Exploring New Pathways

Research Report

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ETHNO RESEARCH

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What is Ethno?

Ethno is JM International's program for folk, world and traditional music. Founded in 1990, it is aimed at young musicians (up to the age of 30) with a mission to revive and keep alive global cultural heritage. Present today in over 30 countries, Ethno engages young people through a series of annual international music gatherings as well as workshops, concerts and tours, working together with schools, conservatories and other groups of youth to promote peace, tolerance and understanding. (https://ethno.world/about/)

What is Ethno Research?

Ethno Research has sought to study the value and impact of the Ethno pedagogy and the related social process on the lives of the participating musicians, and its impact on the society at large, over the last 30 years. Following the initial pilot studies and framing document released in early 2020, and the impact COVID-19 had on the data collection sites, Ethno Research began working within 8 focused areas: (1) Arts and Culture, (2) History, (3) Pedagogy and Professional Development, (4) Trauma-Informed Practice, (5) Ethno Organizers, (6) Sustainability/Covid-19, (7) Ethno USA, (8) Majority World.

Ethno Research exists to develop our knowledge and understanding of the Ethno programme. It provides a critical tool to help navigate the complexity of human engagement in 'non-formal' peer-to-peer learning, 'intercultural exchange' and 'traditional' music-making. Our purpose is to illuminate new understandings of what Ethno does to support future growth and development.

What Next?

As a collection, the reports from this phase of the research are multifaceted and rich in data reflecting the complexity and diversity of the Ethno programme. Paramount for the next phase is to ensure that the research touches those that are invested in its programmes, from participants to organizers. Following the publication of these reports we will be working on a range of dynamic dissemination points resulting in focused outputs that respond to this collection of reports.

The 4-year Ethno Research project, led by the International Centre for Community Music (ICCM) at York St John University in collaboration with JM International (JMI), is made possible through a grant from Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies.

JM International
Official Program

Contents

Acknowledgements

In May 2019 I began my work as a postdoctoral researcher for Ethno Research. Now, in October 2022 I find myself completing the final work package for what has been a rich and fascinating project for anyone interested in studying what happens when people from diverse cultures interact with one another.

I would like to acknowledge all the Ethno Researchers who have been a part of the project. This report would not be possible without all the foundational work of the reports written by the research teams between 2019–2021. I'd like to acknowledge and thank the detailed investigations that took place and resulted in the generation of further research questions, some of which this report aims to address.

I would also like to acknowledge Martina Gerli, Suchet Malhotra, and Matt Clark from the JMI Head office. They have connected me with participants relevant to this research topic and been generous with their time when I have requested interviews with them.

Both the Ethno organisers and participants were very generous with their time for this project. I would like to acknowledge their quick responses to last minute email questions and their patience when I have needed minute details of their musical practice explained to me. Many of these organisers and participants were also in areas which did not have efficient Wi-Fi connections and I appreciate their willingness to keep engaging with the research. Their dedication and passion for Traditional music and Ethno is evident.

Finally, Millie Raw-Mackenzie and Lee Higgins who have been incredibly supportive of this project as it has developed over the last 6 months.

Executive Summary

Building upon research conducted between 2019–2021 this research report explores the development of Ethno as it has expanded to regions far beyond its roots in Sweden. I investigate how the organisers of the following Ethno Gatherings negotiate running an Ethno within their local context:

- Bahia
- Solomon Islands
- Malawi
- Mozambique
- Bosnia and Herzegovina

Secondly, I explore the experiences and perspectives of Ethno participants from the following places:

- Uganda
- Northern India
- Taiwan
- Congo
- Solomon Islands
- Jordan
- Hopi nation
- Chile
- Tunisia

Research is drawn from the analysis of interviews and one focus group as well as online research. The research findings are as follows:

ORGANISER PERSPECTIVES

Ethno becomes a community music project

The organisers of the Ethno's in this research report spoke of the way in which their Gatherings integrated with the local community. They spoke of how including the local community required a change of performance practice towards a conceptual view that recognised:

- Performing occurs continuously
- The need for flexibility to incorporate musicians who arrive unexpectedly
- A schedule, but with an adaptable approach to timekeeping
- Being willing to adapt the schedule
- Acknowledging different systems of music making (percussive focus, multimodality, etc)

Connecting with the international network

Organisers spoke of the importance of re-invigorating or representing their local music-making cultures. They noted that:

- Connecting with an international network assists in recognising the value of local musical cultures either by the enthusiasm with which international participants engage with local music, or, by the respectful musical exchange that participants experience when attending a Gathering in a different region.

Promotion of local music traditions

- Local music traditions could be promoted through final concerts.

Barriers to sustainability

- All Ethno organisers spoke of a desire to remain sustainable but highlighted various difficulties in obtaining funding in their respective areas.

PARTICIPANT PERSPECTIVES

Representing one's culture

- Participants spoke of the confidence they gained by sharing their culture at Ethno. For some participants, sharing their culture has become an important aspect of their musical careers. These participants aim to promote their culture on local and global platforms.

Learning

- **Challenging stereotypes**

  Participants spoke of needing to challenge stereotypes about their culture and of situations where assumptions were made about their musical identities based on their cultural background.

- **Formal and Nonformal learning**

  Almost all research participants had formal music education. However, there was a distinction made between their formal and nonformal music backgrounds.

- **Learning about other cultures**

  Participants spoke of the value of learning about different cultures.

- **Empowering and growing**

  Similar sentiments as in previous research were shared regarding the professional development and growth of musicians with a particular emphasis on how valued participants felt when sharing their music at Ethno. Participants in this research also highlighted how Ethno opened doors to a 'global playground'. Almost all participants are cosmopolitan in that they have lived, worked, and studied in various places around the world.

- **Barriers**

  The largest barrier to participation for all participants was the visa process rather than any experiences within the Ethno Gathering itself, which speaks to issues relating to economic power and agency in the global economy. (Kabanda 2018, Steger, 2003)

Introduction

JMI's youth program for folk, world, and traditional music, Ethno, has undergone rapid growth outside Europe and the Nordic regions in recent years. The first recorded Ethno outside Europe was Uganda in 2009, followed by Australia in 2011, Jordan in 2012 and India in 2014. Between 2017–2021 Ethno expanded outside Europe to include: Palestine (2017), Solomon Islands (2017), New Zealand (2018), Malawi (2018), Brazil (2018), Bahia (2018), Algeria (2018), Cambodia (2019), Chile (2021) and USA (2021) (cf. Gibson, Higgins, Humphrey, Ellström, Reiss, and Roosioja, 2021). In 2022, the number grew to include Mozambique and Tunisia.

With such a rapid growth in Ethno's outside of Europe that largely occurred towards the end of the Ethno Research data gathering period, this research report attempts to ensure the voices of the more recent Ethno Gatherings are heard in our findings. We also wanted to highlight the voices of Ethno participants who are from regions outside Europe. As such the purpose of this research is two-fold: building upon the findings of Ethno Research 2019–2021 we aimed to further investigate the experience, motivations for attending, and impact on the lives of Ethno participants from the following areas:

- Uganda
- Northern India
- Taiwan
- Congo
- Solomon Islands
- Jordan
- Hopi nation
- Chile
- Tunisia

And secondly, how the organisers of the following Ethno Gatherings negotiate running an Ethno within their local context:

- Bahia
- Solomon Islands
- Malawi
- Mozambique
- Bosnia and Herzegovina

The focus of this report is upon the contextual nature of Ethno Gatherings, relating to performance theories such as that of Richard Bauman (1977) and continued reflections on the intersection between local and global musicking. As a further foundational grounding, I have used the twelve elements of Ethno that were drawn out of a meta-analysis of the previous seven reports written by Ethno Research (Gibson, Higgins and Schippers, forthcoming). The findings in this report expand on how the Ethno approach has adjusted to local contexts and impacted the lives of participants from the aforementioned regions.

Figure 1: 12 Key Elements of Ethno

Engaging	Meeting	Playing	Connecting
Empowering	Respecting	Enjoying	Learning
Creating	Performing	Reflecting	Growing

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: PERFORMANCE FRAMES

In an earlier research report I observed how Ethno on the Road Sweden 2019 performed within particular performance frames (Gibson, 2020a). Returning to this as a theoretical framework seemed appropriate due to how Ethno organisers in this research project described the relationship between the audience and performer, not only in the final concert of Ethno, but throughout the Gatherings. The integration between the Ethno Gathering and the local community seemed to be an expectation which suggests a specific performance frame at play.

A performance frame is a set of expectations within which a particular performance occurs (Bauman, 1977; Turino 2008). Both the audience and performer have an agreed understanding of how a performance will unfold depending on the social context. For example, a band performing in a bar as background music will have a different set of expectations compared to an orchestra performing in a concert hall. Considering the entire Ethno Gathering from the perspective of a performance frame, meaning there is a shared understanding between the local community and participants within the Ethno Gathering that is culturally constructed, enables reflection as to whether the reason for the success of community integration was largely due to a different cultural approach towards music within the regions where these Gatherings occur. This may be a cultural approach where there is no conceptual delineation between rehearsal and performance, and, where there is no separation from the audience as the performers perfect their music-making. Taking a performance theory framework acknowledges that music is viewed from a variety of cultural lenses recognising that Western music making is but one of a multitude of musical approaches (Hess, 2021).[1] Using this framework aligns with an approach towards music cultures that acknowledges that 'standard theories about the music of one human society are often inadequate for a cognitive understanding of the music of another culturally differentiated society' (Nzewi, Anyahuru and Ohiaraumunna, 2008, p. 1).

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1 The term 'Western' in this report refers to both Western 'Classical' music and Western 'Popular' music. While both genres are now performed globally, thus not directly related to the geographical location of 'the West', they have a particular set of standards in relation to harmonic and melodic structures, and a delineation between the audience and performer (Nooshin, 2011). These distinctions are relevant to this report.

GLOBALISATION AND ETHNO

Ethno is a programme that encourages the sharing and learning of multiple musical and cultural traditions from around the world. Because of this process of exchange, it falls within the remit of cultural globalisation, which considers issues such as power and agency when people from a variety of social, economic, and cultural backgrounds engage with one another (cf Gibson, 2020a). Globalisation is one of the core frameworks of Ethno Research (cf Mantie and Risk, 2020 p. 10–13). Previous research reports recognise that Ethno is influenced by and can also provide a means through which to view globalisation. This research attempts to recognise the diversity of experience for participants and organisers within the regions represented in this report. It aims to highlight how approaches from areas that are newer to the Ethno programme can provide fresh insights into the Ethno experience.

Four of the Gatherings in this research fall within the category 'Global South'. The term 'Global South' brings with it some associations that relate to the social and cultural imbalances of Colonialism. It was a term used by the United Nations to denote countries across Africa, Latin America, and most of Asia (Haug, Braveboy-Wagner and Maihold, 2021). This meta-category refers to a huge number of countries that can result in broad generalisations (Waisbich, Roychoudhury and Haug, 2021). At times, the research may draw attention to some of the power imbalances relating to broader global inequalities. These findings are shared with the intention to consider how such 'modes of power' may be unsettled and challenged (Born and Hesmondalgh, 2000, p. 47). Or, as Bradley (2012, p. 429) emphasises, 'we need to approach all music, and all philosophies of music education, with an understanding of their contextually situated nature'. Part of exploring the context of the music-making experiences in the Ethnos that form part of this research report is the need to acknowledge and understand the 'social-historical power relations that imbue knowledge production' (Aman, 2019, p. 184). I aim to highlight how the social and cultural practices within regions that were once under colonial rule may further enhance the Ethno experience. Taking such an approach may lead towards creating a global musical identity for Ethno.

Methodology

Semi-structured interviews and one focus group were conducted online; however, research was influenced by offline fieldwork conducted for previous reports and my attendance at Ethno and JMI events throughout 2022. This is reflected in Figure 2 where one notes the proportion of participants who agreed to be interviewed that had already met me offline during my fieldwork at Ethno Sweden (2019) and Ethno New Zealand (2020). This continues to highlight the relational nature of ethnographic research as friendships develop within the field (Hellier-Tinoko, 2003; Russell, 2006). On a broader scale I have been engaged with members of the Ethno network between May 2019 to date, October 2022 so I am familiar to the network.

The methodological approach was a qualitative analysis of the interviews and focus group. The key questions for the research are listed in Appendix One.

Figure 2: Research Participant Information

Pseudonym	Interview date	Gender	English as a first language	Region (s)	First interview with Ethno Research	Offline interactions	Notes
Participants:							
Chloe	07/09/22	F	Y	Multiple regions	No	Fieldwork, Ethno Sweden 2019	
Chia-hao	06/07/22	M	N	Taiwan	Yes	Fieldwork, Ethno Sweden 2019	
Shūfēn	24/06/22	F	N	Taiwan	No	Fieldwork, Ethno Sweden 2019, Ethno on the Road 2019	
Maria	31/08/22	F	N	Chile	No	Fieldwork, Ethno New Zealand 2020, Ethno USA 2021	
Moki	29/07/22	M	N	Hopi	No	Fieldwork, Ethno USA 2021	
Akamu	01/09/22	M	N	Solomon Islands	Yes	None	
Farah	12/08/22	F	N	Tunisia	Yes	Field observation, Ethno France, 2022	
Mukisa	N/A	M	No info	Uganda	Yes	None	WhatsApp
Atido	18/08/22	M	N	Congo	Yes	None	
Hadia	04/07/22	F	N	Jordan	Yes	JMI Conference, 2022	
Akhil	06/09/22	M	N	India	Yes	Fieldwork, Ethno Sweden 2019	
Organisers:							
Johana	16/06/22	F	N	Bahia	No	None	
	14/07/22						Focus group
Billy	15/06/22	M	N	Solomon Islands	No	Fieldwork, Ethno New Zealand 2020, Ethno Committee meeting 2019	
	14/07/22						Focus group
Gordon	N/A	M	N	Solomon Islands	Yes	Ethno Committee meeting, 2019	Email
Limbani	29/06/22	M	N	Malawi	Yes	None	
	14/07/22						Focus group
Adelina	02/08/22	F		Mozambique	Yes	None	
Lejla	22/06/22	F	N	Boznia-Herzegovinia	Yes	JMI Conference, 2022	

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS: ETHNO ORGANISERS

I reached out to the organisers of eight Ethno Gatherings. Five of the Gatherings responded expressing an interest in being part of the research. They were Ethno Bahia, Solomon Islands, Malawi, Mozambique and Bosnia and Herzegovina.[2]

During the interviews it became apparent that Ethno Bahia, Solomon Islands and Malawi share similar concerns, so we agreed to arrange a focus group with the organisers of these Gatherings. The aim of the focus group was to connect with one another and reflect on some of their shared experiences together.

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS: ETHNO PARTICIPANTS

I contacted 20 Ethno participants, some of whom were suggested by JMI head office, others from the Ethno network I have built up over the last four years of research. Of the 20 participants, 13 responded to the request to be interviewed, 11 of whom we were able to arrange a time for an interview. In one instance we agreed to respond via WhatsApp voice-notes due to a time zone difference. All other interviews were remote online interviews.

During one interview the participant requested to answer questions in French. This interview was then transcribed into English. In all the other interviews participants were able to communicate in English.

The aim was to ensure that a participant from regions that appeared to be under-represented in our Ethno Research database was interviewed. For example, regarding the participant from India, I approached someone from the Northern region of India close to Nepal, to contrast with the Indian participants in previous research who are largely based in the South of India. In the first instance, I contacted Ethno participants who had not already been part of Ethno Research with support from JMI. In some instances, there was no response and so I drew upon participants with whom I had already established a relationship or who had been interviewed by other researchers in the Ethno Research team. I also chose to interview one participant who identifies as a 'third culture kid'.[3] This participant holds three citizenships and has lived in multiple countries around the world. My aim was to acknowledge the Ethno participants who may not feel a strong attachment to one specific region.

To triangulate the feedback from Ethno organisers and participants I also held an interview with the JMI Head Office and analysed the relevant Ethno Gathering Facebook pages or Ethno participant's websites.

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2 Bosnia and Herzegovina had been suggested by JMI as an example of a Gathering in an area that had experienced conflict. It is different to the other Ethno's in this report as it falls under the EU and as such can receive EU funding.

3 A third culture kid is a child who has spent their formative years in a place other than their parents' homeland. It was coined by sociologist Ruth Hill.

LIMITATIONS TO THE RESEARCH

As this research was conducted remotely, findings are based on interviews and online data gathering, thus creating a partial picture of the Ethno Gatherings that are the focus of this research. JMI had requested that we conduct remote research to draw more Ethno Gatherings and participants into the dialogue rather than focus on fieldwork in one or two Ethno Gatherings, such as our research into Ethno USA (Schippers, 2022) and earlier pilot research reports (Birch 2020, Čoric, 2020; Ellström, 2020; Gayraud, 2020; Gibson, 2020, Higgins, 2020, Roosioja, 2020). I acknowledge that this is not the way most people from these regions usually engage. Indeed, one research participant commented, "we, as Africans are so used to face-to-face". It was beyond the scope of this research to be able to meet the participants in an offline context in their home regions so therefore we are grateful to those participants who stepped into the online zoom meeting interview approach so graciously. The findings in this research therefore represent the perspectives of the 17 individuals that agreed to participate rather than site-specific fieldwork of each of the Gatherings that are mentioned in the report.

MY POSITIONALLY

Having been born and raised in South Africa and now living and working in England, I have shared similar experiences to many of the Ethno participants who are part of this research study. However, I am also a white South African, which means that I do come from a position of privilege within that society. Most participants in this research recognised that I could identify with the complexity of wealth and power within their nations, however I did not share some of the experiences of village life that participants and organisers describe.

Ethical clearance for this research was granted by York St John University.

Organiser perspectives

ETHNO AS A COMMUNITY MUSIC PROJECT

Ethno Gatherings generally follow the structure of participants meeting together and then spending time sharing and learning each other's music. This process then develops into a rehearsal period as participants prepare for their public concerts. The pattern being followed is quite performative in approach, with a distinction between 'rehearsal and performance' and 'audience and performer' (Turino, 2008). The result has been the creation of an 'Ethno bubble' described by some previous research participants as an escape from everyday life.

The way the Ethno organisers describe their Gatherings in this research contrasts to the performance frame that I have just described. These organisers describe an experience that appears to be much more participatory in approach where there is more interaction between Ethno participant and the local community throughout the Ethno Gathering. This regular interaction leads to less separation between 'rehearsal and performance' and 'audience and performer'. It appears that the resulting final concert becomes a 'community performance' rather than an 'Ethno showcase'. This difference in approach appears to be 'organic' as the organiser of Ethno Bahia describes, or, as the organiser of Ethno Malawi reflects, 'I think it's part of how our culture and communities behave. These comments suggest a particular local performance practice to which they, as Ethno organisers, are responding and aligns to findings in the Pedagogy report surrounding how 'Ethno could be described as an example of glocalization in practice, whereby some characteristics were core, signature facets of Ethno (i.e., the foundational principles and the core pedagogical practices) while others were more fluid and responsive to local needs, traditions and perspectives' (Čoric, Creech, Lorenzino and Varvarigou, 2021, p. 75–77).[4]

In the following interview, for example, the organiser of Ethno Malawi reflects on the difference between a European concert and one in Malawi:

> **When I got a chance to visit Europe and go to concerts, in most of the concerts you wait until the song ends and then you can exclaim but [in Malawi], it's the moment, whether the song is just started if that is what speaks to you, to our heart, your mind you shout at that moment, because that's what you feel (Ethno Malawi, interview).**

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4 Glocalization refers to the universal and the particular within globalization (Robertson, 1992; cf. Mantie and Risk, 2020). In this context it refers to the way that local Ethno's engage with universal or global approaches to music.

The Ethno organiser continues to reflect on the difference in behaviour with audiences in Malawi:

> **When the people are on stage and they start performing, everyone sings along. Yes, even if it is in a different language […] When you leave the venue and all the village is singing the songs you create at Ethno […] When you have participants not willing to go to sleep because they want to learn more and sing more and play more. And then you have young people, small kids not going to have their lunch at their homes but lingering around so they can hear and listen. What is happening there? That is the kind of impact that is there [at Ethno]. (Ethno Malawi interview)**

The organiser of Ethno Malawi paints a picture of a local community who have engaged with the music being learned at Ethno alongside the Ethno participants to the point that they can sing along to the music at the final concert. The description is of an event where it is considered acceptable for the audience to participate in the musical performances by singing or responding at any moment to the music. This is a response that may not feel as organic to an audience who are used to a Western performance frame.[5] These audiences may be more comfortable with the role of listening to music and only applauding at the end of the piece. Taking the perspective that audiences respond to performers based on a cultural set of expectations can help when introducing music and musicians from other parts of the world to them.

Ethno Malawi, Bahia and Bosnia and Herzegovina organisers also describe how they go into the village or town to perform. In Ethno Bahia they visit the village every night to play alongside local musicians. Ethno Malawi go out into the streets to perform and raise awareness for their final concert. As they perform, people around them participate, playing drums and singing. Ethno Malawi occurs in a village and the organiser recounts how the local community may hear the music being made by the participants and be reminded of their own musical traditions and want to participate. As such, Ethno Malawi will often invite the local community to the perform with Ethno at the final concert (Focus Group). Having to go out into the community in this way is essential to the Ethno Malawi organiser, once again suggesting a response to local cultural practices. He also reflects on the way the community prepares the food, sometimes finding that they need to share the food. This means they may have a budget for thirty or forty people but need to share the same food with 35 or 45 people. Similarly, Bahia ask the local community to prepare food for them.

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5 There are Western performance frames where folk dancing occurs. I observed one instance during the Ethno on the Road tour in Sweden in 2019 where the audience pushed chairs and tables back and responded to their performance through dance. It was explained to me that this performance was unusual for them but that the residents of this area had an approach towards folk music that was more participatory (Gibson, 2020).

Flexibility with the schedule

The expectation of greater community engagement requires more flexibility with the programme schedule at Ethno. Ethno Bahia's organiser describes a situation where Ethno participants adjust to a cultural context where everyone is 'all together'. There is minimal time for separate rehearsals because of the need to welcome visiting performers to their Ethno. She reflects that:

> There is perfection in this energy of being together. So, when they're playing together, everyone is not focusing so much on technical perfection but on this special energy and feeling and emotion. Everybody gets involved […] It's not something you can rehearse.

The first Ethno Bahia 2018 took place at the Casa do Samba em Santa Amaro which is in the historic centre of Salvador, declared a centre of cultural heritage by UNESCO in 2005. During this Ethno, there were musicians visiting the centre, such as the Samba Chula Master Aurino de Maracangalha who plays a rare instrument called the viola machete and a group of Jongo no Sudeste musicians. These visiting musicians conducted workshops with the group which allowed for 'cultural interchange' between local musicians and Ethno participants. The organiser of Ethno Bahia describes these as 'spontaneous' performances. She reflects on how these interrupted with the schedule of Ethno, which made it difficult for the Artistic mentors who were focused on preparing for their final performance.

Both Ethno Bahia and Malawi are emphatic that 'we cannot reject people who are coming, they're feeling somethings going on and want to share' (Ethno Bahia, interview). Likewise, the organiser of Ethno Malawi's organiser explains, 'you have to accommodate them and share what you are doing'. He reflects how there is always music at most of their community festivals and activities and this may result in the communities saying 'there is so and so and he plays this kind of instrument. Can we call him in? So, they just became part of it. You can't say no' Both organisers explain how these musical encounters can become the highlight of the event. However, it means that with a limited amount of time to prepare for their final concerts, the way rehearsals take place change, alluding the 'spontaneity' mentioned by Ethno Bahia earlier: musical encounters become more collaborative and responsive, creating the sense that rehearsals become a performance in and of themselves.

Flexibility with time management

The need for flexibility with schedule and the inclusion of musicians thus begins to speak to the way music is being created at the Ethno. In Bahia, rehearsals become less about achieving a technical perfection within a set period and more about collaboration. This process is something that needs to be trusted, Johana explains, as local participants will not engage with Ethno if there is too much focus on a tight schedule or intense

practiced perfection (interview). The Ethno Bahia organiser explains that 'the people show collectivity' suggesting that this may be the desired outcome, or criteria for a successful performance in Bahia. This idea of performing an identity or ethos was also noted in research into Ethno on the Road and with the Ethno History report where there was a suggestion that Ethno performs 'togetherness' when on stage (Gibson, 2020a; Gibson, Higgins, Humphrey, Ellström, Reiss, Roosioja, 2021). In the Bahia context, this 'togetherness' or 'collectivity' appears to extend to members of the local community.

This description of performance and learning is also recognised by the organiser of Solomon Islands. He notes, 'I'm in one of those bands where you just turn up and playing, just play, whatever comes along, and you will be played for a couple of hours. Just collaborate as you go.' The organiser of the Ethno Solomon Islands shares that his participants, who are largely from the local community, also do not respond well to strict constraints particularly in relation to timekeeping. He explains that they are more focused on results than timekeeping (Billy, Focus Group).

ACKNOWLEDGING DIFFERENT SYSTEMS OF MUSIC-MAKING

The previous descriptions of music-making in Ethno Bahia, Malawi and Mozambique all lean towards the connection between music-making and local communities. There is a need to acknowledge that different systems of music-making are occurring according to the needs and expectations of the local communities.

Nwezi, Anyahuru and Ohiaraumunna (2008, p. 1) define a system as 'a body of cultural artistic production that has geographical-cultural delimitation, and that is marked by features of sound, musical objects, and performance organisation distinguishable from the musical arts of contiguous cultures'. The previous section focused on how the performance organisation of the local music cultures influenced the way Ethno participants performed and rehearsed. However, there is also mention of the features of sound that may require more attention than in a Western context. For example, the need for a stronger percussive focus in Bahia. The organiser of Ethno Bahia noted how a third of her musicians were percussionists which meant that 'the way of arranging and thinking the music is different'. The music needed to a much stronger percussive focus with less emphasis on melody and harmonic arrangements. This is different to the concept of everyone in Ethno 'learning a tune' and then adding a harmonic arrangement with some percussive accompaniment that act as a support to the tune, as is typical of an Ethno arrangement.

There is also mention of the influence Western approaches have around the world. It is difficult to avoid situations where the dominance of the approach does not come into play. For example, the organiser of Solomon Island shared how if a European arrives

on Solomon Islands and affirms the music-making, the affirmation is more likely to be accepted than if it came from him. Or, on a musical level, folk music in Bahia struggles to get the same recognition as Western classical music largely due to structural bias within the educational system (Döring, in press). These are not issues directly related to the running of an Ethno but speak to broader issues of structural inequality within the world and a history of unequal exchange in relation to cultural globalisation (Wallach and Clinton, 2019). Both organisers appear to see Ethno as an opportunity to challenge some of the historical hierarchies in relation to music-making.

Within Ethno, most participants have some understanding of Western systems of music allowing it to become the mode within which participants engage with one another. For one of the organisers of Ethno Solomon Islands, the Western approach within Ethno was seen as an opportunity for the local musicians to acquire and learn about some of the expectations within Western music. He felt this would assist these talented artists in finding a platform and to be able to perform their music that would be 'acceptable' to an audience in Australia, Europe, or Asia. From this perspective, Ethno becomes a window towards acceptable 'Western' practices of music-making enabling the local musicians to learn about how to create a successful musical performance within a Western performance frame.

Respecting the transmission of traditions

In some instances, such as the Solomon Islands, there is a sensitivity towards who has the right to share a song. Gordon explains 'there's a lot of cultures in the Pacific that have felt robbed by colonisation and there is an idea of "are you going to come and rob this song as well?". As such it is not appropriate to 'take a song and use it freely', especially if it has cultural significance.

Billy explains that some Traditional songs have a 'massive culture' behind them. They may be hundreds of years old and have a cultural tie or story connected to them. Songs may have been sung when someone is killed, for example. Billy explains that he is very careful to use material such as this just in case someone takes offence at the presentation of the song. When participants from the Solomon Islands bring their songs to share, he always checks to make sure songs have no ties that might be disputed or bring anger to other people. However, he also notes that most Solomon Islanders probably already know that concept because of how they learn their songs as they grow up. He explains, "they know which songs will provoke another tribe". The Ethno participant from the Solomon Islands elaborated further on the concept of music that can and cannot be shared. He explained that they shared the music at Ethno that was allowed to be shared. For him, this is a means of transferring knowledge to younger generations. He sees it as a means to 'get these materials, these songs these rhythms […] to the new generation and the generations that are yet to come.'

Largely, within the Solomon Islands communities 'it's accepted practice that you bring the songs that belong to you' (Billy, Interview). This is a concept that was also emphasised during my participation at Ethno New Zealand in 2020. As participants we were encouraged to reflect deeply on our own connection to our cultural heritage prior to selecting music. In the globalised world, the concept of song ownership, particularly within folk music may need to be interrogated further. It highlights a differentiated approach where the 'folk song' may have become objectified and separated from its cultural or ancestral heritage and significance. By welcoming indigenous music practice into Ethno, there is opportunity to further reflect on the relationship between folk song, ancestral or cultural heritage and rights regarding song performances.

Ethno as transformational

The inclusive nature of the aforementioned Gatherings draws attention to the role of the Ethno Gathering as a transformational space. In previous research it was the 'communitas' of Ethno that allowed participants to feel a sense of deep social connection with one another which contributed to some participants describing Ethno as 'life-changing'(Camlin and Reiss, 2022). In these examples 'communitas' includes the local community.

Kabanda (2018, p. 52) suggests that 'non-Western societies have an advantage, as subjects tend to be a part of daily life in their cultures' and that for greater interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary ways of thinking and learning, there is a need to 'curb [the Western model of education's] tendency to put subjects into boxes'. This relates to the organiser of Ethno Bahia and her reflection on transformation in Ethno:

> **Each Ethno camp is a form of therapy and a chance for very strong transformations. The difference is here in Bahia we have an open mind in relation to therapy, healing, and spirituality. It's also much more integrated in the daily life (Focus Group, Bahia).**

The descriptions of performance practice at the Ethno Gatherings in this research report appears to be one that integrates daily life and music-making in such a way that it becomes difficult to separate Ethno participants from the local community. However, this does not appear to impact the organisers understanding of Ethno as transformational or as having a social impact upon the participants. Rather, they consider their Ethnos as having a social impact on both participants and the local community:

> **In a way their therapy (in the Solomon Islands) is to come and share their music. The thing is when you involve others, when you're actually out in the communities and festivals, that's where the real therapy comes […] If you're only limited to the camp in the bubble, it will be limiting the values to ourselves (Focus Group, Billy).**

The community is also included, it's not separate. If we do the Ethno in the community we are spreading this good news, this energy. It's like you're spreading a lot of seeds and you don't know exactly what this will do in everyone's life or in the community life, but there is something that will go on. It can't be a bubble just for a retreat and we are all closed and then we go back to normal life. (Focus Group, Johana)

Largely, the conclusions by the Ethno organisers are that by expanding the Ethno bubble to include the local community one is opening up the values of Ethno to a wider group of people, therefore benefiting both the Ethno participants and local communities.

RE-INVIGORATING MUSICAL TRADITIONS

Engaging and respecting

The legacy of Colonialism is tangibly felt in the Solomon Islands. Because of the impact colonialism had on local cultural heritage, both organisers speak passionately about how important the Ethno element of 'respecting' is for them. One organiser explained that they were 'taught almost to disregard old music' whilst the other explains that they grew up with the mindset that what is related to their culture is a 'diabolical thing'. Billy began to perform his Traditional songs eight years ago after performing reggae and pop music all his life. He realised that Solomon Islanders do not see the value of their music. When he first heard about Ethno he felt the programme could provide 'tangible evidence' of the value of local music to the Solomon Islands.

The organiser of Ethno Malawi feels that they need to 'catch the moment' by engaging young people with their roots through traditional music. This is a feeling shared by the organiser of Ethno Mozambique (interview). In Ethno Malawi, participants may know a lot of folk songs but not have access to Traditional instruments because instrument makers live in remote areas and instruments are also rare. Young musicians will bring the tunes but perform them on modern equipment. In some respects, this creates a 'mixed message' because of the use of modern equipment rather than Traditional music, but it is something they are working through. For example, Ethno Malawi invite local groups that play Traditional music as a form of exposure, adding that there is dance and music because the two are inseparable in their culture.

Ethno Malawi also find that they are dealing with local attitudes that hear the word 'Ethno and think it's associated with primitiveness'. This is because there has not been a focus on learning Traditional instruments and music particularly with young people. There appears to be an older age group interested in attending Ethno in Solomon Islands, Malawi, and Mozambique. Sometimes this is because older members of the community are more familiar with folk music traditions. Ethno Malawi manage this by inviting 'culture bearers'

to offer workshops to their younger Ethno participants. Bahia appears to follow a similar approach. The Ethno Solomon participant age range is older, but currently, they connect with a youth culture programme called Dreamworks to engage with younger members of the community. The Ethno musicians played the music for a Dreamworks performance in 2021. In this example, the Ethno performers continued to perform the music they had learned at Ethno three months later for the Dreamcast performances. This was achievable because of the non-residential nature of the Solomon Islands and the larger proportion of local musicians who attend their Ethno. It also allowed Solomon Islands to engage with a younger demographic.

Much like Bahia and Solomon Islands, participants in Malawi do not always want to pay to participate. They may not have the resources or may feel that 'they can listen to their [Traditional] music in their own local communities. So, as a concept, Ethno Malawi have needed to work hard to promote the Ethno approach because it is unfamiliar to the region, however, they see the value in belonging to an international network.

Ethno Malawi feel a strong motivation to support the promotion and preservation of Malawian Traditional music. The organiser speaks about a national debate surrounding Malawian identity and how Ethno can contribute to that discussion through music by identifying instruments, folk songs, and ethnic groups within Malawi. Following this focus is the connection between Malawi and its surrounding countries, recognising that cultural and traditional similarities the countries within the region share. This becomes an opportunity for young traditional musicians within the region to connect with one another. Finally, there is the international connection and the opportunity to 'look at ourselves through other people's cultures.' He elaborates further:

> For us, when we belong to this international network of Ethno it is a way of appreciating the diversity of cultures of the world, but also looking at ourselves. There is also a lot of diversity within the national borders, in terms of musical traditions. So, to raise that kind of awareness and appreciation of our own culture through our local music, it's quite motivating for me (Malawi organiser interview)

The international encounter

Ironically, it appears that bringing international participants into the Gatherings supports local participants in gaining an appreciation of their musical culture. The Ethno organisers of Malawi and Solomon Islands explain:

> As you know this region was colonised by westerners and our generation grew up to value music as something foreign. What is related to our culture has no value, including traditional music. A successful Ethno here in my view would be a balance of both foreign traditional music here so young people will not marginalise what we have but rather have pride in it (Gordon)

> **It's the boost the confidence that the locals have when they actually see Europeans in Australia and New Zealanders turn up to the Solomons to learn to teach their songs and to learn their songs. It's a huge boost. (Billy)**

Bringing in international participants has a huge benefit to Ethno Malawi in terms of funding and status within the region. When they want to influence the Government at a policy level, they can refer to the international interest, which strengthens their arguments. What these reflections highlight is the complexity of 'Global North-South' relationships emphasising Bradley's (2012, p. 410) observations of the 'entangled, hybrid and symbiotic relationships that occur in the postcolonial world.'

Finding connections

The organiser of Ethno Mozambique reflects on a profound moment when they discovered that they were holding their Ethno in a community that still practices cultural traditions from Malawi. She explains that, for the participants that were attending from Malawi 'somehow, we removed the Malawians from Malawi, but we brought them back into a very rich traditional community who […] showed them Malawian culture and we had no idea that we were in a community where they are still practicing [Malawian culture].

The Ethno Malawi organisr reflects on these connections in Ethno Malawi. He notes, how participants from Uganda began to realise that the Traditional music was a language variation of music in Malawi. This discovery became quite powerful for the musicians as they started to 'identify themselves with the music or see themselves in the music' that had been presented by a different nation.

These experiences may speak to the 'imagined' notion of nation building particularly in Africa where borders were created by Colonisers. Through the music-making deeper awareness of the cultural connections between African nations may be being established.

Promotion: Beyond the local community

Ethno Solomon aims to show musicians that their local music can go out into the world. One notable example was when one of the bands that formed in Ethno Solomon 2017 was selected to represent the Solomon Islands at the Dubai Expo in 2020. Musicians are realising that they can perform not only in Honiara, but out in the world (Billy). This is important to the organisers of Solomon Islands where it is difficult to earn a living as a Traditional musician. They want to help Traditional musicians earn at least some money from their work.

Secondly, these organisers want to promote the music of Solomon Islands globally because they believe the music has global potential. One organiser also explains that some Western bands have appropriated their music. He feels that Solomon Islanders should rather be the ones performing and presenting their music.

With such a focus on performance throughout the week, the final concert becomes a moment to promote the work that Ethno is doing in Malawi. The organisers invite various stakeholders and potential funders to demonstrate the work that they are doing. This is similar for Ethno Mozambique who had members of the government come and visit their Gathering to find out more about it. This has led to the government agreeing to support with fundraising for future events.

Funding and infrastructure

JMI is a global network composed of autonomous member organizations, responsible for their own funding. JM International is not a donor organisation, thus membership to JMI does not equate with the receiving of funding. However, JMI does work together with its member organisations to apply for international funding to support their joint programmes, such as Ethno. JMI is predominantly supported through European Union and Belgian funding. This funding comes with certain provisos, which the organisation is expected to meet, and frames how funds may be allocated. This determines, to an extent, the support that JMI is able to provide non-European members within these frameworks. In countries where there is little to no local government funding for international cultural collaboration, an additional barrier to participation is thus clearly noticeable.

International networking is apparent within all the Ethno's that are part of this research. One of the organisers of Ethno Solomon Islands is also part of the Ethno New Zealand team; Bosnia and Herzegovina have several partnerships within the EU and the USA Malawi and Mozambique work alongside Norway and Brazil in a further collaboration called MOVE, a JM Norway initiative.[6] Organisers do find it more difficult, however, to travel to Ethno organiser and committee events held in Europe thus their opinions may not be heard as readily as those of the Ethno organisers who find it easier to travel to those events. JMI is aware of these difficulties. Through funding from the MACP grant JMI have been able to provide support for travel for all Ethno organisers.[7] JMI ensure that the funding they provide is proportionate to the need of the organisers.

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6 A recent evaluation of MOVE was conducted by the ICCM. Their evaluation is available at: https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/research/international-centre-for-community-music/projects

7 Margaret A Cargill Philanthropies (MACP) awarded a grant comprising five pillars to Ethno: mobility, research, Ethno USA, organiser training and organisational support (cf Gibson, et al, 2022)

Government funding appears most difficult for Bahia and Solomon Islands. Bosnia and Herzegovina have been able to receive funding through partnerships within the European Union and with the United States. Ethno Malawi does not receive government grants but does have a good relationship with the ministry of culture. This means that the ministry can support with issues such as visa applications or the provision of resources. For example, they lent Ethno Malawi a minivan to help with transport. Ethno Malawi raises funds through fundraising and has had support through the MACP mobility grants to bring international participants to Ethno.

Ethno Bahia and Solomon Islands have been in a situation where funding was promised but did not arrive on time requiring organisers to initially pay out of pocket. Funding for Bahia is particularly complicated because grants usually go to community music projects supporting work in marginalised communities or to 'high art' activities. Ethno does not fall within either of those brackets.

The organiser of the inaugural Ethno India reflected on how he found funding for the event. He recognises that Government funding would be complicated. Using the JMI network's reputation to give the project credibility and a proposal he had drawn up, he approached various stakeholders, including philanthropists. In some instances, this required that scholarships were created in the names of the philanthropists. In other instances, no money exchanged hands, but organisations agreed to cover costs for transport, for example. He focused on finding funding that did not rely on the government.

Furthermore, both Bahia and Solomon Islands emphasise that it is difficult to plan ahead in their regions. Largely because of the lack of reliability with partnerships. For example, most recently Solomon Islands needed to change the dates of their Gathering because of last minute changes in schedule to a local festival. Funding awards may also not always be timeous. The organisers of both regions explain that this is part of the lifestyle, however, and part of the identity of their Ethno.

Kabanda (2018, p. 33) argues, 'There is a role for international agencies, national donor agencies and governments. The action of these agencies should be more than roles between "actors" and "enablers" they should espouse truly interactive and proactive roles that stimulate mutually inclusive public policy measures'. The organisers of each Ethno recognise themselves as independent to JMI and needing to self-fund but some suggest that they would like to engage better within the Ethno network, particularly with regard to support for funding applications.

Participant perspectives

SHARING: REPRESENTING ONE'S CULTURE

Previous research suggested there was a difference in how participants from the 'Global South' engage with Ethno (Mantie, et al, 2022). As discussed earlier, such differentiations can result in broad generalisations. It may also lead to the suggestion of 'perceived hierarchies' (Agawu, 2003, p. 22). What this research has highlighted are situations that relate to misunderstandings surrounding a musician's identity or musical practice, such as assumptions about the music a musician from a particular region may play, rather than a sense of their music being seen at a lower status in a 'perceived hierarchy'. What is drawn from the research is the importance of acknowledging a plurality of musical identities held by Ethno participants and to be aware of the risk of attaching a musical 'label' to musicians purely because of their cultural background (Kabanda, 2022). As Ruth Finnegan reminds us, 'Musicking and its musicians have always drawn upon, incorporated, and integrated from multiple resources. In that sense, it has always been "hybrid" (Finnegan, 2018, p. 492).

The significance of representation

Research participants comment on the importance of representing their region. Mukisa explains he is from the Bugandan Kingdom, rather than Uganda. He was also the first Ugandan to attend an Ethno, which opened up further opportunities for Ugandan participants to attend Ethno in later years. Akhil reflects how his photo was in the local newspaper saying he was representing India at an Ethno, which was a 'big thing' in the small town that he comes from. Representation therefore holds significant value within the regions participants come from as well as on a personal level.

The participants from regions that do not have an Ethno also felt a desire to start an Ethno in their region (Congo, Taiwan, North India, Hopi nation). Largely this was due to issues of access. They saw the value of sharing their musical culture and wanted to give this opportunity to more people from their home region. Moki explains:

> **Because not many people actually get the privilege and the chance to learn their traditional songs as well as their language. And because the two things go hand in hand, language, and song, it's, it's something definitely that's been a lifelong mission to just keep preserved.**

Two participants are already active in the promotion and teaching of their musical traditions. Akamu works with the Dreamcast organisation to give young people experience in the arts and develop their understanding of the traditional cultures.

Dreamcast also now work in partnership with Ethno Solomon Islands where the musicians accompany the dancers in a performance. Mukisa is based in Uganda but spends a lot of time in America. He works as an educator in both countries, explaining 'I'm doing a lot of cross-cultural experiences as an educator' and 'very involved in arts transformation with youth and communities back home in Uganda'.

Another participant felt his region was under-represented within Ethno with more participants from South India than the Northern regions. He continued by saying, 'India is a whole continent itself, and maybe we could learn a lot about India, just from having it in [the Northern' regions']. By having Ethnos in local regions participants felt people who could not afford the travel costs would be able to participate. Research participants also recognised the local diversity of their regions, believing there would be value in these varied musical traditions having the opportunity to share their practice. This is already evident in the interviews with the organisers of Malawi, Mozambique, and Solomon Islands, where local musical identities are appearing to gain value as they are shared within the Ethno Gatherings.

Challenging stereotypes

Further to perceptions of identity, there is a sense of representing one's community and culture. Participants referred to food and customs they shared at Ethno and wanting to share 'more than the music'. They also spoke of how people did not know much about the places they were from and there was a desire to 'educate' Ethno participants about their cultures. For one participant, she wanted challenge some of the stereotypes of 'Arabic people' that people see in the news media. She emphasised behaviours, such as the generosity and love in her culture, and wanted to share the music, dance, and food – which she refers to as 'the best parts of our culture'. Moki also wanted to challenge stereotypes that people see in the media. He, however, wanted to draw attention to more serious sides of his culture.

LEARNING: MUSICAL BACKGROUNDS

Cultural Generalisations

Notable in the interviews with both participants and organisers are the references to the multitude of regional music cultures.[8] Research participants explain that they are from a particular region within a country and so they perform one of many styles of traditional music.

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8 The participant from Congo explained that there 450 Ethnicities in the country whilst the Ugandan participant explained there were 40 to 50 musical cultures in his region.

In some cases, this can result in generalisations or misconceptions, such as in the case of Classical Indian music. A musician from the Nepal region of India explained his relationship to Indian classical music by saying, 'I only learned Indian classical for a brief moment in time'. He reflected on his musical development being shaped by other music he was listening to, such as Nepali, Indian, or Western music. Because of his musical background, this participant brings music to Ethno that may not have its roots in Indian Classical music, but rather relates to other forms of music within his country and region.

Another participant explained how the instrument that she plays is a Chinese folk instrument, not Taiwanese. Yet, she plays Taiwanese traditional music on the instrument. Both Taiwanese musicians explained some of the tensions between Chinese and Taiwanese folk music, drawing attention to complex history of the two places. This example signifies the many ways in which globalisation has impacted music-making across the centuries and in all parts of the world.

Finally, participants reflected on needing to incorporate musical systems that did not easily translate into the Western system, such as the use of quarter tones or needing to add harmonic arrangements to traditions that do not use harmony. Two research participants have quarters tones in the Traditional music and both taught songs that used this tonality at Ethno. They saw it as an opportunity to introduce a new concept to their fellow participants. In the case of the Tunisian folk song, she incorporated Western chords that could accommodate the quarter tone. With the Arabic music, the participant had an interesting anecdote to share:

> **Many of my friends were like, yeah, just choose a song that doesn't have a quarter tone. It's easier for everyone to learn. But I insisted because it's a huge part of our music. […] People got to experience something that many of them have never done before or heard. And then there was an amazing moment that happened. We were [at a festival …] and there was a group of children playing a Swedish folk tune and there was a very clear quarter tone in the melody, like super clear. I took a video of that, and I was telling my Swedish friends, 'see, you have it in your folk music. You also have it so, no excuses, you have to be okay with learning this.**

It appears that the situation is more complex when it comes to harmonic arrangements of pieces. Chia-hao explained that in Asian music, musicians add 'ornaments' to a skeleton melody when playing together, rather than playing a harmonic arrangement. Learning the correct technique requires 'immersion in the environment and years learning from the great masters'. Both musicians from Taiwan were new to Ethno when they first attended Ethno Sweden in 2019. They added Western harmonies to their tune, which they found challenging. Chia-hao reflects, however, that now he knows how the Ethno process works, he may attempt to teach an arrangement more in line with his musical background.

This may also relate to language barriers in the Gathering. One participant felt it was hard to share their 'own thinking' when sharing their music. This was expanded on by another participant who explained how she observed her friends grappling with: 'not being able to articulate their music and having to teach that. Seeing how, maybe they were struggling with English, and having to present that musical style to other non-English native speakers.' Perhaps some of the difficulty in incorporating more Traditional musical systems at an Ethno may be because of the difficulty of explaining the systems in a second or third language. Ethno recognises that most people are comfortable speaking in their mother-tongue and where it is feasible programmes are in two languages, such as in Brazil where the Gatherings are in both English and Portuguese.

Regarding Chopi music and my personal experience of Maori music in New Zealand, participants focused on a single melodic line. Moki felt this was enough as it was difficult for participants to learn the dialect of the song, thus avoiding musical arrangements that may have needed to incorporate different rhythmic or harmonic processes.

Formal and nonformal learning

Ethno appears to be placed at an interesting position with regard to formal and nonformal depending on the educational background of the participant.[9] For example, a participant who had no formal music education reflected on his encounters at Ethno's outside his region saying, 'meeting people who have graduated with a musical background […] helps me to be able to understand the broader concept of music, and how they create and put structures to songs' (Akamu).

Participants such as Shūfēn, Hadia and Chia-hao wanted to highlight that they come from Traditional backgrounds that also have strong 'Classical' or formal traditions, so they could see some parallels with that of participants with Western Classical musical backgrounds who were experiencing a more non-formal approach when attending an Ethno. This was particularly evident with the feeling that Ethno provided an opportunity to step away from the expectation of a perfect performance (Hadia, Shūfēn). Shūfēn feels that her Ethno experience helped her to 'be true to [herself] not the notes' because in 'Taiwanese culture you have to perfect on stage'.

However, several formally trained participants also commented on the influence of Western classical music in their region. Even participants who were studying a folk music instrument were required to learn the piano or the Western theoretical system, for example (Shūfēn, Chia-hao and Hadia) again relating to an earlier discussion surrounding the global dominance of Western musical systems.

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9 Formal refers to learning that is 'systematic and structured with clear learning goals and procedures' Nonformal is learning that occurs 'outside formal contexts' (Mantie and Risk, 2020, p. 42)

Many musicians described their music-making in two categories: their nonformal and formal learning experiences. Participants described learning music by singing in church, attending weddings, making music with their family, or singing at school.[10] Akhil described his school as 'having a culture of singing' where music was present almost every day, during prayers for example, creating an impression of music-making being part of the informal learning spaces in his education. It was interesting to note how participants described learning music from a young age by being around their families and within context where music and dance were part of the everyday experience (Mukisa, Moki Akamu, Farah). Participants then reflect on formal training that they received, which in some cases was purely Western training. This led to a delineation between their 'folk' music and their 'Western' music. It appears that the musicians acknowledge their musical identity as a binary: their formal and then their non-formal learning once again emphasising the plurality of musical identities (Kabanda, 2018).

Learning from other cultures

Notably, participants all expressed an interest in learning music from other cultures, particularly the country that they were visiting. Whilst the experience of sharing a song appeared particularly empowering for the participants, their memories of the events return to the songs that they learned, particularly 'the morning tune', one song, usually from the host region that is sung every morning before rehearsals began. This song does not usually become part of the repertoire for the final performance. Participants reflect on the 'ritual' feeling this provided as a means of connecting with all the other participants at the Gathering (Maria, Chloe, Akhil, Hadia). The morning song is also often a song, rather than a tune that people play.

One participant summarised the views of most of the interviews: 'I think the most important thing is learning, appreciating and practicing the ideas that they share […] It's a lifetime thing that I will always treasure […] for the rest of my life' (Akamu).

EMPOWERING: DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

Feeling valued

Much of the reflections on the development and growth of musicians who have attended an Ethno are similar to findings in previous research. Professional development in a non-formal setting appears to support a growth of confidence in musicians (Mukisa, Farah). For Mukisa, being around people who were a similar age to him really supported a growth of self-esteem as the similar age range provided a 'sense of comfort' when sharing his music and culture.

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10 There appeared to be a distinction between singing in the school choir or at church with training in an instrument or vocal lessons. So, whilst they may represent formal institutions, the manner in which the participants engaged with the music did not appear to align with their conception of formal training or instruction.

> **I would call it the Ethno experience, not just music, it's an experience, that is very transformational in so many ways. And, you know, I still talk about it, when I travel, when I talk, when I play music all over the world. I talk about my time in Europe, you know, many years ago, that really helped me to transition to, to stop being shy on stage, to feel comfort, to feel that I can celebrate my culture, to feel that, you know, my music from Uganda can be appreciated by other people (Mukisa).**

Ethno being a 'safe space' has been noted in earlier research reports (Gibson, 2020b). It is reiterated by a few participants in this research. Maria, from Chile, has attended several Ethno's and talks of Ethno 'creating like a safe space for oneself to just be in in front of your friends and explaining things and feeling comfortable about delivering the message that you want to deliver'. Moki reflects on the experience of travelling outside of his region and into a new cultural context where his perspective shifted due to the way fellow Ethno participants engaged with him:

> **I feel like I became a lot more open to kind of trusting people in a way because growing up Native American you're taught your tradition, but you're also talking to the atrocities that happened. Coming with that perspective, and especially going across the ocean and never being out of the country before, I was honestly a little frightened because I didn't know what to expect. And America here you're met with small nuances of racism and prejudice just for being who we are. When I went to Denmark and I met all these different people, I felt valued as an individual, but also, I felt like [they appreciated] what I was teaching them as well as my culture […] So for me that was very impactful.**

Moki's reflection relates to some of the commentary of the Solomon Island organisers and how external feedback that places value upon their musical traditions have helped their participants also begin to see the importance of their local traditions. Mukisa explains a similar experience:

> **I remember vividly, you know, every single experience, watching people from different cultures singing a song in my language was like, wow, you know, and then they were asking me about what the song means. So, they had an interest in learning about my culture. So, this was really, really something that for me is more than music.**

The description of these touching experiences highlights a connection noted by Kabanda (2018, p. 17) who reflect, 'culture is also about people's identity and dignity, which they have reason to value'. The element of respecting different cultures within Ethno has held a profound effect for musicians who may not previously experienced such respect for their cultural backgrounds from dominant cultural groups.

Development and growth

Musicians spoke of their Ethno experience as being one that supported their musical practice, by developing stamina (Atido) or acting as a transition towards being a professional musician (Mukisa, Hadia). Many of the participants explain that Ethno participation encouraged them to re-imagine their musical identity by moving into other spheres, such as learning a new musical instrument or becoming a composer (Akhil, Maria, Farah). In one interview, musical identity was connected to gender roles within her Traditional music culture. Men typically play musical instruments whilst women sing. Her participation in Ethno allowed her to explore musical instruments and she was able 'to discover herself as an instrumentalist'.

BARRIERS

Visas

In most instances participants speak about the difficulty in obtaining visas to travel overseas. One participant also needed support in acquiring a passport. The issues surrounding visas appeared to be the largest concern for Ethno organisers also. This problem is where a connection to JMI can be helpful. The granting of visas is at the discretion of the official authorities of the country, however, JMI has extensive experience of the process for applying for visas. They also have direct connections with organisations in their network to many countries. These local JMI organisations may be more familiar with the specific requirements of their country for visa applications.

Visa applications for participants from some regions is extremely complicated. A multitude of documents may be required, such as a letter from a parent, university or place of employment stating that the participant is intending to return home after the Ethno Gathering. Participants may need to require evidence of financial solvency. In most instances visa applicants need letters from organisations that invite them to attend the Ethno. JMI can support with templates and any official invitation letters, however it is up to the participant to ensure they have included the correct paperwork with their application.

Visa applications can also take a long time. JMI now request that mobility grant applicants allow up to 6 months for some visa applications. JMI explain that this process takes a lot of time and resources for the head office, Ethno organisers, participants, and families of participants. Thus, for many participants from these areas, their trip to Ethno is also their first trip in an aeroplane or outside their country. This comes with some concern for organisers as they feel the responsibility of participants navigating large airports or places where they may not understand the language. However, in the same breath, this is why the experience can be life changing for participants from these regions (Adelina).

It must be emphasised that this is the situation not just for Ethno participants but many people from the 'Global South'. In some respects, because Ethno participants are travelling under the auspices of an international network, the process to acquiring a visa is less complicated, thus opening the door towards an international platform for young musicians.

OPENING DOORS

The participants in this research are largely 'global citizens'. They appear to shift between countries frequently and there is a sense of cosmopolitanism to how they describe their lifestyles. For Shūfēn and Hadia, Ethno opened a door towards studying world music. Both participants now live and study world music in Sweden and Finland respectively and both feel they are now able to engage in music in a way they would not have been able to in their home countries, largely because they are now able to engage in hybrid music-making rather than focusing on becoming 'experts' in one Traditional form of music.

The only difference was with the participant from the Solomon Islands who spoke of a disconnect when he left his region. He explains that he is 'connected to the cultures of Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia', which he describes as an 'energy that runs through him' which he does not feel when he is travelling. However, he also emphasised that 'given an opportunity or chance to step out of these islands, overseas, it's a vibe that helps us to see things differently, help us to find connections, help us to get out and then have the experience of meeting other people that exist in this world'.

Ethno has also expanded participant's networks. All the participants are still in touch with musicians they met at their respective Ethno's. Hadia, Shūfēn, Akhil and Maria still engage with Gatherings. And Akamu and Moki work as Artistic Mentors for their regions.

Kabanda (2018, p. 123) argues that 'for all artists in growing countries, there is a need to expand their reach into both domestic and international markets. And the answer to the policy question here is clear: enablement'. In this aspect Ethno appears to be enabling participants to begin their journey towards an international platform. For some musicians, the support they received with acquiring the necessary visas was an important starting point to reaching beyond their local networks, whilst for others it was the element of 'respecting' within the Ethno Gathering that helped them gain confidence and start to develop their professional musical identities. For the Ethno participants in this report, it is evident that there is significant importance in attending an Ethno.

Conclusion

This examination of some global Ethno experiences reveals how Ethno organisers engage with local communities creating community music projects that become a meeting point between local and global musicking. Performing becomes a daily activity creating a sense of spontaneity as participants connect with one another and members of the local community. Local communities listen to songs being shared by Ethno participants and want to share their own musical cultures. This element of sharing can result in a reinvigoration of local music traditions that have been impacted by globalisation and lead to Ethno performances where the stage is shared by the local community and Ethno participants . Thus, the Ethno bubble expands to include and impact local communities, becoming a community music project.

Connection also expands the worldview of participants empowering them with the opportunity to travel. The international Ethno network can provide support to overcome complex economic, political, and social barriers as participants move beyond their local borders. This support allows musicians to see themselves as part of a global playground. They gain deeper respect for and value of their own musical traditions and cultural practices as they share their culture and music on a global platform. Because of this, Ethno participants want to increase access to Ethno within their own local communities, either by encouraging more people from their region to attend overseas Ethno's or by starting an Ethno within their region.

Music-making is central to the Ethno's organisers in this research report. They see value in promoting and sharing their local music cultures and the benefits this representation has on a global scale for their participants. Ethno becomes a platform to promote local music. The wider Ethno network can learn about community impact through the culturally embedded nature of the Ethno Gatherings in the local communities in Malawi, Mozambique, and Bahia. A further reassessment of the notion of performance and the 'Ethno bubble' may allow for further community collaborations such as the Dreamcast collaboration in the Solomon Islands.

Kabanda challenges us to 'ask how we should recalibrate and sharpen our tools of engagement. We need to take time to understand cultural activities and how they can play a meaningful role in building a more secure and peaceful world amidst modern globalisation' (Kabanda, 2022, p. 41). The strength of Ethno is that organisers can adapt their programme to suit the needs of their local communities. This is apparent in the research findings of this report and supported by previous research (cf Creech, Varvarigou, Lorenzino and Čorić, 2021). Ethno can also provide opportunity for professional growth for Ethno participants that can enable them to engage professionally on a global platform. The programme has the tools for global engagement through music that suggests it could play the meaningful role in building a more secure and peaceful world that Kabanda encourages.

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APPENDIX: KEY QUESTIONS

Ethno participants

1 What is your musical background? How did you learn to play your musical tradition?

2 What aspect of your tradition did you choose to share at an Ethno and why?

3 Could you describe your experience of an Ethno Gathering?
For example, the experience of:

   1 Sharing a tune.

   2 Learning tunes from other parts of the world.

   3 Performing on an Ethno stage.

   4 Living with people from different parts of the world.

4 What did you learn / gain / take away from attending an Ethno?
Did it support your musical career?

5 What were the barriers / difficulties to participation?

Ethno organisers

1 What are the distinctive elements of your Ethno? (Describe your Ethno)

2 What were the barriers / difficulties in organising Ethno in your region?

3 What support (e.g., training / funding) did you need to run a successful Ethno?

4 What were your motivations for organising an Ethno?

5 How do you balance local cultural practices with international approaches?

6 How did you find connecting with the local traditional music scene?

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