Reclaiming the Mongrel:
a practice based exploration
of Irish and Indian musical sympathies.

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Supervisor: Dr Colin Quigley

Submitted to the University of Limerick in fulfilment of the requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September 2016
DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my original work, except where otherwise cited, and has not been submitted, in whole or in part, for any other academic award. I confirm that this thesis does not exceed 100,000 words inclusive of appendices, footnotes, tables and bibliography.

Earlier versions and excerpts of this research have appeared in peer reviewed journals and a conference proceedings publication. References are provided below.


Signed:________________________________________________________________

Matthew Noone

September 2016

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DEDICATION

To Rosie and Gwen
Reclaiming the Mongrel:
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Matthew James Noone

ABSTRACT

This research is an interdisciplinary investigation of the relationship between Irish Traditional and North Indian Classical music. It is an attempt to explore, in both a rigorous academic manner and through professional level musical composition and performance, sympathies and divergences in Indo-Irish hybrid music making. Grounded in ethnomusicological theory (Rice, 1994; Aubert, 2007), this research also utilises an arts practice approach, theorizing complex musical relationships through practice, analysis and the production of new hybrid musical works. This methodology draws upon the arts practice research concept of ‘critical meta-practice’ (Melrose, 2002) to employ musical skill sets to generate data and pursue research questions.

This project also acts as a case study addressing the instability of the post-modern condition resulting from globalisation and interprets hybridization as one of its cultural consequences. This process has been provocatively characterized as cultural ‘mongrelisation’ (Stross, 1999). I understand mongrelisation within the frame of what cultural theorist Homi K. Bhabha has called the ‘Third Space’ (1994) which relates to the in-between state of individuals with multiple cultural identities. This ‘Third Space’ is an important area for the negotiation, construction and ‘enunciation’ (Bhabha, 1994) of cultural ideology. I wish to extend this concept in exploring the creative possibilities of Irish-Indian hybridization as a hybrid cultural product and apply theoretical applications of ‘Third Space’ and ‘mongrelisation’ to better theorize hybrid music in general.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Words alone cannot express the gratitude to my teachers who have made my musical journey and much of this research possible. My first sarode teacher, Sougata Roy Chowdhury, has given so selflessly of his knowledge and love for Indian classical music that I am forever in his debt. My experiences with him, and his family, have completely altered my life trajectory and Being-in-the-world. I also acknowledge the guidance of Krishnamurti Sridhar who in recent years and has instilled in me a discipline and clarity of consciousness which has helped shaped my music and also much of the focus of this project.

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AN INTERACTIVE VERSION OF THIS THESIS IS AVAILABLE ONLINE @

[www.matthewnoone.com](http://www.matthewnoone.com)

password: Hanuman3

(Please note that the online version is not formatted exactly the same as the printed and PDF versions. However, all of the basic text and notational examples are replicated in the website listed above with extra additions of images and video examples. In particular, the introduction and the final two chapters, include embedded video examples from the performances alongside the descriptive text).
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Reclaiming the mongrel

Let me confess from the outset, that I am a mongrel. To be more specific, I am a *musical* mongrel. My reclamation of my mongrelity has emerged out of the arts practice research process which informs this thesis. Much of this project is influenced and critically informed by my experience as a student and performer on the North Indian 25 stringed lute called *sarode*. I have been studying North Indian Classical music for over a decade and it has fundamentally changed my musical way of being-in-the-world. Yet, through the reflexive narrative of this thesis, I began to realise the significance of my other cultural and musical experiences. This unusual pedigree was something I had often felt as a detriment to my sincere study of North Indian classical music and also my recent engagement with Irish traditional music. I had in fact attempted to suppress the reality of my mongrelity. This is partly in response to what Aubert refers to as the ‘duck in the henhouse’ syndrome, namely that, “the recognition of an artist’s talent acquired outside the context of his or her chosen culture, undergoes a supplementary handicap because his or her trajectory is constantly susceptible to being questioned, even judged as suspicious” (2007, p. 82). Being a musician involved in the world of inter-cultural, hybridity, and fusion is not without its anxieties. As Aubert further suggests an “apprenticeship in Indian music is a lesson in humility, to such an extent that one can wonder if such an artist’s life has indeed a purpose” (2007, p.83). In my own quest for understanding the unique mixture of sources that make up my practice, I realized that if I was to find my own ‘authentic’ voice then I needed to reclaim rather than avoid or deny my mongrelity.

I understand the mongrel as an *internal* confluence of cultural and musical sensibilities which allows us to understand hybridity within a specific musician and their playing. This project, and my reclamation of mongrelity, acts as a case study addressing the instability of the post-modern condition resulting from globalisation and interprets hybridization as one of its cultural consequences. Most research into hybridity and inter-cultural music exchange seems to ignore the complex performative realities of the musicians involved in the music making as reviewed in this work. In this thesis, I attempt to interrogate the complexities of my own hybrid music making within
the metaphor of the mongrel. More specifically, it is an exploration of inter-cultural hybridity through a practice based case study of Irish traditional and North Indian Classical music. It combines both ethnomusicological analysis and an arts practice research model underscored by the creation of two significant musical performances. It is both an attempt to add to scholarly discourse on hybridity by drawing upon the performative, while also addressing my own quest for an authentic musical self as performer.

1.2 Research questions

This research asks two primary questions.

- What is the role of the mongrel in inter-cultural music exchange?

- What are the *sympathies* between Irish traditional and North Indian classical music?

Although some musical and cultural comparison will be necessary, my purpose here is not primarily a comparative musicological investigation. I am not particularly interested in comparing the cultures of Indian and Irish music as an endeavour to establish musical links or connections; the reasons for this shall be explained in more detail later. Rather, the focus of this research is my own musical practice, the unique mongrel way that I engage with Irish traditional and North Indian classical music. I use the term sympathy to refer to my own embodied and internal musical understandings and relationships rather than abstracted musicological connections. Understanding sympathy in this context may be aided by a practice based analogy.
1.3 Defining sympathy

Examine the sympathetic (taraf) strings on the sarode, which run along the neck of the instrument, underneath the main melody strings (Figure No: 1.0). These strings are parallel and in relationship to each other, yet not connected physically. However, when one string is plucked its vibrations may activate the resonance of another string, but only if the other string is tuned correctly. It may also not necessarily be the string directly physically parallel to it which is activated in this sympathetic relationship. This vibrational sonic sympathy is internalised in the acoustic properties of the body of the instrument. So it is in the inter-cultural performance process, certain musical and extra-musical elements will resonant within the bodies of the performer and some will not. This may happen within the music itself, in the relationships of the musicians, or within the affective world of one person. The above analogy reflects my understanding of the word sympathy as the lived interactive process of performance mediated by individuals which is felt in the body. The term sympathy is important in this research as it stresses the extra-musical dimension of this work, which Blacking has referred to as “fellow feeling” (1987, p.39). By examining my own practice leading to the creation of performance, this research seeks to understand what role the mongrel may have in the realization of musical sympathy and how the world of affect may help us bridge the “gap between structure and feeling” in the study of musical meaning (Rahn in Denora, 2011, p.19).
1.4 Situating the self within the research

Before discussing the musical focus of this project, let me first further identify my own musical mongrelity to situate myself in the research. I was born in Brisbane, Australia to an Irish immigrant father. I began my musical life as a guitarist and drummer experimenting with grunge and post-rock, before experimenting with electronica, free jazz, Zen chant and even West African drumming. However, I have spent a large and formative portion of my adult life travelling to and from Kolkata studying North Indian Classical music on the sarode, firstly with Sougata Roy Chowdhury and more recently with K. Sridhar who is based in the UK. My experience of this tutelage has been that of a traditional guru-shishya relationship where disciplined and dedicated practice to both the lineage and spiritual basis of the music are paramount. Since re-locating to the West of Ireland in 2006, I eventually began to play Irish traditional music, first on the mandolin and fiddle and eventually on the sarode. I soon discovered a rhetoric, both anecdotal and scholarly, about Irish-Indian cultural connections, most notably through the writings of the most seminal figure in Irish traditional music, composer, scholar, educator and musician Seán O Riada.

In his influential collection of lectures, *Our Musical Heritage*, Ó Riada argues that, “Irish music is not merely not European, it is quite remote from it. It is, indeed, closer to some forms of Oriental music” (1981, p. 20). In the above interview clip from Belgian television, O’ Riada explains that, “here we also have highly developed traditional music, very complex, very sophisticated, but it's more Oriental than Western...it's improvised . . . very much like Indian rag” (Figure No: 1.2). O’ Riada, however, was by no means the first to posit Irish-Indian connections. Lennon argues that a hypothesis of Irish-Indian connection goes “as far back as writing goes” (2008, p. x). A discourse of ancient links between Ireland and India
(amongst other Eastern cultures) is an old one and has subtly informed the collection and revival of traditional dance music and song in Ireland from at least the 19th century onwards (Dillane & Noone, 2016).

It is important to distinguish here that there is historical discourse of musical connections between Ireland and India rather than verifiable musical contact or exchange. While there is a modern history of Irish-Indian cultural connections, particularly in relation to a shared colonial past (Caroll & King, 2003; Viswanathan, 2004; Ohlmeyer, 2015), this is not the focus of this research. Nor is this research concerned with pre-historic similarities between Celtic and Vedic culture in mythology or language; a topic which has been discussed elsewhere (Dillon, 1947; O’ Flaherty, 1979; O’ Driscoll, 1982). I am rather concerned with examining Irish-Indian musical relationships in and through practice, because, truth be told, Irish traditional music and North Indian classical music are in fact, musically, very far apart. Yet apart from isolated examples, there has been no systematic critical musical examination of either the similarities or indeed the differences between Irish traditional and Indian Classical music.

1.5 Methodology

This research combines traditional scholarship with performance. It takes an interdisciplinary approach combining ethnomusicology, hybridity theory and arts practice. The project began with field work conducted in Irish traditional sessions and music festivals in Co. Clare, such as the Willie Clancy Week, where I enrolled two years running as a student on both fiddle and sarode. I conducted interviews with several key figures within Irish traditional and Indian Classical music who were experienced in cross-cultural exchange and I undertook a traditional academic literature review while also analysing and categorizing my field notes. I also facilitated undergraduate musical ensembles with traditional music students in the Irish World Academy in the University of Limerick to begin to explore the practical applications of Indian classical aesthetics to Irish traditional music.

Concurrently, I began to utilise my own practice, both as musician and performer, to further generate research ‘data’ for analysis. This involved both individual and collaborative sound studio work, and was heavily influenced by Susan Melrose’s (2002)
concept of 'expert disciplinary mastery'. She suggests that arts practitioners, through the development of a craft expertise within any creative discipline, possess a unique embodied knowledge system which in its own way is a possible site for theory. To access this 'embodied mode of knowing' requires a 'critical meta-practice' (Melrose 2002), by which she means developing a reflexive and analytical understanding of what constitutes one's practice and the insights that have been garnered from it. In her words it is “…a disciplinary practice or practices which both maintain conventions specific to the discipline (and the judgements it entails) while challenging and/or interrogating certain of its practices” (Melrose, 2002, p.1). In fact, it was through this reflexive process which can also be located within a tradition of autoethnographic research (Chang, 2008) - focusing in this case on providing a reflexive account of my own musical development - that I first began to play with the term 'mongrel' as a salient one capable of capturing the hybrid character of my own complex, mixed musicality.

This process of embracing my mongrelity became part of my 'critical meta-practice' and helped me focus on aspects of my own individual artistic approach which I felt could be applied in my engagement with Irish traditional music. In particular, I sought to draw on my experience as a student of Indian Classical music. I became interested in the idea of a kind of 'metaphysical apprenticeship' to elders which is central to North Indian classical musical culture and is also part of the Irish tradition. Alongside my academic study of Irish traditional music history as a cultural form, I apprenticed myself to ‘elder’ - established and influential - musicians such as Ged Foley, John Carty, Martin Hayes and fellow Australian, Steve Cooney.

It was through this process of 'apprenticeship' that I discovered a particular lineage of Irish traditional instrumental music which appealed to me and which also seemed in
sympathy with my experience of the aural traditions of Indian Classical music. Attachment to a lineage, often described by the term ‘gharana’, is an important element in studying Hindustani music. It provides not just musical pedigree but also addresses the need for an awareness of the cultural and spiritual connotations of the music one is playing. In my engagement with Irish music, I have consciously adopted this stance of reverential respect for older musicians and have been able to engage with a particularly nuanced style of playing; rather than having simply learned the traditional repertoire ad hoc. In particular, I have become devoted to the simple yet emotive style and compositions of fiddle players such as Junior Crehan, Paddy Fahy and Joe Ryan. The compositions and styles of these musicians represent an approach to Irish music which technically works for me in my attempts to play Irish traditional music on the sarode, while also allowing for a cohesiveness in musical expression which is fundamental to the principles of Hindustani music.

My instrument is also a key part of my methodology and a physical extension of my ‘critical meta-practice’. It is also something of a mongrel. During the initial stages of this research, it became apparent that I would require a different instrument to fully explore Irish traditional music. The North Indian classical sarode is a large instrument, with a long scale length of around 64 cm, four melody strings, two high pitched drones, four sympathetic chikari and fifteen taraf underneath (Figure No: 1.3). It is usually tuned to a ‘C’ natural tonic and played with a coconut shell plectrum. The physical size, the scale length and the tuning of the traditional sarode makes it problematic for
playing Irish traditional dance music. Melodies in the Irish tradition tend to make melodic movements up, down and beyond one octave, which on the sarode requires crossing all four main melody strings rapidly. In Indian classical music, much of the melodic material is played on one or two main strings requiring slides and bends to move up the scale rather than crossing multiple strings. Furthermore, the most common keys for traditional melody are D, G and A which are difficult to play with ease on an open-tuned C instrument.

To overcome some of these difficulties I had a smaller ‘hybrid’ sarode built in the key of D. It has guitar machine head tuners and I have been experimenting with different tunings of the sympathetic strings to more easily facilitate changing of scale material. Apart from the tuning pegs, the shortened neck and the simplified string system, the rest of the instrument is built like a traditional sarode, but its sound and my manner of playing it are significantly different. A more technical discussion of the use of the instrument will be presented in the following performance based chapters.

Figure No: 1.4 (my ‘hybrid’ sarode)

1.6 Theoretical perspectives and arts practice research

The methodological approaches discussed above are in fact not separate from the theoretical considerations of this thesis. Developments in the fields of somatics, aesthetics, practice and performance theory have begun to challenge traditional research models and provide radical alternatives allowing artists to “speak from the positions previously occupied by academics alone” (Candlinin, 2008 p.3). Likewise, practice theory has suggested that the actions, dramas and performances we undertake are central to understanding meaning, so much so that “practices have displaced the mind as the central phenomenon in human life” (Schatzki et. al., 2001, p.20). In particular, I am interested in Leavy’s suggestion that “music based methods can help researchers access,
illuminate, describe and explain that which is often rendered invisible by traditional research” (2009, p. 101). As we increasingly live in “a world of hybrid products” (Shusterman, 2000, p. 2) reflexive practice, with the future goal of performance, can become “the means through which theory is written—in other words, a theory of practice is actively being composed as performances take place” (Morton, 2005, p.14).

Documenting all the complex elements of practice is crucial in developing new knowledge from practice based research. This research employs a variety of ethnographic techniques including traditional field notes, journals, reflection, photos, video and audio recording. Alongside this documentation runs an autoethnographic narrative thread so that the writing flows between connected ideas, even though in different voices, to create a “patchwork that portrays a more complete view of life” (Wall, 2006, p. 10). Autoethnography is a “research method that utilizes the researcher’s autobiographical data to analyse their cultural assumptions” (Chang, 2008, p. 9). Or as Pelias puts it plainly, autoethnography, “lets you use yourself to get at culture” (2003, p. 372). In a sense, it is like a philosophical open door which the Self may walk through as a process of interpretation. Yet Chang cautions the autoethnographer that, “telling one’s story does not automatically result in cultural understanding” (2008, p.13). Wall extends this important critique by suggesting that “using the self as subject is not a problem [but] how the self is used is very important” (2006, p. 11). For autoethnographic method to be effective in its “depth of cultural analysis and interpretation” it requires a rigorously critical reflexive structure which follows an intentional research trajectory (Chang, 2008, p.13). In cognisance of the possible dilemmas of such a subjective research method, I have attempted to follow the guidelines suggested (listed below) by the National College of Art and Design in regards to the nature of practice based doctoral work.

- Purposive - based on identification of an issue or problem worthy and capable of investigation;
- Inquisitive – seeking to acquire new knowledge;
- Informed – conducted from an awareness of previous related research;
- Methodical – planned and carried out in a disciplined manner;
- Communicable – generating and reporting results which are testable and accessible by others. (2005, p.7)

A key feature of the arts practice model used for this research is the use of performance for the generation, communication and reporting of research findings. The development of performance follows the steps outlined above and is arguably the most
accessible form of communication of research. As this research is dealing with the focus of Irish and North Indian classical musical hybridity, the performances developed were of a hybrid nature. Hybrid performance, as Schechner defines it, is a “performance which incorporates elements from two or more different cultures or cultural sources…evolving something new from a basis of mutual respect and reciprocity” (2002, p. 251). It is exactly this ‘evolving something new’ that I am interested in mapping in musical performances. Furthermore, there is an important affective element in inter-cultural music exchange, which Schechner defines above as ‘mutual respect and reciprocity’. Therefore, as well as documenting the musical exchanges of my performance practice, I shall also endeavor to map the more personal inner world of sympathy in inter-cultural music exchange.

I chose a mode of practice based research as the limited academic ethnomusicological discourse addressing Irish-Indian music similarities did not significantly address the performative dimension (Taylor, 1997; O’ Laoire/ Beriou, 2003; Cooper, 2007). The subject has also been something of a theoretical cul-de-sac for researchers, as most scholars have employed comparative musicological perspectives in a biased attempt to plot formal, mythological and historical connections between Irish and Indian classical music (Ladd, 2002; Quinn, 2005; O’ Driscoll, 1982). This previous research into Irish-Indian musical connections has attempted to argue for contemporary musical similarities by referring to an unknowable musical past. I wanted to circumvent this methodological impasse by focusing on the question of performance and by literally testing any theory of musical homology in and through my mongrel practice and, in particular, my experience of cross cultural musical collaboration.

1.8 Structure of thesis

The structure of this thesis is broken into four main chapters followed by a conclusion.

Chapter 2 is a literature review of work relating to ethnomusicology, hybridity and inter-cultural “musicking” (Small, 1998). A connection will be drawn with the theorisation of hybridity as developed by Homi K. Bhabha (1994), along with other scholars responding to his work, and the possible applications of this theory in music practice. An argument will be made that the individual should be at the centre of discussion of hybridity and the concept of mongrelity as representation of this idea will be explored.
Chapter 3 is a review of literature relating to Irish traditional music and North Indian classical music. An attempt is made to provide broad descriptions of the two musical traditions both culturally and in musical terms. A history of the discourse of Irish-Indian musical links will be outlined and explored in relation to an Orientalist framework.

Chapter 4 is a performance focussed chapter. It relates to the first major performance of this research which was a two week tour of India with traditional duo, Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill. This chapter is partnered with a 40 minute film entitled, *The Sound of a Country* made by Myles O’Reilly which presents an artistic document of the tour. This film should be viewed in conjunction with the text of the chapter as examples from the film will be used in the ethnographic accounts.

Chapter 5 is focussed on the final performance project of this research which involved two concerts in the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance. These concerts were a presentation of the culmination of research and feature myself, tabla player Debojyoti Sanyal and Irish percussionist Tommy Hayes. Again, these performances are documented through video. It is important that the video of both performances are viewed before reading the text of this chapter. Some video examples of the performances will be included in the text but for a full understanding of the extent of this research, please watch the films. This final chapter will be followed by conclusions and an attempt to answer the research questions outlined in this introduction.

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1 A brief note is necessary here about terminology used to describe Indian musical culture. In most cases, I will limit my discussion to North Indian classical music as this is my primary performance experience. At times, I will use the more general term, Indian classical music to refer to classical music in general from both the Northern and Southern traditions, particularly when describing the material in the fourth chapter which looks at broader collaborations. I have attempted to only use the more vague term, Indian music, in quotations from other scholars or participants in this research. I also will use the expression Irish-Indian musicking to describe very vague generalizations and comparisons of Irish traditional and Indian classical musical culture which are discussed in the second chapter.
CHAPTER 2
Ethnomusicology, hybridity & the mongrel

“Who what am I? My answer: I am the sum total of everything that went before me, of all I have been seen done, of everything done-to-me... to understand me, you'll have to swallow a world” (Salman Rushdie, Midnight’s Children).

2.1 Ethnomusicology and hybridity

While scholars have spent much energy in recent years discussing the importance of hybridity in terms of musical products (Frith, 2007; Feld, 2000, 1994, 1996), particular world music artists and also as a marketing term (Taylor, 2007), few have engaged with the individual as a location of hybridity. To understand the artistic practice of just one musician in our increasingly interconnected global reality, as Rushdie suggests, is to be consumed by the complexities of a whole world. Yet, not enough research has focused on the performance practices of musicians involved in global music exchange, particularly those musicians who have undertaken serious study of a foreign instrument to their native culture.²

In my previous investigation of foreigners studying North Indian Classical music in Kolkata (Noone, 2013) it became apparent that these musicians inhabited a complex cultural world which was resistant to traditional cultural, national or even musical framing. Coming from a range of countries and musical backgrounds, these musicians were part of a global community that located home and the heart in several places at once. Each musician had a story to tell about the disconnection they felt with their musical or cultural home places and a longing for something else. I explored how the “complexities of being a performer in a foreign tradition can lead to the creation of, not just new musical forms, but personally transformative ways of Being-in-the-world” (Noone, 2013, p. 35-36). While many were dedicated students of the Indian classical tradition, the music they made reflected much more than a clear hybrid between East and West. Many musicians when returning home, as well as performing ‘pure’ Indian

²Exceptions here include the work of Adrien Mc Neil (1995, 2007; see also Durrant, 2003; Booth, 2010). I wish to distinguish from this discussion some of the excellent work of ethnomusicologists using a phenomenological approach to studying a musical culture (Bakan, 1999; Farley, 2010; Friedson 1996; Rice 1994). I would suggest that much ethnomusicological research using practice is informed by Mantle Hood’s (1960) concept of ‘bi-musicality’ as a means of studying another culture which is different from the arts practice approach I am attempting to outline in this research. It should also be noted that there is significant research into the pedagogical manifestations of ‘world music’ in the classroom (Nettl, 1992; Mc Neil, 1996; Thompson, 2002; Solis, 2004). The focus of this research, while cognisant of these frameworks, attempts to investigate ‘world music’ and inter-cultural exchange from a performers’ perspective.
classical music, began to make various kinds of ‘fusion’ or ‘world' music with musicians in their localities. The projects that these musicians began to make outside of the traditional genre of Indian classical music, including my own fusion group, became an area of great interest to me as they challenged the usual definitions and critiques of the world music phenomenon.³

Yet the labels of ‘world’ and ‘fusion’ music, are at best problematic. For that reason, as well as more which I shall describe later, I suggest that they may have become superfluous. However, the problem then remains, what do we call music that falls outside of traditionally established genres? As a category, 'music that falls outside of traditional established genres' does not make sense as a genre itself. Many of the current terms used to describe global music made by instrumentation or musicians outside traditional rock and pop genres are confusing, mostly marketing constructs and have rarely been categorized critically.⁴ Terms such as world music, fusion, cross-cultural collaboration and hybrid are often used interchangeably by critics, scholars and musicians themselves. While some scholars have attempted to define such labels (Aubert, 2007; Feld, 2002; Bohlman, 2002; Frith, 2007) few have explored these processes up from a ground level. For this research, it will be useful to untangle some of these terms and also find productive language to describe my own musical process.

2.2 World music

In trying to define world music, it is easy to slide down “a tautological slope” (Bohlman, 2002, p. i) because of the complexity of musics, musicians and musical processes involved in the exchanges. Stokes says that the term world music is not even “remotely adequate for descriptive or critical purposes” (2004, p. 52). Aubert suggests a broader position when he describes world music as, “intercultural experiences…resulting from the meeting of musicians…and the integration of “exotic” instruments and sonorities”(2007, p.53). Although Hijleh offers a perhaps more accurate characterization when he says that “all music is to some degree world music,⁵

³ The Bahh Band was a seven piece ‘fusion’ group based in the West of Ireland featuring sarode, dobro, bodhran, double bass, tabla and vocals. Their debut album was entitled Worlds Colliding (2010)-self published. The group performed at major world music festivals across the country and was funded by Culture Ireland in 2013 for a 3 week tour of India.
⁴ This type of discussion begs the question when does a ‘new’ music becomes its own genre? Also, we must be critical of 'traditional genres' as a category itself as this may vary according to context and community. It is a very personal dilemma for myself as self-recognised ‘mongrel’ musician as people often want to know what they can call my music if it isn’t Irish, Indian or fusion. I do not yet have an answer to this conundrum, however in my own mind I, somewhat ironically, would refer to myself as a traditional musician, as for me tradition is something which has flexible boundaries and can accept difference.
and world music is the music of synthesis” (2012, p. 2). World music, in its broadest sense, represents a musical consciousness able to regard itself from nowhere and everywhere, it is a summing up of all “heres” and “elsewheres” which have woven our lives (Aubert, 2007, p.54).

At the same time, ethnomusicology is often concerned with the dissolution of local musics across the globe and has championed the cause of preserving traditions and vilifying world music artists in relation to ethnic status and commercial interests. World music, a term popularised mainly for marketing musicians from Non-Western background, has also been critiqued as a homogenizing agent in this process. A substantial amount of ethnomusicological research on world music has been primarily focussed on commercial, commodification and the deterritorialization of culture with particular reference to the dichotomy of power between East and West and the exotification of the Other (Connel & Gibson, 2004; Feld 2000, 1994, 1996; Stokes 2003b; Taylor 1997, 2007). This branch of ethnomusicology has been informed by anxiety of Lomax's 'cultural grey-out' and Marxist critiques of the appropriation of power and capital.⁵

In identifying the origins of the term 'world music', where record executives attempt to categorize, appropriately market and ultimately capitalize on music from outside of the western rock and pop model, it has been convincingly argued that ‘world music participates in shaping a kind of consumer-friendly multiculturalism...that follows the market logic of expansion and consolidation’ (Feld, 2000,p. 168). Likewise, it is suggested that not only record companies are compliant in this commodification and cultural domination but 'world music' artists themselves, particularly those from Western countries who collaborate or incorporate instrumentation or musicians from other cultures. Artists such as Paul Simon and David Byrne have been critiqued as quasi-paternal colonialists in their explorations with musicians from Africa and South America and electronic acts such as Deep Forest and Afro-Celts have been considerably lampooned for their cultural grabbing and sampling of 'ethnic' sounds (Feld, 1994, 1996, 2000; Frith, 2000). These musics have been at best described as a “naive syncretic impulses” (Cooper, 2005, p.221) and at its worst as “music that functions as a backdrop to Western exotic consumerism” (Farrel, 1997, p. 202). Toop has described...

⁵ Lomax argued that the globalization of cultures was creating a ‘grey-out process’ which he feared would “fill our skies with the smog of the phoney and cut the families of men off from a vision of their own cultural constellations” (1977, p.21).
the world music sample impulse as a “fantasy of new hybrid transculturation,” a utopian imaginary universe (the “Fourth World”) in which all musics and cultures “mingle freely without concern for authenticity or propriety” (1995, p. 260).

However, it could also be argued that it is “inauthentic to view any music as a museum piece” a trap to which many ethnomusicologists have fallen into (Hijleh, 2012, p.209). I agree with Schippers when he argues that we need to put “the myth of authentic traditions in context” (2010, p.41). Hijleh urges that “understanding cultural meaning increasingly depends on understanding cross-cultural synthesis” (2012, p. 209). To deny this, Hijleh argues, is a kind of “reverse racism by isolating every culture from all others” (2012, p.10). In analysing inter-cultural music making purely from recordings which are the epitome of modern musical commodity, then we actually contribute further to the consumer impulse and the exotification process of sound itself. Frith concedes that ethnomusicologists and world music markets are intrinsically linked and act as a parody of each other. His approach suggests “the fruitfulness of attending to how understandings of transnational music are created through a set of intertwined vernacular and academic discourses” (2000, p. 308).

Feld has also asserted that ethnomusicologists have been accomplices in the creation of a psycho-acoustical split between the social and sonic immediacy of music with the development of a “global schizophrenic condition” (1996, p. 12) where sound now is so separate from its origin that it causes many levels of anxiety. The processes involved in world music certainly can be viewed from the perspective of cultural commodification and commercialism. However, it is perhaps more productive to explore what Feld has alluded to in his work: that world music reflects a global condition of anxiety over identity of self, place and Otherness. While the expansion of world music can be seen as an exemplification of the deterritorialization of cultures and emphasize the rise of cultural commodity, it also “could not have occurred without the construction and contestation of discourses of place and otherness” (Gibson and Connel, 2006, p.342). Bohlman suggests that world music’s “epistemological concerns for identity “struggles under the enormous weight of Western musical traditions” (in Stobart, 2008, p. 107).

Wade has suggested world music is not an adequate term to describe music making in the post-modern age and prefers the expression “music in global culture”
(2009, p.166). She argues that nothing is truly local yet the inverse is also applicable. In this sense, the term global culture ceases to have a static meaning. I would argue that a more meaningful expression would be to explore 'music in the global condition'. This condition is a post-modern one of shifting signifiers of meaning of culture, selfhood and place. Frith suggests that “the post-modern condition is reflected both in the collapse of grand musical narratives and authorities and in the blurring of musical borders and histories” (2007, p. 159). World music then, for want of a better term, is the sound of the postmodern experience. Bohlman agrees that asserting or reclaiming a position and place in the world has become a “requisite context for world music” (2002, p. 114). This multiple level diasporic consciousness of placelessness “has become one of the places most articulated by world music” and is a reflection of the “multiple consciousness” of an increasingly connected global community who because of our plight, whether real or imagined, takes “placenessness and return” as its main themes (Bohlman, 2002, p.118, p.115). Therefore, the global diasporic condition of multiple consciousness has become a “new aesthetic form of the global imagination.” (Erlmann in Born & Hesmodalgh, 2000) and a “musical context for encounter, hybridity and fusion” (Bohlman, 2002, p. 114).

2.3 Fusion

Next, I would like to problematize the term 'fusion'. Although at times the terms world music and fusion can be used interchangeably, I would suggest that ‘fusion’ while also existing as a marketing term, perhaps describes musical process more than product. Hijleh describes fusion as a” dynamic meshing of elements with each music itself while at the same time acknowledging perceivable differences between musics” (2012, p. 7). The important distinction in this definition is that fusion “requires retention of difference” (2012, p.7). In my own experience playing North Indian classical music, I always associated this term with extremely negative connotations, referring to a music which was sort of blended together into a sonic mess with no discerning characteristics. It is a popular joke amongst Indian classical musicians to use the term ‘con-fusion music’ suggesting that in the retention of difference there is a struggle for a clear musical identity against a fragmented cultural expression. This is indeed more than a little ironic as many Indian classical musicians are increasingly involved in such ‘fusion’ projects as a way to build both financial and cultural capital.6

6 For a more detailed exploration of this concept see Booth (2010).
However, apart from anecdotal examples, it is difficult to explain exactly how fusion is manifested musically. Like ‘world music’ it is often used as a term of convenience for describing music which utilizes non-western sounds. While world music may describe an authentic traditional or indigenous music from a region, the term fusion often refers to the mixing of a clear sonic indicator of Eastern/ Western alterity. Fusion is often western derived musical genres (pop/rock/jazz) with an ‘ethnic’ element such as the case with Afro Celt Sound system (1996) who basically are an electronic dance band with the exotic timbre of African percussionists, Irish traditional instrumentation and Sean-nós vocals. Fusion may also be used to describe the collaboration of high profile world music artists, “two [or more] adept performers working together using two different musical systems” (Mc Neill, 2007, p.6). Examples of this branch of fusion collaboration are evidenced in the recordings of V.M Bhat & Ry Cooder (1993) or John Mc Laughlin with Shakti (1991) featuring Zakir Hassein. Fusion, or perhaps more accurately, world music fusion, can also refer to ensembles of musicians which utilize multiple ‘non-western’ instruments and relative musical systems sometimes drifting into the category of the new age sub-genre. 

The point is that all of the above musical examples of fusion are markedly different from one another. Furthermore, in every example of musical fusion, regardless of genre and instrumentation, we can identify varying degrees of a musical ‘coming together’ and also performances which retain the difference of their stylistic parameters. The aesthetic balance, of what I would call the fusion continuum (the musical degree of enmeshment and divergence), provides endless and complex material for musicological analysis, one which ethnomusicologists have yet to significantly research. But how do we go about understanding the degrees of musical enmeshment and also retention of difference in fusion music in a performance based manner? To do this requires new kinds of questions about music and also tools of analysis in which to answer them.

Hijleh (2012) has written extensively on possible musicological ways to interpret the fusion music paradigm by proposing a universal system of music analysis based on dyadic and triadic models. His work is commendable in its detail but perhaps focusses too much on fixed musical elements rather than the processual nature of performance. Adrien McNeill, importantly both an ethnomusicologist and a performer of sarode,

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7 There is a plethora of artists who fall under the new age world music fusion category. For an interesting cross section of this phenomena please see: http://www.newagemusicworld.com/category/new-age-world-fusion/.
offers a more practice based response for understanding music on the fusion continuum. He suggests that, “it is probably best to start by considering the broader conditions and processes through which performers can establish meaningful dialogues in cross-cultural collaborations...the general principles observed could also be relevant to a range of other formats including greater numbers of musicians and styles” (1997, p. 6). Stokes (2004) has also produced a wonderful set of ethnomusicological questions which may go some way to help analyse the processes of musical fusion when he asks us to:

- distinguish between a variety of different ways in which styles, genres, instruments, and sounds perceived as different are brought together: Which constitute foreground, which background? Which subordinate which other musical elements to it? Which are deformed to fit a new musical environment? Which elements mark cultural difference, and which signify or engage with modernity? Which elements blend seamlessly, and which generate a frisson of difference? (p. 61).

Interestingly, in this set of questions, Stokes uses the term frisson of difference. Frisson could be described as a “sudden physical reaction of excitement, fear or a thrill” (Collins dictionary). Perhaps it is exactly this frisson, the physical thrill of difference, which makes fusion music so popular and “sexy” for audiences and musicians alike (Stokes, 1997, p.201). Indeed, Stokes may be taking the term ‘frisson’ from Barthes (1972) who argued that this thrill or novelty of difference becomes a commodity when subsumed into a recognised art tradition, “thereby economically combining the security of tradition with the frisson of novelty’ (p. 95). Fusion, which one could argue is an emergent especially commercial tradition in itself, offers listeners exactly this novel experience of musical differences while still retaining some elements of a recognisable tradition. Perhaps frisson is in fact created by a kind of musical friction, “the resistance that one surface or object encounters when moving over another” a discordant rivalry that the musicians and listeners must attempt to harmonize (Collins). Yet, much fusion music fails to embrace the friction process and tends to employ a safe kind of frisson by simply introducing unusual instrumentation to create novel soundscapes. Likewise, sometimes the friction can be so great that the music doesn’t come together at all and the resulting frisson is fleeting and unsatisfying.

Ultimately, fusion as a musical descriptor, is also somewhat generic and broad in scope. Hijleh asks that we question the safety and banality of the term fusion and attempt to focus on, “the point at which fusion ceases and something new is created in
which boundaries are so crossed that the origins of distinctive elements are lost “(2012, p. 7). The point at which fusion ceases and friction is integrated and harmonized could be considered a different kind of frission to the often formulaic sonic soup of confusion. Perhaps a more apt term for this process is another word which is intrinsically linked with the world music tautological slope: hybridity.

2.4 Hybridity

Hybridity has been a prominent term in ethnomusicology for exploring the processes of inter-cultural musicking. Yet in the world of literary studies, social sciences and anthropology, there has been a long debate about the use of such terms. Stewart explains that, “anthropologists and social scientists have expressed ambivalence” about terms such as creolization, syncretism, hybridity” (1999, p. 40). Yet in musical terms, 'hybridity' is commonly summoned to represent the transnational, globalized imagined village of post-modern music making. Accordingly, the concept of the hybrid has become circumscribed with a variety of ideologies and concepts of identity. In particular, the implication of hybridity in music often has a somewhat clinical and genetic connotation, suggesting that the purposeful mixing of sources is done deliberately and even scientifically to attempt to create something new. Biologically, usually the hybrid is the offspring of two animals or plants of different species. It begins as the confluence of two organisms to create a third 'improved' organism. Sharma asserts that, culturally speaking, an “underlying assumption is that hybridity produces new and more progressive cultural formations” (1996, p. 20).

In this way, hybridity has become a brand of post-modern authenticity and is increasingly constructed as another kind of value marker of cultural capital. Taylor (2007) has argued that the term is used as a marketing handle by world music industry and artists are also consciously adapting this word into their identity discourse.

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8 Hijleh notes that hybridisation is perhaps “the most healthy and accurate paradigm of globalisation” (2012, p. 6). I use the term ‘musicking’ here in reference to Christopher Small’s (1998) understanding of music as a verb rather than a noun. This concept allows us to understand music, not in just in relation to performance and sound but also incorporates wider musical discourse and processes.

9 It is not the scope of this paper however to fully explore the categories described here. Although I believe the concepts of syncretism and creolization have much to offer ethnomusicological perspectives. For further reading see: Stewart & Shaw (1994), Glissant (1997), Khan (2004) and the more musically focussed DennisConstant (2008) and Guilbault (1993).
Biographies of musicians increasingly point to a myriad of influences and a transglobal consciousness culminating in the creation of new progressive hybrid works. “Whereas interpersonal interactions in “world music” tend to be viewed as “collaborations,” the resulting sound is often described as a “hybrid”, when music from different “cultures” mix (2007, p.140). Hybridity is then “inevitably conceptualized as the encounter of a Third World culture with the West” (Sharma, 1996, p.20). Sharma concludes that the consequence is that “hybridity is understood as part of the project of Western modernity” and that “cultural productions marked as hybrid are celebrated and valorised as being enlightened and politically emancipatory” (1996, p.20, 21). Taylor argues that rather than this being an actual creation of a new kind of authentic cultural capital, this kind of hybridity usually represents a surface level musical and cultural interaction and furthermore is a continuation of colonial hegemonies where the non-western musicians are only given status and commercial success through the adoption of rock or pop instrumentation (2007, p. 141).

It seems the term 'hybridity' is just as problematic as other terms in describing music in the global condition. However, I fear that dominant critiques of hybridity, such as Taylor’s, are guilty of over simplifying hybrid music making into dichotomies of West and the Other: a determinist simplification of culture and industrial flows of capital that “marginalizes the complexity of so-called traditional cultures” (Sharma, 1996, p.20-21). While I agree that hybridity has become a catchphrase for authenticity in a world where the traditional is associated with nationalist agendas and old fashioned values, there is a risk of an over simplification of complex musical realities if we subscribe to the belief that hybrid music is a binary intermingling of fixed cultural commodities. This ideological complacency is further exasperated by over emphasis on the commercial recorded output of world music stars rather than individuals themselves.

Ó Súilleabháin argues that it “fundamentally within the individual” that hybridisation emerges and furthermore that “growth within the individual translates into the culture” (2003, p. 193, 196). Blacking also reminds us that, “many if not all, of music’s essential processes may be found in the constitution of the human body” (1973, p.6). Hybridity has announced itself as an essential process of music making in the post-modern age therefore perhaps we should be seeking its origins in the human body.

Likewise, Sharma (1996, p.20) explores Hall’s (1988) idea that the fixing of ethnicity is partially achieved by the use of the term hybridity.
rather than musical works. If we propose that musicians are processing the complexity of postmodern cultural hybrid selves through the creation of hybrid musical works, then we need a music making, human focused response to the issues involved in world musics.

This means analysing “globalization from below” (Frith, 2007) and realizing that it is overambitious to “read off” from musical forms the wholesale meaning of cultural practices (Born & Hesmondalgh, 2000, p. 3). If we merely study the schizophrenic split at a macro-level, in particular the recording industry and the media, we will miss what is at the heart of music making. Hybridisation is a creative impulse which comes “screaming from a heart that is bursting with fatality” and “offers a means to dignify and transcend misery” (Aubert, 2007, p. 54). Aubert reminds us that the creation of musical hybrids is a response to, not just the financial, but the emotional, social and spiritual needs of humanity when he says, “art nourishes itself on necessity” (2007, p. 54). Hybridity is perhaps the only sufficiently credible and powerful necessary call to action for “a whole generation with aching roots” (Aubert, 2007, p. 53).

Farley (2001) suggests that as nothing is purely local or completely global, these binary boundaries are something which modern musicians can move between with ease and a “curiosity to wander the earth with their music and the integrity to stay connected to their homelands”(p. 7). Ironically, when I reflect on my own musical wanderings I find it difficult to define simply one musical homeland to which I am connected. Rather I am connected to several geographic and musical localities at once. This connection is partly emotional, partly defined by reconfiguring lifestyle patterns in turn aided greatly by communication technology and the mobility of international travel. This global musical wandering is reminiscent of Turino’s (2000) concept of the “translocal” as an approach to understanding music making. Yet, I believe that the concept of translocal is still too abstracted and removed from performance practices of musicians integrating global influences.

An excellent example of local practices and translocal realities is encapsulated in the writing of Irish composer, scholar and self-confessed “musical magpie” Micheál Ó Súilleabháin (in interview, 2013). He has explored the processes of globalization within the tradition of Irish traditional music for several decades and prefers to use the term “lobal” to describe the conflux of local and global musical exchange. It “carries
resonances of the lobe of the ear, of a kind of listening” and hence is respectful to the fundamental bodily experience of music and locality while leaving scope for complex intermingling of global realities (2003, p.193). This term is very much rooted in the local phenomenological experiences of actual music making yet is broad enough to allow for the complex musical and cultural flows that constitute all modern music.

Lobality as an analytical concept offers an insight into the embodied practice of musicians which acts as microcosm for musicking in the global condition and the artistic response to its placelessness and identity anxiety. “Lobality listens to the process of becoming...it leads us towards the real presence of a place where creativity resides” (2003p. 193). The juncture of intermingling musical cultures that is held within the physical and sonic bodies of musicians is a “crossroads of becoming” that represents “the lobality of world” in a entirely different light than that of reviewing and critiquing commercial recordings. The lobal becomes a “site on which new sorts of cultural theory could be developed, new futures glimpsed” (Frith, 2007, p.154). This site is one necessarily of hybridisation. Must we consider the hybrid to be “fictive and divisive, ideological and hierarchical? Or can it be allied to a reflexive, analytical project?” (Born & Hesmondalgh, 2000, p. 2). Can the hybrid enunciate an emergent identity which does not seek validation for its authenticity from musical traditions? More importantly, how can musical hybridity go beyond the need for commercial vindication and an integrity located in an authentic musical self?

We may gain a more 'lobal' understanding of the complexities of cultural hybridisation in a similar way by comparison with hybrid biology. Hybridity “threatens to dissolve difference into a pool of homogenization. It is biological, yet resists definition. It is precisely its resistance that forces us to look closely. Under a microscope, the concept transforms before our very eyes, it does not stay still under our gaze” (Kapchan & Strong, 1999, p. 240). It etymologically derives from the Greek hubris (sinful act against the order). Both the biological and etymological meanings taken together make clear that a certain order is violated. Due to its origin in hubris, “the concept of ‘hybrid might have a negative connotation” (Karoblis, 2012, p.3). However, Stross (1999) has argued that biological mating is different from cultural procreation. He explains that in biology the hybrid offspring of purebred parents possess a strength or ‘vigour’ which is desirable. However, this does not continue if the hybrid is then bred with another pure breed or another hybrid. In fact the opposite is
true. He explains that, if hybrids are mated together, this "vigour" decreases in succeeding generations “so the desired traits can be maintained only by crossbreeding the parental lines over and over again” (Schery 1972, p. 415). “The biological hybrid has only two possible alternatives at any given gene locus and has only a limited number of chromosomes” (Stross, 1999, p. 257). However, he argues that this decrease in vigour is not a necessary outcome of hybrid cultural forms as “there is no limit on the number of traits or features that can be generated in a cultural hybrid form...moreover, adaptation to new contexts can be so much faster in the cultural domain. In short, increased homogeneity and a decrease in vigour are not a necessary outcome of hybrid forms "interbreeding “in the cultural domain (1999, p. 257-258).

Stross also illustrates that hybrid organisms are can be interbred to create new pure organisms. He argues that there “are after all no "pure" individuals, no "pure" cultures, no "pure" genres. All things are of necessity "hybrid." Of course we can construct them to be relatively pure, “and in fact we do so, which is precisely how we manage to get (new) hybrids from purebreds that are (former) hybrids” (Stross, 1999, p. 266-267). In the domain of music, Stokes concurs that there is no such as thing as a “pure” traditional music form, as “all musics stem from some sort of hybridisation” (Stoke, 2004, p.60). Aubert supports this idea when he talks of “hybridity” being “systematically disseminated” by the media until it becomes the universal norm (2007, p.4). Feld has also drawn upon the biological philosophy of Bateson to examine how cultures could participate in a mutually reactive musical discourse and possibly lead to a “closer symbiotic interdependence of both groups” (1996, p. 6). He has borrowed the term “schismogenesis”(2002) from Bateson to describe the mutual exchange of cultures which could also be likened to a Aubert's “vast game of distorting mirrors” (2007, p.54). Shusterman (2001) would suggest that not only do we “learn to understand ourselves better by discovering the cultural others in us” (p. 192) but “our cultural selves are in fact actually composed of elements of the culturally other that we have so far failed to recognize and thus have not fully understood” (p. 196). This theory of cultural otherness relates back to Stross's hybrid model of biology which suggests that we are hybrids the whole way back. I have further appropriated Bateson and used the term “alchemical schismogenesis” to describe the personally transformative nature of intercultural exchange (Noone, 2013). This transformation perhaps is reminiscent the trans-cultural axiom of Schipper's (2010) model in which individuals cease to be differentiated by boundaries of the broad range of musical cultures to which they are exposed. There is a
fundamental change of the Being-in-the-world of musicians who have deeply immersed themselves in a foreign musical culture that has personal as well as new musical ramifications. Aubert articulates the inevitability of hybrid musical production when he questions, “How could this [hybrid] reality, alive in our flesh and soul, remained without musical consequences?” (2007, p.53).

The problem arises in any performance based or ethnomusicological research into hybrid music of how to “make conceptual allowance both for the fluidity of syncretisms and hybrids and for the continuing existence of bounded cultural traditions” (Born & Hesmondalgh, 2000, p 27). How do we account for and analyse “the differential permeability of the boundaries of various cultural lineages and forms?” (ibid, 2000, p 27). While biological hybridity is a useful process for an analogical understanding it does not adequately provide a model for a satisfying cultural analysis. Despite being biologically defined, hybridity is still too abstract to be applied to a ground up examination of trans-cultural exchange. However, still I sense that we are too far removed from the “heart bursting with fatality” musical impetus to which Aubert so eloquently referred. It is within the Self of the artist that the complexities of global music are being lived. It is from here we should truly begin our analysis. For as Bohlman asserts, “[p]erceiving and understanding otherness in music depends on the knowledge of selfness but also on the will to extricate otherness from selfness” (in Stobart, 2008, p. 108).

Ethnomusicology has for too long been concerned with distancing it's Self from the Other through the analytical tools of anthropology, ethnography and Marxist analysis of musical commodities. Ethnographic research needs to be lived to realise the full ethical ramifications of theory. Blacking said that, “Ethnomusicology has the power to create a revolution in the world of music and music education, if it follows the implications of its discoveries as a method, and not merely an area of study” (1973, p.4). Perhaps it is even “untenable” to attempt to protect a musical culture (Hijleh, 2012, p. 6, 209). While the risk of loss is real in accepting such an axiom, perhaps the rewards are worth the risks.¹¹ Hijleh argues that in accepting the dissolution and confluence of musical traditions “musical possibilities are increased

¹¹ Ó Súilleabháin stated in an interview this idea when discussing Irish traditional music, suggesting that,“you can dilute a music out of existence through fusion. It is potentially a dangerous process. But it is no more dangerous and maybe less dangerous than cultural fundamentalism” (in interview, 2013).
exponentially...some local expressions die away but are replaced by a music more robust” (2012, p.6). There is perhaps a “natural evolutionary role of fusion” which leads to the creation of new hybrids (ibid, p. 8). This idea is supported by Stross's notion of hybrid vigour or the strengthening of organisms through hybridisation. This he has provocatively called “mongrel factor” (1999, p. 247).

2.5 The mongrel

The mongrel is a complex beast. A mongrel could, perhaps most benignly, be described as something which arises from a variety of sources (Collins dictionary, 1998). As a noun, the term mongrel can be used to describe individuals, plants or animals, particularly of the canine species, resulting from the interbreeding of diverse breeds or strains; with mixed or unknown breeding. Originating around the 15th century, the word itself is a mixture of sources from the Middle English word ‘mong’ meaning mixture, which was possibly a shorthand version of ymong which again originated from the Old English gemong meaning 'crowd', 'more at' or 'among' (Collins dictionary). The sense of the mongrel being one of unknown ancestry generally also has deep negative subtexts. The Latin hybridia is sometimes translated as a mongrel or a bastard. The mongrel, certainly more so than the term hybrid, has a history of being tied up in extremely negative discourses of inter-racial mixing and ethnic impurity (Burr, 1922) (Cornwell 1999) and is often associated with the "ugly history of racism and has been used to demean couples of different ethnicities and children of mixed race” (The View, 2013). In terms of perhaps its most common usage, in reference to man’s best friend, it is also largely negative. The image of the mongrel, both in a canine sense and in its dominant associations, is confrontational, undesirable and even dangerous.

Yet, the origins of a term and its misappropriations should not require that we let it fall under the dust of habit. As Salman Rushdie states, [n]ames, once they are in common use, quickly become mere sounds, their etymology buried…like so many of the earth's marvels” (1988 , p. 127) I believe the concept of the mongrel has indeed fallen under the dust of habits, the powers of cultural hierarchy and been

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12Interestingly, the mongrel has a history of use in modern literature as a subversive term used to describe cultural and racial mixture. See Guneratne, A. R. (1998). The Chronotopes of mongrel literatures: Rushdie, Ondaatje, Naipaul and the problems of postcoloniality. Journal of Postcolonial Writing, 37(1-2), 5-23. Likewise, the term mongrel, while certainly has been negatively linked to notions of race (Schultz, 1905), it also has been used as a provocative metaphor to understand cultural mixing, particularly in a post-colonial urban context (Douglas, 1995; Cornwell, 1999; Sandercoc, 2003, 2006; Dawson, 2007). Also, Stewart’s (1994) concept of syncretism bears some resemblance to my invocation of mongrelity, albeit from a more top down theoretical perspective.
misappropriated as a defence against the danger of the intricate unknown. To paraphrase Stewart, if this past can be understood, then we are in a position to consciously re-appropriate this term and set the ethnographic study of cultural mixture on new tracks (Stewart, 1999, p. 40).

The term ‘mongrel’ took on a whole new meaning for me whilst deploying Chang’s (2007) autoethnographic method as part of the narrative arc of this research. Chang’s model proposes self-reflection and the development of a self-narrative which forms the backdrop for the research. In analysis of my own speech patterns to describe my historical musical experiences, the term mongrel kept re-appearing but not with the same negative stereotypes as discussed earlier. I realised that I first encountered this word growing up in South East Queensland, in Australia.

In Oz-English slang, mongrel has a distinctive colloquial meaning. While also used to describe the mixed breed of dogs, in Australian and New Zealand sporting slang, the quality of mongrelity relates to toughness and physical aggression and is highly prized. Commentators may describe a player as having a bit of mongrel in them or if lacking conviction and passion a team could be said to have lost that bit of mongrel. While the term is more probably more commonly used as a direct insult e.g. ‘Ya bloody mongrel’, it is interesting to note how mongrel qualities can be valued and even cherished. My grandfather was particularly fond of the 'mongrel' and used it as a double edged sword both as an insult and an affectionate back of hand. Working dogs of mongrel mixes are said to be hardier, more intelligent and even to live longer than pure breeds. These dogs are prized for their unique mongrel mixes and consequentially given a certain affection. The mongrel, while not being of pure breed or class, is often stronger for its unique combination of genetic sources. To mongrelize then, the transitive verb, is the process of intentional or organic creation of crossbreeds or hybrids which enables, “newness to enter the world” (1991, p. 394).

While certainly, the term mongrel is not unproblematic, I have found in my own experience, its distinctiveness provides a useful differentiation from the more general notion of hybridity. I do not, however, wish to champion these practices as some kind of utopian postmodern performative shape-shifting “Fourth World” (Toop, 1995). In the mongrel metaphor, nothing is clear-cut, it encompasses the messy reality of inter-cultural musical mingling. The mongrel is a combination of many sources and is not
necessarily to be considered a refinement. Rather the mongrel embraces the multiplicity of difference. Presence of the mongrel does not necessarily strengthen or a weaken culture but challenges the binary distinction of West and the rest. It also offers the possibility of acting as a personal subversive diffusion of categories.

Importantly, I would like to define the mongrel as a self-referential system. It is not a term I am proposing to describe the mixing of different ethnic musics as a broad category. I suggest that one can invoke the mongrel in one's Self rather than indiscriminately labelling the Other. Labelling oneself a mongrel results from, and causes, self-reflection and a questioning of identity. Labelling the Other a mongrel is fraught with difficulty. Calling another does not necessarily, to paraphrase Heiddeger (1966), 'call what was unknown into Being', it does not draw close the Other. Rather it places the unknown onto a Being and distances the Self from knowing the Other. Invoking the mongrel in the Self intimately includes the Other. In this way, I am attempting to clarify the uses of this term not just for ethnomusicological theory but, more importantly, as an invitation for other musicians to explore the veracity of the term for themselves. For the mongrel is an internal form that requires internal ways of knowing. I would like to propose, then, that hybridity in fact is a more theoretical and abstract socio-centric process in which the practice of personal mongrelity resides.

2.6 Music and the Mongrel

The truth of all inter-cultural musicking, regardless of ethnicity, is that music is cultural capital, it represents knowledge, and therefore relates to the politics of power (Bordieu, 2011). This dynamic is at play among traditional performers of North Indian classical music and also for a mongrel like me. However, in invoking the mongrel, I am in fact attempting to relinquish the weight of some of this cultural capital and give back agency to the traditional culture bearers. This act positions me in relation with the tradition, but differentiated, so that the totality of my Selfhood may come into view. An acceptance of difference and individual integration of that very difference are key to my understanding of the mongrel. It also is a willingness to be honest, open and vulnerable, both in interactions with musical cultures but also with the self. As an inter-cultural-relating musician, this involves maintaining personal integrity, a consciousness of the dangers of miscommunication and unequal power relations yet also keeping a grounding in the Self when in engaging with others.\(^\text{13}\)

\(^{13}\) This is reminiscent of Glissant’s (1997, p. 11) notion of Relation which is rhizomatic, drawing from Deleuze and Guttari and not bound to one dominant root. Also his concept of ‘opacity’ in regards to his philosophy of poetics of relation could be of service.
I accept that mongrelity may be a challenging term to be coupled with traditional musics. It would seem, that in Irish traditional music at least, the mongrel does not have the same level of begrudging respect as in Australia. Seamus Tansey, conservative agitator and Irish traditional musician, has infamously stated that, “America is a mongrel nation, her musical culture is also a mongrel” (1996, p. 212). In reference to musics from other cultures and the Irish tradition he says, “you can’t mix them….or else you have a mongrel representing nothing or speaking nothing, just a noise or an obscene sound that should never have been heard” (1996, p. 211). In the world of Irish traditional music, it would certainly seem that the mongrel is not welcome. Its path to rehabilitation may be a difficult one. Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, sympathized that the term mongrel was “highly negative and a put down of the poor dog” (2013, in interview). Although the views of figures such as Tansey represent an offensive extremist vantage point, a more benign subscription to the same underlying idea is common. Irish traditional musical culture is often defined as possessing a pure ancient heritage. This is a definition which positions itself in opposition to other cultural influences rather than the acceptance of the diverse strains of musical immigration and intermingling.

However, this is in fact the very point of my reclamation of mongrelity, in that it may open a possible dialogue that questions assumptions about the Purity of musical cultures, the stability of culture as a concept, and the porous nature of cultural traditions. I believe that hybrid cultural figures, which I am characterizing through the metaphor of the mongrel, may have an important role to play in reshaping musical cultures. It is perhaps because of the charged moral overtones of the word mongrel that I believe that it may assist us to look more closely at the complexities of cultural forms. I would like to undertake Ó Súilleabháin’s challenge to “throw down the gauntlet” (in interview, 2013) and entertain the notion that in reclaiming the mongrel and attempting to rehabilitate and reintegrate its dark undertones we may gain insight into the ubiquitous reality of trans-global inter-cultural identities in a way that might otherwise be impossible. The term elicits such varied and emotive responses that it would seem that its re-appropriation could stimulate new thinking in both ethnomusicology and in musical traditions.
2.7 Third Space

Hybridity theorist and postcolonial scholar, Homi K. Bhabha, has reflected that we are living in “a moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity” (1994, p. 2). The mongrel, both as a word and as an embodied sense of identity, is uniquely positioned to engage with these complexities and develop new understandings. To paraphrase Bhabha, the mongrel is “pregnant with potential for new world views with new internal forms for perceiving the world” (1994, p. 17). Heavily influenced by Said's (1978) Orientalism, Foucalt's (1982) ideas of power, and Derrida’s post-structuralism (1982, 2004, 1996), Bhabha has been concerned with how colonized people resist and subvert the power of the coloniser and how this power can be manifested through cultural works. Hybrid musical works and musicians can easily be viewed as part of this process of resistance to dominant power structures, particularly in postcolonial interpretations.

While Bhabha has mostly focused his theories on postcolonial readings of literature and the cultural dialogues between the dominant and the oppressed, I believe that his work can be applied with equal if not more success to music, particularly in the realm of hybridity, inter-cultural and trans-cultural performance. The metaphor of the mongrel may enable us to focus discussions of musical hybridity on individuals. The cultural theory of hybridity in post-colonial studies seeks the location of cultural meaning and in particular supports the notion that culture and its announcement or enunciation of identity is located in the in-between or liminal places (Bhabha, 1994). In this perspective, migrants, who are betwixt and between several cultural frames, have a unique perspective on and role in creating new cultural identity as “to migrate is to express deep changes and wrenches in the soul…the migrant is not simply transformed by his act; he also transforms his new world. Migrants may well become mutants, but it is out of such hybridisation that newness can emerge” (in Rathjen, 2002, p.553).

The Indian diasporic electronic music scene in the UK is a good example of musical hybridity which uses the tools of dominant culture (electronic dance music/ pop genres) to subvert and politically retaliate against perceived injustice and the alienation of displacement. Artists such as Asian Dub Foundation (2003), Nithin Sawhney (1999) have overtly political themes in their musical lexicon and the importance of this has been explored elsewhere (Sharma 1996; Taylor, 2007; Frith 2000, 2007). Bhabha
(1990,1994) has described at length how the colonized mimics the cultural forms of the colonizer to create new hybrid symbols which challenge the authority of the dominant culture. Yet, Sharma has suggested that although Bhabha’s work offers “advanced and compelling theorizations of hybridity...there remains a tension in his work...suggesting that migrant hybridity is more emancipatory than that of a traditional culture (1996, p. 30). In an analysis of the politics of what is described as “new Asian dance music” Sharma, Hutnyk and Sharma (1996) provocatively invoke some Bhabha’s ideas but also point to the limitations and postcolonial problematics of the term hybridity.14

Taylor argues that simply using, “the term hybridity makes us complicit in perpetuating and intensifying historically unequal power relations and the entrenched conservatism of the cultural categories employed by the music industry” (2007, p. 159). While certainly, the term mongrel is not unproblematic, I have found in my own experience, its distinctiveness provides a useful differentiation from the more general notion of hybridity. I would like to propose that hybridity is a larger process in which personal mongrelity resides. Perhaps hybridity can be considered a more abstract socio-centric process in which the practice of personal mongrelity resides.

Rice asserts that music “does something else for humankind besides creating meaning, something just as or even more important’ (2010, p. 126). It is the musical “creative possibilities of mongrelisation” (Siddhartha, 2004, p. 78) which may begin to provide an answer to the question of whether “the complexity of the unhomely, intrapersonal world” can “lead to an international theme” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 17). The mongrel stands for proactive advocacy in the tyranny of absolutism and the myth of cultural purity. Salman Rushdie articulates this when he speaks of his own novel, The Satanic Verses. He suggests that his work,

celebrates hybridity, impurity, intermingling, the transformation that comes of new and unexpected combinations of human beings, cultures, ideas, politics, movies, songs. It rejoices in mongrelization and fears the absolutism of the Pure. It is the great possibility that mass migration gives the world...(it) is for change-by-fusion, change-by-conjoining. It is a love song to our mongrel selves. (1991, p.394)

14 Sharma in fact uses the term ‘Radical Otherness’ rather than hybridity as a “strategic positionality responding to the essentialist discourses of absolute difference and cultural assimilation” (1996, p. 31).
In my own investigation of foreigners engaged in learning North Indian classical music, I discussed how musical migrations contribute to not just personal transformations but also may reconfigure musical cultures (Noone, 2013, p. 35). The musicians I have studied are corroborating Rushdie’s notions of ‘change-by-fusion’, change 'by conjoining’ of the parameters of North Indian classical music and also sonic landscape of the western world. A sonic example of this is evidenced by The Monsoon Trio’s (2016) recent release entitled, Pranaam, which has been described as “the product of a very unique cross-cultural synthesis, in which the Eastern traditions are confronted by Western modernity” (Ganguluy, 2016). The group features two brothers Johnathan and Andrew Kay on saxophone and Justin Gray on a new hybrid instrument, the ‘bass veena’. The Kay brothers have been studying Indian Classical music in a traditional guru-shishya manner in Kolkata for many years and have developed a unique style on the decidedly non-traditional instrument of the saxophone. Likewise bass player, Gray found it necessary to modify a fretless bass with extra sympathetic strings.\(^{15}\)

However, there are scholars who are critical of westerners’ engagement with Indian classical music and argue that it relates to a ‘colonial imagination’. Korpella, who has conducted ethnographies of foreigners (although not always necessarily musicians) living in Varanasi and Goa suggests that westerners “imagine’ India according their own needs” (Korpela, 2010, p. 1299). While studies such as Korpela’s are useful in representing the flows of western tourist migration within India, in dismissing all western students of North Indian classical music as “lifestyle migrants” she has ignored the difference between touristic engagement with Indian culture and expert performer’s knowledge.\(^{16}\) Melrose has described how an “expert disciplinary mastery” of a musical form represents “complex and internally differentiated theoretical practices" which are by their nature, "inventive". How may it be possible to consider mongrelity as a natural evolution of post-modernity that could lead to strengthening traditions and creating inter-connected and socially conscious individuals who work as cultural agents and provocateurs?

\(^{15}\) A similar path has been furrowed by numerous western musicians in the Indian Classical world. John Mc Loughlin famously created the ‘scalloped’ fingerboard guitar to bend notes like a sitar in his work with Shakti. Likewise, increasingly, foreigners who have been learning North Indian classical music on western instruments have begun to introduce the instruments to classical audiences to very positive acclaim. Examples include the use of western flute in dhrupad and Saskia Rao’s innovations in use of the cello.

\(^{16}\) In her work, Korpela documents that westerners “embrace a precolonial understanding of India as they appreciate its ancient past rather than modern present” (2010, p. 1300). She implies that foreigners learning Indian classical music are more interested in socialising with other westerners and “smoking hash together” than an actual serious dedication to learning music (2010, p.1301).
An important and provocative element of Bhabha’s work, which is relevant here, is the distinction between cultural difference and cultural diversity. He argues that the concept of cultural diversity is a commodification which allows the dominant culture “to collect and appreciate” others (1990, p. 208). This is an attempt to categorize, distance the Other and safeguard the dominant culture. Also implicit in this concept is the presumption that culture is fixed and stable. In cultural diversity, which he suggests is complicit with liberal multiculturalist societies, true brotherhood is not achieved and racism is still prevalent. He argues for cultural difference, where the uncomfortable possibly antagonistic nature of Otherness is allowed. Bhabha suggests that,

it is very difficult, even impossible and counterproductive, to try and fit together different forms of culture and to pretend that they can easily coexist...with the notion of cultural difference, I try to place myself in that position of liminality, in that productive space of the construction of culture as difference, in the spirit of alterity or otherness. (1990, p. 209)

Within the perspective of cultural difference, mongrelity can be understood as a liminal process of negotiation and differentiation where sonic mixture challenges the authority of colonial identity. The act of the mongrel representing aspects of the dominant culture back to itself is unsettling. In this way I would suggest that mongrelity may “intervene in the agnostic space of authority” (Bhabha, 1985, p. 152). Ironically, Bhabha suggests that postcolonial authority uses hybridity for its own means; this authority “requires the production of differentiations...modes of discrimination...that disallow stable unitary assumption of collectivity” (1985, p. 153). This cultural authority is predicated on a subversive theory of hybridization, in which the mongrel is devalued by dominant culture rather than simply repressed. Taylor has argued that, “Bhabha fails to consider that the colonializing or other dominant powers might interpret the hybrid forms produced by subalterns as simply inaccurate, or mimetic or inferior versions of what dominant culture has thrust upon them” (2007, p. 145-146).

However, Bhabha does account, in theory at least, for the possibility of hybrid musical products being ridiculed or considered inferior. In fact, this criticism of the hybrid product is perhaps part of its subversive nature. In his seminal work, Signs taken for wonders, Bhabha describes how the production of a hybrid cultural product, in
particular an Indian translation of the Bible, while challenging the authority of colonial English identity actually also serves the purpose of allowing the colonial master to denigrate the colonial subject through its barbaric mongrelised interpretations. What takes place is “a discrimination between mother culture and its bastards, the self and its doubles, where the trace of what is disavowed is not repressed but repeated as something different…a mutation, a hybrid” (Bhabha, 1985, p. 153). However, while the mutated hybrid may be subject to ridicule, it is nonetheless a powerful disruptive challenge and a “revaluation of the assumption of colonial identity…the articulation of the ambivalent space where the rite of power is enacted on the site of desire…it reveals the ambivalence at the source of traditional discourses on authority and enables forms of subversion” (1985, p. 154).

Rather than having an ambivalent response, Bhabha suggests that “the display of hybridity…terrorizes authority with the ruse of recognition, its mimicry, its mockery” (1985, p. 157). Hybridity, and by extension what I have suggested is a more personal manifestation in the form of mongrelity, “represents the terrifying, exorbitant object of paranoid classification” (1985, p. 155). This sense of fear and threat is sympathetic with my reclamation of the transformative and elusive nature of mongrelity which is “uncontainable because it breaks down the symmetry and duality of Self/Other, inside/outside” (1985, p. 158).

The productive ambivalence of the distance between Self/ Other is perhaps best encapsulated in Bhabha's concept of Third Space. I believe that the concept of Third Space may also be the most productive in relation to understanding and articulating hybrid music making. While Bhabha has never extensively defined Third Space and generally has evaded its practical applications, it is an extremely provocative term to describe the in-between nature of both hybridity and mongrelity. The concept of Third Space originates in the idea that, “cultural practices construct their own systems of meaning and social organisation” (Bhabha, 1990, p. 209). This construction of meaning happens in a continuously liminal space of relationship between the cultural Self and the Other. It is the almost invisible communication of signs and symbols between dominant culture, its mirrors, mimetics and mongrels. He argues that interpretation of meaning between the Self and the Other is a dialogical process mediated by this Third Space. Cultural meaning between the Self and Other must be “mobilized in the passage through a Third Space, which represents both the general conditions of language and the specific
implication of the utterance in a performative and institutional strategy of which it cannot “in itself” be conscious” (Bhabha, 2006, p. 156).

As a musician, what is interesting here is Bhabha's reference to the performative strategy of hybrid meaning 'of which it cannot in itself be conscious’. Yet surely an on-the-ground reading of this process of hybrid dialogue in music making could reveal the conscious and unconscious decisions made by artists engaging in this theoretical Third Space? Perhaps Third Space can be consciously adapted and appropriated as a responsive and transformative model in not just hybrid music making but music in general. Bhabha agrees that Third Space acts as an “intervention which makes the structure of meaning and reference an ambivalent process, destroys this mirror of representation in which cultural knowledge is continuously revealed as an integrated, open, expanding code” (2006, p. 157). Bhabha here offers insight into the inevitable futility of attempted cultural dominance and the elusive if not illusionary nature of culture itself. The intervening act of Third Space “properly challenges our sense of the historical identity of culture as a homogenizing, unifying force, authenticated by the originary past, kept alive in the national tradition of the People” (ibid, p. 157). Third Space may allow us to circumvent the dichotomy of emic/etic, coloniser/colonised, East/West, Self/ Other and challenge cultural fundamentalism and the absolutism of cultural Purity.

Metaphysically and meta-musically, Third Space acts as a “precondition for articulation of cultural meaning” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 38). It is a sort of primordial space from which meaning emerges which evades the limiting reference of hybridity. As a concept, Taylor concurs that Third Space “obviates some of the problems of the hybridity metaphor...referring to the momentary, evanescent nature of culture, social formations and music” (2007, p. 160). Bhabha could easily be describing the formation of hybrid musical identities when he suggests that “these in-between spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood...the initiate signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration and contestation, in the act of defining society itself” (1994, p. 2). The Third Space is the in-between state where hybridisation occurs and the mongrel is conceived.

The Third Space is “unrepresentable in itself [yet] constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation” that ensure that the meaning and symbols of culture have no
primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 55). In this way the Third Space is the “theoretical recognition of the split-space of enunciation” or the announcement of new cultural identification (ibid, 1994, p. 56). This theorization has musical ramifications if we can consider that the Third Space “may open the way to conceptualizing an international culture, based not on the exoticism of multiculturalism or the diversity of cultures, but the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity” (ibid, 1994, p. 56). I quote Bhabha at length here as he explains that;

hybridity...is the third space that enables other positions to emerge. This third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom. The process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognisable, a new area of meaning and representation” (1990, p.211).

While Third Space theory can be both inspirational in its expansiveness and emancipatory in its implications it is also frustratingly elusive and perhaps phenomenologically un-grounded. Critics of Bhabha have suggested that he “assumes an older model of sovereignty that no longer exists” (Hardt & Negri in Taylor, 2007, p.146). Postcolonial globalization is much more complex than the binaries of dominant and subjugated and is perhaps only sufficiently explored through the somatic experiences of individuals rather than hegemonies. Bhabha argues that “it is the trope of our times to locate the question of culture in realm of the beyond” yet theories are only of use if they can be put into practice (1994, p. 1). Furthermore, it is baffling to consider that hybridity theory such as Bhabha's has not been applied more to its 'playing out' in music. Taylor argues that,

It has not been a major part of Bhabha's work to examine how the oppositional and destabilizing effects of hybridisation might actually play out...the marketing of hybridity frequently triumphs over the third space (2007, p. 145-146).

Hardt & Negri suggest that, the “real revolutionary practice refers to the level of production. Truth will not make us free, but taking control of the production of truth will” (2000, p.156). Taylor would seem to support this idea when he suggests “like all terms and categories you have to watch what happens to hybridity in practice” (2007, p.160). However, in re-reading some of Bhabha's work we may find allusions to possible phenomenological grounding of his theories. He suggests that “by exploring
this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of ourselves” (1994, p. 56). Perhaps then, the Third Space is not a passage we may enter and leave, it is a continuous and organic embodied process. This is an “interpretation of the Third Space as a liminal site between contending and contradictory positions. Not a space of resolution, but one of continual negotiation” which may locate culture in the liminality of the body (Hernandez, 2010, p. 95).

Certainly, though, Bhabha seems to contradict himself and complicate his theories unnecessarily, particularly in relation to the interchangeability of the terms hybridity and Third Space (Hernandez, 2010). Hybridity can be viewed as a product, such as in his discussion of the book as hybrid representation of colonial identity, (1985) yet he also suggests that hybridity itself is the Third Space (1990) despite Third Space being unrepresentable (1994). Furthermore, on one had he argues for the illusory nature of cultural stability or fixity purporting that “the difference of cultures can no longer be identified or evaluated as objects of epistemological or moral contemplation: they are simply not there to be appropriated” (1985, p. 156). Yet at the same time Bhabha argues that “Culture...can be transformed by the unpredictable and partial desire of hybridity” (1985, p. 157).

2.8 The mongrel as Third Space

A resolution of the ambiguities and tensions in Bhabha’s work is perhaps best resolved in practices and the somatics of Self. Hybrid music making and mongrel musical identities offer a unique solution to the unstable and abstract nature Bhabha's postcolonial theory and circumvent the outdated modalities of power and oppression by which much of Bhabha's writing is unnecessarily weighed down. If we agree that Third space is not fixed or static identity but “identification” then we must look at the elusive hybrid process in motion (Bhabha, 1990, p.211). I believe mongrelity may be an extremely useful concept to employ in reference to an embodied hybrid process. More than the idea of hybridity, mongrelity, “calls attention to disjunctions as well as conjunctions and encourages a focus not on structure but on practice (Kapchan & Strong, 1999, p.249). This is what Samuels refers to as "radically local experience” (in Kapchan & Strong., 1999, p. 250).

I would like to attempt to localise or more pertinently loba
de the experience of the performance of musical mongrels as a radical subversion of categories. For the mongrel
“does not challenge us to disentangle influences like tradition and modernity or to unravel strands of difference. Rather...[it] stands in resistance to such disarticulations: instantiating identity at the same time that it is subverted” (Kapchan & Strong, 1999, p.245). This is a practical response to Bhabha's most radical and antagonistic ideal of cultural difference rather than a liberal pluralist rhetoric of cultural diversity.

Bhabha suggests that, “the possibility of producing a culture which both articulates difference and lives with it could only be established on the basis of a non-sovereign self” (1990, p. 212). The musical mongrel stands outside of national or cultural sovereignty and its practices are its evolving and non-static identification. Bhabha concedes that, hybridity has no “perspective of depth of truth to provide; it is not a third term that resolves tension between two cultures...it does not produce a mirror where the self apprehends itself, it is always a split screen of the self and its doubling, the hybrid” (1985, p. 156). The mongrel does not produce a mirror but perhaps embodies the mirroring process of the hybrid and its double. The mongrel as an embodied concept may offer a solution to the problem of hybridity's elusiveness.
CHAPTER 3

Traditions, definitions and Orientalist discourse

3.1 The Pure drop and the Mongrel

As this research focusses on musical collaborations within a framework of Irish traditional and North Indian Classical music, I am inevitably drawn into developing a working characterization of these musical systems. For as Stockhammer argues, “every aim to transcend borders starts with the acknowledgement of those borders, confirming the existence of what needs to be overcome” (2012, p.2). Yet to define the borders of Irish traditional music is difficult as it represents different things to different people in different places. For some, Irish traditional music is very much a 'folk' music, “a product of a musical tradition of a community or region which has evolved through a process of oral transmission...the music of the people played by the people and transmitted orally from one generation to the next” (Curtis, 1994, p. 8).

The above definition of the Irish tradition is connected to the notion of the 'pure drop', which is a “euphemism for uncut whiskey...so implying undiluted and unpolluted” (Vallely, 2011, p. 555). The ‘pure drop’ orientation in Irish traditional music focuses on the art of the solo performer which harkens back to a perception of an authentic past. As a musical reference, the pure drop often refers to a nuanced unaccompanied melodic performance where personal style and expression is valued over technical virtuosity. This view of traditional music honours a lineage of great performers and composers, the solo and melodic basis of the music and the spiritual efficacy of unadulterated performance. Accordion player and broadcaster, Tony McMahon, who in fact named his seminal television programme on traditional music The Pure Drop, describes that, “this music of ours possess the power of magic: it can put us in touch with ourselves in ways no other Irish art form can do. It can touch the pulse of ancestral memory, allowing us to redefine our dreams of what it is to be Irish...It is a gift of nature” (1996, p. 116).

The notion of the pure drop in Irish traditional music is also connected to the concept of the purist, an often negative description, about someone who seeks to maintain the artistic integrity of the tradition against ‘outside’ influence. The purist “abhor[s] commercialism, fusion, and borrowing between music genres, adulteration of the centrality of the melodic line” (Vallely, 2011, p. 555). McMahon is often held up as
the archetypal purist in traditional music discourse, one who is conservative and suspicious of changes to this traditional format and especially of inter-cultural collaborations. He describes how in appropriating other musical genres tradition is “mangled...beaten into multi-cultural rhythmic patterns... developed and damaged” (1996, p. 116). As we saw in Chapter 1, Seamus Tansey, has derided cultural mixing and the presence of the mongrel in traditional music. He describes how Irish traditional music comes from the soil and spirit of the land and that,

if you dilute, impose, cross-pollinate or orchestrate foreign cultures with that which is native and part of the soul of this country you will kill or else will smother the very essence of our music and the environmental source from which it has sprung and the telepathic message our fathers sent us through history and we to future generations (1996, p. 212).

The vehement defence of the borders of Irish traditional music by some musicians, is to some degree understandable. The defensiveness is perhaps a reflection of the close relationship that traditional music with Irish nationalism and cultural identity. Since its early revival years, traditional music has been hijacked as part of a nationalist publicity machine, this coupling of traditional music and cultural nationalism has its origins in the emergence of the Irish state but continues to be exploited in the age of world music (White, 1998; Taylor, 2007; Smyth, 2008; O’Shea, 2008; O’Flynn, 2009). On one hand traditional music is the authentic folk expression of native Irish culture, on the other hand it is, as Ó Súilleabháin concedes, something of a “green package... inherently dishonest, trying to contain culture within an ideological message” (in interview). Or as Valelly (2013) even more cynically asserts, Irish traditional music has become “the cuddly toy of the Celtic Tiger in a rallying Irish identity” (2013).

Likewise, while being a nationalist ‘folk’ music, Irish traditional music is also a successful global concert music, “a trans-national cultural form and a commodity consumed by vast audiences worldwide” (O’Shea, 2008, p.2). Due to the global and professional nature of Irish traditional music, musicians are increasingly intermingling with new instrumentation, musical cultures and forms in the quest for artistic expression and commercial viability: this is the flip side of the commercial ‘world music’ reality of Irish traditional music. Yet Ó Súilleabháin argues that, “purity is not what it’s all about...the history of Irish music is one of fusion” (in interview, 2013). While instruments such as the pipes, fiddle and flute are often referred to as the ‘holy trinity’ of traditional music, a hundred and fifty years ago, there were no “accordions, or concertinas, or banjos or guitars in Irish music, not to mention bouzoukis. Go back 300
years and you don't have any fiddles as we know them, or flutes or uilleann pipes, or any reels or hornpipes” (Carolan, 1996, p. 52). Well respected traditional musician and singer, Andy Irvine, has argued that the tradition itself “isn't going to accept anything unworthy of it. So, I think it is perfectly acceptable to experiment” (in Munnely, 1996, p. 142). Perhaps, the debate of “purist vs innovation is meaningless within the parameters of the traditional dissemination itself” (Munelly, 1996, p. 140).

The complexities of what Irish music means to different people highlights that “traditional music defines not a single community but multiple communities with overlapping senses of identity” (Stokes & Bohlman, 2003, p. 146). Perhaps, it is difficult to settle on a single definition of Irish traditional music as one of its primary features “is its capacity for absorption, retention and change” (Carson, 1986, p. 5). The Irish Traditional music archive echoes this view that it “is impossible to give a simple definition [...] as traditional culture changes traditional music changes also, showing varying features at varying times” (ITMA, 1991). O’ hAllmhuráin suggests that there “is no iron-clad definition of Irish traditional music” and that “it is best understood as a broad-based system which accommodates a complex process of musical convergence, coalescence and innovation over time” (1998, p. 5). It becomes “difficult to define and analyse the basic elements of traditional music in Ireland…The only certainty is that if they are to remain in that tradition they will henceforth be subject to a process of continuous change” (O Cannain, 1978, p. 1).

The difficulty of defining Irish traditional music is compounded by the fact that it can only be traced back historically with any authority several centuries. The form and history of Irish traditional music before the 1600's and the fall of the old Irish aristocracy is open to a great deal of inference and mythos, as this is “Irish music prehistory, a long mysterious period with few hard facts, but plenty of opportunity for speculation” (Carolan, 1996, p. 53). More detailed accounts of the historical and cultural development of Irish traditional music have been covered at length elsewhere (Breathnach, 1977; O' Boyle, 1976; O' Canainn; Vallely, 1999; Skinner Sawyers, 2000; Wallis and Wilson, 2001; O'hAllmhuráin, 1998; White, 1998) and need not be repeated here.

Other interesting perspectives on Irish music and identity are contained in (Smyth, 2004; O' Connor, 2001; Flynn, 2009). In particular, Flynn has explored how
“the perceived otherness of traditional and traditional-derived genres of Irish music continues to influence many peoples’ beliefs” (2009, p.28). More innovative process-orientated reflections on Irish traditional music include, but are not limited to, explorations of the poetic phenomenology of the seisún Carson's (1996) Last Night's Fun, the romantic biographical (Vallely, 1998; Curtis, 1994), the ethnographic (Kaul, 2009; Basegmez, 2005) and explorations of musicians’ metaphorical language (Keegan, 2012; Keegan, 2010).

While the cultural history of Irish traditional music is difficult to situate accurately, there are basic musical parameters which are important to define modern instrumental traditional music. Irish traditional music today is performed in an ever increasing array of settings and contexts, by more people in Ireland and across the world than in the history of the tradition. From a ‘rough guide’ perspective, Irish music could be described under several main categories such as:

1) Sean-nós (unaccompanied song in Irish)
2) Instrumental Airs
3) Songs in English
4) Harp tradition
5) Instrumental dance music.

(Bakan, 2007, p. 162)

A modern performance of Irish traditional music may include any of the above categories in an infinite variety of permutations. An exploration of defining the complex parameters of the modern traditional music lexicon has been suggested by O’Snodaigh (in Kíla, 2011), who argues for expanding traditional music categories to include “Pure Trad” (the solo tradition), “Trad Bands” (ensemble playing) and “Nua Trad” (hybrids or fusions). This principle has been entertainingly extended further through the analogy of Irish traditional music and the humble potato. Both he argues, are staple diets of the Irish people, imported from overseas, the potato from South America and “the rhythmic structure of Irish tunes from Europe via court and folk dances. Such was the national appetite for spuds and tunes that we created our own breeds” (2011, p. 134). From “Pure Boiled Trad.”, to the homely comforting mash of “Sunday Gravy Trad”, the “frozen, bleached, steam-dried, hydrolised, over-sweetened potato powder” of “Mc Trad” and the globally spiced “Trad. Hotpot”. O Snodaigh has
through his unique humour and insight created a tasty cross section of the possible definitions of modern traditional music (2011, p. 134).

While cognisant of the interconnected nature of the tradition and its various modern forms, this research is primarily focussed on instrumental dance music. The main melodic basis of Irish traditional music, the tune, has primarily evolved from a dance tradition. Music and dance have historically been intrinsically linked and part of the structure of the musicking and social structure of performance and has shaped Irish cultural identity. As Ó Súilleabháin explains, “music with its twin tradition of dance, runs like an underground river along bedrock of our cultural thought” (1999, p. 86). However, Irish traditional music also “is now a sophisticated listening music, and no longer a medium only for dancing” (Vallely, 1999, p. xv). Yet the dancing and music still are inextricably linked, even if it is played as a listening music as is evident in its structure and what Ó Súilleabháin describes as the music’s inherent “lift” or “invitation to dance” (1990, p. 123). The dance heritage of Irish traditional music is exemplified by the fact that tune types all, with the exception of the slow air, originate from dance forms.  

The tunes themselves, regardless of which dance form they are connected with, are still, with very few exceptions, “constructed from basic eight bar units” (Ó Súilleabháin, 1981, p. 117). The tunes are relatively short melodic phrases fixed in two or more parts. These 'parts' are musical units which are perceived by musicians “through the feeling of eight main rhythmic pulses and through the melodic framework pointed by tonal cadences” (1981, p. 118). Breathnach describes that in “the vast majority of tunes each part is made up of two phrases...the common pattern is a single phrase repeated with slight modification...the first making, as it were, an assertion to which the second is the response” (1977, p. 56). The cyclical combination and slight variation of short melodic phrases or the 'round' is “at the heart of the Irish dance music tradition” (Ó Súilleabháin, 2004, p. 3). Amongst musicians, the round is described by the 'tune' and the second response of the 'turn'. Interestingly, the 'round' is linked with the idea of 'turning a tune' and its peculiar 'setting' which if all the factors work out will contribute to the 'lift'. (Ó Súilleabháin, 1981, p. 118-122).

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Breathnach describes that there are reportedly some 6,000 dance tunes in the modern repertoire, "jigs, reels, and hornpipes in profusion, and hundreds of tunes for sets, polkas and other dances" (1977, p. 56).
This *lif* is an interesting term and simple definition of the intention of Irish traditional music as an invitation to dance and yet Ó Súilleabháin suggests that it also may allude to a more metaphysical dance “which could be taken synonymously with the creative process itself” (1990, p. 119). As Ó Súilleabháin explains, “the musical essence is within the form rather than being the form itself” (1981, p. 120). It exists in “tension between the inaudible and the audible within music” (1981, p. 130). In this way perhaps we can begin to “view Irish music and dance as more than entertainment, another form of reality itself” (Ó Súilleabháin, 1998, p. 74). This essence of traditional music is ephemeral and “emphasizes the playing of music (and playing with music) rather than focussing solely on its structure” (Kaul, 2009, p.1). An ultimate understanding of what constitutes Irish traditional music is best found with the players and in performance rather than structural analysis. We need to understand Irish traditional music removed from its national, cultural and geographical limits. In the music itself, the utterances of the tradition are revealed.

### 3.2 North Indian Classical music - a hybrid history

In terms of a documented historical development, North Indian Classical and Irish traditional music couldn't be more different. While the modern form of North Indian classical music can be traced back to the 14th or 15th century it is often suggested that its real origins lie in the ancient Vedas from around 1500BC. It is important to note that the early history of the music did not feature many of the arguably essential elements of modern Classical performance such as the drone, improvisation and pure instrumental music. Rather “the theory and practice of early Indian music moved gradually in the direction of increasing freedom and spontaneity, providing ever-increasing performance options while at the same time maintaining certain controls” (Rowell, 1998, p. 12). Rowell (1998) outlines that there were originally two streams of music in ancient India: a classical ritualized theatre music (*marga*) alongside a more vernacular regional based improvisational model (*desi*). Both of these streams merged into what could be understood as early raga theory somewhere around 12th or 13th century. This development was also heavily influenced by a Persian influence from Muslim invasions in the North, which makes its music distinct.

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18 The Vedas, in particular the Rigveda a collection of 1028 hymns which “set forth the purpose” of the other major four Vedas and the Samaveda which is “a much smaller collection of hymns, mostly from the Rigveda, set to melodies” are perhaps the oldest surviving musical doctrines that exist (Rowell, 1992,. 58). In the Vedas the scale material or melodies (*saman*) were intertwined with text and in preceding musical treatises such as the Natyasasthra (200AD) the scale types of theatrical and ancient music were based on jatis which changed the tonic note of the scale.
from Southern Indian or Carnatic music, folk music traditions and later even by western influences such as the introduction of the harmonium and violin (Farrell, 1990).

The above is an extremely brief outline of the development of North Indian Classical music. Yet this outline is relevant to our discussion, firstly in stark comparison to the historical development of the Irish tradition but secondly because it challenges some pre-conceptions about the ancient unbroken lineage of modern North Indian classical music. While certainly Hindustani music, as it is currently performed, is recognisable in form from around the 15th or 16th century, there have also been significant changes in the music. Though there is a co-relation between the development of philosophical treatises and modern day Indian Classical performance, it is misleading to read this in terms of a linear developmental model.

I would suggest that it is more accurate to contemplate the Indian Classical tradition as a hybrid history of amalgamation, absorption and adaptation between a main cultural pool and several intervening musical forms. Van de Meer has explained that a “spaghetti model of evolution and hybridization” is the most appropriate way to understand Indian Classical music (2006, p. 22). The argument that this is a continuous unbroken link with an ancient culture, which by its definition achieves its glory in the past, is problematic and should be kept pertinent in all readings of North Indian classical music history. As Neuman explains, “there is...not only a past which moulds and personifies the "tradition" but also a tradition representing a past which, however unreachable, is always available as a model for the present” (1980, p. 231). The word 'time' in Sanskrit is kal which can be also translated as 'black', 'death', or 'decay'. In this sense, the concept of time relates to the decreasing value or inherent purity of things. If time is decay, then whatever is in the past must be better. This antiquarianism, or 'temporal skew' permeates the rhetoric about the history and future of Indian Classical music. Jaizrabhoy describes this as an “Indo-Occidentalism” or an attempt to antiquate modern practice and assimilate them to fit with ancient texts, sometimes inventing features of ancient musical theory which have a “supposed relevance to contemporary practice” (2008, p. 225). In practice, many performers discredit scholarly treatises on North Indian classical music, yet the discourse that

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19 Van de Meer also recognises that hybridization in Indian Classical music is a complex process and concedes that “understanding the processes of hybridization in music is not easy, but we can see it in action all the time” particularly in musical exchanges. He also admits that much of the process of hybridization “happens on a subconscious level that are very hard to research” (2006, p.21).
Indian Classical music is a quantifiable and systematized spiritual music connected to antiquity remains.

The stages of development of North Indian classical music have been excellently documented in (Rowell, 1992; Prajnananda, 1963), more poetically but nonetheless diligently (Holryde, 1972), situated ethnographically (Ruckert, 2004), sociologically (Neuman, 1990), musicologically (Jaizrabhoy, 1971), and systematically (Kaufman, 1968; Danielou, 1980). I shall not be so bold as to attempt to add any new analysis to this grand lineage of North Indian classical music scholarship and endeavour to not repeat what may be found out in greater detail elsewhere. There are also a wealth of encyclopaedic attempts, both from western and Indian scholars, explaining and defining the elements of North Indian Classical music (Strangeways, 1914; Van De Meer, 1980; Widdess, 1995; Bagchee, 1998, 2006; (Ruckert & Khan, 2004) However, rather than utilising an unnecessarily digressive and lengthy summary of the many sources of Hindustani music theory, I prefer to use Jairazbhoy's model of a broad outline to create a working model of the four main processes at work in North Indian Classical performance (2011, p.28):

1) Main melodic line is carried by the solo instrument or voice.

2) Drone- usually played on tanpuras tuned to the tonic and a fifth or fourth depending on the raga. Also the drone strings on melodic instruments themselves carry this as well. In performance of shennai (reed instrument) the drone is usually carried by an ensemble of other shennais.

3) Accompanying melody line- this is particularly in vocal music which is accompanied by harmonium or sarangi (stringed instrument). Sometimes another vocalist will also accompany the main melodic line.

4) Percussive line- The rhythmic accompaniment, usually tabla, supports the melodic unravelling of raga and gives a form for improvisation to take shape. In dhrupad20 the pakhawaj is preferred. Rhythm cycles may vary from 2 beats to 128 depending on compositions, the instrumentalist or vocalist’s preference.

The main melodic line, to which Jaizrabhoy refers, is informed by the theory of raga. Importantly, he argues that “rag has no counterpart in Western musical theory” (2011,
Holryde has described, rather poetically, the importance of this complex melodic principle in every aspect of Indian Classical music.

All Indian music is concerned with the development of a single melodic line, its rising and descending scale structure, its exposition through reiteration which is continuously applying itself—so expressing the many-faceted aspects of the flashing prism of each single note in relation to the next—and finally linking together this linear development within the density of complex syncopation, the rigid tall or rhythmic framework that climaxes unfolding of any raga (1972, p. 54).

While every raga “consists of a fixed and unchangeable set of notes, presented in the form of an ascending and descending scale...it must be remembered that the raga is also something more than these...the raga is a total tonal complex” (Bagchee, 1998, p. 38-39). Although “some rags are broad in their possibilities for melodic elasticity and expansion...others are quite narrow and restrictive” (Ruckert, p. 55). All ragas have a fixed scale which often has an ascending (aroh) and descending (avaroh) pattern which highlights how the melody may move. While the mechanics of raga are increasingly broken down to account for the complexity and evolution of the Indian classical tradition, it is important to realise that in performance rag is much more than the sum of its parts. Rag is “a scientific, subtle, precise and aesthetic melodic form” (Shankar in Taraq, 2012) yet it also possesses numerous extra-musical characteristics. Often ragas are ascribed an appropriate season and specific time of day for performance, while some ragas are believed to represent a sonic manifestation of various Hindu deities.

Every raga “has its own characteristic mood (rasa)” which informs a performers approach to the possible musical material (Kaufman, 1968, p. vi). It is also a large part of the anecdotal evidence of the tradition that, many ragas, “if performed correctly, are believed to possess magic powers” (Kaufman, 1968, p. v) such as the bringing of rain or the creation of fire. The efficacy of rag is based on the concept “that certain characteristic patterns of notes evoke a heightened state of emotion. Indeed, the word rag is derived from the Sanskrit root ranj or raj=to colour or tine (with emotion)” (Jaizrabhoy, 2011, p. 28). It cannot be underestimated, the powerful emotive affect of raga performance, both as a musician and as a listener. While the concept of raga is very elusive, it is clear that the music is a vehicle not just for personal emotional expression but for communion with a greater force than the ordinary self. For Ali Akbar Khan, “the real music, the real ragas, are food for your soul” (in Lavezzoli, 2006, p. 75).
In reference to Jaizraibhoy's model cited earlier (2008), I will explore the use of drones further in a more practice based discussion, but at this point, an extra note should also be said about the percussive accompaniment of tabla and the use of tala. Musical, historical and technical descriptions of Indian rhythms abound (Clayton, 2000; Kippen, 2005) and I shall not repeat them here for fear of redundancy. However, the importance of tala, and perhaps more importantly laya cannot be underestimated both in its musical function and in its supporting role in bringing raga to life. In North Indian classical music, the percussionist does “much more than accent the pulse; s/he plays a fundamental role in the intricate counterpoint of the rag's performance” (Khan in Rucket, 2002, p. 215). Tala is a complex onomatopoeic mathematical language which is translated into different patterns on a variety of drums. The term, tal could be simply translated as time measure and is “conceived as a cycle” (Jaizrabhoy, 2011, p. 29). Yet it is “a disciplined intellectual exercise as demanding as a Bach fugue and an appeal to the excitability of the audience's emotion” (Holryde, 1972, p. 200). Another important concept is that of laya which is more related to groove than rhythm. “Laya leaves its imprint on the raga...it is the syncopation and the sway, the pull which draws even upon our own bodies when we first hear it” (Holryde, 1972, p. 199). Indian rhythm is often the phenomenological entry point for a first time listener of Hindustani music as it provides something of a recognisable structure in the complex incarnation of each raga. As Ali Akbar Khan argues, “[r]hythm is like your skeleton...and the notes are like our flesh” (Khan & Ruckert, 2009, p. 223).

The philosophy of time in Indian thought is crucial in creating this efficacy through rhythm and in particular the cyclical nature of its exposition. Importantly, the rhythm structure gives the music its unique non-linear form as it moves through “successive cycles [which] generally increase in intensity, thereby creating the effect of an upward spiral” (Jaizrabhoy, 2011, p. 31). This spiralling effect, in which melody and rhythm are intertwined, is what allows for the possibility of the listener and musician to enter into higher states of consciousness. The physical construction of rhythm can be considered a ritual action due to its links to gesture of ancient theatre and mudras or symbolic hand gestures (Clayton, 2000). The physical gestures of the different stages of the rhythm cycle from the all-important Sam or first beat through to the kali or empty beat, represent not only iconic symbols for the vocalist or instrumentalist to know where they are in time, but also have deeper significance. For “the Indian musician controls time by actions...[through] two temporal streams of gesture and breath...with the
gestures of tala he regulates the illusion of outer time...while with the controlled emission of vocal sounds he manifests the true, continuous, inner time” (Rowell, 1992, p. 186).

Yet, there is a problem with assuming that the ritual, philosophical and spiritual nature of Indian classical music is a given universal amongst all modern musicians. Likewise, it is misleading to think that the modern presentation of an Indian classical concert is an exact replica from the ancient past. Since the “great sitar explosion” of the 1960’s (Farell, 1997), Indian classical music has spread East and West and in many subtle ways has globally begun to modify “radically our general perception of music” as well as being modified itself in the process (Aubert, 2007, p. 79). Indeed, the modern format of alap-jhor-gat structure which “Westerners are most familiar with through the work of Ravi Shankar is strictly a 20th century hybridization” (Lavezzoli, 2007, p. 436).

Due, in no small part, to the cult of personality, figures such as Ravi Shankar, North Indian classical music has become a commercially successful ‘world’ music which has been modified to suit the modern concert environment. Many high profile performers travel an international circuit and are sponsored by big businesses for large scale concerts in India. The Indian classical “musician must insure himself to travelling frequently and packaging his musical product for an audience not always sure of what it is seeking” (Ruckert, 2004, p. 82).

The impact of North Indian classical music on the West and its exotification has been well documented elsewhere (Farrell, 2007; Lavezzoli, 2007; Noone, 2013). It is also beyond the scope or intention of this research to produce an exhaustive list of modern Indian Classical hybrid musical examples. However, it is important to put into context how the current hybridisation of Indian Classical music pushes the boundaries of the tradition, especially in relation to ideas of purity. Some performers of North Indian classical music lament that in the modern era, musicians “are watering-down the music, trying to make it easy for simple-minded and fickle audiences...[and] the idea of purity in the old music is fading” (in Ruckert, 2004, p. 82). Yet at the same time, esteemed performers in the Indian tradition have always forged new paths which have led to the rich diversity of its performance practice.21 As international professional musicians, Indian Classical musicians are increasingly being forced to find ways of

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21 Allaudin Khan, the father of Ali Akbar Khan and guru to many esteemed Indian musicians, was an incredible innovator and introduced rhythmic cycles, structures and ensemble playing to the classical tradition. Likewise, he developed the modern version of the sarode, which in itself is still a relatively new instrument. See (Mc Neil, 2004).
adapting their art form to fit new cultural and social forms. As Neuman states, “while the dominant narrative spins tirelessly around themes of “purity” of raga and proper training, the dominant performance presents movements and marches into aesthetically "impure" territory” (2004, p. 191). Here we are reminded of Munelly's assertion that the debate between purism and innovation “is meaningless within the parameters of the traditional dissemination itself” (1996, p. 140).

Understanding the tradition of either Indian or Irish music as monolithic static entities, neglects the constructed nature of purity. As Glassie argues, “tradition is the creation of the future out of the past. A continuous process situated in the nothingness of the present, linking the vanished with the unknown” (1995, p.1). Furthermore, both Irish and North Indian classical music, as we have discovered, are a part of an evolving process of hybridity and can be “too easily reified as ‘traditions’, transforming ongoing process into finished product” (Quigley, 2012, p. 46). I agree with Quigley when he suggests that, a “more rigorously conceptualized notion of tradition as process, both conserving expressive forms and enabling their creative transformation, would be better suited to our analytical needs today” (2012, 47). An on the ground study of current expressive forms which enable the creative transformation of these traditions is essential in re-evaluating how music processes may be the breeding ground for the enunciation of not just new musical systems but theoretical concepts. The intermingling of Irish and North Indian classical music is itself an example of an expressive form which represents an excellent example of the constructed nature of traditions and the porous borders of musical culture.

3.3 Seán Ó Ríada and the river of sound

You might compare the progress of tradition in Ireland to the flow of a river. Foreign bodies may fall in, thrown in, or dropped in, but they do not divert the course of the river; nor do they stop it flowing, it absorbs them, carrying them with it as it flows onwards (O' Riada, 1982, p.19-20).

Drawing upon Blacking's concept of musical cultures as “floating resources which people invoke and reinvent in the course of social interaction” (1986, p.4), Sean O’ Riada, has used the concept of a 'river of sound' to describe the Irish musical tradition. The above quote, describes not just the diverse influences of Irish music but also the “paradox of a national tradition that absorbs outside influences without being changed by them” (O' Shea, 2008, p.3). Carson argues that what makes traditional music ‘Irish’ “means absorbing other differences and making them feel at home” (1986, p. 6).
Perhaps one of the most important, yet subtle influences within the 'river of sound' is the belief of a connection with the Celtic and the Aryan culture of ancient India.

While Irish cultural identity has long been shaped by 'a perceived otherness' (O'Flynn, 2008), it is scholar and composer Seán O Riada who is often credited as the seminal agent provocateur in relation to the Indian other-ing of Irish music. In his influential collection of lectures, *Our Musical Heritage*, he argues that, “[t]he first thing to note, obviously enough, is that Irish music is not European” (1982, p.20). Whether or not that this is obvious is debatable. The Irish Traditional Music Archive (1991) bluntly defines Irish traditional music as “European music...in structure, rhythmic pattern, pitch arrangement [and] thematic content of songs...it most closely resembles the traditional music of Western Europe”. Yet O' Riada extended his thesis even further suggesting that, “Irish music is not merely not European, it is quite remote from it. It is, indeed, closer to some forms of Oriental music” (1982, p20).

O' Riada only touched upon the musical indicators of the Oriental and Celtic influence on Irish culture, such as the ability of instruments with an unfixed scale such as the fiddle and the voice to use microtonal nuances, the importance of the drone and cyclical time structures (which all have a similarity to North Indian classical music philosophy). Importantly, this connection between the Eastern world and Irish traditional music relies more on an assertion of fundamental differences of culture between European and an older pre-colonial Irish culture rather than clear musical synergies. While he did not explore this connection to its fullest in his lifetime, Irish traditional music has been transformed by O' Riada's influence including the introduction of ensemble playing based on an Arabic model. As Cooper argues, to “reform the Ceíli band, Ó Ríada turned to the basic principles of the Arab orchestra, proposing a grouping whose wind section involved the uilleann pipes, flute, tin whistle and a string section formed of fiddles, with accordions to provide weight” (2005, p. 219). Ó Ríada also introduced new instruments to traditional music, notably the bodhrán and the elevation of the music from a 'folk' tradition to the global concert stage.

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22 The concept of ancient Ireland and Indian links is based on commonality of Indo-European language structure, mythological and ritual similarities between the ancient Celts and Vedic culture. The loose historical theory is that the Celts were descended from a race of Aryan nomads who travelled across the Himalayas into Eastern Europe, eventually spreading to the Western seaboard.

23 The main artistic form which O' Ríada draws upon for his comparison is that of the circle or cyclic nature of Irish art in general. Likewise, he also referred to the improvised nature of Irish music, particularly in regards to ornamentation as "the same as Indian rag".

24 While O’ Ríada did not fully explore supposed Irish-Indian, or indeed Arabic, musical connection in his lifetime, his work is continued by his son, composer and musicians Peadar.
However, the folk revival movement, of which Sean O' Riada was a great catalyst, has also been linked with the uneasy expression of Ireland's emerging post-colonial nationalism. In light of this, the folk revival movement and many of O' Riada's ideas have been critiqued as overtly romantic, culturally idealistic and intrinsically nationalistic. *Our Musical Heritage*, while credited as a landmark resource in the development of Irish traditional music, has also been criticised as “an impressionistic overview of the tradition, coming in the intensely fervent nationalistic atmosphere of the early sixties...[and] cannot continue to be accepted unquestioningly as a definitive sacred text on traditional Irish music” (O' Laoire, 2003).

Despite O' Riada's critics, the idea of Irish-Indian musical links still has currency amongst listeners and practitioners of Irish traditional music. The belief in the historical connections between Irish and Indian cultures, while generally discredited among scholars continues to have an anecdotal cultural resonance. Ironically, while the Irish-Indian connection is largely a quasi-academic idea, in the modern permutations of Irish traditional music there is an ongoing exploration of this theme. Peadar O' Riada, has composed and recorded several sean-nós songs with tambura accompaniment (Triur, 2013, 2011, 2010). 25 Micheál Ó Súilleabháin (1992) has composed pieces with sitar and used tambura drones to accompany an alap style introduction in *Still Point of the Turning World* and appropriated Indian rhythms with Mel Mercier in the piece *Crispy*. Jazz musician, Ronan Guilfoyle (2008) has toured, collaborated and recorded with South Indian musicians *Kanda*. The O' Snodaigh brothers from Irish ‘world music’ group, Kíla, have travelled to India to make a documentary about Irish-Indian musical links. 26 Further ramifications of these Irish-Indian imagined links can be heard in the arenas of world music (*Delhi 2 Dublin*) and New Age fusion (*Celtic Ragas, Sheila Chandra and Indo-Celt*). 27

### 3.4 Irish Orientalism

While perhaps it is easy to be cynical and dismiss Irish-Indian musicking as a modern phenomenon which represents an insatiable desire for novelty in a globalised

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25 Peadar O Riada is a composer, scholar, film maker and director of Cuíl Aodha choir. He is the son of Sean O’ Riada and has in many ways continued on the work of his father in his various projects.

26 In this documentary, the O’ Snodaigh brothers travel around India interacting with local musicians, both from the folk and classical tradition. Particularly vivid highlights include their interactions with folk musicians, whereas their performance with tabla maestro, Zakir Hassen, is perhaps ill informed and naïve. Ronan O’ Snodaigh confessed to me personally after the tour that he felt like a “monkey on a stage” in comparison to Zakir.

27 The idea of Celtic-Indian connections also has examples in the Scottish and UK traditional music scene *Milan, Alba and Mike Mc Goldrick*. 
world music market, the cultural links between India and Ireland have historical and political resonance which dates back to the 19th century and much earlier. Joseph Lennon explains how a tradition of Irish contact, both real and imagined, with what is commonly termed “the Orient”, has existed from the ninth century up to the present day. Long before it was treated as Celtic culture, Ireland was linked to the Orient. Lennon states that, “textual links between Celtic and Oriental cultures existed independently in native Irish and Gaelic culture as far back as Irish writing extends” (Lennon, 2008, x). The historical and literary manifestations of this connection have been explored elsewhere, in particular the sympathetic relationship between Yeats and Tagore. However, an imagined Irish-Oriental connection has existed far longer. Lennon argues that there have been “mythic links between Celtic and Oriental cultures since medieval times” (2003, p.129).

This tendency towards cultural synthesis is partly attributable to the enduring cultural influence of Ireland’s origin legends. The ancient and mythological beginnings of the Irish have been situated in the geographical area known as the Asian Steppes. These origin legends outlived their original, and ahistorical, context and remained in the Irish cultural psyche much longer than other, similar, European legends (Lennon, 2003). Throughout the course of Irish cultural history, this discourse has served as an important imaginative and allegorical realm for Irish writers and intellectuals, and, I would argue, has deeply influenced traditional music's evolving sense of identity. Drawing upon Peirce’s (1998) concept of synechism, in which an idea can travel within a culture over time, we can trace the course of Irish-Indian resonance as a cultural idea which informed the romantic developments of the Celtic revival and has subtly influenced Irish music for generations.

While a majority of definitions of Irish music state that it is European and dismiss any Eastern links, we must first consider that culture is defined in relationship to its Others. Said (1978) has famously described the Orientalist systems by which nations appropriate from Others to define themselves. The Orient then becomes an invention, “a creation with no corresponding reality . . . a structure of lies of myths” (Said, 1979, p. 5). Said suggests that the construct of the Orient and the Oriental, “has helped to define Europe as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience” (Said, 1979, 1-2). While Said focuses on Orientalism's construction of 'positional superiority', between the West and the East, within the Irish oriental aesthetic, the inversion of this is true. The Orient, rather than being denigrated as the barbaric and sensuous other, has
been an important imaginative and allegorical realm for Irish writers and intellectuals. Irish artists have drawn upon the ancient mystic image of the Orient to elevate and separate Irish culture from the tyranny of its colonial past and alleviate the “pathos of absence” of a continuous cultural tradition (Koch, 1987, p. 95). Lennon argues that this “may stem from Irish culture’s collective need for a certain and noble past in light of its uncertain present and future” (2008, p.61).

Imperial British texts had long compared Ireland with Oriental cultures in order to, as Lennon explicitly states, “textually barbarize Ireland” (2004, p. 52) and images of the barbaric Scythian ancestry of the Celt were often explicit in sixteenth and seventeenth century depictions of the Irish. At the same time, a more positive alternative model was applied to the origins of Irish culture which drew connections between the Phoenicians and the Celts. This connection, while also imbued with an Orientalist underpinning, rather than 'textually barbarize Ireland' it helped argue for an esteemed an ancient classical pedigree (Lennon, 2008).

3.5 Orientalism in Irish traditional music

This attempt to elevate Irish culture through Orientalist re-imaginings and affiliations with Eastern culture is further manifested in the first collections of Irish music. From the late 1700's until the beginning of the nineteenth century, revivalist and antiquarian impulses spurned the collection and preservation of native music within Ireland. In the rhetoric surrounding these collections, we can trace how Indo-Celtic origin legends persist. In many of these early collections, the ancient music of Ireland was ascribed mystical and classical attributes which found a mirroring in the musical systems of the Near East and the Indian Classical tradition. The music was used to demonstrate the noble antiquity of Irish culture, suggesting that “music was cultivated in Ireland when melody was scarcely known in other countries” (in White, 1998, p. 21). It was also infused with the sensuous characteristics of the Orient, namely emotion and passion. The use of minor scales, flattened sixths and other accidentals became seen as musical and emotional indicators of the ancient Eastern origins of Irish music. This had the effect of further distinguishing Irish music from the formality, logic and tonality of Europe and its colonial empires.

In Walker's *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* 1784, we are told that, “Irish music is, in some degree, distinguished from the music of every other nation, by an
insinuating sweetness, which forces its way extricably to the heart, and there diffuses ecstatic delight, that thrills through every fibre of the frame, and agitates or tranquilises the soul” (in White, 1998, p. 20). For some collectors, such as Petrie and Moore, this emotional resonance was also seen as reflection of the woes and oppression of colonial domination and in this way these early collections became infused with both politics and orientalist romanticism. During this era, Irish music “began to be determined by an attempt to rationalise and subsequently to polarize it as an outgrowth of antiquarian research on one side and as a coherent, politically informed expression of romantic individualism on the other” (White, 1998, p. 36).

A romantic, and yet subtly political, imagining of Irish-Indian musical affinity was also expressed in George Petrie's *Collection of the Ancient Music of Ireland* first published in 1855. He discusses three separate lullabies as bearing a striking resemblance to similar melodies from the East, and India in particular. In his reflections on an air *Seo Hú Leo*, he describes “its strong affinity to the lullaby tunes of the Hindostan and Persia” (1855, p. 106). Furthermore, he compares the mythological nature of the song, which relates to the Tuatha De Dannan, as further evidence of Asian links as it is connected with “a fairy legend, this affinity must be regarded with interest by those who trace such superstitions to an Eastern origin” (1855, p.106). Indeed, Petrie refers to these lullaby airs as belonging to an Eastern category adding that,

> such affinity with Eastern melody is not confined to the nurse tunes of Ireland, but that it will no less be found in the ancient funeral *coaines*, as well as in the ploughman’s tunes, and other airs of occupation- airs simple indeed in construction, but always touching in expression and I cannot but consider it as an evidence of the early antiquity of such melodies in Ireland (1855, p. 169).

In particular, harp music came to be seen as the last living remnant of an ancient and noble Celtic past and represented an, “intense nostalgic longing for a misplaced identity” (Ó Súilleabháin, 1992, p. 45). The Belfast harp convention in 1792, and the subsequent publishing of Bunting's *Ancient Music of Ireland*, marked another important transition of Irish-Orientalism into the realm of music theorizing. In Bunting's collection, several melodies are said to represent something of the old harp tradition of Gaelic court life. Micheál Ó Súilleabháin in particular, has compared these non-cyclical tunes with the modal improvisational model of North Indian Classical music. He argues that Bunting's manuscripts are evidence that the harping tradition in ancient court life “was not harmonically based at all but . . . found its logic in the melodic line itself” (Ó
Súilleabháin, 1999, p. 79). Ó Súilleabháin was significantly inspired by this interpretation to compose new material which explicitly drew upon Indian Classical music theory. This he argued was “a practical way of putting primary creativity back in the hands of the Irish harper” through channelling “a living musical system” and therefore, “heal a break in the oral tradition which occurred a century and a half ago” (1992, p. 46). Ó Ríada had used a similar understanding of North Indian classical music to re-invigorate the medieval harp culture. Ó Súilleabháin says, that one could, “[t]ranslate the sitar into the harp, and the Maharaja into the Taoiseach or Chieftain of the Irish clan, and the equation was set” (2004, p. 2). This type of imagined ancient connection has further been encouraged by links between Sanskrit and old Irish (Dillon, 1947; O Driscoll, 1982). In particular, Rimmer has discussed how the Irish word for harp, cruit, can also be linked with the Indo-European root ker, meaning bent or curved (1962, p.22).

Exotic images of the East, both in its music and mythology, have provided powerful symbols for Irish artists in response to the longing for an ancient unbroken cultural heritage. This was not restricted just to music and was most famously apparent in the literature of W.B Yeats. This Hiberno-Indian mythos also provided a counter hegemonic force against a shared colonial oppression of the Empire and entered into the stream of Celtic poetry indirectly through sensuous and sometimes, musical analogy. The infusion of Indian and Orientalist thought on the literature of the Celtic Revival has been well documented (Lennon, 2003, 2006, 2008) and need not be repeated at length here. It is important, however, to reflect on how musical orientalism influenced the Celtic literary revival. During this period, “the [Celtic] revival proclaimed music as a finite resource from the past, on the other side, this symbol of a dying culture was given new life as a literary trope of immense expressive fecundity” (White, 1998, p. 10). Indeed, Cousins suggests that so “subtly had the Aryan-influence intermingled with the Indian...that poets found their inmost nature expressed in Indian modes” (1922, p. 160). White argues that, this “cultural polarisation was of even greater consequence for music that it was for literature” (1998, p.7).

The musically infused poetry of the Celtic Revival provided what Kearney (1988) has called a “transitional narrative” between the static nature of the Irish tradition and the quest for a new cultural aesthetic. This could be described as an artistic and cultural transitional crisis between revivalism and modernism and the “intimacy between myth and history which underpin modern Irish writing” (White, 2008, p.5). In this way, India
was viewed as something of a spiritual mentor to Europe and Irish writers in particular
drew inspiration from their colonial cousins “through metaphysical elaboration,
mysticism and exoticism... as an “imaginative yet controlled possibility of an emergent
Ireland” (Lennon, 2006, p. 165-164).

3.6 Orientalism and Sean-nós

The syncretic literary vision of the Celtic revival, further perpetuated by dubious
anthropological and ethnomusicological references, has deeply influenced small pockets
of modern scholarship in espousing further connections between music from Ireland and
the East, particularly with the example of the Irish vocal tradition of \textit{sean-nós}\textsuperscript{28}. Again,
it was Sean O Riada who most famously posited this position, suggesting that ‘one
should listen to sean-nós like one should listen to Indian rag’. Bob Quinn's (1986) well
known \textit{Atlantean} films are an artistic exploration of this connection, albeit through the
lens of North Africa and the Mediterranean. His argument, developed in part from O’
Riada's comments from \textit{Our Musical Heritage}, suggests that there is a possible
maritime connection between Eastern Europe, the Mediterranean, the Arabic world of
North Africa, Spain and the West coast of Ireland (Quinn, 1987). Based predominantly
on anecdotal comparison, Quinn has argued for the uncanny similarities between vocal
traditions of a variety of Eastern and the melodic and ornamental style of sean-nós. For
example, as well as comparing sean-nós to the Muslim call to prayer he also describes
how he, “took examples of Connemara sean-nós as far as Tatarstan (Russian
Federation) and had it recognised by performers there as almost identical to their own. I
played Tatar sean-nós songs to Connemara singers; even they unanimously declared it
to be musically identical to their own” (Quinn, 2003).

O Laoire (2003) has described this trend to compare sean-nós with other Eastern
vocal traditions as an “insistent exoticisation” which “deliberately removes this kind of
singing from the real, and places it in one hermetic, ahistorical, timeless, category,
rendering it mysterious, eastern and non-European”. While O' Laoire argues that these
claims are highly exaggerated and despite “affinities of approach” it is not proof of
common origin. Importantly, he argues that this type of discourse is an attempt to
bestow a quality of superiority on the tradition of sean-nós and that “anyone making
external claims for similarities between... Eastern singing and the singing of the Irish-

\textsuperscript{28} Sean-nós (old song) is a traditional unaccompanied vocal form which is predominantly sung in the Irish language.
speaking regions of Ireland, is implicated in the discourse of Orientalism, however inadvertently” (O’Laoire, 2003). Quinn (2003) in a direct response to O’Laoire argued that,

 comparison is not similitude; one compares different objects in order to understand their nature better...seems to me a paradox that a body of research that clearly demonstrates the universal dimension of a form of folk art such as sean-nós singing could be dismissed as narrowly ‘nationalistic’ or as ‘exoticisation’(Quinn, 2003)

While I agree with Quinn's comments which advocate a universalist comparative musicology, it is undeniable that the lack of evidence of origins of Irish traditional music and Irish culture for that matter, before the 1600's has led to the creation of mythical histories and artistically imagined new cultural identities. It is dangerous to conflate myth making with actual history. Ladd (2002) who draws a similar hypothesis to Quinn's Arabic migration across the Atlantic, makes creative leaps of imagination and flights of rhetoric to support his argument. In particular, the Irish music tradition is used to support the antiquated and mystic notion of the Celt as the Oriental of the West.

the Celtic soul seems embodied most in Ireland’s traditional music, the roots of which are comfortably obscured in the mists of myth, legend and contrivance. Follow those tendrils and connections between Bedouin and North African oral traditions and druidic tripartism are revealed....and uncanny correlations between the Middle Eastern maqām and the modal and interpretive nature of native Irish music are unearthed (Ladd, 2002).

The main problem in many arguments suggesting Eastern links with Irish music is that most scholars only possess 'a superficial knowledge' of the music to which they are drawing comparisons. The Middle Eastern maqam to which Ladd refers is a highly nuanced and developed musical and aesthetic system, somewhat comparable to North India raga. Obviously in relating this ancient and esteemed musical system, Ladd is attempting to elevate the modal and rhythmically improvised nature of Irish traditional music. However, he does so unconvincingly. I agree that “to demonstrate the links between the music of North and South India, Persia, North Africa, Spain and Ireland would be a lifetime's work” (Feehan, 1982, p. 335). However, perhaps that would a lifetime misspent as the links, musically speaking may not be there.

Some scholars seem blinded by the light of a mystic neo-Celticism despite musical evidence which suggests that, “modern Celtic music . . . has no historical connection whatsoever in the music of the ancient Celts” (O’ hAullamurin, 1998, p.11). Feehan, argues that despite not knowing much about Indian or Arabic music, that she has “seen
and heard enough, however, to be convinced that there are links and even if some proof is lacking the suggestion remains tantalising” (Feehan, 1982, p. 335). This position is undermined by her own emotional appraisal of the loss of ancient Irish culture in comparison with the living rich tradition of the East when she says, “one cannot but reach the conclusion that those born on this side of the world have lost a very great deal” (1982, p. 335). In her anecdotal accounts of finding a comparison between raga and sean-nós song with an Indian professor of music, while Feehan is obviously excited by the idea, there is no mention of the raga’s name or a consideration of the fact that raga does not necessarily tell a fixed story, rather a raga is a constellation of musical affects which can be attributed multiple themes.

Somewhat more musicologically, Feehan has attempted to compare the slow air Mabhana Luimni to Indian raga presentation.

Like the Indian, the Irish singer uses whatever pitch is convenient. As in some ragas the great Irish songs revolve around three of four notes which recur again and again. “Marbhan Luimní” was composed, we are told, about 1635, but it is conceivable that the tune which circles like a culture over a corpse round the notes E flat, F natural, G natural, B flat, G natural, F natural, and E flat could be transformed by changing the rhythm and latering the pitch upwards a tone; the result, with a little imagination, could approach a raga style (1982, p. 334).

It is, however, with much more than a little imagination, that a rendition of a slow air could be constructed as raga style. In particular, a significant changing of rhythm and temporal considerations would need to take place for slow air to resemble a raga29. The rendition of a slow air in the Irish tradition would take several minutes while the performance of a raga may take several hours. Feehan however, argues that “it is in the interpretation of the melody, and chiefly with regard to ornamentation, that some of the most significant resemblances between Irish and Eastern music can be observed” (Feehan, 1982, p. 338). I suggest that perhaps the opposite is in fact true, namely that the approach to ornamentation and interpretation of melody is one of the most significant differences between Irish and North Indian classical music. For as herself Feehan admits,

The Indian quarter tone seems more predictable than those heard from a traditional Irish singer in Connemara. This would seem to suggest that raga is a consciously acquired means of communication whereas the singer of an Irish slow air will, within

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29 O’ Suilleabáin recounted (in interview, 15th April, 2014) a similar sleight of hand practiced by Ó Riada in espousing Irish-Indian vocal connections. In a lecture in University College Cork, Ó Riada apparently would play a sean-nós recording at half-speed on a tape player and then ask his students to identify where the music was from. When the students responded that it sounded like Indian music, he would adjust the tempo to reveal the true origin of the recording.
a short space of time, produce elaborate ornamentation entirely as the spirit moves him or her.” (1982, p. 334)

Here the spectre of O' Riada's own ideas loom large and also we are presented with a fundamental difference between Irish traditional music and Indian Classical music. While both use ornamentation and melodic variation, in Indian Classical music the theoretical frame for improvisation is explicit, elaborate and built upon completely different cycles of time and rhythm. While scholars frequently allude to the interpretation of melody and use of ornamentation as “the most significant resemblances between Irish and Eastern music” little detailed and sustained comparison has been achieved (Feehan, 1981, p. 338).

Cooper (2005) has explored the imagined North African and Mediterranean origins of Irish music, particularly the vocal tradition of sean-nós, in a more measured ethnomusicological perspective. While he draws the comparison between the ornamental interpretation of melody in Arabic magam with Irish music, he argues that, “it seems unlikely that it came about as a response to external influences such as those of the South Mediterranean; in fact it is probably symptomatic of the flexible approach to modality found in many European traditional musics” (2005, p.214). Importantly, he states while there are some musical similarities in approach to tuning and melodic variation, for Irish musicians, it is “certainly not a theorized practice”, the opposite is true for both Arabic and Indian Classical music (2005, p.214).

Feehan admits that while speculation “as to the Asian origin of Irish music surfaces from time to time: what is often posited depends on the predisposition of the enquirer” (1982, p. 333). Arguably, the disposition of musical inquiry is not constrained by academic critique. Taylor has documented that while many scholars of Irish traditional music, in seeking its origins, “have posited some sort of link between Oriental music and the music of Ireland . . . no one has produced any evidence, or even much of a discussion, mainly because origins can never be unambiguously known” (1997, p. 149). Thomas Moore described in 1843 in his review of Irish history, “how naturally the eye turns to the East, in any question respecting the origin of Irish antiquities” (1843, p.41). It would also seem that it is equally as natural for our ears to turn Eastward in trying to find a sympathetic origin myth for Irish music. Whether or not this origin is in fact a historic reality is almost impossible to discern.
3.7 Remember the future-performance and Irish-Indian music

The modern revival of Irish traditional music has become imbued with a subtle inversion of an Orientalist aesthetic of otherness which it has inherited from the proceeding century of musical collections, literary inventions and mythic histories. This idea became absorbed into the literary imaginings of the Celtic Revival and has continued to influence Irish music performance to this present day. O' Driscoll sympathizes and also resolves this dilemma when he argues that, “there is little evidence to substantiate this claim, but in seeking 'evidence' one is perhaps seeking the impossible. Music, by its very nature, is an evanescent art” (O' Driscoll, 1982, p. xii). Rather than viewing this as a theoretical cul-de-sac, perhaps it is an invitation to reconsider the boundaries of musical traditions. As Bhabha suggests, the “unsettling, advantage of this position is that it makes you increasingly aware of the construction of culture and the invention of tradition” (1994, 247).

The post-modern evolution of Irish traditional music and its many guises, especially the Celtic New Age, can also be viewed as an effort to connect with others “at the world’s edges” (Stokes & Bohlman, 2003, p.10) and a seeking of “a symbolic language in which the fragmented world [of Celtdom] could be reunited” (2003, p. 7). Taylor (1997) has explored how the idea of Irish-Indian shared heritage can be assumed or posited in musical practice. In analysing world music star, Shiela Chandra, who “uses folk and traditional musics as an instrument against modernity/ postmodernity” (Taylor, 1997, p. 151) we may see how the constructed idea of the oriental Celt is “representative of all peripheral and rejected cultures created out of the European experience and as being the European equivalent of the Hopi, the Apache, and the Aztec” (DeMarco, 1982, p. 519-520). Taylor argues that this is “music that exists for its own sake and doesn’t’ have to mean anything other than pretty sounds” (2004, p. 150). Taylor asserts that through Chandra’s “use of reverb... mystification [and] new age tendencies...the world is distanced in production” (2004, p.150).

Yet, Said himself has said that, “survival in fact is about the connection between things” (1993, p.408). Lennon has also explored how Irish Orientalist writings “frequently reflect more triadic structures in which a hybridity is immediately foregrounded” (2008, p. 167). Many of these Irish texts, either through appreciation of
other faiths, or the promotion of religious syncretism, promote pluralism and, most importantly, cultural and religious tolerance. Yazdija has explored how by embracing the hybrid, traditions may “reform their long held ideologies in light of a changing world, as well as to consider their work through alternative (non-Western) lenses, [this] is an essential practice in deconstructing the bindings of narratives-as-knowledge” (2010. p. 37).

Perhaps then true reverberations of the musicality of the Irish-Indian connection lie in the future rather than the past. Bhabha reminds us that the “power of the postcolonial translation of modernity rests in its performative, deformative structure” (1994, p. 346). Perhaps, it is within the post-modern performances and deformations of Irish traditional music in which the power of Ireland's postcolonial manifestations are most apparent. The performance of overt and subverted Indian musical undertones could be understood as postcolonial theory in construction. Further research into this field should therefore be performance based rather than purely historical and draw upon Melrose's (2002) concept of “critical meta-practices” to look at the theory producing nature involved in Irish-Indian musical exchanges. This type of arts practice research is a modest attempt overcome the “intimacy between myth and history” in Irish cultural narratives (White, 1998, p.5) and may begin to solve Kearney's crisis of 'transitional narrative' which still underpins so much of Irish cultural production.

Culture cannot be defined in abstract isolation, but rather must be seen within the context of its construction in relation to the Other. In this respect, I agree that the “quest for origins is a fruitless exercise” (Rowell, 1992, p.341) and invite us to explore Irish-Indian links as 'Third Space' which originates in the idea that “cultural practices construct their own systems of meaning and social organisation” (Bhabha, 1990, p. 209). This construction of meaning happens in a continuously liminal space of relationship between the cultural Self and the Other which Ó Súilleabháin might describe as, “the crossroads of becoming where the dynamic of cultural change is being generated” (2003, p. 192). The “creative working of outside ingredients has had a revitalising effect on traditional music...entirely new musical traditions have not just accepted passive acceptance but taken on new forms...[therefore] Irish music must be defined as encompassing all creative music making in Ireland” (Ó Súilleabháin,1981, p. 87).
I do not wish to perpetuate Orientalist stereotypes or subscribe to colonialist imaginings which would put “Indian music as the easternmost outpost of the ancient Indo-European world” (Rowell, 1992, p.340) but if we can consider western, and by this I mean Irish, music as ethnic music then it deserves to be studied with a method which accounts for hybridity rather than fights against it. Accounting for hybridity by accepting confluence “brings new light to bear on how we have become accustomed to hear, think and feel music” (Rowell, 1992, p. 340). A method which allows for hybrid possibilities should be one based on practice and actual music experience of the individual. For any change in a traditional music “is a continuous process . . . the result of many small steps rather than a few giant leaps...it is also a personal process, in which the big picture is made up of an almost infinite number of individual points of view” (Ahern, 1996, p. 15). It is only though the predominantly non-discursive manner of music making that the possibilities for Irish-Indian sympathies can be fully accounted. Hopefully, the following performance based research will begin to explore the extent of Irish-Indian musicking in practice.
CHAPTER 4

Performance based reflections on Irish-Indian musical sympathies

4.1 Practice based reflections

So far, this thesis has explored the issues of hybridity and Irish-Indian musical sympathies through a survey of relevant literature. However, the main argument of the preceding two chapters has been to vindicate a practice and performance based response rather than a predominantly literary one, to these issues. This research has already explored the limitations of a discursive and abstract theoretical approach to understanding musical hybridity in general. While drawing upon more traditional ethnomusicological scholarship, the following chapter is primarily informed by an arts practice research model where the individual interrogates their own artistic practice as site of experience and as a means of generating new knowledge. As outlined in the introduction, over the course of four years of this research, I have been using my own practice as a sarode player to explore the performance possibilities of Irish traditional and North Indian classical music. At the same time, my practice is an exploration of hybridity beyond the boundaries of Irish or North Indian classical music and is representative of my own quest for an authentic musical self, which I understand through the metaphor of the mongrel.

As well as learning Irish material in traditional manner, I have also taught North Indian classical music to ensembles of traditional music undergraduate students. In these ensembles, we explored the possibilities of improvisation with Irish tunes using the basic principles of North Indian classical music. Concurrently, through my engagement with my own “critical meta-practice” (Melrose, 2002), I began to unravel the multiple threads of my artistic narrative and attempt to integrate these into my playing on the sarode. Following on from the ensemble work with students in the

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30 Over the first two years of this research I facilitated an ensemble with BA traditional music students in the academy. This collaboration resulted in two performances in the academy an example of which is available at: https://soundcloud.com/welcometothemongrel/sets/third-space-ensemble-live-in Also see (Noone, 2016).

31 It is beyond the scope of this research to outline the full details of my own ‘critical meta-practice’ but generally speaking both cultural and musical elements of all of my previous musical experiences became integrated into the practical ‘studio’ element of the research. For example, I began to experiment with acoustic drones using a loop pedal to find an appropriate Irish drone equivalent with the Indian tambura. Naturally I also began to apply Indian classical raga theory of improvisation to Irish tunes which shall be explored more in the next chapter. In my performance analysis I also highlighted several techniques and textural qualities from my post-rock/ electronica experiences and which could be applicable to my interpretations of Irish melody. Beyond musical practices, which I would argue are in
Irish World Academy, I decided that it would be crucial to work with a smaller group of musicians to generate a major performance piece. To this end I was lucky enough to establish a musical relationship with renowned fiddle player Martin Hayes which resulted in an ongoing collaboration and a 2 week tour of India. This tour, its surrounding discourse and my own reflexive experience are the focus of this chapter.

4.2 A long way from Clare to here- the mongrel in India

![Figure No: 2.0 (The touring at the Taj Mahal, Agra)](image)

Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill are perhaps the most celebrated contemporary duo in Irish traditional music. Martin is an All-Ireland champion fiddle player and son of the legendary P. Joe Hayes who was a founding member of the great Tulla Ceili band. He learnt primarily from his father but was also greatly influenced by an older generation of musicians from Co. Clare including Paddy Canny, Martin Rochford, Junior Crehan and the renegade genius of Tommy Potts. He relocated to the U.S. as a young man and was exposed to a wide variety of music but has always maintained links to the Irish traditional canon and was awarded the prestigious Gradam Ceol in 2008. It was in Chicago that Martin met his main collaborator for the last 25 years, guitarist

themselves are an embodied knowledge, I engage with meditation practices from Zen Buddhism and the Bhakti tradition of India and also basic Alexander technique.

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32 I first met Martin Hayes at the Blas summer school for Irish traditional music in 2012 where I was attending under Paul Brady scholarship. Martin was immediately interested in my experience with North Indian classical music and I likewise was intrigued by the way he talked about Irish traditional music. I felt that the way he described traditional music could just as easily be applied to North Indian classical music. For example, at one point he was describing how each note, in a tune, is a whole universe.

33 Paddy Canny is considered one of the key figures in the so called East Clare regional style along with his brother in law and P.Joe Hayes. The classic reference of their playing is the Meet the All Ireland Champions ( ) Junior Crehan is a fiddle player and composer from West Clare. His style is often referred to as possessing the prized quality of draoiacht. For examples listen to The last House in Ballymackea (2006). Tommie Potts is an iconic figure of innovation within traditional music. His renditions of traditional melodies stretch the boundaries of traditional form considerably. Listen The Liffey Banks(1972).
Dennis Cahill. Cahill came primarily from a jazz background but with his minimalist and subtle aesthetic, is now regarded as one of the most innovative accompanists on the traditional music scene. As a duo, their approach to traditional music is stripped down and follows carefully constructed dynamic arcs in which several suites of tunes are intertwined to produce a musical gestalt. They have performed in major venues all across the globe, have released several successful albums and recently have been fundamental in the success of the Irish 'super group' the Gloaming.34

When I first heard Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill it was on a cassette. I had just settled in Ireland after years of sojourns to Kolkata to study Indian Classical music, and for me it was the first time I ever really appreciated Irish music. As I listened to the long passages of melodies which spiral upwards in ever increasing tempo and dynamic, I felt an affinity with the music because it reminded me of raga. For me, the slow airs worked like an alap (the melodic introduction of Indian Classical music) and then evolved slowly in tempo to the passionate abandon of reels, much like the dynamic arc of a typical Hindustani performance. The album was Live in Seattle, and I soon discovered that I wasn't the only one who heard this similarity to North Indian classical music. One reviewer described his experience listening to the album, “I was reminded of the rapport which builds up between pairs of virtuoso Indian musicians...a sitar and tabla performance, where the tabla acts as a supporting voice to the main instrument, and occasionally breaks out into solo extemporisations” (Mc Cormick, 1999).

Several years later I was lucky enough to meet Martin Hayes and discovered that we were living a few miles apart in East Clare and had a mutual interest in Indian classical music. I was fascinated to hear that Martin had a love for Indian classical music and had listened extensively to Sth. Indian violin maestro, L. Subramaniam.

*I would claim, in my own small way, to have been influenced by Indian music in the way that I construct medleys of music and the kind of trajectory and energy of them. I was quite taken by Indian music when I first heard it. I was also influenced deeply by the intentionality and the purposefulness of it and the obvious soulfulness and spiritual nature of the music. That has left a big mark on me* (in interview, 2015).

Through my contacts in India, I proposed to Martin the idea of organising a small tour across India, in particular for him to meet L. Subramaniam, and also to

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engage more deeply with the Indian classical tradition. Eventually, in December 2014, thanks to Culture Ireland and the Irish embassy, the idea became a reality and I accompanied Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill on their first ever tour of the Indian subcontinent. The concert formats featured Martin and Dennis as a duo, with myself joining them as a guest for several pieces, culminating in larger collaborations with local musicians. Performances were scheduled in large auditoriums and also much smaller halls and musical institutes in New Delhi, Bangalore, Chennai and Mumbai. The following ethnography will focus particularly on my own practice within the context of the collaborations as well as examining more detail of the performances and interactions in Chennai with veena player Karaikuddi Subramanian. Some reference will be made to performances from the whole tour but for a more thorough impression please watch the documentary which accompanies this text, *The Sound of a Country* by Myles O’Reilly.35

4.3 The 'tour'

![Figure No: 2.1 (final bow at Siri Fort Auditorium, Delhi)](image)

In a nutshell, the tour was a success. Critics and audiences were blown away by the heartfelt musicality of Martin and Dennis as a duo and responded positively and with great curiosity to my own approach to Irish music on the sarode. The larger collaborations, with piano, bansuri and tabla in Delhi/ Mumbai and with veena and mridangam in Chennai received positive reviews, national media coverage and standing ovations from audiences. The documentary about the tour continues to receive a wide audience online.36 Our funders were all happy with the cultural exposure we had provided for Ireland. Indeed, the project became something of a poster child for Culture

35 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8kPUDbEzck
36 At the time of writing the YouTube version of the film, *The Sound of a Country* had almost 10,000 views.
Ireland's success in cultural diplomacy and the film featured on their website and subsequent public events.

Yet the reality of the tour is much more complex. While the concerts may look and sound great and it seems like we are all having the time of our lives, which we usually were, the tour was also a large scale production dictated by factors of commerce and fraught with logistical difficulties. This element is not documented in the film and general media coverage of the events. While I agree that music is a social production (Merriam, 1964) it also is increasingly a commercial production. Before we even boarded our planes for India, there had been almost two years of planning and negotiating between dozens of promoters and organisations. Ironically, the amount of thought and time given to planning and administrating the tour far exceeded the amount of time given to the actual music making.

In this way, the tour could be understood to exist as its own entity before we arrived. Even before we started rehearsing the music, we would talk about 'the tour' as an actor itself in our collaboration. In this regard, 'the tour' is a character in this story as much as the actual musicians and the performances. For 'the tour' has demands. 'The tour' does not allow for slow organic interaction between musicians. The collaborations needs to put bums on seats to satisfy sponsors and promoters. The shape of ‘the tour’ is constructed months before the musicians even met. Therefore, the music has to be made to work in a short space of time. Rehearsals are timetabled just days and even hours before the already advertised event. Venues have been booked, sound and lighting paid for and tickets bought. Ultimately, 'the tour' has high expectations of its participants. The tour as a character, perhaps more than any single individual, deeply impacted on how we could make music and therefore placed certain constraints in pursuing my research questions. The demands of the 'tour' restricted the extent to which I could pursue the sympathies between Irish and North Indian classical music. It existed as a constant background character in the examination of my own practice and what makes these collaborations work. The way 'the tour' has been marketed and documented in the media, also reflects important perceptions of Indian and Irish culture and the ways in which music can be both a cultural and commercial commodity. The way the tour was 'born' also highlights the complexity of the relationship between the commercial and cultural exchanges of these performances and the important role of my own mongrelity as a mediating agent in these interactions.
4.4 A mongrel in the henhouse

There were several promoters on the ground in several cities in India trying to book dates for, Martin and Dennis as duo, the three of us as a trio, as well as and further collaborations with Indian artists. All of this communication took place via hundreds of emails while Aine Edwards, a Cork business consultant who is now based in Chennai, focussed on networking to procure further funds and/or corporate sponsorship for Chennai performances and the tour in general. However, we initially had a great deal of trouble booking dates in the National Centre for Performing Arts in Mumbai, which is a renowned Indian Classical venue. Partly, this was due to availability of dates and the slow communication channels between Indian bookers, myself and Aine. Interestingly, there was also some difficulty in promoting my own involvement with Martin and Dennis as a trio. Bookers were asking for images or video of the three of us (which didn't exist) and there was some discussion of the conservative nature of Indian audiences. Below is an email conversation with an Indian Classical promoter from Pune/Mumbai.

Dear Mattu,
I would also like one clarification at this stage. Will you be performing with the duo on the sarod for the proposed concert? Or are you only joining them for the recording project? Are there clips of you and them playing together which I could show my colleagues in Mumbai? Can you also give us an idea of the proposed programme? I must warn you that in Mumbai they generally tend to present straight-laced stuff. Look forward to your reply.
Very best, J.

Although the tour was originally to be billed as a trio, it soon became clear that as a professional level tour, which was seeking significant funding from within India, it made more sense to market the event as Martin & Dennis plus myself and other Indian musicians as guests. My mongrelity, in this respect, was a hindrance. I was neither Indian Classical or Irish traditional and an Australian just to confuse matters more. In terms of marketing and promoting the project to bookers, I was betwixt and between categories. Ironically, I was the exotic, the odd one out. Not only was I an exotic but I was perhaps a slightly threatening unknown- like a mongrel dog that might get in the henhouse and destroy all the hens. This difficulty was compounded by the fact that we did not have the required promotional material as a trio such as hi-res photos, recordings or YouTube clips. You can see in the initial image design for the tour (Figure No 2.2) that we had to be photo-shopped together, and not too successfully either. Despite our
collective musical abilities, we could not book shows as a trio. While subsequent promoters, *Pancham Nishad and Arts Interactions* in Delhi & Mumbai, *TommyJamms* in Bangalore and *Aine Edwards Consultancy* in Chennai, did not voice concerns such as those in the quoted email, there was a clear emphasis on Martin & Dennis as the traditional duo with myself to be added as a guest when was appropriate. It was also suggested early on that I take out my own reference to the mongrel in some of my biography and research descriptions.

Once the general vision of the tour had been agreed upon, there were daily email threads with questions to be answered about the details of format of the concert, bios to be re-written, new stage plans to be devised and financial and logistical questions to be covered. I worked closely with *Arts Interactions* and *Aine Edwards Consultancy* to devise a biography and press release which captured the tour (See Appendix 1). The promoters were adamant that a live photo be included for the main tour image and a great deal of time was spent trying to source something of hi-resolution quality. The management firm *Arts Interactions*, who have experience with both Indian classical and fusion concerts, suggested that Indian audiences would need to be sold the virtuosity and high profile of Martin and Dennis. As Martin and Dennis are almost completely unknown in India, as is Irish music in general, the tour's media image was geared towards catching the attention of classical audiences through dynamic images, striking

*Figure No: 2.2 (Initial draft design for tour image)*
quotes and energetic video clips of high profile live performances. The slow and mournful airs and gradual builds were not part of the marketing. Also, there was a great deal of attention to name dropping famous venues and people. In the biography, special mention is given to citing performances in America, Japan and in Australia at the Sydney Opera House and a quote from the Sydney Morning Herald is given as the main review, ‘one of the wonders of the musical world...transcendently beautiful playing’. The promoters were also constantly asking me for more information to put in the biography about high profile names they had performed for. Although only anecdotal and not part of Martin and Dennis's official biography, reference was made to their performances for President Barrack Obama and Paul Simon as it was felt that these were household names amongst the middle class Indian audiences we were trying to attract. Despite my discomfort in doing this, the promoters felt it was necessary to establish their international credibility to the 'new market' as relying on the music alone would not be enough. Focus was given to the quality of their musicianship, “beautifully etched playing” and also something of the somewhat spiritual or efficacious nature of their music which, “involves the audience and transports them into spirited atonement”(from press release). Some of this material was already in the Martin and Dennis bio, but from my own explicit aim of wanting to reach a classical audience and the local promoter’s interpretation of how best to do this, this particular approach to highlighting virtuosity and spirituality was taken.

Figure No: 2.3 (sample press image from Martin & Dennis's EPK)

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37 Here is an example of the clip used for promoting Martin and Dennis in India. 
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQNlye4BbAQ
Furthermore, an attempt was made to bridge the cultural gap through an explanation of my research topic. Without any of my own prompting or suggestions of material, the promoters did some cursory research into Irish-Indian links and paraphrased this notion as the opening section of the press release.

Comparison of European Celtic Culture with Hindu Culture shows large similarities between them. Language and words share Sanskrit roots. One of the world's great musical duets is touring Indian in December- from Ireland's Celtic Culture...The tour is an important part of research. Mattu is researching the links between Indian and Irish music. What are these links? It is hoped to find out more about these in India in December” (press release).

My contribution as a guest artist was attributed to a sort of mix between the two cultures combining the rhythmic drive of Irish music with the transcendental mood of Indian classical music, “joining them on tour is Sarod player, Mattu Noone, who adds to the irresistible rhythm of Irish music taking the audiences on an ecstatic musical journey” (Press release).

4.5 The water of life and the ‘gurus’ of Irish folk scene

Sponsorship was a significant element in getting the tour moving. Apart from Culture Ireland, the Irish embassy in Delhi supported the tour as well as multi-national company, Picard Richard who own Jameson Whiskey. This sponsorship was significant in its financial input into the tour and also reflected the unique commercial and cultural parameters of the performances. Martin and Dennis, as supported by Culture Ireland and the Irish embassy, have often represented Ireland as cultural ambassadors. In a commercial and diplomatic sense, their music, is a high quality cultural brand of Irish-ness. Jameson were very keen to be associated with this brand within their broader remit of promoting Irish culture, particularly Irish drinking culture, within the developing market of India.
Since the early 1990s Irish whiskey has undergone a major resurgence and has for over 20 years been the fastest growing spirit in the world... It is now a popular beverage in India, a country with a great taste for the ‘water of life’. Indian tourists are increasingly finding their way to Ireland, experiencing the folk life through nights of enchanting Irish folk music in the traditional bars. Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill have together had an important role in taking forward its revival into the 21st century. They are indeed ‘gurus’ of the Irish folk scene and Jameson has been keen to see them come to tour India, they having wowed audiences around the world (Tweedie, 2014).

This corporate sponsorship was devised as 'responsible cultural promotion' of Irish culture as part of the remit of Jameson Whiskey's business model within India. A three page document was created called a 'concept note' which formed the background of any press release or article that mentioned Jameson's sponsorship (See Appendix 2). It was also used as a pitch to the executive board within Pernod Ricard to secure funding.

In supporting this tour of India, Jameson Irish Whiskey are recognising the industry’s corporate responsibility to the bigger picture. This for Jameson is... also by supporting cultural and educational activities in the communities where they operate. Jameson support for the tour of India by Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill, leading lights of the Irish folk scene, falls into this latter category (from Jameson concept note, Tweedie, 2014)

However, despite Jameson's enthusiasm for involvement in the tour there was one problem. It was discussed that Indian Classical musicians and Indian Classical audiences could take offence at alcohol being associated with the events. It was decided for the sake of etiquette, that Jameson logos would not appear on backdrops, tickets or any official press release. This restriction was then circumnavigated by 'soft' promotion or cultural interest stories through social media and business magazines, websites and newspaper. The promoters further drew connections between drinking culture, particularly that of whiskey, Irish traditional music and the Eastern origins of the Celts.

Hayes and Cahill are renowned across the globe for the excellence of their interpretation of folk music in the modern world. In Ireland, this folk music has been traditionally associated with the ‘water of life’, whiskey. It is believed that it was the Irish religious community, the monks that brought the technique of distilling back to Ireland from their travels to the Mediterranean countries around 1000 CE. For centuries it was the Irish pub that often brought the community together to sing their folk stories, and often the songwriters brought in the place of the ‘water of life’ (Tweedie, 2014)
The connection between music and drinking within Irish culture is a large part of cultural rhetoric. Drinking itself is seen to be an Irish trait (O’ Dwyer, 2001, p.199) and the environment of the pub is seen as the natural home of the music. Jameson was cashing in on this association and trying to find a way to justify this to the emergent drinking culture of India. This was highlighted in songs (See APPENDIX 2) as an example or justification of alcohol being central to Irish culture and was further exemplified in one of our concerts taking place in an Irish 'super pub' in Chennai. A unique Irish-orientalism, somewhat akin to diffusionist Bob Quinn's (2005) Atlantean theory, was at the fore here in the explicit reference to the Eastern origins of distilling in the Mediterranean. This is a similar trope of Irish-orientalism in which musical connections serve as a subversive use of the East as symbol for a noble, ancient and classical culture (Dillane & Noone, 2016). In a further subversive, yet undeniably opportunistic sleight of hand, the Jameson concept note connected the 'monks', 'the music', and the high culture of whiskey. The document stated that, "Celtic music had first come to Ireland around the time of the arrival of the distilling process brought by the monks. Some of its roots are in the music of the East, brought by the Celtic migration that took the music into Europe" (Tweedie, 2014).

In an even more subversive twist, the document suggested that perhaps Irish-Indian connections was not one way traffic, arguing that while the Celts may have brought music to Ireland,"a similar migration took the music into south Asia"(Tweedie, 2014). In this way, an appropriation of my own research and blatant Irish-Orientalism were used as a cultural bridge for marketing the tour. The promoters referred to my own research and the tour, "as an opportunity for people living in India to share this exploration”. The concept note also recapitulated Indo-European linguistic connections describing that there was, "research already indicating the links between Sanskrit and Irish Gaelic (‘Veda’ and the Gaelic ‘Vid’), this further research should show that it is not only the roots of the words that are shared, it is the sounds of the music". A summary of these concepts was reproduced in the tour Facebook page suggesting. “It’s this music that Jameson Whiskey invites you to enjoy. Clearly,

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38 Although India has a “reputation as a country with a culture of abstinence especially in matters regarding alcohol it is undeserved”. (Prasad, 2009, p. 17). Prasad describes how, especially amongst the growing young urban middle class, India “is fast shedding its inhibitions about alcohol as a lifestyle choice” and even “Bollywood films now glorify alcohol where the good guys drink” (2009, p. 17). Importantly for Jameson, 95% of India's alcohol consumption is spirits, hence Guinness declined to sponsor the tour.
whatever 'this' music could be was already in part defined by the promotional concept of the tour and the re-imagining of Irish-Indian sympathies in a performance context.

The other musicians were perhaps not so acutely aware of the commercial and marketing mechanics on the tour. However, as I was playing multiple roles within the tour (e.g. fundraiser, tour agent, booker, promoter, graphic designer consultant, accommodation and travel logistics and sometime performer) the complicated realities of making the project happen were all too clear. These realities were at times hard to accept and, in the case of the corporate influence, also troubled my conscience. However, out of necessity I had to make peace with this aspect of our inter-cultural exchange and concede that professional music making at this level perhaps always requires compromise and collaboration with larger institutions.

4.6 In-between worlds: the mongrel as Third Space

While the promotional, logistical and managerial aspects of the tour became an uneasy part of my performance practice, this was further compounded by the problematic definition of my role within the tour itself. I was neither a manager, producer or tour promoter, although involved in many of these aspects by default. Furthermore, I was neither an Irish traditional nor Indian classical musician. I was the in-between, the cultural conflux, what I describe as the mongrel or what Krebb has called 'an edge walker’ an individual who “can discard membership without shedding...
cultural traits” (in Chang, 2000, p. 23). This ambiguity proved a challenge for booking and promoting shows with promoters in India, as has been discussed earlier. However, without my involvement and my unique multiple “cultural affiliation” (2000, p. 23) arguably the tour would have been unlikely to ever have taken place. The whole concept of the tour, introducing Irish music to an Indian Classical audience, required an intimate performance knowledge of both worlds. Rather than being a hindrance, my multiple marginality proved a great asset as Martin recognised,

the best practitioners in any realm are probably the ones who are 100% devoted to that...[but] there are the marginal figures with feet in different worlds like Dennis [Cahill] for example, Tomas [Bartleet] is like that, and you would be like that... in that same way...it’s a valuable skill area... you can more easily see things that can be brought from one world into the other than I can. That was a very important part of making this functional( Martin Hayes in interview, 2014)).

Another ‘edgewalker’ between North Indian classical music and the West, George Harrison, described himself as a 'conduit' between East and West.39 While I can empathize with this analogy, I am suggesting that my role was not this smooth. The role of the mongrel is a lot more convoluted. A conduit implies passage between two clearly identified worlds. This binary imagining of culture does not represent the reality of an individual’s experience within multiple cultural frames. In Martin's description of having 'feet in different worlds' we are directed towards the complex multiple sites of knowledge within the somatic world of mongrel musical individuals. I am reminded of the analogy of the Vedic tree of knowledge which roots draw upon different streams of knowledge yet it all feeds the one centre organism (Arapura, 1975). While, within this collaboration, the focus was on two distinct musical cultures, in reality my own practice is more diverse and also draws upon post-rock, free jazz, Buddhist, percussive, and electronic aesthetic paradigms. One aspect of my own practice which I inherited from the Hindustani tradition, namely the reverence and practical deification of the instrument as an entity in itself, also featured as an important connector. “While the major success of the program depended on the brilliant musicianship and experience of Marin and Dennis, on a subtler level, it was also because of the fact Sarod as an Indian instrument made a connection between the two music-cultures”(from interview KSS, 2015)

39 George Harrison member of the Beatles, was instrumental in the great 'sitar explosion' of the 1960's after he spent time studying with Ravi Shankar in India. His use of the sitar in Beatle's recordings has been well documented in Farell’s Indian music and the West (1997, pp 168-200).
The sarode, acted as an external representation of my own hybridity, it was a “kind of half-way house... that kind of helped bridge us...at least sonically into that world” (Hayes in interview, 2015). Martin also half-jokingly referred to my presence on stage as a trio as a sort of 'calling card' to Indian audiences. “To have you on the stage with a sarode...was also sort of a calling card...kind of a...'Hey, don't be afraid of us...(laughter) Check this out! You know...look...we gotta a sarod!' We're not too strange....you know...look...doesn't it sound a bit Indian? Try? We're curious, we're tolerant ... so I mean, it had that as well” (ibid, 2015). My hybrid instrument became a Third Space of musical action between the perceived margins of Irish and North Indian classical music culture. This instrument, which is uniquely designed and made for playing Irish music, was even named after me by one interviewer for Chennai Live FM. "Matthew Noone, who is using what we will now call the Noone Sarod. You heard it first here on Chennai Live, if you ever hear about the Noone sarod again well this is where it started on Chennai Live FM" (from the film Sound of a country). This suggests that, not only individuals, but musical instruments themselves offer a potential site for inter-cultural collaboration. Instruments such as my sarode, represent an “inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity” (Bhabha, 2006, p.157) and through performance, culture is ‘resinscribed’ (Derrida, 2004).

Dennis described a similar pattern of an instrument representing a Third Space of enunciation with genre straddling fiddle player Coamhin O' Raghliagh. Dennis actually used the metaphor of a 'gateway' to describe the role of instrumentation in hybrid music. He explained that in making good inter-cultural collaborations that, “there are gateways with it. You know, for instance, Coamhin using a sort of a hybrid hardanger fiddle, is completely different yet it fits the tradition...cause he makes it fit the tradition” (in interview, 2014). An important reflection here, is the way Dennis alludes to the importance of the flexibility to experiment yet still keeping within a tradition. This is an idea that has concerned me for many years in my development as a sarode player performing within and also outside of the Indian Classical tradition. The question of authenticity for me, is not about purism but as Dennis suggests “more about keeping the concepts which make it the tradition, holding it together...and knowing what you're bending” (ibid, 2014). Importantly, as KSS recognised, some musicians have this opportunity more than others, “the young and the bold musicians with giftedness

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40 Coamhin is a member of the Gloaming as well as being involved in several other traditional, jazz and experimental musical projects. Described by one reviewer as “the link between Martin Hayes and Purple Haze”
are freer to explore to further their own interests in music” (in interview, 2015). Martin also recognised the important role of individuals who can combine different elements within a tradition are to the musical evolution. He described how,

people with feet in different worlds are an important glue for that...they always have been...even back in the early 70's of Irish music⁴¹...they were all outside...they were all makers of glue, you know...that could pull different elements in and connect them, you know...So, the marginal transitional figure in Irish music plays a role.

Not only was I translating Irish music onto the sarode but I was also responsible for interpreting Indian classical music for Martin and Dennis. In my own field notes I described my role “as interpreter or wing man for Dennis and Martin and making sure they were in the groove” (FN 2014). In an interview with Martin and I discussed my in-between role.

Matthew: “I was in a funny position of being in-between...
I really felt it when we with Karaikddi, you know...it was like literally you and Dennis on one side and Karaikuddi on the other...and you're in the middle...”

Martin: “Well...I mean...you knew enough of their language

Matthew: “Just enough...”

Martin: “Well, you knew enough to be able to interact with them...and to make it possible for me and Dennis to even begin to feel comfortable...you know that was part of the game was just finding a comfort level of playing...you were kind of essential there and I realised that we could have had some very awkward moments if you weren't there because you were the only one who could translate both languages. So, you were able to tell Karaikuddi what was happening. You were also able to tell Dennis and myself what was happening...and you also knew where our limitations were....in terms of comprehending that.... just having that dialogue ” (in interview, 2015).

⁴¹ Martin here is referring to the influence of Balkan and Eastern European music in groups such as Planxty featuring Andy Irvine, Donal Lunny and Johnny Moynihan.
4.7 Chasing the Squirrel

Chasing the Squirrel, or more accurately Hunting the Squirrel, is a simple jig of English origin which has been subsumed into the repertoire of Irish traditional music. This melody was the final piece in a collaborative performance with South Indian veena player, Professor K. Subramanian after a five day residency in his music institute called Bhraddvani in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The name of the tune represents a resonant analogy for our quest for inter-cultural musical sympathy. Over the course of our residency, we had an extensive itinerary of interactions, workshops, lectures, cultural tours, media interviews and three scheduled concerts. While we immediately enjoyed and respected each other's music, it took hours of talking, listening, translation, negotiation and compromise to come up with something worthy of putting on a stage for the final performance in the Egmore Museum. Over the course of our residency, and even in the final performance itself, there was a tangible sense of 'chasing' or sometimes more deliberately 'hunting' that evanescent quality that marks a satisfying musical collaboration.

While we had some previous experience in Delhi of working with Indian musicians, this encounter was different as the musicians we worked in Delhi and later in Mumbai were young and well versed in cross-cultural 'jam sessions' as they described them. The time frame for this collaboration was much longer and the expectation was higher due to the residency and also because the Madras Music Season was underway.

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42 https://thesession.org/tunes/3333
43 Excerpts of these collaborations are available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iMx0ioJKL6U & https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=irxTkCG5YPo
when we arrived. Martin was acutely aware of the difficulties involved in exploring a collaboration in an in depth way.

it’s actually tricky enough because Indian music has a very very unique structure and kind of set of rules that have evolved and developed over a very very long period of time. And they've got complicated rhythmic patterns and structures, much more complex than ours and also they have a kind of set of rules around scales, and many scales and ascending and descending scales and all that. So, it’s quite complicated (interview, 2015)

However, after our initial collaborations in Delhi, Dennis was upbeat about the sympathies between the two musics, suggesting that, “in an odd way, it’s very similar...the concepts are very similar to Irish music. It's about phrasing, a bit of improvisation and mainly in the rhythms and the approach...the instrumental approach towards it...there's rules but they're bendable” (interview, 2014). On the very first night of our stay in Chennai, we were introduced to some of the complicated 'rules' of the Indian tradition by our host Karaikudi S. Subramanian and began the process of discovering which, if any, were 'bendable'. The professor talked to us for a long time about the spiritual nature of sound and Indian classical music philosophy. From the beginning of our initial communications to organise the tour, the Professor espoused the spiritual nature of music as the gateway for our collaboration and this was manifested in a spiritual text which he had sent to me (Appendix 3). He performed for us some pieces which he thought could serve as the basis for our collaboration, weaving together the spiritual text in Sanskrit with three different ragas which co-related to the bava (mood) of each text. Despite the undeniable beauty of the pieces, it was hard even for me, to latch onto any repetitive melody or familiar scale structure as the renditions, which were still short by Indian standards, took at least 30 minutes. I wondered how we were going to make this collaboration work and I realised that there would be a need for some serious simplification and translation of these ideas into something approachable from an Irish traditional music perspective.

44 The Chennai (previously known as Madras) music season is a six week event hosted every December–January in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. The traditional role of the Music Season is to allow aficionados of Carnatic music to appreciate performances by renowned artists, and also to allow promising young artists an audience. It is argued that it may be the largest music festival in the world, with a total of around 1500 individual performances by various renowned and amateur artists.

45 Karaikudi Subramanian, or The Professor, as we affectionately called him, is a ninth generation musician from the Karaikudi Veena Tradition. He is one of the senior most performers and teachers on the Veena and also held an academic post in Madras University before leaving to run his music academy. He is steeped in tradition yet also has a deep intellectual, philosophical and spiritual understanding of Carnatic music.
Martin described his own feelings in a personal interview after the tour, explaining that “it sounded like at first with Karaikuddi we were heading for a world of dense complexity and I was just like thinking, ‘Oh my God....I'm going to be exhausted by the time I get out of Chennai because i don't know if I can digest all of this stuff in one go” (interview, 2015). Despite my own love and rudimentary knowledge of both musics, it was hard not to notice the polarity in the two musical approaches from the first evening’s examples. How could we begin to make a collaboration which went deeper than a 'jam session' when the three fundamentals of the two musics (melody, rhythm and improvisation) seemed entirely at odds with each other?

4.7.1 Irish-Indian Sympathies and Divergences: Melody

McNeill states that, “the most immediate thing that confronts performers involved in cross-cultural collaborations, is the degree of difference that is felt between their respective musics” (2007, p.7). Dennis contemplated that although the two musics were quite different, it was only a matter of scale, stating that, “the similarities are in the concentration of the rhythm and the melody. What's different is the scale of the rhythm [and] Indian scales are larger”(interview, 2014). Undoubtedly, Indian melody operates on a much grander scale than Irish traditional melodies. Yet the difficulties that we encountered were not just a matter of volume of material but, an fundamental understanding of these basic building blocks of performance. Utsav Lal, who has experience with both Hindustani and Irish traditional music described that, “the whole base of the music is slightly different” (in interview, 2014).46 As Utsav suggests, in particular the melodic basis of the musics are quite different. From that very first evening of interactions in the Professor's office, it became apparent that we had very different perspectives on what actually even constituted a melody. Martin tried to find some comparison between Irish melody and the melodic structure of rag. He described that, Irish music was:

basically centred around melody which is a little bit akin to the rag here but it's not quite the same. The rag is like a set of instructions to work with, in some ways, but our melody is quite specific....They have a capacity to kind of slowly evolve and develop or the more you can repeat the melody without changing and then at a certain point when you do make a change it becomes more significant. So, it's a subtle movement in the melody but it's melodically based (in interview, 2015).

46 Utsav is a talented piano Indian piano player who plays, jazz, western classical,, Indian Classical and Irish traditional music. He also has released the first ever album on a new instrument called the ‘fluid piano’ which can play microtones. In August 2016 he was invited by Martin Hayes to perform at the Kilkenny Arts Festival and the Master of Tradition Festival in Bantry, Co. Cork. I also had further performances with Utsav during this tour.
The melodic basis of Irish music was much harder for the Indian musicians to grasp than we initially imagined. We spent considerable time in Chennai exploring Irish melodies as an ensemble, both jigs and reels, particularly in the key of D minor which were more suited to my sarode and also worked with the veena tuning. Yet they proved elusive to master. Martin described his surprise when he says,

*I think it was quite difficult for them to just comprehend the tune. Which was kind of a shocking thing for me to realise...like, it took me a while to realise that they weren't really hearing this as I had saw...I thought Irish music was so simple. I thought it was one of the simplest forms in the world and anybody could just...grasp it immediately* (in interview, 2015).

Likewise, Martin and Dennis found it difficult to pick up an Indian composition. In fact, throughout the entire tour, we only performed one Indian composition as an ensemble, a melody based on *Rag Dhani*.47 This was in fact, what I believed, a fairly simple composition that I had begun teaching to Martin prior to our tour. The lack of fixed, short, and readily identifiable melodies in Indian Classical music made our collaboration process more difficult. Despite watching concerts and having melodies broken and down explained to us, by day three of our interactions with the Professor, we had actually produced very little evidence of material for a collaborative performance and had not actually decided on what compositions or melodies we would play as an ensemble.

Martin Stokes, although working with Irish and Turkish musicians, has an astute observation as to the reason for this difficulty in melodic sympathy. He describes how, “the intervallic and modal structure of [Turkish] music revolves around small groups of tones and non-tempered intervals, whereas that of Irish music is equally tempered, rapidly performed and covers a wider range” (Stokes, 1994, p. 110). A similar generalized comparison could be made between Irish and North Indian classical music. For our final performance as an ensemble in the Egmore, I facilitated a necessary process of distilling all the suggested melodies and compositions until we arrived at simple pieces that we could all understand. The Carnatic gat was in a pentatonic scale and matched somewhat the simple D minor reel *The West Clare Reel*. Martin described this performance decision as, “we can find the simpler melodies that give them the freedom to float on top and interact with solos if they wish, you know” (in interview,

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47 Pentatonic minor Sa, ga, ma, Pa, ni, Sa this features in the Delhi performance.
This was more or less the template for all of the ensemble performances with Indian musicians on the tour, simple Irish melodies, either jigs or reels in D minor, with small inclusions of Indian melodies.

While we did engage with a Carnatic composition in our performance in the Egmore museum in Chennai, we did not even begin to learn the movement of the raga and only really caught a small refrain of the actual composition as it proved too difficult to learn in the short time provided. Martin described his experience trying to learn Carnatic music as 'mind boggling'.

_These ascending and descending scales that are both different is just like . . . just kind of a mind boggling idea for me, you know. (laughs) And coupled with some big complex rhythm pattern, you know. I’m going, oh my god, like I don’t know how they can internalize that at all and it’s hard for me to see where the connections are _in interview, 2015_.

Repeatedly, my role was to find where the connections where even when the other musicians could not see them. However, the difference between Irish and Indian melodic structures seemed at first to be an impassable obstacle. Martin described how, “As soon as you begin to examine it, they look like an impossible combination to actually put together because...because like...the melody almost doesn’t exist in Indian music as we know it... and in Irish music there really only is the melody, if the truth be known” _in interview, 2015_. Despite Martin's description, which is in one sense correct, arguably North Indian classical music is all about melody. As Wade explains this, the use of _alap_ (the unmetered introduction to raga performance) asserts the “primacy of melody in the hierarchy of music elements in the Hindustani tradition” (2009, p.141).

This divergent approach to melody was not just a problem between the Irish and Indian musicians. Within the genre of Indian classical music there is also a very big difference between Hindustani and Carnatic approach to melody. For example, when I began to work with the Professor on raga for a possible classical collaboration, it became clear that even though we took the same rag (*Rag Kirwani*) which is from the Carnatic tradition originally, we had very divergent techniques and melodic phrases. I finally suggested that we drop this piece as I could see that it wasn't going to work and
that we focus on finding an Irish melody that could work in sympathy with one of the Professors raga based compositions. A divergence of melodic understanding is not necessarily a cross-cultural phenomenon but also is a difficulty within the same genre.

Ultimately, the resolution of melodic difference in musical collaborations depends on the experience and mode of operation of the individual musicians involved. On this tour, the presence of my mongrelity was a essential factor in helping to establish melodies that would be digestible to the various musicians. Likewise, Martin was also quite good at realizing which melodies might work from the Irish tradition as he has many years of experience working with musicians from various traditions.\textsuperscript{48} However, this process often meant finding simpler melodies that could be most easily learnt in a short space of time, and even then, it didn't always necessarily work. This is because melodies are much more than a simple combination of sequenced pitches in time. Melodies serve different functions in different musical traditions and have different intrinsic rhythmic structures designed to realize differing musical intentions.

4.7.2 Irish-Indian sympathies and divergences: rhythm

![Figure No: 2.7 (Krishnamurthy and Karaikudi Subramanian, accompanied by Usha on tanpura, performing at the Egmore Museum, Chennai)](image)

Perhaps the most notable degree of difference and difficulties in exploring Irish-Indian melody is rhythmic rather than melodic. North Indian rhythmic structure or \textit{tala}, unlike in Irish music, is not strictly tied to the melody. Irish traditional music is perhaps inherently rhythmic. Martin stated that, while “Irish music at its core, has a depth of

\textsuperscript{48} In recent years, apart from his work with the Gloaming, Martin has increasingly collaborated with musicians from around the world including classical quartets such as \textit{Brooklyn Rider} and \textit{Brodsky Quartet}. He was worked with baroque musician \textit{Jordi Saval} and also is developing new work with English folk groups such as the \textit{Unthanks}.}
melody, it is rhythmic in interpretation” (in interview, 2014). The Professor also interpreted Irish music in a similar way. He articulated that Irish melody is infused with rhythmic pulse, what he an “intrinsic rhythm which effortlessly blend[s] with the melodies” (in email communication, 2015). In contrast, the tala, both in North Indian classical music, is designed to offer a cyclical space for improvisation and is not for dance, ‘lift’ or groove. While Irish scholars, such as Ó Súilleabháin (1990) and O’ Riada (1982), have argued for the primacy of cycles in both Indian and Irish music forms, the form and fundamental nature of these cycles are completely different. Indian classical music is framed in cyclical patterns which range from a 3 beat up to a 128 beat cycle and all sorts of wonderful deviations in between. These cycles, unlike the rhythms of Irish music, are not related to the melody as such and offer a continuous framework for extended melodic improvisation. Whereas, while one could argue that Irish music is intrinsically melodically based, its rhythms are inherently built into the tunes. These fundamental differences of rhythm provided understandable difficulties in our collaborations. Martin confessed that, “Dennis and myself were completely bamboozled by the counting that was going on.... I realised no matter how gracious they were in showing you...I knew that this was not going to be two days’ work. This is like two years’ work” (in interview, 2015).

Indeed, I was also encountering difficulties with the Indian compositions that KSS was attempting to teach us as they were Carnatic in structure, which rhythmically differs significantly from my experience with North Indian classical music. On day three of our residency I suggested that we work on a classical piece to perform together as a sort of North & South Indian collaboration and also as a way to get more comfortable with the material he wished to work on with Martin and Dennis. It took a great deal of “noodling” as I described it in my field notes. Even after settling on a raga which I was familiar with and also was common to both traditions, it took over an hour before KSS and I managed to even find some common ground in approaches to improvisation. I found that we had different rhythmic phrasings and constructs of melody. It was hard to discern whether this was stylistic or matter of repertoire and lineage.

49 Stokes has explored this with Macedonian music...despite a certain familiarity with Balkan rhythms...the slower speed of Macedonian music “made the complex irregular rhythms actually more difficult for the Irish musicians to perceive” (1994, p. 110).

50 The raga we attempted to work on was common to both South and North Indian classical music- RAG Kirwani- Sa, Re, ga, ma, Pa, dha, Ni, Sa.
I began to feel that a percussionist would greatly help with the collaboration as our initial interactions had been limited to working with melodic passages and exercises with a lot of theory but not concrete melody or structure. It had been very difficult for Martin and Dennis to catch any repetitive motive in KSS's ideas and I sensed that percussion could at least add a 'groove' that Martin and Dennis could work off. At this stage, serendipitously, the Professor's 'uncle', Karaikudi Krishnamurthy, who is a world renowned mridangam player, called into the office in Bhraddvani. We discussed the idea of him joining us for the performance. I became greatly relieved at this inclusion as, despite Irish music being melodically based, I knew that Martin and Dennis would not grasp Indian melody in the short time provided. I hoped that through the primacy of rhythm that we might find a clearer synergy.

However, the inclusion of Indian percussion, especially in working with Irish melody also proved problematic. As Martin candidly stated, in reference to both the percussionists that we worked with, that “it was kind of hard to tell what they were doing...they weren't hearing this A part of the tune and this rotation at all. They were looking for different measurements They wanted to measure the whole thing over say, five rotations of a jig and literally count that, I think” (in interview, 2015). What the percussionists were in fact most likely doing was using Indian rhythmic cycles which are much longer than the 8 bars -16 bars of a traditional tune. Likewise, the mridangam and tabla players sometimes chose to use shorter, more folk orientated rhythms which did not clearly synchronise with the different parts of the Irish melody. In particular, this was evident in our first collaboration in Delhi and it caused some amount of friction in rehearsal and the performance. As Martin described, “It was a little contrary thing, especially for the percussionist. Who suddenly...I think everything...previously was...was...counted in its structure and they didn't have to analyse the notes of the scale but I was asking them to kind of hear the melody of the jig repeating....that was not registering at all” (in interview, 2015). Indeed, the tabla player in the Delhi collaboration told me candidly backstage that Irish music was boring and that every tune sounded the same, which became a justification for his lengthy unplanned solo improvisations.

51 As well Krishnamurthy on mridangam in Chennai, in Delhi and Mumbai we worked with tabla player Aditya Kalyanpur.
This disjuncture in rhythmic approach was also apparent in our excursions into Indian classical repertoire, in both our collaborations. As mentioned previously, in Delhi we performed one Indian classical compositions based on Raga Dhani. It seemed that the main difficulty was not the melody but the rhythmic structure of the melody. The composition was divided in a twelve beat cycle called, ektal. But the division of those twelve beats is 2,2,2,2, it was not 6 or 12 or three or even a groove of four which was troubling for Dennis.\(^{52}\) Dennis explained in an interview for the Chennai times that he understood before the tour that rhythmically the Indian experience was going to be a challenge. As an accompanist, Dennis has often described how he takes his inspiration in Irish music from dancers. Naturally, before coming to India, Dennis began to listen to tabla players however, this proved a humbling experience.

\[I \text{ listened to various..various players before getting here so that before we could some of this I could understand exactly how much I don't know...and avoid doing that. It's very interesting. It's a whole different approach to music. It takes a lot of getting used to...playing lots and listening lots}'' (in Chennai times, 2014).\]

\[\text{Figure No: 2.8 (Karaikuddi and Martin at the Egmore Museum, Chennai)}\]

In our performance in the Egmore museum, the difficulties of finding rhythmic sympathies were highlighted when we played a Carnatic piece which involved some structures for improvising. Martin and Dennis relied heavily on my verbal cues to keep in time with this piece. The following extended excerpt from my field notes illustrates the performative manifestation of the rhythmic divergences between the two musics.

\(^{52}\) Dennis had in fact downloaded a tabla app on his phone to try and come to terms with this rhythm.
the mridangam plays a tihai\textsuperscript{53} which Martin and Dennis cannot recognize, which is the cue for us to join in the next section of the raga. I start to tap my foot and through visual cues, let Martin and Dennis know that our mukra\textsuperscript{54} or riff is approaching. KSS continues to play a relatively fixed composition over the rhythm while we catch a short mukra at the end...Martin and Dennis had not fully internalised the rhythm cycle and had found it difficult to identify the sthayi\textsuperscript{55} and antara\textsuperscript{56} sections of the composition...So, my job was to keep track of the composition and also the give clues for the mukra...at times I felt not really in the music as I was keeping half of my awareness on whether Martin and Dennis were catching the mukra at the right time and also where KSS was in his improvisation...”

It is a testament to Martin's respect for Indian classical music and also his intuitive approach to performance that he did not try to launch into an Indian style improvisation or give any pretence that he had mastered Indian rhythmic cycles in the short time available to us. It also points to the somewhat intellectual nature of Indian classical music, particularly for a percussionist. This intellectual and mathematical approach to rhythm is, in many ways, the antithesis of the lineage of Irish music to which Martin is connected. In my questions around this difficulty with rhythms, Martin suggested that,

\textit{you have to distinguish me from the rest of Irish musicians in respect to this cause like (laughs) because like, it had been quite common for Irish musicians, for example, to play difficult time signatures or untypical ones for example like Bulgarian rhythms or you know Serbian...you know from that part of the world...so some musicians are good at getting comfortable with that. So, I'm probably not equipped as well as some younger musician now might be to do that. I'm equipped more like Junior Crehan going to India almost, you know. I have a little more capacity to merge into things or twist thing around, you know, I can be free with it but like, I can only let my body be free in the rhythms that I know (interview, 2015).}

However, I am not suggesting that we should understand this divergence of rhythm through a hierarchy of complexity, with Indian classical music necessarily trumping all other music. Western musicologists have been complicit in perpetuating the 'otherness' of North Indian classical music through espousing it as a pinnacle of complexity in musical terms, a phenomenon articulated by Jairazbhoy (2008) as “Indo-Occidentalism”. This has contributed to a continuation of the folk-classical divide

\textsuperscript{53} A rhythmic motif repeated three times which usually finishes on the first beat of the cycle (\textit{sam}).
\textsuperscript{54} Sometimes described as a 'catch phrase' of the raga.
\textsuperscript{55} The middle octave section of an Indian classical composition.
\textsuperscript{56} The upper octave section of an Indian Classical composition.
where what is deemed a simpler music form is deemed inferior. Certainly, at face value Indian rhythmic structures are much more complex and varied that Irish rhythmic accompaniment. Yet when one considers the inherent interweaving of melody and rhythm in traditional tunes, the process of Irish music becomes equally as complex and elusive to explain. Martin ponders that, “I think we digest melodies in the same way. Like, they have a big array of rhythmic structures and scale structures, which are the rags I suppose and...so they digest that and make that second nature. So they digest that and make that second nature. We have to digest all these melodies and make them second nature” (in interview, 2015). The melodies to which Martin refers to, while not explicitly so, are inherently rhythmic. It is only from a lengthy digestion process that Irish traditional musicians are able to fully explore the expressive capabilities of what appears to be a very 'simple' form. Naturally, it would seem almost impossible, for any musician who is mainly absorbed in one form, to become fluent and completely comfortable with a different tradition in such a short period of time as allowed on this tour.

While perhaps rhythmically the collaborations were not all they could have been, at the same time, they worked musically and, mostly, held together on the stage. However, it is undeniable that the rhythmic elements of both traditions were expressed in their simplest structures to make this work. For this reason, we chose tune types from the Irish tradition which were relatively simple in rhythmic complexity (simple jigs and minor key reels) and we stuck with standard Indian talas within permutations of 3 and 4 (sitar khani, teental, ektal). The full extent of the rhythmic possibilities of Irish-Indian musicking would take considerable sustained effort on a much smaller scale than the tour provided to reap any real benefits. Moreover, an engagement in a more nuanced manner is crucial in regards to extending the key musical expressive element which underpins the rhythmic aesthetic of both traditions, namely improvisation.
4.7.3 Irish-Indian Sympathies and Divergences: Improvisation

McNeil states, that the concept of, “improvisation is widely recognised as the central and defining element in Hindustani classical music” (McNeil, 2007, p.4). Likewise, whilst a considerable portion of Carnatic music consists of music that has been composed, the true challenge for the musician lies in aspects of improvisation. For the discerning audience too, the improvised aspects like raga alapana, neraval and kalpana swara reveal the talent and skill of the performing artists. In fact, improvisation could be considered the soul of Indian classical music. While many western musicians, particularly those from a jazz background, have been drawn to North Indian classical music because of its scope for improvisation and expression, at the same time Indian Classical music is incredibly structured and systematic. Holryde argues that Indian, “improvisation has not, however, the same connotations as those with which we invest in the word in relation to jazz” (1964, p. 151). While general rhetoric on North Indian classical music, suggests that 80% of the music is improvised, more accurately it involves a recapitulation and exploration of learnt material from decades of intensive study with a master. Wade asserts that it is important to acknowledge that improvisation, within any musical system, does not mean “completely free” or imply that music is newly created in performance without being based on anything pre-existing (2009, p. 134).

Irish traditional music also has a strong rhetoric of looseness in interpretation and scope for the individual to improvise. Iconic fiddler, Tommy Peoples describes it
thus, "Traditional music is composed as you go...The performance is the composition, like with painting. It's not untouchable on paper, it's [created] as the performer feels, as the mood dictates, on the day. He paints his picture every time he or she performs" (in Shortfall, 2014). Yet, McNeil cautions that, “while improvisation is common to most musical systems around the world, it does not necessarily follow that it is understood and practiced in the same way” (2007, p.4). Indian pianist, Utsav Lal, who has experience as a performer of Irish and North Indian classical music as well as jazz, explained that while, “both Indian and Irish music are very organic” (in interview, 2014) and share a sentiment of improvisation, structurally they are very different. After our collaborations in Mumbai, Utsav while generally an optimist in terms of Irish- Indian musical sympathies, conceded that there was a significant difference between the approaches of improvisation. He stated that, “Irish traditional music doesn't have like alap...although the way you pause and the phrasing sound similar to alap...it’s a dance form of music. It's kind of for entertainment...it’s a folk music, it’s for expressing things that relate to people” (ibid, 2014). Furthermore, when asked to discuss any similarities, he compared approaches to improvisation as, “playing the same tune, but in a slightly different way” (ibid, 2014). However, I would argue that playing the tune in a slightly different way each time is definitely not, to paraphrase Seán O’ Ríada, ‘just the same as Indian Rag’.

Martin conceded that, “Irish music is not improvisational music, performed in that sense, it's not the core element of it...improvisation is the core element of jazz...the core element of Irish music is still the melody” (in interview, 2015). While Martin Hayes has become renowned as one of Irish traditional music's great innovators and improvisers, his concept of improvisation refers to stretching notes, phrases, timings and intonation within the limitations of traditional melody. The way in which Martin and Dennis arrange their extended medleys of tunes are also often improvised, something akin to the performance practice of a traditional session, but also following a similar sonic template to the dynamics of raga development. A radio interviewer in Chennai also drew an analogy with North Indian classical music when he heard Martin's description of his approach to traditional melody, “So, there’s this basic frame work on which you build which lends itself to moving away from it and coming back to it, and away from it and coming back to it” (Kapur, 2014).
However, improvisation in North Indian classical music is much more than dynamic builds or bending or stretching a note from a fixed melody. McCormick, in a review of Martin and Dennis's album *Live in Seattle*, drew comparisons with North Indian classical music but was careful to highlight that, “The problem is that Irish music doesn’t work like the music of India...The melodies are too formulaic. The idiom is structurally and rhythmically too circumscribed by its function as dance music to afford the musician much room for improvisation” (McCormick, 1999).

Improvising successfully within any musical tradition requires an accumulation, absorption and embodiment of complex knowledge within a specific cultural milieu. Martin refers to this quality as embeddedness, the ability to inhabit the music so that liberties can be taken, a quality that takes considerable time to achieve.

*Until the melody is something that is singing out of your innermost being without any intellectual interference, until that moment, you don't have the freedom to stretch a note. Or at least, you won't have the freedom to stretch a note in a meaningful way or even to know the right note to stretch. Not until it’s just embedded within you can you have that experience*” (in interview, 2015).

This kind of habitus was just as unlikely to be acquired by the Indian musicians within the short space of our collaboration as it would be for Martin, “It seemed unlikely that I was going to get to that level of embeddedness of the structure of Indian music in that period of time. Neither were they going to an Irish tune embedded either. I thought that might have been easier, you know”(in interview, 2014). Somewhat sympathetically to the difficulties of this collaboration, Mc Neill argues that, “attempts to apply an Indian template” to other music ultimately misses the point. He suggests that in doing so, “the tendency is for only those things that are meaningful to that template to end up being recognised, while things which are not recognised by the template remain only partially audible to it or are missed altogether” (2007, p. 5). Our collaborations both with KSS and with the musicians in Delhi/ Mumbai, did not really attempt to apply an Indian template to an Irish structure but rather the two existed side by side and sometimes overlapped. However, in the course of a performance a much larger proportion of improvisation was given to the Indian musicians, myself included, in accordance with an understanding that this was primary within their system.
Both rhythmically and melodically, while opportunity was given for improvisation in our collaborations, this was mediated by the constraints of Irish melody and rhythm. As Martin stated,

> the tabla rhythm can actually work so long as they’re not adhering to their normal structures. You know, the flute can actually do a bit of modal improvisation over a simple melody. So, we can sort of be connected that way but they have to abandon a lot of what they do (in interview, 2015).

This 'abandoning a lot of what they do' was likewise necessary to find simpler melodies from the Irish tradition to which some kind of improvisation could be applied. McNeill, offers a critique of this approach suggesting that “in a cross-cultural context it is important that any discourse on improvisation should not be limited by ideas in any one musicological system, and certainly not by one in which it is largely a subordinate practice” (2007, p.5). The discourse of improvisation in this collaboration was not completely limited to the system of Irish music, in which indeed improvisation is more of a subordinate practice, yet it was definitely the main template. However, substantial freedom was given for the Indian musicians, including myself, to improvise as to how they saw fit, often drawing upon raga structures from matching scale types. For example, in Delhi, Paras Nath discussed with me how he would use Rag Bhimpalashi in his solos while Martin and Dennis grooved away on a reel in D minor (*Broken Pledge*). KSS discussed several matching Carnatic ragas to the scale of another D minor reel (*West Clare Reel*).

The discourse on improvisation in these collaborations was in a subtle yet significant way, facilitated by my own liminal position between the two traditions. Often I would be discussing the *raga* or *thata* type with the Indian musicians and also explore possible tunes that might work in that mode with Martin and Dennis. This type of discourse is in itself a social linguistic improvisation which is crucial in developing inter-cultural music exchange. McNeill has likened the success of musical improvisations as a good musical conversation (2007, p. 6-9). As others have explored inter-cultural musical exchange is a field of negotiations of power, articulation and interpretation of knowledge through varied conversational styles of culturally bound individuals (Stokes, 1994; Wilkson, 2011).
Yet ultimately, there are intrinsic limitations to this type of analysis. Even though we are focussing on the performative moment, we are still measuring music in terms of external manifestations as a product something that justifies the collaboration taking place. I would argue that we should be less focussed on the sonic output of these musical collaborations but what is happening within the musical performance and the musicians themselves. This could be described as the somatic 'inner fusion' of inter-cultural music exchange. Musicking is intrinsically rewarding in one's inner world. The activity of making music is not necessarily just about final output. In this regard, the 'conversation' analogy limits our discussion on the important inner workings of this music on the musicians and the listeners. I am more interested in what takes place in improvisation within the musicians themselves, a phenomenological understanding of this kind of musical Being-in-the-world. I include below an excerpt of my field notes from our final performance in Chennai. I use this field note as it relates to improvisation as it focusses on the complex sets on knowledge and emotion involved in musicking. In particular, it outlines some of the unique challenges of moving between improvisational forms.

*When it came time for my improvisation within the Carnatic section, it felt like I was being released from the restraints of all these roles and I let loose. Despite being on short passages, I felt I was able to express the combination of emotion which I embodied at that time- a muted frustration, reaction to judgement, desire to connect with feeling and something divine or outside the self. There was also the great freedom that the form of Indian Classical music allows in expression. Despite not being particularly familiar with the rag, I followed the rules as best I could by focussing on more rhythmic passages. I felt particularly encouraged by Krishnamurthy who had praised my playing in rehearsal the previous day and had also bought me a doti to wear for the concert. Every time I looked over to him, he would make eye contact, smile or nod his head in encouragement. He also responded with 'Shabash!' after some of my improvisations.*

I still vividly recall this performative moment many months after the event. We had begun our final piece with lengthy improvisation by the *veena* which led into a fixed *bandish* or short refrain which myself, Martin and Dennis followed. This required verbal cues from myself to let Dennis and Martin know when the 'hook' or *mukhra* was coming so that we could land on the right beat. I felt very conscious of my teacher being in the audience and also the discerning ears of the Chennai listening public. I was given passages for improvisation in between the *veena* and felt liberated in that performative moment to give vent to my various emotions. Staying within the melodic

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*57 An exclamation of delight and commendation.*
and rhythmic structure as best I could, I closed my eyes and let loose, focussing on the experience of the moment. The performance wasn't a disaster by anyone's measurement, quite the opposite, as we received standing ovations. However, I felt unsatisfied with the lack of integration in the music, especially on the responsibility of my role in understanding what was happening in both traditions. A European composer who had spent many years in Chennai studying Carnatic music candidly told me afterwards that, “You were the only one on stage who knew what was going on”(FN 16/12/14)). In a sense, this comment was true, as I was the only who could mediate between the two forms, although I was by no means a master of either. This improvisation was fraught with cross-cultural complexity and externally as a 'conversation' was somewhat limited, yet from my own internal experience it was a rich and cathartic experience although perhaps not musically the most satisfying. How is it then that a musical collaboration, which while on the surface appeared to be working in technically oppositional directions, satisfied the audience members and to some degree the musicians involved? Perhaps the sympathy of the collaboration had less to do with musical tangibles and more to do with the more intangible world of feeling.

4.8 Cry now/Laugh now- Irish music and affect

While it may be seductive to conclude that inter-cultural music collaborations work because, as one radio presenter concluded in Chennai, “ultimately it’s all coming from the heart” (Kapur, 2014) a critical perspective is also pertinent. Both Irish and North Indian classical music have a historical rhetoric of strong emotional efficacy. While Indian classical music has a long history of being intrinsically linked to emotional affect, which shall be explored in more detail later, Irish traditional music has an equally complex yet perhaps more ambiguous relationship with the world of feeling. Smyth has asserted that there is a “close association between certain aspects of Irish music-certain rhythms, instruments, keys, tempos, melodies, traditions-and certain emotional responses” (2008p. 51). This is further connected to “widespread, linked notions of the Irish as both extraordinarily musical and extraordinarily emotional” (2008, p. 59). Smyth has likened the predominant models of Irish musical affect to two categories, Paddy Sad & Paddy Mad...one signifying “dispossession and defeat” and the other “pleasure and excess as a quasi-religious response to the disappointment of everyday reality” (2008, p. 52). This simplistic dichotomy of Irish musical affect seemed to strongly resonate with both musicians and audiences on the Indian tour. Indeed, two of the main organisers of the Chennai leg of the tour described the
emotional responses to Irish traditional music that they experienced on the tour in strikingly similar terms to Smyth's 'Sad/Mad' axiom. They stated that the music was emotionally charged, "it’s moving. Everybody that hears Martin, Dennis and Matthew playing here....They get it. They get it. Even from the audience. Lay people. They just sit there. Just hooked in. This is something you can enjoy. Cry now/ Laugh now" (from Sound of a Country, 2014).

The idea that Irish traditional music is generally 'happy' music is one that seems to dominate general popular perceptions. The professor described Irish melodies as having a, “the directness of appeal of the songs to the inner joy which is part of everyone. Everyone, on hearing you all were joyous. As if there is no need for explanations of sorts. Instantly the listener seems to own them as their own. that they enter the mind and the body of the listeners ticking the heart to ecstasy in sympathy” Furthermore, he describes the strong affect of the tune 'Chasing the Squirrel', “When I taught the song "Chasing he Squirrel" to our children, they all throbbed with happiness” (in email communication, 2015). In our radio performances in Chennai, the presenter was visibly overwhelmed with positive emotions with the pieces we played as a trio (the jig Sheep in the Boat and a reel Toss the Feathers). He responded that, “It's a very, very happy music. It almost like grabs and tells you get there. Be there. Your attention is already grabbed”. After our rendition of Toss the feathers, he responded, “I'm just about sort of getting out of my chair and dancing to this....I have goose pimples” (Kapur, 2014). Furthermore, this emotional affect was very much linked to an imagined landscape of Ireland. “Wow, in the moment when you hear that music it’s almost like you are walking on those lush green fields somewhere or you’re sitting in a pub somewhere and people are sitting there, happy” (ibid).58

The relationship between affect and music is a complex one and “remains stubbornly ungeneralizable” (Thomson & Biddle, 2013, p. 6). While we may all agree that music affects us, the state of this affect is not universal and is heavily influenced by context. Music affects us in different ways depending on our cultural and musical experience. Storr asserts music generates a “general state of arousal rather than specific emotion” (1992, p. 30). This “emotional arousal is partly non-specific” (1992, p.71) and arguably our specific emotional cues are primarily culturally determined. This

58 Indeed, the idea of sound of a cultures music being tied to its geography was explicit in the title of the documentary of the tour, The Sound of Country. In the opening credits, Martin talks about his feelings of the 'sound of India'. He also described to me on many occasions how fiddle players such as Junior Crehan evoked the 'sound' of West Clare.
leaves the musical moment open to affective interpretation, which is in turn conditioned by cultural experience. As Blacking asserts, [m]usic cannot express anything extramusical unless the experience to which it refers already exists in the mind of the listener…unless they are already socially and culturally disposed to act” (1995, p. 35-36) In the examples just given, the joyous emotions which the presenter expressed did not match those of the performers, nor arguably the actual intended emotional affect of the music. Both of the tunes we played were in a D minor setting. Generally this mode would be associated with a more melancholy strain of traditional music. Contrastingly, the radio presenter when he heard these tunes simply imagined people sitting happy in a pub. After our performance, Martin gently described the actual original meaning of the melody saying that “it’s actually a sad story about some people on a boat travelling out to the Aran Islands on the West and their bringing some animals and a sheep put its foot down through the boat and they were lost. So, it’s a sad story. The presenter responded, “That’s interesting. So the music is kind of great. It’s nice but it’s a sad song. Is this like something you would sing around a bonfire and tell a story about?” (in interview 2014). There was an awkward silence. This interaction reflects the theories of Turino who states that affective interpretation is “dependent on social frames” and culturally framed expectations (1999, p.237).

While traditional musicians in Ireland may describe the qualities of “exile in the music” (Vallely & Piggot, 1998, p.66) or a quality which is a “characteristically plaintive character, melancholy and [with] an undercurrent of tenderness (Smyth, 2008, p. 176), the reality is that general perceptions of traditional music are in fact very different. For many casual listeners of Irish traditional music, the tunes are basically happy and the slow airs are basically sad. David Byrne has suggested that perhaps this incongruency in emotional intention and its resultant affect may be because, “rhythms override the melancholy melodies” (2012, p. 340). Perhaps we can argue that certainly Irish music does have a strong affective impact, but the categorisation of that affect is much more difficult to ascertain. In Irish traditional music, the feeling one gets from the

59 Drawing on a Piercian semiotic reading of affect and music, Turino states that the “multi-componential aspect of music cannot be overemphasized as a basis of music’s affective and semiotic potential” (1999, p.237). He argues that a complex hierarchy of signs or indices are intrinsically linked to affective interpretation in music. Turino asserts that “the effects of indices can be guided by controlling the contexts of reception but they cannot be guaranteed” due to the semantically ambiguous quality of indices” (1999, p. 236).
music is ultimately dependent on the experience and expectation of the listener. The ambiguity of affect is complicated further by what Massumi would describe as a “crossing of the semantic wires [where] sadness is pleasant…when asked to signify itself it can only do so in a paradox” (2002, p.24). Smyth argues that, “traditional music...exposes the illusion of ideal emotional associations operating instead on an imaginary borderline where sadness and happiness segue imperceptibly into one another” (2008, p55).

The affect of an imperceptible merging of emotion has been described in East Clare music as the “Lonesome touch” or "high lonesome” (O' Shea, 2008, p. 70-74). A musician who has the ability to create this affect might described as having great draoicht (literally magic, a spell or enchantment) in their music. The term is sometimes used to “convey a sense of carrying away...a sufficeive heart-felt pain evoked by the music” (Vallely, 2013, p. 222). The term is often used to describe the style of older players and also is associated with a “calm and relaxed personality and [a] peaceful attitude to life” (Crotty in Crehan, 2006, p. 3). Musically, the feeling of draoicht or the lonesome touch may relate to tonal material, such as the use of minor keys, but is more often related to non-tempered tuning, micro-rolling, the sliding notes (particularly sliding into C and F naturals, and a relaxed tempo “allowing the tune to lead the playing rather than the player driving the melody” (Vallely, 2013, p.222). Other terms to describe the intangible affect of traditional music performance include the concept of nea, nyaah or nyach. The concept of nea is arguably more connected to the vocal (sean-nós) rather than instrumental tradition and in particular is often associated with “the audible manifestation…of a slightly nasal hum at the very beginning and sometimes at the end of phrases...[a] resonant quality produced in the head of the singer, using the bones of the skull and jaw as resonating bodies” (Williams, 2004, p. 134). It also has a resonance with the evocative sounds of the drones of pipes. The great sean-nós singer Joe Heaney described the nea as “the sound of a thousand Irish pipers through history” (in Williams, 2004, p. 134). However, the nea also has extra-musical associations that “go well beyond mere droning or nasalization into the realm of culturally recognised qualities like ‘soul’ in African-American musics or bhava in India” (Cowdery, 1990, p. 39). While these descriptions are still quite vague, they are perhaps the most explicit definition possible to describe affective theory in the practice of Irish traditional music.

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60 The lonesome touch is also the title of Martin and Dennis's first album. High lonesome almost certainly comes from its use for bluegrass music in the US and more generally Appalachian singing. It is doubtful that it travelled the other way from Ireland to the US. For more see (Tichi, 1994).
While the variety of the above terms may only occasionally be “spoken of by Irish musicians” we must consider the possibility that they represent an attempt to describe not just a basic element of traditional style but “perhaps even the basic element, the ultimate feature by which someone in the tradition can recognize their own” (Cowdery, 1990, p. 39). The performative manifestations of these concepts shall be explored in more detail in the fourth chapter which relates to the final performance.

4.8.1 Irish and Indian modalities

Despite a strong association of emotionality, the affect of Irish traditional music is at best intangible, highly subjective and implicit in the music making process. In contrast, Indian classical music has clearly defined and categorised co-relation between affect and music which has developed over centuries. In Indian classical music, every raga has a defined emotional aesthetic and both performer and audience have relatively clear expectations as to what the correct mood of the piece should be. Unlike Irish traditional music, Indian Classical music draws upon literally thousands of various scale material which constitute a vast array raga and rasa aesthetic theory. In Hindustani music, ragas can be attributed to ten thatas or parent scales. Each 'thata' is also assigned a characteristic mood/feeling and time of day for performance. The rasa or sentiment of the raga leads to the evocation of a certain mood or bava. As Holryde describes, it is the “aesthetic relish (ras) which enables an upsurge of emotion (bhava)” (1964, p. 54). This is “sentimentality in its true meaning of sensibility, not a maudlin sloppiness of heart” in which “ras is in fact sublimated emotion, directed by, or rather harnessed to, clear process of thought” (1964, p.55). The aesthetic philosophy of Indian classical music is very much connected to Yogic principles of sound and the spiritual connotations of disciplined practice which “is distilled in such a devotional and emotional intensity in Indian culture” (1964, p. 54).

Such a broad and systematic categorisation of scales and their corresponding affective properties does not have a parallel in Irish traditional music. However there is some precedent in modal music in the European art music which has been conceived as a “system that could be used to evoke religious feelings” which is also associated with

61 Adrien Mc Neil has explored the ephemeral nature of emotional aesthetics and music in a broader cross-cultural context. He argues that there “are expectations in many improvisatory musical cultures that a compelling performance should create a special aesthetic effect” (2007, p.9). He refers to the use of such terms as duende in Flamenco music, mojo in the blues and tarab in Arabic music as well as the Indian concept of rasa to explain the importance of heightened emotional states in music, particularly improvised musics, across the world (2007, pp.9-11).
particular folk idioms (Porter, 2001). Furthermore, while modern Irish traditional dance music conveys mostly subjective and implicit affective attributes, there is an older discourse on music practice which has some parallel with the Hindustani tradition. It is argued that there is “evidence of ancient Irish modes in pentatonic harp” which had explicit affective characteristics (Vallely, 2013, p.294). In particular, ancient Gaelic court music has been assigned three strains or main temperaments, namely the joyful (geantrai), the sad (goltrai) and the sleep-inducing suantrai (2013, p. 294). While many have posited which mode types or scale material may relate to these three strains there is little agreement of whether these terms may be related to mode types at all. Smyth notes that the “degree of correspondence [between] the ancient modes and the modern stereotypes remains a matter of conjecture” (2008, p.175-6). So, while at first glance the 'three noble strains' of ancient Irish music may appear to be in sympathy with the Indian classical tradition, in practice there is little evidence in theory or practice to support this claim.

In my own experience exploring mode types and their connected affective attributes, one suggestion that I have heard often is that Indian and Irish music are similar because Irish music uses a lot of minor keys. This is based on two misunderstandings. Firstly, that North Indian classical music is all about minor keys and secondly that Irish music also has a dominant repertoire of tunes in minor keys. While Irish traditional music does use so called 'minor modes', in fact, the majority of Irish traditional melodies are in major keys. Modern Irish traditional music is generally understood as using four main modes (Ionian, Dorian, Mixolydian and Aeolian) in the adopted Greek parlance widely used today. Indian Classical music, on the other hand, utilizes perhaps every possible pattern of modal scale, including so

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62 It is beyond the scope of this research to fully explore the veracity of these terms in practice, the extent of their musical permutations and the significance of their use in Irish cultural history. For more information see, Grattan Flood, (1906), Smyth (2008) and Vallely (2013).

63 I came across this sort of reasoning significantly amongst students in my teaching experience in the Irish World Academy BA in traditional performance. In fact, in one class where I asked the students to apply some principles of Indian improvisation to an Irish tune, *The Bucks of Oranmore*, most of the students simply flattened the notes or transposed it to a minor key. It subsequently became known as the *Bucks of Bangalore*.

64 Brendan Breathnach mentions that the Ionain mode “is the predominant one in Irish folk music” He argues that over 60 per cent of traditional music belongs to this mode. Mixolydian approximately 15 per cent Dorian somewhat over 10 per cent of the music… the Aeolian are the least numerous” (1977, p.)

65 It should be mentioned that the use of the term ‘modes’ to describe Irish traditional music is common but also problematic. Likewise discussing tunes simply in terms of keys is also difficult as Irish traditional dance music does not necessarily fit into standard western art classification of scale material. For example, a tune may seem to change key in its’ second part (the turn) or a tune maybe notated in a particular key such as G major yet use notes outside of that scale both in the written score and within the variations of live performance. As the music is an aural tradition, the tunes are often understood best when played on the instruments themselves. However, for the general purposes of this research it is useful to use the term ‘mode’ as a category only to compare with the Indian tradition.
called major keys. Many westerners are often drawn to North Indian classical music because of its perceived abundance of minor modalities. In practice, there is a plethora of melodic material available to the Indian classical musician and they all have strict aesthetic guidelines. Unlike Irish traditional music, the performance of various mode types within the framework of a raga, has clear affective attributes which while they may be intermingled, extend well beyond a happy-sad dualism.\footnote{In fact, rasa theory described in the Nātyasāstra, is an aesthetic approach which informed all classical performing arts in ancient India, not only music. It has eight affective modes Shringara(love) Hasya (laughter) Karuna (pathos) Raudra (anger) Vira (heroic) Bhaya (terror) Vibhastaa (disgust) Adhuhuta (wonder/surprise). The addition of further rasas has evolved over the centuries to include Santam (peace) and Bhakti (devotion). A complete dramatic performance “should touch on all of these emotions and leave the audience with a feeling of shanti (peace)” (Khan, 2002, p.275). Likewise, Bhakti (devotion) is another rasa often used to describe the affective gestalt of raga. Generally speaking however, Indian classical music usually is ascribed only a few of these rasas such as love, devotion, pathos, joy, heroism and peace.}

More specifically, in North Indian classical music, it is the notes themselves or swaras which are the particular vehicle for expressing feeling rather than the mode type. It is believed that, “various pitches aroused different emotions and that these could be specifically analysed” (Holryde, p.143). This practice is not evident in Irish traditional music, however, the definition of the lonesome touch or draoicht often relates to specific techniques used on specific notes, such as the sliding up to notes such as C and F natural. Although many of the fiddle players that I am inspired by, including Martin Hayes, use this technique and would be somewhat cognisant of the practice, very few would be able to articulate it as such and certainly have never expressed a concrete theory about it. Perhaps though, as Susan Melrose argues, the practice itself is the theory. Younger fiddle players such as Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh have undertaken detailed analyses of the recordings of older musicians who used such flexible tonalities and have more than just replicated these techniques into their playing, have developed a practice based theory which informs their performance.\footnote{I discovered this while attending Caoimhín’s fiddle class at the Willie Clancy Summer school in 2013. He openly advocated a systematic microtonal approach to Irish melodies in his teaching referencing his study of older fiddle players.} The connections between the conscious, or subconscious, use of microtones, emotional affect and the efficacy of Irish traditional performance would require another kind of research that is beyond the scope of this project. However, the highly detailed and systematic model of Indian classical music may provide possible future frameworks for analysis and useful in comparison of techniques and their affective functions.
4.8.2 The world of feeling

Broadly speaking, there are some elements of sympathy between the role of affect and musical material between Irish traditional and North Indian classical music but the extent of that sympathy is perhaps not significant enough to explain the relative successes of the collaborations on the Indian tour. As has already been outlined, technically speaking, the differences far outweigh the similarities between Irish and North Indian classical music. Yet, this is perhaps missing the point, for the main reason why the musical collaborations on the tour could work, as articulated by the musicians, was not because of technical or structural matters of the music but the perception that the musics inhabited “a similar world of feeling”.

I can't say I know, or understand or even comprehend what is happening some of the times...I just like the feeling (emphasis) of Indian music and I like the mood (emphasis here) it evokes and you know, I like what it does to me when I listen to it (Martin Hayes in interview, 2015).

Ethnomusicologist, Martin Stokes has argued that we need to, "look at what musics do rather than what they are held to represent (the two not always being the same thing)” (Stokes, 1994, p. 12). This division is somewhat misleading, particularly in the case of Irish and North Indian classical music, as both musics have strong association of certain emotional affect which defines their function. What music is held to represent is often related to what affect the music is supposed to do for us. Despite the aforementioned musical difficulties and cultural divergences recurring the term which re-appeared in discourse on sympathy between Irish and North Indian classical music related to what the music did for the listeners, the feeling it evoked. This ephemeral concept of 'feeling' was postulated particularly by Martin who explicitly states that 'feeling’ is what music is all about for him and what drew him to Indian classical music in the first place. Repeatedly on stage during the tour, Martin told audiences that Irish and Indian classical music inhabited a “similar world of feeling”. However, an attempt to define what exactly this 'world of feeling' actually entails is problematic.

The 'world of feeling' to which Martin referred could perhaps be best understood under the umbrella term of affect which increasingly “has had a certain currency within a range of disciplinary contexts” (Thomson & Biddle, 2013, p. 6). Since the so-called,

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68 The question of how music and emotion are linked in western art music is a perennial and persistent question. Leonard Meyer (2001, 2008) is perhaps the standard reference. Turino (1999) likewise theorizes this in Peircian
'affective turn' (Kim et. al., 2007) affect theory has become a discipline which “seeks to explore the parts of the experiential that are omitted by hermeneutic and/or discursive modes of analysis” (Thomson & Biddle, 2013, p.6). To Massumi, affect represents “the excluded middle”, the third state between activity and passivity, occupying the gap between context and effect” (2002, p. 6). It is natural that music or the sonic world which is “so frequently resistant to semantic or semiotic interpretation” has increasingly become part of affect scholarship (Thomson & Biddle, 2013, p. 10). Yet, to explain why music makes us feel something, or why we imagine we feel something, is a difficult process. The affect of music is something of a mystery. As Damasio (2008, p.81) states “we anthropomorphize abstract sounds” “so that we can 'feel' a feeling” (Byrne, 2013, p. 342). Perhaps the solution to affect's elusiveness can be countered by understanding that the “question is never really what affect means but what it does” (Thomson & Biddle, 2013, p. 6).

Affective response to music could be described as “a condition of heightened Alertness or awareness… [a] general enhanced state of being” (Storr, 1992, p. 24-25). Thomson (1995) has argued that affect involves “neuro-physiological processes” as well as subjective and cultural experience. Gibbs describes how, “when conjoined with thought, the neuro-physiological events become feelings, and may be elaborated into more complex blends of affect which compromise emotion” (in Thomson and Biddle, 2013, p.8). Music then could be considered a “compound of sonic affects” (Thomson & Biddle, 2013, p. 9). The affective experience in music can be understood “as a transformative force, a process of modulation beyond that which is consciously captured as feeling” (2013, p. 7).69 Cross-culturally, Richard Schechner has argued for the primacy of the emotional affect of performance, which allows musicians “to induce deep psychological transformations either of a temporary or a permanent kind” (2002,p. 321).

In my own practice, the role of musical affect has always been very much central to my values. As music and “sound has an integral role in shaping the affective contours of our day-to-day lives” (Thomson & Biddle, 2013, p. 11). According to

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69 More metaphysically, Deleuze and Guatarri (2003) have described affects as “beings whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds and lived” (p.164).
Massumi, affect is the “connecting thread of experience” Indeed, he argues that affect is what “holds the world together” (2002, p. 217). Feeling is what holds my musical world together. In particular, the locus of affect for me has always been the heart, both in an abstract sense and as in regards to what Riley (2004) calls a “somatic marker”. A somatic marker is a kind of shorthand way to describe a process by which recalled imagery and perceptual imagery become connected, or marked by a feeling about the body i.e. like “a gut feeling” (Riley, 2004, p. 458). The perceptual image of the heart as the centre of feeling and expression in music has been a common trait espoused by all of mentors. K. Sridhar, would suggest that while the heart is an important part of music making, the mind must first be quiet and disciplined so that “the heart can tell the mind what to do” (FN, 2013). Sougata Roy Chowdhury used to relate this concept to tuning, “First you tune your mind, then your heart, then your instrument”(in interview, 2010). In the Irish traditional music world, Tony McMahon has boldly stated that music is “something which changes the chemistry of the moment in the individual heart” (in Vallely & Piggot, 1997, p. 120). Even my father, who was a great influence on my early musical tastes, told me before the Indian tour to, “remember where your heart is” (FN, 10/12/14).

My field notes of the final performance in Chennai reveal a personal perspective on accessing the world of feeling through the 'somatic marker' of the heart. Likewise, the following extended field note highlights the interconnection between the internal world of feeling and the external influence of a teacher or guide which is such an important part of my practice. Drawing upon a mongrel mix of Hindu, Buddhist and other embodied knowledge systems, I navigated the in-between flux of the performances using my perception of the 'heart' as an anchor and guide.

*I try to focus on my own breath and my own bodily sensations...especially drawing down breath into my stomach or feeling my feet on the ground...when we are actually playing music I remember something my father had said to me as I boarded a bus to head to the airport, “Remember where your heart is!” I focus on feelings in my chest both at a physiological level and a more extra sensory perception...this feeling in my heart, actually starts in my solar plexus...the hard bone in the centre of my chest...this sensation radiates outwards...I often imagine it like rays of the sun...and I picture Indian God Hanuman. He is often depicted as pulling open his chest to reveal Ram and Sita residing in his heart... I try to maintain some level of this awareness through my preparations for the concert, even in the chaos of the sound check and feel somewhat detached from the experience as I retreat into the sanctuary of my heart...*
My experience of North Indian classical music has been so intrinsically permeated with Hindu culture that it is almost impossible for me to separate them. While I am not Hindu, images such as the above help remind me of the divine spark within myself and within everything for as Chang describes, the “fragile self is in need of relationship with the Creator” (2000, p. 24). As well as my zazen meditation practice, the iconic use of Hindu imagery is a tool which puts me back into my body. Hanuman is also a physically strong deity, another reflection of a 'somatic marker which inspires in me a feeling of solid personal strength. Focussing internally on the image of this deity centres me in the complex process of performance and can also lead to transcendent moments.

The highest purpose of music in the realm of the feeling body is, beyond or perhaps more accurately in-between cultural and structural forms. It relates more broadly to concepts of what Martin Hayes described as, “intentionality... the purposefulness...and the obvious soulfulness and spiritual nature of music making” (in interview, 2015). For Hayes, the world of feeling is a, “kind of transcendental, kind of heart felt moment of the music that consumes you all of a sudden...etching at something very deep ... very true, very meaningful” (in interview, 2015). Interestingly, both Martin and Dennis described the quality of feeling as being somewhat in opposition to logical thinking and technical virtuosity. Dennis described the importance of “not thinking so technically...to get into the mood of the music...the feel as opposed to the playing” (in Chennai Times, 2014). On the tour, the technical virtuosity of the

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70 Zazen is a form of Zen Buddhist meditation which involves simply sitting and slowly counting the breath until the mind is stilled. I formally studied zazen with Roshi Susan Murphy of the Diamond Sangha lineage in Sydney, Australia from 1999 until 2004. I took lay Buddhist vows in an initiation ceremony in 2002. Ironically, it was my meditation practice, rather than music, which led me for the first time to India in 2003.
collaborating Indian musicians was ranked of much less importance to Martin and Dennis than their ability to generate emotional affect. Dennis even suggested that perhaps a musician with more feeling is not so concerned with technical proficiency, “correctness is great but it doesn’t give you much of an emotional release while you’re playing” (ibid, 2014).

The idea that music can effect 'emotional release' is something central to Indian classical music, as has been discussed earlier, has some parallel in the Irish concept of draoicht. In NadaYogic philosophy, the world is understood as actually made of vibration, which is sound. Our bodies are composed of and influenced by sonic properties. So, when certain sounds and tones are produced they have direct impact on human body. My teacher, K. Sridhar is passionate about Nada in his work. In my own lessons, Sridhar stated that in playing the correct tones (shrutis), one activates the energy centres in the body according tantric philosophy which are called nadi. Sridhar has explained to me that nadi contain an “eternal conduit for pranic energy” (FN, 2013). By holding the instrument correctly and intoning the appropriate notes, the nadi, particularly along the spine, are activated and release pranic energy (Halpin, 2000; Johari, 2000, Greenwell, 2002). This energy, Sridhar suggests, is not just experienced by the musician but by other listeners as well.

In a different context, Dewey has espoused the immediacy of sound and music to effect the human body as “[s]ound agitates directly, as a commotion of the organism itself” (1934, p.247). Tony McMahon has used a similar language to explain the somatic affect of Irish traditional music. McMahon states that traditional music can “send that shiver up your spine…when it sharpens and quickens both spirit and emotions to the point where the individual lonely heart is at one with… the eternal harmonies” (1996, p. 116). Traditional music, McMahon argues, can affect “a sublime change in the climate of the individual mind by uniting our most tender and sensitive feelings in an orientation towards the supernatural” (1996, p.118). He describes this experience as a “shaft of universal joy” (1996, p.116) “something altogether other than a series of notes… a spiritual experience” (in Vallely & Piggot, p. 120). I can empathize with McMahon’s language in describing an affective musical experience that “would

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31 Prana is the Sanskrit name for spiritual energy which flows through the body. It is linked to the yogic breathing practice of pranayama in which pranic energy is circulated through various energy centres in the body.
swell your mind with oxygen” (Vallely & Piggot, 1998, p. 122). I have had something reminiscent to this affect listening to music as diverse as Indian vocal, Irish traditional and even heavy metal. Our film maker, Myles, also made a similar comparison in this anecdote likening the affect of Irish music to heavy metal.

_It has a lot of energy as well. It picks up rhythm. I met this metal guitar player in an ATM booth and I told him to come cause its very like metal. (laughter) It starts off slow and classical and then it just launches off into space. If you’re anywhere in Ireland and you hear that across the kitchen table or if you hear it in a pub or if you hear it on a big stage. It’s the same launch into space. It has the same effect wherever you hear it_ (Chennai Live FM, 2014).

Perhaps it is this coherence of feeling which I am characterizing through the more general somatic experience of affect, which explains why one can liken seemingly completely divergent musics, such as metal, Irish traditional and Indian Classical music. This does not necessarily mean that we all feel the same thing, but the fact is that through music we are moved through a combination of the physical and emotional which results in the somatic state of affect. While the exact nature of this somatic experience surely must differ from individual to individual, there is enough of a similarity in the resultant effect of this state, a heightened physiological state which generates a mutual feeling of release amongst listeners. This sympathy of feeling is reminiscent of our programme theme in Chennai of, “Celebrating the Equi-Vision of the Self and Supreme” (“Samadarshana”) or “Celebrating the Universal Teacher Within”. The Professor, who was a very spiritually and philosophically minded man, spoke in length during our collaborations about our shared universal divine spark. While Martin referred to the notion of a divine presence more in general terms of feeling, the Professor drew explicitly upon Hindu philosophy to frame feelings within the metaphor of a devotee’s love for the Supreme. He was also able to articulate this affective sympathy to the audience during our final performance and when explained that, “through the music and the philosophy of music, we share a lot between us. We attempt to bring our hearts in what we do” (from the film _The Sound of a Country_). Similarly, Mc Neill has in his own experience of intercultural collaborations, attempted to define that “something else’ when the “music acquired a certain coherence over and above the notes being played” (2007. p.14), These affective moments can become “reference points…when feelings did connect in the performance” (2007, p.14-15). The following extended field note from the first rehearsal with the musicians in Delhi, gives a sense of my own somatic experience of feelings connecting in the musical moment.
there is a kind of more physical response to the sonic and energetic resonances in the room...the loud tabla growling and popping in my ear...the flute jumping in and out in a high treble like a bird above a forest canopy...the ominous rumble of the piano...like rain clouds rolling in over us...threatening...dropping little glimpses of its power...Dennis strumming chugging a continuous river of groove...martin's sinewy melodic lines going around and around winding their way past my intellect into heart...I feel like there is a direct relation between my ears and my heart...not my physical heart...but the emotional place in the centre of my chest that gets tight when the mind starts worrying...when thinking takes hold...as I actively listen to the music...my breathing changes...i take deep in breathes and longer exhalations. I can feel my muscles relax...my shoulders drop...my neck loosen...my buttocks and legs on the floor...my glance goes downwards...my eyes close...it's as if i hear the music in my chest...pounding in time with an internal rhythm...like it emanates from within and then radiates out again through all of my blood vessels and sinews to my fingertips, my toes, the tip of my tongue, my lips, the top of my head...i feel my forehead raise...like an energy is pulling up the skin around my third eye...i feel a crick in the back of neck...just where my spine reaches my skull...a popping sound...it's a feeling i am familiar with from my meditation practice...a signal the body is beginning to relax and let go and be present to the eternal internal creative moment...it's brief, only a moment or two...sometimes it can last for a minute or sometimes, very rarely, it can lead to a sustained place of deep awareness and stillness which can linger for hours...

Much discussion in recent years, especially in Arts Practice research, has explored 'mind-body' dualism and the importance of somatic experience as a site of knowledge and theory production. Damasio (1994) has introduced the concept of “body-minded brain” and we also have the idea of “embodied cognition” (Loetscher et al, 2010) which may be located in Riley’s (2004) understanding of “somatic marker” of feeling body. Yet, very little discussion in musical analysis, such as in ethnomusicology, has focussed on performance based accounts of embodied somatic knowledge from musicians. Affect, and the autoethnographic narrative which is necessary to capture it (as exampled above), are often treated with suspicion as to “touchy- feely” (Crang, 2003). Or as Pelais states, affective research methods are sometimes dismissed as “self-serving and self-indulgent [and] not appropriate scholarly discourse, a superficial examination with no contribution to the accumulation of knowledge” (Pelias, 2004, p. 115). Yet Whitehead argues that feelings are, “generated by the body in the world and constitutive of mind” so that, “the human individual is one fact, body and mind. This claim to unity is the fundamental fact of human existence, always presupposed, rarely explicitly formulated” (1968, p.159).
Smith and Dean (in Reeve 1997, p.36) assert that in understanding music “we need to take into account the mindset of the performers” but if we understand the totality of our human experience through Damasio's (2002) 'body-mind' then our approach in analysis requires new methodologies. In this research, the most common 'somatic marker' of the body-mind set of the performers was the heart. As Martin asserts, “the head doesn't know anything...but the heart knows...like it knows if things have feeling. It knows if things are really being honoured” (in interview, 2015). The primacy of the heart as an affective centre of feeling is not that surprising. Yet what is interesting and provocative for me is that if the heart offers a somatic touchstone, one can literally make a gesture to one's chest, as Martin did every time he mentioned the world feeling in our interviews. The space where we feel our hearts is a focussed somatic process and “the affective is to be felt in those 'somatized' processes" (Bordieu, 2002, p. 39). As a somatic metaphor, which arguably all metaphors are (Lakoff and Johnson, 2008 ), the heart represents that ephemeral paradox of the musical experience- the movement of unseen physical forces (sound) upon the unseen inner physical world (affect). Even though you can't see it, you know it’s there because you can feel it. The heart might even be understood as a Third Space which mediates thought-action. The 'heart' is not separate from body-mind yet is the channel through which we mediate between these states.
4.9 Forever Chasing the Squirrel- Final Reflections

If you’re looking at them technically…boy…they’re just worlds apart, like. It’s really an exercise in seeing two things that are completely almost polar opposites almost in terms of how they are structured and how they’re put together…and yet, in the end, absolutely in their essence perform basically the same function” (Martin Hayes, interview 2015)

After spending days in Chennai trying to construct a large ensemble piece which drew equally upon Irish and Indian melody we eventually hit upon the idea of playing a very simple version of 'Hunting the Squirrel' which for some reason we began to call 'Chasing the Squirrel'. This piece came about after I noticed the Professor's immediate response to the tune when martin and Dennis performed it one evening for the children in music institute. We played the tune several times for him in rehearsal and I helped translate the melody into sargam (Indian tonic sofa). The Professor made some recordings in his own time of him singing the melody both in saga and Sanskrit lyrics (APPENDIX 4). I realised that the simplicity and feeling of this melody would bypass the demanding intellectual process we were attempting in trying to learn new material and also would allow for a greater level of comfortability between the ensemble. In rehearsal, I felt it was the most successful collaboration with Indian musicians on the tour.

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72 The original tune, Hunting the Squirrel, is actually an English courtly dance tune from the collections of John Playford in the 17th century. In its original notation it bears little resemblance to the way it is played in Irish traditional music. In particular, The Gloaming recorded a definitive version of the tune on their debut album.
73 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8kPUDbEzck
74 The professor in fact taught this song to children in his music academy. He also sent me a video of the children performing the song in a temple in Mahabalipurm.
However, our final performance of the piece was, somewhat “anti-climactic” (FN, 2014) as the piece “started too fast and abruptly” and was somewhat “stilted” (O’Reily, in email communication, 14/02/15). The lovely slow build from voice to instrumentation we had worked on in rehearsal did not work as planned and it “seemed very long and meandering” (ibid). Myles described it as, “disappointing because I was so super excited over how beautiful it was, or should have been.(in email conversation, 14/02/15). Ironically, the final piece in his film, which features footage from this performance is actually an edited version that Myles tracked together in ProTools upon returning to Ireland.75

The performance of this piece encapsulates many of the dynamics of the musical exchanges of the tour in general. Firstly, the fact remains that, while there is a discourse of similitude between Irish and North Indian classical music, in practice they are fundamentally divergent and substantial adjustment and simplification of both forms is required to facilitate a successful inter-cultural collaboration. This is exemplified by the fact that we did not learn any Indian Classical compositions as an ensemble on tour, and did not even begin to scratch the surface of understanding the intricacies of raga and tala. Furthermore, Irish melodies, although assumed to belong to a simplistic category of folk tunes, are quite nuanced and complex in their own way. While the Indian musicians on tour did learn some Irish melodies, these were some of the most basic tunes in the repertoire (such as Hunting the Squirrel) and also were not necessarily easy to perform.76

The complexity of learning the melodic material from both traditions may in fact be linked to their very different rhythmic structures. Importantly, these structures are informed by the different socio-cultural structures which form the basis of Irish and North Indian classical music, namely the difference between music for contemplation and a dance orientated tradition. Further focussed research is required into rhythmic sympathies and divergences in Irish-Indian musicking and perhaps large scale ensembles are not the most appropriate form of exploring this in practice. Martin also voiced his doubts about the longevity of the project, “I am not so sure it could go the

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75 Sound of a country. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8kPUDbEzck

76 Again, Martin Stokes documentation of a similar interaction between Irish and Turkish musicians is almost identical in its outcome to our tour. “Even though they were reluctant to admit this-constantly asserting that Irish music was 'simple'-the Turkish musicians could not grasp the jigs or reels. While both Turks and Irish musicians were determined to trade tunes, the musical material proved too complex for the time available” (1994, p.110).
full distance as a collaboration. I can't see it. It doesn't mean it can't happen. I can't see it yet, at least” (interview, 2015). For as Utsav remarked, what ends up happening in the time restraints of a tour with collaborations is that it becomes a pragmatic format of, “play some Irish reels on top of a raga then play some raga on top of an Irish reel and then you play your thing and I'll play mine” (interview, 2014). As Alan Tweedie, one of the tour promoters argued, “it’s easy to make these kinds of collaborations between East and West...but it takes time to do quality” (interview, 2014).

In consideration of both time and quality, the remainder of this research will be focussed on my own practice with a smaller amount of external collaboration. Although the tour was enjoyable and a great learning experience, it did not seem the best way forward in exploring Irish-Indian musical sympathies. As Martin suggests, although “we may have laid the ground work for something...it’s a collaborative process that could only work if both music forms could retain their intactness....If you take away some of those fundamental Indian structures, then you've lost Indian music. If you take away the melody in Irish music, you've lost that also (interview, 2015). Knowing what the fundamental elements are of each tradition requires an embodied understanding of both and it is difficult to keep important aspects of the musics flowing when the musicians are still getting to grips with a different musical world. While I fulfilled this mediating role within this collaboration we were in a sense, as Dennis described, starting from zero in terms of what the music could be. In this kind of inter-cultural interaction, “The good news is, that it’s a wide open field and the bad news is, it’s a wide open field... because it’s hard to find where zero is with it and there kinda isn't a zero ( interview, Chennai liveFM).

At least my own practice of Irish-Indian musicking, which has been in development over the last 3 years, has established a 'zero', a starting point from which my more focussed collaborations with percussionists can attempt to extend. My teacher, K. Sridhar also reflected that it may be more successful to work, “solo with percussion, either Irish, Indian or Arabic” (interview, 2015). While he praised the ensemble's musicianship he saw fundamental flaws in the larger collaboration arguing that, “some integration was missing...it was like oil on water” (interview, 2015). He further explained that, “with Indian music you have to understand the whole culture to play the music...the whole subject you have to understand before you read story” (interview, 2015). I do not pretend to understand the whole 'story' of either Irish
or North Indian classical music, I am at an advantage of many other musicians to explore this in more detail. While I was extremely grateful for the opportunity to play with a host of world calibre musicians, it was also at times daunting and humbling. This did not allow for the fullest expression of my own musical ideas. Sridhar again insightfully commented that I, “should perform with non-famous people as the success of this kind of fusion depends on the people. If the mentality is compatible, the jugalbundi is compatible” (in skype interview13/02/15). While I certainly felt a musical compatibility with Martin, Dennis and the Professor and most of the musicians on tour, my role as interpreter and also as a relative novice was somewhat restricting.

Yet, while at times personally challenging, the process of this tour has helped me develop new concepts and categories for understanding my own mongrel practice and inter-cultural musical forms in general. It has also highlighted the way mongrelity may bring new-ness into the world. For as Stokes argues, "[p]erformance does not simply convey cultural messages already 'known'. On the contrary, it reorganises and manipulates everyday experiences of social reality, blurs, elides, ironises and sometimes subverts common sense categories and markers" (1994, p. 97). Indeed, Irish-Indian musicking subverts the common perceptions of what these musical traditions uphold. While Irish music may be commonly perceived as a dance music, a music for pubs, simply a folk music, in attuning its intention to the same spiritual purpose of Indian Classical music although not completely new, is still a 'not yet known'. The constant referral to 'feeling' as a link between the two cultures is in itself subversive and upends and blurs traditional boundaries of the traditions. Martin's statement here is such an enunciation of new-ness, “in the abstract invisible world, they are quite connected, in the technical structural worlds of the music, they are very far apart” (interview, 2015). The abstract invisible world to which Martin refers, the more intangible qualities of affect, were such an integral part of making these collaborations work. My role and the process of mongrelity itself allows us a window of insight into this intangibility which in turn may bring some kind of newness into world of understanding of the inter-cultural music experience.

Rather than being disruptive or disintegrative to a musical tradition, the enunciation of inter-cultural sympathy creates a highly charged and evocative Third Space which opens a dialogue of what the tradition can mean. The Professor supports this when he describes that “an ideal collaboration is that which makes this happen in
order to share our experiences towards creativity which is acceptable in one's own culture... through cross cultural studies is that it is very important for a student of any global musical style to understand and experience music cultures in order to preserve the beauty of diversity in one's own culture” (in email communication, 2015). As has been explored already, I believe this is only possible, as Mc Neill alludes, “when the integrity of each source is maintained while something new is created, or when an existing musical framework is given a new flavour” (2007, p.19). For as Dennis describes so eloquently,

there's a difference between fitting things in and just sort of stapling them on. When they're stapled on it never meshes quite right. it doesn't mesh into the core part of it. It won't hold for very long. It becomes more of a gimmick than an actual statement of musical thought sometimes. It's a very fine line. It's a very very fine line... that's up to the artist knowing in their heart why they are doing it (in interview, 2014)

I agree that there is a big difference between fittings things together and just stapling them. Furthermore, that integration in musical styles has to happen at the core part of not just the music but more importantly, in the individual. Research which gives insight into inter-cultural musical exchange must adopt new models which analyse music not just from an external, product or even sound orientated view point, but the felt world of the musicians involved to give a more embodied experiential account of the possible theory in process of such performances.
CHAPTER 5

Irish-Indian rhythmic collaborations

5.1 Practice based reflections

In the previous chapter I explored the performances of the tour as a microcosm for issues of hybridity and inter-cultural exchange through the particular frames of Irish traditional and North Indian Classical music. What became apparent in the tour analysis was that the success of the collaborations depended more on the individual musicians’ ability to adapt, and to a degree the presence of my mongrelity, rather than specific Irish-Indian musical or cultural connection. It was my ability to translate and see what could be brought from the other side, to inhabit the space between the traditions, as well as the other musicians’ professional experiences of inter-cultural ‘jamming’, which allowed musically for the performances to have some kind of coherence. I also identified that the affective world, or the world of feeling, acted as a kind of somatic intermediary in both our collaborations and within my own practice.

More technically speaking, through the process of the tour, I began to clarify that rhythm was the main obstacle in attempting to produce an integrated Irish-Indian musical performance. While the tour provided a wealth of information, especially in the socio-cultural domain of the collaborative process, there was not enough scope for detailed musical comparison, especially in regards to exploring rhythmic divergences. To allow for a more detailed musicological analysis, focussing on rhythm, after the tour I devised two small scale performances to be performed in the Irish World Academy in the University of Limerick. These performances while using the same melodic material were contrasted with two different kinds of rhythmic accompaniment, North Indian tabla and the Irish bodhran. These performances allowed me the opportunity to compare the two differing accompaniment styles with the same melody. It also allowed a more specific analysis of my own melodic improvisations and personalised approach to Irish and Indian melodies. Again, this was done to contrast the experience of the Indian tour where all the collaborations were relative fresh and tentative. Furthermore, the ensemble nature of the tour limited my own musical input and I was curious to see what could be achieved if I was given free scope to experiment and improvise without the constraints of other melodic instruments.

77 The melodies for both performances featured a mixture of Irish traditional tunes and raga based compositions. The accompanist roles were undertaken by Bengali tablaist Debojyot Sanyal and Irish percussionist Tommy Hayes. For more information on the instruments themselves see (Schiller, 2002) and (Kippen, 2005).
This chapter has two main purposes which provide the rationale and method for the transcription and analysis which follows. These are firstly, attempting to understand Irish and Indian concepts of rhythm through musical performance. Secondly, using this predominantly rhythmic analysis, this chapter aims to also shed further light on my own practice which I have characterized through the metaphor of the mongrel. Arising from an initial musicological analysis, I will explore how the musical sympathies of this project overall are very much idiosyncratic to my own practice and may represent an ‘on the ground’ account of the complexities of mongrelity. By examining the processes of my own cross-cultural musical reasoning and adaptation, through a combination of musicological and autoethnographic method, it is hoped that a clearer impression of my mongrel practice may be achieved.

5.2 A note about the percussionists

Tommy Hayes is an All-Ireland champion on the bodhran and has performed and recorded with most of the great names in traditional music and beyond. He is a founding member of traditional group, Stockton’s Wing and Puck Fair, a composer for film and theatre and also a well-recognised music therapist. I have played with Tommy for a number of years in a project entitled AnTara. The basic structure of the performance with Tommy was not agreed beforehand. We did not have a set list as we prefer to play whichever tune or set of tunes feels appropriate in the moment. However, we do have a standard repertoire and performance arc which we draw upon. This performance arc is something akin to North Indian classical development of starting slow and building up intensity over a lengthy period of time.

Figure No: 4.0( Tommy Hayes)
It is misleading to suggest that my performance with Tommy is true representation of Irish traditional music and standard accompaniment. Moreover, while Tommy is regarded as an exceptional bodhran player and has performed with most of the greats of the Irish tradition, he is not necessarily considered the most ‘traditional’ player. Tommy has always been very open to playing with different musicians and in various musical styles, experimenting with dancers, jazz and various ‘world musics’. His eclectic choice of instrumentation, ranging from bowls, gongs, spoons, bones, gourd shakers, Jews harp, darabuka, slit drum and bodhran, exceeds the usual conservative etiquette of Irish traditional accompaniment. Furthermore, Tommy’s style of accompaniment is often heavily syncopated ‘playing around the beat’ as he describes it. He enjoys improvising beyond simple repetitive iteration of the basic rhythm. The performance with Tommy took place at the Irish World Academy in the Tower Theatre as part of the lunchtime concert series. It was a free event, open to the public and also coincided with an academic conference. A question and answer session was held directly after the concert and some of these discussions are reflected in the following analysis.

Debojyoti Sanyal is from Kolkata, West Bengal. He has studied tabla since infancy from his father Amelendu Sanyal and from esteemed virtuoso Pandit Shankar Ghosh. Debojyoti is a well-respected and sought after accompanist for North Indian

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78 SEM/ESEM joint symposium. Many delegates attended and contributed to the discussion afterwards.
Classical music. He also has a variety of experience performing with African and Arabic musicians in the South of France where he is based part-time. He also is a regular visitor to Ireland. I have known Debojyoti for over ten years and we have played many times together. However, this performance was only our second time performing Irish traditional material and we were both a little tentative about making it work. Unlike with Tommy, we had a strict set list and Debojyoti was very clear on what rhythms he would play. We also had arranged several tihais (a rhythmic device which is repeated three times) to finish pieces and we utilised a tanpura machine for the drone. So, despite the musical material being predominantly Irish, the aesthetic of the performance was arguably more Hindustani.

The performance with Debojyoti again also took place in the Tower Theatre but in the evening at 6pm in the Tower Theatre. The set-up for this performance was much more relaxed and as it was an evening concert, the atmosphere was also quite different to the lunchtime space. There were also subtle extra-musical differences. In my performance with Tommy, we sat on chairs, while with Debojyoti with both sat on a rug on the floor as would be traditional for North Indian Classical music. We both had small icons of a Hindu God in front of us when we played and I consciously remember touching the rug for a blessing before I sat down to tune. These are of some of the extra-musical factors which come into play in this performance and likewise I believe impacted on our musical decisions and orientation.

5.3 Rhythm, culture and musical tradition

In these performances I was attempting to highlight, that the basic rhythmic structures of Irish traditional and North Indian classical music are in fact very different. These differences in the conception and implementation of rhythm define melodic and improvisational approaches. It is understandable than, that rather than focussing on the melodic and tonal aspects of Irish-Indian sympathies, there first needs to be an understanding of their rhythmic foundations. Indeed, as Hijleh argues, “[t]he idea of rhythm is most foundational to music” (2012, p. 17). Rhythm may be understood as “the first and most elemental of analytical categories (2012, p.11). For music flows out over time, it therefore cannot exist without rhythm. Music, and performance itself, is “something time bound and embodied” (2012, p. 7). While the main line of inquiry is practice based, it is also worth briefly considering broader concepts of time and temporality. For, as Hijleh states, “human experience of temporality in music arrives as
a result of our perception of time as an immense hierarchy...time is the definer and medium for all articulation and clarity” (2012, p. 18). Rhythm represents an attempt to articulate and manipulate time within a musical tradition which has a relationship to the culture within it is framed.

I am not necessarily concerned here with arguments that elements of a musical culture represent the greater culture at large (Blacking, 1973; Meriam, 1964). As Clayton has argued, the idea of “music as symbolically representing cultural ideologies is both necessary and deeply problematic” (2000, p. 7). It is far too simplistic to suggest that musical rhythm is a direct expression of a discrete culture; the reality is much more complex. Clayton asserts that, “cultural symbolism can never be absolute...music cannot simply reflect time...musical time is the result of a negotiation between physical and psychological restraints...and human individuals’ attempts to describe and order their experience” (2000, p. 7). My interest is the physical and psychological negotiations of musical time by individuals as they play out in the performative and collaborative experience. While cultural and philosophical concepts undoubtedly have an important part to play in performance process, “they cannot be a simple determinant of musical structure” (2000, p. 7). There is further difficulty in undertaking any cross-cultural musical analysis of Irish and Indian concepts of time, because Irish philosophical temporality, unlike the Indian tradition, is difficult to establish and more difficult to define. While Indian classical music has a long, though not necessarily uninterrupted or ‘pure’, link to a systematized aesthetic and philosophical tradition, it is much harder to understand Irish traditional music in the same vein.79 Unlike Indian culture, there is little documentation of the cultural thought of a continuous ‘ancient’ Irish culture which does not require significant interpretation and a ‘filling in of the gaps’. In fact, it is this lack of historical evidence [cultural vacuum] that has allowed space for the discourse of Irish-Orientalist links (see Dillane & Noone, 2016).

Ultimately, this project seeks to understand constructions of time in performance, although some general socio-cultural comparison is perhaps necessary. Put succinctly, albeit a little crudely, Irish traditional music, is primarily a dance form, whereas North

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79 The case of Indian culture and temporal concepts in music is well documented as far back as 5000BC (Rowell, 1992) (Prajnanananda, 1997) (Widdes, 1992) (Simms, 1992). Nonetheless, there is an interesting degree of disjuncture between practice and theory in Indian classical music scholarship. Likewise, it is important to be cognisant of the construction of Indian classical music within framing national identity (Bahkle, 2005). Irish cultural thought and its connection with music making has a severed history, particular predating the fall of the Gaelic aristocracy 1600’s. There is scant documentation of Irish conceptions of time and musical time even up to the modern era. Apart from antiquarian attempts at ‘tune’ collection beginning in Ireland in the 17th century, there is no comparable scholarly tradition of musical aesthetics and classification with the Indian tradition.
Indian classical music is not. As Ó Súilleabháin describes, the overall structure of Irish traditional music, namely the *tune*, its *parts*, and the *round* “reflects an understood socio-musical agreement among musicians which has its origins in the past interactions between music and dance in the Irish tradition” (1990, p.118). Indeed, it is the tune itself which provides the main rhythmic force in Irish traditional music and it does not necessarily require accompaniment. As Vallely states, the tune is “supreme in Irish music” (2011, p.451). Irish traditional melody is inextricably linked to the rhythmic structure of its dance form. The intrinsic rhythm of Irish melody may be due to the belief that “the melodic phrase has been the basis of European dance, not percussive beat” (Vallely, 2011, p. 180).

Contrastingly, in Indian classical music the main melodic form (*raga*) and the rhythmic structure (*tal*), while co-existent in performance, are also theoretically autonomous. As Bagchee describes, “there is no fixed association of any particular *raga* with a particular *tal*...any *raga* can be set to any *tal*” (1998, p. 72). Indeed, rhythm in Indian classical music could be considered to have three portions, the rhythm of the main melody (performed by the singer or instrumentalist), the rhythm of the tabla player (which is constructed in its own syllabic language called *theka*) and the abstract *tal* itself (ibid, p. 73). The abstract *tal* represents something akin to the concept of metre, the broad theoretical division of musical time while the *theka* are the actual sounds produced on the drum. The singer or instrumentalist explores the many melodic and rhythmic permutations of the *raga* within both the abstract *tal* and the syllables of the tabla accompaniment. Importantly, the tabla has an important role in maintaining a sonic representation of the abstract *tal* so that the singer/instrumentalist may improvise. This is strikingly different from the role of the *bodhran* in Irish traditional music which is (at best) deemed unnecessary for a successful performance. It makes sense too because Irish traditional music has all the rhythm it needs in the melody itself. Yet

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80 Irish traditional instrumental music is strongly connected to traditional dance forms. Irish dance may be a social or presentational event. North Indian classical music is primarily a presentational concert event. There are however North Indian classical dance forms, such as *khatak*, which are strongly rhythmic in nature yet also incorporate instrumental and vocal music from the classical tradition. Likewise there are a plethora of other classical, semi-classical and folk dance forms across the various regions of the Indian subcontinent. It is well beyond the scope of this research to explore the rhythmic forms of all of the musical forms of Indian culture. The distinction to be made here is that North Indian classical music is, unlike Irish traditional music, not used to accompany social dancing.

81 Ó Súilleabháin describes an entire melody in Irish dance music as one ‘round’. The ‘tune’ is the first half of the usual two part, thirty-two bar round. The ‘turn’ is the second half of the round when the ‘tune’ is re-configured and often breaks into a higher octave. He describes some discrepancy between “folk terminology in that the word ‘tune’ can refer to the first half of a round, and also to the piece in its entirety” (1990, p.118).

82 It has been argued that in early forms of Indian classical music musical time followed the patterns of long and short accents used the poetic meter of chanting the Vedic Hymns (Rowell, 1992;Widdes, 1995).

83 At worst, the bodhran, as was infamously stated by Seamus Ennis, should be played with a pen knife!
without tabla accompaniment, a full performance of Hindustani music would arguably be impossible. Clayton suggests that the importance of “accurate and unambiguous time measurement” in Indian classical music stems from its ritualistic origins (2000, p.11). Indeed, this highly formalised and detailed rhythmic language is one of the trademarks of Indian percussion and also one of the greatest stumbling blocks in inter-cultural collaborations.

But it is also important to reiterate that while rhythmically North Indian classical music is “undoubtedly a difficult and complicated subject” it is perhaps not helpful to suggest that it is “more complex...than any other repertoire”, doing so would further contribute to the alterity of Other (Clayton, 2000, p. 6). The distinction that I wish to make here is simply that Indian rhythm is much more explicit and specific than Irish dance forms. It is the ‘unambiguity’ of Indian classical music which sets it apart from Irish traditional music, not a greater or lesser degree of rhythmic complexity. As Clayton argues, while “Indian metric structures appear, on the whole, more elaborate that those of Western music…the subtlety and ambiguity of metre encountered in some Western music far exceeds that of Indian music” (2000, p. 6). So, how does this ‘subtlety and ambiguity’ of rhythm work in Irish traditional music and how does this have any sympathy to the Indian classical rhythmic tradition in performance?

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84 Obviously this is except for the unaccompanied portion of raga development called *alap.*
5.4 General reflections of both performances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERFORMANCE with Tommy</th>
<th>PERFORMANCE with Debojyoti</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Night Larry got really stretched (7:35)</td>
<td>1. The Night Larry got really stretched (6:29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I have a house of my own (4:17)</td>
<td>3. Drowsy Maggie (14:52)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Tulla Road (5:51)</td>
<td>4. Rosie’s Lullaby (3:55)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Concert length (excluding discussion)</th>
<th>Total Concert length (excluding discussion)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28 mins</td>
<td>36:42 mins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure No: 4.2 (Concert timing breakdown)

It is beyond the scope of this project to go into detail about the entirety of each performance but a few general comments are perhaps necessary here. Generally speaking, what is evident from an examination of the audio-visual documentation is the difference in duration of performances, represented in the table above (Figure No: 4.2). While both performances featured only four pieces or sets of tunes, the performance with Debojyoti lasted over eight minutes longer. Despite our efforts to create long sets akin to Indian Classical structures, only one set with Tommy reached the ten minute mark. While with the tabla accompaniment two pieces were well over ten minutes. Even the first set which featured the same tune, The Night Larry Got Stretched were of a similar length despite the set with Tommy containing another tune and also a lengthy drone introduction. This difference in duration is perhaps due to the defined ‘space’ which tabla accompaniment offers for improvisation which leads to much longer improvisation passages but also pieces with a much longer overall duration.

This ‘space’ becomes pronounced by definitive function of tala which accents a strong (sam) and weak or empty (kali) beat in the cycle. The ‘gap’ in the rhythm cycle which is signified by the kali creates a kind of contraction in the pulse and is also a clear temporal marker, an “aural clue” (Clayton, 2000, p.62) for improvising melodic instrument. The general ‘groove’ then of tabla is created not necessarily by microtiming.
around the beat but a structured repetitive alteration of “the density of sound events between beats” (Madison et all, 2009, p.239). This is not just an emphasis on the density of sound between beats but also the absence of density. The ‘space’ marked by the kali breaks the perception of a continuous unbroken beat and it also signifies ‘where you are’ in the rhythmic cycle. It then allows a great deal of freedom for improvising, due to the ‘space’ and clarity in rhythmic structure which allows the melodic instrument to wander off and come back, always being able to anchor to various sections of the rhythm cycle.

As tabla accompaniment is so specific and unambiguous, it metaphorically acts like a container for improvisation, as it frames the melodic improvisation so clearly. In fact, it is so complete on its own, along with the ever constant tanpura drone, that it does not require that I even play. For example, with Debojyoti in the piece entitled *Drowsy Maggie* in the following clip I leave three spaces of at least 4-5 seconds where I am not playing except for perhaps the soft pick of my drone (*chikari*) strings.  85 In contrast, the rhythmic “container metaphor does not inform the complexity of performance” which is at the heart of Irish dance music tradition (Vallely, p. 2011, p.683). As has been outlined earlier, in Irish traditional music, the rhythm is inherent in the melody rather than functioning as external scaffolding. For example, when I played a reel with Tommy, there is not so much of a delineation within the cycle of the groove, there is no clear *sam* and *kali*, there is no systematic ‘gap’ or ‘space’ in the rhythm cycle. Therefore, as an improviser, I am much more fixed to the rhythmic pulse of the bodhran and indeed the tune itself (2:28-3:28). 86 Even when Tommy and I played an Indian composition, which is traditionally in 16 beat (*teental*) cycle, the ‘running rhythm’ of the bodhran dominates the improvisational impulse from (4:30-5:00). 87

In Irish traditional music, the desired rhythmic swing is often described in ambiguous and subtle ways. There is also often a disjuncture between tune type rhythmic categories (such as a *reel*, *jig* or *hornpipe*) and how musicians understand these tunes in performance. Breathnach states that, broadly speaking, all traditional instrumental music accents the first note of the phrase which becomes the longest note in a phrase. He argues that it is the odd beats of a tune which are more heavily accented than the even beats. The odd beats will also be “fractionally longer than notes without

85 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gLMsPSFBM...from 2:27-3:23
86 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mULgNbk6bU&index=2&list=PLYpsCKqEZn5vUsw0pGiV7OuZjKCeZuK6L
87 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9mULgNbk6bU&index=2&list=PLYpsCKqEZn5vUsw0pGiV7OuZjKCeZuK6L
accent” (1977, p. 89). Breathnach’s definition is a useful orientation for understanding Irish traditional rhythm, yet it by no means accounts for the multitude of variations (contradictions) of this description. A crucial element of this form is the understanding of tune types “in terms of rhythmic flow” (Ó Súilleabháín, 1990, p. 121). The definition of what this rhythmic flow entails is purposely left open to the interpretation of the musician who “interacts with a given rhythmic flow in such a way as to allow his own musical thought free rein within the traditional norms of rhythmic possibility” (1990, p.122). This predominantly rhythmic essence, was described in equally ambiguous terms by O’ Neill as “that peculiar rhythm or swing without which Irish dance tunes lose their charm or spirit” (1910, pp.291-292). This almost undefinable rhythmic essence still persists in modern traditional music as “the general feel” which in turns distinguishes it from other traditional music of Europe or the United States (Carson, 1986, p.5).

While the tune, and its inherent rhythmic feel, is supreme in traditional music, perhaps more than any other feature, it is the decoration or ornamentation within and around that tune which gives Irish music its characteristic sound (Keegan, 2010). These ornamentations are dominated by rhythmic aesthetics. Ó Súilleabháín asserts that “ornamentation within the dance music tradition is largely a rhythmic rather than a melodic one” (1990, p.122). Keegan defines ornamentation as “the addition of extra tones to (or the division of) a main tone which is regarded as being embellished” but also describes that “the place in the tune and the type of tune plays a part in the rhythmical structuring” (2010). The variation of breathing patterns for flute or whistle players, the subtle use of the bow on the fiddle, the adjustment of picking techniques on plucked instruments and a near “infinity of subtle modifications” such as crans, cuts, rolls, slides etc. lead “to a powerful creative tension...so subtle that it is unnoticeable except as good feeling” (Kaul, 2009, p .143). Kaul has defines this subtlety of ‘good feeling’ created by rhythmic ornamentation of Irish traditional music though the concept of ‘groove’. Charles Keil’s definition of groove focuses on inconsistencies in timing and pitch, what he calls, “participatory discrepancies”, a “semiconscious or unconscious...out of syncness” (1994, p. 96). This he suggests is the “make-you-dance” magic, the means of losing yourself in the music, the power to pull people into the music, the energies that fuel the will to party and the pursuit of happiness” (1987, p.

88 These ‘norms of rhythmic possibility’ are defined by the regional and personal style, the tune type, and the instrument itself. A combination of factors then leads to the manner in which a player can vary the “basic motor rhythm” of traditional dance music to “achieve the desired rhythmic effect...frequently referred to by traditional musicians as lift” (Ó Súilleabháín, 1990, p. 122). Indeed, as O’ Shea argues, “having the right rhythm has long been recognised as the sign of an authentic Irish style” (2008, p. 95).

My tabla accompanist, Debojyoti Sanyal, suggested to me many times during our collaboration that the problem with using traditional tabla patterns with Irish music was that Indian classical rhythm simply didn’t groove. Mickey Hart supports this viewpoint, arguing that while “Indian drummers ...[have] taken rhythmic complexity to its ultimate expression...they often play like brilliant metronomes”. He recounts that he had to teach tabla maestro Zakir Hassein how let the music move him, to be “imprecise” or to “groove” (1990, p. 154). This does not necessarily mean however that ‘groove; has no place in an Indian percussionists’ repertoire. Ruckert states that in Indian folk drumming, particularly associated with drums such as the dhol or dholak, “the patterns are repetitive and the lilt, or “groove”, of the drumming is highly desirable” (2004, p. 50). Likewise, groove is indeed, “a fundamental part of the light classical tradition and many of the very best drummers who can lay down a lively groove are engaged in the industry of producing film and pop music” (ibid, p. 50). The distinction though is still clearly made here between the “poetic compositions” of the ‘pure’ classical tradition (in which arguably groove has less of a hierarchical value) and the preference for “lilting rhythmic grooves” of light classical, folk or pop music (ibid, p. 51).90

5.5 Main analysis

As the main focus of these two performances is to compare different accompaniment styles with the same basic melodic material, the following section will focus specifically on two ‘sets’ of melodies- The Night Larry got (Really) stretched and Junior’s Lament. These two sets are also rich in a wide range of different tempi, ranging from the slow non-metred introduction approach of the alap to a rapid jhala type crescendo of Hindustani music. There is also a mix of Irish tune types, although there are no reels in these sets.91 These selections also represent a variety of time

89 The dhol and dholak are two sided barrel drums much associated with Indian folk traditions. They have in particular become associated with modern urban hybrid musics such as bhangra. See (Sharma et al, 1996) (Bennet, 1997)(Taylor, 2007).
90 There are of course many tabla players who work in inter-cultural collaborations beyond Indian classical music who are not restricted by the traditional conventions of tala and are able to translate other rhythmic patterns onto their instrument. Zakir Hassein’s and Trilok Gurtu genre hopping collaborations are good contemporary examples.
91 The scarcity of reels (an Irish traditional tune type usually notated in 4/4) in the performances in general is due to the difficulty of playing these melodies on the sarode. In both performances, we did play a few reels in conjunction
registers and rhythm cycles, from the relatively unmetered pulse of a slow air or alap, to variations on jig time and nine, eleven and twelve beat cycles. The two sets are also indicative of the general arc of most of the pieces utilised with both accompanists, namely that they build in dynamic and temporal intensity using relatively fixed tonal material with improvisatory interaction between sarode and percussion.

While the main focus of the two performances was not primarily melodic, I will first spend some time covering some of my melodic approaches. This is relevant, firstly from a rhythmic perspective in terms of how each of the musicians interpreted the structures of melodies outside of their ordinary experience. Secondly, it becomes evident that when different rhythmic approaches arise, the melodies themselves may become adapted. Thirdly, the nature of the rhythmic approach also dictates to some degree the kinds of improvisation that the main melodic instrument can explore. It is important to reiterate that these differences are exemplars of the individual percussionist’s signature style who move between and beyond their chosen traditions. I chose to work with both Tommy and Debojyoti because of their experience with various other musics and their ability to move beyond the boundaries of tradition. This analysis in general will hopefully allow me to shed some light on my own internal practice of 'bridge building' between these divergent rhythmic approaches. The following attempts at further representation of the performance, through a mixture of audio-video, notational and gestural analysis, also further reflect the mongrelity of my practice.

with Indian compositions in fast teental or sitarkhani (16 beat cycle) rhythms. However, the reels required serious re-working to fit Indian rhythmic structures, somewhat altering the original dance pulse of the tune type. A more detailed discussion of this phenomenon is beyond the focus of this chapter but warrants further investigation.
5.5.1 Transcription approach and the problems of staff notation

In any analysis of musical performance which goes beyond a purely sonic approach, at some point visual notation of some description becomes useful, and perhaps, necessary. This is problematic and highlights the question of whether written notation is even useful at all (Nettl, 1983). This debate is especially relevant in regards to both Irish and Indian traditions as both musical systems are predominantly aural. While in the modern era, both traditions have adopted some form of notation as an aide memoir, *sargam* notation in Hindustani music and either staff notation or ABC notation in Irish music, it is generally accepted that these are imperfect representations. Ruckert explains that in North Indian classical music using traditional staff notation “cannot communicate certain essential musical relationships which are germinal” to both Indian Classical and other modal musics, among which we could include Irish traditional repertoire (2002, p. 15). Likewise, Wade describes that when an Indian melody is notated, “a far different degree of exactness is implied...than for its Western counterpart...the notated form is unlikely to be the source from which the performer learned the melody” (2004, p.26). In Irish traditional music there are similar reservations concerning the use of staff notation, despite its widespread use in dissemination and cataloguing. As Ciaron Carson observes, “a traditional tune printed in a book is not the tune; it is a description of one its many possible shapes” (1986, p. 8).

Likewise, the transcriptions which follow in this section should not be considered as complete descriptions of the performative moment nor are they intended as prescriptive scores for future performances. Indeed, I would urge the reader at this point, if they have not done so already, to watch the audio-visual documentation of these performances in full before reading the transcription of performance excerpts which follows. My use of transcription does not intend to document the performance but in this analysis is used as way of assisting with dialogue and particularly in deference to the reader who may be unfamiliar with the musical systems involved. It also constitutes a valid descriptive tool in this instance because to a degree, it is part of the mongrelity of my practice.

To reiterate, the main orientation of this entire analysis is to attempt to understand how my own practice may embody hybrid confluences which may express a sympathetic inter-cultural musical process. To capture this confluence accurately in
notation also requires a mixed method of transcription. So, as well as standard staff notation, I will incorporate elements of Indian classical music transcription. This will involve the melodic sol-fa system called *sargam*, and as we are primarily interested in rhythmic analysis, the syllabic rhythmic dictation of Hindustani music (*theka*). I will deal with the complexities of rhythmic notation in this project later, but firstly a very brief explanation of the *sargam* transcription is necessary so that we may use it to look at the basic melodic material of the ‘sets’ we will be discussing.

The scale material of Indian classical music, even in instrumental music, is denoted in an abbreviated sol-fa system called *sargam*. The basic seven notes of a scale degree (*svara*) are called *shadj, rishabh, gandhar, madhyam, pancham, dhaivat* and *nishad* (Bor, 1999, p. vii). In common practice they are shortened to the syllables *Sa, Re, Ga, ma, Pa, Dha, Ni Sa*. In notation practice, these syllables may be notated as simply the first letter of the note *S, R, G, m, P, D, N, S*. The first letter of the note is often made lower case if the note is flattened (*komal*) except for *Sa* and *Pa*, the fifth and the tonic, which always stay the same. Compositions and important phrases of raga may be notated in this short hand fashion by the student, although it is a practice which is generally discouraged; aural memorization being much preferred. It is important to realize however, that this system does not account for ‘micro-tonal’ variations on these basic notes which are a significant feature of melodic form in the Indian classical tradition.

The Indian classical approach to notation also highlights the important modal basis of the music. We can correspond the notes to a western scale, particularly on my own sarode which is tuned in D therefore *Sa= D, Re=E, Ga=F, ma=G, Pa=A, Dha=B, Ni=C*. However, simply comparing *sargam* to western scales does not fully represent the fundamental relational and modal nature of North Indian classical music. For example, ‘*Sa*’ could be set at any pitch, depending upon the singer or the instrument.92 Once you decide on ‘your *Sa*’, then all of the other notes of any particular mode, scale or raga became relational to that tonic and the particular finger positions of your instrument, or the internal positioning of notes in the case of the voice. It is important to point out in the case of my experience of Irish music, especially when referring to a tune from staff notation, that *Sa* is not necessarily the note D. I take *Sa* to be the tonic, the ground of

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92 Male singers might place *Sa* around D or E, female singers often pitch *Sa* at B or A. Sitar often tunes its *Sa* to D or C#. Flute players can locate *Sa* depending on the scale length of their instrument. Often on sarode the *Sa* is pitched around C natural, however, I know of many variations on what this ‘C’ actually is ranging from 442 HZ to 435.
the whole music. This understanding will be explored in the following performance examples. In the transcriptions of these performances, I have placed basic sargam notation above the melody, not as an addendum, but as an indication of the primary way I understand the ‘tune’ more globally as a gestalt of melody-rhythm- form.

5.5.2 The Night Larry Got Stretched

The Night Larry Got Stretched is a slip-jig (9/8) from the Irish tradition which takes its name from a traditional song. I first heard this tune from the playing of Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill (2008) and instantly loved it. I listened to it so many times that by the time I came to try and play it on my sarode; the melody was already there under my fingers. By repeated listening I had begun to be able to translate the melody in my head to fit my sarode using Indian sargam regardless of the key of the original tune. For example, I never even looked at the notation for the tune, presented here in Emin (Figure No: 4.3). When I listened to the tune, I immediately recognised that it would work on the sarode and began by conceptualizing a modal understanding of it in my mind. This process, which is something both of my sarode teachers have taught me as a way to listen to raga, is to first identify the tonic base of the mode (Sa). The next step is to identify the fifth (Pa) if present, followed by the other notes of the scale, which are either sharpened (tivra) or flattened (komal). From this procedure, as a form of raga identification, one begins to hear which notes are being emphasized (vadi), which ones may by omitted (varjit svara) and any notes which seem to be an ‘enemy’ (vivadi) to the creation of the mood of the piece. The overall movement of the raga

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93 The tonic note (Sa) also has interesting spiritual connotations for many performers. My first teacher, Sougata Roy Chowdhury, used to talk about making a raga stand by the way you played Sa. Likewise, the concept of the tonic note and its inter-relation with the other notes in the scale material is often described in metaphysical terms by Indian musicians. For an interesting exploration of the tonic and other related metaphysical conceptions of raga see O Brien’s (2014) The Endless search for Sa.
(chalan) may come into view this way, punctuated by particular catch phrases (pakar). There are indeed some ragas I know well which I can identify from just the sound of the tuning alone.

Importantly, my experience of North Indian classical music has taught me that musical performance is so much more than just the notes. A raga is a constellation of notes, in a way like a person with its own characteristics, a certain way of moving, and of breathing. Therefore, when I listen to a tune, or even if I read a standard staff notation, I am always trying to figure out the way that the melody moves, its melodic relations, its mood, its tonic, what drone will work with it, its internal logic. In relation to learning an Irish tune, the discernment of a concrete note, e.g. F natural or C, means very little to me on its own. This note is only important within its relationship to the musical mode or scale within which it is a living, vibrating entity. So once I know where Sa is, then all the other notes emerge in a relational dance. The challenge of this way of hearing is that the internal logic of the melody in Irish music, is outlined very, very quickly in a tightly condensed fixed tune generally with only two or sometimes a few more strains. Whereas in Indian classical music, especially in the introductory passages (alap), a very slow, deliberate, note by note, phrase by phrase unveiling of the raga theory takes place. To get to grips with the logic of a tune requires learning it first; only then does the tune become a possible road map for meaningful improvisation.

It is still difficult for me at this stage to confidently identify the way The Night Larry Got Stretched as I would describe it, ‘moves’. By this I mean an identification of its grammatical phrases in terms of raga aesthetics such as (chalan, pakar) which lead to a unique mood (bava) or flavour (rasa). To honour the tune in this way, I believe would require a much lengthier gestation with it as a performer and also would require further analytical tools which are beyond the scope of the project at hand. However, broadly speaking, I hypothesize the salient features of a tune in general comparison with my experience of raga. The scale material of The Night Larry Got Stretched fits into the Asawari thata although it does not really fit into the mood of the Rag Asawari. 94 My sense is that the (ga) is a strong note and also the tonic Sa. The fifth (Pa) also is a dominant note in the tune. Other features might be that (dha) is connected to (Pa) and maybe only is used in a descending motion. Similarly, (Re) seems to be more in

94 Thata is a broader categorization system of scale types in Hindustani music devised by Bhatkandhe in the early twentieth century.
descent and connected to komal ni in the middle register (sthayai). These suggestions, at this stage, are still hypothetical and based very much on my intuition as a performer rather than systematic musicological analysis. While there have been some attempts to analyse Irish traditional melody in a more broader categorization of tune types, most notably Breanthonch (1977) O’ Canainn (1978) and Cowdery (1990) these have not been part of my practice (yet). Jim Cowdery puts forward the argument that the sonic architecture of the Irish folk tradition is built on a “process of composition...suggested by complex permutations on melodic pools” (1990, p. 93). He further suggests that these ‘melodic pools’ have underlying ‘principles’ that the bear a strong resemblance to North Indian classical principle of chalan, which is the melodic scaffolding for raga based improvisation (1990, p. 132). As this research project is primarily practice based, I feel it is important that I endeavour as much as possible to shed light on my own musical procedures first and foremost. Hopefully, at a future date a more comparative and thorough musicological investigation into the notion of an ‘Irish rasa theory’ and tune types may be achieved by building on this performative foundation.

**Possible tune theory-The Night Larry Got Stretched**

![Notation of The Night Larry Got Stretched](image)

**Figure No: 4.3.1 (Notation of The Night Larry Got Stretched)**

*Scale material (Melodic Minor-Aeolian mode)*

*Vadi-* ga or Sa

*Samvadi-* Pa

![Ascending/ descending movement of The Night Larry Got Stretched](image)

**Figure No: 4.4 (Ascending/ descending movement of The Night Larry Got Stretched)**
A performative example of this ‘tune rasa’ is alluded to in my alap style introduction for this tune with Debojyoti (from 00:18-1:36).\(^95\) Overall, I do not think this performance was particularly successful in capturing the essence of the tune. However, elements of the improvisation, particularly the general structure (which follows the basic arc of an alap beginning with the tonic and improvisations around the middle register before moving to the upper octave) are a good foundation for further development.

In the performance of the same tune with Tommy, I also play an alap style introduction, although this is using a different tune as the first in the set, my own composition, *The Black Fox of Corofin*.\(^96\) This introduction (from 0:35-1:05) I felt was more successful in capturing the mood of the following tune (from 1:05-3:17). Again, as the focus of this project is on the rhythmic accompaniment, I will not dwell on this aspect in detail but will note that these improvised introductions could be an interesting starting point for future research into the possible Indian approaches to Irish melodic material, particularly in regards to understanding tune types.\(^97\)

5.5.3 The problems of cross-cultural rhythmic notation

Now that the basic melodic material has been described, my focus shall turn to the problems of graphically representing the different percussive element of the performances. As has already been outlined, Irish and Indian rhythmic practices are quite different in their level of explicitness and also in conceptual framework. This difference is exemplified in an attempt to notate the basic accompaniment patterns of Tommy and Debojyoti. Indian classical music has a prescribed syllabic language for every sound produced on the tabla and has clear sub divisions of accents and weak notes, the *sam* and *khali*. Again, while it is an aural tradition first and foremost, Indian rhythms can be transcribed using this syllabic language with some modern conventions. It is perhaps less appropriate to use traditional staff notation for Indian rhythms because it breaks the cyclic convention and does not convey the important performative expression of “intricate counterpoint” which the tabla player performs (Ruckert, 2002, p.215). This intricate counterpoint is based upon underlying rhythm cycle (*tala*) which “consists of a fixed number of time units or counts (*matras*) and is made up of two or

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\(^95\) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lizb26BFvE&list=PLYPsCKqEZu5u8YtGpuIrzzX8117UmbPF4&index=3

\(^96\) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11S7cv4qFng&index=4&list=PLYPsCKqEZu5vUsw0pGvV7OnzJkKCaZuK6L

\(^94\) Apart from Cowdery’s (1990) work in analysing ‘tune families’, Seán Ó Riada was also inspired by the complex aesthetic theory of Indian classical tradition and was convinced that Irish dance melodies had ‘their own internal logic’ (1982, p.13).
more sections” (Bor, 1999, p. 7). The first beat of each section is either stressed or unstressed which is demonstrated by clapping or a wave of the right hand. The more theoretical tala, somewhat akin to metre in western music, is represented in the basic theka produced by the tabla. The theka also has a syllabic language based (bols) on the sound of the tabla drum. The pattern of these bols set to a fixed tala then creates the unique theka. The sam is the first beat of the cycle followed by the ‘empty’ beat of khali usually in the middle of the rhythmic composition. The tempo at which a rhythm is performed “is specified in relative terms: vilambit (slow), madhya (medium) and drut (fast). In performance, the tempo would gradually increase and include all three of these time frames although the theka may stay the same. Sometimes, the time cycle (tala) might be changed by the singer or instrumentalist, in which case the tabla player would introduce a new appropriate theka.

It is therefore understandable that standard staff notation would be inadequate to fully capture the performance of tabla. Also, the above description of general rhythmic practice in Indian classical music does not necessarily match the performances which I shall attempt to describe in more detail here as the performances were something of a ‘hybrid’. This general description of North Indian classical rhythmic structure is useful however to help understand the underlying principles which influenced my own, and most particularly Debojyoti’s approach to constructing rhythmic accompaniment with Irish melodies.

In The Night Larry got Stretched, the two sections of the piece are constructed around a temporal frame similar to a Hindustani performance. In particular, the first section is a slow (vilambit) and the final section, which changes tala could be understood as the drut or fast concluding portion. In the opening vilambit section, Debojyoti chose to play a 9 beat cycle called mata tal. It can be described thus. Matta Taal = 9 beats of 4 + 2 + 3. The theka described below (Figure No: 4.5)
In contrast, Tommy played a relatively traditional accompaniment of three groups of three quavers which could be basically notated as: 

In these examples we can already see two very different approaches to the same rhythm cycle. It is interesting to note here, that while Irish music does not have a strict syllabic language to describe rhythm, various tune types are often described by melodic examples. For example, I have asked many traditional musicians to tell me the rhythm of a slip-jig, more often than not, an example of a tune will be ‘lilted’ rather than the rhythm being discussed independently of the melody. The fact that standard rhythmic notation does not account for significant re-interpretation by the individual in Irish traditional music makes the above transcription of a slip-jig rhythm somewhat limited. In this type staff notation comparative analysis, it is also very difficult to compare like with like, so to speak, as not only to both traditions have very different division of the nine beat cycle, the very relationship between melody and rhythm is seemingly incongruent. Furthermore, the cyclicity which is such a feature of both Irish traditional and North Indian classical music is not apparent in the above rhythmic examples.

5.5.4 Rhythm and Feeling Tone

In my own practice, I do not understand either of these rhythms in the way that they have been transcribed here. While I can comprehend them in this fashion, I understand them more in the ‘feeling tone’ of performance. Feeling tone is a term I have appropriated from Coward and Goa (2004) who whose it to describe the affect of musical sound not by what it “cognitively reveals but by the complex vibration or feeling tone it creates in the practising person” (p. 6). For example, I never would count the divisions of a nine beat tabla accompaniment. Rather, I would attempt to absorb the rhythm into my feeling world and listen for my own understanding of the ‘groove’ of the tabla, the subtle undulating accents of strong and weak pulses. Likewise, with Irish music, I would not count the division of three sets of quavers, I am usually internally hearing the tune repeat again and again. This, more than anything else, becomes my rhythmic touchstone. These two examples suggest a significant difference in the way I engage with rhythm in my performance practice, through the

98 Lilting is a common term used to describe the musical style of vocalisation in Irish music. “It’s typical sound structure has been adopted as the colloquial term ‘diddley-dee’ to denote (and often trivialise) traditional music” (Vallely, 2011, p. 403). Vallely argues that although lilting may appear to be an abstract use of syllables that it “conforms to an unconscious set of rules” (2011, p. 405). Lilting is a fascinating area of Irish traditional music which warrants further study. For more information see (Madden, 1989) (Kjeldsen, 2000).
Yet, the whole point of this exercise is not just to show that Irish traditional and North Indian classical rhythms are different but rather how this difference may be reconciled in performance. While the mathematics of these rhythms may appear completely disjunctive, the fact is that, with varying degrees of success, in the performances documented here, I am attempting to mediate a sympathetic rhythmic understanding. To account for this sympathy, I feel it necessary to incorporate a third system of notation to compare the performance on a rhythmic basis which better represents my own understanding and also accounts for the idiosyncratic nature of the two percussionists. While I think it is useful that I use standard notation and sargam to outline Irish tunes, standard notation is not visually readable enough to highlight what the percussionists did in the performative moment. Standard notation does not give a good sense of the cyclical nature of both traditions either, nor does a purely mathematical analysis. Likewise, simply adding Indian syllables (theka) to the standard staff notation of rhythm cycles only really works for the tabla rhythms and not the bodhran. This does not allow us to understand both accompaniments within the same framework. Therefore, I have chosen to use a ‘hybrid’ system of notation which gives a better visual representation of the cyclical nature of rhythm. This system, which is called Geometric visualization, was designed by my mentor, fellow Australian and traditional guitarist Steve Cooney.

5.5.5 A possible solution to cross-cultural transcription

The GV system employs a melodic spiral system of rhythmic durations indicated by various circular symbols. Rhythmically, as pictured below, a dot represents the shortest duration is (1) which would be a quaver in standard notation. A duration of (2) is be a small circle. A duration of (3) then becomes a small circle with a dot inside. A duration of (4) is a larger circle. A duration of (5) is a large circle with a dot inside and so on and so on. These durations can also be given a syllabic utterance which depends on the disposition of the individual or cultural frame. These symbols can then be arranged into rhythm rings representing repeated iterations of the strains which can be clapped or spoken. The beginning of rhythm ring is indicated by the accent lines which are outside the circle. The rings are played in a clockwise direction. This is a
simplified description of the system but for the purposes of recording basic tunes and rhythms it should suffice, especially because most rhythms are made up of beat durations ranging from 1-4. This system can also represent melody by placing these rhythmic signs on the differing degrees of a “clock face”. However, this dimension of the system will not be utilised in this discussion. The following images should explain the rhythmic notation more explicitly.

Figure No: 4.6 (Geometric visualization duration values)

For more examples see Kila’s (2011) *Book of Tunes - Leabhar Foinn*, p. 192-195
Figure No: 4.7 (Geometric visualization comparison with standard notation)

Irish dance forms

Figure No: 4.8 (Geometric visualization Irish dance forms)
Figure No: 4.9 (GV notation of slip-jig) (Slip-jig 9/8=3+3+3)
Figure No: 5.0 (GV notation of mata tal) (Matta Taal = 9 beats of 4 + 2 + 3)

Figure No: 4.9 and 5.0 show Tommy’s shaker pattern for the Night Larry got stretched and also Debojyoti’s tabla accompaniment for the same tune. I have added the ‘cloud’ symbol ℃ in the Indian rhythm ring to notate the kali (empty beat). One can clearly see that, although both are constructed in a cyclical fashion, they utilize quite different groupings to make up a cycle of nine. Firstly, looking at the broader systemic differences, the Irish division is much more orientated towards the steady beat requirements of step dancing. The nine beat tala, (mata tal), which Debojyoti plays, is associated the history of Dhrupad where this is performed on pakawaj. It is not particularly common tala and is mainly used by instrumentalists as a showcase for rhythmic dexterity and control over musical time.

The difference between these two very different rhythms is not just related to Irish and North Indian classical musical culture but also the player’s in-the-moment choices. For example, our decision to use this matta tal was not an attempt in virtuosic vanity, rather it was in fact a performance compromise, one which shall be explained shortly. In the performance with Tommy, there was also a choice to compromise, or perhaps more accurately, deviate according to Tommy’s aesthetic preferences, away from the traditional dance pulse. Despite the common characterization of Irish traditional music as constrained by the rhythmic demands of dance accompaniment, it is important to realize that there is an increasing distance between the dance origins of the tradition and the instrumental performance practices of modern musicians. Vallely concedes that “the terms used by musicians may not match the expectation of step dancers...particularly with regard to rhythm and tempo” (Vallely ed, 2011, p. 368).

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100 Dhrupad is arguably the oldest form of North Indian classical music. Its characteristics include slow and extended alap with short fixed compositions accompanied by the barrel drum pakawaj. For more see Clarke and Tinil (2011).
Furthermore, Tommy, while accepted as an icon of the traditional music scene, does not strictly use dance structures as his reference for his accompaniment in this tune. He is in fact, as he describes himself, attempting to “follow the tune” in a rhythmic sense (personal communication, 2015). He uses various ornaments to accent and shift the accent of the beat rather than maintaining a steady and unvarying repetition of the three beat pulse. His aesthetic preferences come from a wide exposure to other musical genres, most noticeably jazz and various ‘world musics’, but also his percussive appreciation of traditional instrumental music. Post-performance, he explained that he was using what he called a “finger style,” which he likened to mimicking the effect of the pipes, notably the effect of ‘cranning’ on triplets, which he admitted is hard to do with a shaker (ibid, 2015). From my analysis of Tommy’s accompaniment in this tune, I can observe three main variations from the main rhythm of three quavers (Figure No: 5.1, 5.2, 5.3). These notations show that although Tommy is playing a ‘traditional’ jig rhythm, his variations stray from the dance pulse of the original tune. This also creates the aforementioned, ‘space’ and ‘contraction’ which I feel is so necessary to create the right ‘groove’ for performance, which in turn creates room for improvisation.

1. A stop and slap in which he accents the off-beat, either the 2 or 3 (example from 3:34-3:46)

2. The triplet ‘cranning’ technique’ at the end of the cycle of the tune (example from 3:50-3:57)

3. A pause at the end of the bar, like a kali or empty beat in the cycle (from 4:20-4:35)

Figure No: 5.1, 5.2 & 5.3 (Transcription of Tommy’s variations on slip-jig rhythm)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=11S7cv4qFng&list=PLYPsCKqEZn5vUswoGiV70uZjKCezuK6L&index=4
These examples begin to shed light on what is an important concept in this analysis, namely that cross-cultural musical analysis must take into account individual (re-)interpretation of traditions within the performative moment. These variations demonstrate how in the performance process individuals make creative choices which are responsive and sympathetic to the needs of collaboration. So, what we are discussing here is not an explanation of Irish traditional vs North Indian Classical accompaniment but rather the ways in which individuals negotiate, choose, and shape multiple aspects, of multiple traditions, in an attempt to construct a resonant and sympathetic musical expression. However, these attempts may also, as is inevitable in any experimentation, fall short of the mark of the desired goal. One such example is my pursuit of a sympathetic rhythmic Indian accompaniment for the humble jig.

5.5.6 Getting Jiggy with it

In all of my collaborations with Indian percussionists, melodies in jig time have proved the most difficult to realize in performance, as was noted in the previous chapter when discussing my experience during the Indian tour. This was a tendency that continued into my collaboration with Debojyoti. However, the difference in this second case was that the two of us have a long history of playing together, so we were already somewhat sympathetic to each other. Technically, however, we remained at something of an impasse. Although theoretically there are talas ranging from 3 up to 128 beats, Debojyoti said that he was not aware of any three beat cycle (in performance discussion, 2015). There certainly is a 6 beat cycle (dadra tal) but naturally this would not match up for a slip-jig of 9/8. Likewise, even though mata tal is not an even grouping of threes, it can be made to fit this rhythm cycle, just about. Neither of us were entirely comfortable with this choice of tal and although it technically fits the tune, it was difficult to keep time in a relaxed manner. For Debojyoti, it was also difficult to identify the sam from the tune itself. This is apparent in the performance (from 1:37-1:55), when after my introduction, Debojyoti is hesitant to join with the tune.

In this performance his sam is not the same as mine. He begins his accompaniment (from 1:55) on the 7th beat of the jig’s nine beat cycle, at the beginning of the last set of three quavers.
In the above transcription (Figure No: 5.4) you can see that the Debojyoti misreads the first beat (sam) of the tune and begins his accompaniment on the seventh beat of the cycle. This is an understandable error as this is a strong beat in the melody. However, technically we were not in complete synchronisation. Therefore, during the performance, it was not clear for me where we were in the rhythmic cycle. Hence, I was somewhat reluctant in my improvisation. Although Debojyoti adapts as the performance proceed and we eventually lock into a shared sense of the pulse, his accompaniment is very much accenting the beat structure of the tune, which made it hard for me to deviate from the phrasing of the tune’s melody while improvising. The other problem for me was the tempo. We actually played the cycle at around 112bpm, much closer to a traditional slip jig rhythm but I felt this was too fast difficult to establish and develop an appropriate mood.\footnote{https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lizb26BFvE&list=PLYPsCKqEZn5u8YtGpulrZrX81I7UmbPF4&index=3}

Debojyoti and I discussed this piece and analysed the video recording together. He was very unhappy with the performance of this piece and suggested a way to improve it for the future. He explained that “I played a slow nine…it should be doubled…played in a flat way” (from interview 04/08/16). We actually performed this piece at another
concert in August 2016 and Debojyoti used this rhythm structure: *Dhin Take Dhin Na Tun Na Dhin Dhin Na*. He suggested that he should play this kind of nine beat and “take out the *kali* and the *swari* to make the rhythm fit the melody”\(^\text{103}\). Doing this makes the rhythm “not strictly classical” but then as Debojyoti argued, “Indian rhythm is based on melody structure” and in this sense we are following an Indian aesthetic as much as possible with the structure of an Irish melody (from interview, 04/08/16).

5.6 The Night Larry got (really) Stretched

![Figure No: 5.5 (Notation The Night Larry Got (Really) Stretched)](image)

The title of the second part of this set, the *Night Larry Got Really Stretched* is a tongue in cheek description of rhythmic variations on the original slip-jig melody. The second part of this tune, rhythmically, is Tommy’s composition. In one of our rehearsals, he was experimenting with an eleven and a half beat cycle and asked if I could make the melody fit. We tried but I couldn’t manage to get my head around it. So we compromised on moving between an 11 beat and 12 beat version of the original tune. The A part eventually has been re-set into a 13 beat rhythm while the B part was put into 12. Both of these rhythms have a sort of built in *kali* or empty beat in the cycle. In fact, Tommy describes this rhythm as 11 beat, as when he originally played it he counted it with a sub-division into 3, 5 and 3. This doesn’t account for the 2 (quaver) beats of empty space which creates the striking syncopation of the tune. This caused much confusion in the counting of the beat, although in performance we never questioned what the time cycle was, we just played the tune. It probably was my own deviation from Tommy’s original 11 beat cycle which has now become the standard.

\(^{103}\) *Swari* is a grouping of threes at the end of a North Indian classical rhythm cycle.
The twelve beat is divided into 3, 5, 4 or two sets of three quavers followed by a crochet and three quavers. III, III, IIII.¹⁰⁴

Tommy’s accompaniment for *The Night Larry got (Really) Stretched* is represented in Figure No: 5.6 and No: 5.7.

![Figure No: 5.6](GV notation of Tommy’s 13 beat cycle) ![Figure No: 5.7](GV notation of Tommy’s 12 beat cycle)

Debojyoti’s interpretation of this same melody was to use another of his own variations of an eleven beat cycle for the first section of the tune, followed by a twelve beat (ektal) cycle.¹⁰⁵ These *tals* can also be represented in GV form in Figure No: 5.8 and No: 5.9.

![Figure No: 5.8](GV notation of Debojyoti’s 11 beat cycle) ![Figure No: 5.9](GV notation of Debojyoti’s 12 beat cycle)

Both Tommy’s and Debojyoti’s approach to accompanying *The Night Larry got (Really) Stretched* are very different. Firstly, Tommy plays a cycle of two extra beats, which accounts for a longer pause in the middle of the melody. Likewise, the division

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²⁹ Which has some parallel to a Balkan additive rhythmic structure.

¹⁰⁵ *(Debojyoti’s 11 beat cycle)= 7 +1 +4 or 7+5= 11 (Dha Tete Dha ge De ne Dhin Dha Dha Tete Tete)*

*Ektaal = 12 beats of 6 + 6: (Dhin dhin dhage terikita tun na kat ta dhage terikita dhin dhage)*

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of the cycle is much more syncopated in Tommy’s style. Debojyoti follows a fairly (in his own words) ‘flat’ cycle of eleven, featuring no kali or swari but just one accent on the eighth note of the cycle to emphasise the gap in the melody. In observing the GV models of the two different twelve beat accompaniments (Figure No: 5.7 and No: 5.9), it is clear that Tommy and Debojyoti’s approaches are strikingly different. This difference is because Tommy is following the intrinsic rhythm of the tune while Debojyoti is using the more abstract theka set to the twelve beat tala.

It should be noted that changing tala in the same composition is not common practice, in Hindustani or indeed Irish traditional music. Despite this however, I believe this is one reason why this section is so successful, as it represents a sympathy that has evolved out of my own practice. Rather than trying to find sympathy between the diverse rhythm practices of these two traditions, we have developed a rhythmic performance which is in itself sympathetic. Especially with Tommy, and increasingly when I work with Debojyoti, I have always felt it was better to create new rhythms for accompaniment rather than trying to copy Hindustani rhythm cycles. There would be little point in telling Tommy to play a twelve beat cycle with four sub divisions and an empty cycle as it is not his language for understanding rhythm. Likewise, with Debojyoti, I have tried to encourage him to find his own approach within the framework of tala to find something which works with Irish traditional tunes. Often, I would lilt him the basic rhythmic pulse but felt it was necessary that the language of the accompaniment come from him. This performance of this tune, particularly of the second part of Larry got (Really) stretched, is again not just an example of Irish-Indian rhythmic divergences but also the individual approaches to the reconciliation of these differences through the musicians involved. Ironically though, this is where a true sympathy can be found, in the performance practice of the individuals working to overcome perceived obstacles to creative expression. Also, for this reason, the two performances are somewhat different.  

The main tension of this tune, in both performances, is built up around, what was initially, an unconscious shifting of the accent and ‘space’ of the rhythm cycle. The concepts of sam and kali are so ingrained into my musical understanding that I naturally try to find some way to mould melodies to fit this structure. This is not done

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106 One example of difference beyond the rhythmic cycles is use of tempo. With Debojyoti we performed this section much faster than I did with Tommy (around 210 BPM & around with 200BPM with Tommy) and we built up to a climatic finish at 240BPM.
intellectually or mathematically, although it is possible to use this type of thinking to make sense of what we did after the performance. However, despite the rhythmic forms being slightly different, namely that Irish forms are informed by the melody and groove orientated whereas North Indian classical forms are isolated from the melody and orientated towards structured improvisation, in these performances, I personally experience their end result, in terms of the ‘feeling tone’ to be in sympathy. I would suggest that the difference in the quality of that ‘feeling’ has more to do with the individual expression of the musicians (and perhaps also the sonic properties of their instruments), rather than the musical structures themselves.

5.7 Junior's Lament

*Junior's Lament* is a piece which I have been playing with Tommy in our project entitled *AnTara*, for a number of years. Drawing upon basic North Indian Classical music structures, this medley arose from the desire to create longer sets of tunes which built from the slow and reflective up to a fast climax. The appeal of this structure is due in part to my experience with North Indian classical music but also has been a signature of my musical process since my early years playing instrumental rock guitar. While in general, *Junior's Lament* follows an Indian classical temporal arc, it does not strictly follow the same scale material or mode. I have found that there is something not satisfying about combining Irish melodies with exactly the same scale material for extended periods. Moreover, changing modality is a crucial factor in the efficacy of Irish music. As Smyth describes, an important feature of Irish traditional music is “its apparent ability to switch between modes during tune clusters, or sometimes even during the course of the tune itself” (2009, p. 55). Arguably, it is this “switching between one mode and another…which gives Irish music its characteristically plaintive undercurrent” (Vallely, 1999, p. 234). This brings into question conventional relationships of affective associations with particular fixed scale material, “in particular, the association of major scales with joy and minor scales with sorrow” (Smyth, 2009, p. 55). This understanding of the aesthetic purpose of modality is in striking contrast with the approach of Indian classical music where one mode is explored at considerable length and usually has fixed, albeit multi-layered emotional characteristics that are ascribed to the particular raga form.


108 As described in Chapter 2 and 3, there are a combination of extra-musical associations which give raga its unique character such as *rasa* (literally taste) and *bava* (mood). Further associations are given for the time of day the raga is to be performed such as early morning, sunrise, sunset, midday, midnight or even particular seasons such as the
The set which I have entitled *Junior's Lament*, is a compromise between the demands of the important structures of both Irish traditional and North Indian classical traditions. It follows a temporal arc of North Indian classical music but also subtly moves between modes and slight changes of scale to create the interest and dynamic changes which are so important to contemporary traditional Irish music. It begins with a slow air of my own composition which was inspired by Junior Crehan.\(^{109}\) In fact, the air came from my own half remembered attempts to play another slow air which Junior recorded called *The Priest' Lament*.\(^{110}\) I named the tune after Junior in honour of his direct inspiration for this piece. The air is in a modal G minor, although I understand it also in a D minor way, as my tonic reference moves between D (SA) and G (ma). In this way it is somewhat similar to some ragas which have a strong accent (*vadi*) on the fourth note of the scale (ma) such as Raga Malkauns, however, the structure follows more of my own perception of the general rules of Junior's air playing. Like with the previous example of the introduction for *The Night Larry Got Stretched*, when I improvised on this piece I was following my intuitive sense of the melody’s grammar. My experience with North Indian classical music has taught me that inside the composition is the way to move with aesthetic of the rag, in a very compact form. My teacher used to say that if you could unfold the composition you can find a musical road map, the grammar, the mood or the *rasa* of the *raga*. I have attempted below to outline my understanding of *Junior's Lament* in this way.

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\(^{109}\) Fiddle player and composer player from West Clare.

\(^{110}\) This slow air is featured on the double CD *JUNIOR CREHAN (1908-1998): THE LAST HOUSE IN BALLYMAKEA*. On this album Junior tells a story behind the *Priest's Lament* and also describes how he devised the tune *Caisleán an Oír* from this slow air.
Possible tune theory of Junior’s Lament

It has two parts. One in the lower register and one upper.
The scale material is- Sa, ga, ma, Pa, dha, ni, Sa.
However, Re is in the scale but only as a passing note to ga.
There is also a strong descending movement between ni and dha.
The ascending/descending (aroh/ avaroh) pattern might resemble something more in G with the tonic being the ma.
Vadi- ni~dha
Samvadi-ma

Figure No: 6.1 (Ascending/Descending pattern of Junior’s Lament)
With Tommy, I played the piece as an unaccompanied slow air with a D drone played by an accordion on the loop pedal (from 0:07-2:21). I utilize the open drone strings of the sarode to begin the piece, much like in an alap, and also strum these open strings in between sections of the air. Most of my pick technique is down strokes, with occasional passages of up strokes for a softer effect. Very little deviation from the melody itself takes place, and is more used in the second round of the air (for rhythmic cadences example 1:34-1:44 and ornamentation on slides for example 1:57-2:04). I am conscious when playing a slow air, that it is not like an alap in North Indian classical music, in that it is a fixed melody, often with its origins in a song. Improvisation can take place up to a point but the essence of the air cannot be lost. From my listening of other musicians performing airs, especially Tony Mac Mahon, Junior Crehan and Willie Clancy, there are very few long pauses on the tonic or other expressive notes as there would be in an alap. The integrity of the song is kept in flow with minor ornamental improvisation or rhythmic/melodic cadences.

With Debojyoti, I played the air through once unaccompanied then he joined with a sitarkhani 16 beat rhythm cycle (from 0:12- 4:12). The choice of sitarkhani is an interesting one and it appears regularly in my performances with Debojyoti. The rhythm is not strictly classical in the Indian sense and it is often reserved for short light, more romantic pieces which are often used to conclude a recital. However, sitarkhani seems to be a good fit for many Irish melodies which are in a 4/4 rhythmic structure, much more so than the more classical 16 beat cycle of teental. Debojyoti explained that he felt that sitarkhani accompaniment worked so well with Irish traditional music because “groove is there…it has a wave…it’s not straight” (in interview 04/08/16). This syncopation produces a 'groove', which is mostly absent in more strictly classical talas and this feeling of 'lift' is such an important part of Irish melodic performance.

![Figure No: 6.2 (Sitar khani in tabla bols)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=esXscvLRJ9w&list=PLYPsCKqEZn5vUsw0pGiV7OuZjKCeZuK6L&index=1)

![Figure No: 6.2 (Sitar khani in tabla bols)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QFV9vERuPqY&index=2&list=PLYPsCKqEZn5u8YtGpuIrzrX8117UmhPF4)
The use of *sitarkhani* changed the phrasing of the piece quite considerably as I felt the need to leave long gaps to fit the accents of the rhythm cycle. In my performance with the *tabla*, the phrase of the slow air fits into one cycle of *sitarkhani*. The following cycle of 16 beats is left open leading into the next part of the air. It also made the duration of the piece considerably longer than when I played it with Tommy. Interestingly, although a slow air in Irish music is not technically metered, it often has a subtle regularly accented pulse, possibly perhaps from the vocal origin of many of these airs.\(^{113}\) It seems to be a natural fit to accompany a slow air with a simple rhythmic accompaniment. This also allows more structure on which to build improvisation, especially within the cycles of Indian tala which are designed for this purpose (for examples from 2:27-2:37 & 2:59-3:05). As with previous examples, the ‘container’ of the tala acted as a catalyst for improvisation although importantly, in deference to the tradition of slow air playing in Irish music, the main melody was not abandoned altogether. As we also maintained this rhythm for the next piece, which was a *hornpipe*, it created more of what I would call a ‘narrative arc’.

\(^{113}\) For an interesting discussion on the rhythm of non-metered music see Clayton (2000, pp. 95-103).
5.7.1 Caisleán an Oír

This hornpipe is one of Junior Crehan's most famous compositions. The melody in this performance was in D Dorian mode and is beautiful and quite mournful when played slowly.\textsuperscript{114} The tune type is often in a slow setting and “performed in a deliberate manner with definite accents on beats one and three of each bar” (ibid, p. 352). The tempo of the hornpipe is generally slower than a reel, and rhythms most commonly encountered in hornpipe fiddle dances include 2/4 and 4/4 dotted rhythms such as:

Steve Cooney, the creator of the GV system used in this analysis, describes the various rhythmic approaches of hornpipe accompaniment as different markers of a 12 beat cycle with an accent on groups threes (Figure No: 6.5). This shows different subdivisions of a pulse of threes which is the undercurrent of the hornpipe despite it being notated in 4/4 or 2/4.

\textsuperscript{114} Often this tune is played in the key of A. It is notated as such in Junior’s book of compositions (2006).
However, I personally feel that the traditional rhythm of a hornpipe is quite laborious and doesn’t allow the natural beauty of the tune to be presented. In my performance with Tommy, we worked with a way to create more ‘space’ within a hornpipe which would allow more scope for improvisation (from 4:24-5:21). This was achieved using a simple cow bell pattern represented in standard notation in Figure No: 6.6 and GV in Figure No: 6.7. For comparison I will also include the tabla in Figure No: 6.8.

In this simple accompaniment, Tommy also occasionally adds a single strike on a low pitched bodhran in between the cowbell pattern. Note that in Figure no, this is written in 3/4 as the pulse of the bell follows the underlying threes of the hornpipe
rhythm. In the GV example (Figure No: 6.7) the twelve beat cycle is divided by two and ten beats. While this doesn’t clearly articulate a cyclic rhythm it is strikingly different to the standard hornpipe accompaniments shown in Figure No: 6.5. However, these notations are only useful for more abstract analysis. In my performance of *Caisleán an Oír* with Tommy, I actually follow the natural melodic cadence of the cow bell pattern, which sounds on the fourth (*ma*) and flattened third (*ga*), rather than following an abstract mathematical metre. My mirroring of the cow bell part can clearly be heard in the following clip 5:06-5:21. Due to this cow bell accompaniment, the resulting tonal centre of the piece moves between the tonic (*Sa*) and the fourth (*ma*) which makes a nice transition from the beginning slow air. I find this interplay between these two tones creates an interesting sense of contraction in the rhythm, somewhat akin to the *sam/kali* dynamic of Indian classical music. This scaffolding allows for an interplay around these accents and I believe works really well for improvisation (from 4:01- 4:34).

Again, however, my improvisation is somewhat linked to phrases around the melody. Although I do abandon the main tune altogether, my phrases are small groups of melodic ideas rather than an extended exploration of the scale material. I feel this type of improvisation is more rhythmic in character rather than melodic. The accent of Tommy’s accompaniment frames the phrases of my own passages, especially in a feeling of three’s or six. My phrases coincide with either Tommy’s bell or bodhran pattern. His accenting of the beat, which is grouped more like 12 e.g. (four groups of 3), is the anchor from which my phrases can stray. The example here (Figure No: 7.1) shows how I accent the fifth (Pa) and the tonic (Sa) at the same time as Tommy’s cowbell (Pa) and bodhran (Sa). The combination of the unusual bell pattern and the strong bodhran bass throb, construct a kind of *sam* and *k kali* interplay, with the *sam* resolving on the bodhran, the bell feeling like an empty beat, although, this rule doesn’t strictly apply throughout the whole improvisation.
Figure No: 7.0 (Caisleán an Oír improvisation excerpt 1 with Tommy)

Figure No: 7.2 (Caisleán an Oír improvisation excerpt 2 with Tommy)

Figure No: 7.3 (Caisleán an Oír improvisation excerpt 3 with Tommy)
With this same hornpipe in the performance with Debojyoti, we actually continued the sitarkhani accompaniment from the slow air. In rehearsals, we had tried using a 16 beat teental and even a 12 beat ektal accompaniment, but they simply didn’t work. This was primarily because the different accents of these rhythms contrasted too dramatically with the hornpipe. Even though a hornpipe is notated with a 4/4 time signature, as already discussed, it has a strong pulse of three, whereas as teental is a very straight pulse of four and ektal is subdivided with a pulse of twos. However, the choice of sitarkhani accompaniment still dramatically changed the rhythmic feel of the tune. Initially, in rehearsals, I had tried playing at half speed as the tempo of sitarkhani felt slightly fast. This meant that the melody stretched over two cycles of the tala. The melody pattern became shortened, with less dotted quavers, so that I could fit it into the rhythmic cycle. I also dropped the melody down one tone, so that (ma) the fourth become the vadi and the sixth note (dha) became flattened. This along with the sitarkhani dotted crochet feel, slightly shifted the pulse of the melody, an effect which is notated in Figure No: 7.4.
However, in the performance (from 4:24-6:35), I in fact played the melody at double this pulse and in the same D minor setting as with Tommy (Figure No: 7.5). This created quite a rapid rendition of the tune and I do not think it was particularly successful as a hornpipe or as a sitarkhani composition. The performance also suffered from a slight confusion over where the *sam* was at times, both by myself and Debojyoti. I think that this was mostly due to the fact that I initially started the melody at the wrong place in the rhythmic cycle. This resulted in our final *tihai* being a little sloppy (from 6:30-6:35). However, the improvisation section (from 5:20-6:35) is quite interesting and deserves a closer examination as it demonstrates how the unambiguous (*sam/kali*) cycle of North Indian classical tala lends itself to systematic melodic exploration, regardless of the melodic material. In particular, I think this improvisation is an example of the possibilities of improvisation beyond Irish melody in which the accompaniment holds space for unearthing the ‘internal logic’ of the melody.

5:20-5:27- (Re is emphasized as strong note).

115 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QFV9vERuPqY&index=2&list=PLYPsCKqEZn5u8YtGpulrzrX8I17UmPf4
Figure No: 7.5 (Caisleán an Oír improvisation excerpt 1 with Debojyoti)

5:27- 5:33 (tabla holds on full cycle of tala and sarode comes at the kali).
5:33-5:46 (again Re is explored with a longer sthyai passage).

Figure No: 7.6 (Caisleán an Oír improvisation excerpt 2 with Debojyoti)

5:46- 6:01 (two phrases from the previous improvisations are repeated with faster stroke (diridiri) patterns (Figure no)
I am not suggesting that this passage is exceptional improvisation or that it is without flaws, but it does illustrate something of a framework around which more systematic improvisation with Irish tunes can be undertaken. Certainly, to focus in on such a small section of the performance is an artificial analytic move that detracts from a sense of the gestalt of the entire piece. Yet this kind of analysis does offer greater insight into the performative future of this project. Focussing in on this short section allows for reflection on the intuitive and ephemeral nature of my improvisations and begins to highlight the ‘grammar’ of the tune. This possible grammar or ‘internal logic’ is expressed in the ascending descending scale pattern (Figure no) garnered from the improvisation analysis.
Figure No: 7.8 (Caisleán an Oír ascending/ descending movement notation)

A tentative ascending and descending scale pattern of the tune is suggested as a ‘crooked’ (vakra) movement (Figure No: 7.8). Although, importantly what I am arguing here is that this ‘grammar’ of the tune will be expressed very differently depending on the ‘language’ of the rhythmic accompaniment. For example, in the performance with Tommy, because of his use of the bell pattern, the fourth note (ma) flattened third (ga) were emphasized which made them resemble of the vadi and samvadi, strong or principal notes in Hindustani raga aesthetics. In the performance with tabla accompaniment, although we originally had rehearsed a setting with a strong emphasis on the (ma), our final arrangement revolved around the tonic (sa), the second (Re), and also the fifth (Pa). This subtlety changes the mood of the piece and also the approach to improvisation.

However, despite the different accompaniment techniques, some of the tune’s ‘logic’ is apparent in both performances. This I feel is because both accompanying rhythms provide a defined ‘space’ which allows for improvisation. One example of the ‘grammar’ of this tune’s logic is evident in the pakar (catch phrase) of sliding up to the flattened 7th (ni). In Irish traditional music, particularly in the styles of many well-known East Clare fiddle players, sliding up to or ‘scooping’ this note, (which is C natural), is often equated with the mysterious quality of the ‘lonesome touch’. In combination with other stylistic and technical approaches, such as the use of minor keys, dropping tunes down a step, a slow tempo and use of dynamic expression, this ‘scooping’ of the note (incidentally called a meend in Hindustani music) is not only associated with the melancholy aesthetic of ‘lonesomeness’ (O’ Shea, 2008, p.70-77) but also is connected to the prized effect of ‘draoicht’ literally ‘a spell or magic’
The use of glissando and other more elaborate ornamentation in Hindustani music is also attributed to the evocation of particular moods. These types of ornamentation could be considered primarily rhythmic in nature, as they deal with the manipulation of melodic material over a strict time, although the focus of the instrumentalist or singer is arguably predominantly melodic. Some scholars (Holryde, 1968; Jaizrabhoy, 2008) suggest that it is within these ornamentations that the elusive ‘sruti’ resides, rather than existing in the pure tone itself.\textsuperscript{116}

This type of argument has interesting implications for exploring this same concept further in Irish traditional music. In contrast to the Hindustani tradition, ornamentation in Irish traditional music is often considered primarily rhythmic, again another example of the interwoven nature of melody and rhythm resulting from a dance function. However, within the ornamentations of traditional musicians, there is a whole universe of micro-tonal and micro-rhythmic cadences. These cadences, accents, inflections and modulations, when mediated against the pulse of temporal progression, are at the core of the affective power of traditional music. My argument here is that these rhythmic ornamentations can only be understood in their performative context, which is bound by melodic restraints.

To fully explore the possibilities of Irish traditional ornamentation as a microcosm for aesthetic theory and extended improvisation, requires that the traditional roles of rhythm and melody need to be somewhat untangled so that the full potential of the tune’s grammar may be elucidated. As melody and rhythm are so intertwined in Irish traditional dance music, this generally makes the role of the rhythmic accompanist static as the rhythm required relates so closely to the tune itself. Yet traditional accompaniment is also ambiguous in that the individual can interpret what is actually required in service to the tune. My own performances represent an initial attempt at re-configuring this relationship between rhythm and melody by understanding the role of rhythm in an unambiguous manner, namely that rhythm ‘holds a space’ for improvisation.\textsuperscript{117} Any further exploration of the internal logic in the melodic cadences

\textsuperscript{116} My own teacher, K. Sridhar, has discussed with me many times that the sruti resides within the passing notes of the ornaments. He describes the effect of srutis in relation to his own practice of nada yoga. He argues that these srutis can be applied in any musical form. In informal discussions he was described the fiddle playing of Joe Ryan and Tommy Potts to possess good sruti. It is not the focus of this research to more systematically explore this concept but hopefully future work will extend from this mostly anecdotal evidence.

\textsuperscript{117} To draw upon my earlier practice based definition, ‘groove’ is defined as a clearly expressed cyclical relationship between strong and empty beats with the intention of creating an undulating pulse.
of traditional music requires a continuation of this performance based approach rather than isolated and extrapolated analysis of existing practices.

5.7.2 The Heron Jig

The next piece in the set, the Heron Jig, is a tune that ‘fell under my fingers’ during a week-long workshop as part of the PhD programme in the academy. It was the first tune I ever made, in the traditional context. The tune, and the heron, literally came to me while I was sitting beside the river Shannon with my instrument. In this performance context, however, the tune which is a double jig, posed some problems for the tabla accompaniment. For this jig, we tried using Dadra tal accompaniment which is an Indian folk rhythm in six (3 +3) beats, sam is on the first beat and kali is on the fourth beat. It is notated here in Figure No:8.1.
Debojyoti explains that he chose to play this in double tempo and slightly alter the “traditional syllable of the rhythm”. He said that this wasn’t an intellectual process but that, “I just followed accent of your tune and structure” (from email communication, 2015). The sam and kali are still in the same place as traditional dadra tal but the strokes (bols) on the tabla are different, offering more of a triplet feel. Debojyoti stated that he purposely didn’t “play straight theka” but rather he “adjusted with the melody structure” (in interview 04/08/16). The syllables are then slightly changed to-

Dhage - ne Dhikete | Take - te Dhikete, and also to Dha- Take te Na Dhin Dhin.

Debojyoti reflected that, “it was lovely tune” and that he enjoyed what he called “the inside rhythm of heron jig” (from 6:35-8:10). In particular, he complimented my approach to Irish melody as establishing a “kind of trance mood” (from email communication, 2015). However, I did not really feel that we were particular in synchrony for this tune. When I notated it using GV I found that it wasn’t really working as a cycle, as the ‘one’ is constantly emphasized. I felt the tabla accompaniment wasn’t particularly responsive to my improvisations. This lack of cyclicity is perhaps best represented in the GV notation of this tabla accompaniment (Figure No: 8.2) compared with the bodhran accompaniment of the same tune (Figure No: 8.3).
I have included three possible ways to notate Debojyoti’s tabla accompaniment because the actual main pulse is somewhat ambiguous. While *dadra* tal traditional has an empty beat on the third beat of the six beat cycle, the *kali* did not seem so pronounced for me in the performance as the cycle is very short. It was in fact difficult to hear the tune running over a long cycle of 12 bars, which is something I thought Debojyoti and I had done very successfully with other Irish tune types. In this case though, the tabla pattern was so short and the *kali* didn’t really give that contraction which it does in longer *tal* cycles. Tommy explained that when he heard Debojyoti’s accompaniment that “he played it like a rock drummer” (personal communication, 2015). Tommy had made similar comments about other tabla players he heard playing jigs from the Indian tour discussed previously. In fairness to Debojyoti, unlike some of the other tabla players I have worked with, he was aware that a different kind of rhythm outside of traditional tala was needed to suit this tune type and he asked many questions about the tune’s structure and, as he called it, its ‘groove’. Interestingly, it was only when I began to convey the tune by lilting it, that we began to make any progress towards achieving a satisfactory approach.
While I did manage an improvised section with the tabla accompaniment (from 7:37-8:01), I ironically felt somewhat constrained by the lack of clear structure to the rhythm cycle. I was reminded of other examples of Irish-Indian ‘fusion’, especially those in which a tabla player simply plays along with a jig or a reel, and felt that we didn’t quite reach the levels of discernment I would have hoped. Again, as with some of the other Irish pieces, our final tihai (8:05-8:10) was slightly out of sync. There were some interesting moments though, and in particular from (7:24-7:38). In this section, I am mostly following the structure of the tune and Debojyoti is accenting the end of the phrase with six rapid bass notes of his tabla (bayan). My interpretation is that this section seems to be dynamically moving because of the accent which Debojyoti is creating at the end of the phrase. This creates a clearer rhythmic definition that the melody can wrap itself around.

With Tommy, I felt the performance of the Heron jig was much more successful and dynamic even though it followed a fairly traditional grouping of threes with accents on the 1 and the 3 (from 5:23-7:24). The accenting of the first and third beat creates a feeling of an undulating pulse, with the second beat acting as a continuous kali (Figure no). Perhaps, though the biggest difference here was Tommy’s familiarity and comfort with the jig form and also our own experience at performing the piece. This experience resulted in a much longer improvised section than with the tabla accompaniment. Just over 30 seconds with Debojyoti (with tabla from 7:23-8:01) and almost a minute with Tommy from 6:28-7:23). This improvisation with Tommy had three clear sections (Improv 1 from 6:28-6:43 Improv 2 from 6:43-7:05 Improv 3 from 7:10-7:25)
**Figure No: 8.4 (Heron Jig improvisation excerpt 1 with Tommy)**

*Improvisation 1* (sthai, middle register improvisations down to flattened sixth (dha))

6:28-6:35 (Sa ni Pa, dha...dha...dha-ni...Sa Re ga Re Sa ni dha Pa,
Sa ni Pa, dha- dha- dha...Sa Re ga ma Pa ma ga Re Sa
6:35-6:39 (Sa ni Pa, dha--dha--dha. ni... Sa Re RgR sa
6:39-6:43 (Sa ni Pa dha- dha..ni Sa Re Sa ni Sa..Sa Re ma Pa ma ga Re Sa, Re ga ma

**Figure No: 8.5 (Heron Jig improvisation excerpt 2 with Tommy)**

*Improvisation 2* (upper register between Pa and Sa, repeated emphasis on Pa)

6:43-6:49 Pa Pa Pa-....ma Pa dha Pa ma Re ga ma Pa ,Pa, Pa-
6:49- 6:54 (moves up to upper octave Sa, emphasis on dha)
6:54- 7:05 (off beat variations on phrase from Pa moving down to middle register Sa)
What can be gleaned from such a breakdown of an improvisation? Firstly, it becomes apparent how I am applying various North Indian classical rhythmic techniques to structure my improvisation. An obvious example is the use of tihais (a three times repeated motif, usually landing on the sam) which are used to signify the end of an improvisatory passage. Secondly, in the broader structure, there is a general resemblance to the basics of raga presentation. The improvisation doesn’t just go anywhere, it follows a pattern. This pattern also follows a dynamic arc moving from the speculative to the more intense opening strumming of the third improv section. The improvisation begins around the middle octave and the tonic (sthayi), to exploring the fifth (Pa) up to the upper octave tonic (antara), then returns again to the (sthayi).

I do not wish to suggest that this simplistic explication is an exhaustive explanation of Indian classical performance, nor that I am an expert authority of the nuances of raga. My experience of North Indian classical music is barely even a drop in the ocean compared to that of true masters, yet the practice has taught me how an
intentional structure gives great freedom. The clarity of form and the rigours of its application, through the paradoxical freedom of improvisation, can ultimately lead to a transcendence which for me is the highest goal performance. This kind of analysis, while also identifying improvisatory musical structures, allows us to hone in on the performative and affective realization of the purpose of these structures. It also may offer the ability to reverse engineer, so to speak, the ‘internal logic’ of the tune itself. As this tune is one of my own compositions, it would be interesting to interpret the tune’s logic or grammar and what elements, if any, can be attributed to a signature style or a broader category of tune types. Again, this is beyond the limits of this chapter but it is hoped that the processes undertaken in this initial research can lay the foundation for future practice based inquiry.

5.8 The performative moment and gesture

Another approach to understand the affective or ‘feeling tone’ of these performances is an analysis of the performance’s gestural dimension (Clayton & Leante, 2011; Clayton, 2007; Morton, 2005; Knapp et al, 2009; Rahaim, 2012). By reviewing the video footage, certain facial expressions, such as closed eyes, head nods, winks, smiles and various verbalised gestures are expressions of the musical affect of the performative moment. By analysing the musical moments of some of these key gestural expressions, I hope to gain further insight into the sympathetic affective experience of the performance and the musical materials present in these moments. In particular, I feel the Heron jig was one of the most effective and affective pieces in the whole performance with Tommy. There are clear gestural signs of both of us enjoying this tune and musically trading ideas. For example, from 6:04-6:12 the camera focusses in on Tommy: eyes are closed, slight smile, swaying head, left shoulder moving up and down in time with the third beat of his bodhran as his left hand moves up and down the back of the bodhran to manipulate the tone. From 6:12-6:17 Tommy closes his eyes more tightly purses his lips and slightly sticks out his tongue as he begins a variation on the pulse, playing twelve crochet beats against the pulse of 6/8. From 6:18-6:20 he opens his eyes again and follows the main pulse before launching into another variation when he closes his eyes tight and plays a flurry of fast triplets down the face of his drum. The mood has been established by this stage and we are both comfortable. I being to improvise from 6:28-6:42 and Tommy begins following the rhythmic accent of my phrases. From 6:43-6:49 I begin to strum strong open chords on the first beat of each triplet (Pa, Pa, Pa, Pa) and Tommy contrasts this with his rapid triplet run down the
bodhran. I then lean back, close my eyes tightly, grimacing as I play an ascending *meend* up to the high tonic from 6:49-6:54). Tommy closes his eyes again and from 6:54-7:04 sways his head from side to side, following my descending *tihai* phrase which leads back to the B part of the composition.

While I did not feel the same affect in my performance of the *Heron jig* with Debojyoti, we did however, manage to create some nice moments which again are evident in the gestural dimension. In our short improvisation (from 7:32- 7:37) I slightly alter the composition by finishing on a *komal dha* rather than a *komal ni*, Debojyoti is obviously aware of this variation and quietly says, ‘*Kya bhat!*’ under his breath. This expression, literally meaning ‘what a thing!’, is a common exclamation amongst performers and audience members alike in Hindustani music and is used to compliment a performer’s technical skill or ability to bring out the mood of the raga. It is a crucial part of the dynamic of performance and I think especially between the performers themselves. This kind of encouraging appreciation is evident in other performative moments with Debojyoti as well. In fact, an audience member at the performance with Tommy commented on my different posture and gestures between the Indian and Irish melodies. She suggested that my posture was more upright and spirited in the Irish pieces.\(^{118}\) This dynamic interplay between the verbal, gestural and the musical is perhaps most evident in the final piece of this set which is based on *Raga Asawari*.

### 5.8.1 Gat in Rag Asawari

![Figure No: 9.0 (Gat in Raga Asawari)](image)

This piece revolves around an Indian classical *gat* (fixed composition) based on *Raga Asawari* in a nine beat cycle (*mata tal*). This raga is an early morning raga, which

\(^{118}\) I reflected that this could also because the North Indian classical melodies were the fastest and most lively compositions. Likewise, I am most comfortable with North Indian classical melodies as they are the most familiar to me.
has associations of pathos and romance. Its strong notes (vadi and samvadi) are the flattened sixth and third (komal dha) and (komal ga). Asawari is also the name of the main ten family scales (thata) of ragas which were categorized by Bhatkhande (2004) in the early twentieth century. The scale material of this thata is in an Aeolian mode e.g. (Sa, Re, ga, ma, Pa, dha, ni, Sa). The ascending/descending pattern omits the flattened third and sixth in the ascent:

Aroh: Sa, Re, ma, Pa, dha, Sa-
Avaroh: Sa, ni, dha, Pa, ma, ga, Re Sa.

Although I have had a long love affair with this raga, my teacher even improvising on this raga as I walked down the aisle when I got married, I have never formally learnt Asawari in the traditional guru-shishya system. In fact, this composition does not come from either of my teachers but rather was gleamed from an old cassette recording of Ashish Khan (sarode) and Zakir Hassein (tabla). Furthermore, I chose this composition, not just because of my love for it, but also because I have not learnt this raga in a strict manner. Both of my teachers have discussed the importance of keeping classical and ‘fusion’ music somewhat separate, and this is also partly why I have a separate sarode for playing Irish music. I also try to keep the formal ragas and compositions I have learnt for more traditional classical performance. Aashish Khan has described a similar selection process in his own ‘fusion’ work, suggesting that it is best, “not import ragas wholesale…to avoid offending listeners” (in Mujumdar, 2013). While compositions can be set to the rhythms of Hindustani music, Khan argues that these melodies should be based on what he describes as “the shadows of ragas” (ibid, 2013). In particular, I tend to choose the more light classical or Misa ragas for non-traditional performances, ragas such as Asawari, or Bhairavi, Manj Khamaj, Chaurakeshi and Kafi. This approach also makes the strict rules of grammar and also

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119 I hesitate to give references to understand this raga as Hindustani music is primarily an aural tradition and is necessarily a performance knowledge. Any understanding of raga should be through practice and guidance from a teacher. However, there is a wealth of scholarly work on raga aesthetics, from both Western and Eastern musicologists. Examples of Raga Asawari can be found in: Avtar, 2006, p. 33, Kaufman,1968, p. 463-466 & Bor (ed), 1994, p. 24-25.
the aesthetics of the raga more relaxed, which is especially important when working with musicians who do not have any experience with North Indian classical music.

Again, in accompaniment, Debojyoti uses the classical nine beat tala, which he used for slip-jig in 9/8, *The Night Larry got Stretched* except that in this example we have the tala in its natural habitat, accompanying a classical composition. Tommy on the other hand, is outside of his comfort zone as this composition is not a 9/8 slip jig rhythm, but rather has a sub-division of 4 +2+3. Tommy’s approach is to follow something of the 1234, 1234, 1234, 1234, 1-2-3-4. He is in fact just filling in the first six beats of the rhythm with his own improvisation, or as one colleague described, ‘busking it’ (in personal communication, 2015). Tommy then catches the final phrase in unison with the melody, which is represented here by dotted quavers (Figure No: 9.2).

![Figure No: 9.2 (nine beat bodhran pattern)](image)

The first six (crochet) beats of Tommy’s accompaniment, shifts between a pulse of four and three depending on his own whim. The dynamic then becomes, what I would describe as, much more earthy compared to the clear finesse of the tabla. However, at least while the melody is being played, Tommy is clearly aware of the contraction of the nine beat cycle and there is a great deal of interplay between us, akin to the relationship of tabla and sarode in the classical tradition. In particular, this is evident at the very start of the piece (from 7’35-7’50) where we ‘trade’ phrases which might be described as *sawal jawab* in the Hindustani tradition. In terms of the gestural dimension of this section of the performance, you can clearly see we are enjoying ourselves.
Further examples of what I consider the gestural expression of sympathy are evident (from 8:08- 8:15) when the composition is being played and I verbally respond to Tommy’s accompaniment by exclaiming ‘Ah!’ Musically, this is followed by my own response where I slightly change the melody, emphasizing the flattened sixth (komal dha). This gestural sympathy continues as I leave the fixed composition and begin to improvise (from 8:23- 8:33). This segment of the performance is one of my favourites, both musically and visually, as it represents Tommy and I rhythmically and emotionally getting into the same groove. Tommy closes his eyes and sways his shoulders, while tapping his feet, seemingly in rapture. My own eyes were closed and I am intensely focussed on my own breathing and the sound of the improvisation as it appears in my own mind before it is manifested on the instrument.
Differently from my performance with the tabla accompaniment, my improvisation here is still very much rhythmically tied to Tommy’s playing (from 8:22-9:50). Yet, the general ‘feeling tone’ of the performance is lively and I would argue in sympathy and this is again expressed verbally at the piece’s conclusion (from 10:00-10:06) where I shout ‘Hep’ to signal the final *tihai*.

![Figure no: 9.6 (standard notation of nine beat mata tal)](#)

*Figure no: 9.6 (standard notation of nine beat mata tal)*

In the performance with Debojyoti, I am able to play with the groove more, using off-beat phrases in the composition and stretching with and around the *sam* (from 8:40-9:53 and also from 10:32-11:01). Not only sonically, but gesturally, the tabla provides a clear framework. As the nine beat cycle revolves, the *kali* is signified by the absence of a bass note on the *bayan* or left side of the pair of drums. The final phrase of the cycle, *Dhin dhin na Dhin dhin na* is a dramatic gestural flurry which clearly leads to the clear and resounding *sam*. Through these bodily signals, combined with their sonic manifestations, we are able to bend and stretch the main pulse of the rhythm and melody, making improvisations which play with the accented first beat (*sam*), within a constant musical structure with which to return. Also Debojyoti gets a chance to
improvise, which would be a traditional part of modern raga presentation (from 10:02-10:32). This improvised section is communicated between us with some difficulty via head nods.

This improvisation also has more dynamic scope, ranging from parts when I do not play at all, to quiet explorations of one or two notes building up to rapid rhythmic and melodic passages (from 9:01-10:02). The efficacy of such a space for dynamic improvisation is again expressed in the gestural, albeit more subtlety in my case. In this section, I am intensely concentrated, brow furrowed, looking into an empty space just beyond my instrument. I recognize this look from the clip from many other performance stills. It is a sign that I am intensely concentrating on the mood of the piece, the mood which I must feel and hear within myself before I can manifest it musically. This requires a technique of present awareness of the musical moment yet also a detachment from the performance environment.
5.9 Reflections on rhythm, groove and the sympathy of the mongrel

To summarise the overall analysis presented in this chapter, it would seem that in rhythmic structuring, Irish traditional and North Indian classical music are almost polar opposites. This rhythmic difference is especially evident if we understand Irish traditional and North Indian classical music in a simplified dichotomy e.g. Irish rhythms are folk – Indian rhythms are classical. Irish traditional music is for dance- North Indian classical music is for listening. Yet my purpose here is not purely comparative musicology but a description of my practice, the unique way that I engage with this material. This is mediated, not only by engagement and understanding of the socio-cultural framework of traditions but an ability to move between them in performance. Therefore, I do not experience Irish traditional and North Indian classical musical rhythm to be necessarily at odds with each other. Rather through the mongrelity of my practice, I attempt to find the sympathetic synchrony in the process of performance. Indeed, I would like to suggest that sympathy is actually an *active* process in the performative sense. Inter-cultural musical sympathies are not to be found the static comparison of isolated musical transcriptions and cultural comparisons. Sympathy is an embodied process mediated by individuals in the performative moment. Admittedly, finding sympathy in the rhythmic considerations of performance requires a mediation of musicological and socio-cultural factors to some extent. Yet, just as importantly, the ‘felt’ knowledge and experience of the musicians involved is a vital factor in making inter-cultural collaborations work. Rhythmic sympathy requires a degree of some compromise, but hopefully when it works neither tradition loses its own defining characteristics.

I find it useful to understand the process of finding rhythmic sympathy in inter-cultural performance within the metaphor of the *groove*. Keil suggests that every groove is “both a mystery [and] a testable practice...the practical question is something like: what do we have to do with our bodies playing these instruments and …the music inside the people and the people inside the music? (2004, p. 1). So, while it is useful, as I hope to have shown in this chapter, to analyse the practical elements of performance, I would like to consider the groove that is the ‘music inside the people’ which undoubtedly is a significant contributor to the sympathy, or lack thereof in the performances analysed here. In particular, I would like to attempt to understand the mystery of the mongrel music inside of me and how this affects my understanding of rhythm in these performances.
We have established that the concept of rhythm and also groove are at least partly culturally defined. My understanding of the purpose of rhythm and the feeling of groove is a mixture of my experiences within a range of sonic traditions outlined in the first chapter (e.g. Indian, Irish, rock, African drumming, free jazz, electronica, Zen). The overriding sympathy in all of my experiences of musical time is that rhythm creates a form and form creates freedom. Freedom within form, (which I would call *improvisation*) leads to the possibility of musical transcendence. The interlocking interplay between freedom and form, which is manifested musical time, I would call ‘groove’. Although for me groove is related to the body, I understand this movement to be affective as much as physiological. I understand that music ‘moves us’ in the broadest sense of the term, both physically and emotionally. Groove carries the affective power of musical time. Madison asserts that, “groove appears to reflect the music's efficiency for entrainment” (2009, p. 7). While entrainment may generally be associated with rhythmic together-ness, Clayton (2009) has also argued it could be equated with John Blacking’s concept of ‘fellow feeling’ in music. He suggests that rhythmic entrainment may be one of the most crucial aspects of music which “lead to fellow feeling and shared mental states” (in LOGOS seminar, 2015).

Feld suggests a broader theoretical definition of groove which does not refer to rhythm. He describes it as, “an intuitive sense of style as process, a perception of cycle in motion, a form or organizing pattern being revealed, a recurrent clustering of elements through time” (in Hennessy, 2008, p. 142). It is this ‘perception of cycle in motion, a form or organizing pattern’ which closely meshes with my understanding of the purpose of rhythm and the feeling of groove. The idea of cyclicity is important here, rather than a linear perception of time. Likewise, the sense of motion, a continuous chain of rhythmic cycles which are interconnected, is important to my understanding of groove. Importantly though, while this form must be clearly expressed, it also should have a consistent pulsating variable, such as a recurring strong or weak beat, which signals one’s place in the chain of rhythmic events. The purpose of these interlocking chains is not primarily to invite physical dance but to invite the melodic dance of improvisation. It is my experience that improvisation (freedom) within this form is what leads to the ephemeral transcendent moment of musical performance. Therefore, I

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120 Although, as Madison suggests it is equally the “physical properties of the sound signal [which] contribute to groove - as opposed to mere association due to previous exposure” (2009, p. 239).
121 This is explained more musicologically in the analysis section.
would suggest that groove, in my own performance practice, relates to understanding the role of rhythm in an unambiguous manner, namely that rhythm becomes a groove when it ‘holds a space’ for improvisation. This is especially evident when the purpose of rhythm is to create groove to move us in the broadest sense. In this context, groove could be technically defined as a clearly expressed cyclical relationship between strong and empty beats with the intention of creating an undulating pulse. This undulation is created by the movement of strong and weak accents and the improviser’s ability to move within and around them. It is the space within the form of non-ambiguous groove which nurtures the spark of musical creativity.

The main difficulty for finding a meeting point in rhythmic approach in these performances, was attempting to apply the above definition of groove as a non-ambiguous cyclical relationship to both Irish and Indian melody. My definition of groove is very much linked with my experience of North Indian classical music. However, I believe there is a performative rhythmic sympathy to be found in the Irish tradition. For me, it is the repetition of the tune, which has the rhythm fixed within it, which creates the possibility for groove. The tune, with its repeating strong and weak accents, creates a particular feeling tone in the listener which is parallel with the somatics of chant. To paraphrase Coward and Goa, the tune, “is verified not by what it describes or cognitively reveals but by more complex vibration or feeling tone it creates in the practising person” (2004, p. 6). Ó Súilleabháin has touched on this type of analogy in his own writing, describing that in the performance of traditional music you can actually feel the main pulses “move through your body, and you can see them going through the musician’s body” (2001, p. 7).

My interest, both as a scholar and a performer, is how it may be possible to understand the rhythms of Irish traditional music in an embodied but less ambiguous manner. This interest arises from a need in my own practice to find a sympathetic rhythmic approach to Irish and Indian melodies. To create this sympathy requires bringing rhythmic elements from both of these musical worlds together; namely the ambiguous ‘groove’ or ‘lift’ of Irish dance music and the non-ambiguous improvisatory rhythmic scaffolding of the Indian tradition. To do this requires a broader theoretical, yet still technically grounded, performance based understanding of groove. I hope that this research is an initial step to realize these lofty aims.
CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSIONS

6.1 A summary of intentions
This research has attempted to explore my own mongrel musical practice as a case study for broader issues of globalization and cultural flux. I have argued throughout this work that most research into inter-cultural musicking does not focus enough on the individual as a locus for hybridity, particularly from a somatic perspective. I hope that this thesis has addressed the imbalance of previous research into this area and offered insights that may be relevant beyond my own practice. At the outset of this thesis, I described two main purposes: exploring the metaphor of the mongrel through my own artistic practice and examining sympathies between Irish traditional and North Indian classical music. Much of the realization of these objectives, I would argue, is in fact presented in the performances that accompany this thesis. These performances, and the films which document them, are in a way conclusive statements of the research outcome in themselves. Upon even a cursory viewing of these performances, it becomes apparent that Irish traditional and North Indian classical music are in fact very different aesthetic systems.

6.2 Irish-Indian musical divergences
Despite some similarities in the features of their social and cultural organization, such as aurality and the approach to apprenticeship, to make these musics come together in a meaningful way in performance takes considerable work. Musically speaking, this research has demonstrated that Irish traditional and North Indian classical music are different on a number of fundamental levels including the conception and structure of melody, rhythm and time. The reality of these musical differences became pronounced during the Indian tour with Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill. Despite working with extremely talented musicians, albeit in a short space of time, we were mostly unable to move beyond the limitations of each tradition. In fact, most of the collaborative performances consisted of simplified versions of both Irish traditional and North Indian classical music, utilizing a predominant structure of an Irish melody played over Indian rhythmic accompaniment with some element of improvisation. The music only found its sympathy in being beside each other.
After this tour, I identified rhythmic organization as a key area of difference between Irish traditional and North Indian classical music. For example, the temporal frame of Irish music is in the micro, minute detail of the tune. The temporal frame of North Indian classical music operates in the macro, expansive space of the raga. The rhythms of Irish traditional music are closely linked to the micro-world of the tune. The rhythms of Indian classical music are purposely separate from the melodic macro-world of raga. Indian classical rhythms offer a temporal space for extended improvisation. Irish traditional rhythms provide lift for the dance. Investigation of this clear rhythmic divergence became the focus of my performances with percussionists, Tommy Hayes and Debojyoti Sanyal. In these performances, I explored how Indian classical rhythm simply does not *groove* in the same way that Irish music does. North Indian *tabla*, and the broader *tala* structures in which it operates, despite being nuanced and diverse, at times does not fit the ‘feel’ of an Irish tune. For the tabla accompaniment to work with Irish melodies, a less disciplined and more 'folk' orientated approach to rhythm was often adopted. On the other hand, I explored how the rhythms of Irish melodies are so strongly linked with dance that it was difficult to establish a clear framework for extended improvisation which is such a key part of Indian classical musical practice.

6.3 Irish-Indian musical sympathies

And yet, I would argue that this research has demonstrated that there is sympathy between North Indian classical and Irish traditional music, but this sympathy lies not so much in musical *product* but in musical *process*. This sympathy only becomes apparent in the process of musicians making music. This is an understanding of sympathy as active, as a verb, as a performance, rather than denoting similarities to be found among isolated musical artefacts. While the concept of a tune and a raga, the tal and the lift, are very different, through the performance process the musicians involved in this research necessarily found some sympathies. I would argue that the figure of the mongrel is crucial figure in realising this sympathy. In fact, perhaps, the sympathy is to be found in the mongrel.

The liminal figure of the mongrel is attuned to that sympathetic moment of recognition of a relationship, a recognising of the Self in the Other. This embodied sympathetic feeling deeply influences my musical practice and is exemplified in the way that I have begun to *hear* and *understand* and therefore, *perform* both Irish traditional and North Indian classical music in a relational and sympathetic manner.
When I play a slow air, such as *Junior’s Lament* in the second performance, I understand it as a prelude to the aesthetic character of the whole piece, in parallel with an *alap* and *raga* expansion. When I ‘scoop’ or slide up to a C natural in the hornpipe *Caisleán an Oír*, I hear and understand it in a manner sympathetic with the emotional evocativeness of a *meend* in Hindustani music. When I improvise with a tune, I naturally am searching for an ‘internal logic’ akin to the concept of the raga’s *chalan* or as my teacher might describe ‘the way the raga moves’.

In reflection on the second performance, I explored how *groove* may move us in the broadest sense of the term, both physically and emotionally, and groove encapsulates the inherent affective power of musical time. I argued that despite the obvious differences in the structure and experience of musical time between Irish and Indian traditions, a sympathetic *process* could be realized in constructing a defined groove as a vehicle for improvisation. This involved some alteration from both rhythmic traditions, namely the tabla player needed to learn how to somewhat relax the strict syllables of standard classical *tala* and the Irish percussionist was required to become more rigorously explicit in creating sonic ‘space’ for improvisation. The key shared concept for both percussionists was the importance of a clearly expressed undulating cycle of strong and weak accents. When this kind of groove was realized in performance, the scope for my own melodic improvisation expanded, in turn expanding the possibilities for a feeling of personal expression.

### 6.4 The role of the mongrel

The musical sympathies of this project are very much idiosyncratic to my own practice which I have characterised through the mongrel metaphor. The role of the mongrel in inter-cultural music exchange is that of a sympathetic agent. This sympathetic process is crucial to understanding how the figure of the mongrel plays an important part in inter-cultural music exchange. The sympathy of the mongrel involves translation: literal, musical and internal. Examples of literal and musical translations were numerous during the Indian tour and with Debojyoti and Tommy in the final performances. For example, I translated the Irish tunes into Indian notation (*sargam*) and scale type (*thata*) for the Indian musicians in Delhi and Mumbai. More musically, I also converted the Indian rhythmic structures into an equivalent Irish dance groove for Martin and Dennis in Chennai and also with Tommy in our collaborations in Ireland.
These translations also happened internally, within my own understanding during the course of this research. This sympathetic internalization process did not just happen in the collaborative encounters of the performances but are an intrinsic part of my continuous critical meta-practice. From the moment of hearing Seán Ó Riada’s exposition of Irish-Indian similarities, to learning my first polka on the sarode, to learning Junior Crehan’s music, to taking up the fiddle, to the creation of a new instrument, and an acquisition of an entirely new repertoire, I have constantly been absorbing, reflecting, comparing, and critiquing Irish traditional music with my understanding of Indian classical music. At the same time, in unearthing my other musical influences beyond Irish traditional and North Indian classical music, in embracing my mongrelity, I have developed a practice which is rich, complex and more embodied. This process has allowed me to inhabit multiple musical worlds. Rather than having to jump between them, I feel I have begun to integrate these diverse musical experiences within my own self. To reiterate, the sympathy is the mongrel in me.

6.5 Sympathetic processes

Broadly speaking, Irish-Indian musical sympathies are subtle, their processes of musical production vary, and their musical products varied. Yet, part of the mongrel’s ability to facilitate the sympathetic process is the knowledge of that which can be brought from the other side. Within the context of this research, I am reluctant to summarize a list the sympathetic moments of recognition, as I believe the performances themselves are the most embodied representation of this concept. However, very simply put, some of the sympathetic musical processes may be summarised as follows. These processes are musical devices which are apparent, in differing degrees in both Irish traditional and Indian classical music. Focussing on these particular processes within the very different rhythmic and melodic structures of the two musical systems made much of the performative aspect of this project possible.

1. *Improvisation:* variations on the ‘internal logic’ of a melody.
2. *Microtonality:* using non-tempered scale material with affective associations.
3. *Modality:* an understanding of melody based on mode and a fixed tonic.
4. Use of a *drone:* sustained tonic textural accompaniment during performance.
5. *Dynamic temporal arc:* the construction of suites of melodies with gradual increase in tempo.
6. *Affective groove:* the construction of an undulating pulse of strong and weak
accents creating a frame for extended improvisation.

7. Repetition: the deliberate reiteration of melodic phrases as an affective technique such as in mantra chanting.

6.6 Affect as sympathetic process

The above list is a summary of musical and extra-musical processes which I believe are sympathetic between Irish traditional and North Indian classical music in the way they generate feeling tone in performance and also in the body. During this research, the concept of affect or 'feeling' has often arisen as way to sympathize between Indian and Irish music. During the Indian tour, Martin Hayes suggested that Irish traditional and Indian classical music had a 'similar world of feeling' and in my own practice, I explored the shared 'feeling tone' of my final performances. Feeling tone is a term I adopted to try and describe my own powerful somatic response to both playing and listening to music, regardless of genre. I have documented this feeling response to a variety of musics in a variety of contexts. The commonality among these varied instances is not the musical style, genre, instrumentation or tradition but my own physical and emotional body.

This research does not suggest that any 'feeling' is universally shared outside of cultural frames. The best way to understand the role of affect in music is in relation to the subjective experience of the individual. I argue that feeling and musical experience is fundamentally a somatic response in which (culturally determined) emotions may overlap. This understanding of feeling operates as an embodied ‘third space’ in inter-cultural mingling. It relates to the “inner nature of phenomenon” (Schopenhauer in Storr, 1992, p. 72). This brings new meaning to Ó Súilleabháin’s use of the expression lobality, a confluence of the local and the global as a site to understand musical hybridity (2003, p.193). The inner nature of the body's felt-sense or what I describe as feeling tone of listening is a 'third space' in which the sympathies between Irish traditional and North Indian classical music reveal themselves, which in turn reveals, to paraphrase Heaney “a music that you never would have known to listen for” (1997, p. 3).

The shared feeling tone, which I have experienced in both Irish traditional and North Indian classical music has helped me not just to identify sympathetic processual structures in the performative sense but also has assisted in creating order, a new
structural sense of the world, which has personal meaning and resonance. The metaphor of the mongrel, which arose at the outset of this research, has become the central pivot of my new sense of order in the world. Rather than being torn between cultural and musical worlds, through reclaiming the mongrel I have become more at ease in the convergence amongst them all. This has not been achieved intellectually or purely sonically, but through the somatic internalisation process which is at the core of hearing and listening to music. So, the sympathy between Irish traditional and North Indian classical music is not just in the mongrel, to be more concrete, it is in the mongrelity of the feeling body.

Yet the sympathy of the mongrel is not just one of accord and harmonious resonance. Recognizing difference and limitations is an important process of developing sympathy. The mongrel is pre-disposed to recognize difference and be empathetic to its existence because of its own mongrelity. In this way, the Australian colloquial slang of having ‘a bit of the mongrel’ expresses not just physical resilience but also, I argue, points to “a prototype of conflict resolution” because the journey of making peace with difference has to be done for the self first (Johnson, 1991, p. 107). Ó Súilleabháin agrees with my supposition that Irish traditional music is a *process* which may be applied “to whatever it turned its ear to” (2004, p.10). Yet he argues that such a practice does not serve to illuminate the similarity between different musical systems “but rather their essential separateness: even as they come closer they reveal themselves as far apart” (ibid, p. 10). We could equally argue that North Indian classical music is a performance process more than formal product. Likewise, when we apply the processes of Indian classical music to Irish traditional music, we reveal just how far apart they are. The sympathy between Irish traditional and North Indian classical music is not in musical product but in the seeking for a “unique sonic integration” (Ó Súilleabháin, 2004, p. 10) which is embodied in the individual and manifested in performance.

6.7 Limits of the research and future opportunities
Yet, perhaps my focus on subjective experience also points to some of the weaknesses of this project. While this research may have vindicated the need for practice based research into Irish-Indian musical sympathies, it is very much idiosyncratic to my own practice. It is difficult to assess whether the musical processes I have identified would be useful for other performers. The processual sympathies I
outlined earlier are also relatively tentative and only became testable in practice towards the end of this project. Much of this research so far has been spent developing methodology with which to navigate this new terrain. Only in the final performances was more detailed musical analysis possible. I would suggest that the performative aspect of this project could benefit from further analytical approaches. This is the strength of an arts practice approach, in that it allows scope for trans-disciplinary research. I would envision that this practice-based inquiry could be enhanced by further application of traditional ethnomusicology methodologies such as the use of performance analysis techniques involving video analysis and sonic mapping. The work of Martin Clayton (2007) (2011) and Wim Van de Meer (2015) in the realm of North Indian classical musicology could prove especially useful for future performance based research into Irish-Indian sympathies.

In the future, I wish to look more at more melodic considerations within this project, particularly the concepts of microtonality as referenced by the terms sruti and draoicht. The concept of sruti in Indian classical music has a substantial theoretical and scholarly history (Holryde, 1964; Jairazbhoy, 2011; Van Der Meer, 2015). A parallel in Irish music is the idea that music possesses draoicht or nyaah, a concept that is mostly evidenced in anecdotal references. Further extending the performance based trajectory of this current research, and by deepening its analysis in the melodic realm, would introduce more practice based research methods into ethnomusicology, expand the methodological frame of arts practice, and also possibly further harmonize my own musical development.
Glossary

alap-a melodic non-metred introductory to raga
aroh- the ascending scale movement of a raga
antara-the second portion of a composition in North Indian classical music, usually in the upper octave. It also means ‘the space between’ in Sanskrit.
avaroh- the descending scale movement of a raga
bayan-the bass drum in a set of tabla
bava- the mood or feeling evoked by a raga
bodhran- traditional Irish frame drum played with the hand or a stick
bol- syllabic patterns which correspond to strokes on the tabla
challan- an exercise which demonstrates the movement of melodic material in a raga
chikari- two high pitched rhythmic strings tuned to the tonic on sarode and sitar
cut- an ornament in Irish traditional music where the note above is touched and cut down
cran- an ornament in Irish traditional music, particularly associated with the pipes of rolling the bottom D
dadra- a six beat tal cycle from Indian classical music
dayan- the high pitched drum in a set of tabla
dhrupad- an austere and systematic Indian classical vocal style which features long alap and a short composition section, usually accompanied by pakawaj
dholak- an Indian barrel shaped folk drum
drut- the fast segment of raga development in performance
draoicht- magic or enchantment in Irish, used to describe a quality of playing in traditional music
ektal-a twelve beat cycle in Indian classical music
gamak- an ornamentation in Indian classical music, moving between two notes rapidly
hornpipe-an Irish traditional tune and dance type in 4/4
jawari-four drone strings on the sarode
jhala-the fastest and climatic portion of raga performance
jig-an Irish traditional tune and dance type in 6/8 or 9/8
jor-a medium tempo rhythmic improvisation segment preceding jhala in raga performance
jhaptal-a ten beat Indian classical rhythm cycle
kali-the empty segment in Indian classical rhythm cycles
komal-a flattened note in Indian classical music
krintan- an ornament in Indian classical music similar to a cut in Irish traditional music
kia bhate- an exclamation of delight used by audiences and performers in North Indian classical music
laya- the basic tempo or feeling of being in time in Indian classical music
mata tal- nine beat rhythm cycle in Indian classical music
meend- an ornament in Indian classical music sliding between notes
mishra- meaning mixed, usually refers to mixed ragas
mridangam- barrel shaped drum used in Carnatic music
nada- sound in Sanskrit
nadis- energy channels in the body described in Yogic philosophy
nyah- a characteristic nasal tone cherished in sean-nós vocal in Irish music
pakar- a catch phrase of a raga in Indian classical music
ravidra sangeet- a form of folk music from West Bengal, India composed by Rabindranath Tagore
raga- the melodic and aesthetic basis of Indian classical music
rasa- literally flavour or taste, an important part of Indian aesthetics
reel- the main tune type in Irish traditional music usually notated in 4/4
sam- the first beat of a rhythm cycle in Indian classical music
samvadi- the second most important note in a raga
sargam- solfage notation system used in Indian classical music
sawal jawab- call and response segment in raga performance
sitarkhani- a folk rhythm used in Indian classical music
sruti- a philosophy of microtonal aesthetics in Indian classical music
sthvai- the main portion of a composition in Indian classical music
swara- note in Sanskrit
tanpura- a stringed drone instrument common in Indian classical music
taraf- sympathetic strings which run under the main melody strings on sarode
teental- a sixteen beat rhythm cycle in Indian classical music
theka- name given to the bol pattern used for a particular tala on the tabla
tihai- a rhythmic device repeated three times in Indian classical music
tivra- a sharpened note in Indian classical music
vadi- the dominant note in a raga
vilambit- medium tempo composition in raga performance
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Hayes, Tommy (26 March, 2016) Co, Clare, Ireland: in my van on route to gig
Sanyal, Debojyoti (3 August, 2016) Faha, Co, Clare, Ireland: in my home studio
APPENDIX 1:

INDIAN TOUR PRESS RELEASE
Embassy of Ireland presents

India tour

Martin Hayes & Dennis Cahill

With Mattu Noone

One of the world’s great musical duets is touring India in December – from Ireland’s Celtic culture. Virtuoso musicians Martin (fiddle) and Dennis (guitar) have toured North America, Europe, Australia and Japan bringing their sublime interpretations of Irish traditional music – a folk form revered across the globe. From Sydney Opera House to Buddhist temple their music has ‘brought beautifully etched playing’, that involves the audience and transports them into spirited abandonment. Joining them on tour is Sarod player Mattu Noone who adds to the irresistible rhythm of the Irish music taking the audience on an ecstatic musical journey.

In Delhi and Mumbai the Irish musicians will be joined by eminent Indian flute player Paras Nath and others. In Delhi, young Indian pianist Utsav Lal also performs. In Chennai, the visitors are joined by India’s Dr. K. Subramanian on veena.

Martin has played for President Obama. Musician/singer/composer Paul Simon is a big fan. You too will surely become one. Comparison of European Celtic culture, which the visitors represent, with Hindu culture shows large similarities. Language and words share Sanskrit roots. How about the music?

For Chennai information, please contact:
Aine Edwards +91-8939291905 / aine@aineedwardsconsultancy.co
APPENDIX 2:

JAMESON CONCEPT NOTE
By Alan Tweedie
In supporting this tour of India, Jameson Irish Whiskey are recognising the industry’s corporate responsibility to the bigger picture. Jameson recognizes that good corporate citizenship is more than ensuring that its products are used safely and responsibly. It also entails balancing the needs of its employees for a safe and rewarding job, improving the environment in which they work, and positively engaging the wider culture in which they operate. This for Jameson is not only about addressing the environmental impact of products through improvements in water use, packaging, emission of greenhouse gases and hazardous substances, energy use, solid waste management, and transport. It is also by supporting cultural and educational activities in the communities where they operate.

Jameson support for the tour of India by Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill, leading lights of the Irish folk scene, falls into this latter category. Hayes and Cahill are renowned across the globe for the excellence of their interpretation of folk music in the modern world. In Ireland, this folk music has been traditionally associated with the ‘water of life’, whiskey.

The word ‘whiskey’ comes from the Gaelic *uisce beatha*. That translates as water of life. Irish whiskey was one of the earliest distilled drinks in Europe, arising around the 12th century. It is believed that it was the Irish religious community, the monks that brought the technique of distilling back to Ireland from their travels to the Mediterranean countries around 1000 CE. The Irish then modified this technique to obtain a drinkable spirit.

The takeover of Irish Distillers by Pernod Ricard in 1988 led to increased marketing of Irish whiskies, especially Jameson. Since the early 1990s Irish whiskey has undergone a major resurgence and has for over 20 years been the fastest growing spirit in the world. Production rose from 4.4 million cases in 2008 to 6.5 million in 2013, with growth projected to rise to 12 million cases by 2018. It is now a popular beverage in India, a country with a great taste for the ‘water of life’.

For centuries it was the Irish pub that often brought the community together to sing their folk stories, and often the songwriters brought in the place of the ‘water of life’. One of the more popular songs, ‘The Holy Ground’ concludes:

*And now the storm is over,*  
*And we are safe and well*  
*We will go down to a public house,*  
*And sit and drink like hell*  
*We will drink strong ale and porter,*  
*And we’ll make the rafters roar*  
*And when our money is all spent,*  
*We will go to sea once more*

‘Whiskey in the Jar’ is perhaps the best known.

*Now there’s some take delight in the carriages a rolling*  
*and others take delight in the hurling and the bowling*  
*but I take delight in the juice of the barley*  
*and courting pretty fair maids in the morning bright and early*  
*Mush-a ring dum a do dum a da*  
*Whack fol my daddy-o. Whack fol my daddy-o*  
*There’s whiskey in the jar*

So it was the homes and pubs of rural Ireland that were, through the centuries, the homes of Ireland’s folk music activity. This Celtic music had first come to Ireland
around the time of the arrival of the distilling process brought by the monks. Some of its roots are in the music of the East, brought by the Celtic migration that took the music into Europe while a similar migration took the music into south Asia. Mattu Noone, an Irish sarod player, who is joining Hayes and Cahill on tour, is currently researching a PhD study of these links between Irish and Indian music. Mattu sees this tour as an opportunity for people living in India to share this exploration. With research already indicating the links between Sanskrit and Irish Gaelic (‘Veda’ and the Gaelic ‘Vid’), this further research should show that it is not only the roots of the words that are shared, it is the sounds of the music.

Indian tourists are increasingly finding their way to Ireland, experiencing the folk life through nights of enchanting Irish folk music in the traditional bars. Never before has there been so many young and talented traditional musicians. Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill have together had an important role in taking forward its revival into the 21st century. They are indeed ‘gurus’ of the Irish folk scene and Jameson has been keen to see them come to tour India, they having wowed audiences around the world.

Mohinder Jahkar, senior marketing manager with Jameson said:

Virtuoso musicians Martin Hayes (fiddle) and Dennis Cahill (guitar) have toured North America, Europe, Australia and Japan bringing their sublime interpretations of Irish traditional music – a folk form revered across the globe. From Sydney Opera House to Buddhist temple their music has ‘brought beautifully etched playing’, that involves the audience and transports them into spirited abandonment. Joining them on tour is Sarod player Mattu Noone who adds to the irresistible rhythm of the Irish music, taking the audience on an ecstatic musical journey.

In Delhi and Mumbai the Irish musicians will be joined by eminent Indian flute player Paras Nath, Adtiya Kalyanpur (tabla) and Utsav Lal (piano). In Chennai, the visitors are joined by India’s Dr. K Subramanian on veena.
APPENDIX 3:

THEME TEXT FOR CHENNAI COLLABORATION
By Karaikudi Subramanian
PROGRAM THEME: “Celebrating the Equi-Vision of the Self and Supreme” (“Samadarshana”) or “Celebrating the Universal Teacher Within”

“TASMAI. RI GURUMŪRTAYE NAMA IDAĬM

ŚRI DAKŚIṆĀMŪRTAYE”

OBEISANCE TO THE UNIVERSAL TEACHER WITHIN

“Samadarshana”- the Only Vision of the reality of the Self. This knowledge and the realization of it is the Vedic Vision.

Here is the summary of the 10 verses of Adi Sankaracharya, the one who expounded the philosophy of Advaita, the Non-Duality as the essence of Self….

1. One who realizes that the Self (Atman) is non-dual is himself THE UNIVERSAL TEACHER

2. The Universe of wondrous plurality is, in fact, within one self, seeming as if it is outside.

3. The Reality, Pure Awareness Absolute (Brahman) is that which shines in the unreal objects we see.

4. The divine light within SELF spills over all that we see through the sense organs.

5. Equating the body-mind-sense organ complex to ‘I’ is mere illusion. By destroying this illusion created by the power of Maya, the Self realizes the Infinite in Self.

6. When Maya eclipses the brilliantly shining Self, it is in the state of sleep. Self in the awakened state is the Existence Absolute, the Lord Himself.

7. The different stages of human life are consumed by the eternal Time. During those stages of life the innermost essence of Self continues to shine as the only Brahman, ever existing as timeless.

8. The divisive thinking like father and son, teacher and sishya, owner and the owned, cause and effect and so on is false and illusory. One who realizes the Reality within is the Lord Himself.

9. Earth, Water, Fire, Wind, Space, Sun, Moon and the Person are the eight fold forms of the Lord. This vision of the Lord as the Self-inclusive is Ultimate.

10. The pursuit of the Truth of the Self glorifies the Supreme in the Self and that is the Blessing of the Lord.
APPENDIX 4:

INDIAN TOUR PRESS EXAMPLES
The Irish connection

Musicians Mattu Noone, Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill collaborate with veena maestro Karaikudi Subramanian for concerts in the city

SUJATHA SHANKAR KUMAR

At a business cultural meet in Ireland, facilitator Aine Edwards, showing off her “pilgrim Tamil”, was speedily connected with a South Indian businessman who then linked her to Bhadhravani, Karaikudi Subramanian’s centre for music and research in Chennai. Theloop was complete when sarod-player Mattu Noone introduced virtuoso musicians Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill, which propelled their India tour. At Bangalore, they spent time with L. Subramanian. They are currently in Chennai, at a short residency at Bhadhravani, performing at different venues over the week.

Of India’s greatly absorbent culture, veena maestro Karaikudi Subramanian says, “The violin was introduced in the 19th Century by Balaswami Dikshithar to Carnatic music. But it is the player who transforms the instrument he plays.” Subramanian established Bhadhravani 24 years ago and developed a holistic educational program COMET. They have hosted many international artists, and give equal importance to both scientific

and emotive aspects of music. Subramanian aspires to take music beyond individualistic expression and so liberate the performer. At the end of five days of immersive musical exchanges, Subramanian and the Irish musicians will perform at The Museum Theatre.

Noone’s first exposure to Indian music was listening to Shakti and L. Subramanian. “My mind really opened to the possibility of the violin, not so much the technique but that the violin could bring out such depth of feeling.” His formal learning on the sarod began under Sougata Roy Choudhury in Calcutta. Living in a rented flat behind his teacher’s home, experiencing family life and visiting Santiniketan, Noone confesses that those five-to-six years were amongst the happiest in his life. “I felt a great hope for the future.” Back in western Ireland, Martin Hayes lived literally around the next hill. At one University workshop, Noone felt a deep bond with Hayes’ rendering of traditional Irish tunes. “Slowly introducing Indian melodies, I felt we could have a great deal of improvisation.”

At Bhadhravani Chicago-based guitarist Dennis Cahill performs an intense music with Martin Hayes. Known for his soulful Irish folk music preserving traditions, Hayes’ spiritual temperament honed his distinctive musical approach. Wandering about the streets of Old Delhi on this tour to India, Hayes likens such simplicity of life to simple tunes. He learnt to play the fiddle at seven years listening to his father P. Joe Hayes play. His melodies bring back those open wood fires, family gatherings and rustic life with a lot of heart. A rather winsome destiny brought Hayes to Chicago, where Cahill lives. They established as a duo touring Europe, Australia, US and Ireland. Their duet albums – Live in Seattle, The Lonesome Touch and Welcome Here Again – have received much acclaim. With Culture Ireland, Irish Embassy in Delhi, Irish Research Council and Jamestown’s support, Chennai is in for riveting performances this week.

The Irish musicians will perform on December 19 at 7.30 p.m. at The Museum Theatre. Tickets are available on http://www.eventinj.com/samadharshana.
AURAL TRADITIONS THAT BIND

Musicians Martin Hayes, Dennis Cahill and Mattu Noone, who were in the city for a performance, discuss the many similarities between Indian and Irish music.

I think Indian and Irish music meet in a place beyond music actually. I describe it as a place where they aspire to a similar place of a spiritual nature. I think all good music aspires to something beyond what it is...

— MATTU NOONE, IRISH SABOD ARTISTE

Music to 30 years ago and it made a major impression on me. Now, interestingly, three decades later, when I came to India, I hear the same piece of music. He says appreciatively.

The musicians also attended a concert by tabla maestro Ustad Zakir Hussain. "Martin and I were familiar with Zakir Hussain's music. It's been amazing since he first came out, both musically and technically, which is quite an achievement," says Dennis. Mattu adds, "Also, I first heard Zakir Hussain as a musician, a virtuoso player and a really nice guy. We went backstage and engaged.

Martin has been visiting India for more than a decade to learn the saudar. He learned the saudar from Sonagia Roy Chowdhury from Kolkata and K. Shriram, who is from Chennai, but currently lives in the UK. He enjoys listening to Carnatic music and had visited Chennai last year, but didn't have a chance to watch any shows. "So, this time, I ensured that we visited India in December to catch the music season," he says, the Bharath National Festival being a personal favourite.

With the Monsoons soon over, and truly upon Chennai, it is a fitting time to think of how these streams of music from different parts of the world are woven together.
On the 50th Anniversary of the Embassy of Ireland in India
The Ambassador of Ireland,
H. E. Mr. Feilim McLaughlin
Invites you to

INDO IRISH CULTURAL FEST

Siri Fort Auditorium, New Delhi
on Monday 8 December 6.30 p.m. onwards

Produced by

|| पंचम निषाद ||

Mandeera Manish
Bharatnatyam
Paras Nath
Flute
Aditya Kalyanpur
Tabla
Utsav Lal
Piano
Satish Krishnamurthy
Mridangam

Martin Hayes
Fiddle
Dennis Cahill
Guitar
Mattu Noone
Sarod

Invites available at: India Habitat Centre & India International Centre 10am to 7pm,
Gandharva Mahavidyalaya 9am to 1pm - 3pm to 7pm and
Kotak Mahindra Bank Hauz Khas Branch 9:30am to 4:30pm
(few seats reserved) (Seating on first come first serve basis)
APPENDIX 5:

CHASING THE SQUIRREL LYRICS
Chasing the Squirrel
Lyrics by Karaikudi Subramanian

Vāruṅga ṅgē Aṉilārē Aṉilārē
Come here respected Squirrel, (Oh) respected Squirrel

Vāruṅga ṅgē Aṉilārē
Come here. (Please) come here.

Vāruṅga ṅgē Aṉilārē Aṉilārē Cīkkiram Vāṅga
Come here Squirrel. Come quickly.

Unai onrum seyyavē māṭṭēn māṭṭēn
I will not do, I will never do, any harm against you.

Vandiḍuṅga please ennīḍam
Please come to me, please.

Iṅgē Aṅgē Iṅgē Aṅgē ōdāiṅga
Don't run here and there, here and there, please.

Iṅgē vāṅga solluvēn vāṅga solluvēn
Come here, I will tell you, Come here I will tell you.

Vandu kēḷuṅga
Come and listen

Ungaḷukkāga nīṅga vāṅga
Come here for your sake

Vandu Pāduṅga Ōm Śānti
Come and sing Ōm Śānti

NOTES BY KARAIKUDDI SUBRAMANIAN
Squirrel, from the point of view of Hindu thoughts, represents an incarnation of 'Help', 'Love'. It was the squirrel in Ramayana, which helped Rama build the bridge in the Indian Ocean to reach Sri Lanka to redeem Sita from Ravana, along with the monkeys! The myth is that experiencing the love of the squirrel for Rama, Rama lovingly stroked the back of the squirrel which brought the three lines you would normally see in the Indian squirrels! The patriot Tamil poet Bharatiyar sang in the praise of God "Oh Lord, I see your colour in the wings of a crow" meaning the colour of Rama who is compared to the colour of the pregnant clouds! In the same way one feels the softness in the skin of a Squirrel because the Lord Himself stroked him. This kind of metaphysics is part of thinking even in a villager. Children like Squirrels. So I tried to capture their imagination through the song. The squirrel will take the peace with him wherever he goes. He will sing "Om Santi” to the world.
APPENDIX 6:

FLYER FOR PERFORMANCE WITH TOMMY HAYES
The Space Between -

A Performance Based Exploration of Irish-Indian Musical Sympathies

WEDNESDAY 16th September

Irish World Academy, Theatre 1 (1.15pm)

This performance is part of Arts Practice PhD research undertaken by Matthew 'Mattu' Noone. Over the last 3 years, Mattu has been exploring the performance possibilities of Irish traditional music on his own hybrid version of the North Indian Classical lute called sarode. He has engaged with the Irish tradition through the lens of his practice as a student of Indian Classical music. In particular, he has focussed his inquiry on developing a repertoire of material from both traditions which have a similar mood, aesthetic or bava. This 2nd major performance follows on from a tour of India in December 2014 with traditional duo Martin Hayes & Dennis Cahill. It seeks to deepen the focus of the research within individual practice particularly in regards to approaches of improvisation and rhythm.

About AnTara [Tommy Hayes & Matthew Noone]

Matthew 'mattu' Noone is an ex-indie rocker who has studied North Indian Classical music in Kolkata under Sougata Roy Chowdhury for over a decade. More recently he has taken guidance from UK based sarodiya, K. Sridhar and has performed Indian music across the globe. Bodhran player Tommy Hayes has performed and recorded with most of the great names in traditional music and beyond, has been at the forefront of Irish music for over 30 years. This unique project was formed after Matthew was awarded funds from Music Network Ireland to design and purchase a hybrid sarode for collaborations within the Irish music tradition. The project draws upon the slow lyrical style of East Clare music as well Indian drones, a plethora of percussion and experimental acoustic loops.
APPENDIX 7:

POSTER FOR PERFORMANCE WITH DEBOJYOTI SANYAL
Samadharshana
(same sightedness)

Mattu Noone- sarode
Debojyoti Sanyal-tabla

Wednesday 21st October
Irish World Academy
Tower theatre
6pm