain types of objects and, as a consequence, meanings come into view. I begin to think of the cultural role of that type of object, its relationships in context, its ideal character. A later research study, 'The Gutter Book,'\(^8\) is a good example of this symbolisation process.

This symbolisation process does not only occur in logical or discursive reasoning but happens across multiple layers of consciousness as Langer succinctly outlines; “Wherever a symbol operates, there is a meaning, and conversely, different classes of experience (reason, intuition, appreciation) correspond to different types of symbolic mediation. No symbol is exempt from the office of logical formulation, of conceptualising what it conveys; however simple its import, or however great, this import is a meaning, and therefore an element for understanding... It brings within the compass of reason much that has been traditionally relegated to ‘emotion,’ or to that crepuscular depth of the mind where ‘intuitions’ are supposed to be born’ [Langer, 1957, p. 97] Methods are developed to reinforce these symbolic processes in order to understand the conscious and subconscious meanings in objects. Some are easy to identify and some are very tricky. The associative and compositional sets establish the ground from which they might be understood.

Categories of meaning in music were outlined in chapter 2. There were three categories outlined; cultural, compositional and presentational meaning. As we symbolise the objects collected in the anthropological process, similar categories of meaning are recognised in architectural practice. Associative sets develop our understanding of cultural meanings that have evolved as a consequence of climate, landscape or society. Differences associated with place, time or event, on sacred, archetypal beliefs become apparent. Compositional sets explore the potential for collected objects in compositional arrangements, to evidence meaning based on abstract arrangement of ideas, forms and principles with hypothetical and evident meaning as outlined in music. Weaker, more obscure meanings can be recognised and reinforced by association with other objects or compositional counterpoint. Presentational symbolism or the ‘art symbol,’ as outlined by Reichling\(^9\) is important. Collecting the whole object is fundamental to the design process. This allows us to transplant the presentational meaning, the character and expressive nature of objects, into the design process.

The ‘transcendental sphere’ shows the ambition to make a new compositional object that has its own presentational meaning as a whole object, its own character and expressive quality. This presentational meaning can exist outside our conscious understanding but remain very present in intuitive, expressive realm. It is captured in the diagram.

\(^8\) See Chapter 5.

\(^9\) See Chapter 2 pg 66.
Idealisation and Contextualisation

A symbolic process of idealisation and contextualisation informs evident and hypothetical meaning structures. We symbolise ideal versions of actual objects (idealisation) and we symbolise actual objects based on relationships to other objects in composition or in culture (contextualisation). In idealisation we abstract objects upwards to a pure or transcendental nature. It allows for striving in improvisation and development of objects. This is particularly evident in the Tommie Potts’ case study and in his lifelong search for the “unbroken music of heaven.” [Ó Súilleabháin, 1996, p. 176] For Whitehead these are ‘Eternal Objects’ and are formed by actual experience. As Shaviro points out “Universals, or “things which are eternal,” can and must be abstracted from “things which are temporal”[40]” [Shaviro, 1993, p. 18] Music is often marked with the melancholy associated with striving towards its ideal form. In contextualisation we symbolise objects based on relationships with the other objects. For example, if a wooden stick is attached to the head of an axe it is a handle, without the head of the axe it can be many other things. These relationships are important in the evolving compositional structures because they lead to the constant reconceptualisation of objects within the design process. This is contextualisation is also informed by our cultural perception of objects.

These two perspectives are important to creative process. They counterbalance each other, idealisation pushing against contextualisation and vice versa. This tension is vital to the design process. Out of this tension, born from ambition, objects evolve character and establish patterns of meaning in the compositional space of the project.

Scales of Objects

Objects exist at a variety of ascending and descending scales of objects. We move from the large scale of landscape to the middle scales of buildings and to their constituent details. As we descend and ascend these scales various different meanings and characteristics become visible. Perception of the scales of objects has a bottom and top horizon line as we have seen in chapter 2.[10]

In compositional objects, patterns of compositional meaning collect and assemble constituent objects through every scale of object. Relationships with the associative sets occur at every scale. The compositional patterns move horizontally between the constituent objects of the same scale and vertically through the scales of objects. Therefore, meaning can move freely from the tiniest scale of detail up to the largest scale of landscape. We ascend and descent through the scales of objects in the interior space of composition.

As the design project progresses, the collection process works at ever more detailed scales. Each development continues to change the patterns of meaning in the total composition due to the functionally interdependent nature of the constituent objects. Compositional patterns are continually reviewed upwards and downwards through these multiple scales of objects and eventually form the overall emergent character.

All objects develop distinct emergent properties at the multiple scales of object. Constituent objects continue to co-exist, at all scales in the patterns of composition, with the emergent whole. This is clear in the musical examples in chapter 2 where tunes can be broken into constituent parts, reshaped, developed and improvised.
3.3 Associative & Compositional Sets

Associative Sets

The collection of objects from cultural landscapes and traditions and the exploration of these in associative sets is the core of the anthropological process in architecture. Objects in the anthropological field\(^1\) are explored through associative sets with context, other cultures, similar objects etc. This is typical of the anthropological method of text and context. Henry Glassie describes how objects are read in context where “… the other objects in the sensate ambit… aid interpretation when the object, having been seen, is taken into the mind and given significance through association.” [Glassie, 1999, p. 61] He also describes how objects are read against similar objects, “the text is located in a set with other texts that belong to the same time and place, that can be understood as products of one process of composition, manifestations in the same culture… The text is broken down, all the texts are broken down into their parts, and what varies among them is separated from what does not vary. Then, the variable and the invariant are structured together into a single principled statement that defines the set as a system enclosed by rules of transformation. The system, a kind of frame, becomes a theory of composition, an account of the process employed in designing the integrated range of forms that stand before us.” [Glassie, 1999, p. 61] The process of observing the collected objects in the design field through associative sets shares much in common with this elegant description. We have observed similar methods in music in chapter 2.\(^2\)

This process of working with associative sets integrates a core ambition in practice; to explore cultural tradition by bringing a cultural and historical landscape of objects into focus. It is through these objects as artefacts that we can explore our psychic structures, our culture and our shared humanity. Through this anthropological process, or conversation I seek to strengthen context as otherwise we are placeless, timeless and we have nothing to say or share. As Glassie outlines “The act of association is the key to our work. The associations might arise from culture, assimilating the object to our needs, confirming our right of ownership. Or they might be gathered out of diverse categories of evidence in order to reconstruct the conceptual context, making the object into a creation by another person to whom we decently grant the right to be like us in humanity and unlike us in culture” [Glassie, 1999, p. 47]

As we learn about our cultural objects and their contexts we learn how to co-exist with them, to build on their characteristics. We learn that categorisation of contemporary or traditional is not really important. We learn to see time, as Glassie outlines; “as an expanding accumulation that permits the coexistence of the old and the new in the Japanese manner. Or […] as a series of recursions, of returns to propriety through the imitation of refined old models in the manner of confucian China.” [Glassie, 1999, p. 61]

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\(^1\) Anthropological field is the repository field of a design or musical project.

\(^2\) Cultural Meaning, Chapter 2 p. 71.
Coppenagh Design Process Summary

The Coppenagh Design Process Summary drawing tests these observations in an actual project, a new house at Coppenagh. Objects, and connections to the associative and compositional sets, are mapped as they are collected into the anthropological field.

Elements that are considered relevant to the project and the physical, societal and cultural context form connections to the associative set in two separate categories. One category includes actual objects, artefacts or cultural forms such as gable, chimney, eaves, plinth, column or temple. The second category includes abstract conceptualisations or qualities such as geometry, threshold, roof, fireplace, lightness, heaviness etc. We can see the different objects, indicated by colour, establishing themselves in relation to both these fields in the associative sets. The categories are not well defined in this early research drawing but it is a vital clue to the development of object and syntax that will become more apparent in the subsequent research. This was an important clue in the early research.

The diagram shows how I conceptualise objects in the anthropological field. The objects are viewed as some type of thing so that we can think about them and compare them to other objects. Conceptualisation is assisted in a number of ways, by naming objects, registering a material quality, identifying geometry etc. This process of symbolisation allows meaning and understanding to evolve in the compositional structures of the project. It helps guide the nature of the relationships that evolve in the composition. It allows us to explore the presentational meaning or character\(^\text{13}\) of those objects, how they have evolved in history, in local and global culture. This allows cultural meaning to evolve from representations across cultures and the particularities of the actual context of the project.

Through this process we assimilate the ideas and characteristics of the artefacts of the cultural landscape. Collecting objects into associative sets help reveal meanings in these objects that might be conscious, subconscious or intuitive. These meanings form the basic tenet for improvisation and development and directs a design process that explores continuities in landscape and tradition rather than the naive reproduction of cultural tropes.

\(^{13}\) See Chapter 2, Presentational Meaning & Character p. 88.
Fig 3.7: Early Design Stage
Process Drawing for house at Coppenagh

COPPENAGH DESIGN PROCESS SUMMARY

3.3 General Theory of Process - Architecture
Compositional Sets

In compositional sets we begin developing relationships between objects based on compositional, cultural and presentational meaning. This leads the design process. Objects come into, and move out of, the anthropological field based on their potential in the evolving compositional patterns. Strategies emerge that establish the objects in patterns of relationships. These in turn affect the objects, developing them further to suit the composition. This leads to a process of improvisation and development that will be explored in chapter 5. A continual tension is established between the compositional and associative sets as the relationships in the compositional space of the project evolves.

These functionally interdependent compositional relationships, similar to those we have seen in music, reflect a “postulation of a world as a seamless web of reciprocal action, or as an integrated totality of functional interdependencies, or as a block of unlimited universal interconnections” [DeLanda, 2006, p. 19] In chapter 4 we will explore the development of these compositional relationships in the design process through ‘collecting and assembling objects.’

These compositional strategies work through all the scales of objects from the large objects of landscape down to the smallest perceptual detail. A change in one single element ripples through the whole compositional pattern of meaning, outwards into landscape and inwards into the compositional form. The patterns of relationships within the composition are changed at every level with each adaptation.

The objects in the conceptual space disappear and re-emerge, mutate and develop based on an ever changing compositional relationships. This continues until strong forces within the

compositional structure begin to hold constituent objects in new positions. Eventually a new compositional whole emerges based on the strength of the compositional forces. Alternatively the design process re-circulates based on inadequate compositional forces between the constituent objects or inadequate emergent character in the compositional object.
New Compositional Whole

The leading ambition for these compositional sets is to establish a simple set of relationships between the compositional elements that leads to a new singular emergent character. I look for compositional strategies that establish simple strategies and can provide harmonic balance between all objects while also searching for a new single compositional object or assemblage.  

An emergent character is important to the project. It binds the patterns of meaning into a single entity that speaks outwards into the cultural landscape and can position itself in that compositional cultural landscape. The compositional relationships are important in the interior of the new compositional object. The three dimensionality of the interior space of the composition becomes evident in the real space of the project. Physical objects collected in the design process establish meta-physical relationships with landscape in light, sound, climate and spatial distance or syntactical relationships with other objects. Cultural relationships integrate into existing cultural meanings and societal tendencies, daily rituals and the social patterns of landscape. When in a harmonic balance these relationships offer a point of stasis or quiet in landscape; moments of silence in the noise of cultural landscape from where you can see from the landscape continually unfold. This is similar to music where we can shape noise towards harmonic balance. 

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Assemblage is a term derived from Assemblage Theory. The word object used to describe new compositional objects is problematic as it suggests a fusing of the constituent objects in the new emergent character. This is not the case as compositional objects allow a continual process of unfolding and re-assembling in the learning and improvising process. We have seen this in the previous musical case studies. This will be outlined in more depth in chapter 6.
3.4 Further Examination of Meaning and Syntax in Compositional Processes

Hypothetical, Evident and Determinate Meaning

As outlined in chapter 2, compositional meanings can be identified in patterns of hypothetical and evident meaning. It is worth looking at this in more detail. "Hypothetical Meanings, Evident Meanings and Determinate Meanings" [Meyer, 1961, p. 38] apparent in music are again evident in this process. An object establishes a range of possible consequences that are envisaged or expected. Direct relationships, 'evident meanings', are entered into that follow from the stimulus object in the overall functional interdependency. "Hypothetical meanings" remain apparent in the overall structure, those that were possible but remain un-enacted.

The diagram explained in chapter 2 offers us a glimpse at the spatial structures of compositional meaning. Evident meaning and its hypothetical shadow co-exist and build determinate meaning in the new compositional assemblage. This relationships of meaning between the constituent objects emphasises an inward looking aesthetic, a compositional aesthetic born of its own terms and meanings, like the intra-musicality of music.

The ideal object plays a role in compositional structures. As we develop and mold constituent objects to form new compositional relationships we note the involvement of their own ideal natures in evident and hypothetical meanings. Again Shaviro points out with regard to Whitehead; "Eternal objects involve in their own natures indecision and indetermination [Whitehead 1929/1978, p. 29]; they always imply alternatives, contingencies, situations that could have been otherwise. This patch of wall is yellow but it might have been blue. This means that their role is essentially passive. An eternal object is always a potentiality for actual entities; but in itself, as conceptually felt, it is neutral as to the fact of its physical ingestion in any particular actual entity of the temporal world. You might say that yellowness in itself, understood as a pure potentiality, is utterly indifferent to the actual yellow colour of this particular patch of wall." [Shaviro, 1993, p. 16]

Each object has multiple possible relationships that it can enter meaningfully in any culture. We gain some understanding of this in the anthropological field. As we break down objects we break open the locked relationships in the object. Evident and hypothetical meanings become live again, full of potential in the new compositional assemblage. As the new composition emerges in the design process objects become locked into the new relationships and evident meanings are formed again from the hypothetical options.

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15 Compositional Structure, Chapter 2 p. 75.
Syntax

These patterns of hypothetical and evident meaning influence the syntactical patterns in the compositional object. As we have seen\textsuperscript{16} objects tend towards fixed connotations in culture. A chimney, a gutter or a column all mean certain things. Through the process of exploring existing compositional meanings we begin to understand how these objects are ordered in relationships in culture. We begin to understand that the rules of syntax also exist independently in culture as we saw in music\textsuperscript{17} and we can explore them in compositional development.

Syntax can be explored in associative sets as we have seen in the Coppenagh study. New compositions can be developed sympathetically or in contrast to existing syntactical structures of the cultural tradition. Syntax may be altered or re-invented without changing the constituent objects in the compositional relationships. We can permit ourselves to use the most ordinary objects of culture and recast them in diverse syntactical relationships. The ‘order’ of relationships between objects in architecture can be manipulated. For example, if a stone step or footing is conceived as a plinth it will have connotations when placed with a wall and roof according to the rules of architecture. If the same step or footing is conceived as a ledge it will have a fully different set of connotations in that order. The same object can be read in multiple ways and similarly ordered in multiple ways. The aim is not to be novel but rather to find balance in the interior space of composition in the simplest possible way.

Over time each project develops an ideal syntax of relationships, its own ‘order.’ This implementation of this order is often the most important thing to watch in the construction process. We can accept tolerance in the physical reality of objects, their robustness, their character born of material imperfection. Syntax, on the other hand, must always be clearly expressed.

Landscape and culture is a part of this balance in the relationships between objects. As objects relate to each other they equally relate to objects in culture and landscape at all scales of objects. In this way landscape and culture is brought into the interior world of composition through syntax.

The role of objects and syntax in architectural composition offer huge scope for further research. I identify them here as important aspects of my creative practice and point broadly to their roles. Future research can, and should, look at each of these in more detail to understand their very interesting complexities in more detail.

\textsuperscript{16} Cultural, Compositional and Presentational Meaning, Chapter 2 p. 64.
\textsuperscript{17} Compositional Meaning, Chapter 2 p. 71.
3.5 Conclusion

Leon’s Drawing

A reflection of the anthropological process and associated drawings was carried out in conversation with Leon van Schaik\textsuperscript{18} and is summarised in his drawing. It is an elegant summary, demonstrating the process of collecting objects on a more apparent anthropological field, until the moment or recognition emerges. This moment of recognition starts an ordering process between the two perspectives of the associational set and the compositional set until the newly formed object emerges.

Leon also asked two questions. What is the attractor and what is silence or the interior compositional world. The answer to this is the emergent presentational character of the new object and harmonic compositional balance that moves out of noise. We have already touched on these. They will become evident in the research and are fundamental ambitions in practice.

\textsuperscript{18} Meeting with Leon van Schaik, Dublin, November 2014.
Deficiencies

Although this was an important development in the research there were a number of deficiencies or omissions which were observed through this drawing process and a significant number of new questions about how these processes work. These brought about the middle stage of research. Here I test and further observations made in these process drawings.

One of these observations is that the associative set is not artificially constructed in the design process as is suggested in the drawing. I do not categorise influences in some carefully constructed catalogue. It is a freely intuited set of associations in place, context or culture. This evolves as a natural process in the cultural context and through my own personal interests. In other words the associative set is a set of cultural and personal associations over time. We will see this outlined more clearly in Chapter 6.  

Also the relationships formed in the compositional set suggests an organisation of compositional and cultural meanings into a tightly knit, perfectly calculated, singular compositional order. In reality it is much looser, more intuitive than is indicated allowing for less formal relationships.

Critique of Early Drawing

These early drawings have been a very helpful model, mapping out main processes and interests in practice. It identified areas for further study such as the role of objects, associative and compositional structures in the design process, the development of new objects, or assemblages, and the relationship of the compositional process to context. However the drawings do not capture the actual nature of the design process; its broad compositional landscape; the instinctual processes used in collecting and assembling objects and the ideas and meanings that they introduce. As I turned to the next area of research I sought to test these processes in design practice and music, to explore observations and nuance in the real design practices.

Again I recognise the value of this drawing or mapping process enabling the identification of previously unseen techniques used in the creative process. It intuitively evidences creative processes so central to creative practice that they are difficult to see. By making physical drawings, or drawing out, we again make objects. It is through these objects that I reflect on the legitimacy of the observations. Here we can see a form of intentionality at work, as Graham Harman has pointed out; mental acts directed towards an object or “on objects lying before the mind.” [Harman, The Road to Objects, 2011, p. 174] Through this objectification of a process we can direct

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19 See Chapter 6 p. 244

20 See Chapter 1, Early Research Methodology and Observations.
our attention towards the object or “intend” it as Harman says. [Harman, The Quadruple Object, 2011, p. 21] I can stabilise parts of an intuited object and examine it repeatedly. We relinquish aspects that do not hold true and eventually build a truthful model from the subjective experience of intentionality. The drawing, formed by more intuitive layers of consciousness than logical thought alone, becomes an object or lens through which I can continue to intend the nature of the creative process. Through this process of critical reflection I will develop many of the observations outlined here in chapter 6.

Conclusion

The development of these drawings allowed observations of the correlation between process used in oral music practice and architecture. I understood that I had made a significant shift in the research and was beginning to explain aspects of the design process that were similar to music practice. This will be more clearly evidenced in the next stage of the research. Jo Van Den Berghe\(^{21}\) described this process as taking place separately in ‘two rooms,’ music and architecture. It is not necessary to directly map one process to the other in mathematical precision. It is adequate that we simply and precisely explain the processes in both creative practices and allow the similarities to be observed.

So, I move into a deeper shift in the research. Chapter 4 will explore the processes that lead to these compositional assemblies in the architecture and in music; ‘collecting and assembling objects.’ Chapter 5 will introduce research that explores ‘improvisation and development’ of objects.

\(^{21}\) Jo Van Den Berghe PRS3 review, Barcelona, Nov 2014.
Collecting and Assembling Objects
Pre Introduction

This research explores processes of ‘collecting and assembling objects’ used across creative practice. The research here is in two stages. In the first three sections examine architectural practice. I examine primary source material and use this to observe the processes actually happening in practice. The last section centres around a recording project, a duet CD I released in 2015 with harmonica player Mick Kinsella.

Introduction

The following case studies look at ‘collecting and assembling objects’ in architecture. This process generally occurs at the early and middle stages of the design process, typically before I begin developing construction information. It establishes the general compositional character of the project. It is the most intuitive and difficult section of the design process.

This research concentrated on two projects in development during the research so that information could be collected as the design process evolved. The two projects are Coppenagh and Kimmage. The first project was a low budget house in a rural location which allowed us to examine process in landscape. The second was a house in a brownfield site in Dublin. This would allow us to explore the contextual influence of landscape in the differences between the two.
4.1 Design Process Landscape Maps

Methodology and General Research Observations

Categories of ‘objects’ and ‘spatial composition’ were defined in the earlier research. The role of the anthropological process was outlined. Cultural and compositional meaning in objects was explored through the lenses of the associative and compositional sets. The research here would test these observations and explore the real nature of these processes in creative practice.

During the design process I collected everything - all sketches, hardline drawings, models, references, exploration techniques. A significant catalogue of sketch drawings evolved during this time and was clearly the most central process to the creative process. It became evident that these sketches were the central spine of thinking through the project. I followed this lead in the mapping methodology and I organised these sketches along their timeline. This allowed us to collect the information as we went and see any repeating patterns within this timeline. Supporting objects that were influential to the project such as references, models and hardline drawings could then be positioned on the timeline as they influenced the development.

Once the mapping was done I was able to analyse the following areas:

• The collection of objects from communities of practice, from landscape and from personal fascinations.
• The influence of objects on the design process and their development in the process.
• The compositional and cultural patterns; the relationships between objects and to culture; associative and compositional sets.
• The emergence of a new piece of work; a new assemblage; a new compositional space.

The sketches were examined from the perspective of ‘objects’ and ‘space of composition’ based on the earlier research findings. This is categorised in the design landscape drawings. Analysis or exploration of the nature of an ‘object’ was organised on the top line. Patterns of relationships or ‘space of composition’ were represented on the bottom line.

Fig 4.1: Excerpt showing mapping methodology for Design Process Landscape Maps

1 See Chapter 1 p. 44
2 Van Den Bergh, Jo, Cian Deegan and Alice Casey PRS Review, Barcelona, Nov 14.
Types of objects can be clearly identified and tracked across the design process. As the design evolves we can see their development in the process. These are highlighted in the drawings with coloured circles and tracked across the sketches. Objects, such as references, that are collected into the design process and influence it, are positioned at the appropriate point on the timeline. It is clear that objects, from landscape of architectural culture, are continually collected into the process. Models and drawings are located to correspond with their evolution in the process.

Techniques of spatial or compositional analysis are highlighted on the bottom line. Each colour represents a different mode of development, like plan, section etc. Objects from culture that influence the spatial thinking are included in the appropriate locations on the timeline. It is immediately apparent that these ‘spatial references’ are present at the beginning of the project as a set of spatial ambitions. These early ambitions are in response to initial observations in landscape. They are recorded in an instant, probably based on the first site visit. The spatial ambitions also represent a set of concerns in practice as we see similar ambitions across other projects. This suggests a subjective ‘interior space of composition,’ a spatiality that evolves in the patterns of compositional relationships in the mind, like the interiority of music and perhaps subjective physical space. These will eventually emerge, to a degree, in the real spaces of the building.

Collecting and Assembling Objects

Representations of objects are collected into the design process from physical and cultural landscapes with as much of their complete phenomena intact as possible. They are collected based on conscious and subconscious characteristics with intuition playing an important role and allowed to float in the subjective design space. A process of symbolisation begins and I start thinking about them as types of roofs, gables, chimneys etc. and what they might mean in culture and landscape. I symbolise towards idealised forms (idealisation) and in the various contextual and compositional relationships (contextualisation). Characters and adumbrations emerge as they are placed in different associative and compositional relationships. Objects are collected, retained or eliminated based on their potential in compositional patterns of the evolving design process.

Spatial or compositional patterns develop between objects based on compositional, cultural and presentational meaning. Diagrammatic plans and sections are used with an emphasis on compositional pattern rather than on plan and section as measure; how constituent objects can be organised in patterns of relationships rather than the distances between them. They look for ways that constituent objects can be revealed or foregrounded. Compositional strategies are sought with an emergent character and a balanced compositional interior.

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3 See Intuition and Sensibility, Introductory Principles, Chapter 3 p. 107
4 See Idealisation and Contextualisation, Introductory Principles, Chapter 3 p. 107
5 Husserl’s calls Abschattung or Adumbration as we saw in Chapter 3.
Building Compositional Patterns

Objects initiate activity in the spatial line and vice versa. Sketching moves quickly across objects and compositional arrangements, not relying on singular patterns but building patterns across them. The activity jumps from the top line to the bottom line. Potential emerges for ordinary meaning to occur. Compositional strategies emerge in the process forming these relationships. This is predominantly articulated in sketch plans and sections.

This process of moving between objects and spatial relationships is very evident in the mapping and tells us a lot. We can see stops in activity, disappointments, dissatisfaction with outcomes and a return to the objects. Towards the end of the process we can see the activity align with design conclusions evident in the objects and compositional patterns that balance them. The number of objects has reduced to a small number of important ones in strong patterns of relationships. These will develop in the subsequent stages of the project. In other words, the game is set up.

Community of Practice

The influence of the communities of practice (CoP) discussed in chapter 1 is evident. Through their objects or work, communities of practice actually exist in the ‘associative set’ and offer insight, consciously or intuitively. In some instances their actual objects are tested in the design process to see how they might evolve in certain compositional and improvisation conditions or relationships. The main contributors to my ‘ideal’ CoP are architects who have strong links with a tradition of architecture based on artefact. This is natural as through the CoP I can explore continuities in the tradition of architecture, trace roots down through the sedimentary rock of our cultural history.

Objects, or references, from the CoP are positioned in the design space and help embed insight consciously and subconsciously into the process. This is the core of what I have described as ‘oral’ architecture. They are identified and organised here in the appropriate category (object or spatial) along the timeline. This identifying and organising of references allows us to see and map the real relationship to a project for the first time.

Ordinary meanings associated with compositional relationships (functional interdependencies), cultural associations and presentational meaning as outlined in Chapter 2.
The Sketching Process

A significant finding in this part of the research is the role played by the sketching process. Design development sketches form the central spine of thought of the design process. This is an important discovery as previously sketches were not properly valued or archived. Sketching is very fast, messy and fluid as I move quickly across multiple patterns and objects in the design process. We are not looking to craft one single idea with accurate pictorial representations, we are seeking multiple layers of interlinking compositional strategies. The sketches themselves therefore are miniatures that allow us to look at an object or a relationship in multiple ways based on the evolving composition. They usually look at particularities, moments of relationship. They move quickly, each new one responding to the last, to see how multiple potential relationships might evolve based on the objects and their potentialities. Models and hardline drawings anchor this fluid sketching process and test certain relationships or design conclusions that seemed particularly appropriate.

It is a process of exploring compositional and syntactical ideas and their consequences. It is a fast way of forming and examining relationships based on the ideas in the project. Many of these relationships and ideas are discarded immediately through sketching. The examination of the sketches revealed a process that was intuitive, ambiguous, led by instinct rather than being conceptually driven in a definite way. Intuited relationships or objects become vaguely apparent in the sketching. They continue across the design process until the conceptual relationships unlock in the project with consequences across all scales of objects. The sketching process was a way of working through these intuitions towards the ambitions of the project.

The sketch concentrates my thought in moments of conceptualisation. It is a form of thinking out loud, a shorthand. It adds another layer to the conceptualisation process through the thinking hand. Understanding can evolve consciously and intuitively. Sketching and fiddling are both “from the wrist” as Jo Van Den Berghe has pointed out and draw on intuitions that exist more readily in the hand than in the thinking brain.

Through these simple sketches I can make subconscious thinking more conscious. This intentionality is a cyclical process that first creates the object and then reflects on it as an object. For this communication to occur they must share, at least in part, some realm. These sketches are a living record of the design process at its most creative. A similar sketching process occurs in music where sketches of tunes are captured with the fiddle in audio recordings. Like the architectural sketches, the audio sketch is equally intuitive and diagrammatic.

Fig 4.2: Sketches from Coppenaghi Project

7 Jo Van Den Berghe, In Conversation, PRS 4, Ghent, April 2015.
The Design Landscape Map

This research, derived from primary source material in practice, is valuable. The sketches are identified as an important source of thinking in our practice. It is difficult to understand them and cut through the ranging nature of their thought. However I do so with as much accuracy as possible, recording the process in the flux of current projects. It is very revealing and illustrates the real nature of my practice, the evolution of patterns, the continuities in the culture and landscape. I will develop this further in later summary landscape drawings that begin to capture the pattern of relationships in the assemblages.

The following drawings are represented at a small scale within the confines of this document. Although the detail of the sketches are not fully visible at this scale it still gives a general summary of the mapping process.
Fig 4.3: Koppenagh Design
Process Landscape Maps
[Following Pages]
Images used in Coppenagh Summary Drawing

Beat Rothen, House at 8 Unostrasse Images (Rothen 1997)
Mies van der Rohe, House Plan (Gustavo 2009, p.171)
Mies van der Rohe, House Photo (Gustavo 2009, p.171)
Mies van der Rohe, House Image (MoMA 2009)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Carneiro de Melo Photo (Coloivo 2005, p.181)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Avelino Duarte Photo (Coloivo 2005, p.129)
Fernando Távora, Summer House Photo (Távora 1993, p.80)
Walter Pichler, House for the Birds Photo (Pichler 1997, p.106)
Walter Pichler, Chapel for the Great Cross Drawings (Pichler 1997, p.93)
Walter Pichler, Clay House for the Couples Photo (Pichler 1997, p.155)
Walter Pichler, House Photo (Tripamer 1997, p.61)
Edinburgh Roofs, Photo (Donaghy, unpublished)
Toshima House and Outbuildings, Photo (Itch 1972, fig.80)
Gassho-style Farmhouse, Photo (Itch 1972, fig. 69)
ShoIda House Segai Eaves Structure Photo (Itch 1972, fig. 81)
Geoffrey Bawa, Hen House and Art Gallery Photo (Futagawa 2010, p.67)
Peter Celsing, Harlanda Church West Facade Photo (Galli 1996, p.91)
Peter Celsing, Harlanda Church North Photo (Galli 1996, p.85)
Kazuo Shinohara, Casa Yamashiro Photo (Ueda 2011, p.33)
Kazuo Shinohara, Casa Norte and Casa South Photo (Ueda 2011, p.70)
Kazuo Shinohara, Elevations (Gili 2011, p.69)
Kazuo Shinohara, House in White Photo (Ueda 2011, p.77)
Kazuo Shinohara, Tanikawa House Photo (Ueda 2011, p.135)
Joze Plecnik, Plecnik’s House Trovo Photo (MGML, n.d.)
Sigurd Lewerentz, Workers Cottage (Lewerentz, Stubelius 2015, p.23)
Sigurd Lewerentz, Petri Church Entrance Photo (Snogeröd 2015, p.165)
Sigurd Lewerentz, Petri Church West Facade Photo (Snogeröd 2015, p.168)
Stone Walled Farm Building Troutbeck Photo (Crawley 2011, p.147)
Alvar Aalto, Maison Carré Photo (Jetsonen 2012, p.161)
Gunnar Asplund, Villa Snelman Elevation (Asplund 1985, p.25)
Henry Glassie, Derry Home Photo (Glassie 2000, p.13)
Henry Glassie, Down Farmstead Photo (Glassie 2000, p.101)
Ulrich Ruckriem, Red Barn Photo (Clonegal Barn, 2005)
Ulrich Ruckriem, Architectural Model Photo (Hueckvriem, n.d.)
Dinell Johansson, Hamra Project Photo (Hamra, n.d.)
Heideggers Hut, Photo (Heidegger’s Hut, n.d.)
Robert Venturi, Venturi House Photo (Vanna Venturi House, n.d.)
Nikolaus Benefeld, House Poeten (HausPoeten, n.d.)
Henz Benefeld, House Babanek Photo (Blank, n.d.)
Pascal Flammer, Museum Old Armoury Image (Museum Old Armoury, n.d.)
Valerio Olgiati, Plantahof Auditorium Photo (Verme, 2012)
Swedish Summer House, Photo (Olsson, n.d.)
Satoshi Irie, Habuka Mountain Retreat Photo (Koubou, 2013)
Kazunari Sakamoto, Weekend House Photo (Shinkenchiku-sha, 2013)
Wim Wenders, Himmel Uber Berlin Image (Himmel Uber Berlin, n.d.)
Sophie Clements, Eversong, Still from Film (Clements, 2008)
House at Coppenagh
Design Landscape Map - Case Study 1

The first case study examines a project in a rural part of Co. Carlow. The site is a small paddock beside the family home. It is a landscape of small fields, high hedgerows and traditional farmsteads.

References and sketches illustrate the process of collecting objects from the local and broader cultural landscapes. This intuitive collecting process is based on site, on cultural context and personal fascinations. Objects are collected through spatial experience, site visits, photographs, drawings. They contain characteristics derived from landscape, cultural history and materiality. Each object, at whatever scale, is collected whole and in context with its associated meanings intact. Our understanding of them, their cultural and compositional meanings can be developed with anthropological sensitivity.

The initial images collected in the project are of local farm sheds of the area, built with heavy stone walls and light corrugated metal roofs. They represent a loose vernacular of traditional agricultural sheds, outhouses and yards. They form a rich built landscape of diverse order in weak and strong geometries. Low slung eaves hang over long stonewalls that mark the topography of landscape. Yawning interiors are formed from roofs with frayed rusting edges marked by uncaring patches of new sheeting. Proper and improper elevations, hips, chimneys, misshapen verges and gables all bundle together.

These contextual artefacts direct the anthropological process. We begin to extend outwards to other cultural landscapes to explore buildings with similar characteristics, sensibilities, materiality, order or spatial characteristics. Locally, in Ulrich Ruckriem’s shed in Clonegal, an exquisite piece of contemporary architecture born of that vernacular. More broadly, in the carefully hewn shed architecture of Walter Pichler, to the eaves shadows of the Japanese vernacular, to a tight Nordic Classicism, stable but built from the lightness of sheds. Finally, to other buildings with similar qualities, of roof and walls relating to landscape across Britain, Europe and especially Japan. We examine these artefacts in light moves, heavy moves, deep in shadow, out in the grey light, their stone and slate courses, protruding gutters perched on walls, making windows, the nonchalance of a free eaves. The wider anthropological study asks us many significant questions of the cultural context, of the landscape, our sense of interior, our sense of shelter, our sense of light and rain. These different perspectives fuel the potential that objects have in the design field. I see how they might evolve.

The buildings analysed in the process are broken down into a variety of scales of objects as evidenced in the drawings. Gutters, walls, beams, eaves etc. emerge at these various scales. We can observe the cultural and compositional meanings in these objects born of climate, material landscape and culture. As the existing relationships break apart objects are left to take

8 Van Den Berghe, Jo, Cian Deegan and Alice Casey PRS Review, Barcelona, Nov 14.
on a range of new relationships with other objects. Evident and hypothetical meanings in old relationships become more apparent. As new compositional objects, or assemblages, develop these objects are caught in new relationships with new evident and hypothetical meanings formed. These bind these constituent objects into new assemblages with new emergent character.

The constituent objects are improvised, developed and articulated to suit their new compositional relationships, each changing in response to others as the various patterns of relationships evolve. We can see this evolution in the sketches, cycling through various adumbrations. They develop or adapt to the new compositional patterns while maintaining their own character or meaning. Or they are placed in relationships and manipulated to draw out their natural character. This is subsequently developed in the improvisatory process.

The Development of Objects

The meaning or character of objects must be identified for any improvisational development to occur. This sets the principles around which the improvisation occurs. An object is symbolised as that ‘type’ of thing; it becomes a concept of that ‘type’ of thing. Once symbolised, it has meaning associated with whatever that type may be. I can begin to change it, adapt it, improvise within those boundaries. Improvisations can be searching, based on the ideal nature of the object or its real nature which is formed in the earth bound relationships to other things as we have seen in chapter 2. The notes on the mapping clearly evidence the process of symbolising objects. I sketch out particular objects, name them, examine their meanings, their behaviours in that particular condition and search for potential relationships.

This symbolising process is also important to understanding differences that similar types of objects carry in various cultural manifestations. For example a chimney can be a massive stack in one culture and a hole in another. In this way I encounter objects with similarities in meaning or character which often bear no physical resemblance. This allows exploration of improvisatory range. I am building a potential improvisatory landscape as evident in the mapping.

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10 Compositional objects might be more appropriately called assemblages. We have seen in Chapter 3 the deconstruction of the constituent parts of a tune into objects, melodic phrases, cadences and ornamentation. This would not be possible in a fused compositional object. Assemblages, derived from Assemblage Theory [Delaun, 2006] after Deleuze, can have emergent object character and can be broken down further into constituent objects. We will explore this in more depth in Chapter 6.

11 Chapter 2 p. 82.
The naming process is important to symbolisation and is evident on the drawing. By calling something a roof or a chimney we can quickly see the connotations and character against all other roofs, all other chimneys. Denoting can identify long histories and associated connotations. In this way objects are open to endless improvisation provided they retain relationships with the connotations associated with their symbolic form.

The symbol is at the centre of the design process. An object is identified and named as a type of object. Once the object is named connotations arise that allows a range associated conceptions. The trick is to denote objects with appropriate connotations so that meanings derived can help establish new overall assemblages with meanings appropriate to the ambitions of the project. Objects must be selected carefully based on their connotations for the ambitions for the project. For example, a parent would be unlikely to choose a well known girls name for a baby boy, due to its associated connotations. We also saw this in the example of the stone that could act as either a plinth or a ledge in chapter 3.

In classifying types of objects we understand their particular characters. These are highlighted in the drawings with circles of colour, each representing a specific object character. This happens at the various scales of objects. The following table shows objects at the landscape scale and the building scale in this project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objects: Examples of Objects in the Close Landscape Scale</th>
<th>Objects: Examples of Objects in the Building Scale</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tin roof</td>
<td>Satellite portico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long walls</td>
<td>Tin frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freestanding house</td>
<td>Swinging eaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevation as object</td>
<td>Plinth on ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The gable as an object</td>
<td>Mono-pitch object in landscape</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12 Chapter 3 p. 120.
The Development of Compositional Relationships

As we coordinate the objects in new assemblages we see patterns of meanings evolve in compositional relationships. As we have seen, this is not sets of simple A to B relationships but rather functional interdependencies with an associated complexity of pattern tested and tracked in the loose sketching process. This is the beginning of the compositional process. These abstract compositional meanings can be identified in patterns of hypothetical and evident meaning as we saw in chapter 2 and chapter 3. Evident meaning and hypothetical meanings, that continue to register other cultural and compositional meanings, continue to exist in the final project. We enjoy the evident meanings in the face of all the hypothetical ones. Our aesthetic experience is participatory.

The interdependent nature of the compositional patterns can be seen from the relationship between the roof to the wall in this project. A gable is introduced. This is a common cultural form with a range of cultural meanings and relationships. Eaves and verges are drawn and redrawn in a search for relationships that would support a compositional balance and include the interdependent relationships of road, field, hedgerow, roof and wall etc. Eventually the gable is removed and a pattern clicks into place. The relationships are stronger without it, the spatial composition is stronger, as well as the potential for improvisation and cultural resonance. A hipped roof is introduced by extending the eaves and moving the wall into the shadows. The porticoes now emerge nicely separated from the roof with a spatial tension under the eaves. The walls don’t touch the roof but sit in its shadows. These relationships between the wall and the roof develop older cultural significances in the immediate cultural landscape of sheds, and in the broader architectural landscape of the references in the project. A rich anthropological ground opens up. We are also sensitive to the consequences for the compositional meanings of the project as certain relationships are strengthened over others. Eventually the overall compositional structures produce an emergent character and balanced spatial characteristics. The outcome is judged on these characteristics of the compositional object as it exists in the local landscape.

The evolution of the relationships between the objects is evident on the bottom part of the design landscape map. These compositional patterns are easiest to explore, in architecture, through the patterns of section, plan and axonometric drawing as we can see. Also, compositional relationships move through the variety of scales of objects. There are the main compositional relationships of walls, frames, windows, roof, etc. There are also the detailed relationships formed by smaller objects such as eaves, verge, gutter, frame, etc. Furthermore there is the overall relationship to landscape or climate. These relationships continue to evolve until they establish simple patterns across the various scales of objects. For example;

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13 See Objects and Intro to Meaning, Chapter 2 pg 63 / See also Compositional Sets 3.3 Associative and Compositional Sets, Chapter 3 p. 114.
14 See Compositional Structure, 2.4 Compositional Meaning, Chapter 2 p. 75 / See also Hypothetical, Evident and Determinate Meaning, 3.4 Further Examination of Meaning and Syntax in Compositional Process, Chapter 3 p. 119.
the roof extends its eaves to make a waterfall; we live under a roof, between farmyard walls, with porticoes emerging from the shadows and within the hedgerows and topography of landscape.

We can begin to see the main conceptual relationships between things. The objects within the interior conceptual space of the project are ordered by conceptual and cultural meanings. They have been resolved to a relatively small number as we can see from the drawing. They successfully organise the cultural and compositional meanings in the project into a synthesised and emergent whole. Syntactical relationships have been studied in the development of the composition and they clarify into simple patterns to order the relationships between object in the emergence of the real project.

Fig 4.8: Compositional Objects at house at Coppenagh

4.2 Collecting & Assembling Objects
Syntax

Through the relationships between objects a syntax evolves; a metal frame holds roof and eaves in a light external colonnade; eaves and rafter ends hold inverted horizon against the hedgerow; timber box inside the frame; the roof independent; the porticoes within the colonnade standing like soldiers; the internal tree of structure and infill. At a larger scale we see the relationship between the rain house and landscape. At a small order we see the details like the relationship between window and plinth. Their individual object character is amplified through the development of a clear syntax in their particular relationships.

Relationships tell us much about the character of each object and similar relationships can be explored throughout architectural history. Order or syntax allows the character of the object to amplify a relationship to another object. I seek to reduce the number of objects and position them in clear syntactical patterns in order for this to happen. The syntactical patterns then lock the object in a strong assemblage with an overall emergent character. It does this at various scales.

Patterns of composition are sought that organise objects in clear systems of order or syntax. We see these patterns being explored in plan and section on the lower spatial line. Various examples of syntax or order are intuited for the project as seen at its beginning. Light frame, spatial layering, open-ness, closed-ness plasticity of forces etc. are identified as potential properties of the composition in their own right. The sketches also become an exploration of syntax or order as the project evolves. Again the sketches move quickly seeking pattern. As the relationships between objects become apparent, those objects can be manipulated to suit the patterns of syntax. They in turn emerge in greater definition. Like objects, patterns of syntax develop within the compositional order. These patterns exist in culture and can be explored in other artefacts.

Two different types of syntactical relationships are explored in the design process. Firstly, there are connecting relationships; how things meet at the detail level, the tensions and gaps articulating order. Then there are the spatial relationships between objects. A tension between the two types is at work within the process. Some connecting relationships are amplified to become spatial, some spatial relationships are condensed to become connecting. This balance of space and connection is especially important here where the steel frame moves out of the wall to make a spatial colonnade. Also, material and cultural influences are enacted in these relationships. Characteristics in syntax capture the nature of objects in these relationships. They express weight, plasticity, hardness, precision etc. These syntactical relationships are manipulated most in the improvisation and development of objects as we will see in chapter 5.

In summary, two types of relationship are evident here. Connecting relationships establish how things meet at the detail level and spatial relationships between objects establish real inhabitable space from the ‘interior space of the composition.’
### Examples of Syntactical Influences Identified in the Objects Collected into the Design Process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connecting Relationships between Objects:</th>
<th>Spatial Relationships:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material placement</td>
<td>Connecting Relationships between Objects:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eaves - position off ground, off hedges, no gutters - inverted horizon</td>
<td>Layering of landscape, topography, to plains, to fields etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character placement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layering of frames</td>
<td>Layering of envelop, eaves, colonnade, frame, spatial envelope, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonnade and roof</td>
<td>Layering of interiors, porticoes, depth of plan, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance and connection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free standing columns of tin, on base to capital under eaves</td>
<td>Degrees of closeness and openness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance and connection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frames off ground on plinth and base</td>
<td>Combing light</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance and connection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm timber enclosure inside cold metal under cold roof</td>
<td>Building sound - acoustic resonances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance and connection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong frame and light infill</td>
<td>Psychological interiors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance and connection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior frame, open infill and sinking into white</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance and connection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porticoes under eaves, emerging from tin walls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance and connection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corner windows eroding corner of timber envelop and emerging under verges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance and connection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roof like insect wings extending to eaves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance and connection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hip and verge like veins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance and connection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 posts of the bed internal structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The potential for syntactical meaning to move across cultural fields was observed in chapter 2. This can be especially evident in music and architecture where architectural objects are established in similar syntactical relationships to musical ‘objects.’ This is particularly evident in work by Xenakis. We can clearly see syntactical similarities between Metastasis by Xenakis and the Philips Pavilion by Le Corbusier with Xenakis who worked with him at that time. While this example is clear most are not. The patterns of cross-disciplinary syntax are often only intuited especially in categories of weak meaning.

This is how music and architecture relate. Not in the objects but in the ideas of how things are related, syntactical meanings, rhythm, geometric connections, proportion, point and counterpoint, light and dark, moments of relational simplicity and detail. Similar compositional interior spaces with different types of objects caught in their matrices.

Pattern Drawings

We can see these relationships being developed in the sketches to establish the internal logic of the project. Below I will outline notes taken during the research that represent the design thinking in these pattern drawings. They track through the development in the design process landscape maps.

Plan & Section

Plan (green circles) is continually worked across the project as the primary method of ordering relationships eg. thresholds, layers and relationship to light. At the minor scale (intimate or interior world) it develops the 9-square plan, with porticoes and eaves as a deep spatial entity in landscape with multiple layers of interiority. At the major scale (interiors in landscape) it develops the layers of interiority in landscape (ditches and roads etc). Section (pink circles) is the secondary method of ordering relationships. It is particularly important when determining relationships of interiority, light and sound. It is also important for delivering the contrapuntal relationship of closed-ness and open-ness operating in compression and release. It is a significant determiner of object character as it develops the profile in landscape.

Layers

Layers, or the movement into the interior world, are developing throughout the project. This is also evident in the interiority of music and the building of layers.

Boundaries

Boundaries (blue) extend out into landscape. Walls are used to abstract the geometry of the immediate landscape and

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15 See Syntax, 2.4 Compositional Meaning, Chapter 2 p. 75.
stitch into it. They divide the site establishing the principal relationships and the threshold zones. They develop interstitial spaces between landscape and interiors. They help order the immediate landscape in preparation of the interior spaces. They become the codifier of landscape.

Elevations
Elevations exist as objects in their own right in this project (sometimes directly from compositional principles). The early attempts developed proportional systems, remembered columns, depth on facade and the subtle tricks of temples. The development of elevational relationships (purple) through positioning, measure and proportion as shown. These relationships are considered too arbitrary and meaningless in the end, especially in the loose cultural traditions of building and immediate contextual relationships, where proportional presentational relationships were out of place. This is one substantial reason for the elimination of the gable and development of the eaves character. Here the elevations must evolve naturally from the plans, sections and spatial relationships. They are to express the development of the compositional relationships, of measure and interiority. Simple elevations, a measure of elegant logic in the project.
As we move through the spatial line we see the perspective sketches, hardline drawings, models and sound atmospheres evolve. Evaluating these spatial relationships has to do with measure. It is through measure that the final spatial tensions between things are established. These tensions must be balanced in composition to make harmonic or proportional relationships.

Models and hardline drawings evolve to anchor and test this measure and proportion. They test various iterations of objects. Often we are forced to re-enter the process of assembling, of reorganising relationships due to disappointment or unhappiness about the richness of the spatial interior or lack of emergent character. Models and drawings allow us to test this in real measure and to consider the technicalities of building.

The process of model making also introduces new objects. Through these models we gain our first insights into emergent character. They are helpful in reinforcing the design process, adding to the anthropological collection. In these models we guide the process, intuit the emerging character. Over the course of the project they take over from the objects collected in the anthropological processes. It is a perpetual distillation to the oral character of the new project.
Conclusion

Here we see the processes of collecting and assembling the objects of landscape. These objects are collected locally and from across cultures in Europe, Scandinavia and Japan. Similarities can point to the shared cultural values, difference can point to large shifts in the nature of our landscape or cultural psychology. We develop our roof with the insight learned in loose anthropological processes.

New compositional objects evolve through the process with characteristics that are two-fold. On one hand they inherit character from the collected objects. On the other hand they evolve in new compositional structures. Development and evolution are natural consequences for the ‘anthropological’ objects as they enter into new relationships while retaining their character and emotion in the new assemblage. New compositional meanings provide an opportunity for a new aesthetic experience and compositional object to evolve. Each object supporting others, amplifying them and building resonances in compositional patterns.

At this stage of the design process, before we encounter the realities of things, the conceptualised objects within these patterns are vague symbolic forms open to development and improvisation in later design stages. We structure a pattern of composition with potential for compositional meanings, formed out of the abstract possibilities of the symbolised objects, their real and unreal qualities. This pattern of composition is brought forward in the subsequent design stages into the realities of improvising and developing objects.\footnote{See Chapter 5.}

We are striking a balance here. The compositional relationships are strong enough to identify constituent objects and compositional structure but we do not render the constituent objects or relationships in too much detail. The composition offers rich opportunities for improvisation and articulation in later design stages and space is left for these to evolve. We sketch loose forms and retain scope for development. A range of hypothetical meanings, potentialities, are possible in the later development. All such potentialities remain in the final project bristling under the skin of the real object.
4.3 House at Kimmage
Design Landscape Map - Case Study 2

Methodology

The second case study is a House in Kimmage, a brownfield site in a city location in Dublin. This case study sought to confirm previous observations in a different context. It is also a comparative study to test the influence of the rural landscape on my design process.

The same methodology was used. The design sketches were collected and organised in a timeline. Hardline drawings, models and references were located in accordance with their influence or development. Again these were analysed from two perspectives, ‘object’ and ‘spatial composition’ in the project. We see the same processes as follows. The early enthusiasm for the potential compositional space of the project, a house in a garden, which establishes a range of objects and relationships. Patterns of relationships in plan suggest the starting point.

The project is set in an enclosed brownfield site in a semi-suburban, backland, part of Dublin. This landscape is difficult to navigate and results in a longer design process. The cultural and compositional landscape is less broad in terms of topographical, natural, cultural and historical build up; there are less major compositional relationships with topography, sea, bogland etc. ordering the scale of objects. The project develops from an architectural and material language of brick, concrete, colonnade and vaults etc. associated with the light industry character of the landscape. These objects evolve through a long process of design development and improvisation. This is partly due to the absence of a wider cultural landscape and partly due to the difficult nature of the site, the scope of accommodation and the budget.
Fig 4.21: House and Garden Case Studies
Observations from the Design Process Landscape Map

The same design tendencies are evident here. A proposal for an interior landscape, within the existing stone and block walls of the brownfield site, is established. Architectural landscapes are studied to explore how new interior landscapes can be formed. Objects are then collected into this landscape. These build the interior character of the landscape. A contained interior places a limit on the scale of objects that are possible in the project. They exist at the building or garden scale and cannot relate to a larger cultural landscape. This affects the design process.

As before the sketches are the central spine of thought. Once more they construct a landscape around the project. They move quickly across different potential relationships and seek out patterns that can hold them together in the new assemblage. Plans and sections explore how relationships might evolve into space. Models and hardline drawings test measure and proportion.

Architectural communities of practice are much more relevant in this project. Buildings and artefacts from within the CoP are explored, taken up as whole objects and embedded loosely into the design process. They are not consciously conceptualised. They sit in the design space as possible influences on the project, pushing towards certain types of relationships and patterns of composition.

Findings from the last case study are confirmed here. The role of sketches is again remarkably clear reinforcing this earlier discovery. The differences between this study and Coppenagh, outside the normal actual differences in type of project, is in a compositional relationship to landscape. In Coppenagh, the social and cultural landscape goes to the very heart of the project. In this case study, these overarching or large scale sets of relationships are missing. As a consequence it concentrates on the inner compositional structure without developing an overall character that becomes an active participant in a composition cultural landscape.
Development of Objects

The compositional objects collected in the process are at the project scale. They emphasise a robust constructional detailing of garden and farmyard based on the interior character of the site. The boundary wall is reinforced in order to protect the garden reserve. There is less emphasis on an overall character as the relationship with the building will always be intimate. Constituent objects relate to the construction technique, the material character of the site and material preference of the client.

A landscape of objects (cornice, chimney, colonnade, pavilion, elevations) emerges in the development. These are organised in a relatively loose compositional structure. This is unlike past projects in landscape where the patterns of meaning, at the various scales of objects, must come together in the tight contrapuntal form to produce a strong character for a compositional landscape. As a consequence there is less improvisation of the constituent objects. They do not need to evolve to meet the requirements of overall compositional forms. Their evolution is tied more to construction in the detail design stages of the project.

The character of these objects have both feet firmly in the ground of material character. The ideal, abstract forms of geometry and compositional relationships are distant and the imperfect nature of objects is given precedence.

Objects: Examples of Objects in the Building Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brick piers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light vault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collonade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pavillion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig 4.23: House in Kimmage, Section

Fig 4.24: House in Kimmage, Landscape Planometric Drawing 1
The Development of Compositional Relationships

The project prioritises space making in a complex brief and on a difficult site. This is apparent in the sketches with extensive work on spatial composition. As before key ambitions are established early in the project and develop in the design process. Extensive work is done to organise the accommodation. A number of compositional patterns emerge based on key practice interests. Extensive model making and hardline drawings explore measure outside the sketching process.

Examples of Syntactical Influences Identified in the Objects Collected into the Design Process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connecting Relationships between Objects:</th>
<th>Spatial Relationships:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evident materiality (messy concrete, brickwork, heavy joints, little articulation)</td>
<td>Stepped horizon, the development of assemblage in the main composition form - porticos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free character placement - weak relationships from the real nature of artefacts</td>
<td>The articulation of brick and concrete: straight and direct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressive development (relations in materiality)</td>
<td>Column and beam - depth, height and meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonnade and window</td>
<td>Interior to Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manner and window</td>
<td>Weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden and window</td>
<td>Holding light in a garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall and garden wall</td>
<td>Horizon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matt of vaults to garden</td>
<td>Material plasticity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chimney</td>
<td>Measure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is an emphasis on the imperfect nature of made objects. This is evident in the messy nature of constructing, the making hand. The project enjoys the humanity of construction, an acceptance of materiality.

Conclusion

The anthropological and compositional processes are again evident in this project. The tendency towards ‘object’ and the ‘interior of spatial composition’ are visible although the spatial interiority does not extend past the garden walls. Nonetheless is a strong interiority at the larger scales, characterised by the building, vaulted ceiling, layers of depth in the facade, and garden walls. A matrix of objects characters exist but at the smaller detail scale, like a cloister where sculpted heads might emerge from the capitals of columns. These episodes of character are collected into the interior landscape of the project.

Landscape is manufactured by establishing a garden reserve. This is the first layer of interiority. This becomes a repository for a collection of objects that prioritise a study of the real nature of material objects. The compositional strategies are looser than projects in landscape as the project does not need to connect from the molecular structures out into broad scales of landscape. This is the main difference between the two case studies presented here.
The Design Landscape Map

This is important research derived from primary source material in practice. It identifies, through these sketches, an important source of thinking in our practice. It is a difficult task to research and understand these and cut through the ranging nature of their thought. However I do so with accuracy, recording the process, as much as possible, in the flux of current projects. It is very revealing and illustrates the real nature of my practice, the evolution of patterns, the continuities in the culture and landscape. The later summary drawings begin to capture the patterns in the assemblages. To show the building assemblages in patterns of order that resonate into the ground of culture from the collections of objects.

This large drawing is set out in full in the next seven pages.
Fig. 1.1 Kimmage project. Summary drawing. Drawn by Author.
Images used in Kimmage Summary Drawing

Le Corbusier, Maisons Jaoul Axonometric Drawing (Corbusier 2005, p.24)
Le Corbusier, Maisons Jaoul Elevation (Corbusier 2005, p.56)
Le Corbusier, Maisons Jaoul Photo (Corbusier 2005, p.69)
Le Corbusier, Maisons Jaoul Photo (Corbusier 2005, p.85)
Le Corbusier, Maisons Jaoul Section (Corbusier 2005, p.85)
Le Corbusier, Maisons Jaoul Photo (Corbusier 2005, p.108)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Plan (Corbusier 2011, p.12)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Plan (Corbusier 2011, p.12)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Section (Corbusier 2011, p.13)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Section (Corbusier 2011, p.13)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Section (Corbusier 2011, p.13)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Elevations (Corbusier 2011, p.13)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Photo (Futagawa 2011, p.16)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Overall View Photo (Futagawa 2011, p.20/21)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Entrance Photo (Futagawa 2011, p.26)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Garden Photo (Futagawa 2011, p.27)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Verandah Photo (Futagawa 2011, p.28)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Elevations Photo (Futagawa 2011, p.29)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Verandah Photo (Futagawa 2011, p.30/31)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Study Photo (Futagawa 2011, p.32)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Verandah Photo (Futagawa 2011, p.34/35)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Living Room Photo (Futagawa 2011, p.42/43)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Study Photo (Futagawa 2011, p.44)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Wall Detail Photo (Futagawa 2011, p.50)
Le Corbusier, Sarabhai House Terrace Photo (Futagawa 2011, p.51)
Luis Barragan, Antonio Galvez House Photo (Saito 2009, p.166)
Luis Barragan, Eduardo Prieto Lopez House Photo (Saito 2009, p.174/175)
Luis Barragan, Eduardo Prieto Lopez House Photo (Saito 2009, p.176)
Luis Barragan, Eduardo Prieto Lopez House Photo (Saito 2009, p.182)
Luis Barragan, Eduardo Prieto Lopez House Photo (Saito 2009, p.183)
Luis Barragan, Eduardo Prieto Lopez House Photo (Saito 2009, p.184)
Luis Barragan, Eduardo Prieto Lopez House Photo (Saito 2009, p.189)
Luis Barragan, Luis Barragan House Photo (Saito 2009, p.191)
Luis Barragan, Luis Barragan House Photo (Saito 2009, p.196)
Luis Barragan, Luis Barragan House Photo (Saito 2009, p.206)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Avelino Duarte Photo (El Croquis 2000, p.89)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Avelino Duarte Photo (El Croquis 2000, p.89)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Avelino Duarte Elevation (El Croquis 2000, p.91)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Avelino Duarte Elevation (El Croquis 2000, p.91)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Avelino Duarte Plans (El Croquis 2000, p.92)
Alvar Aalto, Aalto House Photo (Jetsonen 2012, p.64)
Alvar Aalto, Villa Mairea Living Room Photo (Jetsonen 2012, p.100)
Alvar Aalto, Villa Mairea Library Photo (Jetsonen 2012, p.101)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Roche Rebeiro Plan (Molteni 2004, p.29)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Ferreira da Costa Drawings (Molteni 2004, p.39)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Alves Costa Sketch (Molteni 2004, p.49)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Manuel Magalhaes Photo (Molteni 2004, p.66)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Maria Margarida Photo (Molteni 2004, p.111)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Maria Margarida Photo (Molteni 2004, p.113)
Alvaro Siza, Quinta de Santo Oviedo Photo (Molteni 2004, p.162)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Alves Costa Photo (Molteni 2004, p.189)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Maria Margarida Photo (Molteni 2004, p.212)
Alvaro Siza, Casa Avelino Duarte Photo (Molteni 2004, p.219/25
Jorn Utzon, Can Lis Living Room (A+U 2003, p.288)
Sigurd Lewerentz, Church of St. Peter Photo (A+U 2003, p.343)
Alvar Aalto, Villa Mairea Photo (A+U 2003, p.361)
Alvar Aalto, Villa Mairea Living Room Photo (A+U 2003, p.362)
Peter Zumthor, Zumthor House (Schedegg & Speiss 2014, p.28)
Peter Zumthor, Zumthor House (Schedegg & Speiss 2014, p.29)
Adolf Loos, Rufer House Street Elevation (Bock 2007, p.218)
Adolf Loos, Rufer House Side Elevation (Bock 2007, p.219)
Adolf Loos, Muller Villa East Facade (Bock 2007, p.259)
Adolf Loos, Muller Villa Interior Photo (Bock 2007, p.268)
4.4 Coppenagh and Kimmage Summary Landscape

These ‘summary landscape drawings’ trace the compositional development of the Coppenagh and Kimmage projects at the middle scale, at the scheme design stage. This is a particularly intuitive part of the design process. At this stage it is about general compositional balance rather than specificity (a later part of the design process explored in ‘The Gutter Book’). These are the broad shapes or patterns of compositional structures, central to practice, made visible for the first time. We see the evolution of a functionally interdependent compositional structure, across the project, based on requirements of the brief, personal spatial and object ambitions and the potential for compositional, cultural and presentational meanings. These patterns are searching for a compositional assemblage where the exterior relationships between the constituent objects, at the scale of the compositional assemblage, harmonically balance. Each constituent object becomes equally (more or less) involved to stabilise a new compositional object with a clearly defined territory.

It is perhaps worth noting at this stage that each constituent object also has its own collection of objects (with their own exterior relationships) within their own interior. These objects also eventually evolve within the overall (functionally interdependent) compositional structure as we will see in ‘The Gutter Book.’ Therefore these drawings really represent a snapshot at an important middle point of the compositional development. Movement through various scales of objects evolves in the compositional development. This is a central tenet of the exegesis (particular emphasis on p.112 and diagram on p.216) and allows us to move between the large scales of landscape down to detail objects. This middle scale is vital to this evolution.

These ‘summary landscape drawings’ are a heuristic as Marcello Stamm has pointed out. While the drawings don’t represent the actual design process, they allow us to get as close as possible at this stage of the research; to visualise these compositional patterns; to read them ‘synoptically’ in order to understand and begin to make observations that can develop further research. The appearance of these patterns of meanings was an exciting moment in the research. It visualised of the intra-compositional meanings outlined in chapters 2 and 3 across the middle landscape of the design process.

The drawings emphasise the importance of the compositional interior and visualises the search for the overall compositional structures. This chapter will make several observations about this process and point to future research strategies that deepen observations made here. It is important to note that the objects in the composition remain vaguely sketched and are developed in ‘development and improvisation’ design stages.

A more detailed description of precisely what is being brought into the composition, and at what point, can be found in the text and tables of Case Study 1 - House at Coppenagh p.139-149. The way in which these decisions are formed in the context of associative and compositional sets can be found on p.115-118.


18 See Chapter 5.
Drawing Methodology

The sketching process moves quickly across the landscape of the project and allows the development of individual relationships to establish the generative patterns. The drawings have been carefully constructed to map real relationships as much as possible maintaining their complexity. Excerpts from the sketches are positioned in relevant patterns of relationships. The multiple themes are tracked visually to understand the compositional logic, the cultural and compositional relationships. We can begin to see how the objects, sketches, hardline drawings and models contribute to a broad landscape of ideas from which patterns evolve.

The first summary landscape is from the Coppenagh project. Objects and compositional space remain separated on the top and bottom lines but on a condensed timeline. Stages in the design development are represented in vertical stacks of sketches. They evidence the chords of ideas in the landscapes of ‘object’ and ‘compositional space’. This is an edited selection of the key sketches seen earlier. High stacks indicate a larger number of different ideas than the short stacks. Each sketch is bounded by a coloured circle indicating type of object or compositional principle as identified in the earlier drawings. These are noted on the drawings. Grids of hardline drawings and models are organised in accordance with approximate location on the timeline. References are placed in the appropriate category, ‘object’ or ‘compositional space,’ and positioned on the timeline. Threads of compositional sub-themes run through the project horizontally. These are indicated by colour. These end as the sub theme dies or continues through the project to the end of the design development stage.

They are of course approximate and based on a reading of the research but nonetheless present revealing findings within an accepted margin of error. We also understand that there is a further overlap between the two landscapes not represented here.

Object and Spatial Design Landscapes Coppenagh

Collected ‘oral’ objects that are relevant for the ‘object summary landscape’ (top line) are represented by photographs, drawings, etc. They thread through that design landscape in an ongoing anthropological process. Networks of sub-themes include geometric form and looseness, gable in landscape, sheds, chimney in landscape, walls, eaves, reading structure, plinth etc. Collected objects that are relevant for the ‘spatial summary landscape’ (bottom line) are positioned at the start of the design landscape and map spatial ambitions that are identified or intuited from the beginning of the project. The spatial sub-themes include, frame and lightness, layers, horizon, interiority of deep plan, open-ness, closed-ness, atmosphere, proportions, measure and order etc. Some of these reinforce the project and some die out. The sub themes clearly indicate object (top line) and the syntactical patterns (bottom line) in the compositional relationships and reinforce observations already made. Hard line drawings and models are anchors at key moments in the project. Climate, atmosphere, sound, etc. influence the network of relationships in the Spatial Design Landscape.
Episodes of Development

There are two main design episodes in the ‘object summary landscape’ that eventually conclude with a new compositional object or assemblage. These episodes are indicated by the general areas of shading on the drawing. The first iteration, a house that emphasises an elevation and a lean-to is not successful spatially or contextually and is abandoned. A second design episode starts and eventually various compositional strands converge into a new emergent character, the ‘rainhouse’ option. This character has presence in landscape and develops rich spatial and compositional characteristics. The same objects, those collected in the anthropological process, are involved in the development of both schemes. This represents the creative divergence possible with the anthropological process.

There is a single ongoing episode in the ‘spatial summary landscape’ that evolves over the whole design development. Again the shading in the drawing shows this. This forms more complex spatial relations as the project develops. Restrained spatial relationships can be seen in the early iterations while at the end of the process this is much richer, illustrating a complexity in the project.

The object character is given to the cultural landscape as a simple object with a clear character. Complexity becomes
apparent as the compositional spatial interior unfolds. This is similar to the musical case studies in chapter 2.\textsuperscript{19} Those tunes, or short form poems, had rich compositional interiors formed from complex constituent objects. The design project is similar. Its constituent objects, collected from landscape and architectural culture, form a cultural reservoir in the project with their characters embedded and emphasised in the compositional patterns of meaning.

Syntactical patterns begin to emerge in the spaces and connections of the project. The predominant emphasis is on the spatial relationships between objects as seen from the table. This changes in the construction information and tendering design stages to a connective relationship as we will see in chapter 5. However, these connective or spatial relationships are in flux or in conversation. Connective relationships may open up to become spatial and vice versa in an ongoing development of syntax in the project.

\textsuperscript{19} See especially ‘My Love is in America’ Chapter 2 p. 82.
Kimmage Case Study

The Kimmage project was summarised in a similar way. Some further observations can be made.

The project is less directed by a large scale compositional relationship to landscape evident in the Coppenagh case study. Without this directing influence the design process becomes more expansive as it seeks to establish the compositional patterns within the terms of its own interior. Consequently there is less overall emergent character and the sub themes are more dominant. Each collected object plays a more individual role and helps develop a landscape of elements rather than a singular compositional character. As a consequence there are six main clouds of sketching evident in the 'summary landscape drawing' that represent multiple possible iterations in the development process. These clouds identify design stage conclusions that were not developed. Many did not establish the ambition for spatial relationships due to restrained site conditions.

The themes apparent in the objects include portico, stepped horizon, material development, fantasy walls, garden objects, cornice, clerestory objects, timber structure, facade. There are a number of spatial themes threading through the design development. These include pinwheel diagram (formal - not spatial and eventually abandoned), landscape, plan development, portico in garden, height and cornices, interior garden, etc. Here the continual development of relationships in the spatial landscape can be seen. Again hard line drawings and models are anchors at key moments in the project and represent development episodes.

Simplicity and complexity is inverted in this project. The 'object summary landscape drawing' shows a complex number of elements existing within the final design solution while the 'spatial summary landscape drawing' shows a simplification throughout the process brought about by a clarification of syntactical or spatial relationships due to restraints. This is opposite to the tendencies in landscape and perhaps reveals the biggest difference between them. In landscape, where space is not limited, the object is simple and the space is complex. The object is charged to respond to landscape while it retains complexity within its interiors. At Kimmage a complex array of objects form a looser compositional spatial relationships due to the existing interiority of the site and with a less significant larger landscape relationship.
Comparison Study

In Coppenagh the overall project is driven by an ambition for an emergent character that forms relationships with landscape. That landscape provides a collection of cultural artefacts that fuels the anthropological process. It provides information about a cultural, social or historical inhabitation of landscape. These objects are the mediators of landscapes. Landscape generates objects and becomes the anthropological field where they are collected. Objects construct our landscape, are its DNA. The anthropological elements collected allow my creative practice to form connections with landscape, to understand it and build into its meanings.

The importance of the space of landscape is also apparent. In Kimmage we see the evolution of a ‘real’ intimate landscape in the garden interior, a compositional space within the realm of the garden walls. Architectural enquiry is freer. It becomes an opportunity to examine loose compositional structures rather than the highly contrapuntal relationships formed in the landscape projects. In Coppenagh a meta-physical space associated with landscape is more present. A singular character emerges that builds spatial relationships between the new object and the existing cultural landscape. The composition spaces naturally become structured, more contrapuntal, and this emerges in the real space of the project. Both projects will eventually merge into the shared cultural landscape. In this way and just as in any oral culture, landscape continues to be formed from the multiple efforts of individuals in a shared cultural community. Both projects reflect an interiority observed in chapter 1 with the project case studies.

See all projects in Chapter 1
Kimmage Portico Study & Conclusion

In the final ‘summary landscape drawing’ I take one of the constituent objects, the portico sub theme in the Kimmage project, and explore its outward (exterior) relationship with the other objects in the design assemblage. From the perspective of this one ‘term’ we can see whole patterns of relationships with other objects.

The development of the portico is tracked horizontally and highlighted with the coloured thread. Satellite ideas are arranged in accordance with the timeline. It is clear that the sub-theme has its own distinctive development in the context of the project. Also other sub-themes respond to each other in development. Each theme must therefore develop its own character and relate to the other themes within the compositional form. This evidences the functional interdependency outlined in chapter 2.

The design development tends to reduce the constituent parts of the project to a small number of objects or sub-themes that will contribute to the make up of the final project. This often translates into the tender process with a drawing set based around those individual objects, such as gutter, roof, structural frame, plinth etc. These objects are developed or improvised in the construction information stages of the design process and is a very substantial part of my creative process explored in chapter 5. This is a helpful observation. It can allow a conscious structuring of construction information development in line with design development.\footnote{We will see the development of one of these constituent objects in the research in chapter 5: ‘The Gutter Book.’ Also we examine the potential future directions for the practice based on these observations in chapter 7. The identification of objects charts a way for building office procedures and size as I examine in Chapter 7.}
Fig 4.29: Kimmage Portico Study Drawing

4.4 Collecting & Assembling Objects
Larger Projects and what a Tender Set Wants to be

The research outlined in this chapter has clarified the central role that objects play in the development of compositional meaning in the work. A compositional assemblage can evolve with a small number of conceptual objects in very specific sets of relationships. These are then developed and improvised in the development of construction information outlined in chapter 5.

This observation has changed the procedures used to develop construction information as referred to above. Construction information can now develop ‘objects’ in the project rather than attempt to detail the overall project. This develops a more systematic method of producing construction information and will facilitate development of practice, while still maintaining procedures that emphasise the ‘character’ of the objects. We can see this type of process at work in the research in chapter 5 and in the project Big Red in chapter 1. These discoveries are very valuable as they answer the difficult question of how to make larger work. We can now build teams to work individually on objects and return into the larger conversations.

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4.5 Collecting and Assembling
Final Observations

The collecting and assembling of objects is an important part of my creative practice. In music these are tunes and performances while in architecture they are the artefacts of a cultural landscape, buildings and details etc. These objects bind together in patterns of compositional meaning in the overall assemblage. These patterns of relationships move horizontally across objects at the same scale and vertically through objects at a variety of scales. This usually hones down to a small number of carefully selected objects balanced in the composition, positioned in carefully edited, direct and simple relationships.

An amplification of the character of each object is sought in this process. Composition is a process of building patterns that foreground the character of the objects within that assemblage as well as developing a new overall emergent character. By collecting cultural objects in the anthropological process I try to transplant their character and meaning into the compositional structures of new projects. These are then developed in improvisation as we will see in chapter 5. Actual characters emerge in the final design while other ideal and relational possibilities sit below the surface of the project. These background hypothetical meanings can be revealed through changing relationships, subjective perspectives and sensibilities.
Intuition

Intuition is both supporting and supported by a creative practice that has evolved from an oral musical practice as we saw in chapters 2 and 3. Whole representations of objects are collected in the anthropological process. Intuitive and conceptual understanding can then be constructed from the whole representation. It is a type of ‘oral’ architectural practice where both intuition and conscious understanding play an important role through actual objects.

The technical processes used, like sketching and hardline drawings and models (seen in the drawings), have developed to support these different types of intelligence. The design landscape maps, for the first time, present both the intuitive and conscious processes at work. The similarities to music, which also accommodates intuitive and conscious thinking in the act of music making, can be understood. To re-use Jo Van Den Berghe’s memorable comment, both practices operate ‘from the wrist.’ It remains a surprise to me that the importance of the sketching process was previously unidentified.

The usefulness of these broad expansive landscapes is now evident. This was misunderstood and the source of frustration in practice. They are a valuable technique that allows intuition to emerge in the work. They also reveal improvisatory opportunities and help to foreground the character of collected objects in the associative relationships. We can now try and build on these processes rather than try to ‘correct’ them in practice.

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23 See Whole Representations, 3.2 Introductory Principles, Chapter 3 p. 107.
24 Van Den Berghe, Jo, In conversation, PRS 4, Ghent, April 2015.
Reconstructing Meaning in Objects

We can clearly see the development of patterns of cultural and compositional meaning. This highlights observations made throughout chapters 2 & 3.\textsuperscript{25} Objects collected in the anthropological process are taken apart into their constituent objects opening new possibilities for hypothetical and evident meanings\textsuperscript{26} in new compositions. The compositional structures and syntax apparent in their cultural tradition are examined. These constituent objects can then be placed in new compositional structures with other constituent objects. Cultural and compositional meanings, released from artefacts, can combine into new evident and hypothetical meaning structures. We improvise these objects, shape their character, adapt them to new meanings that can then form part of new symbolic constructions.

The mapping demonstrates a building up of complex compositional structures similar to intra-musical meaning as outlined in chapter 2.\textsuperscript{27} Evident and hypothetical meanings are clearly building patterns of relationships and will eventually form a determinate meaning. The work evolves into a structured set of functionally interdependent relationships similar to those described by Langer.\textsuperscript{28} It also highlights an improvisational process that is similar in music. This is evident in the anthropological process and in the development and improvisation of objects that will be explored in chapter 5.

\textsuperscript{25} See Cultural, Compositional and Presentational Meaning, Chapter 2 p. 64. Also see Chapter 3, General Theory of Process - Architecture p. 103.
\textsuperscript{26} See Evident and Hypothetical Meaning, Chapter 2 p. 80-81.
\textsuperscript{27} See 2.4 Compositional Meaning, Chapter 2 p. 75.
\textsuperscript{28} See 2.1 Objects and Introduction to Meaning, Chapter 2 p. 64.
Presentational Symbolism and Character

‘Presentational symbolism’ [Langer, 1957, p97] and character have been discussed in relation to music. We have already seen how character is transplanted from old objects in the anthropological process. Character in new objects emerges from the art symbol, a symbol of the subjective interior and is born of idealisation and contextualisation, a product of the real nature of objects made evident in associative relationships and their pure potential. We begin to understand differences in character.

Presentational symbolism, or expressive character plays a significant role in practice derived from expressive character in oral musical practice. This has transferred to architectural practice where the expressive or presentational character of ‘the thing itself’ is valued. This presentational character must work through all scales of objects in a design project from the detail up to landscape scales to build assemblies of characters. This layers an oral character into the compositional structure which is tested in scale models. They are the closest possible representation and become consolidated compositional objects in practice.

PRS 4 was particularly helpful in coming to this research conclusion. Marcello Stamm observed “Character. You didn’t say the character that weaves through this - this was not the character you described. You discussed the foregrounding of

the character of the individual objects. If there is something that weaves through in terms of character it is not one character, like they are all green, they are all psychotic, they are all melancholic; I don’t know what they are; this is a complex thing in its own right; but then the idea is bringing forth character in each of these. It is not that it is one character. This would be an extraordinarily flat result.”

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29 See Presentational Meaning and Character, Chapter 2 p. 91.
30 See Idealisation and Contextualisation, Chapter 3 p. 112.
31 See Idealisation and Contextualisation, Chapter 3 p. 112.
Conservative Architecture

Paul Minifie also pointed out at PRS 4 “there is a] clear premise that you are interested in conservative architecture. Forms that have always been – how to continue without dead repetition. Clue [is] in the music – clear set of music tropes or tunes etc - there is also a set of ideas about a transformation of these things – as much part of the music as the figures themselves. Nodes in the sorting and positioning is about how to maintain these forms but keep them communicating (a vital form) in some way or other. I think that’s the absolute nub of what you are trying to get to here. I expect that each of those nodes on that graph is about that. There is about them saying ‘am I changing it too much that it becomes unrecognisable’ - is this something that is interesting and can be conveyed to the audience that understands these forms. And I think that’s really the key of what you are trying to do.”

A transformative character in objects and patterns is sought. This transformation occurs in the development of objects based on patterns of composition and vice versa. The development works towards an emergent expressive character. This object is understood as the ‘oral’ object, capable of being recognised in a single act of vision. This is important to its existence in the social cultural landscape. Each node on the graph is placing moments of the puzzle and assessing if the emergent character is being strengthened or weakened.

The use of traditional forms does not arise because of a philosophical or conservative standpoint. They emerge naturally from anthropological processes that seek to understand cultural consciousness, the ambition to evolve an expressive character in an interior cultural landscape. I am not biased for or against contemporary or traditional forms. Each might be used to explore character and meaning in landscape. The traditional forms of landscape are interesting only in terms of their meanings in cultural consciousness. The processes of practice are not established to mimic forms but rather to explore their conscious and subconscious meanings. This is a helpful observation in practice as it allows me to see how these processes might explore other ideas in the subjective imagination, like myth, ideal forms, character etc.

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Community of Practice and Hejduk

The tendency to explore intuited cultural consciousness establishes a community of practice around Palladio, Walter Pichler, Alvaro Siza, Sophie Clements, Peter Markli, Jose Plecnik and John Hejduk. These practitioners build processes that use intuition in order to explore expressive character. This can emerge from a cultural subconscious like in Hejduks work, [Hejduk, 1985] or placing artificial elements in immersive natural interiors like in Clements34 work. We see these influences in the very early landscape scores presented at PRS 2.35

We have seen the role that objects play in the work. It begins with oral practice in music where an understanding and representation of the character of objects is important. This is a necessary requirement of an oral culture where tunes live or die through their representations. I believe it is similar in architecture where complex packages of cultural and compositional information might be packaged in an overall singular identity. This is like a good tune as seen in chapter 2. These objects in turn construct a larger cultural landscape.

I recently, on the suggestion of Martyn Hook,36 returned to John Hejduk’s Mask of Medusa, an influential book in university. In the introduction, Daniel Libeskind writes with regard to his work “Symbolic thinking, in which the pre-eminence of the fascination with the reality of things is made explicit, permeates the proposals, with an aura of natural mysticism. Thus, the move away from technical and scientific forms of expression and from specialised thinking as such is not a nostalgia for some gone-by poetic but rather an authentic, one might almost say religious, attitude in which the dialogue between norm and transgression derives from a still more powerful archaic source: the struggle between the profane and the sacred. This conflict and the mystery which it engenders is the context of wonder, the interpretive sign to be followed as a key to a labyrinth of unsuspected meanings or diffused meanings.” [Hejduk, 1985, p. 15]

Hejduk’s fascination with the reality of things derive from archaic sources in his cultural consciousness. The reality of things, the struggle between the sacred and profane, the labyrinth of meanings in our cultural consciousness are written in our mythical and ancient landscape.37 I have the opportunity to explore our cultural consciousness through objects set out in an oral and physical landscape. Our fundamental and primitive mental space, our pagan selves, is not in some recess of our subconscious but already made visible, shared, in our physical and oral landscapes. We can explore this through objects.

I now admire and value more fully the process of Hejduk’s architecture. The necessity of the writing which draws the subconscious out and directs character in the work. There is also the sketching, the fast character studies, another line of attack into character born of the subconscious. The landscape drawings, the fluid against the geometric and the mythical. All are

35 Chapter 1 p. 36.
37 This refers to observations in folklore that will be reviewed in Chapter 7 p. 267.
born in our subconscious, explored and repositioned knowingly in Hejduk’s work. I can learn from Hejduk in the development of my own process and structure my own intuitive processes with more clarity. As Libeskind outlines “One is in the presence of an architecture whose philosophical perspective remains as close as possible to a mystery: an architecture which is not a mere outlet for ideas, nor an operation which infiltrates things via reasoning alone. On the contrary, through its respect for the irreducibility of presence it introduces a new provisional order of its own.” [Hejduk, 1985, p. 16]

Hejduk’s work arrives from his subconscious and finds character born of classical myth, abstract geometry, contrapuntal forms, density and sparseness, line and shape. I work from a consciousness bound in place, an ancient pagan Irish landscape of myth, stories and music represented in physical and oral landscapes. In exploring this landscape I seek to draw subconscious characteristics back into the interior space of landscape, to make visible these invisible characters already present. As Libeskind says of his work; “Poetry, dream and remembrance rather than science and technique seem in Hejduk's architecture to answer the question he poses: who lives here?” [Hejduk, 1985, p. 20]
4.6 Collecting & Assembling Objects

Anthropological Music
Album Recording of Traditional Irish Music by Steve Larkin and Mick Kinsella

General Introduction

Continuing the exploration of ‘collecting and assembling objects’ I turn to my practice in Irish traditional music. This is the second section of the research outlined in my introduction. I will not undertake a full exploratory examination here. This has already been done in architecture with significant conclusions that apply to both practices. I simply intend to demonstrate a similar process at work in traditional Irish music practice. This part of the research centres around a recording project, a duet CD I released in 2015 with harmonica player Mick Kinsella.38

The process of learning music in an oral traditional culture is a type of anthropological practice as we have seen. Here I would like to show a process of assembling objects into larger structural assemblies. Tunes are often grouped together in medleys, to make a composite ‘set.’ These are also grouped together in projects such as a recording project or concert. Each of these assemblies has their own emergent character through the scales of objects already discussed in the context of architecture. There is emergent character in the constituent tunes, the sets, and in album recordings. In the album recording we considered it important that the character we enjoyed in our music would exist every scale of object, the tunes, sets and overall recording.

Collecting and Assembling

The diagram below, on page 193, represents one part of the collecting and assembling process associated with the project. It is a representation of the tunes used on the recording. The ground line ‘roots’ shows commercial and personal recordings that influenced my versions of these tunes. These only represent a small sample of influences. The tunes used on the recording have been part of our repertoire for years. They have been influenced by musicians, recordings, music sessions and live performances. These are impossible to catalogue.

However the diagram does represent one strand of influence in these tunes, and in some cases very important ones. The actual performances that influence my version of these tunes most are indicated on the main branches of the roots while the less significant ones are on the smaller branches. These lead into the individual tunes which are then branched into the sets on

38 Steve Larkin and Mick Kinsella, SLMK001, Distributed by Claddagh Records, 2015.
this recording. These sets in turn collect into the single album recording indicated at the top. The diagram clearly evidences the collecting process even though it only demonstrates a small selection of the influences on the recording.

Tunes, for the most part, are collected from the traditional music repertoire and assembled into individual tracks, or sets as they are called. The choice of tunes needs to balance the voicing of the instruments, the personalities of the musicians and the nature of the performances. Like in architecture, we seek to develop new characteristics in the tunes based on the fiddle and harmonica pairing and the particularities of our musical personalities. We explore characteristics in the tunes and pair them with other tunes that make these characteristics evident.

This process of assemblage occurred in a working musical partnership spanning ten years. It is best captured in the sleeve notes:

“Many of the tunes on this album are classics from the traditional music repertoire and they’re tunes we’ve been playing together for a long time. Over the years, we’ve adapted them to suit the fiddle and harmonica duet sound, by making subtle changes to the melodies or by experimenting with different keys and tunings. Fiddle tunes, and versions of tunes, play a central role in the music. It is an interest shared by both of us. As a fiddle player, Steve is naturally drawn to these. Mick’s interest traces back to many tea-fuelled conversations in the home of the great chromatic harmonica player Eddie Clarke, who was also a great lover of fiddle music and introduced many fiddle tunes to the harmonica repertoire.”

There seems to be more interest in the melodic structure, rhythmic emphasis and character of the tunes themselves. The sets are mostly in pairs, a way of evidencing the characteristics of tunes. There is little interest in dynamic keys changes or shifts in tempo. Fiddle and harmonica draw out characteristics of melody, tone and rhythm that are exploited, nicely in my view, by the bouzouki and guitar.

We can see from the notes a process of improvisation at work in the voicing and keys of the individual tunes. Melodic phrases within the tunes are reviewed and altered to suit the character of our playing or instrumentation and to emphasise subtle transformations. An example of this might be the tune ‘Young Tom Ennis’ where a simple change in the last cadence of the A Part significantly alters the overall character and suits the fiddle and harmonica sound and rhythm. The development of character opens into the compositional interior of the tune, shifting its patterns of composition. We also develop the overall character of the tune, shaping it by changing keys, tunings, tempos and rhythms.

We see a development of character through the tunes, sets and overall album. It is not a linear process of collecting and assembling and stitching together with a formulaic outcome. It is a process of development, moving up and down through all the scales of objects, developing the tunes and sets so that an overall character of the music emerges instinctively over time. This process occurs over years of playing which allows the character of the duet, the instrumentation and the repertoire to evolve. Therefore recording should be a conversation between two people and the process should also capture this. A live recording environment is best allowing for a spontaneous musical conversation rather than multiple overdubbing.

I include a sample recording of excerpts from three tracks.

Many of the tunes on this album are classics from the traditional music repertoire which we’ve been playing together for quite a few years now. Over time, we’ve adapted them to suit the fiddle and harmonica duet sound by making subtle changes to the melodies or by experimenting with different keys and tunings.

Fiddle music and tune versions also feature prominently. Mick’s interest traces back to numerous un-stated conversations in the home of the great chromatic harmonica player Eddie Clarke, who was also a great lover of fiddle music and introduced many fiddle tunes into the harmonica repertoire.

There are two new compositions by Mick: ‘An Gharbh na Bhualáidh’ was composed while monopolised by the mammoth leaves of a eucalyptus plant in the ornate gardens of Stan’s Palace, Hawk’s Cross. ‘Ernabhoom Shaoili Saheli’ was written on the road to Letterfrack, Co. Galway, amidst the rugged beauty of The Twelve Bens.

Mick plays chromatic and diatonic harmonica. On chromatic he uses the Tremolo slide method, a technique pioneered by two inspirational harmonica players, Eddie Clarke and Sean Walsh. Chromatic harmonica used are in the keys of C/E, D/E, A/B, D/F# and B/C. He also plays English concertina on tracks 1, 6, 9 and 10. Steve plays a fiddle made by Conor Whelan and a Morinovskl fiddle kindly on loan from Conor Rusell. These fiddles are tuned to concert pitch except on tracks 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 12 and 13 where C, Eb and open G tunings are used.

Steve Larkin & Mick Kinsella, Album Launch and Sleeve Notes, Nov 2015. Photographs by Donal Siggins
The album is the new work. It has been formed by the relationships within the process, the musicians and the particular performances recorded in a cottage in Mayo amongst friends over a period of a couple of years. It is our collection of the historic performances that have influenced us, our own evolution of the tunes, the new versions put forward here. I hope that the overall record stands as its own thing, with its own character, a positive addition to a rich and varied culture.

Our reinterpretations of these tunes add another tiny colour to the landscape of traditional Irish music. They offer another presentation of these artefacts. This is the nature of traditional music, now more than ever with commercial recordings, where an oral music can be laid down in record. Music and architecture present thick, dense landscapes which we explore in our anthropological processes in creative practice.

I am accompanying the diagram with musical excerpts of some of these root performances. This will hopefully show a change in character from the source recordings to our presentations of the same tunes. It evidences the artistic scope of traditional Irish music, not just in our music, but in the tradition generally.
5.

Improvisation & Development
Introduction

In Collecting and Assembling objects,\(^1\) we studied an anthropological process that sought to develop new compositional strategies with cultural, compositional and presentational meanings. There was an emphasis on an emergent expressive character. Marcello Stamm\(^2\) and Richard Blythe\(^3\) observed that the research presented in chapter 4 was as a heuristic that brought us as close as possible to the compositional processes. The research in this chapter explores the development of these compositional observations in actual practice.

The landscapes of each project were too wide to engage in research at the detail level across the full project. In the Portico Study\(^4\) we saw the outward relationships from a single constituent object and I could observe the multiple connections it made across the landscape of the project. Building on this, a research strategy was developed that studied the development and improvisation of particular constituent objects, as they developed in these compositional structures. This was done in music and architecture to observe the similar tendencies in both fields. It also provided a lens to explore the role of the improvisation and development outlined in chapter 2,\(^5\) derived from the conceptualising process.

The detail study allowed observation of the development of objects and its relationships in a project. We could see how cultural meaning and individual character evolved at the detail scale. We could explore how they contributed to the character of the project. This reveals the processes at work in the interior compositional space of the project in improvisation and development at the detail scale.

This research was done specifically for the Ph.D catalogue. A musical example, ‘An Paistín Fionn and Galway Bay,’ was developed in order to observe the detail development and improvisation in music. An architectural detail from a current project, House at Bagnelstown, was identified to observe detail development and improvisation in architecture. ‘The Gutter Book’ emerged from a model of this detail prepared for the ADAPT-r exhibition.\(^6\)

‘An Paistín Fionn and Galway Bay’ presents a number of audio recordings cataloguing its development at the detail level. Initially there is a cultural exploration of these tunes with examples from history. I then outline the development of personal interpretations at the detail level. Finally, I explore how these two tunes develop into an overall musical form or ‘set.’ It explores the technical characteristics of the tunes in detail including different cultural characteristics. It looks at how these are interpreted and improvised and directed in the process.

‘The Gutter Book’ presents a record of the development of this detail during the construction design stage. It consists of hardline drawings, sketches, models and notes evidencing

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1. Chapter 4.
4. Kimmage Portico Study Drawing, Chapter 4 p. 171.
5. See Chapter 2, Improvisation and Development p. 82.
multiple conceptual strands. This research offered an opportunity to examine the development of a single constituent object in depth. This development or improvisation is directed by material and technical characteristics and other objects collected in the new assemblage. Each developmental move seeks to connect and strengthen the overall compositional character of the project. It also evidences a sensibility for similar objects collected in the anthropological process.

I try to present the actual nature of both practices. This allows comparison without artificial or metaphorical links. The processes in the two different creative fields are remarkably similar. It underlines at the most detailed level the fundamental processes I use in creative practice.
Case Study 1 - An Páistín Fionn & Galway Bay

The case studies in music\(^7\) and the analysis of the album recording by Steve Larkin and Mick Kinsella in chapter 4\(^8\) sought to point towards certain tendencies and practices in traditional Irish music. They illustrated the creative principles of practice, the processes used and their influence in both architecture and music.

This research explores, in detail, the development of a new piece of traditional Irish music. It is an idea for a set\(^9\) formed by two traditional tunes ‘An Páistín Fionn’ and ‘Galway Bay’. These tunes have characters that might make an overall piece of music with a larger scope; one which allows their individual characters to become more evident. An emphasis will be on the emergent character in the new set. The performance, in turn, should explore the character in both the tunes and the overall set. Invention is not the primary goal. The process explores the intricacies and depths of the tradition and tries to reveal them again in contemporary practice.

Process

This study was prepared specifically for PRS 5. It is an aural presentation of about 6-8 minutes with accompanying text that describes key points in the process. It is a heavily edited version of a number of day-long recording sessions that map the development in detail. It also includes historic performances by musicians who form an influential community of practice around the tunes. There are also recording notes made during this process. I use a physical sketchbook to record the character of takes and locations in the timeline of the recording process. These are subjective notes that describe the character of individual takes. These are a useful roadmap in recording projects.

At this stage of the research I had strong intuitions about the similarity of the detail process in music and architectural creative practice. However, rather than using metaphor, I conduct this research purely in the processes of music. I can then compare this as an independent piece of research to architectural research developed on a similar research methodology, ‘The Gutter Book’.\(^10\) I suspend drawing conclusions about similar tendencies in both creative practices in the research itself.

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\(^7\) Chapter 2.
\(^8\) Steve Larkin and Mick Kinsella, 2015, CD001SLMK, Chapter 4, p. 189.
\(^9\) Anthropological Music, Chapter 4 p. 189.
\(^10\) Chapter 5 p. 214.
Development and Cone Diagram

In the recording sessions I map the development of each tune as I explore historic versions and develop my own tendencies. This process is not usually done under the microscope. Development usually happens over time, in conversation with other musicians, in sessions, in performances and by listening.

As a fiddle player I am particularly interested in traditional Irish fiddle music. This influences my development of these tunes as I naturally work within that sub-context. Development is also influenced by historic performances of the tunes which come from outside the fiddle tradition. We again recognise the anthropological process of 'text and context' described in chapter 3.\textsuperscript{11} This is evident in the accompanying diagram where historic performances, or texts, sit on the shoulders of each tune. The tunes themselves sit, for me, within the context of traditional fiddle music shown dotted.

The red hatched area represents the emergent character of the set over and above the constituent elements. This emergent character, presentational symbolism or art symbol\textsuperscript{12} provides the expressive character of the overall piece. The overall emergent character sits mostly within the fiddle tradition but has the potential to move outside it into new creative areas. This might be areas of new knowledge of distinctive character. It represents the creative nature of traditional Irish music where

\textsuperscript{11} See Associative and Compositional Sets, Chapter 3.
\textsuperscript{12} Chapter 2, Presentational Meaning, p. 82.
new work is born of cultural tradition but also pushes outside boundaries in subtle ways.

The upper part of the cone represents the development of an interpretation of each tune and the overall set. Over time this develops and ideally concentrates into a condensed set of personal interpretive beliefs. This is described by the central point in the drawing. Instinct or intuitions, developed by playing the tunes rather than conceptual thinking, guides this process as indicated by the sides of the cone. Development is therefore intuitive, ‘from the wrist’, born of playing or practice. This demonstrates the importance of intuition over conscious conceptualisation. It reveals the genesis of the sketching processes observed in the last chapter. We again recognise the broad and indeterminate studies that seek to identify relevant conceptual objects that can be carried forward in a new performance.

I arrive at precise and defined conclusions from this development process. This is not restrictive in any way. It simply provides a perspective for subsequent performances; a base from which to understand other characteristics that develop in music making with other musicians. The bottom cone then represents performances beyond these conclusions. These performances again spread outwards, away from any singularity, to happily recognise multiple adumbrations of the tune and performances.

As the cone of the diagram suggests, there are many ideas explored in the development. They emerge from the consideration of multiple artefacts in the cultural landscape. Each idea is scrutinised and only consolidated into the project when they integrate with the other ideas to form an emergent whole. Others remain, as hypothetical meanings, in the conceptual background. This supports improvisation or development in music-making. This landscape around the tune is at the core of musicality.

The recording process carried out in the research captures this process. We can see the development down through the upper cone to the point where certain characteristics emerge in the recording. All the other characteristics remain as hypothetical meanings in the background landscape. The bottom cone starts to unfold in a development of the musical conversation with composer Donal Siggins. As we begin to explore the tune together new conversations unfold out of the core of the earlier development.

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13 Jo van den Berghe in conversation - See Chapter 4 p. 129.
14 Sketch in Chapter 5, p. 129.
15 See Compositional Structure, Chapter 2, p. 75.
16 Donal Siggins, Composer.
The Source Recordings

I begin by examining the source recordings on one of these tunes, ‘An Páistín Fionn’ or The Fair-Haired Child. This was published in Dublin by Edward Bunting in 1796. It is a relatively well known song. In this case however I am interested in instrumental versions.

Having listened to a broad catalogue of sources I hone down to 4 primary sources of interest. James Kelly, Paddy Taylor, Micho Russell and Willie Clancy. I will try to illustrate the key differences with a comparative study of a small 4 bar detail. These versions are broad in scope, containing differences, that make some versions of the tune unrecognisable from others. It is in these variances of melody, ornamentation, meter and phrasing that a broad creative landscape can emerge. This provides scope for exploration within what might be perceived as restrictive conditions of a traditional format or tune. Audio sample and notational descriptions are provided. I suggest audio examples are the best representation.

I begin with Paddy Taylor’s version of the tune. Paddy was born in Loughill, Limerick and emigrated to England in the 1940’s. He played the Boehm system flute and recorded this air on an LP called ‘The Boy in the Gap’. Claddagh Record 1970. Taylor’s version of the tune emphasises the melodic structure with clear and simple phrasing in a mostly regular meter. The meter is slightly stretched in two places, in the first phrase of the second bar and in the last bar. Slight rhythmic emphasis is given to the melody in 2 or 3 places. Subtle melodic ornamentation that establish an implied secondary meter within the tune and develop into chromaticism due to his instrument. He emphasises the 4th in the first bar which Kelly picks up and develops in his version (see below).

James Kelly further develops Paddy Taylor’s version of the tune for fiddle. As he outlines in his recording Melodic Journeys; “I learned this tune, “The Fair-Haired Child”, from the mighty Limerick flute player, Paddy Taylor who was a frequent visitor to our home in Dublin.”

There is a further development on the melancholy cadences established in the Taylor version. The tempo is reduced significantly and allow for more complexity in the meter. The melodic ornamentation and rhythmic bow strokes, especially in the B part of the tune, develop two overlapping layers within the tune. The melodic ornamentation is used to create distinct episodes or smaller landscapes within the tune. These episodes of complexity significantly flex the meter without undermining it. The pattern of bowing introduces rhythmic down strokes establishing another layer of rhythmic emphasis usually in advance of the melodic ornamentation. Another rhythmic emphasis is developed in other parts of the performance with open double stops that are layered on top of the melody.


19 Two notes played together in fiddle technique. Open means one or two of these notes are the open strings.
The tone contrasts sweetly tuned notes with touches of vibrato to naked off-tune notes touched with frailty and imperfection. Kelly clearly intends to move between a ‘sweet’ and ‘frail’ expression to mirror emotional character; an observation on the ‘ideal’ nature and the ‘real’ nature of the music. It celebrates an imperfect or naked character of performance common in traditional Irish music. A gutsy quality found in other traditional music also. He varies the pitch on certain notes within the tune to establish tension and release by sliding to the minor third in the two episodes of melodic ornamentation. Variances of this technique are developed across the whole tune. These are techniques we will see in the Clancy version (albeit a very different melody) and I assume Kelly himself knew this version well.

The E minor key is important to the performance and establishes much of the character. It allows him to take advantage of a particular ‘position’ on the instrument with an associated fingering and relationship to open strings that he uses in the rhythmic emphasis as outlined above. This defines the double stopping, the open rhythmic bursts, intonation and general shape of the performance. This is the same as Paddy Taylor’s setting of the tune.

There are a number of aspects to this version that occur outside these 4 bars that are worth mentioning as they will be relevant later. Double stopping is used to emphasise the cadences of the main melody. Rhythmic open double stops played with the bow in the B part of the tune develops the overlapping rhythm to the melody. A similar rhythm technique is evident in the Clancy version where a rhythmic counterpoint is layered onto to the structure of the tune itself.

Micho Russell, from Doolin, Co. Clare, plays a very distinctive waltz version of the tune. On the notes from his recording ‘The Man from Clare’ he simply describes the tune as a “Slow air also played as a waltz in the old days.” It is predominantly based on the Willie Clancy’s version as we will see later. He does introduce the dramatic flattened third in the second (A) part of the tune which is similar to Taylor’s and Kelly’s version of the tune.

The tempo and phrasing are regularised in the waltz tempo without the contrapuntal layering of meter seen in the earlier versions and as we will see in the Clancy version. There is an elegant simplicity to the tune that finds joy in the character of the melody. There is also a lightness that is brought out of the tune developed by the unusual breathing pattern that matches the 3/4 time signature and an unhurried performance.

The last version I would like to discuss is Willie Clancy’s version. Willie Clancy (1918-1973) was an Irish Uilleann piper born into a musical family on 24th December 1918 in Miltown Malbay, County Clare. His parents both sang and played concertina.

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\[20\] First position is used with the associated fingering patterns. Use is made of the lower G string in the rhythmic double stops. Other double stops used are in a position that supports the improvisatory development of the ornamentation in the tune.

\[21\] Russell, Micho, The Man from Clare, Sleeve Notes

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and his father, who was influenced by local blind piper Garret Barry, also played the flute. Willie had a deep knowledge of Irish music, dating back through his father and Garret Barry, to the mid 19th Century. His version of An Páistín Fionn is an old version of the tune and probably one inherited in this way.

It is a wonderful version, rich and complex. Firstly it has a different melodic structure to the other versions and is quite distant to any of the song versions that I have heard. It seems to have evolved purely into an instrumental or piping tune.

Both the melodic structure and the meter of the main tune has evolved to accommodate a secondary melodic ornamentation meter like we saw in the Kelly version. However these melodic episodes are very different to Kelly’s and more expansive. They have embedded themselves into the tune more fully making it more difficult to establish these regions of ornamentation from the main structure. Cuts and crans\textsuperscript{22} within the performance establish a third contrapuntal rhythm over the flexing rhythms of the other two meters. This is further emphasised with contrasting play of open (fluid) and closed (rhythmic) chanter\textsuperscript{23} technique. As a result, the timing or phrasing is not defined in a regular meter. It stretches and pulls allowing room for the mini episodes of melodic clusters to expand and develop within the tune.

Again the tone of the performance is important. Vibrato is only used twice and others notes are played naked illustrating the timbre of the instrument. The exception is an exaggerated vibrato in the pitch slide at the start of bar two. This happily emphasises plaintive and imperfect qualities within the performance.

Overall there is much less emphasis on a singular melody and more interest in the broader rhythmic and contrapuntal potential of the tune, the syntactical relationships and the episodes, at various scales, that they allow. It is a very rigorous and accomplished version more interested in the intricate potential inside music rather than exuberant expression.

\textsuperscript{22} Types of ornamentation in uilleann piping.
\textsuperscript{23} Chanter is the part of the uilleann pipes on which the melody is played.
Fig 5.7: Transcriptions of Detail Excerpts, by Author, Nov 2015
Conclusion

This small four bar detail of a single tune in performances by four musicians gives us a tiny snapshot of the complexity of traditional music. In exploring this oral cultural archive we find complex patterns of meaning and character operating at conscious and subconscious levels. It is impossible to describe these fully outside of music but we can clearly hear them here. In exploring traditional music I am deepening my sensibility. I see the music, culture and society with greater understanding, with a fuller landscape of cultural, compositional and presentational meanings.

Many of the observations already made in the research can be seen here. Object and syntax are working together at layers of microcosmic detail. An emphasis on ‘ideal’ and ‘imperfect’ object is evident; dense episodes of activity counterpoint quieter moments; single variations unfold into landscapes; objects evolve through improvisations. Multiple layers of complex, subtle syntax operate. There are overlapping meters; relationships evolve between different scales of objects; the syntax of rhythm is stretched and pulled. As Libeskind says about Hejduk’s paradox of density and sparseness, shrinkage and expansion, of elongation and centralisation. [Hejduk, 1985, p. 18]

The character of the musicians is carried in the tunes and in their performances. Each musician has their own sound, tone, a captured character, resonant of the person themselves. The unconscious nuance of the finger or breath on the instrument that transplants some element of the musician directly. This is formed in part, by the musician themselves and in part, inherited from their local culture, the regional style, particularities of pitch, tone, melodic phrasing etc. A rich inheritance for the musician.

There is also the artefact itself, the tune, with its compositional and cultural meanings captured in its relationships, its phrases and cadences. This is developed by each musician as they draw out the characteristics they intuitively feel. Some performances present the overall tune with an emphasis on its melodic composition, like Taylor and Russell, while Clancy and Kelly explore the various scales of objects within the tune. The tune becomes a landscape.

Only in the act of physically learning the tune do I understand the subtle depths in the versions. As I step into the performance I am captivated by the artistic scope at the microcosmic layers of detail. I gain some understanding of ornamentation born out of the physicality of the instrument. I understand how the smallest improvisatory nuance can ripple with profound consequences across the whole compositional object. Many of these small, tiny shifts in nuance are captured with intuitions born in performance rather than with conscious intellect.

The process of translating these source performances to the fiddle allows me to develop multiple perspectives. Although many ideas are edited out of performance they remain in the landscape of the tune. These characteristics inform development and improvisation in music making with other musicians. In this particular recording I develop a performance that leans on the Willie Clancy and James Kelly versions.

For example we can count six overlapping meters in the Kelly and Clancy versions.
The Development Recordings

The development of An Páistín Fionn is examined here. It is represented in three ways. The most important is the aural record, taken from a number of day-long recording sessions that were conducted to map the development of the piece. I present an edited recording that looks at excerpts from those recording sessions to illustrate the development of the piece. There is also an image of the recording studio desktop. I also present the playback notes.

Description of Development

There are 28 recorded fiddle takes. This is a broad landscape of ideas similar to those made by the sketching process seen in chapter 4. It develops wide thinking and supports a multilayered understanding that facilitates improvisation and ornamentation. I include an excerpt of the landscape of recordings, or takes, as visible on the recording desk to assist the visual picture of the process.

I try to develop a performance that captures the multilayered characteristics of the tune and an emergent character in the new performance, an overall shape. The takes are sketches for recording and reviewing ideas. To illustrate the development I have selected 5 excerpts from these 28 takes to describe the process. These aural examples are accompanied by notes on the takes from the recording notebook.

A natural exploration of the performances from source recordings is evident. As these are studied many of their attributes are embedded in my version. There is little concern for novelty or difference. I understand that they will change naturally as the performances are explored. As my understanding evolves the interior space of the tune becomes more apparent and rich. I tend towards the landscape versions of Clancy and Kelly with an interest in the various layers of syntax, ornamentation and improvisation at the smaller scales of objects. This is born out...

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25 See Design Landscape Drawings in Chapter 4.

Fig 5.8: Recording Session, photograph by Donal Siggins, July 15
in the process where, like in architecture, landscapes of ideas are tested to support wider potential for development in the performance.

The Recording Notes

During lengthy recording sessions I note the characteristics of the takes on playback so that they can be remembered, identified and easily referred to. These notes are very subjective descriptions, really written to remind myself only of the ‘character’ of each take on initial playback after recording sessions. These often relate back to the ‘character’ of the source recordings. This provides a geography of the takes. We can quickly identify the take based on its character and begin conceptualising that character in the overall compositional assemblage. These descriptions become symbols of the takes, each with their own relevant meaning within the compositional assemblage. An image of these sketchbook notes is included.

It is not possible to describe the process of playing music in text. The initial playback notes, made immediately after the recording seems to be the closest possible mirror. The language is deliberately instinctive, loose and free. This is a personal reflective process and a development aid allowing me to map and assess takes / details based on what I believe to be their character and feel. I include two excerpts as follows:

"47-89
Success of the willie translation evident. Layering of tune. The structure of the tune exists in the 1st order and a second layer emerges in the ornamentation episodes. These exist in a type of second layer or second ‘in-between’ meter. There is also a development of clear note value in the tune. A number of clearly defined characters emerge from the over developed vibrato notes - contrast with dry imperfect notes emphasising frailty and performance - to shifting notes suggesting tension and..."
imperfection in movement. The transposed key emphasises this due to position and also tonal clarity. 26

201-285
Very clean take. Voice present. Really good space. Notes good - characterful and exaggerated. Good balance between tune and personal voice. Ordinary feel to versions. Good bow pressure, vibrato and pitch alteration. Sub or layered episodes (ornamentation) integrated into the main structure. Nice development at the end. Slightly more laid back take - little more reflection in take while retaining emphasises on rhythm, melodic variation at 2nd time. Tuning still off in places. Generally good performance although weirdly the previous one might be better. 27

In the descriptions of the audio takes below we use edited version of these recording notes to capture some of the character of the takes.

**An Páistín Fionn - Five Takes**

Details from five takes are presented to show the development of ‘An Paistín Fionn.’ These are highlighted in the image showing the landscape of takes [fig. 5.9]. They evidence development of the character, ideas, feelings and emotional engagement as the tune develops. They also allow us to explore the intricacies of the details. The accompanying piece of text is developed from the notes on these takes and tries to capture the process. They will probably exceed the boundaries of the excerpts due to contamination from other aspects of the performances. I accept this in order to try and describe the experience around these excerpts.

Again we have selected a recurring ‘detail’ as to develop the overall tune would take too long. It is indicative of the overall process but it should be noted that it only captures a microcosm. Areas outside the scope of these excerpts is also developed in the recordings. This will be evident in the longer recording examples that examine the overall shape of the performance shown later.

1. **Ballyedmond Takes B1 (244) & B2 (261)**

These are early recordings. The character of the melody is not clear, appearing and disappearing in overly complex improvisations. While these improvisations sketch initial ideas, they are flat, introverted and not fully engaged with the tune. Variances of tone or pitch begin to express melancholy and humanity. It is undermined by attempt at ‘performance’ and associated tonal consistency. The meter flexes between the melody and the improvisations but is underdeveloped.

Overall the performance is disappointing. It feels like an attempt at a ‘balanced’ performance that tries to foreground the melody. This ‘balance’ is getting in the way of the natural inhabitation of the melody. In addition there is too much emphasis on the ‘ideas’ in the improvisations as a new voice.

There wasn’t an emotional connection with the tune in the performance and I can clearly hear this in the playback. I am not getting to inhabit the interior or landscape of the tune. I am only operating at the structural melodic layer. The initial takes are ideas driven and without emotional feeling and commitment. They do not enter the interior of the tune.

With some excitement and we begin to inhabit the tune and space is opening up. We sit in the melody enjoying its beauty while the world recedes. Techniques of improvisation and ornamentation supports this.

Concentration of the melody is supported by a contrasting rhythmic chordal layer. This counterpoint, with a crude rhythmic character, emphasis the sweetness and melancholy of the tune. The chords do not relate to the usual harmonic order but work on an overlapping plane. This is also the case with meter. This is exciting and it establishes unusual harmonic and metric relationships. These are folded into the tune with a standard harmonic double stopping at the start and end of the phrase. We remember similar complex relationships in other areas fiddle music and enjoy the relationships.

Things are getting nice - we see the tune more clearly. The space of the tune is opening up and we can begin to introduce contrasts and ideas within the folds of the tune. The ideas are now less imposed but are in direct conversation with the interior of the tune. The tune is taut and clear while the improvisations are specifically bringing out the character of the tune and developing new characters.

3. Audio 15 Micho Part B1 (96) and Part B2 (100).9

And now we are back in the world! The tune is changed and offered as a waltz, for the dancer and listener remembering Micho Russell’s version. The bounce or swing carries the tune offering the melody with lightness and fun for dancing.

This is an act of giving rather than meditation. This version is apparently simple and modest for easy sharing in social circumstances. Naivety rules and it becomes a reflection on lightness, humour and generosity so much a part of Micho’s personality and wisdom. Yet, in the playing, we discover the complexity behind the simplicity. It is hard to capture and we gain insight into Micho’s mastery, lightness and ease.

We are back in the interior! Here we explore the melancholy of the tune. And it is beautiful. Intellectual ideas vanish as they are unnecessary. Improvisations and chords are thoroughly responsive to the tune. The space and notes are fully open and inhabited. The idea of a performance has vanished - the world has completed receded. This has a character that I like a lot. It makes a completely personal space where you be in the silence of the tune.


And finally we open into a rich and layered world. This understanding builds from the Willie Clancy version and the translation from pipes to fiddle. And we learn so much from the piping master. This is a layered reading of the tune and eventually becomes the main character of the performance. I am excited by the evolution of multiple layers. The performance captures a taut vertical exploration through a tapestries of layers, ideas and improvisations.

The interior is built from a number of overlapping layers of tone, rhythm, improvisation and melody that are completely responsive to each other. The responsive nature of the layers implies a contrapuntal character laid out in linear form connecting relationships in memory. This is exciting and adds clarity and precision to each layer. The performance moves easily through these and fully inhabits the interior space of each layer. Meter and rhythm then respond and emphasise.

And yet these complexities are controlled in the shape and meter of the performance. It retains a simple modest clarity. This is an exciting and mature exploration of the tune. It provides scope for future performance and is less about a personal meditation. It explores more of the complexities of a long tradition.
Galway Bay - Five Takes

This process also take place for the second tune in the set, Galway Bay. There is no need to go through the development process again. Instead I show the table of audio sketches with the excerpts highlighted. This is accompanied with the aural examples. Again we can hear the development of the ‘character’ of the performance.

Fig 5.11: Screenshot from desktop showing landscape of recordings for ‘Galway Bay’
Final Set

This is an example of the final set, an Páistín Fionn and Galway Bay, in a solo fiddle performance. This is a personal interpretation of the tunes. An exploration within a fiddle tradition context. This might be considered a development of the culmination of the point on the sketch shown earlier. It is not as clean as suggested by the sketch and there is already much I would change about the recording just heard. It does however give us a point of perspective on these tunes that we can take to conversations with other musicians, collaborations etc. I hope to find here an emergent character above any of the characteristics evident up to now.

Development of Final Set

The final set is developed with composer and collaborator Donal Siggins. He develops ideas and begins a sketching process that develops a new perspective. The final excerpt comes from those sketches. Donal describes his development as follows;

"Algorithmic performance programmed in MaxMSP where an analysis of fiddle tunes is used to trigger simple processes to add other musical elements. With the exception of the amount of interaction with audio, which is controlled throughout, we get to observe the results in traditional indeterminate music fashion: rather than dictating every element, low level detail is left unspecified. Errors and artefacts in analysis are retained and these along with the varying level of interaction are plainly audible."

The development of this would probably occur in a live recording or performance environment where the fiddle performance could interact in real time with the triggered accompaniment. The set would become a more immersive and responsive musical interior in real time.

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29 Donal Siggins collaborated on bouzouki and guitar on the album recording Steve Larkin and Mick Kinsella. Donal also engineered, masters and produced the recording. See Anthropological Music, Chapter 4, p. 189.

30 Donal Siggins, Description of accompaniment on An Páistín Fionn and Galway Bay, November 2015.
Conclusion

The detailed improvisations in the interior of the tune are the lifeblood of the compositional process. It is in the details that the richness of the compositional form becomes evident. Once we inhabit the interior of the tune the composition become a landscape. A rich and complex world emerges full of improvisatory details, relationships and character. We mustn’t get lost in the interior. Musically brings the presentational character of those landscapes into performance.
Case Study 2 - The Gutter Book

Introduction

'The Gutter Book' is a research study of the development of the gutter detail for the ‘House in Bagnelstown.’ In chapter 4 we saw broad and improvisatory landscapes of design development in the ‘design landscape drawings.’ These worked to establish the compositional patterns of the project through multiple scales of objects. This thought is condensed into the real physical objects at this detail design stage. This produces construction information that manifests these patterns of composition in real projects. In 'The Gutter Book' I examine this process through the lens of a single detail.

I was a contributor to ‘Making Research – Researching Making,’ ADAPT-r conference, Aarhus School of Architecture, September 10 – 12, 2015 co-ordinated by Maria Veltcheva, Valentina Signore, Anna Holder and Eli Hatleskrog and the EU ADAPT-r Research Fellows. In this exhibition I presented a study of the gutter detail developed to fit into the framework of the exhibition, a Muji box. This allowed the model to be packaged and sent on a travelling exhibition around the host university of the EU ADAPT-r program. I also presented an accompanying abstract. This is an edited version of the text.

“This is a study of the gutter detail for a house in Co. Carlow, Ireland. It evidences the improvisational process on historical and contemporary precedents appropriate to the particular project, climate and culture. This forms a new artefact and solves various technical or compositional difficulties in the project. It assists the overall character of the building in landscape. This object contributes to the spatial ambitions of the project by framing horizontal space, filtering light and introducing climate to the interior.

The study also evidences the way in which this particular object-based synthesis, the gutter detail, establishes itself within the compositional strategy. The model also articulates,
in part, other key compositional objects such as the floor slab tapestry, the articulated roof structure and the gable and shows the compositional relationships between these objects. This compositional strategy slowly builds the spatial character of the project and landscape.

In earlier research we see how object and spatial characteristics configure the design process. A method of improvisational sketching allows distinct objects to develop, at various scales, across the project. These objects seek to evolve a distinct character that contributes to the material character of the cultural landscape and also seek to contribute to the evolving spatial ambitions in the design project. Both these strands of thought develop in tandem, and without bias, until synthesis is reached through the improvisational process.

These characteristics evolve in a type of compositional tapestry. A fluid improvisational process is anchored by key moments of synthesis in the design process. Those key moments are recorded in models and drawings and either; form touchstones for further improvisation with the design process; or establish themselves to become part of the overall compositional tapestry. The models, of synthesis moments in the details, shows how the character of objects or artefacts and spatial ambitions are in conversation in our work at every detail and continually contribute to the overall compositional tapestry of the project.32

32‐Adapt-R travelling exhibition - Making Research – Researching Making,1
Diagram

The accompanying diagram was developed to observe the position of the gutter detail in the compositional structure of the project. It captures or summarises the nature of objects in compositional assemblages. The chronology of the drawing runs from top to bottom. Objects have loose boundaries that extend and connect with other objects. They are improvised and developed within their own typological boundaries and establish syntactical or spatial relationships with the other objects in the compositional assemblage.

The diagram represents the various horizontal cross sections as we proceed through the project. In the early stages we see larger scale ‘objects’ that respond to landscape, that emerge from the improvisatory sketches. For example Roof, Villa, Temple, Shed, Inverted Plinth etc. These objects are loose in definition and cross contaminate as the project develops. We see a smaller scale of objects further down the diagram although only the ‘Gutter Detail’ is named. This is indicative of the timeline of the project, as we gain more definition in the project. The field of improvisatory sketching surrounding these smaller scales of objects is much less that in the landscape scale of objects. As we descend to the tender point we see that more precise details emerge as ‘gutter, column frame, gable, etc. These are often informed by practical lenses such as local building techniques, climate and economy.

A significant discovery brought about by the drawing is what is identified as the ‘Emergent Values,’ or ‘Compositional Lens,’ at the top left or the middle slice parts of the drawing. It was here that the role of syntax (or order), that I have been discussing.
throughout the research, crystallised. We can see objects form in the improvisational sketches from the ‘emergent values’ at the top left of the drawing. These are intuitions for relationships in landscape including ‘interiority, landscape, economy, topos and geometry, etc.’ As objects evolve in the compositional assemblage they are studied through the lens of their relationships with other objects. This is shown in the slice in the drawing and includes “material, proportion, space, compositional principals and framing landscape.” This highlights compositional syntax between objects, in the composition or landscape, and is made spatially or in connections. My intuitions for the difference between objects and syntax came into focus through this drawing. On one hand we have the character of objects and on the other the character of the syntactical relationships that bind them. I can clearly separate the nature of object in practice from syntax and order.31

Objects in the compositional assemblage, shown by the diagram, have vertical and horizontal relationships through the various scales. Syntax is formed in horizontal relationship across the scales of object as evident in each cross section and highlighted with arrows from the Gutter Detail in the diagram. For example, the gutter will have relationships with a column and a roof. It is also formed in relationships between the different scales of objects as indicated by the long vertical arrows that move from the Gutter Detail. For example, the gutter will have a relationship with the building as a temple and with landscape as part of this temple. Not to mention its role as a part of the DNA of landscape outlined in chapter 7.34 They develop complex functionally interdependent relationships across the various scales and ideas of the project as observed in chapter 2 and 3.35

The diagram leads down to a central point. This is similar to the diagram on music in the earlier part of this chapter.36 This is ambiguously called ‘the point of conceptual completion.’ This is really the point when the construction stage starts and we hope to have a fully resolved compositional interior. This is an important point in our process where every object of the composition comes into sharp definition and establishes exact relationships. The objects and patterns of syntax should be clear and complete. After this point our diagram fans out again in the construction. Improvisations develop in conversations with builders and subcontractors. Developments emerge in the imperfect nature of the construction process. However the compositional order is always underneath defining the

31 The observation of the role of syntax is very significant. Syntax is fundamental to the second cornerstone of practice ‘The Interior Space of Composition’ observed in chapter 1. It has been continually observed throughout the research and was especially apparent in music as observed in chapter 2. Many conceptual ideas develop from this perspective. One project, ‘Sounding Boxes’, derived almost thoroughly from syntactical relationships. This understanding represents much potential for future research and practice development.

34 See Detail as DNA of Landscape, chapter 7 - p. 258.

35 See Development and Cone Diagram, Chapter 5, p. 198.
Improvisatory principals.

A perfect building, that reflects the compositional form at the central point of the diagram, is not sought in the construction process. The interior space of the composition simply sets out proposed compositional relationships. Like in music, it is a position of understanding, a perspective from which to improvise. As the construction process evolves, items change and adapt to suit budget, the difficulties of building, the practicalities of making, cultural techniques and the insights of craftsmen. Conversations with the local makers involve adjustments, small improvisations, moments of conceptual imperfection, etc. This is the act of making architecture, like the act of making music.

The compositional ideas are manipulated to suit the character of the construction, the landscape and the society. We explore local construction techniques; stones pulled from the ground, farmyard concrete and ditches. We see a light herding of landscape and construction rather than a staunch guard. The ‘ideal’ interior space of the composition gives way to a ‘real’ character of construction. We engage with an old constructional conversation in landscape. It is a process of digging, being observant and finding the ‘usual’, efficient ways of doing things. Then applying these to the compositional ambitions of the project.

We must understand where alterations and improvisations can be made. In the process of construction we should understand the difference between tolerance and error. In the craft of making objects we must not seek artificial perfection, but character, in the relationships of syntax we seek clarity and emphasis; in the act of building we seek belief.

Symbolisation and Improvisation

In this project the emergence of 12 detail characters in the detail design stage are counted as follows: Gutter, gable, landscape columns, windows as meter, windows as landscape moon, eaves, major structure (column tree), tapestry floor slab, pit base, light conservatory, rain pools and spout. The naming of these items indicates the process of categorisation, of symbolisation. As outlined in chapter 3\textsuperscript{37} we begin, or continue, an anthropological process of collecting similar types of objects in culture. We also begin to think conceptually about their role in the patterns of compositional meaning.

‘The Gutter Book,’ is a good example of this symbolisation and improvisation process. The object as gutter is identified as a conceptual form within the composition. The gutter detail is not developed as a simple sign of rain but rather a symbol that allows us to conceptualise what a gutter might mean, or has the potential to mean, in a place of rain. This symbol denotes a history of meanings associated with the concept of a gutter and frees our thinking to improvise on these meanings in a contemporary way. In this way pastiche associated with postmodern referencing is avoided. We then develop, improvise, twist and push the character of object, the gutter detail, until it can sit comfortably into the patterns of meaning already identified in the overall composition. Through these improvisations, the gutter detail finally fuses into the overall

compositional structures of the project while retaining its individual character and meaning in new and unusual ways.

The gutter detail must also develop the compositional patterns within the composition. It is tested by its ability to support the abstract compositional relationships, which move towards the interior space, the real moments of syntax and order and the relationships between the compositional and cultural objects in the project.
Methodology

‘The Gutter Book’ records the development, in real practice, of one object in a compositional assemblage. It records sketches (reflective and developmental), the development in hardline drawing form (in over 35 revisions) and other developed drawings that emerge from the gutter detail. Photographs of models made in the development are also included. A descriptive text accompanies the development similar to the recording notes taken in musical recording session and seen in ‘An Páistín Fionn’. Key moments of development in other objects, influenced by the gutter detail, are referred to. The plan development is shown to contextualise the detail development in the overall project.

Models

Models are made to test opportunities in the design development. There are a range of types of models. Sketch models test the eaves detailing in three dimensions. Overall scale models of the eaves test emergent character and space of the gutter. Simple cast models test the material character of elements in the detailing such as tiles etc. These models test the spatial atmosphere or character in real objects. They become part of the anthropological collection in their own right as observed in chapter 4. The successful models have strong characters beyond the compositional and technical ideas of the detail. They re-enforce the presentational meaning or character of the overall project. These models are read in conjunction with the Gutter Book.


See Pattern Drawings, Chapter 4.
Reflective Notes

We recorded written notes as part of this reflective process, similar to those taken during the music recordings. The resultant text, loose and often formed by simple keywords, has been included in the gutter book. As in the music playback notes, this is a personal reflective process which forms a research aid, allowing us to map the development of the detail based on its character and instinct. They capture the experience of the detail design process in the heat of the moment.

The emergence of character in these notes is very evident. It is a surprise that this was not previously recognised as a design tool as the inner design dialogue is so present in these notes. It draws out a rich set of intuitive observations and can become a part of practice. This is a valuable observation and one that would be useful in developing work outside of contextual practice. John Hejduk uses a similar, more sophisticated process in his writing to explore a cultural subconscious.

40 As outlined in Chapter 4, I recognise a similar tracking of character in this way in the poems of architect John Hejduk. This is a valuable observation as it allows a development of practice. With these techniques we can explore personal subconscious as well as landscape character.

41 See Community of Practice and Hejduk, Chapter 4, p. 182.
Source Gutters

By identifying and symbolising the gutter we can begin to explore similar cultural artefacts. Bagnelstown has a rich local 18th C neo-classical and neo-gothic building tradition associated with the local estates. The cultural tradition of building is made clear in the planning report:

“There is a very fine tradition of detached farmhouses set on the undulating farmland in the area. There are the distinctive dormer window farmhouses common in the area that may be a house type developed by the Beresford Estate for well off tenant farmers probably in the 18th C. [...] There are also a number of Georgian farmhouses independently developed in the mid 18th C [...] at Kilgreaney, Kilcruit and surrounding areas. Other distinctive development includes the Barrow Line completed in 1791 and supporting locks including Sliguff Lock and Lock House [...] The neoclassical Georgian tradition is clearly evident in Muine Bheag town itself and surrounding areas with many fine examples. An early example is the Garden Temple at Woodlands House in Newstown, Co. Carlow (circa 1740) with 5 columns supporting an entablature and a small dome roof built of rubble stone. The Courthouse on Main Street, Muine Bheag (circa 1835) by Daniel Robertson is perhaps the most obvious example with its detached single cell over raised base and single storey deep projecting porch to rear. A continuity of tradition can be seen in the the 3 bay double height post office (circa 1915) probably by Harold Leask.”

Less documented but equally important are the vernacular farmhouses and outbuildings nesting into the topography of the area including the clients’ own family farmhouse and outbuildings. Here there are many characterful and rich examples including the detail photographed. Broader cultural references are also introduced. We see Asplund, Barragan, Siza, Tavora, Plecnik and Shinohara expressing the gutters to the point that they become a major player in the order of their architecture. We also refer to the cultural reading of gutters, from the rope eaves of Donegal cottages to the classical house to the temple etc. They register local climate, craft and materials. They are often captured best in farmyards where ad-hoc details capture character with elegance.

Similar to the music recordings, attention is paid to source details, ‘gutters’ in this case. We explore their meaning in the composition of the building and in the climate and culture and understand their compositional meanings. We do not need to explore them with the same precision employed in music. There is more room for subjective fantasy. The idea of the gutter, or the potentiality of the gutter is what is being explored. This allows the development of the gutter free from any particular traditional form. It’s the idea, the symbol of what a gutter can mean, that develops rather than precise technicalities.
Stages of Development

I recorded 5 key stages in the development of the gutter detail. These principle 5 stages are outlined here along with an edited summary of the reflective notes. The complete Gutter Book is included in the index.

Introduction

The introduction starts with a general reflection on the project carried forward from the planning stages. The development of an efficient two-storey square envelop housed within a broader ‘shed’ form can be seen.

Its relationship to landscape is especially noted. The sharp geometrical nature of the project set against the undulating farmland and the archetypal geometry of the ancient ring-fort beside it. The relationship of the eaves to the ground is measured, carefully judged. They sit low to the ground hunkering the sharp geometry of the first floor, monolithic and devoid of all windows except two moons, looking into the landscape. The ground floor areas recede, hidden into the earth aided by the inverted plinth. This is further supported by the eaves detail which throws the reflective windows deep into the shadows. It becomes a simple archetypal geometry in the landscape. The inverted plinth sinks into the topography making interior landscape space like the adjacent ring-fort. The technical separation of warm envelope and outer shell allows flexibility in the proportion and head height in the attic and is controlled by the eaves. The interstitial space between thermal envelop and the external form is rich with possibility. This continues to develop throughout the Gutter Book development. The precise technicalities, the construction of local gutters and the opportunities they provide in culture are explored. The gables offer light and view to the attic space.
5.2 Improvisation & Development

Fig 5.22: Landscape at Bagnelstown
Fig 5.23: Site Landscape at Bagnelstown
Fig 5.24: Site Model House at Bagnelstown

Fig 5.25: Proportional Elevational Study for house at Bagnelstown
Revisions 1 - 3 begin the process of development. At the beginning of the detailing process we are left with a collection of objects in vague relationships based on the ‘collecting and assembling process’ evident in the previous chapters. In this project, the process of collected and assembling of objects has left us with Roof, Villa, Temple, Shed, Inverted Plinth etc. at the larger scales in landscape. At the detail stages we see objects close up - objects such as gutter, column frame, gable, etc. We have intuition for the conceptual interior of the project, the objects in patterns of conceptual relationships set in landscape and working at the various scales of objects.

We begin to look specifically at the gutter detail in this context. We begin exploring the nature of the spaces, rolling between the scale of space in landscape and the intimate eaves scale spaces. There is a sense of excitement in examining the potential that separating the eaves from the envelop offers. It allows an exploration of a world of hay lofts, semi-interiors in the landscape. The eaves frame landscape horizontally and provide a datum to the topography. It solves the low geometry conundrum and opens up potential for exploration of a gutter order.

Technically the separation of the roof and the house provide opportunity for a rich syntactical order. Construction techniques, often hidden in thermal wall construction methods, can be evident and celebrated. Wide tolerances can accept ad-hoc construction that might be farm-like in character. Simple cast in situ concrete profiles and roofs of cheap metal that can clatter in the rain. Light can be brought in through the eaves with single glazing at a reduced cost. Cheap products can be used and these can be replaced over time.
However, there are many frustrating problems. The deep plan, attic and eaves spaces compromise the quality of light. Chimneys used to bring light into the plan weaken the roof geometry in landscape. The attic space is compromised, reduced significantly in area by the eaves. The external loft spaces are difficult to access and offer potential for pigeons. We remember that at one stage there was a glasshouse as the roof.

Rev 3 - First Jump

Revision 3 represent at the first major jump in the design thinking, the first 'Gutter Jump'. It causes obvious and significant changes. We reposition eaves windows on the ground floor external line. This is an exciting development for the attic space because it creates useable spaces at the gable windows and storage in the dark areas. I remember Lampens\(^ {43} \) and the value of dark spaces. We can have eaves windows that can borrow upside down light like Sert,\(^ {44} \) at the Miro Foundation, Barcelona. There is no increase in thermal envelope and therefore no associated additional cost.

The attic is gaining a spatial character with low windows of borrowed light at the eaves and 2 landscape moons at the gables. Overall the character of the house is clear in the landscape with the soft interior envelope covered by the geometric roof shell. The flying gutter is still technically clear separating water from envelope. This provides more clarity on the eaves spaces. An attic order develops on the inner elevation. Conservatories fold easily into these new conditions and start a dialogue with intermediate columns. The chimney moves to the eaves spaces and opens the roof to let light onto its shoulders.

\(^ {43} \) Juliaan Lampens, Houses.

\(^ {44} \) Josep Lluís Sert, Miro Foundation, Barcelona, 1975.
Rev 4 - 7
As we move through Rev 4 - 7 we see subtle shifts based on developments in other ‘objects’. Roof datum and sills move up and down adjusting frame and interiory. Columns go and then return based on engineering requirements. First floor slab begins working as a ceiling tapestry. A sunken floor emerges. The plan is stable.

Problems with the attic order develop in the eaves spaces. The windows explore slipped meter, framing, depth of frame and other techniques to try and solve these problems. The conservatories evolve to support the eaves beam to eliminate problematic interstitial columns and add hanging down-stands to the eaves beams. Eaves ceiling too small to be expressed as the underside of the roof construction. Frustrated by the relationships at the eaves space. This needs its own particular character. We need to go back to the gutter.
Rev 8 - 10
As we move through Rev 8 - 10 the gutter detail begins to control the nature of these eaves spaces. There is significant development and change to the order or syntax of the gutter detail. A corniced space evolves with attic windows on one side. The datum of external roof is repositioned to assist.

Height of the gutter beams increases to meet the requirements of the span but with a thinner profile. The spans also require large elements of vertical structure and we introduce columns that establish a spatial meter. I remember Shinohara’s work. A new development of the first floor slab ceiling tapestry of fine precast beams is introduced. There is a new excitement about the counterpoint of gutter detail, major structure and tapestry. I am beginning to balance the compositional and syntactical framework to relate the scales of landscape and interiority to the syntactical patterns of order. Layers are thickening to landscape.

The chimney is back to north. Windows are joining the conversation with a vertically emphasised meter. Masonry wall panels, of pilasters and ribbed panels, are introduced to limit material palette and manage expression through surface depth and order. Still unsatisfied with the eaves spaces now under the control of the gutter.

Rev 13 - Jump
Another ‘Gutter Jump.’ In this revision we see an important development that directs all subsequent design development. The spatial potential of the gutter in climate and light becomes evident. It can charge the eaves spaces and interior space of the house. We can comb the light and the rain.

These developments are brought into the construction detailing. Extending the technology used for precast concrete floor beams construction, we examine the potential in precast eaves tiles. They are stacked side by side delivering rainwater over the eaves space to a cast in situ gutter beam. Light filters through a triangular frieze that emerges from under the roof covering part of the layered architectural expression. Externally we read the frieze in the landscape like the rope stitching on the eaves of a donegal cottage. Mists of rain make their way through the triangular openings.

The first floor slab tapestry now extends to the eaves to make a frayed edge to landscape. This weaves light, rain, landscape and interior spaces together at the eaves. The precast eaves tiles explore shape, size and weight to make a detail artefact within the gutter object. Another objects at the smaller scale and like at Utzon’s house where such fragments might be found in the grass years later. The detail is not yet working with the proportions and order of the eaves spaces but it is an exciting development. We emerge from a myopic view of

earlier problems to observe the significance of the detail evolve across the scales of composition.

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5.2 Improvisation & Development

Fig 5.35: Gutter Model Detail

Fig 5.36: Gutter Tiles Models
Rev 16
We return to the frieze and the problem of order. We drop the datum of the external roof and embed the attic story clearly the eaves cornice. We move beyond the precast roof tiles due to the complexity of detailing. We explore earlier ideas of an eroded eaves that casts shadows on the wall. The ceiling is better and the eaves counterpoints the attic windows. A raised gutter takes roof drainage (we remember the beautiful swiss gutters) and drainage system becomes clear. Eaves spaces are still not right.
Rev 17 - 23 - Jump

We discover the problem. The attic space has maintained an unnecessary visual connection downwards into the eaves spaces. We move the gutter to the first floor slab level, reintroduce simple precast tile allowing light through and the problems evaporate. It becomes the rainbow house. The gutter becomes spatial, opening up to the interior. Light is captured through rainfalls from the roof and reflections in rainwater pools.

These gutters become silent. They eliminate landscape registering only light through sun and rain. This delicately balances two temporal worlds of landscape, climate and light through the eaves and two picturesque moons. The upstairs space is now in a beautiful harmonic state. The syntactical order of the house positions two spatial landscape states in perfect compositional balance. Below, the interior tapestry of the ground floor ceiling extends to the external ground floor eaves maintaining the horizontal register. The precast eaves pieces reinforce the frayed edge to the tapestry allowing rainbow light through.
In the elevations the attic problem disappears and the proportions are restored. The eaves beams increase their depth to the gutter. This successfully develops the overall proportion of the house and it crouches further into the archetypal geometries of landscape. The beam depth also eliminates the need for central columns and now the overall structural order is defined by the modest gutter. Only two central columns remain on the gable elevations to establish off centric relationships with the circular windows. A gargoyle returns to cascade water, at a safe distance, to geometric rainwater pools.

The gutter detail has grown to be a significant voice in the overall logic of the project. It oscillates between its own character and the spaces it creates in the project. It provides an important platform for the emergent character of the project.
Minor issues remain across the project. We fine tune the gutter development. For example, the major structure develops on the basis of the spans to provide vertical points of tension through the project. The frieze at the FF slab further simplifies with a subsequent development of the cast artefact. The various ‘objects’ in the project are set up and positioned in relationships to seek ‘compositional space’. All element have worked to a single point, in harmony and towards an overall logic. We complete the detail design drawings and get ready for tender.

Realistic tender price in too high and we enter the first round of improvisations. We simplify the build maintaining the important parameters and make savings of 30% on the budget. And we are off into the world. First post tender improvisation.
5.2 Improvisation & Development
The Gutter Book Conclusion

The Gutter Book illustrates the development of one constituent object in relation to the compositional assemblage. We can then understand similar processes of improvisation and development across all constituent objects in the design process. We see the complete development of object character; a new cultural artefact; detail born of climate, material and culture. This is the DNA of landscape. It represents the cultural landscape and is formed by it. It establishes its meaning in place and context promoting regional variation.

Symbolisation and meaning is central to the process. In identifying and naming the gutter as a constituent object we introduce a catalogue of meaning into the object. Improvisations develop on the meaning of gutter allowing freedom from cultural tropes in the development process.

The development of syntax is evident. Spatial relationships are established within the object itself, accepting light and rain into an expanded interior, establishing tensions in the spatial relationships between the objects on the interior of the detail object. This space is brought into the interior of the object. There is also connective syntax; the syntax of actual connecting relationships on the interior. These syntax structures work down into the interior object. The syntactical relationships of space and connection also turn upwards into the large scales of building and landscape. Relationships, tensions, within space of landscape are established – horizon, hedgerow, sky, distance. While the connective syntax is equally important. The character of order in landscape.

The detail foregrounds its own character at its own scale and up and down the entire scale of objects, from detail to building to landscape. As in music expressive character is always sought. Technical performance or ideas are secondary. Each detail or object has a subjective emotional character. It is about marrying and counterpointing the characters in the composition to make an overall new character. These characters inhabit landscape and the landscape in turn forms their DNA at all scales.
5.3 Overall Conclusion - Similarities Between Music and Architecture

These studies are a snapshot of how I develop detail in music and architecture. In ‘The Gutter Book’ we see the frustration and excitement of working through sketches, notes, models and drawings and see the evolution of the the detail. The development evolves from cultural, compositional and presentational meanings, their structures of hypothetical and evident meaning, from emergent character and the ambitions for the interior space of composition. In music, ‘An Páistín Fionn and Galway Bay’ we also see the development of detail towards compositional strategies that pushing meter, pitch, timbre, etc. They both build wide design landscapes on which to draw on in improvisation and which also support cultural understanding. They also work back into a broader compositional strategies that unfold into their respective landscapes.

There is also remarkable similarities in the processes used. Both explore cultural details, in anthropological processes and develop them in improvisation as we have seen. We also use similar sketching processes uncovering vague intuitions and developing them. This further clarifies the sketching and improvisational techniques seen in earlier research. I continue to explore a wide landscape of influences rather than direct a singular design process.

The value of the anthropological process is very apparent at this scale. The landscape is rich with detail and character of the artefacts. There is no need for resplendent forms; the moments of detail embedded in the project are powerful voices.

Music has developed a high expectation of the precision required for these moments. This has offered some understanding of the value of accuracy and precision in the examination of the details of architecture and the scope of their expressional capacity. They must have meaning to have value, both in the compositional form and in the cultural landscape. We develop our sensibility and work towards a deeper understanding of the detail of the music and tradition. Working hard into the tradition as Eliot [Eliot, 1997] says, De Solá-Morales points out that “Art is not the object; it cannot be identified with an artefact that we appropriate independently of the process by means of which it was conceived and realised.” [De Solá-Morales, 1997, p. 75] While this is true, similarly, we cannot leave behind the object or artefact. We need both, the perceived object and the aesthetic experience that comes from the participatory experience of being involved in the revealing of its compositional structures; its evident and hypothetical meanings. This is evident in music.

47 See Chapter 4.
48 De Solá-Morales continues "The process is more important than the finished, isolated object are the ideas that made it possible. Artistic communication is produced at the moment we are able to understand the object as the result of a structure... Only from the structure of the complex whole and the successive systems of signifiers and signifieds are we given the possibility of receiving the idea, of participating in the self-referential and autonomous messages of the process of artistic production" [De Solá-Morales, 1997, p. 75].
6.

Development of Theory of Process - Part 2
Introduction

In chapter 3 I introduced the ‘early design process diagram.’\(^1\) This diagram can now be developed based on observation in the research outlined in chapters 4 and 5. It makes further observations about the anthropological design process and compositional objects or assemblies based the subsequent research findings. It explains the collection of objects, the development of objects in the process and the nature of the compositional relationships in the new compositional objects. This iteration of the design process diagram was developed for PRS 6, the pre completion seminar.

The principal observations or developments were as follows:

• A more realistic model of process with ‘associative sets’ established in a field of ongoing practice rather than as artificial set in the design process.
• Development of understanding of the ‘potentiality’ of objects in the design process. Indicates the potential for the object to be perceived, improvised or developed in the development of the project. Much of this is intuitive in the early stages of the project.
• Development of understanding of the emergent object is an ‘assemblage\(^2\) of objects in a pattern of compositional and cultural meaning rather than a fused new object.

\(^1\) See Early Design Stage Diagram, Chapter 3 - General Theory of Process, p. 103.
\(^2\) The term ‘assemblage’ was introduced in Chapter 3 and is a term derived from Assemblage Theory. This is a better term than compositional object and is outlined more fully towards the end of the chapter under Assemblages.

We will examine each of these categories below but first I will outline the general structure of the diagrams and what they represent. There are two diagrams. In diagram 1 we see the early working stages of the projects while in diagram 2 we see the developed project.
6.1 New Design Diagram

I will first explain the geography of the diagram. It is important to state that, like the last process diagram, this is a frame that structures the observations made in the research. Once the diagram is explained we can move to understanding the various processes captured in the diagram born out in the research.

There are a number of [satellite] objects, that are influential to the project, in position around the space of the design project. These may be objects from the cultural landscape or practice collected in the anthropological process. They are collected in loose associative sets, or fields of interest, that have built up in the project or practice generally. This is a better representation than the model presented in chapter 3. It describes a more a fluid ongoing practice, a type of anthropological field over time, rather than associative sets artificially established in each project. Projects require me to condense certain collections of items in new assemblages and this deepens my understanding of those objects.

Fig 6.2: Design Process Landscape Diagram
Fig 6.3: New Design Stage
Process Drawing

6.1 Development of Theory of Process
Part 1 of New Design Diagram

The fluid line indicates the interior space of the design project while arrows show objects being brought into that space from the collection around the project. Those objects retain their links back out to those associative sets. They remain in a comparative position as they evolve or change in the design process. The interior design space of the project is the emerging new compositional object or assemblage.

We have already seen in chapter 3 how objects are collected and allowed to float loosely in our conceptual imaginations as various conceptual adumbrations, or sketched outlines. As the process evolves they are conceptually symbolised or categorised as types of things with compositional, cultural and presentational meaning. This is the basis of improvisation and development. In as much as possible we collect the whole representation of the object, the oral object, rather than singular concepts. This allows understanding of the object to evolve over the design project and my practice generally.

Objects are brought into the interior space of the design project and have varying degrees of influence in the early stages (evident by their sizes in the diagram model). They also have potential in the project based on their perceived ability to contribute to the patterns of meaning or to establish syntactical order in the assemblage. This is called ‘potentiality’ here and indicated with a dotted ring around the object. On a perceptual level, they exist as intentional objects within the range of their potential representations or ‘potentiality’. We perceive them based on our conscious and intuitive understanding often directed by anthropological and compositional relationships. On a symbolic level, the objects have recognised evident meanings while their potentiality refers to their possible hypothetical meanings. Every representation of an object exists as the nucleus of its own potentiality.

Various objects in the design assembly can have potentialities with sympathetic characteristics. In the early diagram this is indicated by a slight overlap in the outer areas of potentiality. These are often noticed in initial intuitions or observations. As the project evolves the objects develop and modify through improvisation and development with the aim that these potentialities might develop into fully sympathetic compositional relationships.

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3 See Chapter 3 Collecting Objects.
Part 2 of New Design Diagram

We can see the development of the design project in the second part of the diagram. This shows the compositional assemblage as it reaches the design stage conclusion. Objects that have consolidated within the assemblage have been directed by their potentiality to form a singular emergent character. Each object has been developed to sit within the heart of the project. Their potentialities overlap creating synchronous the patterns of meanings and syntactical order. This growth has occurred through improvisational techniques. The constituent objects and their relationships are further amplified by the resonance with other potentialities. A new ‘distinct’ object emerges incorporating all the objects collected within the assemblage. The satellite, or associative, objects remain in orbit around the design project connected by their shared meaning to the new object. This maintains the relationships with context, culture or other influences on the project.

The new compositional object is not a fused new object but rather is an assemblage held together by the strong internal forces between the constituent objects. A number of objects tend to occupy the centre with strong potentialities that are shared with other objects, thereby forming the ambitions for the project. These ambitions are strengthened in synchronous patterns of meaning and order. The edges of potentialities alone push out into areas of individual character. These are characteristics that might be outside the general ambitions for the project but add colour and character to the new assemblage.

The degree to which any object can contribute to the resonant patterns of meaning and have characteristics that exist outside is continually questioned. This constitutes judgement in the project. Discordant objects are possible but are introduced knowingly. They tend to fall away in my practice due to a search for harmonic balance in the work.

In summary, the objects within the assemblage are not now the same as the objects initially collected. They have developed to become a new set of objects with sympathetic potentialities forming an emergent character or assemblage. However, they maintain characteristics and meanings associated with their original forms. I have illustrated this in chapter 5 in musical and architectural examples. I return to the gutter example to unpack this further.
Bagnelstown Gutter Example

If we take the gutter detail in Bagnelstown we can see how the potentiality of one element has a centre, where it shares common ambitions for the project with other objects, an outer edge with its own distinct character and everything in between.

In Zone 1, or the the heart of the assemblage where all potentialities overlap, there is a strong set of shared relationships contributed to by all of the objects in the composition, including the gutter. They form the basic patterns of compositional meaning in the project which are strong enough to support an overall emergent character. The gutter contributes to these shared ambitions: 1. A temple in landscape, with a contemporary entablature and frieze; 2. Supports proportional balance in the overall form; 3. Lights the important attic and eaves; 4. Ordering the relationships between columns and cella; 5. Creating the terraces; 6. Allowing the project to sit low into topography.

The gutter detail, along with the other compositional elements, are all shaped to contribute most significantly in these areas. They form the central heart of the project. The compositional elegance is a measure of the balance between the elements.

Zone 2 is the second overlap where a number, but not all, potentialities overlap. This shows the looser harmonies where a fewer number of these potentialities form relationships. This represents a looser pattern of meaning around the strong centre. These might be inferences around the edges that appear and reappear in the composition. Here the gutter contributes as follows: 1. Shelter for the conservatories and terraces; 2. Receded elevations; 3. Window details. These secondary relationships often emerge naturally in the project and exist in the background solving various compositional requirements.

Zone 3 has no overlap with other potentialities. These refer to characteristics of the objects that don’t form relationships with other objects. These are often the distinctive features in the composition, the characterful colour, the singularities on the fringes. They can establish the contradictions and imperfect elements so important to the life of many projects. Or they can evolve to become main themes in the project themselves. Here the gutter contributes these individual characteristics as follows: 1. Rain-house - gutter and gargoyle; 2. Rain-light - the introduction to rainbow light or silent light into the house; 3. The small kick in the elevation; 4. the conservatory roof. In this project many of these establishes main themes in the project and the patterns of other elements shift as a consequence. It realigns the relationships throughout the project.

Through this design process the assemblage becomes a new object identifiable by the strong character of the heart of the project.

Harmonic potentialities create strong patterns of compositional meaning that bind constituent objects together in assembles. Constituent objects always exist independently but in relationships with others. The strength of the ‘heart’ relationships mean the objects will be bound so strongly in these primary compositional relationships that a new emergent ‘compositional object’ evolves. In zone 2 the less fundamental relationships have potential to appear and disappear as the assemblage is perceived by different people with different understanding. The zone 3 singularities offer colour or character.
to the assemblage. The three layers offer a perceptual range of characteristics to the assemblage governed by sensibility and understanding.

As we have seen in music in chapter 2, the constituent parts can always be perceived and explored independently. They exist at all scale of objects, downwards into a molecular level and upwards into landscape and context. The new assemblage itself sits in the middle ground of the molecular and landscape scales and we must be conscious of its relationship to both. The constituent objects in the assemblage are already inherited complex assemblages perceived through our sensibility and understanding. Assemblages are formed in context as one constituent object to a much larger cultural landscape. We are bound both downwards and upwards and tinker in the middle between molecular and broad landscape objects.

The drawings support understanding of the design process; a useful method of recording the process in a form of shorthand. They allow me to observe and reflect on the moments of complexity especially the anthropological process and the improvisatory nature of the development process. I understand Siza’s metaphor more fully “The design of one house is almost the same as the design of another: walls, windows, doors, roof. And yet it is unique. Each element is transformed as it comes into relation with another. Occasionally the project takes on its own life. Then it becomes an unpredictable animal, with restless feet and shifting eyes. If its transfigurations are not understood, or more than the essence of its desires is satisfied, it becomes a monster. If every things that seems evident and beautiful in it is fixed, it becomes ridiculous. If it is too contained, it ceases to breathe and dies.” [Siza, 1997, p. 51] The objects we collect, and the assemblies we create, are unpredictable animals with the ranging personalities and the best we can do is herd.
6.2 Observations on Potentiality and Assemblages

In the same way as we made certain observations on the initial drawings I would also like to examine some further observations on this diagram in the area of Potentiality and Assemblages. As before these are sketch outlines and suggest future areas of potential research.

Potentiality

We have already outlined ways in which objects can be perceived in multiple adumbrations. They can have cultural, compositional or presentational meanings and can develop relationships with other objects. These ‘potentialities’ can be intuited in the objects within our anthropological field. We see evident meanings in their existing relationships and possible hypothetical meanings based on new relationships or based on an idealisation of their natures. While we can’t predict outcomes at the beginning of projects we make subconscious choices about what type of objects might offer most potential.

Anthropological practice is a way of gathering objects containing rich potentials that can be brought to projects when the circumstances are particularly suitable. We allow objects to move into position when required. We saw this especially in chapter 2 when Tommie Potts introduced a phrase from ‘Mambo Italiano’ into the reel ‘My Love is in America’. By looking at it this way, we understand that practice is in fact the anthropological field itself.

The potentiality is what is being explored by the extensive sketching we saw in chapter 4. It is not a pictorial representation but a process of exploring the potentiality of objects and their ability to enter into relationships with other objects. It is also a shorthand method for quickly viewing the nature of those relationships and explores how these relationships might affect the overall compositional patterns. It is an exploration into syntactical order and spatial character in those relationships. It is through these studies that the potentiality of each object is turned over and explored for the new project.

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Fig 6.5: Sketch of Sensibility, Intuition and Understanding with Cultural, Compositional and Presentational Meaning

Fig 6.6: Development of Sketch of Sensibility, Intuition and Understanding with Cultural, Compositional and Presentational Meaning

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4 See Improvisation and Development, Chapter 2.
5 See design landscape drawings for Copperagh and Kimmage, Chapter 4.
Assemblages

Oral musical cultures use objects, tunes or songs, to carry cultural knowledge in packages that can be easily transferred between members of that oral culture. They must be capable of being remembered from single acts of vision or hearing. The tunes are built from constituent objects that are held together by complex relationships and patterns of meaning as we have seen in chapter 2. They can be broken down into constituent phrases within the compositional structures. However they present as compositional wholes so that they can be conceptualised as single entities with their own presentational meaning in landscape and culture. Similarly, in composition, we look for emergent character in new objects. We build them so that they can also have their own identity and meaning in culture.

We have spent some time trying to understand how this evolves in both sides of practice. I have shown how the characteristics of objects emerge from culture and then position themselves in new work at the various scales of objects. The constituent objects continue to exist with autonomy within the overall project and can be perceived and developed in their own right. These can be returned to and examined separately with all their evident and hypothetical meanings intact. We understand how to change them to affect the overall structure or we can extract them and use them in other objects.

Therefore we understand that compositional objects are not fused entities, formed in a kind of synthesised leap impossible to reverse. Instead they are collections of objects of various scales held together by forces within the compositional structure. A more appropriate description is based on 'assemblage theory' following observations by Manual DeLanda in his 'New Philosophy for Society' [DeLanda, 2006] DeLanda describes the assemblages as follows; “First of all, unlike wholes in which parts are linked by relations of interiority [...] assemblages are made up of parts which are self-subsistent and articulated by relations of exteriority, so that a part may be detached and made a component of another assemblage.” [DeLanda, 2006, p. 18] The research shows this by clearly evidencing a continued existence of objects at all scales of the compositional patterns. As Harman points out “What we have in Bhaskar, as in most of DeLanda’s writings, is a vision of the world as a chain of ascending and descending compounds, each of them autonomous from the pieces that create them and equally independent of the wider contexts in which they are enmeshed.” [Harman, 2010, p. 181]

Assemblage theory solves the conceptual difficulties with the earlier model and allows us understand the importance of the patterns of meaning that holds the objects of the assemblage together in their syntactical structures. The constituent objects continue to exist independently within the object and can be adapted, improvised and developed. The assemblage can change and adapt through improvisations and developments.

As DeLanda outlines; “Today the main theoretical alternative to organic totalities is what the philosopher Gilles Deleuze calls

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6.2 Development of Theory of Process

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Graham Harman discusses Manual DeLanda and describes assemblage theory as; “theory of society not in the limited sense of human assemblages, but one suggesting that all entities result from a swarm of finer subcomponents that do not melt into a seamless whole.” [Harman, 2010, p. 170].
assemblages, wholes characterised by relations of exteriority. These relations imply, first of all, that a component part of an assemblage may be detached from it and plugged into a different assemblage in which its interactions are different. In other words the exteriority of relations implies a certain autonomy for the terms they relate, or as Deleuze puts it, it implies that ‘a relation may change without the terms changing’. Relations of exteriority also imply that the properties of the component parts can never explain the relations which constitute the whole... although they may be caused by the exercise of a components capacities. In fact, the reason why the properties of a whole cannot be reduced to those of its parts, is that they are the result not of an aggregation of the components own properties but of the actual exercise of their capacities. These do depend on a component’s properties but cannot be reduced to them since they involve reference to the properties of other interacting entities. Relations of exteriority guarantee that assemblages may be taken apart while at the same time allowing that the interactions between parts may result in a true synthesis.” [DeLanda, 2006, p. 10-11]

The ‘relations of exteriority’ describes that simple autonomy which allows objects to be borrowed and relocated as we saw in the Tommie Potts example in the last chapter. He borrows a phrase from Mambo Italiano and integrated it into My Love is in America. This is also described in the ‘dangly diagram’ and the ‘disassembly of a currach diagram’ on the next page which shows how material objects might be taken apart into various ‘exterior’ relationships for re-assembling into the interior of new objects. He emphasises the ‘interactions between parts’ as being the source of synthesis. I find these terms helpful in understanding my intuitions for the ‘Interior Space of Composition’ that I have continually referred to in the research.

The ‘relations of exteriority’ is helpful because it clearly demonstrates the outwards relationship of the constituent objects. We can then see more clearly the interiority of the ‘interactions between the parts’ or objects or what has been referred to here as the importance of relationships between objects in the act of composition in music and architecture.

Assemblages also help us to better conceptualise the relations of scales of objects in landscape. We can more easily see how objects maintain ‘relations of exteriority’ and allow evolving interactions between the parts. We saw this in the compositional attributes of music through improvisation but we can also see the same in landscape. The assemblage has the ability to absorb differences or changes. This is very important in an oral culture.

Harman points out that “DeLanda provides a realism in which realities are never fully actualised even in the physical realm, let alone in our minds.” [Harman, 2010, p. 171] It is forever a process of actualisation. Once a compositional pattern becomes evident it is the actualisation of that compositional pattern towards the ideal that is sought and not some transcendental notion of the building becoming what it wants to become. This is clearly nonsense. Furthermore understanding the difference between the material object, order and the patterns of meaning can illustrate that old problem of when is an error an error. It is the patterns of compositional meaning and the syntactical structures or order that bind that proceed towards idealisation in our conceptual minds. The actual materiality of objects can hold the fingerprints of our humanity. The materiality of objects, in music and architecture, allow us to share our humanity and our imaginations move beyond this, in meaning and order, to seek the ‘perfect music of heaven’.
6.2 Development of Theory of Process

Fig 6.7: Dangly Diagram, Disassembly of Compositional Objects and Assembly of New Object with Hypothetical and Evident Meaning

Fig 6.8: Disassembly of Cur-rach Diagram showing Evident and Hypothetical Meaning
6.3 Interior Space of Composition

The interior space of composition is a compositional meta-physical interior, like those experienced when immersed in music, architecture or landscape. It is a subjective space between meta-physical and physical landscapes. This was conjured in the google map images and associated musical examples shown in chapter 1. In its most immersive, it is a harmonic compositional space, formed by balanced sets of objects, concepts and relationships. This interior space has evolves in my consciousness from an interiority in music. This has had a significant consequence for my spatial intelligence.

The cultural landscape is also important to this interiority, present both in this cultural musical interior and in my general spatial intelligence, constructed in childhood on a farm in Co. Wexford.

In creative practice I try to make the properties of this interior space real in landscape. My ambition is to build these balanced spaces into landscape. To allow the characteristics of this meta-physical space, born of a cultural landscape and an oral musical tradition, to become apparent in that landscape. To balance properties of a cultural landscape, formed in the deep time, in harmonic or proportional relationships. To construct harmonic space in landscape. These subjective interiors are shared in culture, in a surprising world of shared meanings and perceptions. There are differences in this subjectivity. By making work and music this interior world emerges into the exterior world.

Objects in assemblies build this interior. Patterns of cultural and compositional meaning work down into compositional assemblies and outwards into context and culture. Spatial balance is found by balancing the compositional patterns of these constituent objects and landscape as best we can. This interior is both a conceptual space, i.e a subjective space of composition and a real space, the interior of landscape. I live and work in both these spaces, the conceptual and real. Interiority describes a ‘space’ made up of a combination of both.

This deep interiority evolves in the physical spaces of my architecture. It guides the composition and design process. We see a recurring accretion of layers, the development of depth in the thresholds between inside and outside, strengthening interiority in the work. We see this observation at the very beginning of the research in the case studies in chapter 1.

In the end our world is an interior space of composition and we share it in a cultural perception of landscape. As Harman outlines; “When I judge there is something judged; when I love there is something loved. In directing my attention towards something, I intend it. But that which I intend lies within consciousness, not outside it. Existing only on the interior of my experience.” [Harman, The Quadruple Object, 2011, p. 21] Or as he says elsewhere; “So, what we have is the contact between me and the sensual tree on the interior of the relation between me and the real one.” [Harman, The Road to Objects, 2011, p. 177] My interior is conditioned by culture; from my spatial history and oral musical practice. I accept and value this context in my work and try to build from this position.

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7 See Google Image and Musical examples in Chapter 1, pages 13, 14 & 15
8 See Chapter 2, Objects & Intro to Meaning & Cultural, Compositional and Presentational Meaning.
9 See Chapter 1
7. Landscape and Conclusion
Introduction

In this chapter, I make some final observations on landscape. Some of these are precise reflections on observations made in the last chapters. Others are sketches, included to illustrate future research areas. Overall it is a conclusion to research that has landscape at its core. I will then finish with general observation and contribution to new knowledge in the field.
DNA of Landscape

“The Gutter Book” research in chapter 5 shows a continuing process of anthropological collection down to the detail scale. The objects collected are modest details of a cultural landscape, like gutters or eaves etc. These can be rich in character and information about the society, culture or physical place. They mirror the sensibility of the society, ranging from the characteristic ad-hoc details in farm sheds to the precise character of granite eaves in classical courthouses. They represent a significant part of the material culture. We can examine it with an anthropological eye similar to musical practice, carefully analysing text and context, building a picture of culture and landscape.

These details tell us much about the physical nature of landscape, its climate and topography. They build real and meta-physical interiors that report directly on the severity of wind, rain and sun; the nature of economy and society. They report on the cultural processes of making which speak directly to the craft and resources of a culture. We can grow our understanding of the subtleties of place and through them and see the cultural landscape in all its subtle difference.

Details are the DNA of landscape. This DNA can be altered to affect its material and compositional evolution, to respond to its nature as we saw in the gutter.1 The characteristics of landscape can be manifest in a single detail. Yet, it is comprised of thousands of such details.

There is huge creative scope at this scale. This was clear in chapters 1 & 2 and again in chapter 5 where details in traditional Irish music and landscape formed new emergent characters. Details can form rich compositional structures to make new interiors in landscape. They can build on its rich character to make physical and meta-physical interiors linked to culture and context while fully engaged in contemporary culture. They can explore small variations in detail that continue to define the regional characteristics of landscape and music. It is through the differences in detail, enacted on the yardstick of standard typologies, that we learn most about the differences of regional cultures.

2 See Regional Landscape, Chapter 1 where google map images are shown with associated musical examples from traditional Irish music evidencing regional styles in Ireland - p. 13, 14 & 15. Also see Regional Improvisations in Chapter 2 - p. 82.
3 See Chapter 5, detail development in music - p. 197. Also see Source Gutters, Chapter 5 - p. 214.
Understanding landscape through detail is a very significant part of my cultural and spatial intelligence. [van Schaik, 2011] Landscape is perceived and made through details and small manipulations can have great significance for its spaces. This comes from my childhood experiences where the natural landscape was made and manipulated. My strongest memories of landscape were not of a picturesque landscape but rather one that emerges in the negotiations between made and natural details.

Ireland has a history of building in direct communication with landscape rather than to patterns of style or taste. This is evident in the stone walls of Árainn\textsuperscript{4} to hedgerows of Wexford. Gates, pathways, bogs and field all have their associated details. These reveal the physical landscape and, in turn, shape it. I am interested in bringing these landscape construction methods into the dialogue of architecture. These objects have loose boundaries, extending out into, and merging with, landscape and we wrap it into the ‘compositional space’ of the project. The sacred pagan landscape can continue to have a relationship with material culture.

\textsuperscript{4} The Aran Islands off the West Coast of Ireland.
Representation in Landscape

A significant and recurring question in the PRS panel reviews was how to represent landscape? This was a difficult question to answer. I sought to do so by developing representational techniques for landscape. This was an artificial process and did not work. The breakthrough for this question came through the research presented in chapter 5.

I do not try and represent landscape outside of landscape itself. I work directly into it. The details both represent that social and cultural landscape and they are the cultural landscape. The representation is part of the landscape itself rather than at a remove. It is an act of engaged process rather than a representational one. The same happens with oral musical culture. I play music directly in an oral culture and as part of that culture. This comes back to the reluctance to ‘perform’ due to a belief that music is an engaged process of music making rather than a representative process. It also returns to early intuitions in the research where the space of music and landscape were shown to be immersive, active and participatory.5

In practice, it is often the technical details that enable an actual real engagement in landscape. These details in turn mirror the nature of their landscapes. Over time, as technical proficiency increases, these representations can be explored more deeply. The development of ‘An Páistín Fionn and Galway Bay’ and

“The Gutter Book6 evidence this representation of landscape through the development of detail of their respective landscapes. As Richard Blythe has pointed out; “Actually it is not simply a representation it is actually an entire modified DNA of the same thing which is a much more substantial claim.”7 The representation is a living active part of the landscape itself, a part of the society and culture. It is itself a real part of landscape rather than interloper.

5 See Introduction to Traditional Irish Music and Landscape, Chapter 1 - p. 8.

6 See Chapter 5.

7 Richard Blythe in conversation November 2015.
7.2 Artefact and Interiority

Objects are the mediators that allows us to engage in a conversation with landscape. We perceive the landscape through objects from the ‘bluring buzzing confusion’ as outlined in chapter 2. We build the interior of landscape from the relationships between physical and meta-physical objects in a cultural landscape.

We move between the interior and exterior of objects as we move up and down through the scale of objects. We recognise the interiority of ‘the landscape artefact’ as Aalen [Aalen, Whelan, Stout, 1997, p. 5] has described it. In each interior we see the exterior relationships between constituent objects, each with their own character, a defined ‘object-ness or over againness’ to quote Heidegger. [Heidegger, 1971, p. 165] These relationships, charged by the character of the objects, define the compositional interior.

This exteriority or ‘over againness’ of objects is useful in landscape. They are separate, cardinal points of cultural or physical space. They can be used to counterpoint or broaden the landscape or bring the interiority of landscape into sharp relief. This is evident in ‘Evensong’ by Sophie Clements [2008] who uses constructed, thought or dynamic artificial objects of geometric neon light, to counterpoint or emphasise immersive natural landscape interiors. Ingold outlines interiority in landscape as being invited into the gathering by the objects we place there: “In lying down with the mound, in adding a stone we have picked up along the way to the cairn, in turning the handle of a door and hunching our shoulders to enter through the wooden frame, we experience mound, cairn, and cottage as things […] To witness a thing is not to be locked out but to be invited in to the gathering […] And so, writes Heidegger, are tree, pond, brook and hill […] To join the gathering as Heidegger puts it in his inimitable style, is to correspond with the thing ‘in its thinking from out of the worlding world’ (181-182)” [Ingold, 2013, p. 85-86]

Interiorty or interior landscapes of music form a significant part of the actual spatial intelligence [van Schaik, 2008] of musicians. In music making we exist in an immersive interior landscape of compositional relationships as observed in chapter 2. This helps develop an appreciation for harmonic balanced interiors. I observe the same tendency in architecture; making deep interiors in landscape and culture. This interiority was observed in the early research in architectural case studies and emphasised in acoustic projects.

In making new work we build interiors from the artefacts of landscape. Large landscapes evolve in the design process that eventually condense into tight compositional structures. New objects emerge each with their own interior spaces. I move between the exteriority and the interiority of objects as I move through the scales of objects. [11] Balance between compositional space for example an immersive musical interior, and real space, for example landscape, is the fundamental motivation for the spatial composition. It seeks to build harmonic balance in the compositional structure and across all contributing aspects in a particular work.

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8 I re-use of William J. James’ memorable phrase which has become a touchstone for thinking on this subject.
9 Chapter 2, p. 61.
10 ‘Evensong’ by Sophie Clements [2008]
7.3 Building Landscape in Culture

The house at Bagnelstown is currently under construction. In the cone diagram in chapter 6¹² I observed the point of conceptual convergence of the project. It represented the synthesis of the interior space of composition and the object character. This is the synthesis that is brought into landscape. This object character is brought to the existing landscape interior.

We can begin to see the development of the space of the existing compositional landscape. It sits into the sacred nature of its geometries. Its low slung character fits nicely into the immediate relationships. It nestles well into the surrounding landscape of ring fort, trees railway bridge, tracks, topography, ditches etc. It develops sympathetic relationships with those objects. Also the existing space of landscape is manipulated. For example by digging into the ground to deepen the existing interiority.

The interior spaces of the project then emerge. The plateau of the first floor space sits over the rolling topography and focusses the landscape space in its interior through the moon windows. The enclosure of the space with roof and gutter light is anticipated. At the ground floor we sink into the topography; the ground and hedgerows, into an enclosed and protected space defined by the low horizons of hedgerow and topography. We wait to see the ceiling direct a horizontality to these space on the interior. All spaces are leading well into the compositional interiors of the project.

¹² Chapter 6, p. 250.
We also see the presentational character, its ‘object’ nature, of the project emerge. It is itself, distinct in the landscape. Its primitive geometry sits into landscape, but low, discrete, nestled into the tree, emphasising the topography and recognising other archaic geometries, the ring fort, railway line, etc. Its monolithic quality, round windows, manipulated proportions defines a character appropriate to the robust landscape. These ‘objects’ form at all scales of building and relationships between them become evident. The two structural trees of the house enter their conversation, the columns and the gutters, the gable moon window and elevational column.

The synthesis moment of the earlier cone diagram is loosened in the construction stage. The objects at the building scale develop their character in the construction. For example, the quality of concrete has its construction patina of small organic blemishes from pockets of air left on the surface of the formwork. Details also change based on economy, resources on site, problems encountered in construction etc. A form of improvising in making. The gutter detail develops again. In a move for economy in construction the horizontal beams are removed in favour of a cantilevering gutter. Concrete retaining walls are eliminated in favour of stone retaining ditches that can be made by the client with the tractor. Ditches and gates are manipulated, pushing and shoving slightly at the interiority of the existing landscape. The design logic evolves in construction and ambiguities develop. The relationship between infrastructural concrete and inhabitation becomes more evident. The construction records the social and cultural landscape; the clients, their family, the digger man, the local concrete plant, the workings of the farm, the ground, the weather and generally the particularities of building in that landscape. It provides a unique view into the social landscape on a large scale.
Spatial Intelligence and Late Walter Pichler

My spatial intelligence [van Schaik, 2008] was formed on a farmyard filled with artefacts. These objects which included rusting bits of ploughs, old sprongs, broken down machines, etc. formed a characterful landscape. These broken down objects were more conspicuous, characterful, fascinating than those that were ‘useful at hand.’ Their ‘thingness’ became vivid in our imagination. Once their usefulness was gone, hypothetical meanings emerged. The tool was no longer characterised by its use where, as Heidegger outlines, ‘the thingness of the thing remains concealed, forgotten.’ [Heidegger, 2001, p. 168]

In Heidegger’s concept of Zuhandehheit, his tool analysis in Being and Time [Heidegger, 1953] we see the unveiling of the thingness or character of objects in the change between tool and broken tool. As Harman has pointed out, [Harman, 2009, p. 46] we see the difference between readiness to hand and presence to hand. Harman outlined that “all objects are marked by a contrast between their subterranean reality and the series of phenomenal surfaces they generate in our encounter with them.” [Harman, 2009, p. 55] If we remove the principle phenomenal surface, the tool nature of the object, then multiple other phenomenal surfaces come into view. This is evident in the potentiality of objects outlined in chapter 6; a move from evident to hypothetical meaning as outlined in chapter 2.

This early anthropological field of farmyard is an important influence. It evolves a sensitivity to the character of objects. Character of the object emerges from subjective imagination and processes of idealisation and contextualisation. It is the basis for a ‘farmyard’ character in my work. The late work of Walter Pichler, finds a similar character in the thingness of farmyard things, and this is centred in my CoP. We see a similar interest in myth and archeological exploration, in a farmland culture, as noted in Hejduk. However, Pichler explores a particular cultural subconscious, in a particular context and written in the artefacts of that place, rather than a subjective cultural subconscious as seen in Hejduk. I have noted a similar contextual tendency in my work. This is well captured in the following paragraph by Friedrich Achleitner “The villages are dominated by the ordinariness of traditional agricultural production houses in well formed, but not exuberant, buildings. Occasionally the towns are brutally disturbed by new buildings brought about - here like everywhere - by the machine age or a discontent with local conditions. Nonetheless, the region is still govern by simple activities that signal a succinct and unsentimental order to those who are receptive to such things.” [Pichler, 1993, p. 9]

On the next page I show a study model for a new house for Linda. This is a project that is developing for a farm in Co. Wexford. This is a conversation with many of the ideas evident in the work of Pichler.

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13 See Evident, Hypothetical and Determinate Meaning, Chapter 2 - p. 81.
14 This difference is well outlined in Harman’s essay, ‘A fresh look at Zuhandehheit’ 1999.
15 See page 117
16 Work at St. Martins
17 See Hejduk and Communities of Practice, Chapter 4 - p. 187.
Fig 7.13: House study for Linda
Cultural Space of Landscape

The architect Mary Laheen quotes the geographer Frederick Aalen “cultural landscape is our major and most productive creation; it is both an artefact based on foundations of geology and climate, on a narrative, layer upon layer of our history and nature’s history intertwined” [Aalen, 1997, p. 5] [Laheen, 2010, p. 6] My work attempts to build from the interior of that landscape. As outlined in the preamble to the Burra Charter “Places of cultural significance enrich peoples lives, often providing a deep and inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape, to the past and to lived experiences. They are historical records, that are important as tangible expressions of Australian identity and experience. Places of cultural significance reflect the diversity of our communities, telling us about who we are and the past that has formed us and the Australian landscape. They are irreplaceable and precious” [quoted in Laheen, 2010, p. 13]

The Irish landscape has its own distinct interiority. Corner [Corner, 1999] reminds us “The landscape idea is neither universally shared nor manifested in the same way across cultures and times; its meaning and value, together with its physical and formal characteristics, are not fixed. To assume that every society shares an American, English, or French view of landscape at all, is to wrongly impose on other cultures one’s own image” [Corner, 1999, p. 5]. The Irish physical and cultural landscape has recorded a cultural subconscious that has evolved through time. My work attempts to explore this and to an extent return to the underlying physical and metaphysical landscape from the perspective of architecture and music.

This is different to Europe as Cosgrove outlines “Between 1400 and 1900 much of Europe and […] North America were progressing towards a characteristic form of social and economic organisation which we term capitalist.” [Cosgrove, 1984, p2] He continues “The self-contained universes of manor and parish which we take as the model of the spatial order of feudalism gave way over time to the integrated and structured space economy of the nation state with its urban hierarchy and specialised agricultural and industrial regions.” [Cosgrove, 1984, p 4]

In Ireland the manor and parish remained predominant in the landscape, brought about by the particularities of the social and cultural history. As Laheen outlines “factors have contributed to the richness and continuity in the landscape, such as the peripheral location of Ireland […] which in recent centuries delayed the effects of development and change as they occurred on the European mainland. Equally, in earlier times, the Celtic hegemony that was broken by the Roman conquest of Europe continued to exist in Ireland for over a thousand years. […] Until the final eclipse of the Gaelic order in the early seventeenth century, large parts of Ireland, particularly in the north and west, continued to be administered in the manner of the rural multi-kingdom that it had formerly been. Consequently

18 See also Ryan, Anna, Where Land Meets Sea, Surrey, Ashgate Publishing, 2012, p75.
19 He expands on this as follows; “Purchase and sale in the marketplace of an ever increasing range of goods and services, including the land itself, determined their social allocation. Labour itself became a commodity, released from the bonds of custom and allegiance which had formerly tied the labourer both socially and spatially, in developing a capitalist mode of production. Europeans established and achieved a dominance over a global economy and a global division of labour which remains a critical determinant of our present social and economic geography.” [Cosgrove, 1984, p. 2].
symbols of power and society were invested in the landscape rather than in towns and cities as happened in other parts of Europe where varying factors, including the force of the Roman conquest, let a legacy of urbanisation.” [Laheen, 2010, p. 6]

In contrast to other parts of Europe, our landscape has maintained a more recent connection to a physical and mythical landscape born in this pre-Christian, Gaelic culture. This character is still present in the contemporary landscape and consciousness, linked to long histories of folklore, music, social and cultural history, sacred belief, and material culture. It is a more complex relationship with landscape than suggested by Cosgrove who outlines, when speaking about Europe and America, that “Landscape today is pre-eminently the domain of either scientific study and land planning, or of personal and private pleasure. It no longer carries the burden of social or moral significance attached to it during the time of its most active cultural evolution” [Cosgrove, 1984, p. 2].

A sacred or mythical character is still associated with the Irish landscape in folklore. The Ossianic Cycle; the mythic land of Hybreasail; CúChulainn and the Ulster Cycle; Táin Bó Cuailnge are heavily mythologized historic accounts which are passed on through the oral tradition. Myth is embedded in landscape; pagan beliefs cloaked in a thin veil of Christianity, still exist in ritual and in associations with artefacts of landscape. This is particularly apparent in folklore, song and music. As Schama points out, “the cultural habits of humanity have always made room for the sacredness of nature.” [Schama, 2004, p. 18]

Laheen points directly at the sacred nature of landscape “The landscape of Ireland […] also held intangible values, which until recent years had great cultural significance. This is especially true of the Celtic landscape due to the non-urbanised nature of the society. The royal sites are a good example, as are the less well known places of outdoor assembly or parley sites of the dynastic families in the Gaelic world […] they can be located through contemporary documentary evidence, often through the place name and through local tradition and folklore associated with them” [Laheen, 2010, p. 12].

Thomas Kinsella, in his introduction to ‘An Táin Bó Cuailnge’, 20 shows how the pre-Christian Gaelic pagan culture was directly linked to landscape; “One of the major elements of the Táin is its topography. Place-names and their frequent fanciful meanings and origins occupy a remarkable place by modern standards. It is often enough justification for an inclusion of an incident that it ends in the naming of some physical feature; certain incidents, indeed, seem to have been invented merely to account for a place-name. The outstanding example is in the climax of the Táin itself, where the final battle […] is treated casually, while attention is directed in detail to the wanderings of the mortally wounded Donn Cúailnge around Ireland, naming the places as he goes. This phenomenon is not confined to the Táin, or the Ulster Cycle; it is a continuing preoccupation of early and medieval Irish literature, which contains a whole class of topographical works, including prose tracts and poems of enormous length composed by the professional poets, who were expected to recite them on demand.” [Kinsella, 1969, xiii]

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The contemporary cartographer of the Aran Islands, Tim Robinson, identifies similar associations with landscape. "As Gregory the Fairheaded, Gríóir Ceannfhionadh, he was beheaded by a tyrant at Cleggan in Connemara, the name of which the town derives from cloigeann, a head; and then [...], he rose up, cursed the people of that locality, carried his head to a spring (now a holy well named after him), washed and replaced it, and came home to Inis Meáin.

In other words, we have retained our symbolic landscape. A study of the consequences of this symbolic character for creative practice offers scope for future study but must unfortunately fall outside this current research. Schama recognises the importance of its symbolic nature "... it is clear that inherited landscape myths and memories share two common characteristics: their surprising endurance through the centuries and their power to shape institutions that we still live with. National identity, to take just the most obvious example, would lose much of its ferocious enchantment without the mystique of a particular landscape tradition' [Schama, 2004, p. 15]

Myth also resides in this world of landscape. As Langer explains myth differs from fairytale in that fairytale is ‘irresponsible; it is frankly imaginary’ whereas myths on the other hand, become more and more closely woven into one fabric, they form cycles, their dramatis personae tend to be intimately connected if not identified. Their stage is the actual world—the Vale of Tempe, Mount Olympus, the sea, or the sky—and not some ungeographical fairyland." [Langer, 1957, p. 174-175] This
We have seen how Hejduk uses multiple perspectives (poetry, drawing and thinking) to explore archaic patterns of culture and belief in the imagination of western thought. I explore similar archaic patterns in a collective subconscious made apparent on an ancient sacred landscape. Other influential practitioners in my community of practice, Siza, Markli, Plecnik and others, explore cultural subconscious in similar ways.

Through observations made in this research I have developed an understanding of the processes used to explore landscape in creative practice. This understanding loosens the enchainment to landscape because I can now use these processes to examine other things. As processes they have developed intuitively over my practice history and are valuable to me and to my work.

My creative practice emerges from the Irish cultural landscape. This is a simple, obvious statement but it could not have been said with understanding and clarity before this research was undertaken. This landscape shapes our cultural subconscious and in turn becomes a physical record of our society and beliefs through history. Music and architecture are the tools I use to examine and engage with the cultural landscape. I use them as lenses to see this landscape anew and to place work back into it.

Landscape is the most significant enchainment in my creative practice. It is the record of our collective consciousness. Understanding this allows the practice to concentrate and develop it in more depth. A creative practice in traditional Irish music and architecture will continue to explore this from two perspectives, or ‘two rooms’ as Jo Van Der Berghe has said.

Leon van Schaik in Mastering Architecture, Great Britain, Wiley, 2005 p. 106. “I take the term enchainment from Randall Collins, and use it to mean the processes by which individuals align themselves with the players in a knowledge domain. We do not enter a domain as a solitary originator. Consciously or not we situate ourselves in the field of all the players of whom we are aware. I see this awareness factor as what distinguishes between our earlier ‘provincial’ reaching out to mastery and our later metropolitan search for validation of our innovation.”

Van Den Berghe, Jo, PRS 3, Barcelona, Nov 14.

See Community of Practice and Hejduk, Chapter 4 - p. 187.
If we refer to Richard Blythe's diagram we can identify three principle areas of significance in the practice. Blythe outlines that there are 'key moments in the formation of the practice both in terms of its historical existence and also as it unfolds in its present time in the research itself. [...] It not simply a matter of reflection on one's own work but then there is a responsibility, from a research point of view at least but also in terms of how creative practice works, to begin to associate these key moments in the work itself with other projects and other communities that are critical in terms of the practitioner's own thinking about their practice and their work. In other words, this is, if you like, establishing a set of relationships in and around the practice and its working and thinking and making projects. And beginning to reflect outwards from the practice and beginning to look at how those types of associations might be linked back into the workings of the practice and the way that each project begins to take shape. We talk about this in our practice based research model as trying to understand the Communities of Practice that the practitioner is linked to. Of course, these are always evolving and sometimes linked to each particular project. [...] in traditional research methodologies this is often referred to as establishing a literature review. But because in creative practice work it is not just text but also drawings and works and so on, and also including texts, we refer to this as the communities of practice that surround a particular creative practice." [Blythe, 2014] I have identified these moments of significance in the research and explicated deep connections in the findings. It is worth summarising diverse Communities of Practice particular to these principle areas.

Music and Architecture

The findings in this research with regard to the deep connections between musical and architectural practice are in unique territory. They evolve from the observations around the conceptual processes, the categorisation of 'Objects' and the 'Interior Space of Composition' in the creative process. An exploration of the perceptual and conceptual processes used in the actual practice has been subject of a literature review as we have seen in the research. This literature review, exploring similar observations in music or critical theory, formed a community of practice around the observation made in the research. There is significant potential for future research in this area especially from a practice based perspective that can cite concrete examples to illustrate theoretical observations.

There is also a community of practice that works from a shared syntactical landscape of different creative disciplines, that combines musical and spatial intelligences in the projects themselves. This predominantly includes artists and musicians who cross creative fields. Particular examples in my CoP include Sophie Clements, Xenakis, Alvin Lucier, Renaissance principles of proportion and others. These examples explore the phenomena that are common to the spatial natures of both disciplines. They do not explore the similarities in the 'process' of music and architecture. These have been illustrated in the research.

The influence of music and architecture on each other was broadly intuited in the loaest of contexts at the beginning of the research. Some minor singularities were evident but most came under a general banner of creative practice. Through the
research I have evidenced the deep connections between two modes of practice, music and architecture. As Leon van Schaik has pointed out, “The research makes evident deep connections between the two modes of practice, modes that are often casually linked but that have heretofore had their inter-connectedness demonstrated at a practice level. This is a major contribution to knowledge.” This has been demonstrated in the research by carefully analysing the practice and thought processes and demonstrating with actual examples in both disciplines.

Natural Anthropological Process

The research has observed shared ‘processes’ in music and architecture. A natural anthropology has been observed contextually located in contemporary physical and meta-physical landscapes. We have observed the methods of this creative anthropology in music and architecture, in other words the methods of an ‘anthropological practice.’ We have seen the creativity of the processes that bring new ‘artefacts,’ objects related to a contextual cultural landscape, into being in practice.

Leading anthropologists have outlined the need or potential for creative anthropology. Tim Ingold writes: "There is of course a long and distinguished tradition of study in the anthropology of art. [...] In the study of material culture, the overwhelming focus has been on finished objects and what happens as they become caught up in the life histories or social interactions of the people who use, treasure or consume them. In the study of visual culture, the focus has been on the relations between objects, images and their interpretations. What is lost in both fields of study, is the creativity of the productive processes that bring the artefacts themselves into being: on one hand in the generative currents of the materials of which they are made; on the other in the sensory awareness of the practitioners.” [Ingold, 2013, p7] The ‘anthropological process’ in this research, developed from a shared practice in traditional Irish music and architecture, evidences this creativity that produces artefacts. This is not as a historic reflection but is in contemporary practice. This anthropological process is carried out in conversation with a historic cultural landscape, developing old continuities and placing them again in a contemporary cultural

landscape. We re-make these artefacts, re-evaluate their cultural perception, material and symbolic properties, and uncover their cultural meanings. An improvisational process allows the meanings and symbolic associations of a cultural tradition to re-emerge in contemporary practice.

This describes new knowledge that can affect other fields of practice, converging them in potentially significant ways. Ingold poses a question "To date [...] collaborations between anthropologists and arts practitioners have been few, and those that have taken place have not been entirely successful. Once again the source of the difficulty lies in the identification of anthropology with ethnography. For the very reasons that renders arts practice highly compatible with the practice of anthropology are precisely those that render it incompatible with the practice of ethnography. On the one hand the speculative, experimental and open-ended character of arts practice is bound to compromise the ethnography's commitment to descriptive accuracy. On the other hand, the retrospective temporal orientation of ethnography runs directly counter to the prospective dynamic of art's observational engagement. Precisely as arts practice differs in its objects from the history of art, however, so anthropology differs from ethnography. It is here, I believe, that the real potential for productive collaboration between art and anthropology lies. Could certain art practices suggest new ways of doing anthropology? [...] If there are similarities between the ways in which artists and anthropologists study the world, then could we not regard the artwork as a result of something like an anthropological study, rather than as an object of such study." [Ingold, 2013, p. 8] This research demonstrates such a practice, one that makes creative work as a result of anthropological processes as Ingold suggests. A practice with a significant catalogue of work and mature processes, observed through this research, that can contribute to this conversation.

A community of practice in 'creative anthropology' can be observed as a result of the research. Anthropological techniques and observations were identified in the literature review. This identifies a diverse and insightful community of anthropologists. These have added new mentors25 to my communities of practice, Henry Glassie being the most prominent. The practices of anthropology observed in this literature review have been a part of my creative practice in music from the beginning. Traditional Irish music is a natural anthropological practice. many traditional irish musicians have become professional musical anthropologists.

In addition The research has identified a second significant anthropological community of practice in music. These are musical friends and colleagues who use these anthropological processes to explore their musical cultural heritage. These include peer musicians like Julie Langan, Ronan Galvin, Kevin Rowsome and many others who see creative practice as a process of creative anthropological discovery and development.

25 See Chapter 1, Communities of Practice, p. 44.
Symbolic Thinking - Intuitions
Metaphysical and Cultural Landscapes

The research demonstrates a third community of practice associated with artefacts of cultural meaning and character in architecture. Mentors (or challengers) such as Hejduk, Pichler and others demonstrate, in their work, tendencies towards symbolic thinking, an emphasis on intuition and an archeological process that explores cultural subconscious. They each use their own processes, their own techniques of practice, in their inquiries. This is perhaps most clearly evident in Hejduk’s work where “poetry, dream and remembrance rather than science and technique seem in Hejduk’s architecture to answer the question he poses: who lives here?” [Hejduk, 1985, p. 20]

The significance of these mentors to my practice lies in the central role that cultural consciousness and process plays in their exploration of work. This points to similarities in my practice but I can also identify differences. Hejduk explores a cultural subconscious understood subjectively through multiple lines of attack, writing, sketching, making architecture etc. My creative practice explores a the cultural subconscious recorded in an oral and physical cultural landscape. I have developed and outlined my own processes of working into the subconscious of these landscapes.

Ph.D Community of Practice

Finally a significant community of practice has evolved from the Ph.D process itself. Critical thinking has developed understanding at all layers of the research. My supervisors Richard Blythe, Jo van den Berghe and Leon van Schaik have become very significant mentors. Other peers and challengers who gathered at the PRS weekends have also formed an influential and appreciated community of practice.

This is a supportive, committed and intelligent community of practice that supports a ‘tri-polar environment of practice’

comprised of mentors, peers and challengers crucial to the environment of research. Important shifts have been brought about by the peer group, the PRS review sessions and side room conversations. Observations made by my mentors in respect to my practice and their wider contributions to research in contemporary architectural practice remains a continuing source of inspiration and insight.

Van Schaik, see pages above.
New Knowledge and Future Practice

The research makes evident deep connections between two modes of practice, music and architecture. It demonstrates this inter-connectedness at a practice level and demonstrates the particularities of the processes used. It also makes evident that, on a meta level, insights and meanings, that exist within each practice domain, are transferable between the two modes of practice. This is the contribution to knowledge in the field as articulated through the framework of RMIT’s invitational design practice research model.

The ambition of the practice has been centred on an exploration of a cultural consciousness evident in the Irish cultural landscape. To date, this has placed a contextual emphasis on that cultural landscape. I can now draw on these processes in new landscapes as I speculate on future practice.
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Fig 5.32: Plan from Gutter book, Revisions 4-7

Fig 5.33: Sketch from Gutter Book, Revisions 8-10

Fig 5.34: Detail Section from Gutter Book, Revisions 8-10

Fig 5.35: Plan from Gutter book, Revision 13

Fig 5.34: Detail Section from Gutter Book, Revision 13
Fig 5.35: Gutter Model Detail

Fig 5.36: Gutter Tiles Models

Fig 5.37: Detail Section from Gutter Book, Revision 16

Fig 5.38: Sketches from Gutter Book, Revision 16

Fig 5.39: Sketches from Gutter Book, Revisions 17-23

Fig 5.40: Detail Section from Gutter Book, Revision 23

Fig 5.41: Cast Model of House at Bagnelstown

Fig 5.42: Gutter Tiles Models

Fig 5.43: Sketch from Gutter Book, Revision 23

Fig 5.44: Floor Tapestry House at Bagnelstown, Revision 23 [Following Page]

Fig 5.45: Floor Tapestry Model, Revision 23 [Following Page]

Fig 5.46: Gutter Space Model [Following Page]

Fig 5.47: Sketch from Gutter Book, Revisions 23-32

Fig 5.48: Plan from Gutter book, Revision 32

Fig 5.49: Cast Model of House at Bagnelstown

Fig 5.50: Detail Section from Gutter Book, Revision 32

Fig 5.51: Proportional Elevational Study 2 for house at Bagnelstown
Chapter 6

Fig 6.1: Early Design Stage Process Drawing Excerpt

Fig 6.2: Design Process Landscape Diagram

Fig 6.3: New Design Stage Process Drawing

Fig 6.4: Cone Diagram of development of Gutter

Fig 6.5: Sketch of Sensibility, Intuition and Understanding with Cultural, Compositional and Presentational Meaning

Fig 6.6: Development of Sketch of Sensibility, Intuition and Understanding with Cultural, Compositional and Presentational Meaning

Fig 6.7: Dangly Diagram, Disassembly of Compositional Objects and Assembly of New Object with Hypothetical and Evident Meaning

Fig 6.8: Disassembly of Currach Diagram showing Evident and Hypothetical Meaning

Chapter 7

Fig 7.1: Sverre Fehn, Sketch 1984, [Norberg-Schultz, Postiglione, 1997, p243]

Fig 7.2: Bola Beg Detail, photograph by author

Fig 7.3: Bola Beg Landscape, drawing by author

Fig 7.4: Construction Gutter Detail

Fig 7.5: Still taken from ‘Evensong’ by Sophie Clements [2008] (Available at: http://www.sophieclements.com/evensong/)

Fig 7.6: House at Bagnelstown in landscape
Fig 7.7: Interior to landscape, house at Bagnelstown

Fig 7.8: Retaining wall details, photograph by author

Fig 7.9: House in construction stage, photograph by author

Fig 7.10: Eaves, column and window details, photograph by author

Fig 7.11: Skullcap by Walter Pichler

Fig 7.12: House for the Birds, side view, Walter Pichler [Pichler, 1993, p105]

Fig 7.13: House study for Linda photograph by Alice Clancy

Fig 7.14: Map III - In Conaille and Cuailnge, An Táin [Kinsella, de Brocquy, 1969]

Fig 7.15: Map of Árainn [Robinson, 1986, appendix]
8.3 Table of Recordings

Chapter 1:

Rec 1.1: Johnny Doherty, Donegal - unidentified recording [excerpt]

Rec 1.2: The Mist Covered Mountain played by Junior Crehan, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann - CL17 - 1978 [excerpt]

Rec 1.3: O’Rahilly’s Grave, The Star Above the Garter, Denis Murphy and Julia Clifford, Claddagh Records, 1969 [excerpt]

Rec 1.4: Soundstories, RTE RADIO 1, Luke Clancy interviews Mairéad Ní Mhaonaigh & Steve Larkin about the acoustics in her house at Carrickfin. [excerpt]

Rec 1.5: Sounding Boxes, Audio by Composer Donal Siggins [excerpts]

Chapter 2:

Rec 2.1: Denis Murphy, Music from Sliabh Luachra, Caoineadh Uí Neill, track 5, RTÉ 183 CD - 1995 [excerpt]

Rec 2.2: My Love is in America played by Willie Clancy, The Pipering of Willie Clancy - Volume 1, track 9, Claddagh Records, CC32CD [excerpt]

Rec 2.3: My Love is in America played by Tommie Potts, The Liffey Banks, track 12, Claddagh Records, CC13CD [excerpt]

Rec 2.4: The Morning Star - 4 excerpts from following recordings in 1 audio file:

Chapter 4:

Rec 4.1: Steve Larkin and Mick Kirrane, collage of excerpts from tracks 1 (Caisleán an Óir), 2 (Young Tom Ennis), and 6 (Ashling Gheal), 2015.

Rec 4.2: Roots Recording, collage of excerpts from source recordings — 4 excerpts from following recordings in a single audio file:

- Ashling Gheal sung by Dáireadh O’Gilleabáin, Brúach Na Carraige Báine, track 3, Dáireadh Na Carraige Báné, CICD 115
- Down The Broom played by Frank Cassidy, Níl gar ann, track 2, Cairdeas na bhFidiléirí 2008
- The Gatehouse Maid played by Harry Bradley, As I Carelessly Did Stray, track 6, 2002, SPINCD1005
- The Star Above the Garter by Denis Murphy and Julia Clifford, Claddagh Records, 1969
- Martin Hayes: The Iron Man by Martin Hayes, Label Green Linnet, 1985
- Audio collage of all four excerpts by author

Rec 4.3: Port na Bócht, Tommy Peoples: An Exciting Session with one of Ireland’s Leading Fiddlers, CCE Label, 1976.
Chapter 5:

Rec 5.1: An Páistín Fionn Source Recording - 4 excerpts from following recordings in 1 audio file:

- Paddy Taylor, Boy in the Gap, Claddagh Records, 1970
- James Kelly, Melodic Journeys, Own Label, JKM0147, 2004
- Russell, Micho, The Man from Clare, Sleeve Notes, TRADCD011
- Willie Clancy, The Gold Ring, Disk 2, RTE276CD, 2010

Rec 5.2: An Páistín Fionn Development Recording - 4 excerpts from recording session

Rec 5.3: Galway Bay Development Recording - 5 excerpts from recording session

Rec 5.4: An Páistín Fionn and Galway Bay Final Set - Solo Fiddle [excerpt]

Rec 5.5: An Páistín Fionn and Galway Bay Final Set Development - with Donal Siggins [excerpt]
8.4 Images Used in Design Landscape Maps

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