CHAPTER 20

AMATEUR AND PROFESSIONAL MUSIC MAKING AT DARTINGTON INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

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The extent of amateur musical activities is well documented (see e.g., Finnegan 1989; Pitts 2005a), spanning participation in choirs, orchestras, or other ensembles; folk, pop, or jazz bands and sessions in formal and informal contexts; solo performance; or just making music for its own sake, alone or with others. While amateur music making has a long and complex history, such activities are playing an increasingly significant part in the social and emotional lives of those who participate in them, forming what can today be called a "leisure identity."[1] This identity has been influenced in the last few decades by a shift in the definition of self in relation to career (Grint 1991; Salaman 1974), toward the fragmentation of working life, and the increased importance of nonwork activities.

Leisure has gained significance in the formation of an identity and the perception of self, as people seek to prioritize freedom over necessity and engage in "trying to find out what matters to them the most, and then to do it . . . whether or not this is a realistic aspiration" (Blackshaw 2010, xii). An individualized approach to leisure time (Putnam 2000) furthermore suggests the possibility of transcending various limitations of class, gender, culture, or other markers that are imposed in other contexts: "What the world seems to be saying to men and women today, who now imagine themselves as individuals first and foremost, is this: 'forget who you are and if you cannot be who you want to be, imagine that you can' " (Blackshaw 2010, 88). Most leisure pursuits however, must coexist with work, family, or other commitments, and the routines of everyday life. This means the identities they confer have a temporary aspect that may be suppressed, by choice or necessity, once the activity finishes (Roberts 2011).

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One type of (usually) amateur musical leisure pursuit—which will be the focus of this chapter—is that of a residential music school, often taking place in the summer and often known, therefore, as a "summer school."[2] Such events allow amateur participants to privilege their leisure identities almost exclusively for a period of time, through an immersive experience of music making and involvement, at a physical and psychological distance from their everyday selves (Pitts 2005a). For the duration of their stay at summer school they can call themselves musicians, like the professional counterparts who, according to Stebbins (2007), define their amateur status; in Stebbins's conceptualization of amateurism, it is relational to an equivalent professional (paid) activity. Opportunities and spaces that enable such a transformation can therefore become very important to their participants. Residential summer schools in general are an under-researched area.[3] Yet they afford invaluable foci for research into musical identities and attitudes toward music making: they can shed light on both "big leisure"—broad attitudes toward leisure and work—and "little leisures"—the activities that groups and individuals engage in and relate to across their lifespans (Roberts 2011)—as well as affording insights into a range of other issues of potential interest to music education scholars, including those of identity, participation, inclusion, and status.

The performance of Western Art Music is often characterized by hierarchical relationships between amateur and professional musicians inhabiting discrete musical and social spheres, separated by physical and conceptual distance. For example, as described by Small (1998), a symphony orchestra in evening dress elevated upon a stage and performing to a paying audience is a very different scenario from a community choir sharing their term's work at the end of a rehearsal with an audience of friends and family. From some perspectives, though, the amateur-professional distinction can be considered a spectrum upon which individuals are placed according to their context, and between which they can move at different periods of their lives.[4] Amateur or professional status could be measured in terms of a continuum of success (Kirschner 1998), determined by culture, reach, and influence of musical production. This conception though is framed in a rock music context, where, according to Kirschner "every upwardly mobile rock band seeks to be more successful . . . but only a lucky few achieve mass popularity or influence" (254). However, for many "classical" amateur musicians—particularly, perhaps, those who only ever consider themselves amateurs—"success" in terms of recognition by others or monetary reward is not the primary goal; rather, music is made "for the love of it" (Booth 2000). Therefore, musical activities in the classical field are broadly speaking separable according to the status of their participants in relation to what can reasonably be seen as an amateur-professional divide (at the point at which the activity occurs and regardless of the status of participants in other situations). Not only performance, but also teaching, learning, rehearsing, or otherwise making music usually fulfil clearly delineated leisure or work functions for their participants. Such activities are normally undertaken, if not alone, then alongside other people who have similar levels of experience first and foremost, with less emphasis on age or membership of large-scale social groups such as class, ethnicity, or gender, than on the amateur or professional status of those involved. (Owing to the close connection between religion and music, the religious dimension may be of high significance in some cases; however, this is not our focus in this chapter.)

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This chapter will present some findings from an ethnographic case study of a major British music summer school: Dartington International Summer School (DISS). DISS was the first summer school to take place in the United Kingdom. Inspired by the Tanglewood Music Festival and Boston Music Center, it was established in a new and quite radical move in 1948 at the suggestion of the internationally renowned pianist Artur Schnabel as a "holiday school where every sort of musician . . . could go" (Warrack 1950, 377). On one side of the coin, over its first six or so decades it attracted many musicians, as both tutors and students, who either were at the time or went on to become internationally acclaimed. Their numbers included, as but a few very disparate examples, Igor Stravinsky, Jacqueline du Pré, Daniel Barenboim, and Ravi Shankar. On the other side of the coin, DISS has hosted thousands of amateur musicians, many of whom, as we shall discuss below, have been regular attendees often over an extended period. As such, DISS represents an atypical setting for Western Art Music: a forum for music making shared by participants of all ages and backgrounds, including those who, in their everyday lives, are recognized as amateur, semiprofessional, aspiring professional, fully professional, and internationally acclaimed musicians.

The summer school mounts a five-week program of teaching, along with performances primarily given by the professional tutors, but also often involving amateur and aspiring or semiprofessional participants. Courses in a range of what we will here call Western Art Music instruments and genres are delivered through master classes, workshops, orchestral, chamber, and choral rehearsals. There is some representation of jazz, folk, popular, and non-Western musics. Classes are indicated as suitable for particular levels, with a minority open only to "advanced" participants, or those who have been preselected on the basis of ability. Most courses are in practice open to all and encompass a wide range of musical levels, often involving some degree of collaborative music making between individuals from across the amateur-professional spectrum. In addition, there are numerous opportunities for informal music making: participants get together on an ad hoc basis to play chamber music, madrigals are sung in the gardens, and music is played in the bar on whatever instruments are to hand.

Many attendees have visited DISS regularly for years; in a very few cases, some have attended since the first summer school in 1948. According to the testimony of numerous participants, the summer school's consistent presence across their life span, the music made and heard there, and the friendships it enables grant it a unique status in their lives. Attending the summer school allows them to connect and reconnect with a way of being, which for the amateur participants is outside their professional and "normal" lives. It fosters the development of a "Dartington identity" that runs alongside the everyday self—intertwining with it to varying degrees, and revisited each year at DISS. The location, which enables this intensification and revisiting of an alternative self, becomes very significant; similar to the participants in a Gilbert and Sullivan festival studied by Pitts (2011), "music, place and identity [are] interwoven" (158).

The multilevel, multigenerational participant body at DISS, combined with the range of musical styles and activities on offer, creates a situation where differing aspirations coincide. In the majority of sites for musical leisure activities, participants of a similar age are united by "a sense of community with a common purpose" (Blackshaw 2010, 11).

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Similarly, many such community or "nonformal" learning contexts are characterized by activities targeted at specific age groups (Silberman-Keller 2006). Although DISS represents a temporary community for the duration of the summer school, and beyond it in terms of social and musical connections maintained, it brings together a particularly diverse group. Each of the participants have their own purpose for attending, whether motivated by teaching and learning, performance, or leisure.

For some amateur attendees, the summer school's primary status is as a space where their leisure identity can take full sway; for professional musicians, whether established or aspiring, DISS fulfils a different role as an opportunity for performance, teaching, and learning. There are aspects of attending which fulfil a "holiday" function for the full-time professional musician—for example, the opportunity to stay in one location rather than moving around on tour—but distinctions between "work" and "leisure" are unclear for many professionals in the creative sector (Whiting and Hannam 2015). Social interactions often provide a forum for professional networking and the development of musical contacts which can lead to future engagements (Cottrell 2004; Dobson 2011).

This chapter focuses on the leisure experiences of amateur participants at DISS, and considers how these experiences are colored by the presence of professional and aspiring or semi-professional musicians. Using Borsay's (2006) conception of leisure as "symbol, play and the other" and Bakhtin's (1968) idea of the "carnivalesque,"[5] the impact of DISS upon musical and leisure identities and the relationships between diverse groups of musicians are explored. The chapter draws on data from a case study of DISS carried out by the first author as an insider researcher study over two years of fieldwork (2012–2013). During the five-week period of DISS in both years, data were gathered from a variety of sources: sixty-six interviews with participants across the musical spectrum, aged between sixteen and eighty; field notes; thirty-minute observations of classes, rehearsals, and performances; participant observation in classes, rehearsals, and performances; and seven participant diaries written by amateur and professional subjects. Interview participants were recruited using a combination of a questionnaire distributed during the 2012 summer school and purposive sampling of professional performers and tutors, who were contacted via email prior to the 2013 fieldwork. Data were analyzed inductively using thematic analysis (e.g., Boyatzis 1998; Gibson and Brown 2009; Saldaña 2009). Ethical procedures were in place including permissions, information about the right to withdraw, and anonymity. All names used here are pseudonyms.

The Otherness of DISS: A Site for Utopia?

> It's hard to sum up in a single paragraph what Dartington is, does and gives. But essentially it's a manor house surrounded by a large, rolling estate so beautiful it hurts, and the location of what was historically an

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> attempt to create a utopian community: an experiment in how to live responsibly, ethically and well, with arts and crafts as central to the plan.
>
> (White 2012)

We will consider DISS first of all in its capacity as a location for the "other," before going on to examine the construction of an alternative symbolic identity which it can allow and the possibility of "play" through imitation of work and education activities. Originally founded at Bryanston School, DISS moved to Dartington Hall in 1952. Located in rural southwest England, the Dartington estate was purchased in 1925 by Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst as the site for their utopian experiment in social justice through rural regeneration, education and the arts (MacCarthy 2014). Centered on a medieval Great Hall and courtyard, the estate provides surroundings of outstanding beauty, described by Leonard Elmhirst as "one endless garden" (cited in Ballenger 2012, 8). The Elmhirsts brought together a community of artists, musicians, dancers, and dramatists, including the composer and educator Imogen Holst, the potter Bernard Leach, and the actor Michael Chekhov, and sought to involve the estate's residents and the local community in their educational and artistic endeavors. "It is these two threads, the recourse to nature and the vision of a less oppressive society, that place Dartington within the tradition of utopia" (Nicholas 2007, 2).

According to Borsay (2006), the "other" in leisure can refer to both locations and experiences that differ from the "normal" and everyday. There is a freedom to take risks and indulge in different behaviors, engendered by the perception of leisure activities as "inconsequential" and separate from real life (Roberts 2011). Such behavior shares characteristics with Bakhtin's (1968) conception of the "carnivalesque." Originally describing medieval festivals, the carnivalesque has been used to analyze events, music, and dance cultures (Anderton 2008; Halnon 2004; Matheson and Tinsley 2014). It is a subversion of the natural order of society, a "second life" (Bakhtin 1968), where rules are suspended, mock figures of authority are paraded, hierarchies are overturned by equal participation, and inhibitions are lost amidst immorality and grotesque physical humor (Borsay 2006; Matheson and Tinsley 2014; Morris 1994). Importantly, though, these changes are confined to the "carnival" period, and the challenges that they present do not extend beyond it (Blackshaw 2010). According to Gardiner (1993), the carnivalesque can also be used to reconsider the notion of an idealized society presented by visions of Utopia. In his conception, Utopia becomes a "manifestation of pervasive social and ideological conflicts with respect to the desired trajectory of social change" (Gardiner 1993, 22).

Although conceived as a separate enterprise from the wider Dartington project described above, DISS and its participants feel the legacy of the idealistic artistic and political vision of the setting, describing both their own responses to Dartington as a "spiritual home," and their personal experience of the Elmhirsts and their influence:

> Yesterday's talk about Imogen Holst was fascinating. Like her, when I walked down through the garden I thought about how beautiful the place is—it's a real spiritual home for me too. (Susan, amateur participant, diary extract)

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> . . . and there was a real sort of spirit that seemed to be to do with the Elmhirsts—they were a very gracious couple, delightful couple they were, and I remember what was always nice about Dartington, what does make it special is that everybody talks to everybody else, even if they're professional and in a different class from participants, particularly ones who in those days like myself didn't even play an instrument. (Rosie, amateur participant)

DISS presents a contrast to a more conventional situation where amateur and professional musicians occupy separate spaces:

> It's different here because of the way everybody rubs shoulders with each other and the fact that there are the professional artistes [Simon's term; professional performers are usually referred to as "artists" at DISS] , there are the music students and the aspiring professionals, there are people like me who are essentially holidaymakers and amateur musicians on the fringe of it all, but unlike other settings, Dartington has a creative rubbing of shoulders between all of those groups, so I enjoy having drinks and friendly coffees with a number of the artistes that I've known for a long time—and you get to know them a bit better as a participant in a creative field. (Simon, amateur participant)

The inclusive atmosphere Simon describes is often referred to as the "Dartington spirit," recognized here by participants from aspiring professional and professional backgrounds:

> I did some chamber music last year, and that kind of summed up what Dartington was about—we played through some piano quintets with Huw Watkins [pianist and professor of composition at the Royal College of Music] because he just had a spare hour in his lunch hour, and the two violinists were, well, amateurs, you know, really enthusiastic, and it was just great because you had this international guy who was quite happy to play through some stuff with some people who weren't so great and that was, that was for me what I took away as the Dartington spirit if you want. (Peter, aspiring professional)
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> A spirit of absolute generosity and inclusion, inclusion of everybody who wants to make music. And that really is what music is about, it's not about excluding people from it because they're not of this standard or they haven't reached this grade, or they haven't done that, it's actually drawing everyone in together and proving to those people that it can be enjoyed by anybody at any level, perhaps not altogether at the same time but sometimes it can. (Louise, tutor)
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> it was really nice to see how the two best musicians acted so patiently, and didn't seem the least bit bothered that they were being held back. They were happy to show what I consider to be the "true spirit of Dartington," where enjoyment of music making is far more important than standard. (Esther, tutor, diary entry)

This spirit has a utopian quality to it: like the Elmhirsts' original project involving a range of artists along with rural workers and community members at Dartington Hall,

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DISS seems to aspire to equality by breaking down hierarchies between, in this case, amateur and professional musicians. The utopian possibilities of music itself are also important; Levitas (2010) refers to the "capacity of music to transport the listener or performer into a better world" (216), while Barenboim (2006) argues that the act of making music with others enacts an "alternative social model, a practical Utopia, from which we might learn about expressing ourselves freely and hearing one another." Toby, a tutor, described DISS as "idealistic," going on to explain how it seems to offer an environment where status relationships are suspended by prioritizing "the music":

> It's the sort of openness of the attitude and the openness to everyone really, the music obviously being the unifying factor but everything else—there's sort of a much more eclectic mix of people and influences than a lot of other festivals. (Toby, tutor)

Alongside this utopian quality, the distant location and residential nature enable behaviors outside the usual professed moral code of the participants. A favorite phrase at DISS is "what happens on the hill stays on the hill," and there is a sense of freedom which underpins much of how participants view their social and musical experiences. This liberation ethos again echoes the excesses of the carnivalesque, where anything is possible and norms of social behavior may be challenged:

> I also loved it because it was this very relaxed space . . . like a personal, like a place to grow up safely, outside of—so quite a lot of it was like falling in love, or like fancying the pants off people, because music's really sexy, and it was in that, it has that really kind of, there's a real feeling of it being a hothouse, a bit of a kind of emotional and sexual hothouse basically, so without wanting to be too explicit about what I got up to, definitely the fact that there were people here I fancied definitely played a really big part in it—I just remember that sense of this is a place where I can, because music is the linchpin of it which has no demographic, this is a place where I can meet people of all genders, nationalities, sexualities, you know, ages, across the spread, and they all felt like really important friendships, which was lovely. (Susan, professional participant)

Partly because of this release from "normality," the time-bound nature of DISS is crucial. As Blackshaw (2010) states, the function of the carnivalesque may ultimately be merely to reinforce the status quo. Behaviors that challenge existing power structures too much are abandoned at the end of the carnival time and do not survive the return to "normality." Instead, they provide an alternative view, that "critical utopia" which Gardiner describes—but one which may not be able to translate into other areas of the participants' lives or extend beyond the duration of the summer school.

A further problem with conceptualizing DISS as a Utopia is the financial reality of its "holiday" status. For the amateur participants, DISS represents a significant financial outlay; one tutor described it as an "elitist academy," due to the high cost of attendance. The fee structure, based on different types of accommodation, is such that those paying

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maximum fees are essentially subsidizing the aspiring professional students, many of whom receive bursaries or pay the lowest rates. Staying in the more expensive accommodation grants access to the professional tutors and performers, since they share one dining room while those staying in the cheaper accommodation eat together in another. This also creates a division of ages, since the majority of the older participants stay in the more expensive (and more comfortable) accommodation, while those in the younger age group are either bursary students or not in a position to afford the higher costs. Not only is greater access to higher status musicians enabled by superior economic capital, but there is also an extent to which longevity of participation grants individuals a higher level of social capital within the society of DISS. While this does allow longstanding friendships between older amateur musicians and professional tutors to develop, economic and generational separation can undermine any utopian vision of a more equal musical society.

Tutors talked about how the financial aspect of DISS affected their teaching:

> I'm trying to understand where they're coming from and convey some of my experience in a way that is something they recognize, and tell some stories—and at the same time show them a bit of how the music works—so I'm very conscious that I'm stuck in the middle; I'm also offering an experience to people who've paid to have a cultural holiday. (Tom, tutor)

Sara expressed similar views, in addition perceiving a conflict between the mixed ability of the people that she teaches and her ability to do a good job:

HRK: And what's it like teaching on the summer school, how do you find that experience?

SARA: Interesting question—it's very challenging in a different way to the rest of the year. I love it, I always really have a great week—can I be completely frank? I find it very difficult as well. For me it's difficult because I have this kind of customer satisfaction thing that I have to uphold, and I guess that everyone you speak to who teaches here is going to say that, so it's just this thing that people pay a lot of money to be here, and I always teach to the best of my ability, but I'm always teaching a very mixed group. (Sara, tutor)

One very popular activity is the summer school choir, which is attended by the majority of the participants, some of whom sing regularly during the year, and some of whom participate in choral singing only at DISS. Each week finishes with a performance of a major choral work with solo roles taken by tutors and participants in advanced-level classes, accompanied by an orchestra of aspiring and professional musicians. Jack, conducting the choir in 2013, talked about the sense of responsibility that he felt to ensure that the participants had a good time, given that most people paying maximum fees sing in the choir. For him this presented a challenge in terms of balancing their enjoyment and his desire to produce a good performance at the end of the week.

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DISS therefore shares many characteristics of a utopian site, where freedom from social and musical division enable an openness of communication; nonetheless, the temporary nature of the summer school and the differing financial status of the participants serve to some extent to undermine this potential for equality. Further altered status is granted by the adoption of an alternative identity, particularly for those participants who come from an amateur music making background, something considered in the following section.

Leisure as Symbol: An Alternative Identity

In Borsay's conception, leisure can fulfil a symbolic function by providing a surrogate or alternative identity. As stated above, DISS gives amateur participants the opportunity to prioritize their musical identity for the duration of their stay. People can introduce themselves by talking about what instrument they play, and can enjoy the luxury of making music all day, knowing that they are surrounded by like-minded people, as described by Ted:

> You can talk to anybody, I can walk around with a big smile on my face and nobody's looking at me thinking "he's a bit odd," and of course I love singing, and that's it, I mean I can sing, and sing, and sing, I can sing again—of course, I get problems with my voice, unfortunately. I mean that's the thing, that's what takes me, I love singing, and it's nice to have a week away from the real world and you know have a singing holiday, oh, it's just heaven for me. (Ted, amateur participant)

For the aspiring professional, the immersion in music offered by DISS can be a turning point in realizing what they want their career to be and enabling them to make the alternative identity a reality. Data here show one participant who has just reached that turning point, and one who reflects retrospectively on the influence DISS has had on her professional career development:

> For me Dartington has been just the place to be right now, just to make me see what I really want to do. (Raquel, aspiring professional)

> HRK: And what was that like coming here as a seventeen year old?
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> FIONA: Wow, it was amazing, I mean it was definitely sort of the first time for me to be so completely immersed in just, like, music for two weeks, only about singing and music, it was really wonderful. It was a bit scary, though, because there were so many amazing singers, like for example in the madrigal group there were a lot of people who could sight-read really well and I wasn't very good at that, because I was not very experienced, but it was really exciting, also to do—I did a vocal workshop with Evelyn Tubb [soprano and renowned early music specialist] and

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> she was so nice and everyone was really very encouraging and I think it really, it all played a big part in me wanting to be a professional singer. (Fiona, professional participant)

For some amateur participants, though, this immersion in an alternative musical life reminds them of opportunities that are lacking elsewhere, or that they no longer have due to having chosen another path in life. Emily had studied music at a conservatoire but had no access to classical music ensembles or performances due to the remoteness of her home location. She was delighted to be in an environment where she was surrounded by music, but to some extent it served as a harsh reminder of what was missing in her everyday life:

> It's just mind blowing. I mean, for where I live to see something like this—you'll see it once a year, twice a year. To have the opportunity to see three concerts in a day some days is just, my mind cannot comprehend it, it's just amazing—such a privilege, you know, for me. I think for me it's very, the experience is very different from other people who have come because I'm so thirsty for this, I know that in a week I'll be home and I will not have any of this so all those concerts have been fantastic. (Emily, amateur participant)

Clare also talked about the contrast to regular music experiences, drawing attention to the difference in standard between those with whom she makes music regularly and her colleagues at DISS, and the subsequent contrast in performance outcome. She also discusses her administrative role in her regular choir, which differs from DISS, where her only responsibility is to sing:

> The whole thing I really enjoy about Dartington is being able to come here and sing with people who sing well, in tune, and can sight-read so you can just get down to things, you can learn a huge amount in an hour and a half. Now in my own choir, when we get back to the next rehearsal half the choir have forgotten what we learned the previous week and have to learn it all over again, and I keep going because I'm the membership secretary, keep the registers—I've belonged to that choir since 1973 and I'm doing it as sort of like a voluntary job, helping to keep the choir together and keep it going—but I find those rehearsals so tedious because the music we're doing I could learn in half a dozen rehearsals, so to come to Dartington and do that, to learn something that I've never sung before, that I'm not likely to sing at home, and to sing it to a really good standard in a very short time. . . (Clare, amateur participant)

These differences in experience manifest themselves among tutors as well. Rebecca was teaching a course in beginner musicianship, having originally attended DISS as an amateur participant. In an observation of her class and in her interview she defined herself as a teacher and a chamber musician, rather than a professional performer. She described her experience of playing with the resident professional string quartet:

> At the end of the week they very kindly let me play through the Schubert Quintet with them just for fun, and that was the most amazing musical experience of my life I have to say, because I do a lot of quartet playing anyway, back in [home town], I play

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> in two string quartets regularly, but it's quite unusual to find even one or two musicians on exactly the same musical wavelength as oneself, I mean, and to find four, just mind-bogglingly unlikely. (Rebecca, tutor)

Although Rebecca's role at DISS was that of a tutor, she was not, as she herself stated, a professional performer. On this occasion, though, she was able to experience the "reality" of playing with those for whom music is a profession. This allowed her to find people "on the same musical wavelength," something she struggled to find in her everyday musical life; but her reference to how they "let her play through" the music shows her perception that there was still a perceived status relationship between her and the professional performers.

The alternative identity found at DISS creates a close correlation between the place and the surrogate self—the "music, place and identity" described by Pitts (2011)—which affords it great significance and engenders loyalty to the location. Silberman-Keller (2006) identifies how sites for nonformal learning often take on the characteristics of a "second home," a quality DISS has for many long-term participants. This can cause great happiness but also be a source of sadness and conflict as changes occur in the surroundings. Revisiting DISS over many years presents an unusual level of continuity—it is uncommon to be able to regularly reexperience an activity which has been a constant since youth. This may heighten the longstanding participants' sensitivity to changes in the environment which are beyond their control, as exemplified by Adam's reaction to a change in the walking route around the site:

> Walk across to Aller Park [studios]—why can't we walk across the field any more? So many happy memories of doing so; feels as if they have all been cut off. Guess I don't like change. (Adam, amateur participant, diary data)

Returning to DISS also brings participants into a sharp contrast with their younger selves in ways that can conflate changes in their broader identity with how they feel about the summer school:

> it does feel really different, and Dartington has gone in a different way, summer school, I know that the summer school has worked hard to try and maintain that same thing but for me the feeling of the place has changed a lot, there's a lot more rules here than there used to be, you can't, you know, it's just different, I don't want to sound bitter—it's just, I feel very sad about it actually. I think that the place has become a lot stiffer and the arty, slightly off-the-wall thing has disappeared and it disappeared long ago—so when I was a student, I had kind of long lunches sitting outside the White Hart with my bare feet like a hippy kid, playing whistle with a friend playing mandolin, and people were sitting all over the grass, and it was just this big loungey kind of mess of people, and there was this kind of slightly upper-class thing, kind of strand running through it, but there was room for everybody, and now it feels a little bit more, it just feels a bit more kind of stiff, you know, there were lots of love affairs that went on and it was kind of quite romantic—but it felt different. But it is different, I'm married with kids, so of course I don't expect to be still experiencing those things, but the vibe was different. (Sara, tutor)

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It can be seen therefore that DISS allows for alternative identity exploration, which may be temporary (with attendant frustrations or challenges) or have more long-term implications; attendance at the summer school can also highlight broader changes in self-concept, altering across the life course. Alongside the potential for shifting identity, DISS offers opportunities for teaching and learning, which are experienced in diverse ways by the participants according to their expectations of attendance.

Teaching and Learning: Leisure as Play and Mimesis

According to Mantie (2012), the very fact of viewing a leisure activity as a learning experience alters its quality, as the shift from participant to learner changes the focus from communal to individual goals. This is interesting in the context of DISS because the diverse nature of those present implies a huge range of individual aspirations and expectations. This dichotomy between a focus on the learner and on the participant is highlighted by the range of musical abilities represented. An important aspect of leisure activities is their function as play—a type of activity that is seemingly inconsequential and insignificant (Borsay 2006; Roberts 2011). According to Blackshaw (2010), play becomes mimesis when it mimics activities carried out by others in an employment or education capacity. This would usually occur in a separate setting from one where the learning is "real," forming part of the goal of becoming a professional musician:

> Well, the people there [at conservatoires] have to achieve a result, there's a goal, and the goal is some kind of achievement, it's the BMus and for most of these undergraduates it's the beginning of a professional life in music—that's the big difference, because this is sometimes the beginning of a professional life in music for students who come here and sometimes it's absolutely not, and for a vast number of Dartington regulars it's their summer of growth and joy and wonderful music making and more depth of understanding. (Louise, tutor)

Learning may fulfil a different role for the amateur participants at DISS, who have space to explore new areas of knowledge for the sake of pleasure:

> It's experiential, it is not goal directed, whereas some of the time, you know, people want to learn something for a particular function—people here want to try to, they're doing it for their interest. (Tom, tutor)

For some of those who are "imitating" formal education, their personal goals may though be just as real as the goals of those for whom it is a part of their professional development. As Stebbins (2007) explains, the pursuit of a "serious leisure" career can entail attitudes that are as committed as those of the professional, although the goals

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may be different. An extract from researcher field notes exemplifies one possible goal—the cataloguing of works that have been played during the week, and the serious challenge of fitting in as many music making possibilities as possible each day:

> Another group come and sit next to me—they're talking about chamber music—one man says "I've played with 23 people off the list and I've played 11 works." "Every night before I go to bed I write a page of diary recollection about what I've done, who I've played with, what works I've played" reply—"I make a list every week of all the works I've played for the past 15 years." "I've been playing the Schubert A minor, in our way, that the quartet did the other night." They start talking about the late night concerts—"If you know you're playing at 9 am you've got to give that priority over everything else." (field notes, August 16, 2012)

Teaching and learning at DISS often bring the "make believe" and the "real" together, as less advanced students "mimic" the learning of the aspiring professionals. The early brass course is renowned for the professional development and networking opportunities that it provides—"as an early brass player, you look around the profession and find someone who has not been to Dartington; I just can't find anyone" (Elizabeth, tutor). For the amateur participants, some of whom are complete beginners, it offers a very different experience:

> There's a room of twelve people—some of them are really hungry twenty-one-year-olds who just want to be cornetto players in the future and just want to put in all the work, then you have partly deaf nice old German chaps that can't hear when you shout a bar number and then can't play the notes that are in front them—I mean obviously the super advanced students, they're well aware that they're not being pushed in some pieces, but we've made sure they have the chance so when it comes to the *tutti* pieces with the mixed-ability ones, it's fantastic because they're just really supportive of the beginners, rather than thinking "you're holding me back." In the beginner lessons there's a couple of ladies who are in the later stage in life, total beginners with no background; they have an absolute love of the repertoire, but not burdened by absolute burning desire to become professionals. (Graeme, tutor)

This can be a positive and supportive experience, offering multiple learning opportunities, as described by one of the tutors:

> in our group it's kind of a microcosm of Dartington itself in that we've got an Academy [Royal Academy of Music] student, who's an extremely able player but he's taking his first steps as an early player, at the very high end of—he's going to go out into the profession in a few years, and then we've got a professional modern trombonist who, again, retraining kind of mid-career, kind of thinking I really want to specialize in this, and then we've got a man who's choosing to spend his holiday learning from scratch having never ever played a brass instrument before, all in the same room, and they're all equally deserving of my attention and the attention of the whole place, and that, you know, they're all learning so many things, and the Academy student is

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> learning about teaching and learning, about tolerance, and learning about how older people learn, at the same time as we're giving him, you know, advice from the coal face of being a professional about what we you do about tuning on a professional date, how you ornament, then turning round and saying by the way, to get a note out of this instrument you need to push the arm to that place. And it's in the same room, and of course that makes him less pressured, no one gets too arrogant, no one is arrogant, because we're all, you know, we all sit down to dinner together, it's unique for musicians. (Elizabeth, tutor)

Jane, an amateur participant on the early brass course described above, referred to how her experience at DISS was different from her everyday musical life, where she plays in an amateur early music consort:

> It's quite a contrast to what we normally do. I like it because it's quite academic, the tuition is really good quality, and it's really nice to play with professionals, but I also find it quite challenging sometimes because it's a whole step up from the way we normally practice and play, which is much more relaxed, so I learn a lot but it's challenging.
>
> HRK: So in what ways would you say it's a step up from what you normally do?
>
> JANE: I think we don't ever—we consider ourselves lucky if we can get through a piece to the end, we tend not to focus on the musicality and the articulation and phrasing in the same kind of way as—I think you approach it from a much more amateur perspective, whereas here the expectation is that you approach it from a professional perspective and also that you've got the skills to go with that.

Jane went on to talk about how the challenges presented at DISS could be positive "when you can rise to it," but that "sometimes it's too much of a challenge and then you come away feeling that you've not achieved, or that you've achieved less, doing worse than you did when you started." This could be applied to any teaching and learning situation, but the presence of musicians of significantly different experience and background at DISS might suggest that the negative impact of such challenges could be increased. When the higher-level musician whom a learner aspires to equal is playing alongside them, the difference in expertise must be more noticeable and could potentially be disempowering to the less experienced amateur. This is also interesting in the light of Blackshaw's conception of leisure as mimesis (2010); the possibility of imagining that you can be who you want to be might be somewhat tarnished by the obvious differences in musical ability between who you are and the physical representation of who you want to be.

Mixed-level music making can also serve to reinforce existing hierarchies and differences in ability, however subtly. The string orchestra in 2012 exemplified this dichotomy. On one level it provided multigenerational, multilevel music making, free from hierarchies:

> I took a photograph yesterday in an orchestra rehearsal—there was a kid, I mean he must be like eight, and there was this really elderly woman on the same desk,

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> playing together—and I put it up on Facebook and I thought this is Dartington, this is Dartington, there's no, to a certain extent there are no levels or professionals or amateurs, everybody's together performing and getting on with it and I think that's the essence of music at the end of the day—breaks down all barriers. (Emily, amateur participant)

My own observation of the same concert captures this inclusive spirit, but also reveals some underlying tensions about the standard of the performance and its participants:

> The string orchestra concert at 7.45 is great—very much what you might call "in the spirit of Dartington"—there are all ages and levels playing together, three different conductors who are all very renowned in their own field, there are stewards and houseparents [the terms used to describe helpers in DISS] mixed in the orchestra. During the Penderecki there are quite a lot of mystified looks between desk partners—Faith explains later that they only actually rehearsed it once! It sounds great though and it's good to see all these people playing and listening to this kind of music. [The conductor] is also clearly totally in command of what's going on, which makes a huge difference in such a complicated piece. It's interesting that the [artistic director of DISS at the time of the study] piece was cancelled—apparently there was a muddle with ordering the music and not enough time to rehearse it—I wonder if it's him that wants to program his own music and then isn't happy with it! At the end of the concert [the conductor] says "We have no encore. Usually for this piece we would have a week's rehearsal—with this group of artists (someone mutters 'artists') we've only had two one hour sessions—thanks to their constant (inaudible) we've managed to achieve it. I hope I haven't abused you too much (laughing from orchestra) and happy returns to Dartington!" (field notes, August 9, 2012)

Jane's view of the standards of teaching, learning, and performance at DISS was that they are "very high" compared to other amateur music making situations where she stated that "degrees of poor playing are often tolerated." This view was not shared by everyone; for some, the mixed levels could be a source of frustration. Jack, a tutor who had originally attended DISS as a composition student, described how he had found the experience disappointing because of the varied standard of the other students and the contrast between his desire to work hard and their lack of a serious attitude. Having progressed to tutoring the composition class, he had experienced similar challenges, referring to the group of students as a mixture of postgraduate students and those who just had a very "holiday" attitude. For Jack, there was a disconnect between the perfectionism that he applies in his professional life as a conductor and composer and the standards that are achievable at DISS given the mixed ability of the participants. David, a tutor in free improvisation, expressed similar views:

> the difference in technical ability of people in the class actually provides some problems, because some people want to do things they can't, but then of course we don't want to not allow them to do those things, absolutely not—they should be free to do them, however it makes the piece suffer—so it's a constant, for me it's a lose-lose in

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> that sense, musically—and for, in many senses the class participants, if the mind-frame is right it's a win-win, because anything goes—and then even if it's wrong it's not wrong.
>
> HRK: So do you find it frustrating?
>
> DAVID: No, I don't find it frustrating, it's just a fact—because the only way to get rid of this is only to work with people you've chosen and trust and who are the same professional level with you and that's impossible in any summer festival, it just wouldn't work.

If the participants do not experience the effects of the tutors' dissatisfaction with the musical product, it could be argued that it does not matter; if they are able to enjoy the music making and benefit from the expertise of the tutors, then from their perspectives they are getting what they want. There are times, however, when participants felt the tutors did not deal well with the mixed standards of the group:

> one of the reasons I didn't do the piano this year was last year I came away just thinking that I was useless, I mean he was nice enough and he never actually said anything bad, but he never said anything good to anyone. Basically what you'd get was "that's better" and it just felt, it just felt as if I was, I wasn't playing because I thought I was great at it, and all I could think was all the things wrong, yes I know about that bit, I need to work on this, I need to do this and I need to that and actually I'm not very good at all, and I just came away thinking I don't need to be told that I'm brilliant, because I'm not, but I'd like to think that there's something good about what I'm playing—what are the bits that I don't like, and what are the bits that I can extract and it just made me realize more just how much that level of encouragement is important. (Jennifer, amateur participant)

Conclusions

> It's like a microcosm of music in the wider world, so you have the performers, you have the arts administrators and the trogging team,[6] and you have the audience, you have the amateur performers as well.
>
> (Susan, professional participant)

DISS represents an intense community comprising many kinds of participants in classical music making in the U.K., whose different roles would normally keep them in separate hierarchically defined spheres. DISS aspires to an inclusive vision of a musical universe where, like the utopian, unifying vision of music making embodied by Barenboim's West-Eastern Divan Orchestra (Barenboim 2006), the making of music matters more than status or difference. However, as Beckles Willson (2009) states, such a vision makes large assumptions about the possibility of classical music to act as a unifying force merely by making music together; as she identifies, the gap between

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musical and political discourse can be reinforced rather than challenged by making music with the "other." The microcosm of DISS is confined to the summer and to a specific location—and if its idealistic, democratic version of shared learning and music making is contained only in the environment of the summer school, it is worth considering its effects on the individual participant, its position in the wider musical community, and the potential to reenact or represent such musical democracy elsewhere.

When everything returns to the status quo at the end of the summer, how much influence does this shared space for music and leisure have upon the amateur and professional participants who attend? If the "second life" (Bakhtin 1968) offered to the amateur participants can exist only at Dartington, it could serve to highlight its absence as a permanent musical identity in their everyday lives. Of course, we are not implying that there is anything "wrong" with enjoying a DISS identity for a short time—but if it cannot be replicated elsewhere, and if this utopian vision of music for everyone does not exist in the "real world," then what does this escapism achieve and what can it tell music researchers, educators, community musicians, and others?

These are important questions that are relevant not only to the limited universe of DISS, but also to the wider context of Western Art Music. Opportunities are increasingly being sought for audiences and performers to integrate and interact socially as they do at DISS (Pitts et al. 2013), motivated by both the desire for audience development and retention, and, perhaps more cynically, by the funding possibilities which these relationships can offer. These interactions can serve, as they sometimes do at DISS, to reinforce rather than challenge hierarchical relationships between audience and performer, emphasizing the status of professional musicians as mysterious "other."

Musicians of widely different levels of experience and expertise are increasingly making music side by side in other contexts. Cuts in funding for the arts in the U.K. have led to many ensembles and venues seeking to reduce their budget for performances; this, combined with the burgeoning participation and outreach activities by professional organizations since the 1990s (Winterson 1996), has led to many collaborative music making opportunities and performances between amateurs and professionals.[7] Participants in these events bring different aspirations, expectations, and identities, which can be disrupted to either negative or positive effect by juxtaposition with musicians who are in some way "different" from them. Although it is impossible for leaders and participants in these situations to take into account the individual requirements of each person present, an awareness of the differing needs of those making music for leisure or work purposes can only add to the enjoyment, mutual understanding, and musical satisfaction of those involved.

Notes

1. For studies of attitudes to amateur music in a range of contexts see, among others, Booth (2000), Durrant and Himonides (1998), Everitt (1997), Finnegan (1989), Peggie (2002), Pitts (2005a), Regelski (2007); for studies of the beneficial effect of music making and music

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making in later life, see Ansdell (2010), Creech et al. (2013), DeNora (2000), Gaunt et al. (2012), Lamont (2011), Pitts (2009), Taylor and Hallam (2008, 2011), Taylor (2010, 2011), and Varvarigou and Creech (2011).

2. Music summer schools have grown up in the U.K. since 1948. They combine elements of summer schools that arose in North America to address educational inequalities, providing intensive remedial or acceleration programs (Cooper et al. 2000), North American summer camps (activity holidays, often themed around social, educational, or cultural development), and summer schools in universities across Europe, North America, and Australasia, which provide intensive learning or curriculum enhancement. Most U.K. music summer schools are targeted at a specific market: children, young musicians, adult amateurs, or aspiring professionals. Those encompassing a range of abilities are usually genre or instrument specific. Selective courses for aspiring professionals offer young musicians of an advanced musical level access to renowned professionals and opportunities professional networking. For the amateur, summer schools are a cultural holiday with like-minded others; learning forms a significant part of the experience, but is characterized by practices associated more with nonformal than formal education.
3. There is only one study of music summer schools in the U.K. (Pitts 2004; see also 2005b, 2011); studies of U.S.A. summer camps include Brandt (1988), Cooper et al. (2000), Diaz and Silveira (2013), Nemser (2014), Paul (2010), Zelensky (2014), Seeger and Seeger (2006), Joselit and Mittelman (1993), Sales and Saxe (2004).
4. See Drummond (1990) and Finnegan (1989) for discussion of the amateur-professional continuum; for discussion of the professional and aspiring professional musician, see Bennett (2008), Cottrell (2004), Coulson (2010, 2012), Kingsbury (2001), and Nettl (1995).
5. These conceptions can be used effectively to consider music making for leisure in this context, although they do not apply as well to other free-time and hobby activities, where there is less separation between the “other” and the “real”; for example, volunteering for a charitable organization or do-it-yourself in a domestic setting.
6. “Trogs” are volunteers who carry out administrative and concert management tasks at DISS, usually students and recent graduates hoping to make a career in arts administration.
7. Examples of such projects include the Ex Cathedra choirs (www.excathedra.co.uk) and Highbury Opera Theatre (highburyoperatheatre.com).

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