

# TRAINING THE COMMUNITY MUSICIAN

University of Aberdeen

18TH AND 19TH  
FEBRUARY 2019



## Evaluation and Summary Report

This project was delivered in partnership between The University of Aberdeen, Sound Sense and Edinburgh Youth Music Forum





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# Welcome

Dear All,

On the 18th and 19th of February 2019, 50 attendees from Canada, England, Ireland, Israel, Scotland, USA and Wales gathered at the University of Aberdeen for the first Training the Community Musician symposium. The attendees ranged in age from 18 – 75 and brought a breadth of experience that included those in training to experienced practitioner, producers, project managers and educators.

The symposium was conceived over a period of 18 months through extensive conversations between ourselves (Sound Sense, University of Aberdeen and Edinburgh Youth Music Forum). The work that we undertake on a day to day basis focuses on strengthening the sector in a variety of different ways but we felt strongly that the time was right to explore, explicitly how we train Community Musicians now and for the future. We wanted to know if our feelings were mimicked by others, and felt the need to be guided by the thoughts and practice of others.

The symposium's Open Space approach came from our need to give voice to those participating, to give people the chance to express their thoughts without the need to mould them to a traditional symposium agenda. Above all we wanted to initiate an event that embodied the field within which we live and work, giving participants the opportunity to interact freely, discuss and develop concepts and ideas and where relationships old and new could grow.

This report has been created to provide an overview of the symposium proceedings, share outcomes from the evaluation process and to make recommendations for the second TTCM event which, we are pleased to announce, will be hosted by Trinity Laban Conservatoire, London in February 2020.

We thank all those who gave their time, energy, openness and innovation at TTCM 2019 and we look forward to continuing to build relationships with you all in the years to come.

Best wishes

Åsa, Chris and Jess

Sound Sense

University of Aberdeen

Edinburgh Youth Music Forum



# Thoughts from the Organisers

Åsa Malmsten

Director of Sound Sense

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As director of Sound Sense since 2016, my vision for Sound Sense is one of empowerment of Community Musicians. Sound Sense is an organisation (some say movement) with its roots in community. We are a community of music facilitators and practitioners, working to enable thousands of participants across the UK each year to take part and enjoy music, in whatever form or setting that works for them.

My role at Sound Sense is to facilitate those amazing Community Musicians, to enable our members to connect and grow, to share the practice and joint experience, to enable personal development amongst our members and to reduce the isolation that comes with working on your own in community settings. The Training the Community Musician Symposium allowed me to set all of this in motion, and to begin to offer to our members a meaningful network of colleagues and an open space to express and share ideas and ways forward in the field.

**Institutional Impact:** This symposium was the first event Sound Sense had produced since I stepped into post in 2016. Following on from a period of organisational review and strategic reflection, one message in particular came through strongly from the membership; a wish to meet and connect with other Community Musicians through the development of regular, regional networking events. The Training the Community Musician allowed us to take important steps towards making this ambition a reality. The partnerships with the University of Aberdeen and Edinburgh Youth Music Forum meant Sound Sense could deliver an event tailor made for its membership, and trial new ways of working by using the Open Space facilitation. The Open Space method offers a uniquely equitable ground where people come together to share the community's joint knowledge and experience. It allows everyone, regardless of background or level of experience, to wear the mantle of the expert. An equitable approach to fit the equitable field that is Community Music.

The result was a powerful event where delegates took an active part in setting the agenda and running their own discussion groups, all scribed in detail.

**How will TCM progress:** The symposium marks a new beginning for Sound Sense as we look forward to offering this event again on an annual basis, taking the symposium to different geographical locations across the UK and continue to build strong partnerships that support our membership in its practice.

## Chris Gray

Programme Director BMus (Hons) Community Music, University of Aberdeen

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'Ssssh... don't tell anyone... I'm a Community Musician!'

Moving to the University of Aberdeen in 2012 was to be my opportunity to finally bring focus to my practice and begin a process of identifying who I was as a music professional. I had always felt conflicted, with the 'who am I' changing on a daily, if not twice daily basis. I had also become aware that much of this conflict was not of my own doing, societal pressure would often steer me to the answer I 'should' be giving. Why say you are a Community Musician when you could say you are a conductor?

My initial years at the University did nothing for my need to share my secret. I'm a Community Musician. The on-going need to justify and defend my discipline as practice and particularly as rigorous academic study was demanding, and tiring. However, slowly the idea gained traction. Slowly the results of our students began to speak for themselves, as heads began to turn and acknowledge, I knew the battle was turning. Around this time, I had also realised how isolated we were in Aberdeen from the UK's Community Music scene, it very much felt like we were sitting on the periphery of the field, and further beginning to acknowledge that future development was not possible in this isolation.

I can't remember exactly how the contacts came about but maybe first to Åsa and Sound Sense, then to Jess and EYMF but slowly the dialogue moved forward and before long the Training The Community Musician (TTCM) symposium was born. Along with two invaluable friendships.

The two days of the symposium went past in a flash, it is only on reflection that I realise how lucky I have been to host such an event, to have been in the company of a diverse and international delegation that brought with them open hearts and minds and a generosity in their giving and sharing that I have not be part of before.

I still get lost in thoughts, discussions and provocations from the event and have noticed that many of my approaches have adapted based on my learning at the conference. I am excited for the next phase of this process and to our next symposium and starting to move towards a collective and shared approach to the way we approach training, but most of all I look forward to continued dialogue, the process will always be more satisfying than any possible product.

We asked people in the survey 'what are your next steps?' for me it is to embrace the empowerment that I felt during and every day since and declare with pride and without fear or justification 'I am a Community Musician!'

**Institutional Impact:** The impact of hosting the TTCM Symposium at the University of Aberdeen has been extensive. Having the unmistakable energy of 50 Community Musicians roaming the corridors of the Music Department has helped to bring and consolidate a deeper understanding to the potential of Community Music as both practice and academic study. The symposium has helped to clearly demonstrate the need for the training of Community Musicians to have it's home within the Academic institution. The success has further provided the teaching team on the BMus (Hons) Community Music degree the opportunity to expand provision in relation to content and to the development of MMus level study over the next two years.

The symposium was attended by all of our BMus (Hons) Community Music students at the University of Aberdeen. The opportunity to explore this topic, as training Community Musicians, amongst the breadth of experience present at the conference was invaluable to them. They felt welcome, included and listened to and that their experiences, thoughts and opinions were valued and validated. Their experience had a significant impact on the remainder of their term and brought a confidence to both their practice and academic work. The symposium will remain for many of them a pivotal experience within their undergraduate studies.

**Next steps for TTCM:** I am excited by the success of the first event and more excited that it will be the first of a series allowing for progressive approach to the subject area. I hope that the next event will begin to focus carefully on prominent areas of discussion from the first symposium, starting to lay the foundations for a shared understanding of what Community Musicians required within their training and how we can best provide this.

## Jess Abrams

Director, Edinburgh Youth Music Forum

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As one of the organisers of the Training the Community Musician symposium, I first want to say thank you to everyone who took the time to join us in Aberdeen. It was a rich pair of days full of dialogue, debate, questions, sharing and connection. Here's what's interesting to me - no matter what we set out to do, something different always happens. I think, with Community Music the idea that we can plan, even an event exploring Community Music - and expect that it will go as planned, is quite amusing. Of course, what's great about Open Space is that there is no plan, just structure. Something I feel embodies an essence in Community Music; that of creating a structure that allows things to emerge as those in the space want them to. And that is exactly what happened in TTCM's Open Space. As the Training the Community Musician event wound its own path, it explored so many things and, as usual, led to more questions.

**Institutional impact:** The Edinburgh Youth Music Forum, supports practitioners who work with young people making music. This event impacted the EYMF in that several members were able to attend and explore their practice and strengthen their network. The EYMF was able to offer examples of the benefit of a strong local network and working relationships where we share practice. We will disseminate the symposium evaluation to the EYMF membership and have a follow-up event to review the event's take-aways. It also gave the EYMF a chance to highlight some extremely good work being done in Scotland.

Interestingly, at Edinburgh College, where I teach, it's just been decided that Community Music will be a core unit (e.g. mandatory) for all students in year two. This has stirred a great deal of urgency in me to further un-pick the questions that surround 'Training the Community Musician'. Of course it's also raised many questions for me about whether it goes against the whole ethos! Saying all that, the thought of getting to plant the seed of duty of care, and the implications of the work are not lost on me; this event really served me in exploring how I will create a meaningful experience for students studying Community Music - even those who would prefer to be elsewhere.

**Next Steps for the TTCM:** I'm delighted that this event is the first but not the last because now I want more! I've 'tasted the topic' and am excited for further, longer dialogues. So maybe the next symposium can be Open with longer Space (!) and perhaps a couple of key provocations/talks as well.

## Lee Willingham

Professor, Faculty of Music, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada

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### Reflections and ways forward

As with any challenging and valuable professional development event, participants and facilitators leave with new ideas, strategies for leadership, beginning relationships with new colleagues, and above all, probing questions about how to move forward and face both new and familiar circumstances. This intense two-day symposium was no exception!

My role as an external observer and provocateur provided an outlier perspective on the practices and beliefs of many experienced Community Music facilitators. It was thrilling to note the intergenerational population of undergraduates, graduate students, professors, facilitators and people of older ages who provided both wisdom of experience, and a curiosity to explore new ways.

Initial observations of those present included an eagerness to learn; to find ways to improve and enhance practice. I noted that there was an established familiar network as well as an emerging one where knowledge and ideas were shared, built on, and new knowledge constructed. I sensed from the outset that there was a good deal of trust and goodwill amongst the participants and facilitators. Evidence of this was the speed in which the "blank wall" was filled to overflowing with questions, ideas, and topics.

Participants indicated early on that there was a willingness to suspend prior ideas and assumptions in order to let the process unfold. Fixed ideologies were suspended in favour of emergent ideas that created an action research environment.

That is, an idea was proposed, critiqued, implemented and assessed through lively discussion. This was a pattern that occurred repeatedly as all of our imaginations were challenged and stimulated to explore new paths and processes.

Throughout the process themes emerged. One particular topic of discussion was the invitation to participate. Levels of “welcome” were identified, including the risks inherent in both the host and the guest. Tensions within leadership and the concept of training people were addressed informally. Facilitation as a concept was thought to require different qualities than mere leadership. The ability and sensitivity to listen and respond and reflexively move participants to the intended outcomes are abilities that are difficult to teach.

We discussed the etymological roots of facilitation (facile-to make easy), to muse (to wonder, imagine, dream), to amuse, (to block the muse) in the interest of thinking more globally about how we go about facilitation in Community Music settings. The question was raised, “What kind of facilitator are you? Do you encourage creative imaginings?”

Building relationships, establishing trust, opening up spaces for work to be done were threads that wove throughout the days. It was pointed out that relationships were being built during the registration period, before anything formal had begun. Engagement in the process was cited as a key goal and to the relief of the organizers, was demonstrated fully. The ability, as a diverse group, to reflect on our own practices provided a sense of comfort in discovering commonalities amongst us.

Finally, it was important to note who was not there...who did not come. The open space process generated probes, such as ‘Why here?, Why now?, Why these people?. There were other so-called “missing questions” and “missing persons,” but in the open space culture, we are reassured that this is the right place, the people who came are the right people, and the work that was done was that which was meant to be done.

Someone said, “our minds are interesting places.” May it ever be so! Thank you for this wonderful opportunity to participate with you. Lee



# The Event

## What is Open Space:

Open Space Technology was developed in the 1980's by Owen Harrison an Episcopal Priest and civil rights activist. He observed that unorganised encounters were the most productive aspect of formal meetings. Open Space meetings are considered to be 'self-organising'. Although participants are invited by an organiser to discuss an explicit theme the agenda, in full, is created by the participants.

Open Space meetings are introduced by the organiser but facilitated independently. The facilitator is said to be 'fully present and totally invisible', where they are 'holding a space' for the participants to self-organise. Open spaces are governed by four guiding principles and one law.

## The Four Guiding Principles:

- 1 Whoever comes are the right people
- 2 Whenever it starts is the right time
- 3 Whatever happens is the only thing that could have
- 4 When it's over, it's over

## The law (of Mobility)

If you are not learning or contributing it is your responsibility to respectfully find somewhere you are. Participants are encouraged to consider how they engage with the agenda and can move freely but respectfully between sessions:

- Be a Bumblebee: Moving between different sessions taking energy and ideas from one session to the other
- Be a Butterfly: Moving between sessions quietly listening and reflecting

## Discussion topics called by delegates

As outlined, Open Space is a facilitated safe space, where delegates are encouraged to self-organise creating their own discussion topics and leading their own discussions.

On the following pages you will find a complete list of the topics proposed and discussed during the TTCM '19 symposium. Introductory notes follow this from those who called the sessions (note: not all introductory notes were available at time publication).



Session day and time		Details
Monday	3.00 – 4.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community in Conflict (Anna Shapira)</li> <li>• Developing the skills to deal with the unexpected (Emily Carr)</li> <li>• How to develop an Electronic Music Curriculum and Pedagogy. How do we make it Inclusive? (David Henderson)</li> <li>• What do you wish had been part of your training? (Emily Crossland)</li> <li>• Mapping the past and present to support the future (Chris Gray)</li> </ul>
	4.15 – 5.15pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is our responsibility in localising/globalising music experiences? With Specific reference to urban/rural geography (Eilidh Mackenzie)</li> <li>• Supporting life-long career (Tim Palmer)</li> <li>• Community Music abroad searching for other paths – China, Asia, International (Shannon Stevenson)</li> <li>• Community Music programmes in education (Dawn Ellis)</li> <li>• Mapping the past and present to support the future (Chris Gray)</li> </ul>

Session day and time	Details
<b>Tuesday</b>  <b>10.00 – 11.30am</b>	<p><b>Combined session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ‘how to’ of connecting theory and practice in Community Music programmes (Catherine Birch)</li> <li>• What are the musts, shoulds &amp; coulds when we train people in CM? (Jess Abrams)</li> <li>• Supporting the use of reflective practice in workforce development (Tim Palmer)</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining the line between Music Therapy in Community Music (Megan Foster)</li> <li>• Supporting the mental health and well-being of the Community Musician (Amanda MacLeod)</li> <li>• Mapping the past and present to support the future (Chris Gray)</li> </ul>
<b>11.45 – 1.00pm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing the leadership – facilitation tension (Tim Palmer)</li> <li>• Crossing contexts; aiding the transference of skills/knowledge/context from classroom to practice (Ceri Tippets)</li> <li>• Community engagement to community empowerment: what are we training the Community Musician for? (David Francis)</li> </ul> <p><b>Combined session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we ensure diversity in training community workers? (Graham Dowdall)</li> <li>• ‘Training the un-trainable’ – how do we encourage those ‘who know everything’ to take part in training? (Rachel Duff)</li> </ul> <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate call and response into drumming workshops (Jamie McDaniel)</li> <li>• Improvisation: A journey through music (Lise Mitchell Noble)</li> <li>• Mapping the past and present to support the future (Chris Gray)</li> </ul>
<b>Lunch</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let’s have a Jam sandwich (Jess Abrams)</li> </ul>
<b>2.00 – 3.00pm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to obtain funding to mentor apprentices (Carolyn Francis)</li> <li>• Making music with ASN? (Peter Taylor)</li> <li>• Is HE the right place to train community musicians? (Chris Gray)</li> <li>• Creating safe space (Lise Mitchell Noble)</li> <li>• Mapping the past and present to support the future (Chris Gray)</li> </ul>
<b>3.15 – 4.00pm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we maintain this feeling of connectivity? (Emily Carr)</li> <li>• What can umbrella organisations/professional arts organisations/Sound Sense do for the individual freelance Community Musician? (Amanda MacLeod)</li> <li>• Mapping the past and present to support the future (Chris Gray)</li> </ul>

**MONDAY 18TH FEBRUARY, 3.00 – 4.00**

## Developing the skills to deal with the unexpected

**Called by Emily Carr**

I called this session to discuss the question of how to teach or help someone prepare for dealing with the unexpected within sessions. As a small charity that employs sessional musicians I found that practitioners were coming with excellent planning skills, a good idea of the theory of what they wanted to achieve but lacking the skills to cope when something unexpected happened in a session, as is par for the course with the nature of the work that HMM does. It isn't about classroom management or engagement but how to think on your feet and maintain an outward calm presence when something potentially distracting or worrying or totally unexpected happens. (Emily Carr, 2019)

**MONDAY 18TH FEBRUARY '19, 4.15 - 5.15PM**

## What is our responsibility in localising/globalising music experiences, taking into account geography (urban/rural) & language - perception of 'local/global culture

**Called by Eilidh Mackenzie**

Looking at how a tutor with or without a direct connection to a locale has a responsibility to engage him/herself and the participant with musical references specific to the particular locale, in recognition of the fact that these musical references may occur nowhere else and in so doing strengthen a local sense of community and ownership to be shared on the global stage. (Eilidh Mackenzie).

**TUESDAY 19TH FEBRUARY, 10.00 – 11.30AM**

## Defining the line between Music Therapy and Community Music

**Called by Megan Foster**

The intention of this session was to define the roles of a Community Musician and a Music Therapist and clearly understand the differences between them. My expectation for the session was to discuss the training which takes place before entering into these job roles and the requirements necessary to undertake training in these fields. I also intended to recognise the aims that a practitioner in each field would have and how these aims influence their practise. (Megan Foster, 2019)

**TUESDAY 19TH FEBRUARY, 10.00 – 11.30AM**

## The 'how' to of connecting theory and practice in Community Music programmes. What are the musts/shoulds/coulds when we train people in CM? Supporting the use of reflective practice in workforce development.

**A combined session called by Catherine Birch, Jess Abrams and Tim Palmer**

With the conference title, "Training the Community Musician", it seemed natural to call a session around the how to of connecting theory and practice. This has been a contentious issue within Community Music research and practice for a good number of years, with Bruce Cole's phrase, 'a marriage of convenience', when describing Community Music in higher education, haunting the field since the late 90s. Having attended a number of conferences during the past year where this tension has been tangible, it seemed right to offer a platform where some of these continued tensions could be aired, as well as providing space for reflection on how the two can not only compliment but help sustain each other. Tim's offer of reflective practice seemed to connect easily into the theme, and neatly rounded off the 'holy trinity' of practice, research and reflection"(Catherine Birch, 2019).

The professional development of Community Musicians throws up many challenges – not least in the practicalities of the costs of provision and the costs for Community Musicians of accessing that provision. In such a diverse field there are possible conflicts in terms of hierarchies of knowledge – practices are often highly situated, and generic responses or advice might rarely hit the target – and of power – who decides what best practice is, based on what experiences? The literature is generally divided between case studies, philosophy and practical descriptions of recommended workshop activities, although each has its limitations for the busy practitioner. How might the CM community and the representative bodies best support professionals in a dynamic and rapidly changing work environment? (Tim Palmer, 2019)

I called this session to discuss the musts, shoulds and coulds when we are training Community Musicians and see if there was common ground in the answers. My interest was (is) particularly linked to what are we offering in academic settings as, in many cases there are a limited number of hours to ‘instil’ practice and/or theory so what do we choose?! Tying it in to Catherine’s question around theory and practice and Tim’s focus on reflective practice felt a ‘holistic’ step; the three together reflect the question of what the balance in it all could/should be. On reflection, I would still like to have an ‘academic settings’ discussion as it is its own ‘arena’ (Jess Abrams, 2019).

**TUESDAY 19TH FEBRUARY, 11.45 – 1.00PM**

## Improvisation: A Journey Through Voice

**Called by Lise Michell Noble**

The intention of this discussion was to examine improvisation as an essential skill for the Community Music practitioner’s toolkit. I wanted to understand what people’s resistance and misconceptions about improvisation were, with a view to demystify it and reframe it as an accessible, multifaceted approach to working in a flexible and playful way with colleagues, students and participants. My experience as an improvisatory musician and vocal educator has given me insights into many people’s lack of confidence with this approach. I wanted this discussion to remind people that facilitating ways into improvisation does not require a vast and complex range of skills, it is about using your own experience and creativity to make reference to what you already know and to make something new or approach problem solving through curiosity and creativity. (Lise Mitchell Noble, 2019)

**TUESDAY 19TH FEBRUARY, 11.45AM – 1.00PM**

## How do we ensure diversity in training community workers? Training the un-trainable’ how do we encourage those ‘who know everything’ to take part in training?

**Combined session called by Rachel Duff and Graham Dowdall**

As someone who trains musicians across a wide range of contexts and places, ranging from university to music outreach organisations, disability organisations and music hubs it is clear to me that the current workforce does not look sufficiently like the people we work with and I think we need to address that. Looking around the room at the start of the symposium I saw a sea of 90 % white faces and very few visibly disabled people. In seeking to encourage and enable more people of colour and difference into this exciting work I wanted to ask the questions that many progressive organisations are now asking - how do we attract musicians from diverse cultural, musical, social and abilities backgrounds into our work? Are the training courses available too expensive, run in the wrong venues, insufficiently inclusive? Is the content of what we offer in training fit for purpose and musically diverse enough? Or the harsher and less palatable question - are we stuck in a smug bubble of good intentions and not prepared to take on the difficult challenges to really create a community of musicians that represents the communities we work in? (Graham Dowdell, 2019)

**TUESDAY 19TH FEBRUARY, 2.00 – 3.00PM**

## Is HE the right place to train Community Musicians?

**Called by Christopher Gray**

I opened this session with three provocations:

### 1. Should we ever teach Community Music in Higher Education (HE)?

- ‘We’ are a practical vocation. It’s the thing that is visible in our vocation and profession.
- Where do ‘we’ sit within academia as a valid field of study?
- Can you really prepare a student to do different things at different times with different people in different places? Is this possible in 4 years?

### 2. Nature / Nurture: Can you train a Community Musician?

- We connect, build relationships, share and work. Can this be trained?
- Who has the right to decide who gets to study, or is trainable? (Gatekeeper)

### 3. Qualification providing a distorted privilege.

- Do we get to a point when qualification takes over knowledge, understanding and experience?
- Does this privilege those with a degree or qualification?
- Is it a mistake to qualify within a field that is organic?

**TUESDAY 19TH FEBRUARY, 2.00 – 3.00PM**

## Creating Safe Space

**Called by Lise Mitchell Noble**

This topic is something I wanted to introduce into the space to gain insights into how other practitioners were framing and implementing this within their own practice. I wanted to gain clearer insights into what other educators felt this meant and what they prioritised when creating this for their students and colleagues. I hoped that this discussion would bring about a recognition of the health and wellness aspects being more essential to the consideration of safe space over the politics of debate. (Lise Mitchell, 2019)

**TUESDAY 19TH FEBRUARY '19, 3.15 - 4.00PM**

## How do we maintain this feeling of connectivity?

**Called by Emily Carr**

I called this session to discuss how to maintain the energy and connectivity generated by the number of people and stimulating discussions that had taken place over the previous two days. I have had prior experience of being in similar situations and feeling connected and full of fire but it being very hard to maintain once daily life takes over. It was very much a question for discussion. (Emily Carr, 2019)



# Themes

The following headlines represent the over-arching themes that come out of Training the Community Musician. Keywords listed underneath help to set the scene and offer more insight into the issues and questions discussed. Under the three main themes are a couple of 'Other' topics raised, but they were not as prevalent throughout the event'.

## Professional Development

- What makes you a Community Musician? degree/hours in the field
- Developing the skills to deal with the unexpected
- How do we teach or help someone prepare for the unexpected within a session?
- The balance between what we train the person to be, and what we train the musician to be.
- The 'holy trinity' of practice, research and reflection
- Developing effective reflective practice amongst Community Musicians
- The connection between theory and practice

## Health & Well-being

- The importance of developing peer to peer networks to support community musicians working in isolation – working in community music can be lonely
- The importance of regular, regional, face to face networks to encourage peer to peer support in the sector
- The danger of burning out when juggling a portfolio career
- Supporting lifelong careers- could organisations like Sound Sense do more?

## Mentoring

- Sharing experience and skills
- Funded mentoring programmes?
- Local mentoring sessions
- Cross-field placements

“Never been more challenged as a community musician to really reflect what it is that I want to give my participants.”

## Other topics discussed

- How do we attract musicians from diverse cultural, musical, social and abilities to Community Music?
- Who decides what 'best' practice is?
- How might the Community Music community and representative bodies/organisations best support professionals in a dynamic and rapidly changing work environment? (It was not a major focus of this event but could be part of the next).
- Is 'Training' the right word? Does it imply there's only one way of getting it right? Whereas there are many paths & contexts.
- Are there any foundational principles that we would agree are common? If we could find them it would help us define our own work and describe it to others.
- Practice invites inspection/analysis. Analysis informs practice



“The ability to have so many conversations with different people openly”

“Open space allows all sorts of things to happen. Holding onto just enough power to hand it to anyone equally, something anyone can do.”

## What delegates said in the closing session of the symposium (as written in real time by Open Space Scribes)

- Thankful to be here. Never been more challenged as a Community Musician to really reflect what it is that I want to give to my participants. How I value myself as a Community Musician. Extremely informative.
- Thank you to everybody. The most useful thing, chatting to professionals with experience in the same demographic.
- In the process of creating a degree programme. Coming here and having all the discussion is very energising. Lots of things to think about. Leaving with a lot of knowledge and a little hungry but have the tools to go look where I need.
- Learned more than I anticipated I would. Incredible.
- Community Music is constantly moving. I've come away with more questions than answers...
- As someone who's just learning about this degree/job/lifestyle, discussions have been really inclusive. Great hope that there's a job out of my degree.
- Outlook of Community Music changed for the better. Only experience of Community Music in Aberdeen so good to see how much more opportunity there is out there.
- Lot of digestion to do. Such nice/active/engaged people. Really inspiring. Will help my engagement and develop my community of practice more.
- Particular thanks to international visitors, such a huge energy and effort to come here. Within our own work, we can get stuck, refreshing to have you here. Gained a huge amount.
- Thank the international people for making the long trip. Crazy how similar we are even though we're far apart.
- Echo the point about lots of questions raised. Questions don't necessarily need answers. Or answers can be multi various. Pleasure in exploring the different possibilities...
- Relationships at the heart of Community Music. Great to meet everyone, key part of the experience.
- It's been inclusive; although we don't have the experience that you have. Being able to learn and develop. We're able to reflect and pass it down.
- Lots to take away and reflect and put in my own development. Excited to do that.
- Good to look up, so used to being focused. Good to meet people with projects with the same goal. Good to have time away from the desk/projects. Think about what we're doing. New ideas for how we can do better. Lots to think about.
- Found answers to questions I didn't know I had. Questions for things I didn't know I had.
- Saturation point at this moment of time. It's always wonderful to get to these events and have these connections with people. Intrigued of open space, feel that it was a really great fit to facilitate diverse conversation.
- Never worked in this format before. What's come and developed. Thanks to the students, great to have a different perspective.
- What I've learned about what exists is really fascinating. The ability to have so many conversations with different people openly.
- Interesting to hear what goes on outside Aberdeen and Fife. Especially hearing of different places outside Scotland. Gives me faith, there's so much going on.
- Action-wise I'm going to re-design the degree I teach. Longing to continue my growth as a practitioner; have an urgency, coming away wanting more.
- It's going to take a long time to explore everything that's come up.
- About the students; it's essential to have you as full time participants. We all try to be innovative and find new ways to do things; you see the world in a different way of doing things.
- What people said about having questions and answers etc. one particular thing I've taken away is Open Space. Think it's really effective to make this very inclusive.
- Open Space as a framework; this hard copy thread that's evolved which is amazing; so information rich. A bit mind boggling. I didn't fully understand what my motivation/what I was looking for but I feel the discovery of that has been finding connectivity and community within this group; within this field of work.
- Feel that I've come away with confidence in myself.



## Post event feedback – a snapshot

Shortly after the TCM, we sent out a survey with a series of questions about the event. Below are the questions with some of the responses.

### What impact, if any, will your attendance at the conference have on your approach(es) to your thinking and /or practice in the short and long term?

- As ever food for thought across a wide range of areas that will hopefully improve the quality of my work.
- I am already implementing some of the ideas we talked about in the Community Music in Conflict session to help structure a music share between our kids in the suburbs and kids in the inner city.
- I've taken so many ideas from various attendees on what is working in their programmes of study, which is great as we start structuring our own degree in Community Music.
- Lots of food for thought; ideas about the relationship between HEI's and Community Music training; about music training in conflict areas; about reflective practice; connections between theory and practice.
- More confidence in my work. More awareness of how to develop my practice, particularly relating to improving my knowledge and application of theory.
- I enjoyed the connection to the student sector and will consciously look for ways to engage students and young people in future discussion and project work
- I have already begun working on re-designing my workshop model to make it less about 'teaching' and more of meeting people where they are.
- In the short-term I was heartened to spend time with other practitioners and feel that I am indeed part of a network. In the longer term I shall use the contact I have made to ask for help and support with the next stages of developing the work.
- Meeting people, hearing new thoughts and different perspectives is always a good thing as is sharing practice. Short term a mind massaging, thought provoking time. Long term understanding how as a CM organisation soundLINCS can feed into the richness of this learning.

## What are your next steps?

- Brand new extra CM module at Goldsmiths approved and running so a great chance to broaden out the offer to students by exploring what others offer
- Finish writing the degree plan, file the paperwork for an Intro to Community Music course and do a lot more reading because my theory is a bit lacking
- Hosting it next year! Keeping connections with interesting people
- Develop my PHD ideas inspired by the conference and explore possible routes for research. Also continue reading and thinking about theory to support my existing practice/reflection habits
- Implementing new activities for drum circles, incorporating the methods we discussed and practiced at the symposium. I will continue to work on engaging those that do not have the opportunity to make it to the concert hall through our outreach missions.
- My next steps are to set up a charity 'Folk First' to help sustain, develop and protect the work.
- More talking, seeing and visiting

## What are the three issues you feel need to be discussed further in relation to how we 'train' Community Musicians?

- Qualifications, does the Community Music sector know how to use them well?
- How we avoid the void between theory and practice.
- How to create win-win for CM!
- Establishing a scheme to enable us more easily to offer placements and/or apprenticeships to trainees
- How to measure the effects of the work
- Short term failures aren't your entire future
- Facilitation can sometimes be very isolating; remember that a network of like-minded people exist to not only share ideas with, but to give support in times of struggle
- Financial literacy must be present in all our interactions – make sure people are paying you your worth
- Health
- Expectation (of tutor/facilitating organisation/where applicable, the participant)
- Embracing the local as part of the national/international
- The incredible breadth of the topic – there are so many ways to be a Community Musician!
- Models and approaches from a wider array of musical/global cultures.
- How to marry up theoretical study of the subject with meaningful practical experience (thinking particularly of those training within university settings)
- I think we did a good job of covering lots of interesting and necessary areas. How about evaluation – evidencing change?
- I'm really interested in what and how we teach as core skills, ethics and understanding.
- How we attract and support a wider diversity of new Community Musicians into training.
- Potentially developing "occupational standards" in the field for students to address.
- I think we can always talk more about how to utilize technology, how to work with diverse populations and also how to work with those who have different abilities.

## In the closing circle, Lee Willingham questions the word 'training' in the symposium title. Is there another word you feel would better reflect the symposium?

- Defining
- Prepare or Equip
- Developing the Community Musician? Growing the Community Musician?
- Develping
- Conversation – as in Conversations with the Community Musician or Conversation around Community Musicianship
- Understanding the Community Musician. Discovering the Community Musician. Molding the Community Musician.
- I'm trying to remember that!!! I guess we train trees, plants to grow up things...maybe the point is NOT training in any particular direction, but allowing the individual to flourish in their own unique way to best effect. To become a naturally flourishing exuberant shrub rather than a bush which has been forced to grow this way or that. If you give something or somebody space to grow and nutrition perhaps that is better than pointing it obe fixed direction...But I don't know what one would call that...maybe...nurturing?? Making nurturing environments for Community Musicians? I think you certainly succeeded in doing that in these two days.

## Please tell us about your conference experience, including theme, approach, venue, catering etc?

- I just loved it! Good, interesting range of people with varying experiences, great venue, wonderful format, love Open Space!
- This was my first experiene of a conference run on Open Space principles and I really enjoyed it. I liked the sense of equal imprtance it gave to all participants, and the sense of responsibility that came with it. I enjoyed being part of a thinking environment for a couple of days ...
- 10/10. It was a thrill, a relief and a blessing to be able to get out of my university and not only see another country, but to be able to connect with so many Community Musicians. The venue was wonderful; I had never done Open Space before and I am a convert. It was amazing to see the exchange of ideas presented without a rigid list of events. Having never been to a conference for Community Musicians before, I can say that I was overjoyed with how natural this one was.
- I enjoyed the relaxed format and welcomed the inclusion of the student body. However, I would have welcomed one more structured talk/lecture/workshop with a guest speaker. Very enjoyable and well organised. The Open Space seemed to work very well and, surprisingly, it never felt too crowded having several groups working in the same room. Very positive indeed.
- Had a great time; the people make it
- Great venue and good organisation. I enjoyed and appreciate the open space approach and the commitment to egalitarianism in that approach. However by having no advance agenda and enabling any direction suggested sessions I think the original focus of the event was lost and it was much more of a wider exploration Community Music practice with some incredibly interesting discussions. I was really hoping that we could start a conversation about the content and quality of CM training that can enable the profession to develop and prove it's professionalism as a distinct field from therapy and education.
- We had a wonderful time and I really enjoyed the Open Space concept. I hope future conferences utilize it as well! I wouldn't mind a couple of presentations being set in stone and bringing speakers infor those, but the Open Space format kept us so engaged.
- Great venue and good organisation. I enjoyed and appreciate the Open Space approach and the commitment to egalitarianism in that approach.

## Do you have anything else to add that you haven't already had the opportunity to tell us about?

- 'I just loved it!'
- Just to know that we left this conference renewed and reinvigorated and that was so needed!
- It was a thoroughly inspiring and nurturing environment and made me come away feeling positive and hungry for more!
- If you need a place to hold any future conferences in the US please let us know. We would love to host!
- I will make every effort to come to future conferences and I hope to have made good progress with my work before next time. That in itself is a useful rhythm/marker point.

## Conclusions and recommendations

When reflecting as a team on our initial intentions for the TTCM symposium we are happy with the outcomes. The rich quality of interaction between participants and the freedom offered by Open Space ensured that the voices of those that wanted to be heard have been heard.

There are three conclusions we want to draw from the creation of this report that have been key in drawing together the recommendation for the next TTCM symposium in 2020:

1. There is a need for continued and regular dialogue and discussion in relation to the training of Community Musicians
2. There is a need for the development of further, formal connections between those working in the of training Community Musicians
3. There is a need for discussions to be fully representative of the field

### TTCM '20 Recommendations:

Much of the success of the TTCM '19 symposium was down to the Open Space format which provided participants the opportunity to engage with the what, where, when, how, and why's of Training the Community Musician, and to do so from their own perspective without any individual or group of individuals making decisions on the direction the symposium should take.

This approach highlighted specific areas that require more focused and detailed discussion in future events. What has come through clearly in symposium notes, post symposium conversations, and formal evaluation is the desire to approach the next symposium with a blended approach mixing more traditional symposium formats with a continuation of Open Space.

### The following format is proposed for the February '20 conference:

Day 1 – The opening afternoon of the symposium will follow a more conventional format, including spoken presentations/workshops and poster presentations on the preselected symposium theme.

Day 2 – Open Space format based around the symposium theme; presentations and provocations.

### Recommended themes:

The options posed throughout this report for future themes are extensive, however it is proposed that the theme should be drawn from the following:

- What are the essential and desirable skills required by a Community Musician (Community Music Standards?)
- Within training, what is the balance between training the person and training the musician?
- What is the Community Musicians Duty of Care; to self and others?
- How do we evaluate or monitor the impact training has on the field as it proliferates?

