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The Influence of Literature in 1960s British Popular Music: Approaches to Popular Composition

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ABSTRACT

There is a noticeable influence of literature and literary techniques in the popular music songs of the countercultural period in Britain (1965-71). These dates, as noted by Jonathon Green, characterize the beginning of the UK countercultural movement of the 1960s, culminating with the 1971 trial of the *OZ* magazine, which Green regards as marking the end of the period (1999).

There are three main questions that this project explores. In what ways did songwriters of the era use literature as an inspiration in the compositional process? How can literary influenced songwriting techniques be used and extended in contemporary popular composition? How useful are these techniques and the extensions of these techniques in the compositional process?

This project investigates the influence of literature on the songwriters of the era by analysing relevant song examples and subsequently inventing systematic forms that songwriters today can use as a basis for composition. A portfolio of original compositions is included, which demonstrates various approaches to composition that abide by the systematic forms, which stem from the literary influence of the 1960s songwriters. This project makes a contribution to our knowledge and understanding of popular music, as the influence of literature, especially the application of literary techniques in the compositional process, is a subject that has not been researched previously in any great depth. The abundance of available literary techniques and the possibilities for the invention of techniques is an exciting prospect when applied to popular composition.

After highlighting certain issues such as the homogeneity of songwriters and poets, a brief contextual background is given concerning 1960s counterculture and popular music. A taxonomy of systematic forms is created, into which are placed literary influenced techniques used by songwriters such as Syd Barrett and John Lennon, illustrated by a number of examples. Explanations of the original compositions included in the portfolio highlight the attributes of various songwriting approaches and conclusions are drawn that look into the differing levels of constraint and artistic intuition and how these factors affect the compositional process.

CONTENTS

WORD COUNT = 23,245

4

Copyright Statement

List of Figures

Chapter 1

Introduction

This project investigates the use of literary techniques and a wider influence of literature in the songs of the British countercultural era of the 1960s, precisely 1965-1971.

Also submitted is a portfolio of original compositions that use related literary techniques as a form of inspiration. The major artists examined are Syd Barrett and John Lennon along with other artists from the era such as Ray Davies and Donovan Leitch. The project examines the ways in which songwriters gathered their ideas and inspiration, the techniques that they used when converting a literary influence into lyrics and the ways in which these techniques can be adopted and adapted in the compositional process.

The main incentive is to offer approaches to writing popular music. This is achieved with the analysis of songwriting techniques of the era and the use of the techniques as inspiration for the development of songwriting methods. The portfolio of compositions focuses on the application of literary techniques to both the music and the lyrics. Songwriters of the 1960s tended to experiment with the lyrical content but they did not appear in general to apply literary techniques to the musical content in the compositional process. The aim here is to apply experimental techniques to create popular music by using a mixture of technique and artistic intuition to cater to the conventions of popular music discourse.

The term 'popular music' is ambiguous in nature; there is no definitive definition. Greg Hainge summarizes this point in detail (2004). I place my compositions within the popular music idiom for the following reasons. The compositions are songs that contain hooks and memorable vocal melodies and each composition uses similar instrumentation to the majority of 'pop' songs, such as drums, bass guitar, electric guitar, vocals, backing vocals, synthesizers and so on. The instruments are played in a conventional manner, for example the electric guitar is picked/strummed/fingered in a 'pop' fashion and there are no experimental techniques such as prepared guitar. The vocal style is firmly based in the pop or rock idiom (Moore, 2001, p.44). In terms of the metre, the majority of compositions are based around conventional time signatures such as 3/4 and 4/4. The compositions are

based around grooves/beats that fit within the pop idiom. The majority of songs fall between 3-4 minutes that is the general case for popular music and the production style is conventional in the sense that the compositions sound 'commercial' to an extent. Most of the compositions contain verses and choruses and are structured like pop songs. The 'feel' is that of popular music. Feel is a vague term, however it is an appropriate term when writing about popular music. Feel is an amalgamation of all the points noted above and also a general sound.

The project begins with a section that highlights certain issues concerning the research and goes on to give a brief background of 1960s counterculture and popular music. It examines the literary influences of songwriters of the era, mainly focusing on nonsense literature. Specific song examples of the era that have a relationship with literature are cited, analysed and placed within a taxonomy of systematic forms. Before the original composition explanations, details about how the research has developed are discussed and more systematic forms are introduced. A brief explanation of compositions that are not included in the main portfolio is given, followed by a detailed look into each composition that is included in the main portfolio. The compositions included on CD 1, some of which are draft versions, and the explanations in Chapter 6 (6.1) are not to be assessed, the intention is to demonstrate the difference between the compositional approaches of applying literary techniques to the lyrical material alone and applying the techniques to both the music and the lyrics. The compositions included as the main portfolio on CD 2 and the explanations in Chapter 6 (6.2) are to be assessed.

Chapter 2

Issues and Methodology

2.1 Why Focus on British Popular Music of this Era?

A number of British songwriters in the 1960s experimented directly with literary techniques in the compositional process of popular music. American popular music of the era has a relationship with literature, however the approach is more to do with alluding to literary figures or works than directly experimenting with techniques, for example the many allusions to 'Alice in Wonderland' (Carroll, 2007 [1865]) in Jefferson Airplane's 'White Rabbit' (1987 [1967]). The French 'Chanson' tradition also has a strong link to literature, however the approach is more of a conglomeration of music and poetry than the heterogeneous approach of British music of the era in question.

There is a lot of music that may be categorised as popular since the 1960s inside and outside of Britain that is inspired by literature and expands on the level of experimentation when using literary and other extra-musical techniques, including Beck, Björk, Cabaret Voltaire, David Bowie, Devendra Banhart, Forgive Durden, Ian Dury, Roy Harper, Sonic Youth, They Might Be Giants, Throbbing Gristle, and Tool. There are also parallels evident when researching literary techniques in experimental/avant-garde music, including the stylistic approach of the OuMuPo group founded by Françcis Le Lionnais, the CeMaMu group founded by Iannis Xennakis, Berlios' *Symphonie Fantastique*, Christopher Hobbs' *L'Auteur se Retire*, Erik Satie's *Vexations*, Tom Johnson's *Four note opera,* Brian Eno's *Oblique Strategies* and works by Denys Bouliane. It is useful to recognise the literary influence in music created post-1971 and to also recognise that not all music of the chosen period experimented in the same way or abided by such rigid boundaries, however I have chosen to concentrate on the selected period and certain artists because the music generated as a whole appears to have a strong connection with literature and is what inspired the initial focus of this research project.

2.2 Creativity

With the aim of the project in mind, the idea behind the project is innovative in its own right. It is a mixture of what Margaret A. Boden calls 'P-creativity' and 'H-creativity' (2004). P-creativity defines the instant when the artist produces an idea that they deem to be innovative and 'new' even if the idea has been produced before unbeknownst to them. H-creativity is an idea that has, to current knowledge, not been produced before. The application of literary techniques to the creation of popular music has not, to my knowledge, been addressed in the same way as this project investigates. However, literary techniques have been applied to many other artistic forms including other forms of music, as mentioned, therefore my idea cannot be fully placed in either category. The research nevertheless adds to our knowledge of popular music studies and also works as a tool for creating methods of popular composition.

2.3 The Use of Techniques

The application of literary techniques highlights creative opportunities that would not have objectively been possible through artistic intuition alone. I do not abide absolutely by the rules or constraints of the technical process, instead, I use a mixture of artistic choice and technique to make musical decisions. The levels of faithfulness to the technical process differ in each song depending on the opportunities that the experiment creates. The compositions are created with the intention of being heard as songs, even though they are experiments and the intention is not for the technical process to be overly evident in the finished product.

2.4 Lyricists or Poets?

The homogeneity of songwriters and poets is a topic that is widely discussed. This project does not discuss the topic in detail. However, it is useful to discuss the subject briefly. Robert Christgau ' states about the lyrics of Bob Dylan,

> However inoffensive "The ghost of electricity howls in the bones of her face" sounds on vinyl, it is silly without the music. Poems are read or said. Songs are sung (1967, p.232).

To exemplify the subjectivity of the argument, Robert Chalmers carries essentially the same point as Christgau, but by claiming that the same Dylan lyric is an example of his successful poetic tendencies.

> While it's true that Allen Ginsberg or TS Eliot would be anything but ashamed of a line like "the ghost of electricity howls in the bones of her face", from "Visions Of Johanna", they would most likely not have chosen to rhyme "kelp" with "help" (2011, p.7).

Rob Woodard adopts the idea that the two art-forms are interchangeable by asserting that both arts come from the same basic foundation, that 'Long before the written word there was poetry' and that the natural inflections of speech give poetry a certain musical quality (2007). He then goes on to negate this theory by mentioning that 'poetry and song lyrics are almost always better left in their own universes' (ibid). There are many similarities between lyrics and literature as J.P. Dabley mentions '…they are both *arts of sound*—of vibration, and are governed by the same basic laws' (1927, p. 379). Griffiths summarizes his point when proposing the lyric and anti-lyric symbiosis

> … stop thinking that the words in pop songs *are* poems, and begin to say that they are *like* poetry, in some ways, and that by extension if they are not like poetry then they tend towards being *like* prose (2003, p.42).

Other factors ought to be recognised such as the manner in which the vocal is performed. The vocal performance is inherently important when attempting to analyse the projected meaning taking into consideration factors such as phrasing and intonation (Shuker, 2008, p.262).

Regardless of the subjective nuances, in this case it would be detrimental to assume that the two arts are synonymous, given that the aim of the investigation is to research the influence and application of one art form on the other. Therefore, there are no such comparisons as John Lennon and James Joyce or Syd Barrett and Gerard Manley Hopkins. Instead, the investigation focuses on the influence that literature has on songwriters, not the similarities between the two art forms.

Chapter 3

Context

3.1: 1960s Counterculture

Observing how the countercultural movement began helps provide a historical and sociological context that creates a useful foundation when analysing music from the era.

3.1.1 The Beats

Allen Ginsberg, a leading poet of the Beat movement visited the Albert Hall in 1965 for a reading known as 'The Wholly Communion'. The Beat movement helped to ignite the uprising of British counterculture and thanks to its infectious nature, the 'underground' spread with momentum. Beat culture affected politics as well as popular culture such as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

> CND was gradually being colonised by beats, long-haired, weirdly
> costumed, clad in paint-stained jeans and ageing, filthy sweaters,
> blowing sousaphones and cornets, festooned in slogans, defiantly grimy
> (Green, 1999, p.37).

3.1.2 Art-school

Britain began to find its individual alternative identity, whether it was in literature, art, fashion, film, light shows, 'happenings' or music. The epicentre for creativity was the art school. As Frith and Horne mention, art schools with their 'loose entry requirements' allowed otherwise under-achieving or non-academic students to continue their study (1987, p.28). Here, students could escape the shackles of British tradition and social conditioning by representing themselves through the medium of art. The art-school-way-of-thinking was to become influential for the upcoming musical generation. The teachings of Dada, Bauhaus, Abstract Expressionism, Surrealism, Pop art and Op art, all suggested rebellion with an anti-capitalist backbone, which attracted students who were raised in the authoritarian 1950s. For an art student like John Lennon who, at the time, abhorred jazz and adored Elvis Presley, attendance at art school broadened his mind and he began to idolise artists such as Van Gogh and Beat poets such as Allen Ginsberg and Gregory Corso (Frith, S. and Horne, H, 1987, p.57).

11

For Roger (Syd) Barrett, art school provided a community in which he could express himself, an environment in which he could paint in his abstract Rauschenbergian style, and develop the ability to apply art school practice to songwriting for his band at the time The Pink Floyd. The Pink Floyd started out like the majority of college bands of the time, covering Bo Diddley songs and other staple blues/R'n'B numbers. With Barrett's 'painterly eye' (Chapman, 2010, p.152) and a growing interest in experimental avant-garde music resulting from his art school experience, the band soon became a significant force in the developing British psychedelic movement.

3.1.3 Political Impact

Not only did the art-school-way-of-thinking affect the generation artistically, it stimulated and prompted a change in society. 'What distinguished 1960s bohemians from previous "angry" young men and women was their collusion with (and direct intervention in) mass media' (Frith, S. and Horne, H, 1987, p.52). The counterculture began to grow with the Pop art scene, the introduction of independent magazines such as *IT* and *OZ*, independent bookshops, independent cinemas and independent music venues such as the *UFO* club. The countercultural involvement in mass media paved the way for a new generation to begin their artistic 'revolution'.

> Of course, the impact of these songs is difficult to judge, and the meaning and clarity of their lyrics are at times unclear. Yet their commercial exposure, and the widespread media and public interest in them, suggested they certainly had an impact (Shuker, 2008, p.244).

3.1.4 What Hierarchy?

Popular music helped to blur the boundaries between high and low culture. Certain factors created this hierarchical change such as the influence of the avant-garde, the political charge of music and the literary allusions in the lyrics.

Macdonald states about The Beatles' 'Revolution 9' (1987 [1968]),

> While the cut-up texts of Burroughs, the collages of Hamilton, and the *musique concrete of Cage and Stockhausen …* have remained the preserve of the modernist intelligentsia, Lennon's sortie into sonic chance was packaged for a mainstream audience which had never heard of its progenitors, let alone been confronted by their work (2005, p.287).

The period is when art such as literature and avant-garde music mixed with art such as popular music and became accessible to the masses. As Frith notes, popular music was becoming a 'serious' art form.

> The Beatles represented something new, *a way of taking pop seriously*, as something more than commercial entertainment or teenage indulgence, as something artistic and capable of social reflection. 1960s Britain, in other words, turned out to have a talent pool of musicians (and producers, managers, DJs and entrepreneurs) who could take pop seriously (2004, p.56).

3.2: The Influence of Literature

Songwriters of the era were inspired by literature in a variety of ways, on different levels and by various types of literature. One literary genre that stands out is nonsense literature.

3.2.1   Making Sense of Nonsense

Initially when reading nonsense verse such as Carroll's 'Jabberwocky' (2007 [1872]), one might believe that it is literally 'non-sense' and nothing more. For example in Carroll's famous opening lines:

> Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
> Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
> All mimsy were the borogoves,
> And the mome raths outgrabe.

Most of the words are not recognisable in the English language, but semantically the meaning lies in the pronunciation and sensitive creation of the words. As Mrs. Peake writes about her husband, the poet Mervyn Peake, 'Words were shapes and sounds to him' (1972, p.7). As John-Jacque Lecercie states, 'Nonsense loses its structure semantically, but creates it prosodically and syntactically' (1994, p.22). Nonsense verse can be difficult to understand when trying to recognise each word individually, but read, or in the musical

13

case, heard aloud, together the rhythm, syntax and shapes of the words carry the meaning. The creativity behind the meaning of nonsense verse is useful to acknowledge. The careful way in which words are shaped produces the desired effect, for example, if one was to read each word of Carroll's passage above separately it would not be clear what Carroll was writing about. 'brillig', 'slithy' and 'mimsy' may not be read as adjectives alone, especially 'brillig', yet with the correct syntactical placement it becomes clearer. Similarly, 'toves', 'wabe', 'borogoves' and 'mome' may not be recognisable separately as nouns, but syntactically they begin to make some sort of sense.

3.2.2   The Nonsense of Youth

Syd Barrett and John Lennon both adopted nonsense styles. As teenagers, they both wrote original nonsense rhymes with annotated illustrations and both read the likes of Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll. Lennon went on to publish original nonsense books.

> John Lennon was clearly the pop descendant of Lear. The characters
> that populate his books *John Lennon in His Own Write* (1964) and *A
> Spaniard in the Works* (1965) … as well as the language that
> accompany them, are highly reminiscent of Lear (Chapman, 2010,
> p.147).

When considering 'psychedelic' music of the era and nonsense literature, one of the most interesting connections between the two art forms is the fascination of childhood. As a reaction to the industrial revolution, writers such as Edward Lear wrote escapist and fantastical verse. Similarly, after two world wars and an impending conflict in Vietnam, the 1960s brought about an attitude that made adults want to escape and regress into their childhood as Syd Barrett's song 'It is Obvious' suggests to 'creep into cupboards, sleep in the hall' (1994 [1970]). Both nonsense literature and psychedelic music provided a form of diversion, a fantasy world full of anthropomorphic characters, 'tangerine trees and marmalade skies' (The Beatles, 2009 [1967]) and adventure tales, to distract from, but on occasion recount the underlying and sobering themes of loneliness and death.

> Children were captivated by an inventive cast of the mischievous, the
> macabre, the nonsensical and the grotesque, and by the explicit
> rejection, or complete absence, of adult authority. Adults recognised
> their richly parodic nature and the way they mocked the social order
> and the moral certainties of the adult universe (Chapman, 2010, p.146).

3.2.3   Drugs

'English psychedelia emphasised not so much the turning on and tuning in, but turning back and tuning in to echoes of the past' (Young, R, 2010, p.454).

Another link between nonsense and psychedelic music is the relationship between hallucinogenic drugs and creativity. There is a stigma attached to the music of the 1960s pertaining to the idea that songwriters were constantly under the influence of drugs such as LSD and mescaline. Although this may be true, if somewhat caricatured, the music does not necessarily represent an acid trip or was not necessarily influenced by drugs during the songwriting process. Rob Chapman in an Internet video interview negates the view that Barrett's post-Pink Floyd songs were 'a product of a sort of damaged consciousness' by stating

> I don't subscribe to that … the areas he was exploring after that were
> much more influenced by … automatic writing and symbolist poetry
> and things like that (MuddyRog, 2010).

3.2.4   Other Literary Influences

Along with nonsense literature, songwriters drew influences from other literary genres such as experimental literature, psychic automatism, nursery rhyme, beat poetry, romantic literature, vers libre, children's literature and more that is explored in the next section when analysing existing songs from the period.

15

Chapter 4
Systematic Forms and Song Analysis

4.1: Creation of Forms

This section focuses on songs from 1965-71 that are inspired by literature. I have created a taxonomy of forms in which certain technical compositional approaches are categorised. The separation of technical processes into various forms helps with the analysis of lyrical content. The forms are my own creations therefore the songwriters of the period would not have created their songs with such constraints in mind. There are three main forms; *Direct Form, Technical Form and Stratified Form*.

Direct Form involves a 'direct' influence from literary works.

Direct Form divides into three sub-forms:

- *Direct Pastiche* – An explicit imitation of a literary form, whether it is the style of vocabulary, metrical form, structure and so on. (Not necessarily a parodic imitation as the word *pastiche* might denote.)

- *Direct Metamorphosis* – The application of literature to song. For example, using the lines of a poem directly as the lyrics of a song.

- *Direct Inspiration* – An implicit influence of literature, whether it is the use of similar characters, semantic content, writing style (first, second, third person narrative) and so on.

The second form, *Technical Form* involves the experimentation and application of literary techniques in the compositional process, such as the cut/up technique. Unlike *Direct Form*, there are no imitations in vocabulary, characterisation, metrical form and so on, this form concentrates entirely on the application of a literary technique when composing lyrics.

16

The final form *Stratified Form* involves an amalgamation of the forms discussed.

To reiterate, songwriters would not have consciously written with such disconnected forms in mind, but for use of analysis, the division of form highlights particular techniques that may have otherwise gone unnoticed.

4.1.1   Direct Form

Direct Form involves the songwriter taking influence from literary works in the sense that they may use similar vocabulary in the same manner, they may use similar metrical and syntactical structures or they may go as far as changing verse directly into song format or creating a pastiche. Nonsense literature was notably influential for songwriters of the era. This is pertinent when examining songs under the form *Direct Pastiche*.

4.1.2   Direct Pastiche

Syd Barrett was influenced by the work of the historian and writer Hillaire Belloc. Belloc's *Cautionary Tales for Children* (1907) is ubiquitous in satire and humour and his writing style is easily recognisable. Written in iambic tetrameter (lines with 8 syllables and a stress on the second, fourth, sixth and eighth syllable), Belloc's verse lends itself to be sung. Barrett has on two occasions, adopted and adapted Belloc's style into original songs. The first being 'Matilda Mother' released on Pink Floyd's debut album *Piper at the Gates of Dawn* (1987 [1967]).

As a side note, 'Piper at the Gates of Dawn' is a chapter in Kenneth Grahame's well-known novel *The Wind in the Willows* (1993 [1908]). Barrett decided to use the title of this chapter for the title of the debut Pink Floyd album. This in itself is an example of a literary influence.

Pink Floyd's 'Matilda Mother' (1987 [1967]) is an example of *Direct Pastiche*.

> Syd simply replaced Hillaire Belloc's words with his own and submitted them to the same metrical beat as the *Cautionary Tales*, even here though he still retained an element of mimicry (Chapman, 2010, p.140).

Matilda Mother' also draws influence from nursery rhyme '…he minimally adapted the children's poem "When Good King Arthur ruled the land" to read "There was a King who ruled the land" (Chapman, 2010, p.150). The verses are examples of *Direct Pastiche*, whereas the choruses include ostensibly original lyrics that do not adhere to the original pastiche such as 'Why'd you have to leave me there, hanging in my infant air waiting' therefore the choruses are not examples of *Direct Pastiche*.

More explicitly than 'Matilda Mother, 'Effervescing Elephant' from the album *Barrett* (1993 [1970]) is a 'perfectly executed, metrically precise pastiche of the verse form and macabre twists contained in Hillaire Belloc's "Cautionary Tales for Children"' (Chapman, 2010, p.55). 'Effervescing Elephant' is an example of *Direct Pastiche*, it ticks multiple boxes associated with nonsense verse. Its subject is morose; it includes whimsical characters; it includes idiosyncratic English language; it is written in an easily accessible and recognisable metrical form (iambic tetrameter); and its absurdity introduces an imperative element of humour.

4.1.3   Direct Metamorphosis

Along with Barrett and Lennon, other songwriters such as Donovan Leitch have been directly influenced by nonsense verse. Donovan's album *HMS Donovan* (1998 [1971]) includes mostly classic nonsense poems by writers such as Lear and Carroll that Donovan arranges into songs, including 'The Owl and the Pussycat' (Lear, 1894) and 'Jabberwocky' (Carroll, 2007 [1872]). This is an example of Direct Form at its fundamental level, *Direct Metamorphosis* – changing one existing art form (poetry) into a different art form (popular song). It is evident when listening to 'The Owl and the Pussycat' and 'Jabberwocky' that the metre of the original poems and the nursery rhyme feel had an influence on Donovan's musical renditions with Donovan's exaggerated accent, simple vocal melody, folk-like feel and stripped back instrumental arrangements.

Another example of *Direct Metamorphosis* is Syd Barrett's 'Golden Hair' (1993 [1970]). Barrett applied James Joyce's fifth poem from his 1907 *Chamber Music* anthology (1954) almost word for word to an original song. 'Syd's version of 'Golden Hair' is so much more than an exercise in accomplished mimicry. Its plaintive lovelorn air was utterly in keeping with the mood of *The Madcap Laughs* album' (Chapman, 2010 p.216). Chapman

18

goes on to suggest that Barrett's minimal change, 'substituting "midnight air" for "merry air"' (ibid), could in fact improve Joyce's poem. A serious allusion or comparison between Barrett's work and the work of Joyce is not necessary, but when listening to 'Golden Hair' it is obvious that the literary form of Joyce's original poem influenced the way that the music was written. Barrett's simple phrasing follows the metrical rhythms of the poem, the guitar arrangement works as cadences with each line. The tempo of the song, with no apparent metronome used during the recording process plays along with the tempo of the poem as if it were being recited (Parker, 2001, p.132).

The relationship between music and literature is also noticeable in Paul McCartney's 'Golden Slumbers' (The Beatles, 1969). The lyrics are taken from the first quatrain of a 'nursery rhyme' written by 'one of Shakespeare's contemporaries Thomas Dekker' (Macdonald, 2005 p.355). McCartney slightly altered the original words in 'Golden Slumbers Kiss Your Eyes' and the sound of the song, at least the verses, is reminiscent of a lullaby due to the nature of the lyrical content, innocent vocal style in the first verse, dream-like string arrangement and simple piano arrangement.

Peter Bellamy, the founder of the folk band The Young Tradition set Rudyard Kipling's poems to music in 1970 and for many years later. One example is 'The Tree Song' from the album *Oak, Ash and Thorn* (1970). Bellamy directly used Kipling's poem, 'The Tree Song' from *Puck of Pook's Hill* (2004 [1906]) and set it to a traditional folk-style song format. In a similar fashion to Bellamy's adaptations of Kipling, in 1968 Pentangle released a double-album *Sweet Child* (2001), included on the album was a musical adaptation of the Elizabethan poet John Donne's 'Go And Catch A Falling Star' (Donne, 2003 [1633]) arranged and performed by John Renbourn (Young, 2010 p.199).

4.1.4   Direct Inspiration

Marc Bolan, an admirer of Syd Barrett's work, incorporated on Tyrannosaurus Rex's album *Unicorn* (1998 [1969]) a fantastical story written by Bolan and narrated by John Peel called 'Romany Soup'. The short story follows the characters 'Lionel Lark' and 'Kingsley Mole' on an adventure through the 'Wonderful Kingdom'. The dialogue and characterisation is highly reminiscent of *The Wind in the Willows* (Grahame, 1993 [1908]). The fact that it was written by a pop star demonstrates the amount of influence that

19

literature, especially children's literature, had on the artists of the era, and therefore, the receptive audience. A similar concept exists on the second side of *Ogdens' Nut Gone Flake* (The Small Faces, 2005 [1968]). The fairytale story, narrated by Stanley Unwin, follows the character 'Happiness Stan'. Both of these examples exemplify the integration of literature into popular music at the time.

Acknowledging the fact that, anachronously, my proposition of systematic forms would not have been adhered to by songwriters, some song examples cannot be placed into categories with ease. For example, Barrett's 'Silas Lang' (or 'Swan Lee' as the artist knew it himself) (1988). Chapman states that ' … 'Silas Lang' (aka 'Swan Lee'), took its inspiration from Henry Longfellow's epic poem *Hiawatha'* (Chapman, 2010 p.214). If we trust Chapman's view that Longfellow was a direct influence on Barrett, then we come to a crossroads when attempting to categorise the song. Chapman states that 'Once again we are in the company of Syd the sophisticated pasticheur, emulating a verse-form and subject matter' (ibid). I hold that 'Silas Lang' does not emulate the verse-form of *Hiawatha*. Barrett's lyrics do not comply with Longfellow's lines metrically or with his verses prosodically. To exemplify this point, here is a section of each.

The final verse of 'Silas Lang'

Suddenly the rush of the mighty great thunder,
Confronted Swan Lee as his song he sang,
In the dawn, with his squaw, he was battling homewards
It was all written down by Long Silas Lang (Cairns, 2009 p.151).

Longfellow's final verse 'Hiawatha's Departure'

By the shore of Gitche Gumee,
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,
At the doorway of his wigwam,
In the pleasant Summer morning (1855).

The two examples differ metrically. As Chapman correctly states, the song 'shuns Longfellow's use of the trochee' (2010, p.214). A trochee is a poetic technique that involves the first syllable of a word being stressed and the second syllable unstressed. For example the stressed syllables are written in bold. '**By** the **shore** of **Git**che **Gu**mee' and '**In** the **plea**sant **Su**mmer **Mor**ning'. The shunning of the trochee is not as immediately apparent as the shunning of the number of syllables per line. Here, Longfellow writes in trochaic tetrameter and Barrett writes in an unrecognisable metre, due to the fact that the lyrics adhere to the musical metre. The verse-form also differs in the fact that Barrett extends the verse with the line 'The land in silence stands'. This does not adhere to Longfellow's prosodic structure.

When comparing both examples, it is noticeable that Barrett emulates Longfellow's use of vocabulary. Both contain simple epithets and natural words such as 'Mighty great thunder' and 'Big-Sea-Water'. Throughout the original poem and 'Silas Lang', there is an abundance of personification and both are also written in third-person-narrative. Chapman correctly states that Barrett has emulated the subject matter, however, the problem of categorization is an issue. The imitation of vocabulary is categorised under *Direct Pastiche*, whereas the emulation of subject matter and the use of the characters 'Silas Lang' and 'Swan Lee' are categorised under *Direct Inspiration*. The boundary between these two aspects of the song is minimal; this is the reason that the two forms, *Inspiration* and *Pastiche*, are both sub-forms of the main category *Direct Form*.

Barrett also, ostensibly, uses *Hiawatha* as the main influence for his song 'Opel' (1988). Barrett 'reduces the narrative' and describes 'a people-less landscape of ebony totems and driftwood half buried' (Chapman, 2010 p.234). The influence of Longfellow in 'Opel' is less obvious than in 'Silas Lang', its lack of narrative lends itself to ambiguity.

> The pebble that stood alone
> And driftwood lies half buried
> Warm shallow waters sweep shells
> So the cockles shine (Cairns, 2009, p.147).

After reading *The Song of Hiawatha* and noticing similarities such as simple natural words, imagery and personification, it appears that Barrett intended to describe a

21

Longfellian scene. At first sight, the lyrics appear disjointed, but when read/heard as a whole, with complex clauses, the imagery and personification form a clear description. The repeated refrain at the end of the song 'I'm trying, to find you' and 'I'm living, I'm giving, to find you' suggests that 'Opel' corresponds with *Direct Inspiration* rather than *Pastiche* because of the apparent change in subject matter and the lack of obvious similarity with *Hiawatha*.

In 1954, Dylan Thomas produced a radio drama called *Under Milk Wood* (1954) that is based around an imaginary Welsh village and its peculiar inhabitants. The play inspired Ray Davies to create the concept album *The Kinks Are the Village Green Preservation Society* (2001 [1968]). The abundance of eccentric characters that Thomas created stirred Davies's love for the idiosyncrasies of British life. The song 'Polly', that was originally left off the album, takes influence from one of Thomas's characters Polly Garter. Davies mentions the original character in the lyric 'Pretty Polly Garter'. 'Although *Village Green* may not be the *Under Milk Wood* adaptation Davies had first hoped for, the album certainly reveals the plays influence' (Kitts, 2007, p.116). The literary influence of Dylan Thomas is an example of *Direct Inspiration*, Ray Davies states in an interview for the Independent that George Orwell's *1984* and Thomas's *Under Milk Wood* were the two books that had changed him (Williams, 2010). Davies took Thomas' characters such as 'Polly Garter', 'Dai Bread', 'Willy Nilly', 'Captain Cat' and 'Lord Cut-Glass' and created his own, along with 'Polly', 'Johnny Thunder', 'Walter', 'Monica', 'Wicked Annabella' and the 'Phenomenal Cat'. Davies referred to 'Phenomenal Cat' as a nursery rhyme, and superficially the song could be categorised along with British psychedelic songs such as Pink Floyd's 'The Gnome' (1987 [1967]) and Les Fleur De Lys' 'Gong With the Luminous Nose' (1968), which is a direct allusion to Edward Lear's 'A Dong With a Luminous Nose' (Millar, 2003 p.86*)*.

4.1.5   Spiritual Texts

The influence of spiritual texts is also noticeable in popular songs of the era. Syd Barrett, like many people of his generation, had become interested in the ancient Chinese teachings of the *I Ching* (Wilhelm, 1951). Barrett's song 'Chapter 24' (1968) draws influence from the 24th chapter of the *I Ching*. It is conjecture whether Barrett was a follower and user of the *I Ching* or whether the book was just 'close to hand' when he was

writing the song, nonetheless, the chapter provided the fertility of lyrical ideas that Barrett used in the song (Chapman, 2010 p.151).

Barrett seems to have focused on 'The Judgement' and 'The Image' sections of the chapter, mostly ignoring 'The Lines'. The opening lyrics, like many in the song, are taken directly from the text, 'A movement is accomplished in six stages, and the seventh brings return'. Barrett seems to focus on the changing of light by using the repeated refrain 'Sunset, Sunrise' which, from reading the chapter, can be surmised as self-penned. When reading the original text, one can see how Barrett has omitted certain words to create his desired effect. 'Therefore seven is the number of the young light, and it arises when six, the number of the great darkness, is increased by one' becomes 'The seven is the number of the young light, it forms when darkness is increased by one.' This condensing elision of words creates what may appear as a 'far-out' lyric, proposing the question 'How can darkness be increased by one?' when in truth it is inspired directly from the book.

The chapter focuses on the 'turning point', the notion of Fu/Return. The structure of the lyrics adheres to the idea of 'returning', the first verse returns as the final verse of the song. Some lyrics derive from passages in the chapter and change to an extent so that they seem original. 'The Judgement' reads 'Return. Success. Going out and coming in without error.' Barrett has applied minimal changes with 'Change returns success. Going and coming without error.' This lyric seems Barrett-esque, with what equates to an ellipsis creating a concise but ambiguous statement.

The Psychedelic Experience: A Manual Based on the Tibetan Book of the Dead written by Timothy Leary, Ralph Metzner and Richard Alpert became a popular source of reading material for the period (1964). The book attempts to lead the reader through the different stages of a psychedelic experience, from 'Ego-loss' to 'The Period Of Hallucinations' and 'The Period Of Re-Entry', it even explains, quite pragmatically, how to plan a successful trip. John Lennon recorded the didactic words and listened to them whilst taking a trip on LSD. He then wrote the song 'Tomorrow Never Knows' (The Beatles, 1987 [1966]).

> The result was spectacular and he hastened to capture it in song, taking many of the lines directly from Leary and Alpert's text – above all its rapturous invocation of the supposed reality behind appearances: The Void (MacDonald, 2005 p.187).

In the 'General Introduction' the text states to 'Whenever in doubt, turn off your mind, relax, float downstream'. Lennon, with minimal alterations, used this suggestion as the strong opening line in the song. Lennon, like Barrett, took lines from the original text, altered them until agreeable with his artistic preference and used them as lyrics. Lennon takes the originally separated 'Surrender to it' and 'The Void' and condenses them into the lyric 'Surrender to the void'. 'The Clear light of the Beginning' becomes the refrain 'Of the beginning'. Similarly to how the book asks the reader to 'surrender' and 'float downstream', Lennon asks the listener to 'listen to the colour of your dreams' and to 'play the game'.

The lyrics, albeit simple, conveyed a message to a not-yet-so-psychedelic Britain, a message to the people to ignore the Id and kill the Ego, '…becoming one of the most socially influential records The Beatles ever made.' (MacDonald, 2005, p.188). The eastern influence of the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* along with the song's subject of psychedelic drugs opened up new creative opportunities for the band, the engineer Geoff Emerick and producer George Martin (Emerick, 2006 pp.111-114). The use of eastern instruments such as a tambura drone, experimentation with tape-loops, Mellotron oscillation and revolving speakers (to make Lennon 'sound like the Dalai Lama and thousands of Tibetan Monks chanting on a mountain top' (Macdonald, 2005, p.191), together would produce something highly original, and according to Ian Macdonald 'Pop music, … had heard nothing like this before' (2005, p.190).

Other examples of existing songs of the period that can be placed under Direct Form are included in Appendix 3.

4.2.1   Technical Form

Technical Form differs from *Direct Form.* It involves the use of literary techniques rather than the semantic or stylistic side of literature. It focuses purely on the technique of writing, for instance, the stream of consciousness style, rather than focusing on factors such as subject matter or metre. Songwriters have naturally used literary technique as an element of an all-encompassing influence, but in certain circumstances, the technique itself is the main concern.

24

The most used style of the period is the cut/up technique. Cut/up is a post-modern and non-linear technique made famous by William. S. Burroughs, with his novel *Naked Lunch* (1959). Burroughs often presented the words cut up as 'cut/up', hence my adoption of the grammatical style (1971). The artist Brion Gysin introduced the technique to Burroughs. Burroughs became interested in the social undertones of cut/up and claimed that 'language equals control' and that if man was to destroy and manipulate language, man would, by result, have control over language. David Bowie became enthusiastic about the technique and used it when writing lyrics most notably on the albums *Diamond Dogs* (1999 [1974]) and *Low* (1999 [1977]). It is thought that Bowie also used the technique when writing 'Life on Mars' (1999 [1971]). Incidentally, the British psychedelic band 'The Soft Machine' took their name directly from the eponymous Burroughs' cut/up novel (1966).

Syd Barrett was influenced by the cut/up technique and used it as an approach to songwriting. However, it was not Burroughs who inspired Barrett, it was the sound-artist Bob Cobbing, the poet Spike Hawkins and the collage technique of the artist Robert Rauschenberg. Barrett's friend, the poet Spike Hawkins, a well-known figure of the counterculture, introduced him to what he called the *Instant Poetry Broth* (1969). *'Instant Poetry Broth* entered Syd's lexicon, another way of dislocating sense and senses, another way of subjecting commonplace subject matter and everyday vernacular to avant-garde techniques and principles' (Chapman, 2010, p.229). It is difficult to determine whether Barrett used cut/up for certain sections and songs, it is even more difficult to discover to what extent cut/up provided his lyrical structures. Nevertheless, it is known that Barrett experimented with the technique.

An example of Barrett's use of the technique is in 'Word Song' (1988). The song lyrics are a string of words that seem to have little, if any similarity, repeated rather monotonously one after the other. For example, 'Mycenaean, moat, poppy, rubber, Radar, rags, sugar, teak' (Cairns, 2009 p.149). The song is the starkest example of Barrett's experimental writing.

'Rats' (1994 [1970]) also appears to have been written with the cut/up/poetry broth technique. Barrett seems to have used cut/up in this song to a lesser degree than in 'word song', the products of the technique mix with what appear to be original lyrics.

25

Bam, spastic, tactile engine

Heaving, crackle, slinky, dormy, roofy, wham

I'll have the, fried bloke

Broken jardy, cardy, smooch (Cairns, 2009, p.97).

Superficially, these lyrics appear to be the product of cut/up, as do the lyrics of 'Word Song'. However, looking more closely, some words carry a human weight, for instance, the half rhymes such as 'spastic/tactile' and 'slinky, dormy, roofy'. It also appears as if Barrett has written the colloquialisms such as 'cardy' rather than created it via the cut/up technique. It would imply that Barrett possibly applied a mixture of the cut/up approach and artistic intuition. Throughout the song there are words that Barrett has created such as 'sploshette', 'pufftie' and 'splintra'. Barrett could have cut/up his material and mixed words from various sources to create such neologisms, alternatively, he could have created them intuitively.

The use of cut-ups explains some of the more severe ellipsis and

occlusions in the solo output, but then again Syd was perfectly capable

of editing in his own head that way … emulating the strategy without

the need to utilise the technique itself (Chapman, 2010, p.243).

Barrett used the technique in many other songs, notably, 'Octopus' (1993 [1970]), which is analysed under *Stratified Form*. To determine whether Barrett used cut/up or intuition is impossible, it would help a great deal if one could find out from what source Barrett was cutting his lyrics from in every circumstance. In reality, his approach is more ambiguous. Barrett is also said to have experimented in the stream of consciousness technique (or psychic automatism as it is otherwise known) however this is much less provable. It seems as if Barrett used cut/up and artistic intuition in symbiosis to create his lyrics.

The Beatles applied the cut/up technique to the musical content of songs such as 'Yellow Submarine' (1987 [1966]) with the random splicing of a brass band recording (Emerick, 2005, p.123), 'Revolution 9' (1987 [1968]) and 'Being for the Benefit of Mr Kite' (2009 [1967]) with the random splicing of EMI sound effects (Emerick, 2005, p.168). Lennon wrote 'Being for the Benefit of Mr Kite' after seeing a poster advertising a circus event, he used the words on the poster as inspiration for the lyrics, this approach could be placed

26

under *Technical Form* as can the use of the cut/up of tape recordings. Stated earlier was the proposition that songwriters of the era did not apply literary based techniques directly to both the lyrical and musical content, the Beatles' cut/up tape recordings were only applied to the musical content, songwriters did not apply the same technique to both the musical and lyrical content within the same composition. This is most likely due to the potential impact upon commercial possibility concerning the outcome of the song and possibly the disengagement of meaning during the songwriting process.

Many authors use the term 'stream of consciousness' with a nonchalant approach to describe songs with a meandering lyrical style. Hannah Turner states about 'Strawberry Fields Forever' (1989 [1967]), 'The song's verses flow freely in a stream of consciousness, against a backdrop that has obvious childhood idyllic associations for Lennon' (2009).

 'Cyprus Avenue' and 'Madame George' written by Van Morrison for the album *Astral Weeks* (2000 [1968]) are both products of stream of consciousness writing (Yorke, 1975, p.56). It is difficult to distinguish whether Morrison or Lennon were directly influenced by automatic writers such as Joyce, Kerouac or Nabokov. The stream of consciousness approach has the potential to apply to many art forms. In Jackson Pollock's work for example, the sweeping arm movements created his style of automatic artwork. There will inevitably be a human intuitive element to the stream of consciousness approach therefore it is difficult to determine whether certain songs are attempting to replicate literary style or simply writing free-hand. The lyrics of Morrison and Lennon do not appear to have been written in a stream of consciousness fashion, in fact they appear to match rhythmically with the musical content, as if they had been meticulously worked out. Rob Jackaman's term '*simulated* automatism' (1989) meaning: automatic writing that mimics the attributes of genuine automatism: aptly describes the approach that Morrison and more so, Lennon, seemed to be adhering to, especially in 'Strawberry Fields Forever'. 'Always, no sometimes, think it's me, but you know I know when it's a dream. I think I know I mean a 'Yes' but it's all wrong, that is I think I disagree.' Lennon here seems to be writing in a *simulated automatic* fashion, although he could have possibly been alluding to Lewis Carroll's Alice monologues (2007 [1865]).

27

4.2.2   Stratified Form

Stratified Form is the amalgamation of two or more forms. Lennon's 'I am the Walrus' is an example of *Stratified Form* (The Beatles, 1989 [1967]). According to Turner 'I am the Walrus' was one of the first 'obvious glimpses' of the 'postmodern approach to writing [in popular music]' (2009, p.82).

Lennon had heard from a school friend Pete Shotton that a student from their old school was to study The Beatle's lyrics in class, Lennon found this amusing and insisted that he would write a song with the aim to be so nonsensical that it would be impossible to analyse with any serious intent (MacDonald, 2005, p.266). Even with this is mind the lyrics of the song are worth analysing when researching literary influences under *Stratified Form*. The 'Walrus' character in the song is inspired by Lewis Carroll's novel *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There* (2007 [1871]). 'The Walrus and the Carpenter' is a narrative poem in the novel, which Lennon originally misinterpreted, not understanding that the Walrus is in fact the antagonist rather than the protagonist. Lennon nevertheless was influenced by Carroll's style of writing and the use of certain characters in the novel. Another character from the book that Lennon is likely to be alluding to is 'Humpty-Dumpty', with the lyric 'I am the Eggman'. Humpty-Dumpty is an interesting character in the book. Through the character of Humpty-Dumpty, Carroll devised a technique known as a Portmanteau 'two meanings packed into one word like a portmanteau' (Holquist, 1969 p.122). Lennon created the term 'snied', which appears to be a portmanteau made up of the two words, 'sneered' and 'cried'. This coinage by Lennon is an example of *Technical Form*, whilst the use of the characters 'the Walrus' and 'the Eggman' is an example of *Direct Form*, more specifically *Direct Inspiration*.

The line 'Yellow matter custard, dripping from a dead dog's eye' was influenced by an old nonsense rhyme that Lennon and friends used to sing when they were young, originally, 'Yellow matter custard, green slop pie, all mixed together with a dead dog's eye' (MacDonald, 2005, p.267). Lennon's modified version is directly influenced by nonsense literature with its absurd situational value and counter-intuitive ellipsis. Like most nonsense literature, the song has a dark undertone. 'The nonsense of I am the Walrus is, though, anything but whimsical…it is defensive to the point of desperation' (MacDonald, 2005, p.268).

28

The song is full of innovative coinages and characters such as 'Crabalocker-Fishwife' 'Elementary Penguin' and 'Semolina Pilchard'. Along with these creations comes the phrase 'goo goo g'joob', this nonsensical phrase is representational of Edward Lear's limericks and the writing style of Spike Milligan's nonsense poems. Another of the song's noteworthy literary links is the lyric 'Man you should have seen them kicking Edgar Allen Poe'. Adding to the direct literary influence, the song concludes with a BBC radio recording of Shakespeare's Act IV, Scene 6 of *King Lear*. Geoff Emerick recalls how the recording happened to come on by chance on the radio as Lennon and Ringo were twiddling the dials, even though it was happenchance, the decision to include the recording in the song stands as an example of literary influence (2006, p.215).

Another song that belongs under *Stratified Form* is Syd Barrett's 'Clowns and Jugglers/Octopus' (1993 [1970]). Chapman notes how Barrett has created a 'found poetry' composition by drawing from many eclectic sources such as 'Elizabethan masque play, Shakespeare's *King Henry VI Part I, The Wind in the Willows* and the poetry of, among others, John Clare, Sir Henry Newbolt and William Howitt' (2010, p.217). There are also sections that draw directly from the Mother Goose rhyme 'Huff the Talbot and our Cat Tib' and the *Junior Laurel and Gold Anthology* (2010, p.219).

Barrett wrote, along with the 'found poetry', original lyrics that can only be deemed as original due to the fact that they have not been found as existing literature as of yet. Treating the original parts of the lyrics as Barrett's own, one can notice that another influence was at work. The lines 'the madcap laughed at the man on the border' and 'Cheat he cried shouting Kangaroo' appear to have a Lear/Carroll weight to them. In addition, the chorus 'Please leave us here, close our eyes to the Octopus ride' has a foothold in the realms of nonsense poetry because of the nonsensical situation and the childhood nostalgia of funfairs. Taking into account the use of 'found poetry' and the nonsense-inspired original lyrics, 'Clowns and Jugglers/Octopus' belongs under *Stratified Form* due to the *Technical Form* of the cut/up, collage or 'found poetry', the *Direct Metamorphosis* of existing literature and the *Direct Inspiration* of the original lyrics and overall theme of the composition.

Chapter 5

Constraints and More Systematic Forms

5.1:   Why Constrain?

After analysing existing compositions from the chosen era by placing techniques under systematic forms, the separation of techniques encouraged me to compose in a certain fashion. For example, the songwriter could choose to use one technique from Direct Form as the entire idea for a composition or the songwriter could choose to use an amalgamation of various techniques from different forms during the compositional process. This particular method of composition sets constraints during the writing stage. The constraints, however restraining they are in nature, allow the songwriter to compose material that may not have been accessible beforehand. I decided to build on the ideas of the songwriters of the 1960s and apply literary techniques such as the cut/up technique to the musical content as well as the lyrical content in the same song, something that the songwriters in question did not do. As my research has developed, I have moved away from compositions that simply re-enact the techniques from the era and started to use other techniques and invent techniques to use in the compositional process. This approach to composition developed into further experimentation with constrained writing and other literary techniques.

> In opposition to the general term rule, the more narrowly defined term constraint indicates any type of formal technique or program whose application is able to produce a sense of its making text by itself, if need be without any previous "idea" from the writer. A constraint-ruled text is thus the opposite of a text in which the author tries to express an idea or a meaning he saw or felt within his own mind before he started to write (Baetens, 1997, p.2).

The writing of any form of literature has inherent constraints, 'formal limitations and formulaic conventions' that set parameters for the writer without the use of further constraints such as lipograms, pangrams and so on (De Geest, An Goris, 2009, p.82). The inherent constraints also apply to popular music in the way that the songwriter is typically subjected to keys, twelve notes, harmony, duration, time signatures and referential codes. These conventions have been and can be broken with the existence of microtonal music, various tuning systems, polyrhythm and other techniques associated with the avant-garde, however these approaches to composition are, in general, not readily consistent in popular

music. With popular music in mind, the addition of extra constraints further narrows the opportunities for the songwriter yet simultaneously creates opportunities.

> On the one hand, such constraints function as boundaries that explicitly limit the possible realizations of a text in some respects. On the other hand, those constraints are not primarily intended as strict limitations but rather as creative stimuli for the artistic process; they reduce the endless possibilities—the common, rather naive association of literature with boundless freedom and complete originality—and thus contribute to a stronger focus on the mechanisms on which genuine literature should be based: formal control and a maximal artistic concentration within an appropriate frame of constraints (De Geest, An Goris, 2009, p.82).

The use of a technical process that leads to constraints is meant entirely as an approach to composition, it is not necessarily intended to be noticeable for the listener in the finished result. The compositions are written with the intention to be heard as songs that can be placed under the broad term 'popular music'.

> … traditional constraints are mainly intended to function as creative stimuli, the constraints pertaining to popular literature [music in this case] always (implicitly or explicitly) operate under the understanding that publication and commercial success are (part of) their ultimate goal (De Geest, An Goris, 2009, p.86).

5.2 Initial Stage of Composition

The techniques are used at the primary stage of composition. Allan F. Moore discusses the importance of the initial phase of composition, 'Unlike many art music composers, it appears that most rock writers use an instrument to develop songs' (2001, p.59). He also mentions how the choice of instrument that the songwriter uses during the basic stages of composition can set certain limits (on the subject of guitar):

> The only major chords available in open position are those based on C, G, D, A and E, and the different disposition of pitches within each one of these shapes gives each chord a definite spacing characteristic (2001, p.59).

My preferred approach to composition relies on guitar arrangements. With this in mind, during the compositional process, literary techniques have mainly been applied to the basic guitar arrangements and the lyrical material only. The vocal melody and remaining instrumentation of the song do not adhere to the technical constraints. The constraints or

techniques constrain the songwriter at the beginning of the composition, but allow for further harmonic development when arranging the composition.

Moore introduces Andrew Chester's (1970) terminologies 'intensional' and 'extensional' form. *Intensional* form involves

> … a music taking place within relatively rigid harmonic, melodic and perhaps rhythmic archetypes (almost in the sense of an external skeleton), within which performers can utilize a great degree of freedom, particularly with respect to aspects of sound production that defy analysis by notation (2001, pg 22).

Chester supposedly intended the forms to be applicable to the performance of music. Moore uses the forms from the listeners' point of view. The forms apply to this study from the compositional point of view. My compositional approach could be described as *extensional*, 'a music built up from 'basic musical atoms' (ibid). The framework (or rather *internal* skeleton) of the song is created by a technique (or techniques) and the remaining features such as instrumentation, arrangement and production style provide freedom for the songwriter to add to the original framework of the song.

5.3   More Systematic Forms

Certain compositions included in the main portfolio possess similarities. To exemplify the ways in which various techniques affect the musical content, the compositions are placed into three groups. The groups are similar to the forms proposed in Chapter 4, yet they can all be categorised under *Technical Form* and in most cases, *Stratified Form*. The forms introduced in Chapter 4 consider the literary influence on the lyrical content alone. The new sub-forms of *Technical Form* consider both the lyrical and the musical content, and the relationship between the two.

Implicit Technical Form

This sub-form involves the literary technique directly affecting the lyrical content, yet not the musical content to the same degree. The one example from the compositions submitted in the main portfolio (CD 2) is 'Transmission'. The lyrics were created purely by the literary technique. The music however, was influenced by the lyrical content alone. It is an

example of a secondary influence; a primary influence in this example would involve using a music-program to generate the musical content as well as a writing-program to generate the lyrics.

Inherent Technical Form

In contrast with *Implicit Technical Form*, this sub-form directly affects both the lyrical and musical material. Examples of this sub-form included in the main portfolio are 'Magic Rain', 'Freak Fire', 'Take One Honey for the Kin', 'Edwood Liar' and 'Fifteen Three'. 'Take One Honey for the Kin' for example, applies the same literary technique to both the lyrical content and the musical content. Inherent in the formulation of the composition is the technique in question.

Interactive Technical Form

The third sub-form *Interactive Technical Form* involves a cooperative relationship between the technique and the musical content. The remaining three compositions 'Ill of the Illness', 'Kings, Yazoos & Harlots' and 'He, Me, Him' are all examples of this sub-form. Both 'Ill of the Illness' and 'Kings, Yazoos & Harlots' employ a similar corroboration between lyrical and musical material with the use of the chord tables. 'He, Me, Him' employs a different cooperative relationship between the lyrical and musical material with the use of mathematic equations that create the lyrical content and a variation of the mathematical technique to create the musical content.

With the forms and sub-forms in mind, the songwriter can choose to employ a variety of methods with a clear compositional approach. The separation of form allows the songwriter to constrain him/herself to separate compositional methods. One example could be the stratification of *Direct Metamorphosis* and *Interactive Technical Form*.

Chapter 6
Original Song explanations

6.1   Songs Not Included in Main Portfolio

Track list included in Appendix 1.

The compositions are written with the intention of being received as experimental approaches to popular songwriting. The compositions included in the main portfolio are the experiments that I chose to work further on and arrange/produce. This section includes some examples and brief explanations of more basic compositional sketches, exercises and studies that I decided to exclude from the portfolio, beginning with the first song I wrote for the project. My first compositions only applied literary techniques to lyric writing, which seemed to be the main approach of Barrett and Lennon. The nine songs included on CD 1 exemplify the progression of musical material. Some of the songs are arranged and produced better than others. Some are draft versions containing only acoustic guitar and vocals. I decided to include these draft versions because it demonstrates the *extensional* approach to composition (guitar and voice).

'Charley, Charley' (CD 1 - Track 1)

'Charley, Charley' would be considered as *Stratified Form* due to the techniques applied, which are *Direct Metamorphosis/Inspiration* and *Technical Form*. I used Albert Camus' *The Myth of Sisyphus* (Camus, 1955) and a nursery rhyme called *Charley, Charley* (Opie, 1992, p.115-16) for the subjects of Direct Metamorphosis/Inspiration. I also applied a particular form of the cut/up method to Samuel Beckett's *A Piece of Monologue* (Beckett, 2006 [1982]). This particular form of cut/up involves the cutting in half of existing pages and the pasting together of adjacent pages to result in mixed sentences and arbitrary neologisms. This method is similar to Burroughs' 'simplest cut/up method'.

> The simplest cut/up cuts a page down the middle and across the middle into four sections. Section 1 is then placed with section 4 and section 3 with section 2 in a new sequence. Carried further we can break the page down into smaller and smaller units in altered sequences (Burroughs, 1971, p.16).

This form of cut/up could be applied to the music as well as the lyrical material, for example, the songwriter could write the music as a score (or score it afterwards) and cut/up the pages to create new harmonic/melodic/rhythmic combinations.

'Tabula Rasa' (CD 1 - Track 2)

I created a pastiche of William Wordsworth's blank verse poems (Wordsworth and Coleridge, 1968). Blank verse involves writing in non-rhyming iambic pentameter. Iambic pentameter consists of 5 'feet', each foot consists of two syllables and the second syllable in each foot is stressed. The *Direct Pastiche* created the lyrics of the song. The lyrics follow Wordsworth's style, for example, including the use of pre-modifying adjectives, negative adjectives, complex-elliptical syntax, generalised pronouns, personification, intended tautologies, frequent changes in tense and so on (Maxfield, 1973). *Direct Pastiche* could be applied to music as well as lyrics, for instance, the songwriter could choose to emulate the style of a David Bowie song, yet include a pastiche of a Futurist poem as the lyrics.

'Hector Protector' (CD 1 - Track 3)

Following on from the characterisation of *The Kinks are the Village Green Preservation Society* (2001 [1968]) and the 'found poetry' approach of Barrett's 'Octopus', I decided to use a character called 'Hector Protector' from a nursery rhyme of the same name (Opie, 1992, p.200). The composition involved changing the lines of the existing poem and including other references to nursery rhyme in the lyrics such as 'Thirty white horses stand and stare' (1992, p.212) and 'as Tom the Dandy combed his hair' (1992, p.234). This song is an example of *Direct Inspiration*.

'We Grow Old' (CD 1 - Track 4)

I wrote a 900 word automatic poem to provide me with a foundation for lyrical content. The song also includes certain phrases of T.S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred. Prufrock* (1982 [1915]) and following on from spiritual texts, Lama Surya Das' *Awakening the Buddha Within* (1997). This song would be placed under *Stratified Form* due to the *Direct Metamorphosis* of both *Prufrock* and *Awakening the Buddha Within* and the *Technical*

35

Form of automatic writing. The automatic writing approach could be applied to the musical material by improvising for a certain length of time, recording the result, and choosing fragments that seem useable.

The Flight of the Moon (CD 1 - Track 5)

I used, word for word, Oscar Wilde's poem *La Fuite de la Lune* (1881) as the lyrics to this song. In a similar fashion to Barrett's 'Golden Hair' (1993 [1970]) the metrical and prosodic foundations and flow of the poem encouraged the style of phrasing and the structure of the song. *Direct Metamorphosis* could be applied to the musical content by taking an original chord sequence/drum pattern/vocal melody and so on of an existing song.

Phillish (CD 1 - Track 6)

Phillish is an extension of the technique Pillish (Keith, online). Pillish involves the use of the digits of the number Pi to determine how many letters are to be in each word. I decided to use the number Phi (aka the golden ratio/number) 1.618 … to determine how many letters are to be in each word. When the number reaches the digit 0, a new verse/section is started. Phillish could be applied to the musical material also, for instance, the digits could determine bar lengths, pitch, metre and so on. This song is an example of *Technical Form*.

'Where the Wheels End' (CD 1 - Track 7)

Lipogrammatic writing involves the exclusion of a certain letter, in many cases, the letter 'e'. The novel *A Void* by Georges Perec (1969) is an example of this technique. This composition contains the use of only ten consonants and only the vowel 'e'. This approach to composition, under *Technical Form*, could be applied to the musical content by excluding certain notes/chords from a song.

'Rosaleen' (CD 1 - Track 8)

This composition is another example of *Direct Inspiration*, influenced by the character 'Rosaline' in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (1980 [1599]). The name 'Rosaleen' is

pronounced differently in the song than Shakespeare's 'Rosaline' (ros-a-lin). The frequent shift in tenses of T.S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred. Prufrock* (1982 [1915]) also influenced the lyrics 'The past is here, the present ran away', 'The present's gone, the future never comes' and the constant change in tense throughout the song.

'In the Room' (CD 1 - Track 9)

The poet Robert Johnson used a technique in which the writer utilises an existing poem and blanks out certain sections to produce a new poem. Johnson was influenced by the ideas behind Lucas Foss's *Baroque Variations* (Foss, 1968). Johnson produced *Radi Os* a 'poem-by-excision' of John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (Johnson, 2005). I decided to use this technique to blank out certain passages and fragments of T.S. Eliot's *The Love Song of J. Alfred. Prufrock* to produce the lyrical content (1982 [1915]). This technique could be applied to the musical material by making certain passages/chords of an existing song inaudible.

Another technique that I used to produce lyrical content is influenced by the literary genre SPAM poetry. I did not write the musical material, hence the exclusion of the piece on CD 1. I became interested in SPAM poetry and decided to use SPAM emails to create the lyrical content of a song. A similar approach could be applied to the musical content by pasting a SPAM email into a word document on a Macintosh computer and sending it to a PC. Certain fonts create musical notes instead of the intended written passage due to Mac/PC incompatibility. The erroneous musical notes could be used to create the musical material.

I decided not to continue with these compositions because by this point, I had not chosen to apply the techniques to both the lyrics and the music, the ways in which the literary techniques could affect the musical content noted above are an afterthought. I was quite pleased with these initial experiments, and they certainly helped me to generate interesting and unusual material. However I felt that I was emulating the 1960s songwriting approaches to composition and wanted to extend the techniques to the musical material as well as the lyrics. I wanted to have a more consistent theoretical approach to music and lyrics. Even though the compositions included on CD 1 are draft versions and are not to be assessed, it helps to highlight the difference between the musical outcomes when applying

37

literary techniques to the musical content as well as the lyrical content when listening to the main portfolio.

6.2   Songs Included in Main Portfolio

Track list included in Appendix 2.

For each composition in the main portfolio there is a structural representation including chords and lyrics, these representations are not intended as chord sheets, graphical scores, or any type of performance-based diagrams, they serve the purpose of simply representing the initial stage of composition and structure. Each composition is included as a recording on CD 2, therefore, the structural representations may be read along with the listening process, or read alone.

6.2.1   Magic Rain (CD 2 - Track 1)

'Magic Rain' is the first composition I composed with the intention of applying a literary technique to the musical material as well as the lyrical material.

I decided to use a form of the cut/up technique to create the lyrical material. I used Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* (1993 [1908]) and Allen Ginsberg's *Howl, Kaddish and Other Poems* (2009) as the subjects of cut/up. I decided to use these texts because of Barrett's interest in *The Wind in the Willows* and the importance of Ginsberg in 1960s counterculture. There are many ways to use the cut/up technique. I wanted to come up with an original approach. I used the Fibonacci sequence to dictate which pages should be used. For example, I started on page one of *The Wind in the Willows* and pointed (eyes closed) at a single word on the page, I then wrote down the word. I then did the same to page 2, page 3, 5, 8, 13 etc (following the Fibonacci sequence). As the books are quite short, I decided to repeat the cycle four times for each book to create enough material.

Here is the outcome:

The Wind in the Willows 4 times using Fibonacci sequence

dark and peeped best bank hills sorry sorrow dwellers restless never cried lowly black cleaning chattered look tumble paddock aimlessly fellow rat warning longing his riverside sheer length manner now delicate fine night speck down small legs above fat while flung face belt chap country

Howl, Kaddish and other poems 4 times using Fibonacci sequence

madness cold wine task harpsichord heart faith! Newspapers sunny weeping magic burning filth holy entangled smile stranger death saw high hours fireplace sixth mind eternity soul love grove electric darkness naked brilliance rain down cement magnanimity blessed injured song mills

I wrote the resulting words down on pieces of paper in their arbitrary order and cut them up into individual slips of paper, each slip with one word on it. I then placed all the slips of

39

paper into a hat and picked out each slip at random. I then wrote down the words in their new arbitrary order.

Here is the outcome:

dwellers never best sorry death cleaning cried waking and hills cloud blessed electric chattered faith sorrow sunny eternity task injured soul tumble paddock burning brilliance fireplace lowly magic rain harpsichord high seeking weeping mills sixth mind music small belt cement naked country restless cold face saw love smile filth wine his hours madness entangled magnanimity while song sheer aimlessly speck above bank down chap holy now warning dark legs riverside delicate peeped flung fine heart night manner length fellow longing look grove stranger newspapers darkness rat fat black

I studied the words and wrote down phrases or combinations of words that appealed to me.

Here are the phrases I chose:

the hills are waking
electric clouds
sunny sorrow
tumble in the paddock
burning brilliance
magic rain
high weeping mills
naked country
restless cold face
his hours of madness entangle
aimlessly on the bank
flung down the riverside
peeped the fine heart
a delicate manner of night
a longing look at the fellow stranger
fat black rat
dwellers of darkness

40

his smile cried love

the chap chattered mind and newspapers

I applied a similar cut/up technique to the music. As I used existing literature as the subject for lyrical cut/up, I decided to take an existing song and cut/up the chord sequence, and used the chords from 'Terrapin' by Syd Barrett (1993 [1970]). I decided to use an original song by Barrett because of the relevance of the compositional process, as Barrett also experimented with cut/up. A similar method was applied, I wrote down the chord sequence for the bridge section of 'Terrapin' and cut/up the chords individually, placed them in a hat and wrote them down in the arbitrary order. I did the same for the original chord sequence of the verse of 'Terrapin'.

I decided to use the bridge chords of 'Terrapin' (post cut/up) as the verse chords for this composition and the verse chords of 'Terrapin' (post-cut/up) as the chorus.

Here is the outcome:

Verses

'Terrapin' bridge chords – C G Ab A C G Bb E A C G E

Result – A C G Bb C A Ab E G E G C

Chorus

'Terrapin' verse chords – E G E G A D E A C G

Result – G C G E A E E D G A

I wrote an original introduction and middle 8 that was not affected directly by the use of the cut/up technique. (Chords: A Amaj7 A7 D7) This was intended to provide the harmonic variety that I felt the song might otherwise lack, these chords create a contrast with the cut/up chords and the choice in chord structure allowed for a smoother harmonic progression.

The next stage involved me playing the chords in their dictated order and singing the chosen phrases along with other words from the cut/up experiment over the chords until I

41

came up with the final lyric pattern. The experimentation with cut/up lyrics and chords altered my approach to writing the vocal melody by constraining the melodic progression, syllabic structures and syntax which allowed me to write a vocal line different from what may have come naturally without the application of the technique. Some of the word patterns changed and some stayed the same, some words were added for example 'Flung down the riverside' became 'Flung down *by* the riverside', which seemed to fit better in the song's context. Some of the chord patterns were also changed slightly, for example, the chorus uses all of the original chords but repeats the G and the A at the end which serves to build tension and allows space for the hook 'Magic rain'.

Here is the outcome:

Intro

Verse 1

```
 A               C
The hills are waking up
G       Bb    C
Electric clouds above
A               Ab
Flung down by the riverside
E           G       E       G           C
Peeped the fine heart in a delicate manner of night
```

Verse 2

```
A               C
Tumble on down to the paddock
G       Bb    C
On our naked country
A               Ab
Sunny sorrow and love cried smiles
E       G       E     G       C
Aimless speck out on the bank of night
```

Chorus

```
G     C     G     E
Magic rain, weep down to
A           E
Me, from your high-weeping
A           E           D
Mills and your harpsichord hills
```

G   A   G   A
Magic rain, magic rain
G
Magic rain cry on me

Verse 3

A   C
Hours of madness are hanging still
G Bb   C
Entangled the holy mill
A   Ab
A fat black rat cloud dweller of light
E   G   E   G   C
Chattered alone on the wine-dark legs of night

Chorus

Middle 8/Intro

G   A   G   A
Magic rain, magic rain

(Repeat to fade)

End.

The lyrical content influenced the musical content on another level. The lyrics 'harpsichord hills' and 'magic rain' inspired me to include recordings of harpsichord music and recordings of rainfall at certain points in the song. The harpsichord sounds were sampled from John Cage's *HPSCHD* (2003 [1969]). I also decided to use Barrett's original vocal melody from 'Terrapin' in the reversed guitar part by playing the vocal melody on electric guitar and simply reversing it. The use of reversed guitar is a common feature in 1960s psychedelic music. I also decided to reverse the main vocal melody of the chorus of 'Magic Rain' and include it alongside the reversed guitar and rain recordings in the middle 8. In a similar manner, I included a recitation of Ginsberg reading 'Howl: Part II' in the fade out ending and this was inspired by the inclusion of the 'King Lear' recording in The Beatles' 'I am the Walrus' (1989 [1967]). The cacophonic 'concrete sound' texture at the end of 'Magic Rain' was inspired by 'Revolution 9' (1987 [1968]) and Pink Floyd's 'Bike' (1987 [1967]).

I regard 'Magic Rain' as an example of *Technical Form*, more specifically, *Inherent Technical Form* focused on the direct application of the cut/up technique on both the lyrical and musical content. I found that the song sounds somewhat like a pastiche of 1960s popular music due to the reversed guitar, use of concrete sound, double-tracked vocals, vocal style, backing vocals and fairly lo-fi drums. Other additions such as the loud bass guitar, feedback guitar and wah-wah guitar add a modern feel, and I deliberately took a contemporary approach to the production, which makes the song sound modern in a sense due to the use of modern recording and mixing equipment, yet the 1960s feel is still apparent. In general, this compositional approach produced successful results because of the balancing of the technique involved and application of subjective taste in order to achieve a listenable result. Overall I was pleased with my first experiment, although I was aware of the risk of the music sounding dated. I did feel that overall sound of the song, made up from a 'band' sound with added 'found sound' worked well as did the general structure and catchiness of the melodic lines.

6.2.2   Freak Fire (CD 2 - Track 2)

I had begun to research the writing method known collectively as constrained writing. *Alphabetica Africa* by Walter Abish (1974) was an inspiration, so I decided to write a song in a similar alliterative fashion as the novel. Abish wrote the entire first chapter with words that begin with the letter 'a', the second chapter with the letters 'a' and 'b', the third with 'a', 'b' and 'c' and so on with each chapter gaining the consecutive letter in the alphabet, until reaching the 25th chapter where Abish allowed himself to ignore the constraint. At chapter 28th Abish removed one letter every chapter beginning with the letter 'z' and then 'z' and 'y', then 'z', 'y' and 'x' and so on until the final chapter only includes words beginning with 'a'.

I decided to use a simplified approach where each verse uses only words beginning with the same letter. The first verse contains words that begin with 'a', the second verse with 'b', the pre-chorus with 'c', the chorus with no constraint, the third verse with 'd', the second pre-chorus with 'e', the second chorus again with no constraint and the outro with 'f'. I chose to allow the chorus to have a free reign, as Abish's few middle chapters also allow free reign.

I then decided to apply the alliterative technique to the music in a similar manner as the lyrics. The introduction section of the song has no constraints, the first verse consists of a chord pattern based around the chord A major, the second verse uses a modulation of the same chord pattern to work around the chord B major, the pre-chorus uses the chord C7, the chorus has free reign, the third verse uses the same chord pattern as the first two verses but is transposed to work around the chord D major, the second pre-chorus uses the chord E7, the second chorus has free reign again and the outro is based around the chord $F^{\sharp}$ major. The absence of constraints in both choruses and the use of C7 and E7 allowed me to modulate to the connecting sections, it also adheres to the absence of constraints in the lyrical content inspired by Abish's chapters 25-27.

45

Here is the chord and lyric structure:

Intro (Based around chord E major)

Verse 1 (Based around chord A major)

A
As Annie always appreciated art
D   A   D   A
Anything, anywhere. Anyhow, Anywhere.

Verse 2 (Based around chord B major)

B
Break beats, bending backwards, bedpan (yeah)
E   B   E   B
Big bad bitches brew, Bopping, Baby Blue

Pre-Chorus (C7)

C7
Cream cake cow crack crack

Chorus (Free Reign - No Constraints)

F   Fm   C   C7
Panic Stations, everyone
F   Fm   C   G
Head for the oceans, it's just begun

Verse 3 (Based around chord D major)

D
Dive down, down, down down, deeper (yeah)
G   D   G   D
Dirty dingy deep, don't declare defeat

Pre-Chorus 2 (E7)

E7
Easy Enter Easy Exit

Chorus 2 (Free Reign – No Constraints)

A   Am   E
Panic Stations, everyone
A   Am   E B B7
Head for the oceans, it's just begun

Outro (Based around chord F$^{\sharp}$)

F$^{\sharp}$
Freak, fire, fire, fire, fire.
B
Freak, fire, fire, fire, fire.

End.

'Freak Fire' is an example of *Inherent Technical Form* because of the direct application of the variation on Abish's alliterative technique on both the lyrical and musical material. Akin to 'Magic Rain', this song has a certain 1960s feel, mainly due to the backing vocals, the bass line and the chord patterns. The alliterative constraint when applied to the musical material was not adhered to as strongly as the lyrical material, for example, the use of the chord F$^{\sharp}$ instead of F in the outro. The inclusion of the words 'yeah' in the second and third verses and the 'it's a' in the outro, does not adhere to the alliterative constraint, however it was improvised during the recording and I think that it adds a certain quality to the song. The addition of synthesizers and other choices during the production phase helped the song move away from the 1960s sound to an extent, however the 1960s feel is still noticeable. The application of this technique provided good opportunities for composition, for example, the structure works well and the variation between the alliterative constraint in the verses/outro and the 'free reign' choruses work well as a compositional tool. The simplicity of the chord patterns allowed the room for catchy vocal melodies and hooks which work well in the song however, as I was trying to move away from this type of sound, I decided to use a completely different approach for the next composition.

6.2.3   Transmission (CD 2 - Track 3)

'Art may seem highly unpromising as a domain for computer creativity. Admittedly, computers are widely used by artists as tools, or even as imaginative aids' (Boden, 2004, p.148).

There are many computer programs that cater to the needs of artists such as the drawing-programs of Harold Cohen and AARON; music-programs by Johnson-Laird and a corpus of writing-programs such as TALE-SPIN, BORIS, COPYCAT and Racter (Boden, 2004, pp.147-98).

After researching various genres of digital poetry such as Flarf, Spoetry and Hypertext I decided to use a writing-program to write a set of lyrics. I used Charles O Hartman's *PyProse* program (Hartman, online). The program is simple to use, the user presses the space bar until a passage of words appear, some debt is therefore owed to the choice of lexical constraints, words, punctuation and overall programming of Hartman (1996). I chose from the dislocated sentences a group of sentences and phrases that I thought would create worthy lyrics.

Here is the lyrical structure:

An offering determines to rule someone. I returned.
– why shall the gentleman rule?
And I worry, and the back of April is no sin.
So bitter a feature ended me. Before Sunday between the mixture and the space was the death of sound, I was curling.
How have you fought? So vigorous a saddle may crawl.
You were trendy, but China played him.
So moderate a residence was this elephant. Why had I paced?
Had you landed on the field of memory?
The proof was so votive a beginning; and had the lieutenants of tension started?
Vireos thereafter drank.
To progress projects you.

48

The childhood of night has split.

Conversation (every pistol between the woman and a fear) looks for no living.

They are reading; and children stare.

Have we twisted these candles?

Birth — how had neither twisted?

The bear had cried; 'Wind cannot design summer.'

Each line was formed separately therefore the lyrics are presented with the original punctuation. The aleatory method in which the sentences were originally formed, along with punctuation and semantic content, prompted me to arrange the lyrics in a particular way. For example, the word 'rule' appears in the first two lines even though the lines were originally separated, this encouraged me to place the lines next to each other. The word 'trendy' from line 7 was originally 'treaty', during the initial period of the songwriting process I misread and sang 'trendy', I decided to include the mistaken word as a 'mot trouvé' instead as I thought it sounded better.

The unique differences in the syllabic content of each sentence/phrase encouraged me to compose the music in a particular manner. For example, the metrical content of the line 'The proof was so votive a beginning;' encouraged me to write an ascending guitar part in the loose syncopated triplet rhythm that follows the lyric syllabically. An example of this in 1960s popular music is Pink Floyd's 'Jugband Blues' (1994 [1968]) where the music follows the syllabic rhythm of the words, it is especially noticeable in the lyrics 'I never knew the moon could be so big and I never knew the moon could be so blue' and 'brought me here instead dressed in red'.

The arbitrariness of the sentence-structure also influenced the form of the composition. For example, the half rhyme (residence/elephant) from the eighth line 'So moderate a residence was this elephant' prompted me to underline the rhyme with a new section because it is one of the only noticeable rhymes in the piece. The possible semantic content of the words also influenced certain compositional choices, such as the choice to move to an F minor chord for the objectively morose line 'So bitter a feature ended me.' This chord change then dictated a pattern in the song, the F minor chord, as a result, is included in the hook.

49

'Transmission' is an example of *Implicit Technical Form* because of the use of digital software in the production of the lyrics inspired by research into digital poetry and the ways in which the technique affected the musical content on a secondary level. The compositional decisions were not exactly constrained by this technique. This approach provided a lot of musical freedom, however the mixture between artistic intuition and a set of disjointed and metrically complex lyrics allowed me to compose in this particular manner. The ways in which the incoherent, yet flowing lyrics form a structure encouraged me to consider new instrumentation and arrangements and resulted in a successful composition. The use of a computer program to write the set of lyrics (and how the lyrical patterns affected the musical content) moved me away from the 1960s sounding 'Magic Rain' and 'Freak Fire' and encouraged me to use more contemporary sounds. An example of this is the (what was intended to be) *digital transmitter* synth sound at the beginning and throughout the piece, also the other melodically used synthesizers and the more contemporary drum sound. The electric guitar and bass lines form a kind of contrapuntal effect with the lyrics at points in the song, yet at other points follow the syllabic content of the lyrics. The structure of the song becomes repetitive due to the repeated chord sequences and fragmentary sections, but the detailed arrangement and the inclusion of the memorable hook help to hold the listeners' attention.

I found the freedom offered in musical creation in this approach interesting and refreshing, it provided enough inspiration to keep ideas flowing without producing musical results that were too forced or artificial. I decided however, to take a more constrained musical approach in the next song.

6.2.4   Take One Honey for the Kin (CD 2 - Track 4)

After researching further into the idea of constrained writing techniques, I became interested in the French group OuLiPo (Matthews, 2005). OuLiPo, a group of mathematicians and writers from the 1960s and still in operation today, use many techniques in their work. The one I chose to use in this song is known as the 'S+7' or 'N+7' technique. Jean Lescure's N+7 technique 'consists in replacing each noun (N) with the seventh following it in a dictionary' (Matthews, 2005). I chose to apply this technique to the poem 'Take One Home for the Kiddies' by Philip Larkin (1964).

Here is the original poem:

On shallow straw, in shadeless glass,
Huddled by empty bowls, they sleep:
No dark, no dam, no earth, no grass -
Mam, get us one of them to keep.

Living toys are something novel,
But it soon wears off somehow.
Fetch the shoebox, fetch the shovel -
Mam, we're playing funerals now.

Here is the version with N+7 applied (in bold are the modified nouns):

On shallow **streptococcus**, in shadeless **glee**,
Huddled by empty **boys**, they sleep:
No dark, no **damp**, no **ebb**, no **graves** –
Manatee, get us one of them to keep.

Living **trades** are something novel,
But it soon wears off somehow.
Fetch the **shovel**, fetch the **shrike** –
Manatee, we're playing **funnies** now.

I applied the N+7 technique to an existing chord sequence to generate a chord pattern for the song. I used the Kinks 'Dead End Street' (1998 [1966]) mainly because I like the chord patterns in the song, but also because of the significance of The Kinks, especially Ray Davies, on the popular music of the period. I chose to apply the N+7 technique to the minor chords of the original chord sequence, as I applied the technique to the original nouns of the poem. The two original minor chords in the song are Am and Dm, with the technique applied to ascending semitones, Am and Dm become Ebm and Abm respectively.

51

The Kinks verse chords for 'Dead End Street':

```
Am              C  G
Dm              F  Am
```

After the application of N+7 technique, the new verse chords:

```
Ebm             C  G
Abm             F  Ebm
```

The N+7 technique was executed in this fashion for the entire chord pattern of 'Dead End Street'. The initial arrangement of the composition followed the structure of 'Dead End Street' with the N+7 alterations. The structure did not seem to work so I decided to arrange the song differently. The 'Hook' section was originally a bridge section, however I chose to use it as a hook because of the catchiness of the melody. There are parts in the original song that do not use minor chords, therefore the technique was not applicable to these parts. For example the chords C and F are used in the 'Dead end street (yeah!) Dead end street (yeah!)' section of the original song, I decided to use these chords as the chords for the chorus of 'Take One Honey for the Kin' because the chords allow plenty of opportunities for a memorable chorus melody.

I did not abide by the original structure of 'Dead End Street' neither did I stick to the original structure of 'Take One Home for the Kiddies'. The line 'Huddled by empty boys, they sleep:' was removed so that the line 'Manatee, get us one of them to keep.' could be played over the chord sequence of Ebm G F E7, also because I did not particularly think the lyric worked with the rest of the song. I also used the title of the poem and applied the N+7 technique to generate the line 'Take one honey for the kin' which became the title of the song and one of two choruses along with the second half of Larkin's second quatrain 'Fetch the shovel …'

Intro/Hook

```
A Abm E
A Abm E
```

Link

```
Ebm
```

Verse

```
Ebm C     G          Abm F     Ebm
On shallow streptococcus, in shadeless glee,
Ebm C     G     Abm F     Ebm
No dark, no damp, no ebb, no graves
```

Bridge

```
Ebm  G   F              E7
Mana-tee-eee,
Ebm   G                 F E7
get us one of them to keep.
```

Hook

Pre-Chorus

```
F     E       Ebm      G
Living trades are something novel,
F     E                Ebm  G
But it soon wears off somehow.
```

Chorus 1

```
C              F
Fetch the shovel, fetch the shrike –
C              F
Manatee, we're playing funnies now.


       (Played through twice)
```

Pre-Chorus 2

```
F     E  Ebm  G
Mana-tee-eee
F     E  Ebm  G
Mana-tee-eee
```

Chorus 2

```
C                      F
Take one honey for the kin
C                      F
Take one honey for the kin
C                      F
Take one honey for the kin
F                      C
Take one honey for the kin
C                      F
Take one honey for the kin
```

Hook

Pre-Chorus 2

Chorus 1

Chorus 2

End.

Figure 6.1: Structure of TOHftK

This song is an example of *Stratified Form* (*Direct Metamorphosis* and *Inherent Technical Form*) because of the use of an original poem for the lyrical content and an original song for the chord structure plus the application of the N+7 technique to both the lyrical and musical material. The application of this technique was successful as it allowed me to move away from a direct influence from the 1960s and 1970s and instead, begin to use techniques that have not to my knowledge been used in song composition. The opportunities that arose from the use of this technique facilitated the development of a more unique and original compositional voice. The production style is contemporary in the way of vocal processing, use of synthesizers and general feel of the song. Overall, I felt that the results that this technique created were more successful than previous work. At the beginning I was worried that the technique would produce un-listenable results, it easily could have done if I were to use other subjects for manipulation (for example a song with more minor chords) however it worked well in this case and I felt this song was a step forward into my own style and away from that of the 1960s.

6.2.5   Ill of the Illness (CD 2 - Track 5)

This composition utilises a technique developed by writer and composer Jackson Mac Low. Mac Low employs a variety of techniques to compose his material. I decided to use one of his chance/acrostic operations to create a basis for the lyrical content (Zweig, 1982).

The technique involves taking the title of an existing chapter of a book, for example 'On the inconstancy of our actions' and using each word of the title to create a single line. The first word of the title in this example 'On' dictates that the writer looks for the first word of the chapter beginning with the letter 'o' (excluding words included in the title itself) and uses the amount of letters in the original word, in this case, 2, to write down the first and the following word. To reiterate, if a word from the title of the chapter has 7 letters and begins with the letter 'a', the writer would find the first word beginning with 'a' in the text of the chapter and write down the first word along with the six following words in the sentence.

I decided to use Michel de Montaigne's *The Complete Essays* (2003) as a subject on which to apply the technique because of the richness of its subject matter. Here is an example of the first chapter of Book II with the Mac Low technique applied. Each of the seven lines below signify the relationship between each word of the title and the resulting phrase due to the length and starting letter of each word.

   1.   **On the inconstancy of our actions**

One whole (from 'On')
Those who strive (from 'the')
In so odd a fashion that it seems impossible that they (from 'inconstancy')
One light (from 'of')
Of cruelty, who (from 'our')
Account for a man's deeds are never (from 'actions')

I repeated this technique for the remaining 36 chapters of Book II to create a plethora of phrases. I wrote down all of the phrases that seemed useable on to paper, one sheet of paper labelled 'Hooky Phrases', one as 'Connecting phrases' and one as 'Remaining'.

After deciding on the lyrical structure, I thought about how I could use the technique to develop the musical content. I decided not to use the technique directly on the musical content with the same approach but to use the arbitrary outcomes of the lyrical content to determine the musical content. I created a formula that is slightly influenced by the original Mac Low technique, yet moved away from it somewhat. I chose to use the first word of each phrase to dictate what chord should be attached to the phrase. For example, the first word of the first phrase is 'Armour'. The word Armour contains six letters and the first letter of the word is 'A'. By adhering to the set of parameters below, the chord 'A6' must be attached to the whole of the first phrase.

A1 – A
A2 – Am
A3 – A7
A4 – Amaj7
A5 – A5
A6 – A6
A7 – Am7
A8 – Amaj9
A9 – A9
A10 – A11

The problem occurs when a word begins with a letter higher that 'G' in the alphabet. *Figure 6.2* indicates which chord should be attached to each letter. I decided to use all twelve semitones so that the opportunity for chord structures could be interesting. I used sharps, regardless of the key.

A – A	G – G	L –G$^\sharp$	Q – E	V –D$^\sharp$
B – B	H –A$^\sharp$	M – A	R – F	W – F$^\sharp$
C – C	I – C$^\sharp$	N – B	S – G	X –G$^\sharp$
D – D	J – D$^\sharp$	O – C	T –A$^\sharp$	Y – A
E – E	K –F$^\sharp$	P – D	U –C$^\sharp$	Z – B
F – F				

Figure 6.2: Codification Table

The table applies to each starting letter, for example the phrase 'Masters, the maladies and,' must have the chord Am7 attached because of the starting letter of 'Masters' being M ('A' according to the *Figure 6.2*) and the amount of letters being 7 (min7).

56

When the starting word of each phrase contains more than 10 letters, the remaining letters after the tenth letter begin at 1. For example the lyric 'Overstepped by' must have the chord $C^\sharp$ attached to it because the word contains 11 letters (10 + **1**) and begins with the letter 'O'.

Here is the final chord and lyric pattern:

Introduction

Chorus (played twice)

$C^\sharp$**m**
Ill of the illness which killed him he never,
$C^\sharp$
Overstepped by
D5
Dying and dying is without

Verse 1

A6
Armour until the very last second
C6
Coward he replied, others blood
G7
God who is the plenitude
Am7
Masters, the maladies and,
G7
She never stops making our ears ring
C7
One thing, old age
$G^\sharp$**maj7**
Look at a
F6
Father who had
D6
Purity, the very elements
Am7
Amazing in every respect but
$A^\sharp$**7**
(I have) the various pieces

Chorus

Verse 2

Gmaj7
Good marriage; the real
C5
Cards are so mixed up, with your enemy indistinguishable from you
F$^\sharp$m
We read that many leaders in,
D11
Difficulty, in all things pleasure is
Gmaj9
Governing the works of
C9
Cowardice is the mother of cruelty and I have
A$^\sharp$7
The various pieces

Chorus

Outro

C$^\sharp$m
Ill of the illness
D5
Dying is without

(fade-out) *End.*

There are some exceptions that I chose to make during the compositional process. The first exception is a minor change, the bracketed 'I have' on the eleventh line, was not part of the original phrase, I chose to include the 'I have' for grammatical reasons and for the congruence with the second time that the line 'the various pieces' is heard, where the 'I have' comes from the previous line 'Cowardice is the mother of cruelty and **I have**'. The second exception is also a minor change. The line 'Governing the works of' should have the chord G9 attached to it, however I decided to use a Gmaj9 chord instead because it worked better harmonically. The third exception is that the guitar chord is not always adjoined at the beginning of each sentence, sometimes it overlaps. For example, the G7 chord attached to the lyric 'God who is the plenitude' is actually sounded on the last word of the previous line 'Coward he replied, others **blood**'. This is a minor exception and was a natural decision when writing during the initial phase of composition (see 5.2). The final exception is a major exception. The chord that should be attached to the line 'ill of the illness' is a C$^\sharp$7 chord. I chose to use this lyric as the chorus and consequently the C$^\sharp$7 chord did not work with the

connotations of the lyric. The conjoining $C^\sharp$ and D5 chords did not work with the original $C^\sharp 7$ chord either, so I decided to change it. It is a choice that was made for compositional reasons and I think that the choice to change to C minor is a choice that works well with the composition. The introduction/hook is also in C minor due to this change.

Although I have not adhered completely to the technique, this composition has very little freedom in the musical sense due to the connectivity between the chance operation lyrics and the dictated chord structure. In 'Transmission', the rhythm of the vocal/guitar lines followed the syllables of the arbitrary sentence structures, this also happens at places in this composition. For example in the line 'Cards are so mixed up, with your enemy indistinguishable from you' the music and vocals follow the 5-syllable patterns 'Cards are so mixed up' and 'with your enemy'. The main triplet hook follows the 3-syllable chorus lines 'ill of the' and 'killed him he', this relationship between syllabic content and musical rhythm goes on to underline the majority of the rhythmical content of the song.

This composition is an example of *Interactive Technical Form* and *Direct Metamorphosis* (together, *Stratified Form*) due to the use of Mac Low's chance/acrostic operation, the codification table and the use of lines from Montaigne. The constrained interaction between Mac Low's technique and the codification chord table helped me to move further away from the 1960s sound and has created even more of a unique and more contemporary voice. The production is more contemporary than the previous compositions in terms of the drum sounds, the processed bass guitar/electric guitar/synth/vocals and the overall sound of the song. The fragmentation of each line and the related chords allowed me to experiment with various sounds and textures such as the change in texture during the line 'Governing the works of'. The amalgamation of techniques and constraints allowed me to produce a complex song, with a mixture of the technical approach and subjective artistic choices such as creating a chorus. This approach has produced a song that is difficult to follow yet memorable. The disjointedness of the compositional structure is not something that is generally associated with popular music but it is inventive and original. I was pleased with the direction that the techniques I was finding were taking

me, and liked the precision of this more systematic approach to musical composition, and it made an interesting contrast with previous songs where I was far less compositionally constrained.

6.2.6 Kings, Yazoos & Harlots (CD 2 - Track 6)

When researching types of constrained writing, I discovered a technique called Pangrammatic writing. A pangram is a sentence that employs each letter of the alphabet. The shorter the sentence, the more skilled the pangram is considered. I decided to use this constraint as a technique for composition. I am not an experienced writer therefore I chose not to focus on the brevity of the sentences and chose not to include a constraint on a maximum (or minimum) number of words. I wrote three verses to begin with that all separately contain each letter of the alphabet, I then decided to slightly modify an existing pangram 'Six big devils from Japan quickly forgot how to waltz' into 'Six *broken* devils from Japan quickly forgot how to waltz', this pangram is used as the final (fourth) verse.

Initially, I decided to use the same compositional method as 'Ill of the Illness' using the codification table to indicate what chords must be used. I then decided that I would modify the method to supply more choice in harmonic development.

The starting letter of each word, instead of dictating the *chord*, dictates a *note* that the resulting chord (usually triad) must contain.

A – A	G – G	L –G$^\sharp$	Q – E	V –D$^\sharp$
B – B	H –A$^\sharp$	M – A	R – F	W – F$^\sharp$
C – C	I – C$^\sharp$	N – B	S – G	X –G$^\sharp$
D – D	J – D$^\sharp$	O – C	T –A$^\sharp$	Y – A
E – E	K –F$^\sharp$	P – D	U –C$^\sharp$	Z – B
F – F				

Figure 6.2: Codification Table

The chords in brackets are the original chords dictated by the starting letter of each word when related to *Figure 6.2* (indicating the *chord*, not the *note* that must be included).

The (A$^\sharp$) crazy (C) parade (D) flickers (F) on (C), boxing (B) with (F$^\sharp$) queens (E) and (A) jiving (D$^\sharp$) with (F$^\sharp$) prime (D) ministers (A).

The notes in brackets below are the chosen chords in which the original *note* is included rather than the chord itself; the chord changes are highlighted in **bold**.

The (A$^\sharp$) crazy (**F**) parade (**E7**) flickers (F) on (C), boxing (**E**) with (F$^\sharp$) queens (E) and (A) jiving (**B**) with (F$^\sharp$) prime (D) ministers (A).

The harmonic modifications such as the original C major chord from the word 'crazy' into an F major chord (F A **C**) gave room for more opportunities than the initial codification approach. Another difference between the approach used for 'Ill of the Illness' and this approach concerns the word length. The word length does not affect the chord shape in this composition. Concerning the previous composition, the contiguous chord/word relationship constrained the shape of the chord due to the amount of letters in the starting word of each phrase, however this modified approach allows for more choice in chord structure. The approach in 'Ill of the Illness' consisted of attaching a chord to an entire phrase, this approach consists of attaching a chord to every word, and this method produced a noticeably different result. The arbitrariness of the dictated chord sequence and the four sections made of pangrammatic lyrics formed the four-part structure of the song. I decided to write a hook that links each section together. For example, the hook before the first section and second section is based around the note A, before the third section is modulated up a tone to B and before the final section is based around A again, the modulation of the hook allows for a smoother transition between sections. An allusion to 1960s popular music is included where the last word of the song 'waltz' inspired me to reference The Beatles' song 'Being for the Benefit of Mr Kite' (2009 [1967]) where the music changes into waltz time when the word 'waltz' is heard. The waltz part is unaffected by the codification table approach due to the fact that there are no lyrics, the guitar arrangements were improvised during the recording process.

Another technique used in the composition of the lyrical content is Direct Inspiration /Metamorphosis of Philip Larkin's 'Aubade' (1988). The lines 'Locked-up offices' and 'Courage is no good' are directly included from the poem, other lines such as 'The crazy parade', 'x-ray machines' and 'drink together' are inspired by some lines in the poem.

Hook/Intro (A)

Verse 1

```
A♯   F    E7     F       C
The crazy parade flickers on
E        F♯  E
Boxing with queens
A    B    F♯  D        A
And jiving with Prime Ministers
```

Hook (A)

Verse 2

```
A      G  F♯ B
Every day it   needles
A♯       A♯        A♯  A
Forward through the underground
F♯   B
With jokers
A    A      E      A
And antique x-ray machines
B        D
Breaking post
F♯  D    B
We mean zero
```

Hook (B)

Verse 3

```
C        C♯ B  Em
Courage is   no good
D    D        D  Gm
Kings, Yazoos and Harlots
G     Gm
Drink together
C♯  G♯        Cmaj7
In  locked-up offices
G      A F♯ F     F♯        A♯
Staring at the rabid vultures that
F♯   A♯  A
Woo the queers
A    G♯  F  A
And jeer on mandrax
```

Hook (A)

Verse 4

```
C   B      D
Six broken devils
F      B
From Japan
E        F
Quickly forgot
F♯   F♯ Bm
How to Waltz
```

Waltz section (fade out)

End.

Figure 6.3: Structure of KY&H

The method in which the lyrical material was created meant that I was focusing primarily on the dedication to the pangrammatic constraint. During the lyric writing process, poetic techniques such as rhyme, assonance, alliteration and general semantic content were not necessarily in mind, the main aim was to fulfil the means of each pangram. Due to this the lyrics have an odd, sporadic feel, especially syllabically. The unusual syllabic patterns provoked intuitive metre/bar length changes in the song when I came to attach the chords to the lyrics in the initial stage of composition (playing the chords on acoustic guitar and singing along). An example of this happens during the line 'x-ray machines, breaking post'. The phrase consists of 2 bars of 3/4 and a bar of 2/4 played twice. The change in phrasing to 3/4 highlights the lyrics 'x-ray' and 'breaking'. As a result of the erratic changes in metre/bar length, I decided to write a hook that constitutes of three bars of 4/4 and one bar of 5/4 to integrate with the slightly 'math-rock' feel of the song.

This composition is an example of *Stratified Form* due to the *Interactive Technical Form* of the pangrammatic technique and the *Direct Metamorphosis/Inspiration* of 'Aubade'. The use of the pangrammatic technique and the modified codification table approach provided a fertile basis for songwriting. The pace at which the chord changes occur and the general rock feel of the electric guitar is underlined by a modern sounding drum pattern, this gives the song a strong foundation for the esoteric lyrics and melodies. It is interesting to note how the use of the codification table in this song and 'Ill of the Illness' produced similar outcomes in some cases but, in general, a completely different sounding song. Both songs change sections frequently and are both slightly hard to follow, but the overall sound is different. This could be due to the subject matter or the use of the different lyric-generating techniques/codification process or it could be due to the production style. The mixture between artistic choice, such as adding a hook as a link between sections, and the constrained technique provided a composition that I think is interesting and has achieved a level of balance between choice and constraint.

6.2.7   Edwood Liar (CD 2 - Track 7)

The influence of nonsense literature on the songwriters of the sixties is noticeable in their work. I decided to use nonsense as an influence for the basis of this composition. I used the Edward Lear poem 'The Dong with a Luminous Nose' (1894) as the foundation of *Direct Metamorphosis* (using the words of a poem as the lyrics of a song). Les Fleur De Lys' 'Gong With The Luminous Nose' (1968) was also in mind when choosing the subject material.

I applied a technique influenced by Mike Keith, a mathematician and author of constrained writing who uses the heteroliteral constraint. In Keith's own words 'each pair of adjacent words is not allowed to have any letters in common' (2005). An example of the heteroliteral constraint in practice is 'The Heteroliteral Raven' where Edgar Allen Poe's 'The Raven' (1845) is re-written with no adjacent words that use the same letters. (Eckler, 1976). I applied the heteroliteral constraint to 'The Dong with a Luminous Nose' with the aim of adhering to the original narrative and conventions of nonsense verse as closely as possible. The addition of original nonsensical phrases such as 'Fuzookoo', 'Shackly Moor', and 'Toffee-Plum Tower' adhere to the syntactical structures of nonsense verse, inspired by Barrett's adoption of nonsense literature. I chose to use the first three stanzas of the poem as the lyrical foundation of the song. The final quatrain of the third stanza provides the lyrics for the chorus. The title of the song 'Edwood Liar' is a heteroliteral version of Edward Lear, due to the use of the writer's poem as the subject.

I applied the approach of the heteroliteral constraint to the musical content by replacing letters for notes and words for chords. For example, each pair of adjacent *chords* is not allowed to have any *notes* in common.

Here is the final lyric and chord structure with the heteroliteral constraint applied to both:

Intro

Verse 1

G   **Fmaj7**
When gloomy dark in sweet calm reigns
G   **Fmaj7**
By our vast Fuzookoo plains,
F$^\sharp$ **Am** **Abm**   **Gm**
Through my strong, peaceful night;--
      Fmaj7
Do the angry swells roar?
                 Gm
Will they smack the jaggy shore;--
   Abm   **F**$^\sharp$ **Abm**   **F**$^\sharp$
 Will Storms dwell thick on bumpy heights
       E   **Dm C Dm C Bb Ab**
Of my Hills on Shackly Moor:--

Verse 2

G   **Fmaj7**
Then amid the gloomy dark,
G   **Fmaj7**
Flings what seems a glowing spark,
      F$^\sharp$ **Am**   **Abm**   **Gm**
 O this lonely spark with a burst of rays
         Fmaj7
 Lit upon a sorrowful night,--
      Gm
O alien so bright:--
 Abm   **F**$^\sharp$ **Abm**   **F**$^\sharp$
Away so far, but closer it sways,
    E   **Dm C Dm C**
 The ugly forsaken light.

Chorus

Bb Ab   **Ab**
   My Son! My Son!
Bb   **C**
  The magical Son by the dark hill goes!
Bb Ab   **Ab**
   My Son! My Son!
Bb   **C**
  'My Son with a luminous Nose!

(Bb) (Ab)

Verse 3
66

G   **Fmaj7**
Dart, push to wander,--stop and creep,--
G   **Fmaj7**
And to flash, burn, stop and sleep;
F$^\sharp$ **Am** **Abm**   **Gm**
By and by--- onward it goes
                 Fmaj7
A light on the Bong tree body it grows.
                     Gm
And eyes that look at evil hour
  Abm   **F$^\sharp$**   **Abm**   **F$^\sharp$**
In Hall or high Terrace of a toffee plum Tower,
   E   **Dm C Dm C**
All Cry, as the odd light fades out,--

Chorus 2 + Refrain

End.

The only exception to the heteroliteral constraint was the choice of including the original phrase 'luminous nose'. I decided to make this exception to reference the original poem and because I think it works well as a hook.

The repeating pattern of the endings of the first two lines in each stanza prompted me to write the conjoining phrase with two bars of 4/4, one bar of 3/4 and another two bars of 4/4. The metre change was due to the syllabic lyric pattern of 'sweet calm reigns', 'Fuzookoo plains', 'gloomy dark', 'glowing spark' and so on.

This composition is an example of *Stratified Form* due to the *Inherent Technical Form* of the heteroliteral technique and the *Direct Metamorphosis* of 'The Dong with a Luminous Nose'. The application of the heteroliteral constraint to the musical material encouraged me to write in a new fashion, for example the chromatic constraints applied to the chord patterns formed chord sequences that I would not have usually created when composing on acoustic guitar. The overall sound of the song is contemporary due to production techniques such as the dub-style bass sound, the electronic drum kit, the processing of vocals and drums, and the ambient guitar lines. The sound of the song adheres to the sound of popular music more than most of the compositions due to the dance-like chorus, memorable hooks and production techniques. The amalgamation of techniques created a satisfying sound, and the drive of the techniques was pushing me to create contemporary and original material with a characteristic sound.

6.2.8   Fifteen Three (CD 2 - Track 8)

Another technique used by OuLiPo is the snowball technique (Matthews, 2005).

The snowball technique involves increasing each line with an extra word. For example;

I
Truly adore
The snowball technique
Because it is interesting

The technique can also involve increasing the amount of letters in each word. For example;

I am far away being freaky

I decided to apply this technique to the amount of syllables in each word instead of the amount of letters in each word. I also decided to use a slightly altered version of the snowball technique known as the 'melting snowball', where the amount of syllables increase and then decrease in symmetry.

I chose to write the first line starting with words of one syllable, then two, then three, then two, then one (forming the melting snowball pattern).

Line one: 1, 2, 3, 2, 1

Line two: 1, 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, 1

Line three: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1

Line four: 1, 2, 3, 4, 3, 2, 1

Line five: 1, 2, 3, 2, 1

Each line is a melting snowball and the entire lyrical structure is also a melting snowball with the 5-syllable word in the third line being the pivot. The meaning behind the lyrics is also influenced by the use of the technique. The song is about narcissism due to the self-contained nature of the composition. The lyric 'fifteen three' is an allusion to the 'narcissistic number' 153 (where $1^3 + 5^3 + 3^3 = 153$).

Here is the lyrical structure (in **bold** are the pivotal words of each individual melting snowball).

68

We wanted **victory**, although we
Got nothing, however, **everything** created rumbles in
Our dreamland. Openings disappeared, **exacerbated** get-up-and-go attitudes, shameful, yet,
All people require, **resolution** numeral fifteen three,
We wanted **victory**, fifteen three.

One issue with the lyrical structure is the inclusion of the word 'everything' in the second line. When read aloud, 'everything' could be determined to have 3 or 4 syllables. The placement of the word in the second line dictates that 'everything' should be pronounced with four syllables as ev-e-ry-thing. The word is pronounced however as ev-ry-thing (three syllables) in the recording. I do not think that this point affects the composition, however it is useful to emphasize the small issue, as the sort of small detail that I have ended up considering very carefully. This attention to detail has helped the focus, and I think interest, of my work.

For the musical content I decided to match the number of syllables with the time signature and the number of bars in each line. The first line for example constitutes of three bars of 3/4 because the syllables in the first line pivot around the three-syllable word 'victory'. The second line is composed of four bars of 4/4; the third line is composed of five bars of 5/4 and so on (matching the melting snowball structure).

I also decided to apply the technique to the chord sequence by making sure that the chords throughout the piece are completely symmetrical.
Here is the chord structure:

1st line: A D A
2nd line: A D C D A
3rd line: A D C E C D A
4th line: A D C D A
5th line: A D A

I also chose to make the structure of the whole piece symmetrical. The song starts and ends with a symmetrical section constituted of segments from Section 3 (as shown in *Figure 6.4*). Each bar of Section 1 is a splice of the first bars of each line in Section 3. The splice does not contain the lyrical content but contains every other instrument.

The symmetrical pattern of Section 1 follows:

First bar of line 1
First bar of line 1
First bar of line 2
First bar of line 1
First bar of line 2
First bar of line 3
First bar of line 2
First bar of line 1
First bar of line 2
First bar of line 1
First bar of line 1

Section 2 is another instrumental section. The section is a riff that rhythmically complies with the melting-snowball structure. The riff constitutes of these metre changes with each bar.

3/4| 4/4| 5/4| 4/4| 3/4|

The bar of 5/4 is heard as a bar of 3/4 and a bar of 2/4, this is due to where the stresses are placed.

In Section 3, the chords, lyrics and time signature are all symmetrical in theory. The chords and lyrics do not comply with strict symmetry, as they do not fall completely on the bars.

Figure 6.4: Structure of Fifteen Three

Section 1 (splices of section 3)

3/4	3/4	4/4	3/4	4/4	5/4	4/4	3/4	4/4	3/4	3/4

Section 2 (riff played twice)

3/4	4/4	5/4	4/4	3/4

Section 3

3 bars	3/4	A D A We wanted **victory**, although we
4 bars	4/4	A D C D A Got nothing, however, **everything** created rumbles in
5 bars	5/4	A D C E Our dreamland. Openings disappeared, **exacerbated** get-up- C D A and-go attitudes, shameful, yet,
4 bars	4/4	A D C D A All people require, **resolution** numeral fifteen three,
3 bars	3/4	A D A We wanted **victory**, fifteen three.

Section 2 (riff played twice)

3/4	4/4	5/4	4/4	3/4

Section 1

3/4	3/4	4/4	3/4	4/4	5/4	4/4	3/4	4/4	3/4	3/4

This composition is an example of *Inherent Technical Form* due to the application of the Snowball technique to the lyrical and musical material. I was finding increasingly detailed methods to change the musical content of songs using these systemic processes. The changes

71

of time signature, structure, lyrics, chord patterns and holistic approach of the use of a single technique gives the song a complex result. The result makes the song quite difficult to listen to, with an odd structure and duration. The structure for example is experimental in nature, following the melting snowball technique.

The amount of artistic choice available to me was much lower compared to other songs because of the application of the constraint on multiple compositional levels. As a result of this, the symmetry of the composition may be recognisable during the listening process. Referring to the point made earlier, that the compositions are not intended to exhibit the technique on a superficial level, this song is a slight exception, however the listener would most likely not recognise all of the constraints, and only might perhaps recognise the symmetrical nature of the composition. I am satisfied with the result, yet I believe it is not one of the most successful compositions. It is original and innovative, but it seemed to indicate that a more strict adherence to constraints in various parts of the composition was likely to result in a composition with a more narrow appeal.

6.2.9 He Me Him (CD 2 - Track 9)

For the final composition I decided to use another constrained writing technique used by Mike Keith called Alphametish.

An *alphametic* is a kind of mathematical puzzle, in which a set of words is written down in the form of an ordinary 'long-hand' addition sum, and it is required that the letters of the alphabet be replaced with decimal digits so that the result is a valid arithmetic sum. For example, the sentence 'Send more money.' is an alphametic since the longhand addition

```
 SEND
 MORE
-----
MONEY
```

can be interpreted, by setting S=9, E=5, N=6, D=7, M=1, O=0, R=8, Y=2, as

```
 9567
 1085
-----
10652
```

which is, in fact, a valid addition (9567 + 1085 = 10652)

(Keith, online).

I used James Fenton's 'God, a Poem' as the subject for *alphametising* (2006 [1983], p.34). I chose to write the song in the key of G major simply because the title of the poem begins with the letter 'G'. I chose the following 7 chords in the G major scale for the harmonic structure of the song. The alphametic technique played no part in choosing the chords at this stage of the composition; any chords or any key signature could have been chosen.

G   Am   Bm   C   D   Em   F#dim

Here is the compositional method step by step:

1. Enter an existing piece of writing into 'ALPHAMETIC PUZZLE GENERATOR' (Soares, 2002)
2. Take all options given using all parameters available
3. Choose phrases that seem attractive
4. Place phrases in a preferable lyrical structure

5. Enter each phrase separately into 'ALPHAMETIC PUZZLE SOLVER' and note down each sum (Soares, 2002)
6. Add up all digits of each sum/lyrical phrase
7. Add up all digits of the resulting number until the sum total is ≤ 7
8. Use the sum total digit to allocate the chord. (ex. 1 = G)

Here is an example beginning from Step 5:

Step 5.

After choosing the phrase 'of that which caught' produced by the 'ALPHAMETIC PUZZLE GENERATOR' and entering the phrase into 'ALPHAMETIC PUZZLE SOLVER' the sum (in brackets below) is produced.

of that which caught (62+4804+98718=103584)

Step 6.

Add up the digits 6+2+4+8+0+4+9 and so on (following each digit given in the sum).

The result of the addition is 78.

Step 7.

The resulting number is 78 - Add up all digits until the sum is ≤ 7

7 + 8 = 15 (>7)
1 + 5 = 6 (≤ 7)

Step 8.

By using the 7 chord choices, the resulting number 6 dictates that the chord to be attached to 'of that which caught' must be Em.

Here is another terser example:

5. He me him, (19+89=108)
6. 1+9+8+9+1+0+8 = 36
7. 3+6 = 9 (> 7)

When the number is a single digit greater than 7, in this case, number 9, another simple sum must be completed.

Lets call the resulting number that is greater than 7 'y'.

This simple equation is used:
74

y – 7 = x (where 'x' is the chord that must be used)

9 – 7 = 2, therefore the chord that must be attached to the phrase 'he me him' is Am.

Numbers greater than 9 such as 10 can be added up as 1+0 which dictates chord 1 must be used, therefore this extra sum only needs to be applied when either 8 or 9 is produced.

Here are the phrases that the 'ALPHAMETIC PUZZLE GENERATOR' created when entering 'God, a Poem':

```
OF + THAT + WHICH = CAUGHT
IS + THAT + THAT = NASTY
MISTAKE + SHAKES + THAT = NIGHTIE
IN + ROCK + SOCK = ROUND
A + GRAVE + THAT = SHAKES
ALL + IS + NASTY = WHICH
END + THAT = FAITH
TELL + THAT = FAITH
BEEN + THE = FLOOD
DIET + NASTY = FRIEND
BEEN + END = GRAVE
HE + ME = HIM
PISSED + TRUMPET = LIMPEST
BEEN + THE = NASTY
BUT + UNTIL = NASTY
THAT + YOU = NASTY
IN + ON = OFF
FRIEND + SHEEP = PHRASE
SORRY + TERMS = PHRASE
SORRY + WORMS = PHRASE
FAITH + THAT = PISSED
GRAVE + SEE = RINGS
SHEEP + THE = RINGS
NASTY + NOT = ROUND
GUESSED + PISSED = SERIOUS
PISSED + WHICH = SHAKES
DIET + THE = SHEEP
BEEN + THE = SORRY
END + NAME = SORRY
FLOOD + YOUR = SORRY
TELL + THE = SORRY
SEE + THE = SORT
ALL + NASTY = TERMS
SERIOUS + SORRY = THOUGHT
AND + EXIST = UNTIL
AND + WOULD = UNTIL
ROCK + SOCK = WORMS
```

Here is the final song structure with the chords and lyrics.

Intro (Am)

Verse 1

Of that which caught (Em)
A grave that shakes (C)

75

Tell that faith (D)
End that faith (F#dim)

Verse 2

Tell the sorry (Am)
Diet the sheep (C)
End that faith (F#dim)
Tell that faith (D)

Chorus

He Me Him (Am)

Verse 3

See the sort (Em)
Serious sorry thought (Em)
End that faith (F#dim)
Tell that faith (D)

Chorus (x2)

Bridge

In rock sock round
A grave that shakes
In rock sock round
Terms all nasty
In rock sock round
A grave that shakes
Terms all nasty
A grave that shakes (All C)

Chorus (x2)

Bridge

Chorus (to fade-out)

End.

The only minor exception to the technique is the line 'Terms all nasty' which should actually

be `ALL + NASTY = TERMS`.

This composition is an example of *Stratified Form* due to the use of 'God, a Poem' and the

Interactive Technical form - the application of the alphametic technique and the direct

76

relationship between the technique and chord allocations.

I attempted to continue the iconoclastic connotation of the poem in the lyrics. The lines 'tell that faith', 'end that faith', 'diet the sheep' are all example of this. I decided to use the phrase 'He Me Him' as a repetitive chorus because I think it is, although chance-operated, a wry slant on the holy trinity. The Am chord attached to 'He Me Him' encouraged me to write the intro using Am also.

The nature of the technique produced lyrics that were mostly monosyllabic, this prompted me to write the chorus 'He Me Him' with a matching staccato rhythm and monotone vocals. The monosyllabic nature of the lyrical content drove me to compose an Electronica/Dance/Pop song, due to the pumping four to the floor nature of the genre. After repeating the Am and 'He, Me, Him' in the chorus three times I decided to include the F#dim and D chords derived from the first verse as a transition into the consecutive sections and also in the introduction, this was an artistic choice that did not follow the constraint but was used because I liked the rhythm and sound of the chords on the electric guitar part.

The amount of artistic choice was quite high compared to most songs and this allowed me to compose material without many constraints. The lack of constraints is apparent in the result of the song, yet the technique still encouraged me to compose in a particular manner. The use of this technique and the resulting monosyllabic nature of the lyrics pushed me to write in a more contemporary style. The Electronica/Dance feel of the song moved me further away from the 1960s sound. The simplicity of the song structure and form prompted me to experiment with production techniques to more of an extent than in other compositions such as the use of the distorted bass synthesizer and the slightly jittery main hook with the drums, bass, synths and guitars jumping in rhythm and the tape delayed vocals. The techniques applied mean that this was a far from typical piece of dance music, and one that I feel fits in well overall with my compositional style, and has stretched me again in a new direction.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

7.1 Usefulness of Techniques

This research has illustrated the various ways that certain songwriters of the selected period used literature as an inspiration in the compositional process. It has also shown how such literary influenced songwriting techniques can be used and extended in contemporary popular composition. The use of such techniques and the extensions of these techniques have been hugely useful within my compositional process, and have the potential to be a rich source for any popular music composer.

By researching the area of applying literary techniques to the practice of popular music composition, I have gained knowledge of how certain songwriters working in the period 1965-71 composed their material and the techniques that they used during the compositional process. Some songwriters such as Barrett and Lennon used an experimental approach with the use of cut/up and collage techniques (*Technical Form*), other songwriters such as Davies used a more subtle approach, by emulating characterisation (*Direct Inspiration*); other songwriters such as Bolan included spoken word fairy-tales in their albums as a direct allusion to literature (*Direct Inspiration*); and many songwriters simply used existing literature to create their lyrical content (*Direct Metamorphosis*). Whilst acknowledging the amount of music post-1971 that has used literature as a compositional tool, the chosen period provides an important study relating to the origins of the use of literature and literary techniques in popular musical composition.

The production of a taxonomy of systematic forms helped me to define and delineate the songwriters' technical processes into various technical approaches, which in turn encouraged me to find largely unexplored methods of composition. A focus on form allowed me to work in a different manner when songwriting by creating constraints and choices simultaneously. A variety of literary texts, whether used as inspiration or to provide a rich variety of words or source material to be dissected or manipulated, have enriched my lyrical approach. All of this together has helped me to compose material that is different to the material that I was

78

composing before and at the beginning of my research. The inclusion of the draft versions of compositions that only apply the literary influence to the lyrical material help exemplify the difference between the early compositional approaches and the later methods of composition.

The main portfolio of compositions demonstrates the musical progression and eclectic range of sounds from 'Magic Rain' to 'He Me Him'. The compositions are experiments in approaches to popular composition, and inevitably some experiments worked better than others. Finding the balance between technique and artistic intuition appears to be the key to composing this type of popular music. I find the most successful composition to be 'Edwood Liar', in which the balance between technique and artistic choice seemed to create a balance of originality and listenability.

Since adopting this approach I have had no problems coming up with ideas and the application of literary techniques to the lyrical and musical material has provided me with numerous approaches to composition. The techniques, of course, are not the only factor affecting the process. Many other factors affect the process, such as the choice of existing literary material (if any) that is used in the technique, the chosen instrument (if any), the individual choices of the songwriter, the aim of the composition (if any) and the availability of technical equipment/instruments and so on.

The variation of literary techniques available and the potential to develop techniques in this area is a hypothesis that I have found well worth researching and one that has given me many conceptual ideas concerning approaches to composition. These songwriting methods have broadened my approach of composition, especially as I usually compose on an acoustic guitar, and in particular the constraints and techniques have provided me with many options at the initial stages of writing. I have created a unique compositional voice that features a range of various qualities, from 1960s based music to Electronica/Dance, from a dub-nonsense song to an experimental symmetrical song. Out of all the compositional approaches I have found the stratification of form the most useful, especially the stratification of *Direct Metamorphosis/Inspiration* of an existing literary work and *Inherent Technical Form* of applying experimental techniques directly to the lyrical and musical material.

79

7.2   Further Avenues of Research

Future work to develop this research may include the application of other extra-musical influences such as mathematics, scientific methods, other artistic approaches such as painting, sculpture, architecture or film theory to the lyrical and musical content in the compositional process. There may also be a development in the application of literary techniques, but instead of applying the techniques to the initial songwriting process alone, applying them to the arrangement, production or mastering process. For example, the mathematic equations behind the alphametic technique could be applied to the equalisation or compression during the production phase. The techniques could be applied to other forms of music, especially experimental or computer-based composition and also other art-forms such as painting, fashion design, sculpture and most artistic practises. The techniques could possibly be applied to other avenues of the music business such as marketing techniques, album art, photography, advertising, stage performances, costumes, artist/band names, album names and so on. The choice to focus on the period 1965-71 provided me with a manageable starting point for a submission of this length. The ideas in this submission could be extended to research music post-1971 and the influence of literature in other avenues for a larger research project.

APPENDICES

Included are two versions of both CD 1 and CD 2. 4 discs are provided in total:

CD 1 that is to be played on a general CD player (mp3 format)

CD 1 that is to be played on a computer (aif format – better quality)

CD 2 that is to be played on a general CD player (mp3 format)

CD 2 that is to be played on a computer (aif format – better quality)

I have included two versions of each CD for convenience, however, I suggest playing the discs in 'aif' format via a computer (preferably with good speakers), as the sound quality will be far better.

Appendix 1: List of Tracks on CD 1:

1.   Charley Charley
2.   Tabula Rasa
3.   Hector Protector
4.   We Grow Old
5.   The Flight of the Moon
6.   Phillish
7.   Where the Wheels End
8.   Rosaleen
9.   In the Room

Appendix 2 (Main Portfolio): List of Tracks on CD 2:

1.   Magic Rain
2.   Freak Fire
3.   Transmission
4.   Take One Honey for the Kin
5.   Ill of the Illness
6.   Kings, Yazoos & Harlots
7.   Edwood Liar
8.   Fifteen Three
9.   He Me Him

Appendix 3: Other Songs Under Direct Form

Here is a selection of songs from the period that also use literature as an influence in the compositional process:

Boeing Duveen & Beautiful Soup. (1968) *Jabberwock / Which Dreamed It*. UK: Parlophone. R 5696 – literature used - Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There*

Comus. (1995 [1971]) *First Utterance*. UK: BGO Records. BGOCD275 – literature used - John Milton's *Comus masque* of 1634

Cream's 'Tale of Brave Ulysses' – literature used - Homer's *The Odyssey*

(Cream. (1967) *Strange Brew/Tale of Brave Ulysses*. UK: Reaction. 591015)

Donovan. (1970) *Riki Tiki Tavi/Roots of Oak*. US: Epic. 5-10649 – literature used - Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book.*

Led Zeppelin's 'Ramble On' and 'The Battle of Evermore' – literature used - J.R.R Tolkien's The *Lord of the Rings*

(Led Zeppelin. (1969) *Led Zeppelin II*. UK: Atlantic. 588198) & (Led Zeppelin. (1971) *Led Zeppelin IV*. US: Atlantic: SD 7208)

The Incredible String Band's 'The Mad Hatter's Song' – literature used - Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

(Incredible String Band, The. (1992 [1967]) *The 5000 Spirits Or The Layers Of The Onion*. UK: Elektra. 7559-60913-2)

The Beatles' 'The Inner Light' – literature used - *Tao Te Ching*

(Beatles, The. (1968) *Lady Madonna / The Inner Light*. UK: Parlophone. R 5675)

The Frumious Bandersnatch - Band name inspired by - Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There*

The Rolling Stone's 'Sympathy For The Devil' – influenced by - Charles Baudelaire

(The Rolling Stones. (2008 [1968]) *Beggars Banquet*. UK: ABKCO Records. 95392)

The Zombies' 'Rose for Emily' – influenced by - William Faulkner's *A Rose for Emily*

(The Zombies. (2007 [1968]) *Odessey and Oracle*. UK: Big Beat Records. CDHP 025)

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