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Creating sustainable performance careers

Karen Burland and Dawn Bennett

Abstract

This chapter reviews and distils the diverse literature on performance careers in music. It begins by exploring the issues and concepts involved in a performance career, examining the nature and shape of musicians' work across the career lifespan. Next, factors which influence sustainability are discussed; these include initial and ongoing education, job-getting and the role of networks, place-making, mental and physical wellbeing, and musician identity. Drawing on these sources, the chapter examines likely influences on the creation of sustainable performance careers before turning to practical implications for the performing musician and for those who prepare and support them in their careers.

Keywords: Music, music career, musician, musician identity, musician health, wellbeing, higher education

How do musicians think about their careers in music? Is it possible to secure a performance position and sustain it across one's entire professional life, or is it more viable to think about one's career as an eclectic mix of roles, contexts and musics? Labour market research tells us that people's work is changing rapidly. Many people, for example, will experience five different careers and 17 different jobs across their working lives (Foundation for Young Australians, 2017; World Economic Forum, 2016).

People are also more likely to work in roles which require creative thinking and problem solving, they will need to interact with technology, and they will need great communication skills. Although creative arts graduates tend to take longer than some of their peers to become established in their careers, they are often highly successful in finding full-time work (Bennett & Bridgstock, 2015; Comunian, Faggian, & Jewell, 2011). Often, this entails working in two or more different roles at any one time in order to make a living. This is a pattern of work known as portfolio work and musicians have successfully managed portfolios of work for centuries (Bennett, 2008a; Rohr, 2001).

What is a performance career?

The romantic image of the star performer who sustains a career solely through performance activities has always been the exception rather than the norm. There are, of course, full-time positions with music organisations such as opera companies and professional orchestras. These opportunities are, however, small in number and fiercely competitive (Bennett & Bridgstock, 2015) and the majority of performers—including those in full-time performance positions—hold a portfolio of work. Far from a negative outcome, the inclusion of multiple roles enables musicians to find and sustain meaningful work that aligns with their personal and professional values, their financial and artistic needs, and their intellectual, physical and emotional wellbeing (Bennett, 2009).

It is a popular belief that forging a sustainable performance career has never been more challenging, but musicians have always worked in multiple contexts and genres. They have always held multiple roles with more or less creative and organisational autonomy, have travelled and toured, have created their own work, found their niche, and refined their skillset in order to sustain their careers. Musicians' work has always been located within broad professional, cultural and multi-arts contexts, and the decision to work in myriad roles has been driven as much by the desire for interesting and meaningful work as it by the desire for financial security.

In reality, then, the performance career in music—and this is the case across all musical genres—is more typically represented as a portfolio of project-based, self-generated activities which feature diverse performance roles alongside teaching, composition, community work, both music- and non-music roles, and the organisational capacity to bring it all together.

Where and how do musicians connect with audiences?

The locations of music performance have changed over time. Popular and jazz musicians in the 21st Century can perform to thousands of people in stadia so large that the sound has to be mediated through expert technologies. Although some orchestras and opera companies have performed in the same venues for centuries, they are also using new technologies to stream their performances to millions of people around the world, both live and via social media platforms. The technologies are now so affordable that individual musicians stream and record their music as a matter of course, opening up vast audiences and new opportunities.

In Western classical music, the performance stereotype is that of a soloist, chamber ensemble or large ensemble performing on the stage of a concert hall with the audience seated at a distance appropriate to their role as observers. In line with the "unplugged" (acoustic) movement in other musics, classical music has seen a revival of boutique operas and a rise in the number of house concerts which hark back to the salons of 18th and 19th century Europe. The classical house concert is just one example of the rise in unofficial live music venues. These often relate to increasing (noise) regulation within urban locations and listeners' desire for a sense of community and to fill a gap in the commercialised, "official" music scene (Bennett & Rogers, 2016).

Smaller, more tailored operations (Bennett & Rogers, 2016) may become typical of live music venues in the future. Unofficial venues range from warehouses to studios, from churches to rehearsal spaces and from pizza parlours to book shops (see, for example, the work of cellist Matt Haimovitz). Ironically, thriving music hubs often contribute to gentrification, which leads to more expensive property prices and leases and in turn puts their viability at risk (Gibson, 2002); hence, hubs tend to be unstable. The implications of venue instability for performers are obvious in that musicians need to regularly rethink when, where and in which modes their music can be heard.

Performance and inequality

Another challenge for performers is that of equality. The music industry is a site of persistent gender, race and class inequality. Taking gender, for example, classical music including composition is known for gendered networks, career progression and instrument selection (Bennett, 2008b; Macarthur et al., 2017; Schraff, 2017). Jazz and music technology are well documented for being male dominated (Wehr, 2016), and pop culture is criticised for its sexism (Trier-Bieniek & Leavy, 2014). Even metal music is criticised for its persistent gender inequity (Berkers & Schaap, 2018). Overall, women, in music occupy around only one-third of music industry roles, earn less than their male counterparts and are more likely to experience barriers to progression (Armstrong, 2013; see further, Hendricks & Smith, this volume).

Inequality and inequity have a significant impact on the ability of performers to create and sustain their performance careers. Among the many points of concern are the absence of women's music and female role models in the music education curriculum (Bennett, Macarthur, Hope, Goh, & Hennekam, 2018; Macarthur, 2007; Peters, 2016); the gendered nature of instrument selection and music technology adoption (Born & Devine, 2015; Shibazaki & Marshall, 2013); and the exclusionary nature of the physical and online social networks through which much music work is obtained (Bennett, Hennekam, Macarthur, Hope, & Goh, 2019).

The implications for individual musicians—in line with all workers for whom work is precarious, self-managed and often self-employed—include the need to become aware of inequality and inequity, and aware of their rights and obligations. Performers seeking to build and sustain their careers need to account for normative expectations related to social class, sex and race. This is discussed by Scott (2012) in his study of music producers, by Gavanas and Reitsamers (2016) in their study of female DJs, by Connell and Gibson (2003) in their work on the new geography of popular music, and by Graham (2019) in his thesis on gender and identity among transmasculine, CIS and non-binary singers.

Musicians and mobility

Music making is part of the intangible cultural heritage of every society, forming place-based oral traditions through which histories, religions and protests are relayed (Brown, 2005). These oral traditions migrate, as do populations. As such, location and mobility have always been a feature of performance careers. Oral traditions are also communicated via diverse media quite independent of a physical performer. Indeed, some commentators have claimed that music performers no longer "depend on their locations for physical resources or large-scale production complexes" (Florida & Jackson, 2010, p. 310). However, music is an embodied art form and musicians need to be physically present: mobility in music still demands "movements of people, and the music they bring with them" (Connell & Gibson, 2003, p. 45).

Although digital distribution has revolutionised the recorded music industry and has lessened geographical constraints to some extent, live performance remains a core component of the performer's work. Live performance is most often a collective endeavour; hence, even music making that is created and/or shared online (for example, online video creation, Stebbins, 2017), most often involves some face-to-face contact. It is therefore simplistic to suggest that a performer no longer needs to feel tied to particular geographic locations, as claimed by Florida and Jackson (2010, p. 310).

In music recording, too, freelance labour is being redefined by “new ecologies of physical and virtual mobility” and the way in which networks operate (Watson & Beaverstock, 2016, p. 1428). Touring is an obvious example of the physical movement of music musicians. Touring musicians even in classical music can tour at a financial loss in order to develop their fanbase and attract attention, whereas established musicians can attract tours featuring sponsorships, substantial audiences, and increased revenue from the sale of merchandise such as CDs (Johansson & Bell, 2014). Either way, mobility—whether for touring, single performances or project-based work—is a persistent feature of the performer’s career. Many musicians write about spending the excitement of spending many months “on the road” as they perform around the world. Of course, there often comes a time when musicians prefer to travel less, and this decision can mean rethinking a successful international career in order to lessen the need for travel (Bennett, 2007).

Performers form part of trans-national networks which demand a high level of physical and relational mobility. The importance of mobility on sustainable performance careers is encapsulated in Watson and Beaverstock’s (2016) study of trans-national freelancing in the creative industries, which concluded that freelancers’ ability to secure work is directly linked with their mobility. So, what happens when music performers’ mobility is impeded? Research on the careers of orchestral musicians (see Young, 2017) highlights the low mobility of orchestral musicians, including due to age (Brodsky, 2011; Gembris & Heye, 2014). For these performers, a new role necessitates a fiercely competitive audition process in which current job performance is irrelevant and which might necessitate a move of city or country. The latter is particularly problematic for musicians who have families and spouses, secondary businesses and strong community links. Career entrapment can also result from the highly stratified nature of an orchestra in which performers can find it impossible to extend their skills: for example, learning another instrumental or vocal part or gaining exposure to leadership roles.

One way in which musicians often protect themselves from the frustrations often associated with skill stagnation is to find non-musical leisure activities (Burland, 2005). Such activities provide psychological and emotional mobility away from performance and music networks, towards energising and motivating opportunities to learn new skills. Similar approaches to the work setting are also beneficial. Mobility for orchestral musicians can feature "mindset mobility" in which a substantive orchestral role is retained at the same time as the musician focusses attention and energy away from the routine of orchestral work to encompass secondary roles with higher levels of creativity, autonomy, leadership and role agility. Adopting these coping strategies or "contradictory routines" (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997) can help to deflect attention away from work-related dissatisfaction. However, deflection is not necessarily a solution for orchestral musicians, whose poor physical and mental health has been the subject of a raft of research (Ackermann, Kenny, Driscoll, O'Brien, 2017); indeed, contradictory routines can undermine a musician's identity and lead to identity change or dislocation. Role satisfaction and psychological wellbeing is thought to be higher among musicians who hold paid or unpaid non-performance roles within their organisations, leading to calls for orchestral musicians to engage in a broader range of activities (see Young, 2017).

What does it mean to be professional musician?

Although the desire for audience interaction and authentic performance is an important driver of current performance trends, another is undoubtedly cost – both of facilities and workers. To illustrate, we turn to those performers whose careers can appear to be least impacted by the prevalence of insecure work and the changing economics of the music industry. Musicians employed by arts companies such as operas and orchestras are often assumed to be full-time company musicians; in reality, this is increasingly rare. The performers in arts companies from New York's City Opera to Australia's boutique Pinchgut Opera are hired on a by-project basis, with a pool of performers forming the core ensemble for each project. Many of these musicians have trans-national performance careers and supplement their income with music- and non-music work as required. Similarly, the domination of major record labels has led to a plethora of small, independent labels lead by artists whose work is typically self-managed and, arguably, more geographically constrained.

One of the ironies of classical music performance is that the usual efficiency measures are not possible: it takes the same number of musicians to perform a Rachmaninov symphony or a Wagner opera as it did when these works were first performed. What *has* changed is the size of the permanent ensembles maintained by orchestras and opera companies, most of which function with a growing reliance on casual players whose work is entirely dependent on programming.

Not surprisingly, arts companies supported by public funding are also increasingly subject to myriad performance measures which influence everything from programming to their social and educational engagement (Evans, 2000). This impacts the work of musicians who may be required to engage in community education and outreach programs as part of their "performance" roles and it has implications for pre-professional education and ongoing career support.

Musicians may choose to pursue a performance career because they have high levels of intrinsic motivation and/or a sense of career calling; this is connected to the role of music in their self-concept (Burland, 2005; Dobrow Riza & Heller, 2015; Vaag, Giæver, & Bjerkeset, 2014). There is no doubt that the opportunity to shape one's own career autonomously can offer high levels of psychological and emotional fulfilment. However, the close connection between music and self, coupled with the often-precarious nature of a portfolio career, can mean that musicians work long hours, often in a number of diverse settings and locations.

A report by the Musicians' Union (2012), for example, highlighted that over 50% of musicians surveyed in the UK earned less than an average of £20,000 per year (the national average salary that year was £26,500) and around one-third of those surveyed included a non-musical role in their portfolio. This pattern has not changed in 2020 and it is replicated around the world (cf. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019; Music Australia, 2015). A three-year Australian study (Bartleet et al., in press) found that only 37% of musicians surveyed held a single role and that multiple-job-holding persists across the career lifespan. Almost half the respondents held a self-employed role; part-time contract roles accounted for a further 15.6% of roles, and unpaid roles and casual roles accounting for another 13.2% and 12.5% respectively. Work from non-music sources accounted for 89% of musicians' overall income and musicians' average annual income based on all current work was 48% of the national average. These data indicate that aspiring musicians might establish unrealistic expectations of themselves in terms of the kinds of work they imagine they will do in order to achieve external validation as a 'successful' performer. On a more positive note, the data also indicate that many musicians are enterprising and agile in the formation and management of their careers

Musicians spend significant periods of time working alone on concentrated work (Ascenco, Williamon, & Perkins, 2017) and commit significant resources to sustaining a career in music. These resources include time, unpaid labour to develop subsequent opportunities or to enhance their profile, and investing funds in professional development (Armstrong, 2013). A growing body of research confirms that performance musicians typically sustain their careers by adopting a learning mindset and being open to diverse opportunities, including opportunities they create for themselves (Bennett & Hennekam, 2018; Moore, 2016). This may mean that the solo singer, for example, seeks additional employment in the opera chorus, or that the pianist works as an accompanist. As seen in the studies cited above, it often also means the inclusion of non-performance roles and, for many musicians, roles outside music. This should not be viewed as a lack of success: accounts of the careers of famous musicians highlight that performance careers are sustained by shifting between different musical sub-domains (e.g. conducting, composing, teaching). This is both in response to physical fatigue, which impacts performers' ability and confidence to perform on the concert stage (Kopiez, Lehmann, & Klassen, 2009; Manturzewska, 1990), and in response to other interests and positive life choices (see, for example Isaac Stern's autobiography, Stern & Potok, 2001).

It is also important to be aware of the distinction between the terms musician and performer (Bennett, 2008c). A performer is someone who performs; however, a musician might work in multiple aspects of music, often combining several specialist areas. Composers and conductors are good examples of musicians who might not perform, but they are still musicians!

The characteristics of portfolio careers therefore hold several implications for developing sustainable performance careers:

1. Musicians who work entrepreneurially maximise their opportunities to manage and sustain their careers;
2. Musicians who develop flexible and adaptable identities can protect themselves from the potentially negative impacts of unpredictability and change; and
3. Musicians can underpin their professional learning by developing and adopting a learning identity or learning mindset.

We discuss each of these points in the following sections.

Entrepreneurial ways of working

Musicians are often compelled to develop entrepreneurial activities from financial necessity, but their passion for, and self-identification with, performance activities enables them to identify exciting and novel opportunities (Albinsson, 2018). Aside from passion and calling, entrepreneurial characteristics include resilience, creativity, innovation, flexibility, good communication skills, and the ability to take risks and to find creative solutions to problems (Haynes & Marshall, 2018). There are many similarities between traditional entrepreneurs and musicians, particularly in terms of their creative processes and entrepreneurial qualities (Albinsson, 2018). However, there are distinct differences between traditional entrepreneurs and musicians, suggesting that success may be defined quite differently for each group (Coulson, 2012) particularly since musicians appear to be inclined to align themselves with the values of social entrepreneurship, representing a desire to contribute to a community's cultural welfare with little profit in the process (cf. Haynes & Marshall, 2018).

Identity and protecting the self

Research on the health and wellbeing of musicians is burgeoning and addresses both physical (Matei et al., 2018; Norton, 2016) and psychological health (Pecen, Collins, & MacNamara, 2018). Declining performance skills can cause a shift in the focus of a musician's chosen career activities, as mentioned above, and can have a significant physical and psychological impact on the musician (Gembris & Heye, 2014). It is not surprising that there are frequent reports of health concerns among professional musicians, including Gross and Musgrave's (2016) report which finds musicians to be three times more likely to experience depression than the general population due to the uncertainty, socio-economic pressures, and working conditions associated with the music industry. Gembris and Heye (2014), along with authors in section six of this volume, highlight how essential it is for individuals and musical organisations to develop the right conditions for sustaining a performance career, which should include reflecting on working conditions and developing appropriate healthcare initiatives.

As suggested earlier, there may be something particular about the performance industry and the entwined nature of *musical practice and person* that exacerbates this situation. In this respect, the insights provided by recent qualitative studies are valuable for understanding the source and potential mitigation of poor health and wellbeing. Musicians may have multiple incompatible identities (Bennett & Hennekam, 2018) which can lead to identity tension (Beech et al., 2016). Whereas traditional understanding of identity across the lifespan is that it operates on an identity-resolution continuum, musicians do not seem to seek to resolve their identity tensions because they are self-invested in the careers (Bennett & Hennekam, 2018): identity tensions form a fundamental part of a musicians' identity. In addition, part of the musician's entrepreneurial mindset is self-directed competition, suggesting that the assumed norms of identity management often do not apply within music (Scharff, 2015).

Identity plays a critical role in managing a performance career. It involves a long relationship with music, and the flexibility to manage one's own identity in music cases where career ideals are not sustainable (Oakland et al., 2014). Understanding the way in which an identity is formed through and within music plays an important role in supporting musicians to create sustainable performance careers, and Oakland et al. (2014) suggest that a flexible approach to identity is crucial to mitigating unexpected moments of transition and change.

Although musicians seem to implicitly utilise psychological strategies to help them to cope with challenges, social support networks including peers, family and teachers are a vital source of support (Pecen et al., 2018); this includes affinity networks through which musicians seek to ameliorate the impacts of inequity (Hennekam, Bennett, Macarthur, Hope, & Goh, 2019). Research exploring attitudes towards precarity within a sample of London jazz musicians highlights the importance of considering those attitudes in the context of musicians' visions for their futures as well as the support they receive from their existing networks (Umney & Krestsos, 2015). This suggests that critical reflection on current and future selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986), with the support from trusted others, is crucial to creating and sustaining a performance career.

It is important for individuals to be mindful of their personal values—who they are and who they wish to be—when making choices that will inform how their career unfolds. Indeed, Miksza and Hime (2015, p.180) confirm that people describe the greatest satisfaction when their work reflects "their personality, interests, and values, as well as with their opportunities to be creative and contribute to a sense of a 'greater good'" (p. 180).

Finding work

It is well documented that finding work as a professional performance musician is highly competitive (Bennett & Bridgstock, 2015; Comunian, Fagian and Jewell, 2011). This is hardly surprising, since conservatoires and higher education institutions around the world produce far more highly accomplished performance graduates than there are positions in professional arts companies (Bennett, 2008a). Job-getting depends on factors which extend beyond proficiency as a performer (which is assumed) and instead focusses on extra-musical capabilities such as determination, goal-setting, adaptability and dedication (MacNamara et al., 2008).

As discussed, musicians can often find themselves working on an occasional basis (sometimes with no pay) for an organisation, perhaps as a 'deputy' (casual player) in an orchestra or band, or in a pit band for a musical. Opportunities (and the capability needed) to seek out new relationships (with other musicians, organisations, and fixers) are therefore important for building networks and vital for creating a sustainable performance career (Creech et al., 2008; Dobson, 2010; Umney, 2017). Creative workers maximise their potential by employing their career capitals; that is, by making the most of their place and status within the various, often overlapping, networks in which their creative work is situated (Bennett & Burnard, 2016, p. 126).

Professional sociability

One of the most important capabilities for finding work, including in the major arts companies, is "'professional sociability': the need to be sociable and liked by one's colleagues and peers in order to increase chances of offers of work, or simply to retain existing work" (Dobson, 2010, p. 248). This territory can be difficult to navigate because musicians can be simultaneously building relationships and competing with these peers for the same opportunities (Dobson, 2010). Both the transition into the profession and sustaining a career over the longer term requires high levels of social and interpersonal skills and the ability to adapt styles of working and communication to different contexts (MacNamara et al., 2008).

Developing and sustaining networks

Developing and sustaining a professional network also relates to reputation building and visibility within a community of practice. Reputation is one of a number of resources (the others include education and networking building) which enable performers to create a sustainable career (Coulson, 2010). However, many musicians have an *ad hoc* approach to managing their reputation and visibility (Bennett et al., 2018), expressing uncertainty about how to promote themselves and their work. Some musicians are also unaware of their reputations; this can lead them to draw comparisons with their peers and to experience self-doubt as a result (Dobson, 2010).

An important feature of building a network is that of integrating within one or more communities of practice; this is important not only for being considered for performance opportunities, but also for the opportunities such communities provide for development, support and testing the self. This aspect is summarised by Creech et al. (2008), who emphasise the importance of peer relationships, networks and professional communities both in securing work and reinforcing self-concept as a musician (Burland & Davidson, 2004). Communities of practice are therefore vital for creating a sustainable performance career. In addition to social, developmental and psychological support, the role of these networks in developing a reputation is critical given the music industry's reliance on social media; belonging to communities of like-minded others provides a mechanism through which work can be circulated and profiles built (Haynes & Marshall, 2018).

How do musicians learn to sustain a performance career?

The ways in which musical skills are developed and refined relate to an intricate balance of psychological factors (including personality, motivation, identity, resilience and learning styles) and social factors (including the role of family, peers, teachers, broader institutional contexts and relationships between/within settings). These elements are important during the early stages of learning and remain critical as individuals work towards creating a sustainable career (Vaag et al., 2014):

One of the difficulties facing aspiring professional musicians is that conservatoires at the post-secondary level are still trying to adjust to the changing demands associated with building a career in music. The challenges faced by aspiring and professional musicians are the result of "institutionalised features of the conservatoire culture itself", which are viewed as a "rite of initiation" into the demands of a performance career (Dobson, 2010, p. 252). The implication of this is that higher music education could help students to understand and develop the capabilities needed to develop a sustainable performance career (Bennett et al., 2018). A practical concern is that during the transition from education to creating a career, the amount of time available for practice can be reduced; this means that musicians have to become more efficient in the way they learn in order to continue their development.

One particular area of research focus has been the extent to which instrumental musicians feel prepared for work with a professional orchestra. Musicians report feeling unprepared for the reality of integrating into a new professional context (Calissendorf & Hanneson, 2017).

In this regard, regional and national youth orchestras are vital training grounds for the orchestral profession because these ensembles provide contextual and embedded experience (Ridgeway, 2002).

Graduateness

Musicians' transitions into the profession have been likened to the wilderness years. Adopting a lifelong learning identity can enable successful and sustainable transitions throughout the career lifespan:

> … graduateness is more about committing to a form of lifelong learning that is relationally based, a critical part of graduates developing a fitness for professional practice and the persistence to emerge from the wilderness to becoming professional. (Johnson & Hager, 2008, p. 256)

The chance to gain first-hand insight into the profession through activities such as an orchestral fellowship programme (which in Johnson and Hager's study included masterclasses, workshops, student tutoring and mentorships) provides opportunities to develop, within a professional context, the attributes of graduateness defined above.

Career preview

Work-based learning programmes, in which students build a portfolio of work by researching opportunities and practitioners within their chosen industry offer an alternative approach for learning about performance careers (Daniel & Daniel, 2014). Through these activities, students build their networks and contacts and enhance their opportunities for success. Daniel and Daniel suggest, however, that students' levels of confidence, resilience and initiative are central to the extent to which such programme can have a positive impact on career development learning, particularly in terms of networking beyond the relatively safe environment of the higher education setting.

The insecure and non-linear nature of music presents obvious challenges to aspiring musicians' self and identity (Alvesson et al. 2008). Many incoming students are initially motivated by their extrinsic social world, and their self-concept and self-image becomes more aligned with their future self as their studies progress and the reality of an ideal 'professional' self comes into view (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Rowley & Munday, 2014). Hence, students' developing sense of self is an important consideration for higher music education.

Positive mentoring relationships may play a valuable role in supporting a successful transition into a performance career (Ascenco et al, 2017; Creech et al, 2008; Hager & Johnsson, 2009), particularly given that graduates might make multiple attempts to become established in order to be successful. Mentorship can help musicians to learn about the relevant communities of practice; it can also provide a useful way to test possible selves as aspiring musicians refine and adapt their musical identities in response to their current activities (Ascenco et al, 2017; Burland, 2005).

In sum, aspiring musicians can only imagine what comes into view. It follows that optimal learning for a sustainable performance career will maximise the available opportunities to perform, work with and discover a variety of musicians and music work in order to develop and renew knowledge, confidence, versatility and networks (Creech et al., 2008). It is also significant that this type of learning continues throughout professional life. There is much value in providing aspiring musicians with the tools to reflect on the wider transferability of their musical and extra-musical capabilities is, as is highlighted in Morgan and Wood's (2014) study of young men seeking to build careers as performers or sound producers.

What is success? Repositioning performance careers

In this final section, we consider the loaded issue of success. Defining the characteristics of a *successful* performance career is tricky. Perceptions of success are individualised and personal, determined by external, social indicators such as finances, status and reputation, and also determined by more personal emotional or psychological factors. These assessments are both complex and time-bound. Financial success, for example, may create tension for a creative artist (Taylor and Littleton, 2009). On the one hand, earning money from art may be perceived as a validation; on the other hand, creating art with commercial value may not align with the artist's values, as emphasised by their description of "art-versus-money" as opposed activities even though this may mean a great deal of financial instability.

Matters of identity are implicated here, since, as discussed above, a musician's identity plays an important role in individual perceptions of success and career motivation (Burland, 2005; Burland & Davidson, 2002; Davidson & Burland, 2006; Jordan, 2009). The development of performers' capabilities "involves a complex web of motivation, time, educational systems, vocational concerns, and long-held perceptions of success" (López-Íñiguez & Bennett (in press), and adaptation within the career lifecycle is a pro-active, self-regulated process wherein individuals negotiate situations such as goal success or failure, or changes in environment and resources. Hierarchical perceptions of successful music careers, and successful performance outcomes, can drive narrowly defined early career behaviour. The results of this behaviour are still felt in late career, even among musicians with international performance careers. The fact that all eight musicians in López-Íñiguez and Bennett's study of internationally renowned performers had redefined success in line with their personal and professional values illustrates the need for educators to normalise complexity and for students to prepare for it (ibid.).

How do musicians create successful and sustainable performance careers?

Throughout this chapter we have explored the complexity surrounding they ways in which performance careers are defined, developed and sustained. We have discussed the elements and contexts that impact on musicians' experiences as they attempt to forge a career in musical performance and explored ways in which the transition into professional life can be smoothed and optimised. The implications of the literature as they apply to musicians and educators fall into five categories:

1. *Mindset Mobility:* The value of flexible and adaptable identities for being open to learning new things, seeking new roles, and adapting to new and changing contexts. This includes a commitment to lifelong learning and ongoing career development activities, as well as seeking at non-musical leisure activities as a way to stay fresh and energised.
2. *Personal Skills:* Strong social and interpersonal skills which can help to build reputation and networks and enable integration into communities of practice. These networks and communities of practice help to sustain performance careers, as spaces for development, testing the self, and distributing work.
3. *Entrepreneurship:* The ability to work entrepreneurially, to identify opportunities, to take risks and to solve problems creatively.

4. *Self-reflection:* The value of developing personal tools for reflecting on past, current and future selves, and to use mentors and support networks as a way to test and refine possible selves.
5. *Career preview:* Grasp opportunities to gain direct insight and experience of professional work contexts as a form of career preview and preparation.

The performance career in music engages musicians in multiple tasks, contexts and genres. The vast majority of musicians are involved in a diverse ecosystem of intangible cultural heritage which involves music making, listening and learning. Some musicians perform, some teach, some create musical works and some direct performances. As such, not all musicians are performers. Most musicians self-manage at least part of their practice and they constantly reinvent themselves in line with new opportunities, changing interests, personal circumstances and changes in the labour market. The sustainability of a career based in performance is predicated on the ability and openness of musicians to operate in an agile, challenging and always exciting musical world.

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Five Reflective questions for aspiring musicians

1. Which elements of a sustainable performance career do you feel you have already developed? Which need some additional attention?
2. What do you most enjoy about your engagement with music, and how could you incorporate these elements in your career plan?
3. What institutional resources might help you to develop the capabilities and experiences helpful for developing a sustainable career in performance?
4. What steps might you take to develop the lifelong learning mindset needed to establish and sustain your career?
5. What is your musical identity: how do you define yourself in relation to your musical activities?

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