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Unheard Melodies

Living Arts Project 2016: A Critical Review

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
(Ode on a Grecian Urn)

Executive Summary

The Living Arts project took place during spring 2016 and was set within the dementia care home Aspen Court. Musicians, Julian West, Amy May and Tim Cape, dancer Clare Whistler, and visual artist Lucy Steggals visited Aspen Court once a week for eight weeks to lead sessions using music, movement and visual art as the central participative arts. This review of the project is structured around a series of questions:

i) What is the background to the project?
ii) What is the role of the professional artist?
iii) How is the Living Arts Project different from other participative arts projects?
iv) How has the project facilitated language and communication?
v) How did the team enable creative self-expression?

These questions evolved in consultation with the project leader (Julian West), the researcher and Spitalfields Music.

The following executive summary outlines the main findings from the brief literature review undertaken as background to the project and from the observations collated from the artists and the researcher involved with the project.

The Living Arts project and this critical review were made possible through lottery funding from Arts Council England. Thanks also to the residents and staff at Aspen Court care home, HC-One and Attend.

What is the background to the project?

- Recent reviews of the literature (Young et al, 2015, Zeilig et al, 2014) demonstrate that the visual, performing (including music, dance and theatre) and literary arts can have a positive effect on the lives of people with dementia particularly by aiding communication, cognitive processes and encouraging creativity. However, both reviews emphasise the need for the evidence base to be strengthened in this area.
- Other individual studies have explored the role of the arts in care home settings (Roe et al, 2016) and found that wellbeing was enhanced as were other factors including social engagement, learning and creativity. Similarly, the potential for the arts to be transformative in the lives of and perceptions about people with dementia is noted by Dupuis et al (2016).
- Wellbeing is explored in one article (Algar et al, 2014) as it is a controversial concept, which is difficult to quantify and therefore difficult to measure but nonetheless it

remains the focus for evaluation of arts interventions in many studies (NB* work of Johnson et al on viewing art and museum object handling, 2015).

- The difficulties and challenges associated with initiating an arts project with people with dementia are noted in a recent study (McParland et al, 2016). It is relevant to acknowledge these potential problems (as noted by Zeilig et al, 2014) as the arts may provoke unexpected and negative reactions for people with dementia and also involve practical issues that are hard to negotiate.
- Overall, the recent studies (published between 2014-2016) demonstrate that the arts can be transformative in terms of changing perceptions, encouraging communication, promoting creativity and sustaining selfhood and interconnectedness for people with dementia

What is the role of the professional artist?

- The musicians, dancer and visual artist were able to use their deep knowledge of their art forms to create connections with and between the residents. This allowed participants to assume new identities during the sessions – as story-tellers, musicians or dancers themselves.
- There was an opportunity for the residents and some of the care staff to collaborate creatively with the artists and to generate something that could not otherwise have been created. Thus the residual creativity of the participants was stimulated.
- The artists through their technical proficiency were able to create a new space within the care-home.
- The artists were challenged in their practice to avoid imposing predefined structures on their interactions with participants and to work with 'in the moment' fragments.

How was the Living Arts project different from other participative arts projects?

- The structure was shaped collaboratively by the care home staff, artists and residents.
- Creative risk taking and encouraging creativity were prioritised through playfulness.
- Careful planning, sensitive leadership and team building were features of the project.
- The participative art forms used meshed together and yet were distinctive.
- There was an emphasis on the process and the moment rather than the product and also a focus on art for art's sake.
- The importance of connections was central to the project, and these were actively facilitated by the artists and the multi-arts approach.

How has project facilitated language and communication?

- The reliance on non-verbal forms of communication enabled a form of emotional communication between even those residents with advanced dementia.
- The music, dance and poetry reminded the artists and participants of their embodied natures and aided communication with those living with a dementia.
- The music and movement generated a sense of equality and engagement.

- There was some use of language that demonstrated the involvement of residents; in one particular instance despite saying ‘shut up’ or ‘It’s boring’; Daisy was actually fully engaged with the experience.

How did the team enable creative self-expression?

- The team were responsive and reactive to the participants.
- There was careful listening and an openness to the individual people involved.
- Examples include: In particular one resident who had been a drummer demonstrated his skills in most sessions with shakers, another older man sang and others felt able to express their spirit during the dance and music sessions or to Lucy who gathered their stories and transformed these into poems / fragments.
- Playfulness helped to liberate the participants and artists alike and prompted creativity.

Conclusion

The Living arts project demonstrated the ability for the arts to enhance communication and connections for people with a dementia both between themselves and between the artists and participants. The unique improvisatory and playful nature of the project allowed the artists to work responsively with the residents and to listen with openness to the participants. Above all, the project was exploratory and focussed on the process of engaging the care home residents, rather than generating any tangible or polished end product.

REPORT[1]

Background

i) Outline of relevant literature*

Previous work that has been completed in this area (Zeilig et al, 2014, Young et al, 2016) that critically explored the literature forms part of the wider context for Living Arts. The studies reviewed testify to the extraordinary growth in providing arts activities for people living with dementia in the last decade. The literature reviewed by Zeilig et al (2014) demonstrate that the arts are able to contribute positively to the lives of people with dementia in manifold ways; these include aiding communication, encouraging residual creativity and enhancing cognitive function.

Zeilig et al (2014) also noted that the only Cochrane review of the arts for people living with dementia explored music therapy (Vink et al, 2006), although the emphasis on therapy is not directly relevant to the Living Arts project it was noted that it is perhaps significant that of all possible art practices - music has been examined in the highly regarded systematic Cochrane review. Overall, the literature on music for people with dementia demonstrates that definitions of music vary and may include both interactive sessions, improvisation and passive listening. The variation in interpretation of participative musical activity for people with dementia is pertinent to the structure of the Living Arts project which emphasised using music, movement and art responsively with residents and therefore not relying on any one fixed interpretation. In terms of cognitive abilities, the systematic review undertaken by Young et al (2016) notes that arts based activities enhanced attention, stimulation of memories, communication and engagement with creative activities.

However, both reports note that the evidence base in the field can certainly be strengthened and more methodological flexibility would be one way of doing so. In particular, Zeilig et al note that what is needed are studies that are more longitudinal and that use a variety of evaluative methods. Zeilig et al (2014) also found that there is a dearth of theoretical perspectives used and an absence of acknowledgement that the arts might also have a negative effect on people with dementia. After all, the arts are concerned with connecting people with their feelings and therefore often generate complex emotions that may not always be positive. Nevertheless, the field remains nascent and despite the need for further research, thorough evaluation and appreciation of the undesirable effects that the arts may have, the work that has been done indicates that the participative arts will continue to respond to the needs of people with dementia in uniquely valuable ways (Zeilig et al, 2014). This was certainly amply demonstrated by the Living Arts project.

As a means of further contextualising the Living Arts work, for this report recent studies (2014 - 2016) exploring dementia and the arts have also been examined (see appendix). A careful search of the literature revealed 10 recent relevant studies were found that helpfully

[1] NB* All names of participants with dementia have been altered to protect anonymity.

* NB* Put Chloe's work as an appendix?

contribute to the field of the arts and dementia, exclusion criteria involved those reports about music therapy or the arts as a therapeutic intervention. This is because the Living Arts project was not structured as an explicitly therapeutic intervention. Of these 10 studies (which are discussed below) four are explicitly about music interventions (Altenmuller et al, 2015, McParland et al, 2016, Ward et al, 2015 and Reynolds et al, 2016) and the others examine arts in more general or evaluative terms. A brief analytic overview of these 10 studies is offered below.

A recent evaluation 'Coffee, Cake & Culture' (Roe et al, 2016) despite not focussing exclusively on people with dementia has relevance for this project due to the concentration on the arts within care home settings. The study identified the benefits and feasibility for residents of a care home who engage in arts activities. The authors note that wellbeing, social engagement, learning and creativity are all positively impacted by the arts. The emphasis on wellbeing, which is a controversial concept and difficult to measure (Algar et al, 2014), was not an overt goal for the Living Arts project. However, the other benefits identified by Roe et al (2016) were also central to the shaping of the work at Aspen Court and it is logical that if social engagement etc., are positively impacted that this is likely to also make participants feel better.

The potential role of the arts as a transformative medium and the ability of the arts to construct alternative narratives of life with a dementia was explored by Dupuis et al (2016). This study took place within a community setting but has resonance for the work of the Living Arts artists who working within a care home were partially concerned with challenging the dominant discourses within Aspen Court about the ability and capabilities of the residents, the possibilities of the space and the need for staff to foster critical reflection about what dementia might be. The value of person centred art activity is noted in two separate studies by Sauer et al (2014) and Sauer et al (2014) in contrast with traditional arts and crafts activities that are offered in both care homes and the community. Although the opportunities for real engagement must be increased by person-centred arts (and was certainly evidenced by the Living Arts) this study does not indicate whether it is the arts per se or the emphasis on individual engagement that allowed participants to show pleasure and increase their wellbeing. However, as noted above this sort of critical reflection about the role and impact of the arts is rare due to the relatively early explorations by academics, artists and health providers concerning the value of the arts for people with dementia. It is noteworthy that in one recent study about implementing a music and movement project with people with dementia (McParland et al, 2016) the challenges and difficulties inherent with initiating an innovative project are indeed commented on. These include ensuring that the programme was matched to the needs of participants, communicating effectively and last minute funding issues.

Professor Julian Hughes in his book 'How we think about Dementia' emphasises the philosophical and ethical underpinnings of dementia care and although he concentrates on a particular project 'Memory and Forgetting' (chapter 13) which is a visual art project his observation that art can enable us to reenvision our 'mutual standing' with those with a dementia and to view people as:

> "….. situated embodied agents, rather than as objects solely for pity or even disrespect." (chapter 13 p.217)

is (or should be) central to the endeavours of those participative arts projects that seek to work with and for people living with dementia and their carers. The role of music as enabling clinicians and carers to reimagine the potential of people is apparent and observations of the benefits for people with dementia and their carers of viewing public performances of an orchestra (Reynolds et al, 2016) testify to the importance of including people with dementia as a means of challenging negative perceptions of the condition. In addition, the writers note that there is potential for performances by people with dementia.

Thus the arts can be transformative in terms of changing perceptions, promoting creativity and sustaining selfhood for people with dementia. Singing sessions have also been studied within day centres and were observed to stimulate elevated moods (Ward and Parkes, 2015). The importance of music as creating happiness and enjoyment for those involved is not always explored and should not be underestimated as a central reason for its ability to engage and help connect with people with dementia. Altenmuller et al (2015) discuss the conceptual underpinnings to the efficacy of music, noting in particular that the unique ability to prompt emotions and memories is the primary reason that it can generate feelings of interconnectedness and is the 'ideal' stimulus for people with dementia.

ii) Description of the project

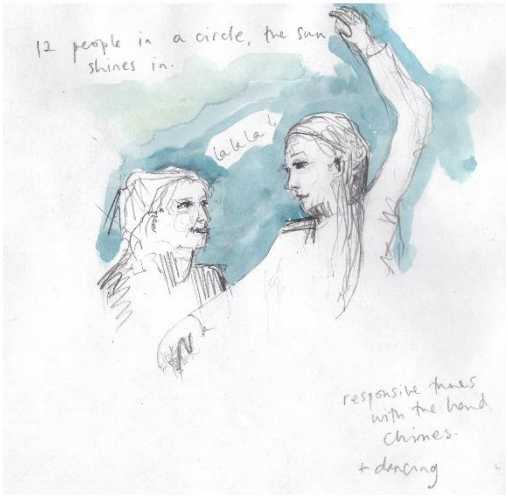
During an eight-week pilot project in Spring 2016, musicians Julian West, Amy May and Tim Cape, dancer Clare Whistler, and visual artist Lucy Steggals, visited Aspen Court for one morning each week. They worked almost entirely through improvisation to make pieces of music, dance, and written words that were collaborations with the residents, most of whom are living with dementia.

Working interactively with those residents, stories, small gestures, comments, facial expressions, and unexpected creative flourishes gave intimate and meaningful insight into personalities and individuality. Music, dance and art were created together in the moment - for and about the people who were making the work, rather than it being created for an audience.

Living Arts session, photo James Berry

Three professional musicians were central to the project – an oboist, a drummer and a viola player. This is an unusual combination of instruments to bring together- there was no traditional string quartet. This meant that the musicians were freed from the expectations of tradition that a more conventional group might experience, allowing them to create melody and rhythm in partnership with the people who were participating, including the other musicians and the dancer and with an awareness of the specific moment.

In this important sense, the music was entirely responsive to the here and now – to the people and situations within Aspen Court. The music was created and existed for its own sake and as a result of those who participated. Each musician used their instrument and musicianship as a means of direct communication and engagement, the emphasis was uponn using music with residents in a reciprocal process of discovery. There were numerous incidents in which the sensitively responsive musicians (who were also listening carefully to one another) enabled a resident with quite advanced dementia to express themselves through music.



Living Arts session, illustration by Kate Munro

Essential to the project was the presence of a dancer. Clare's way of using the space, certain objects (lemons, collected rain water, folded paper) and her body in time with the music, was unconventional. Just as the three musicians used their art as a means of reaching out to residents, as a communicative bridge rather than isolated performance, so Clare created dances that were inspired by her immediate surroundings. Clare's dances evoked strong feelings in people. The sometimes subversive ways in which Clare occupied the lounge of the care home, usually accompanied by Tim and his drums – on one memorable occasion dancing through, around and with a Zimmer frame, lying upside down, giggling and openly, unashamedly 'playing', to no pre-identified purpose, represented a freshness and novelty to the tried and tested approach of using dance to connect with people. Lucy Steggals, the visual artist was an equally important member of the team. Lucy used a typewriter to collect the fragmented stories that people told her and structure these into poems. Lucy's focus on fragments rather than linear narratives (as described below) heavily influenced both the subsequent work of the artists as well as the final delivery of the project which avoided the need to present a single polished product.

From October 2015 – January 2016 planning meetings took place with the Care Home Management, Activities Coordinators, Care Staff, relatives and residents. Three days were allocated for research and development. The team also received training focused on medical information about dementia, together with advice on best practice for communication with people living with dementia. The final development day took place at Aspen Court. This was a chance for the artists to visit the setting, do observations, meet some of the staff and residents, and begin to negotiate the spaces they would be working in.

The delivery phase of the project consisted of a series of eight creative sessions. The team of artists visited once a week during February and March of this year. They worked with both smaller groups of residents who attended sessions regularly, and also in the communal lounges and in people's individual rooms.

Living Arts session, photo James Berry

As the project progressed, it became apparent that a final 'culmination' of the work would not be appropriate. Instead of presenting a finished product, the audience were invited to take part in creative sessions in the same way that the artists had been working with the residents. It was felt that this was the most authentic way of sharing the results of the project. Two public sessions were held at the end of the project for two distinct invited audiences:

- 'Critical friends' of the project and other people involved in working through the arts with older people
- Board members of HC-One, the care home provider and Attend, who ran a 'Friends of Aspen Court' project, family and friends of residents.

Overall (and as noted in the project leader: Julian West's report for the Art's Council, 2016) the project successfully met the aims and objectives that were set. These include:

- A new way for artists to work in a care home setting and including those living with dementia was developed. Artists learnt how to position the creative expression of the residents firmly at the centre of the work created. This necessarily produced new ways of working for the team of artists, and for Spitalfield's Music.

- The project succeeded in creating a model for future working, or more accurately a set of values that are replicable and can guide and shape future iterations of the project. Members of the team of artists have been inspired to continue working in this field, with suggestions being made by several members of the team of how other work they are involved in could be extended and adapted to include people living with dementia in a care home.

- Residents created new work, and for the time that they were involved in that process, the task-driven schedules, the relationships between them, and between them and the care staff were altered. Staff perceptions of the residents were challenged and enhanced. The understanding by the activities staff of the people with dementia in particular moved beyond pathologizing them, or viewing their actions and behaviours merely as symptoms of their condition.

- Feedback from observers and members of the public who were invited to see our work indicates that what they saw and experienced was new, different and exciting.

What is the role of the professional artist in arts projects for people with dementia?

i) Context

There have been a number of reports from arts projects that outline the unique input of the arts professional leading projects for people with dementia (Rose, 2008, Gilfoy and Knocker, 2009, Coaten and Newman-Bluestein, 2013). Indeed, one definition of participative arts projects, in contrast to arts therapy or general arts projects, is that they are led by professional artists whose primary interest is in deploying their art (whether this is movement, music, poetry or visual art) to engage the people that they are collaborating with for creative purposes. This is in contrast to projects where the arts are used for a palpable therapeutic objective, therefore as a means to achieving a particular end such as improved cognition or enhanced wellbeing.

Others who have commented on the role of the professional artist note that they have few preconceptions about the abilities of the people they are working with and equally that they are able to respond flexibly to their environments (Coaten et al, 2013). The expertise and intimate relationship that a professional (and therefore actively practising) artist has with her or his art can facilitate forms of communication and introduce aesthetic standards that may be positively applied when working with people with dementia. After all, an artist is primarily concerned with thinking and feeling through and with their art-form in ways that may elude activities co-ordinators. This immersion that an artist has can lead to embodied experiences for people with dementia (and indeed people in general) that allow them to express their unconscious selves (Coaten & Newman Bluestein, 2013). A professional artist has the ability to take creative risks due to the mastery and control of their art. This risk-taking can push participants' boundaries positively and also generate connections.

In a recent report (Vella-Burrows & Wilson, 2016: 55) one of the dance practitioners observes that they aim to make participants regard themselves as 'dancers' and to choreograph from that point of view. The professional artist is also able to encourage participants (both staff, carers and people with dementia) to don a new identity, or at least to acknowledge the possibility of new identities (dancer, artist, musician, actor) by connecting with an art-form. In addition, the illness (in this case dementia) is not the sole focus of the connection rather the possibilities offered to collaborate or communicate through the music are more important.

ii) Connections

Perhaps the most important (and essentially unquantifiable) aspect of the participative arts for people with dementia is that they can encourage people to connect: with the art, the moment, with other people and above all with themselves? As explicated by Buber (1923) perhaps art allows and encourages 'I-thou' relationships; this was certainly evident throughout the Living Arts project. In his pre-project notes, Julian West states that one of the main reasons that he wanted to be involved in the project was to explore the connections that might be generated by a multi-artform approach.

Similarly, in weekly notes kept by Julian and other artists there were regular comments upon the ways in which they could forge connections with the care-home residents and how these were often non-verbal:

> Tim and I found it with Polly, because we knew she is Spanish, so we didn't start from a point of words, but from music and movement. This was a very intense interaction, which seemed to move through delight and passion into something more akin to upset/frustration/desperation. Tim called it a lament. Worked to move back towards reassurance and a safe place which seemed to work. Tried to do it through the music - changed tonality to something in a major key, and also through tempo and the size of the musical intervals. (Julian West project notes 3/2/2016)

This description exemplifies the ways in which a profound musical knowledge is able to create connections. The ability to change tonality, intervals and tempo and thereby to regulate the ambience moving the interaction from a lament to a reassuring space without any need for spoken language emerges from a fluency and depth of understanding peculiar to artists. Indeed, the musicians themselves used the rhythm of their playing to communicate with one another rather than any words.

Throughout the Living Arts project, it was perceptible that the interactions and the space itself (whether in the small turquoise lounge, the main resident's lounge or the sitting area on the third floor) was defined and re-created by the music, movement and poetry that the artists offered the residents. In a further observation (from my notes) about the first session at Aspen Court, the way in which the music palpably alters the atmosphere of the third floor lounge is striking:

> The music in particular seems to calm the atmosphere of the lounge whilst simultaneously lifting it from the usual torpor of an overheated care-home room. The oboe and the drum work well together, the regular steady beat of a drum is more effective than I would have imagined. The way in which the Autoharp and violin was used by Amy as both instruments and objects was effective. (Hannah Zeilig project notes 3/2/2016).

The music and musicians were the only novel addition, the seating was not re-arranged, the care staff did not alter their routines and the residents were not expected to be on ceremony and it was therefore this musical interlude that noticeably affected the atmosphere. This observation also highlights the way in which Amy could manipulate her instruments and so use them as both interactive objects and also for making music. This demonstrates the musician's close knowledge of the many possible functions of her instrument and ability to be adaptable and playful.

iii) Collaborative creativity

The possibilities generated by professional artists include the creation of new tunes, use of music and movement and poetry to generate something novel (that could not otherwise have been created) as noted by the artists in Mark Making study (2014). In this latter study, the artists all stressed that they were most interested in sharing new experiences rather than any overtly therapeutic or pedagogical objective. This was echoed by the artists involved in the Living Arts project:

> In a moment of silence, the lone note of an oboe from Julian and the different worlds opened up. We all will have different moments to treasure from the time- a wind chime piece by Julian, Tim and Colin with a swirly conducting respond from me, a 'hello' song that started in greeting and rose to rhythms and a joyous crescendo, a high singing from John, his own arpeggios, then the feisty dancing, singing and pure East End expressiveness of Fiona and the drumming of Colin, all ebbed and flowed. (Clare Whistler project notes 10/2/2016).

This quote exemplifies the importance of technical proficiency and a broad knowledge of repertoire. These skills peculiar to a trained artist allow for freedom and flexibility and concentration upon the activity that is led by the dancer, musician or poet (in the case of Living Arts). This in-depth and specialised knowledge also means that the artist is able to extrapolate from their art in distinctive ways. As mentioned in the Mark Making study (2014), the skill of the professional artists is able to '*keep things moving forward creatively'.* This creative energy and movement is a distinctive characteristic of the way in which artists interact with their medium and is able to produce a new space in which the integrity of the activity is the focus and is therefore liberating.

iv) Challenges and realisations for the artists

A key realisation for the artistic team was the need to resist the temptation to impose their own interpretations on the creative work of the residents, which existed largely as fragments. The intrinsic value of the project was in the cherishing and celebrating of these fragments, rather than trying to piece them together to tell someone's life story; these fragments were communication in the here and now, of what someone wanted to express in that moment - not evidence of 'who they used to be.' This was perhaps most clearly demonstrated in the fragments of lives and pieces of writing captured on a typewriter and then displayed across the care home by Lucy Steggals, the visual artist.

How is the Living Arts project different from other participative arts projects?

i) Context

Other projects that I have observed were more defined and fitted within a pre-existing structure or framework (Visual to Vocal at The Dulwich Picture Gallery used familiar techniques, methods and structures, similarly Music for Thought). In contrast, the direction of Living Arts was shaped collaboratively by the care home staff and residents with the artists. As a result, there were more risks taken both creatively and in terms of the care home space and although there were no polished performances or outputs from people with dementia (as for example a concert or exhibition) there was a sense that residents had truly collaborated and contributed.

One of the refreshing and novel aspects of Living Arts was the open sense of uncertainty about what was being created. This is echoed in the programme manager's notes after the first session (5/02/2016), where she writes:

> I'm learning to live with uncertainty.

Questioning was conspicuously encouraged (no-one was ever silenced when they expressed doubt). The structure of the project involved regular reflective sessions with the artists and care home staff who had been closely involved. In this way, a reflexivity about the processes and the ability to express hesitancy was nurtured. This was one of the central strands of the model that has been created by the Living Arts team and I think enabled the artists and eventually also the care home staff to take creative risks and to risk themselves. In turn, this sense of safe risk taking clearly inspired many residents who, as the project progressed, relaxed into joining the music with hand-chimes, or singing and moving.

ii) Planning, flow and leadership

Despite the lack of an explicit framework, a great deal of careful planning was a notable feature of the project. Several planning meetings were held in which the team got to know one another and were also educated about 'dementia'. Julian the project leader asked everyone a series of reflective questions about the forthcoming work and a series of mind-maps were mutually created. So from the outset, those involved were invited and encouraged to participate personally and also collectively. This helped the group of artists cohere and establish a sense of group identity. Equally, throughout the project the individual artists were continually wondering about the best and most appropriate ways to engage with residents and care staff, so the planning was part of a process rather than something that was set in stone. Thus Clare, in her notes about the second session (10/02/2016) speculated:

> Is there a difference if chairs are placed in straight lines or curves - and with our new knowledge that one's vision closes in as one grows older, it might be an important thought.

And once Lucy's idea about embracing the fragments that people offered her, rather than searching for a whole, linear narrative had been discussed in a group meeting, Amy reflected on the appropriateness of this notion:

> I love Lucy's thoughts about embracing the fragments. A whole collection of them, ever changing, in each room, would present such a colourful portrait of each individual… A patchwork quilt of ideas and thoughts and experiences, so that residents are summed up by kaleidoscopes of creativity, not A4 sheets of paper. (17/02/2016)

Similarly, after every session at the care home, the Living Arts team communicated their impressions of the day with one another and so a supportive community was formed that existed beyond the specific Wednesday session, giving a continuity, continual reflectivity and flow to the project that were distinguishing characteristics. These features of the project were enabled by the sensitive leadership of the group that generated a sense of privilege to be working together and with these particular people. Therefore, the artists (and others working on the project) were synchronised and co-operative group working was facilitated. This contributed to the sense that the artists were supported and able to try new approaches and take creative risks.

iii) Creativity

The Living Arts project emphasised the creativity that people with dementia may bring to the process of music making, art and dance, and demonstrated an interest in using multi-arts approaches to release the innate creativity of the care home residents. Thus in her early project notes, Amy wonders:

> How can dementia be seen as a positive aspect of creativity? Certain aspects of some dementias could be potentially 'freeing' to someone being creative. Although this will vary from one individual to the next, how can it be harnessed and encouraged? (25/01/2016)

Similarly, Julian West comments that a motivation behind the project is that he wanted to:

> …experiment with new ways of working creatively with people living with a dementia that was different from the ways of working I have used so far (25/01/2016).

During one of the planning sessions, the project team stressed their interest in being 'the responder' rather than the 'reactor' – thus in using their artistic skills to incite and draw out creative engagement from the care home residents. This was an early objective of the project and subsequently directed the responsive way in which the arts were used with residents.

In line with Tronick's (2003) thesis on connection, the project facilitated co-creativity in the relationships that were generated between artists and participants:

> Co-creativity implies neither a set of steps nor an end state. Rather, it implies that when two individuals mutually engage in a communicative exchange, how they will be together, their dynamics and direction are unknown and can only emerge from their mutual regulation. (Tronick, 2003:476).

This emphasis on the unknown and essentially messy state of co-creative relationships that was a feature of the Living Arts work also led to an honesty and authenticity of interaction (as was an original objective and outlined in the pre-project mind maps).

The project itself was devised creatively to mesh different art forms and yet value their distinctive nature thus Clare's dancing responded to the music that was being played and yet was also an expression in itself. Similarly, Lucy's use of a typewriter and subsequent wordplay and experiments with an old fashioned camera, fitted around the other activities that were taking place. There was no sense of overload at any moment or of any one artist promoting their approach to the exclusion of others. Lucy's observations as she gathered the words, stories and phrases from the people that she was working with exemplify the artists' continual search for creative ways of capturing the experiences of those they were working with:

> I keep thinking it is us that needs to see differently. Perhaps we need to be braver to try to find through the music, art, movement and conversation new ways to make audible/ visible this unique ever changing language of fragments that is firmly rooted in the now. (29/02/2016).

iv) Process, Moment and art for art's sake

There was an insistent emphasis on the living aspect of the arts, the process, the moment - rather than the product. This is exemplified by one of the planning mind-maps, in which 'present' is in caps and underlined. This allowed a freedom to play and experiment without

the utilitarian pressures of producing a 'thing' and also to focus on the importance of connections. The opportunities afforded by this sense of play and freedom that being in the moment afforded is neatly captured by the project leader's notes from the 5th session. In these notes, Julian observes that the playing of Mozart duos, which Clare danced to, with no expectation that the residents would respond in any particular way was 'probably one of the most successful things we have done so far' and he goes on to wonder:

> I wonder whether it was so successful because a) we were sure of our role and our skills, b) the residents were sure of what we were there to do, and what was expected of them (nothing!) When nothing is expected, then are we free to offer and contribute what we want? When the limelight is being taken by someone else, are we free to enjoy ourselves unselfconsciously? (2/03/2016)

This demonstrates the use of art for art's sake, something that was enabled by the artists' being sure of their role and also expecting nothing in particular from the residents. In one encounter documented by Julian, his emphasis on simply playing music to one resident with Clare's movement produced a striking interaction that is worth quoting in full:

> Betty seemed to become quite distressed, asking for help, "Help me, help me, I do pray" repeated many, many times. ….. We continued to play and sing, just using voices and chime bars, echoing her words. I think my intention was to let her know that we could hear her, because how could we help her? We all sang to her, and spoke. I told her that she was safe, that everyone was here to look after her. Stroking her arm slowly. Clare was kneeling beside her; I was in front of her- very close. I offered Betty my hand, which she took, but she pulled away because it was cold. After a few seconds she said something like "I should've held your hand to warm it up". I told her that I would really like that, and she and Clare held my hand to warm it up. I thanked her for helping me.
>
> This felt like such a crucial turning point, that Betty had been able to help me. Everything was about giving and receiving, and exchange. How often does Betty, or any of the residents, get the opportunity to give or to contribute? Or to feel that exchange. They only ever receive passively. Great example of Kitwood's point, the importance of allowing people living with a dementia to give.

This incident demonstrates the power of the 'in the moment' nature of the project - Julian and Clare were responding to a particular situation with Betty as it occurred, echoing her words in music and responding to her with touch. In addition, there was a use of art for art's sake, the music and touch in themselves were mediums of communication (rather than to produce any particular result or end product). This freed the artists to use their art forms to respond directly to an individual and also as a means of producing sustained, responsive interactions with individuals, with an emphasis on eye contact and touch as well as music.

This created a unique ability for the project to contain intense emotions (rather than shirk these) and was due to a number of factors including: the artists' skilled use of music/ movement/ poetry and the emphasis on the moment and the process.

How has the project facilitated language and communication?

Speech without word and
Word of no speech
(from Ash Wednesday T.S. Eliot)

i) Context

As little as 20 years ago, it was generally believed that the development of a dementia gradually destroyed the capacity of an individual to communicate and have meaningful relationships with others.

However, with the movement away from a purely medical and biological understanding of dementia has come the understanding that people with a dementia are still just that 'people' and that just as communication is important to all human beings so it is also crucial for people with a dementia.

There are a number of reasons that communication with people with dementia is important:

- Communication is vital for personhood
- Progress in understanding dementia relies on genuine communication with people who have experience of the condition
- Quality care depends on clear communication
- Communicating with people with dementia forces us to confront why and how we value persons (to move away from the hyper cognitive culture that we live in and to value different aspects of being human).

Nonetheless, there are undoubtedly changes in the ways in which people with a dementia communicate and these changes can be very challenging.

The arts in general have been demonstrated to be effective at alleviating boundaries between service providers and people with dementia and in providing new insights for the dementia workforce and family members (Zeilig et al, 2014). There is some consensus that the arts have a unique application for uncovering and communicating the interior worlds of those living with a dementia (Gjengedal et al, 2013, Ryan et al, 2009). There is no clear comprehension about why this might be, but one possible explanation is that music, dance, visual art and poetry represent particular non-verbal languages and that exposure to these facilitates communication. An over-reliance on verbal language sometimes masks our feelings rather than reveals or expresses them. We can all get tied up (tongue tied) using words, a tendency to aphasia[2] is not solely something that afflicts people living with dementia. Relying on music, movement, touch and poetry (a different form of words, in poetry is used symbolically or to create images rather than to functionally communicate) can often bring us closer to a person.

[2] The term aphasia is a general one that is used to refer to a range of difficulties with word finding, which may result in the person talking around the word that is causing difficulty and may also involve confusion with pronouns such as 'he' and 'she' and reduced fluency overall.

ii) Interactions between staff and residents

The Living Arts project exemplified both a blurring of taken for granted boundaries between the care staff and residents; and the provocation of surprising insights for some of the staff (these were both personal and related to residents). Thus although staff may not quantitatively have spoken more to residents, the quality and nature of some of their interactions was different – for instance Nicole (one of the activities staff) noted about several of the residents that she had not ever seen her / him behave in certain ways or engage so fully with others.

The ways in which some of the care staff saw the artists and participants communicate helped to dispel the prevailing sense that dementia is an illness characterised by silence and interiority. For instance, Julian's project notes observe that one member of staff states after the session has finished:

> …. that she has never heard Gertie speak about her faith before, and I wonder what it was about the session that prompted it. The music itself maybe - is Church the place that she would have most experienced live music? Or the sense of togetherness and mutual respect? (Julian West project notes 2/03/2016).

The entrenched expectations of care staff about some of the residents (and also about themselves) was subtly challenged during the course of the project. This is a finding that is supported in the literature, for example Fritsch et al (2009) note that improved quality of interactions can occur between those with dementia and their caregivers, as a result of engaging in the arts.

iii) Emotional communication

What is above all apparent throughout the residency at Aspen Court is that a form of emotional communication was enabled by the artists.

This is amply captured in one of my diary entries from the first session:

> When I make it up to the 3rd floor I find Julian playing oboe and Tim on a drum in the room of a man who is in bed but seems to be engaging with the music with his whole body, his head is lifting up and his body seems full of movement (despite not moving very much or at all). The scene is extremely moving …..This … reminds me of the embodied state of my own being (just as Kontos, 2005, has examined the embodied identities of people with dementia) I am not contained solely in my own head or defined by my cognition. This seems an important thing to recall when interacting with people with dementia as it demonstrates our innate similarities – we are all more embodied than we often realise.

The observation that a man very close to the end of his life was nonetheless willing and able to respond to the music being played by lifting his head and moving his body and was in his engagement communicating with those around him, demonstrates one of the ways in which the project facilitated communication. In addition, for the artists and myself – being reminded of the similarities between ourselves and those 'with dementia' was a crucial part of the process. Recognising our own embodied states of being (which was assisted by the music, dance and poetry) helped us communicate with the residents and equally created a strong sense of camaraderie within the team.

iv) Musical and movement as communication

The musicians use of tempo, major and minor keys, swirling and then calming rhythms with direct eye contact (did the music allow a steadier gaze at people than is usual in conversation?) eloquently and powerfully created an immediate form of communication that surrounded and held individuals. Moreover, the sustained nature of musical communication for instance the 40-minute unwavering solo by Amy, counterpoised by Clare's dancing that effectively captured everyone's attention – there was no suggestion of any of the residents with dementia leaving. Yet it is commonly assumed that people with dementia are unable to focus for long periods of time, that they are no longer capable of concentrated attention. The use of music and movement (in particular) as a form of communication had an equalising effect and produced a sense of universality (at least within this UK care home) of understanding.

v) Verbal communication

The sessions were characterised by a gentle pace and sense of concentration upon the event taking place, the present moment was prioritised and those participating (with or without dementia) were all respectful of the atmosphere.

The pace of the project, which was relatively slow seemed to prompt quite a lot of talking by the participants. Equally, the emphasis on listening openly to residents allowed us to hear what residents were saying in new ways. Amy observed that rather than looking for deeper meanings perhaps we should relax and enjoy the banter:

> Residents said such an overwhelming amount of amazing things …. I also wonder if, when interacting with a person who has dementia, it can sometimes be easy to put too much emphasis on finding the deeper meaning of words and phrases rather than simply enjoying conversation and lovely banter. Having said that, one moment really stuck out for me; Delia said *"I try to remember things but there's this hole (drawing a circle with a finger around her forehead)".* (26/02/2016)

There was also a use of language that implied involvement despite 'saying' the opposite:

> In the lounge of the 3rd floor I sit near Daella who starts in a good humour but steadily gets more irritated, although her irritation doesn't seem to go very deep and is mostly directed at Clare who is dancing with other residents. Daella says:
> *'I want to just sit and listen and do nothing'*
> *'All I wanna do is go home'*
> *'Oh shut up'* (with real emphasis), *'Its boring', 'BORING'* very loudly and then throws pieces of cake in the general direction of Clare and the musicians. Although she also is interested in Clare's plastic bag and so does seem to want some interaction. (Hannah Zeilig project notes 10/02/16)

Although Daella was using words that implied she was not enjoying the music and movement, in fact she had been prompted (despite herself) to fully engage with the experience and to communicate with those around her, even if this was through throwing pieces of cake towards Clare. Recognising and sensing that Daisy actually wanted to connect with her, Clare approached her with the plastic bag and gently showed her some of its contents.

How did the artists' intervention enable the creative self-expression of people living with dementia?

i) Context

According to Basting and Killick (2003) cultural arts interventions (e.g: music, visual arts, story/telling/theatre and dance) are non-pharmacological approaches that can encourage creative self-expression and therefore may enhance the personhood and quality of life for those living with dementia. Arguably, opportunities for creative expression are most important for people living with dementia who may have fewer occasions for self-expression and control. This is particularly true of those living in residential care. Work by Johnson and Sullivan-Marx (2006) (despite having a focus on art therapy) has nonetheless demonstrated that engagement in the arts has the potential to reveal the self and the strengths still remaining in people with dementia to family and to paid caregivers. Further there is some neurophysiological evidence (Sauer et al, 2016) to suggest that the cognitive challenges experienced by those participating in creative expression activities may also stimulate the development of new dendrites in the brain.

ii) Responsive and reactive approaches

The artists were above all responsive and reactive to the residents. They were receptive rather than didactic in their approach and were therefore able to encourage some residents (it is relevant to note that not everyone participated fully or at all) to participate and to do so creatively. This is beautifully captured in Clare's notes:

> Listening as a creative act used in very fine ways, the quiet senses, touching, looking at, holding
>
> Is that the art? The art of listening with all one's senses and skills, intuition and openness? How does one give off that artistry? (Clare project notes 10/02/2016)

Listening, or being open to the people that the artists were working with created a sense of intimacy and freedom that allowed some of the residents' moments of creative self-expression. Again Clare during the same session remarked upon moments that she had especially treasured:

> a 'hello' song that started in greeting and rose to rhythms and a joyous crescendo, a high singing from Jack, his own arpeggios, then the feisty dancing, singing and pure East End expressiveness of Fiona and the drumming of Colin, all ebbed and flowed.

Each of the instances noted by Clare are eloquent examples of creative expression from people with dementia that were released as a result of the music, dance and writing taking place in the room. Jack had been a choir master but had never been known to sing during his time at Aspen Court, Fiona felt safe enough to express her feisty London spirit and Colin– who had once drummed in a band in Martinque, quietly but insistently demonstrated his skills and kept in perfect rhythm during many of the sessions. Indeed, it is noteworthy that although one of the participants (Colin) was known by the staff for his wandering, he remained seated and focused throughout the hour long sessions.

iii) Playfulness

The use of a variety of objects from different instruments to the paper butterflies, lemons, rainwater that Clare sometimes brought to sessions and including the novelty and yet

familiarity of the typewriter that Lucy used, gave the participants licence to play – as captured in Amy's notes (26/02/2016):

> I had brought with me a suitcase full of small, portable instruments. Lucy and I shared lots of banter with the ladies and soon they were exploring the instruments and telling stories. Delia was great on xylophone and autoharp, playing melodies and sweeping flourishes. We duetted together, which was lots of fun. Bells worked well on Pam's wrist as she clapped and she had quite a hoot playing the ukulele. Then we made some lovely music as a group, adding Julian's oboe, Tim's Cahon and Nicole on Autoharp for the last session, as Clare danced and Lucy typed Delia's words.

The creative imagination is infectious and this encouraged the participants' self-expression. Indeed, playfulness was a hallmark of the project, from Clare's dancing with a zimmer frame to Tim's instinctive and entirely appropriate joking and slightly flirtatious exchanges with some of the women that recalled a Beckett play, and was also evident in Lucy's word play. Similarly, the musicians played with tempo and rhythm and melodies matching these with the mood of the day. Playing and a sense of play also gives licence and a certain liberation to most people – this was certainly the case at moments in the care home, when for instance Clare was challenged about her behaviour and told she ought to go to a party. John Killick in his book on Playfulness and Dementia, (2013) notes that:

> Play is the unfettering of mind and body; it is without purposefulness; it welcomes the unexpected ….play is needed at all stages of life." (p.15)

This ability to welcome the unexpected and the consequent freedom (or unfettering) for participants, artists and care home staff alike was a noteworthy feature of the project.

Concluding thoughts and comments

The Living arts project, in line with recent studies about the role of the participative arts for people with a dementia, demonstrated the ability for the arts to enhance communication and connections for people with a dementia both between themselves and between the artists and participants. The project also challenged the artists' preconceptions about how they would work with people in a care home (that is without preconceived plans and structures) and their ability to take creative risks. The unique improvisatory and playful nature of the project allowed the artists to work responsively with the residents and to listen with openness to the participants. In turn, the participants were prompted to interact in the moment and respond creatively (even if this was sometimes negatively) with the musicians, the dancer and visual artist. Above all, the project was exploratory and focussed on the process of engaging the care home residents, rather than generating any tangible or polished end product. This afforded the artists and participants, including the care home staff, a sense of freedom to discover their creative potential. As noted by Julian West in his report to the Arts Council (2016) several of the artists have been inspired to continue working in this field and this, in itself, testifies to the success of the project.

In addition, and bearing in mind the difficulties of claiming originality for anything, there were many ways in which the Living Arts project 'made new' or created within the space of the care home that which had not previously existed.

Above all, the innovative aspects of the project included:

- Working with and through uncertainty

- Encouraging those involved to reflect on a regular basis about their practice and their engagements with people with dementia (and involving a number of observers to capture as many angles as possible)
- Establishing an ability to take risks that formed a virtuous circle influencing care home staff and residents
- Art for art's sake: Emphasising the importance of creating art in the moment rather than focusing on the potential benefits of art
- Using music and movement to communicate in the moment with residents and to hold people as individuals but also within a group
- Dispensing with plans and expectations trusting the process, the innate skills of each artist and creating through playful experimentation.

The Living Arts project also generated a number of questions and the need to re-evaluate expectations, these concerned:

- How the arts might work to enable us to be with people with dementia, to be alongside people.
- The need for outputs or products - what they should be, and who decides?
- The importance of the process - the value is in the doing and making of the thing, the communications, connections and relationships that are formed, rather than in the product.

Just as Beckett (and others before him) have clarified that art is not ***about*** something but is the ***thing itself*** so this project was ultimately innovative in that it was the 'thing itself'.

The phrase 'unheard melodies' is of course borrowed from Keats. It is a phrase that is particularly appropriate because the interactions of the musicians, the artist and dancer provoked an engagement from the residents with dementia that could not easily be captured, measured or quantified but that reached towards something intangible, emotive and even spiritual. The melodies that emerged were subtle, barely audible and although many emerged during the course of the project – they had been previously 'unheard'.

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Appendix – 2014-2016 Literature Review

Article Name	Source	Link	Abstract (Or summary)
Coffee, Cake & Culture: Evaluation of an art for health programme for older people in the community	Dementia, July 2016; vol. 15, 4: pp. 539-559., first published on March 31, 2014	http://dem.sagepub.com/content/15/4/539.full.pdf+html	This article reports an evaluation of an art for health initiative – Coffee, Cake & Culture organised and delivered by Whitworth Art Gallery and Manchester Museum in 2012 for older people living in a care home and a supported living facility. The study has identified the benefits and impacts of the arts for health programme and its feasibility for older people, with or without diagnosed memory loss – dementia, living in a care home or supported living facility and their care staff. The findings demonstrate there were benefits to the older people and their care staff in terms of wellbeing, social engagement, learning, social inclusion and creativity.
Re-claiming citizenship through the arts	Sherry L Dupuis, Pia Kontos, Gail Mitchell, Christine Jonas-Simpson, and Julia Gray Dementia, May 2016; vol. 15, 3: pp. 358-380.	http://dem.sagepub.com/content/15/3/358.full.pdf+html	Healthcare literature, public discourse, and policy documents continue to represent persons with dementia as ‘‘doomed’’ and ‘‘socially dead.’’ This tragedy meta-narrative produces and reproduces misunderstandings about dementia and causes stigma, oppression, and discrimination for persons living with dementia. With few opportunities to challenge the dominant discourse, persons with dementia continue to be denied their citizenship rights. Drawing on the concept of narrative citizenship, we describe a community-based, critical arts-based project where persons with dementia, family members, visual and performance artists, and researchers came together to interrogate the tragedy discourse and construct an alternative narrative of dementia using the arts. Our research demonstrates the power of the arts to create transformative spaces in which to challenge dominant assumptions, foster critical reflection, and envision new possibilities for mutual support, caring, and relating. This alternative narrative supports the reclamation of citizenship for persons living with dementia and fosters the relational citizenship of all.

"It makes me feel like myself": Person-centered versus traditional visual arts activities for people with dementia	Philip E Sauer, Joan Fopma-Loy, Jennifer M Kinney, and Elizabeth Lokon Dementia, 1471301214543958, first published on July 21, 2014	http://dem.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/07/21/1471301214543958.full.pdf	This article compares signs of well-being and ill-being during traditional art activity (colouring, scrap books etc) and person centred art activity that focuses on creative self-expression. The conclusion is that person centred art activity offers more opportunities for participants to be engaged and show pleasure than traditional arts and crafts activities.
here:now – Conceptual model of the impact of an experiential arts program on persons with dementia and their care partners	Philip E Sauer, Joan Fopma-Loy, Jennifer M Kinney, and Elizabeth Lokon Dementia, 1471301214543958, first published on July 21, 2014	http://dem.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/04/12/1471301215577220.full.pdf	An evaluation of here:now, a joint arts engagement program for persons with dementia and their care partners – involving visits to galleries and art classes. Telephone interviews were done two weeks following participation in the project. Both persons with dementia and care partners showed high levels of engagement, mindfulness, social connection, and positive interactions.
Measuring the quality of life and well-being of people with dementia: A review of observational measures	Katherine Algar, Robert T Woods, and Gill Windle Dementia, July 2016; vol. 15, 4: pp. 832-857., first published on June 24, 2014	http://dem.sagepub.com/content/15/4/832.full.pdf+html	This paper looks into how QOL is measured in older people. "This review responds to the apparent gap in resources for researchers wishing to choose a suitable measure to record the well-being of people with dementia during a psychosocial intervention. Eleven observational measures were identified. The results of this review will help researchers plan projects to show the full range of effects for people with dementia for taking part in art sessions."
How We Think About Dementia: Personhood, Rights, Ethics, the Arts and What They Mean for Care	Julian C. Hughes, 21 Aug 2014	Book	"Exploring concepts of ageing, personhood, capacity, liberty, best interests and the nature and ethics of palliative care, this book will help those in the caring professions to understand and engage with the thoughts and arguments underpinning the experience of dementia and dementia care. Dementia is associated with ageing: what is the significance of this? People speak about person-centred care, but what is personhood and

			how can it be maintained? What is capacity, and how is it linked with the way a person with dementia is cared for as a human being? How should we think about the law in relation to the care of older people? Is palliative care the right approach to dementia, and if so what are the consequences of this view? What role can the arts play in ensuring quality of life for people with dementia? In answering such questions, Julian Hughes brings our attention back to the philosophical and ethical underpinnings of dementia care, shedding new light on the significance and implications for those in the caring professions, academics and researchers, and those living with dementia and their families."
The 'ripple effect': Towards researching improvisational music therapy in dementia care homes	Mercédès Pavlicevic, Giorgos Tsiris, Stuart Wood, Harriet Powell, Janet Graham, Richard Sanderson, Rachel Millman, and Jane Gibson Dementia, September 2015; vol. 14, 5: pp. 659-679., first published on December 18, 2013	http://dem.sagepub.com/content/14/5/659.full.pdf+html	"Increased interest in, and demand for, music therapy provision for persons with dementia prompted this study's exploration of music therapists' strategies for creating musical communities in dementia care settings, considering the needs and resources of people affected by dementia. Focus group discussions and detailed iterative study of improvisational music therapy work by six experienced practitioners clarify the contextual immediacy and socio-musical complexities of music therapy in dementia care homes. Music therapy's 'ripple effect', with resonances from micro (person-to-person musicking), to meso (musicking beyond 'session time') and macro level (within the care home and beyond), implies that all who are part of the dementia care ecology need opportunities for flourishing, shared participation, and for expanded self-identities; beyond 'staff', 'residents', or 'being in distress'. On such basis, managers and funders might consider an extended brief for music therapists' roles, to include generating and maintaining musical wellbeing throughout residential care settings."
The role of music in the lives of older	Melanie Elliott and Paula Gardner	http://dem.sagepub.com/content/early/20	"Given population ageing trends and rising incidence rates of dementia, alongside its chronic nature and the ability to live a long time with the

adults with dementia ageing in place: A scoping review	Dementia, 1471301216639424, first published on March 18, 2016	16/03/18/1471301216639424.full.pdf+html	diagnosis, it is crucial for alternative therapy strategies to be created and utilized with this population. Music has been shown to be an accessible and effective alternative therapy for people with dementia, both in an institutional setting and in the home. The results of this scoping review support previous research to demonstrate the benefits of music in the lives of people with dementia and make an important contribution by focusing on individuals who are ageing in place, a population that prior to this scoping review had not been examined in this way. It is important to further explore emerging personhood research as it represents a humanized and compassionate strategy to support older adults with dementia who are ageing in place and those who care for them."
The relationship between apathy and participation in therapeutic activities in nursing home residents with dementia: Evidence for an association and directions for further research	The relationship between apathy and participation in therapeutic activities in nursing home residents with dementia: Evidence for an association and directions for further research	http://dem.sagepub.com/content/15/4/494.full.pdf+html	"In this study, it has been shown that there is a relationship between being involved in therapeutic activities and apathy levels of people living with dementia. A number of suggestions have been made for further research, including the nature of any causal relationship, the impact of severity of dementia on modifiability of apathy, nosology of apathy symptoms, the impact of the social and physical environmental context, attitudes and knowledge of nursing home staff about apathy, and the impact of comorbidities and diurnal rhythm on its manifestation."
The challenges of implementing and evaluating a pilot music and movement intervention for people with dementia (innovative practice)	Patricia Mc Parland, Clare Cutler, and Anthea Innes Dementia, 1471301216642342, first published on April 12, 2016	http://dem.sagepub.com/content/early/2016/04/12/1471301216642342.full.pdf+html	"This paper reports on the challenges associated with implementing and evaluating an innovative pilot music and movement project. The evaluation documents that participants enjoyed the sessions and that they created the opportunity for social engagement although there is little to suggest this is unique to this particular type of intervention. Difficulties included matching the programme to the needs of participants, communicating effectively, and over burdensome paperwork. The paper also comments on the challenges associated

			with last minute, limited funding opportunities for both the organisation commissioning a project and the team evaluating it. In this case, the evaluation team found that many of the more difficult issues associated with the pilot could have been resolved with more time for planning and preparation."
'The stigma attached isn't true of real life': Challenging public perception of dementia through a participatory approach involving people with dementia (Innovative Practice)	Laura Reynolds, Anthea Innes, Christopher Poyner, and Sarah Hambidge Dementia, 1471301216635828, first published on March 1, 2016	http://dem.sagepub.com/content/early/2016/03/01/1471301216635828.full.pdf+html	"This paper discusses the potential impact of viewing public performances of an orchestra comprising people with dementia, family members, student volunteers and professional symphony orchestra members in contributing to challenging negative perceptions of dementia." "This demonstrates the power of including people with dementia when aiming to challenge public perceptions of the condition. This paper has demonstrated the potential of performances by people with dementia to positively challenge public perception of dementia and points the way to a future where people with dementia themselves can and should be part of raising awareness of dementia."
An evaluation of a Singing for the Brain pilot with people with a learning disability and memory problems or a dementia	Alison R Ward and Jacqueline Parkes Dementia, 1471301215592539, first published on July 8, 2015	http://dem.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/07/08/1471301215592539.full.pdf+html	"This study has identified that SftB can be run for people with a learning disability and a form of dementia or memory problem. Although some modification of the session format and content was required, the changes to the sessions were not significant and were in line with the Alzheimer's Society's recognised format. Positive benefits were reported in enjoyment, sociability and giving choice to participants. The reports of elevated moods sustained after the singing sessions were made by staff within the day centres. However, this evaluation was not able to corroborate these reports and further research would be required to investigate the longer term impact of SftB on well-being, mood and memory with people with a learning disability and form of dementia."
Developing relationships between care staff	Ruth Melhuish, Catherine Beuzeboc, and Azucena Guzmán	http://dem.sagepub.com/content/early/20	This study provides preliminary findings suggesting that a collaborative approach between Music Therapists and Dance Movement Therapists and care staff can contribute to improving interactions and positive

and people with dementia through Music Therapy and Dance Movement Therapy: A preliminary phenomenological study	Dementia, 1471301215588030, first published on May 26, 2015	15/05/26/1471301215588030.full.pdf+html	relationships between care staff and residents. It explores the phenomenon of involving staff to support and learn from professional Music Therapists and Dance Movement Therapists. Future directions will require a larger scale project which should aim to employ additional forms of data gathering such as video (subject to participant consent) that could capture subtleties of non-verbal interaction and facilitate more objective and detailed post-intervention analysis. Future research could also incorporate quantitative methods to support the qualitative findings of this phenomenological framework regarding skills transference, staff competence, morale and skills development.
Music and dementia	Eckart Altenmüller, Stanley Finger and François Boller, editors, Progress in Brain Research, Vol. 217, Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2015, pp. 207-235.	https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Amee_Baird/publication/273787450_Chapter_11_Music_and_dementia/links/564311bf08ae451880a31486.pdf	"Music is widely accessible, easy to utilize, and enjoyed by the majority of people. Its unique ability to elicit both emotions and memories means that it can potentially provide a link to the persons past and promote feelings of interconnectedness with carers and others with dementia. This makes it an ideal stimulus to present to persons with dementia and an important topic for more rigorous scientific research."