

DOING RESEARCH IN SOUND: MUSIC-MAKING AS CREATIVE INTERVENTION

6

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This chapter is centred on my research into sound identities and musical practices in Basilicata, which started at the end of the 1980s. Ever since, I have used performing music as a form of research by way of active participation as a musician in the local scene. Performance-based research has a long history within ethnomusicology (Cottrell 2007). One of its most famous formulations is found in the concept of bimusicality proposed by Mantle Hood, who considered musical practice a privileged way to approach a foreign musical culture (1960). As a native researcher, my case has been characterised by a shifting positionality, constantly moving between musical activity as an insider musician and academic reflection addressed to an audience of outsiders. Doing research in sound has meant that listening, playing and researching have been interconnected actions taking place within a sonic environment that I helped to create as a performer.

During my fieldwork in Basilicata, my activity as a musician, and specifically as a *zampogna* player, represented a constant opportunity to interact and have a dialogue with local musicians and through them with the local communities. Research then became synonymous with constant participation – musically active and intellectually alert – in religious festivals, pilgrimages and collective rituals. As analysed in a variety of contexts in this volume, these forms of sociality often represent the main opportunities to observe musical practices and intense sonic involvement beyond the specificities of their religious implications.

Such a methodology requires first of all a performative conception of research, especially in its fieldwork phase, as underlined by Turner (1986). At the same time, it fits within recent debates on the interpenetration between artistic and ethnographic practices. The reasons for this convergence arose as anthropologists redefined their research methods, experimenting with forms of ethnographic representation and abandoning the myth of the ethnographic encounter as the

foundational moment of the discipline; at the same time, on the other front, many artists expressed a need for detailed studies, field research and interdisciplinary dialogue on methods and content (Foster 1995; Marcus 2010; Rutten et al. 2013).

Similarly, my research involved interdisciplinary collaborations with anthropologists, artists, filmmakers and photographers, generating multiple outcomes, including books, concerts and performances, as well as mixed-media installations. From 2005, these activities took place under the wing of LEAV – the Ethnomusicology and Visual Anthropology Lab at the University of Milan.¹ The laboratory was set up in collaboration with a number of colleagues (Elisa Piria, Lorenzo Ferrarini and Tommaso Vitali) and was inspired by conversations with Steven Feld over a long period. From its foundation, LEAV was intended to be a place for experimenting with different media and for developing dissemination strategies that would be refined through teaching. Most of the materials produced by LEAV have taken the form of short books incorporating a high-quality sound component – often a CD – and a photographic section (see for example Scaldaferrì 2005; Scaldaferrì and Feld 2019; Scaldaferrì and Vaja 2006). This format has involved balancing the textual, photographic and sonic components, with due attention given not just to technical quality but also to aesthetic considerations, all with a view to developing polyphonic narratives in which diverse forms of representation can find a synergy. A key precondition was the decentralisation of writing and the increasing diffusion of theories and practices testing the role of sensoriality (Cox et al. 2016; Schneider and Wright 2010).

Researchers focussing on musical practices and cultures, though, developed much earlier collaborative practices and digressions towards art. Moreover, since the beginnings of ethnomusicology, the study of non-Western and folk music has required the adoption of systems of sound recording in order to delimit an object of study in its materiality. This created a proximity with recording technologies that remains central and opened the door for further developments in the field of multimedia.

The foundational experience of Béla Bartók at the beginning of the twentieth century shows a synergy between his studies of Hungarian folk music and his activity as composer; more specifically, the latter stimulated his research and became a way to make a creative use of its results. Cases such as Bartók's were frequent, though not very often analysed in scholarly discourse, and suggest how in its heyday ethnomusicology was quite 'fluid' in methods and practices. Later on, the discipline became more consolidated, thanks to the influence of historic musicology and anthropology, which had more academic seniority and prestige.

Simha Arom's (1991) study of African polyphonies at the beginning of the 1970s is a good example of research employing active intervention during fieldwork, re-drawing the relationships between researcher and 'informant' through a dialogue revolving around the production of musical sounds. Arom, who had a background as a high-level classical musician before becoming a researcher, aimed at understanding and translating according to European musical categories the rhythmic models that musicians have in mind when they execute complex polyrhythmic music. In order to achieve this result and 'separate' the complex rhythmic parts played by a percussion ensemble in the Central African rainforest, he used techniques normally used in recording studios, such as overdubbing and playback, training musicians to perform for re-recording. Thanks to the centrality of sound, this method altered significantly the relationship between scholar and musicians involved in the research, who thus become 'true scientific collaborators' (Arom 1976: 495) with an active and conscious role.

Arom's ultimate aim was the creation of a musical transcription or score, similar to that which a hypothetical composer would have written in a Western music context. Composers such as György Ligeti and Luciano Berio were fascinated by his ideas well before Africanists, and adapted some elements of his work to their compositions. A strategy such as Arom's is far removed from the idea of fieldwork as gathering of 'documents', which could be defined as a real 'documentary prejudice' (Scaldaferri 2014b: 2). Rather, recording introduces factors of subjectivity and choice that end up giving an authorial role to the person who records the performance, sometimes creating a relationship that resembles that between a composer and their favourite interpreters (Scaldaferri 2018).

Recently, Steven Feld underlined Arom's pioneering role in creating collaborations in sound and in introducing 'new knowledge about African music, and new possibilities for listening to it' (Feld 2015b: 91). Feld, who made dialogue and collaboration central features of his own work, is also an active musician and has been experimenting with recording technology throughout his career. Recording and playback technologies informed his landmark research on Kaluli – including compositional techniques and re-recording, especially in the making of the filmic version of *Voices of the Rainforest* (Feld et al. 2019). His research in Ghana (2012), on the other hand, received important input from his musical activity with Accra musicians, which resulted in performances and record productions (Accra Trane Station 2007a, 2007b; Annan 2008).

The examples mentioned above represent some pathbreaking experiences in the introduction of new research and fieldwork methods of sonic intervention as well as new ways of listening to musical practices.

It is perhaps not by chance that they come from researchers whose experience of music-making intersected with technological experimentation. As proved true in my own experience, joining intellectual interests with first-hand practice created fertile ground for creative experimentalism.

Provoking in sound

Ever since I was a teenager, in parallel with classical musical studies I have played *zampogna*, a musical instrument that has appeared in a number of the previous chapters thanks to its widespread diffusion in rural Basilicata. A *zampogna* can be manufactured in different sizes, from small instruments around 50cm in length to those beyond 160cm. They are made of four pipes – two chanters and two drones – with double reeds, inserted in a single wooden block and oriented towards the ground. The bag is made out of a whole goatskin, which is so recognisable that in some areas the instrument is called ‘the sounding goat’, an expression that some scholars have picked up in the title of their works (Lortat-Jacob 1984; Ricci and Tucci 2004). In some areas the *zampogna* is called ‘*i suoni*’ (the sounds), which exemplifies its status as musical instrument *par excellence* but also suggests the substantial aural impact that it has in local perceptions. A *zampogna* is capable of dominating the soundscape, and its frequent use in festivals, pilgrimages and other moments of socialisation make it particularly suited to creating a sense of sonic community, understood in a sense similar to that suggested by Schafer (1977: 214). It can bring people together and control the movements of dancers but also of other musicians, who have to adapt to its key and to its volume (see chapter 3). Some *zampogna* players love playing while walking, in open spaces or through the streets of a village, interacting with the place, testing the resonance of the walls. Some love playing in narrow alleys, getting close to the walls, or aim the pipes into cavities to maximise resonances. Antonio Forastiero, among the best players and builders in Basilicata, was fond of playing in the woods, especially inside a hollow tree, as seen in Rossella Schillaci’s documentary (2005). Pasquale Ciancia, my *zampogna* teacher, during his final years had become very introverted and played in his house only, making it resonate as a huge sounding box and projecting his sound to the whole neighbourhood.

Listening and the materiality of sound are crucial elements of the way music for *zampogna* is transmitted from master to disciple. Music is learned through imitation, without forms of explicit teaching, and pupils learn through being exposed to the performances of their teachers. They have to ‘absorb’ from the observation of gestures, listening carefully and committing to memory rhythms and melodies,

which are not visualised or transcribed. This transmission process is found in many musical cultures, and is defined by Timothy Rice in his study on Bulgarian *gaidar* Kostadin Varimezov as a 'learned but not taught' tradition (1994: 65). In their jargon, Lucanian *zampogna* players often say '*facenno e mbaranno*' (learning by doing) to refer to this type of education.

The way the sound of a *zampogna* tends to fill the surrounding space has played a role since my first involvement in field research, in 1990, when I was a student at the conservatory. I was part of a team of scholars from the University of Basilicata led by Francesco Giannattasio researching the musical traditions of the Arbëresh villages of the Sarmento valley (San Paolo Albanese and my home village of San Costantino Albanese). My role was supposed to be of native research assistant, but soon transformed into that of musician, since at that time I was the only active player in the area. Some important singers had stopped performing due to the lack of players, and my role became fundamental to creating a situation in which they could perform. In a *zampogna* singing the instrument is not just an accompaniment but acts as a provocation for

6.1 Accettura, May 2005. Scaldaferrì playing for a singer during the *Maggio* festival.



the singer. Its volume and piercing timbre create a dense soundwall that demands of the singer their best effort, sparking an almost aggressive reaction. In order to break through the soundwall created by the four double reeds, a singer's voice has to be powerful and sharp, engaging in a very physical duel that is not within everyone's reach. It is an almost shouted singing style, somewhat liberating. In many Arbëresh villages it is called '*shtie një voxh*' (to throw a voice). It is characterised by 'tumbling strains', which in Sachs's classic definition (1961: chapter 5) are descendent melodic movements starting from high-pitched loud sounds, following the dynamics of a shout. The sound of a *zampogna* can provoke shouted interjections that are present already in Carpitella's recordings from the 1950s (Adamo 2013: CD 3).

The deep connection between performers during a *zampogna* singing can be perceived in their posture: the singer, positioning a hand by the side of the mouth as if to direct the voice, 'throws' the song towards the player, almost as a 'sound challenge'. Alternatively, singer and player can perform side by side directing their sounds to a third element. Melodies and songs are mostly improvised, so singer and player have to listen carefully to each other to be able to interact, and when this is successful a sort of timbrical fusion takes place at the end of a song. The relationship between singer and player has a character of totalising challenge, which creates an intimate proximity that is nonetheless externalised in public for its volume and extension in space. The relationship happening in that moment becomes a priority, and everything else becomes secondary – including the notion that the player is also a researcher.

It was thanks to my experiences as a musician during that research in the 1990s that I learned a different way to listen to the musical performance. I acquired an awareness of establishing a deep connection in sound with other performers, creating an event that implicitly becomes a form of control of acoustic space. In particular, observing my colleagues and trying to fit their research strategies and their expectations through my playing generated an awareness that became the basis for the research that I developed in Basilicata ten years later. Here, I had a *zampogna* constantly by my side in order to encourage singers and players, and to revitalise musical repertoires that were being neglected. In many situations I used as an instigation an old *zampogna* by famous builder Carmine Trimarco (1864–1952), considered by some the Stradivari of *zampogna* makers. The same instrument was heard on the recordings from the 1950s that I used for playback sessions. Listening to old recordings always provoked strong emotions, especially among those who would hear deceased family members.

During public events and festivals, when I needed to juggle the roles of player and filmmaker or interviewer, I needed to plan accurately

when to shift roles, especially if I was playing with other musicians. This was easily done with younger musicians but was a real problem with players from the older generations, who lived my shifting positionality with unease. Agostino Carlomagno, a senior player with whom I visited many Carnival festivals, would sometimes ask me rhetorically if we were really going to play or if I was there to do something else.

My positionality, continually shifting between that of an almost insider player and that of a researcher, played a decisive role during the team research on the *Maggio* festival in Accettura in 2005 – both in terms of favouring some logistical aspects and of orienting our attention on the sonic features described in chapter 1. I had familiarity with the village, whose festivals I had been attending as a musician. But the real promoter of the team experience of 2005 was the extreme fondness of the people of Accettura for a *zampogna* singing. In the village there is a long-standing lack of players, as if people preferred taking up the challenge of singing rather than to propose it. Players from other villages, on the other hand, visit gladly because they are treated very well. Being known locally as a player was a springboard for the development of the research, which initially was perceived as an extension of my musical activity.

The Accettura 2005 ‘research tribe’ (Feld and Scaldaferrì 2019: 86) was made up of eight researchers, with the addition of three of the best *zampogna* players of the region, Alberico Larato, Quirino Valvano and Leonardo Riccardi. I invited them with an awareness that their presence, in addition to mine, would have a crucial importance in directing moments of the festival and in provoking other musicians. The *Maggio* is a very inclusive festival, attended by hundreds of participants and dozens of musicians from the whole region – some of whom are occasional performers. The musicians are spread over the full extent of the festival and the sounds they make fit into the soundscape of the festival. But the quality of a musician, especially a *zampogna* player, does not go unnoticed for long and can influence significantly the sonic unfolding of the festival. Feld’s soundscape composition and the other recordings from those days allow an immersive journey in the rich festival soundscape, including extraordinary voices provoked by top-level players.

In Accettura, a *zampogna* songs are based on shorter melodies compared with those spread around the rest of the region, which are much more elaborate. This allows the singers to interact with the player and especially to alternate with each other in ‘song duels’. A player who understands their style can find himself surrounded by a group of singers who, in crowded situations such as the cutting and transport of the trees, challenge each other in competitions of endurance that can get priority over everything else. The players’ ‘sound challenges’ act as forms of control over space through acoustic aesthetic criteria,

attracting the best singers and other musicians, inviting them to interact. In situations in which performers who often don't know each other create temporary communities, the best musicians find each other through playing and singing.

The impact that four esteemed *zampogna* players could make on the soundscape of the ritual, and consequently for the development of the research, emerged clearly during the procession of the small statue of St Julian, on Monday evening. This is a much more private phase of the festival, mostly attended by the people of Accettura during breaks in the operations to prepare the raising of the trees in the square. This procession, in its sonic richness, attracted Feld's attention to the point that he dedicated to it a third of the whole soundscape composition (Scaldaferri and Feld 2019: track 5 of CD 1). An important feature of that year's procession was the presence of an ensemble formed by myself and the other three players I invited. The formation, which played a small and a large *zampogna* tuned an octave apart, a soloist *ciaramella* and a double *ciaramella*, is commonly seen during important regional pilgrimages such as that to the Marian sanctuary of Viggiano. The parish priest Don Giuseppe and the festival committee were enthusiastic about the proposal to accompany the procession with this ensemble, seeing it as a celebration of the role of double-reed instruments in an official situation. From that year on, on Monday evening during the festival a team of players has accompanied the procession of the small statue of St Julian. Still today this involves an invitation (and an implicit obligation) for me to perform on that occasion. A section of Feld's soundscape composition is about the team of double-reed instruments (track 5 from 14'40'). The ensemble forms a single, compact sound source that traverses the narrow streets and makes them resonate. In the recording it is possible to perceive the changes in reverberation from the different surfaces of the walls and the stone pavements – the provocation of the reeds this time is thrown to the village of Accettura, rendering to the listener a perception of its urban spaces.

Insider repatriation

Shelemay underlined how the presence of a field researcher always represents an element of interference, and sometimes even becomes a major player in the transmission of the knowledge and practices they intend to study (1996: 35–51). All the more so in the case of insider researchers, whose activity is not limited to the circumscribed time-spans of research and fieldwork but is a constant presence or a sharing of everyday life. For this reason Narayan, writing on the figure of the native researcher, suggested how a rigidly dualistic paradigm should be

replaced by a rethinking of a researcher's role, which is characterised by 'shifting identifications' (1993: 671) and the quality of the relationship thus created.

In my community of origin, my presence was never perceived as neutral and detached. I was often explicitly required to provide a concrete contribution, thanks to my competence as a musician or as a researcher, such as intervening to support practices that were going through hard times. In San Paolo Albanese, a village that is undergoing such depopulation that in addition to its cultural practices it endangers the community's own survival, a heartfelt tradition is the 'dance of the sickle' during the festival of St Roch (see chapter 4). In the past, the village was well known for its *zampogna* players, who had been studied by researchers as early as the 1970s. However, because of depopulation, already during the 1990s there were no remaining players. In the absence of musical accompaniment, the dance had become a sort of silent pantomime that the performers were almost too embarrassed to stage. At the beginning of the 2000s I agreed with the main dancers at the time, Pietro Ragone and Costantino Osnato, that some young players from San Costantino and I would play each year if they guaranteed that they would perform the dances. This allowed the revitalisation of a tradition which, thanks to returning emigrants, is still ongoing despite the decrease in population.

Other times, the request to collaborate came from institutions such as museums, schools, local administrations or associations. I perceived these requests as a duty of returning the results of my research in tangible terms, often in the form of archival material that a community could use to preserve collective memories and to build a collective heritage. Similar themes emerged in various activities of repatriation of sound archives, in the use of sound recordings beyond research activities or more in general for the activities discussed by proponents of an applied ethnomusicology (Nannyonga-Tamusuza and Weintraub 2012; Pettan and Titon 2015).

In my hometown of San Costantino Albanese, one such project involving the local primary school became a sort of self-repatriation – a term I use to underline how the returning of the community's heritage was performed by an insider. In San Costantino my research has become, with time, part of the local heritage, and often my collaboration is required as a sort of civic duty. The project was called *Lule sheshi* (wildflowers) and was centred on the work of the Arbëresh poet Enza Scutari, who taught in the local primary school for more than forty years. The main aim was to revitalise the use of the Arbëresh language, which has been undergoing decline for the last few generations, through songs to be performed by schoolchildren. Local and outsider musicians were involved, as well as schoolchildren with

whom we went through the village sound archives, thus bringing back old repertoires into circulation. The project resulted in the publication of a book on the work of Scutari, with attached CD, and later of a second CD in which the children performed songs and selected archival recordings by three generations of singers (*Lule sheshi* 2016; Nikolskaya and Scaldaferrri 2010). The result follows Narayan's suggestion of an 'enactment of hybridity' in the textual production of authors who show their belonging 'simultaneously to the world of engaged scholarship and the world of everyday life' (1993: 672). The unfolding of this project followed a creative approach, aimed at generating aesthetic relationships between historical recordings and new songs, texts, poems and images. The project had an impact on the transmission of local song repertoires: the young singers, enthusiastic about the CD, continued to perform the songs outside the school space. Some of them created a female vocal ensemble, which in the years following has continued to perform and participate in other musical projects, such as URLA by artist Yuval Avital, which I will discuss below.

Again, my activity as a musician and in particular as a *zampogna* player had a relevant role, helping me to manage my shifting positionality and interacting with the other performers. An example is the song *Trëndafile baxhanare* (Nikolskaya and Scaldaferrri 2010: track 12, included in sound-chapter 6), which I composed on lyrics by Scutari, and whose basic track is a *tarantella* that I played on two overdubbed *zampogna* tracks, with the addition of instruments from both local and classical traditions. The song represents a crossing between my role of musician, ethnomusicological researcher and a technical role of mixer and editor, which all came together in the recording studio.

Composing tradition

In 2019, the designation of the city of Matera as European Capital of Culture was the opportunity for a number of initiatives in dialogue between art and ethnography. The Sassi area became a set for artistic experimentations. One of the main projects was I-DEA,² which took inspiration from John Cage's *Rolywholyover: A Circus*. In this 'composition for museum', Cage transformed the Philadelphia Museum of Art in a 'circus for artworks' that each day switched works from forty-five museums and special collections of the area (Bianchi 2016; Murphy 1996: 458–63). In Matera, artists were invited to create exhibitions and installations based on their creative interpretation of archival collections. In this context, where I was an adviser, some exhibitions were based on my research in Basilicata and its recordings. One of these was the installation *When the Trees Resound*, which used recordings and photographs from research on the 2005 *Maggio* festival in Accettura.



Feld's soundscape composition was played in an ad hoc, theatre-shaped space, where people could lie on mats and listen. At the same time, in the entrance two screens played slideshows of Vaja and Ferrarini's photographs, which were meant as a preliminary phase to the listening. Another exhibition, *The Land of Cockaigne* by Navine G. Khan-Dossos and James Bridle, displayed a large wheat offering from Pedali di Viggianello, inside which a loudspeaker played a harvest song recorded by De Martino and Carpitella. Four large *zampogne* from my collection were placed horizontally on low pedestals, suggesting the idea of dead animals, as loudspeakers played back the sounds of each instrument. The same exhibition featured an installation based on Rossella Schillaci's documentary *Pratica e maestria* (2005), a film in which the filmmaker's observational approach built upon my close knowledge of some of the best *zampogna* players in Basilicata.

In these cases, the outcomes of previous research (as recordings, objects or audiovisual productions) became the substance that the artists used to create their own interpretations. Elsewhere, I have collaborated with composer and multimedia artist Yuval Avital, who opens

6.2 August 2010. Scaldaferrri on stage at the Portogruaro International Music Festival.

his work to ethnographic research, based on field encounters and in dialogue with a researcher. His creative career is full of references to contexts dense with cultural meanings and significance, at times connected with biblical and Israelite heritage, combined with the exploration of multiple artistic languages and technologies. His works are often based on field research and involve dialogue and collaboration in ways that are mindful of ethnographic research. The relationship between researcher and artist is here closer, but also presents new potential problems insofar as the methods are aimed at different goals.

My first collaboration with Avital resulted in the opera *Samaritans* (performed at Festival MiTo, Milan, 2010). Defined by the artist as ‘icon/sonic opera’ (see Scaldaferrì 2015: 380–85), *Samaritans* mixes multimedia playback with live music performances, which include some singers from the Samaritan community of the area of mount Gerizim. I was involved as an expert of fieldwork methods by recording and filming rituals in the West Bank, which would then find a place in the multimedia component of the opera. *Samaritans* is a work with strong identity and religious connotations, which raises ethical issues similar to those that ethnographers encounter whenever local practices are put into relationship with a global scenario (Shelemay 2013). A crucial aspect, for example, was the inclusion of Samaritan religious rituals within the opera. These had been negotiated with the religious leaders of the community and had been authorised by the high priest of the Samaritans, who had approved the presence of a priest on stage saying that a prayer is a prayer regardless of the context in which it is uttered.

Avital planned my presence on stage as a multi-instrumentalist, playing parts for violin, accordion, *torupill* (Estonian bagpipe) and for a large 6 palm *zampogna*. A *zampogna* is a very limiting instrument to fit in a concert performance, because of its difficult tuning and fixed dynamic. In *Samaritans* it was inserted within a rigorously annotated score, and put side by side with instruments of the Western classical tradition – a string quintet, wind instruments, grand piano, classical guitar. Aware of the *zampogna*’s morphology and musical limitations, Avital used it to evoke ancestral sounds, as a support of the Samaritan vocal ensemble with low-pitched sounds, creating an evocative sound with hieratical and ceremonial features.³

Within the initiatives for Matera European Capital of Culture 2019 I collaborated with Avital in the creation of URLA, a work of crowd music that involved more than three hundred performers from different parts of Basilicata. Most performers and most sounds had been selected through my history of research in the region, in part discussed in this book: the teams of bell carriers from San Mauro and Tricarico, the sound of the *zampogna*, the walking wind bands, the *cupa-cupa*

(friction drums), the 'shouted' songs, the Arbëresh polyphonic songs of the young female choir from San Costantino.

In planning this project, I defined these phenomena 'sound monuments' because of their collective identity, acknowledged as part of their heritage by the whole region, beyond the communities in which they originated. In URLA, the performers were divided into four groups, who toured the Sassi district according to a geographic score. Along the path they would come across 'sound terminals' made of amplified instruments, kickstarting sonic or ritual acts. I managed the network of contacts required and the rehearsals. The main challenge was to get the performers to understand the requests made by Avital through his score, which were very different from their usual musical practices. One of the groups was made up of fifteen *zampogna* players, among the best known in the region, with instruments of different sizes, directed by me at the head of the group while recording with a microphone on my back. These sixty double reeds, playing mostly long notes with effects of tonal dissonance, were aimed at obtaining microtonal clusters similar to those which can be heard in some of Ligeti's compositions. Avital's idea was that of a huge-sounding lung, breathing and moving through the picturesque streets of the Sassi district and making them resonate. The cluster effect, which cancelled the perception of melodies or harmonic intervals, represented a real challenge for the players, who are used to playing on their own and to paying close attention to their tuning. It required specific training and a collaborative stance on their part. Avital is not new to similar collaborations between performers with diverse backgrounds, who are at times placed side by side in compositions in which each has to perform according to their own traditional canons. These formats raise questions on the creative role of the composer when dealing with musicians who perform within specific traditional guidelines, instead of instrumentalists who follow his instructions. In a conversation in which we discussed URLA, Avital explains his position on this subject:

NS: The involvement of whole communities has created a close relationship with the territory, its rituals and traditions. It was necessary to set up a collaborative approach that took a long time and could not be taken for granted.

YA: In Basilicata I encountered communities with a strong sense of identity, carriers of important traditions and capable of original creations. I can define them as real communities of artists, in which every traditional action constitutes an authentic artistic ritual. This is something that struck me and I had to consider.

NS: Working with a large number of real artists, each with specific cultural and identity traits, did not just entail collaboration but

also negotiations and sacrifices. Did you feel limited in your role of composer? Do you think that this can cause a crisis of authorship?

YA: I never perceived it as a limitation or a way to undermine my role. We should consider the primary meaning of the term composer: putting together, side by side, situations, objects, and with them creating a new order. What emerges is something new. (Scaldaferri 2020: 77)

Avital's explanation of the etymological role of the composer almost echoes the classical definitions of music as organised sound. More precisely, the artist can be seen as someone who, rather than placing together musical and sound phenomena, removes them from their context to blur their limits, thus trying to suggest new possible relationships and ways to listen.

Conclusion

My work in Basilicata unfolded in the spirit of overcoming the separation between researcher and research subject. This process has been based on continuous intersections of playing music as an insider musician, learning, as well as recording and establishing dialogues. These activities required shifting positionalities and adaptive strategies, in which the practical and technical knowledge of a musical instrument and its sound represented an anchor point. Listening has always been a crucial stage of knowing musical repertoires, but also a research method that creates forms of interaction by relying on the circularity between performance, cognition and produced sound, as illustrated by Merriam (1964: chapter 1). Performed sound was not just the medium in which the research was carried out but became a form of representation that went beyond traditional textual forms. The multiplicity of roles and relationships that I built through music-making became the inspiration for layered and multi-authored research outputs, which spanned across multiple media and forms of dissemination – including forays into the arts scene. Importantly, my collaborations with local institutions – sometimes requested as a sort of civic duty – resulted in forms of repatriation of the outcomes of the research, which often were integrated into the local politics of heritage.

Thanks to provoking and interacting through creative interventions, the examples described in this chapter allow exploration of the variety of relationships that can develop between a sonic context and some musical practices. They provide a more nuanced perception of cultural dynamics in which, as shown by Yung (2019), creativity and traditionally established practices are in a relationship of complementarity.

Notes

- 1 www.leav.unimi.it (accessed 31 March 2020).
- 2 www.matera-basilicata2019.it/en/programme/pillar-projects/i-dea.html (accessed 31 March 2020).
- 3 www.yuvalavital.com/press/item/68-samaritans-icon-sonic-opera-new-video-clip (accessed 31 March 2020).

Sound-chapter 6 – *A musical journey with my zampogna*

This sound-chapter includes recordings from 1990 to 2019. In these diverse situations Scaldaferrì used playing *zampogna* as a way to do research in sound. Through forms of interaction that range from provoking singers to collaborations with contemporary artists, he used creative practice as a research approach.

