Creative Trigger, Creative Intent and Creative Choice:

An Exploration of Where Songs Come From

Mark A. Scholtes

Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Music

February 2015
Abstract

This paper investigates the relationship between Creative Trigger, Creative Intent, and Creative Choice in the context of intuitive songwriting practice. By positioning creative practice in a theoretical framework that includes both traditional musical transcription and autoethnographic data, the paper discusses the interplay between these creative elements and their relationship to the finished works. It also seeks to compare conscious and intuitive songwriting process in an attempt to better understand how these two modes of operation intersect in the context of the author’s own creative practice. As a result, over the course of this project, this research highlights a transition away from what can be considered an overly romantic and anachronistic view of songwriting and creativity, towards a conclusion that refutes much of the mystery surrounding songwriting practice as propagated by many successful recording artists, songwriters, media, and the music industry at large.
**Folio of Recorded Work**

A large part of this thesis is built around the author’s existing creative practice, so in addition to the written work, this project places considerable weight on achieving a significant creative outcome. In my case, this outcome was intended to further my development as a recording artist by undertaking the production of a full-length album of original material intended for commercial release. With two existing major label international album releases to date, both recorded with multi Grammy award winning personnel, this production project would be tasked with the challenge of standing side by side with my existing body of work in both its sonic quality and artistic statement. To further extend that challenge, it was my intention to self-produce this new album.

Produced over the duration of this research project, performances for the album were recorded in a variety of studios in Brisbane and Los Angeles, utilizing both local and international musicians including significant contributions from Bruce Woodward (Electric Guitar/Acoustic Guitar), John Parker (Drums/Percussion), A.J. Hall (Upright Bass), Larry Goldings (Organ), Doug Pettibone (Pedal Steel), Jen Mize (Background Vocals), Andrew Johnson (Electric Bass), Darran Muller (Drums/Percussion), Brad Lee Swanson (Background Vocals), with me providing lead vocals, acoustic guitar, piano and additional keyboards. The album was mixed in Israel by Grammy award-winning engineer Helik Hadar, and mastered by Grammy award-winner Brad Blackwood in Memphis TN.

The album contains 11 original songs, including three works that will be identified for detailed investigation later in this thesis.
Track Listing

California - Mark Sholtez (EMI Music Publishing)

Cold Here in the Water - Mark Sholtez (EMI Music Publishing) & Adam Tressler (BMG Gold Songs/Area Man Writes Songs)

Who Knows You Better - Mark Sholtez (EMI Music Publishing)

Love You at Your Worst - Mark Sholtez (EMI Music Publishing) & Jennifer Crowe (Crowe Family Music)

She Looks Like a Friday Night - Mark Sholtez (EMI Music Publishing) & Adam Tressler (BMG Gold Songs/Area Man Writes Songs)

Your Satellite - Mark Sholtez (EMI Music Publishing) & Brad Lee Swanson (Yomamazen)

Sink Me (The Ballad of a Fisherman) - Mark Sholtez (EMI Music Publishing)

No Better Place - Mark Sholtez (EMI Music Publishing) & Tyler Lyle (Check Your Pulse Music, All Who Wander Publishing)

Hey Love (The River Song) - Mark Sholtez (EMI Music Publishing)

Lifeboat - Mark Sholtez (EMI Music Publishing)

Don’t You Believe It - Mark Sholtez (EMI Music Publishing)
Attach CD here
**Intellectual Property Considerations**

Due to my existing contractual obligations for recording and publishing, with exclusive rights in all compositions and recorded works assigned to third party companies, the accessibility of the recorded outcome for this project is to be restricted to examiners and Griffith University archive purposes only. Any included recorded work shall not be made publicly available under any circumstances without the permission of the author.

However, with respect to the inclusion of lyrics and musical transcriptions in the written thesis, permission to include specific material has been granted by the publisher under the conditions detailed in Appendix E.
Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the assistance and support provided to me throughout this project by my supervisors, Professor Don Lebler and Dr Donna Weston.
Statement of Originality

This work has not been previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

(Signed)___________________________ / /

Mark A. Scholtes
# Table of Contents

**Chapter 1: Introduction** ........................................................................................................................................... 12

**Chapter 2: Literature Review** ............................................................................................................................. 16

**Chapter 3: Methodology** .................................................................................................................................... 22

  Phase 1: Reflection and Transcription .................................................................................................................... 22

  Phase 2: Analysis .................................................................................................................................................... 24

    Analytical Framework ....................................................................................................................................... 25

  Phase 3: Application ............................................................................................................................................ 25

**Chapter 4: Analysis** ........................................................................................................................................... 27

  Who Knows You Better ...................................................................................................................................... 27

  Hey Love (The River Song) .................................................................................................................................. 37

  Sink Me ............................................................................................................................................................... 45

**Chapter 5: Findings** .......................................................................................................................................... 52

  Themes and Patterns and Finished Work ........................................................................................................... 52

    Creative Trigger and Creative Intent .................................................................................................................. 53

    Creative Choice .................................................................................................................................................. 55

  Comparing Mystery Songs and Everyday Practice ........................................................................................... 56

  Creative Outcome ................................................................................................................................................ 59

**Chapter 6: Conclusion** ...................................................................................................................................... 63

**Appendix A** ..................................................................................................................................................... 67

  Reflection and Transcription: Who Knows You Better ...................................................................................... 67
Appendix B ........................................................................................................................................... 75
Reflection and Transcription: Hey Love (The River Song) ......................................................... 75

Appendix C ........................................................................................................................................... 81
Reflection and Transcription: Sink Me......................................................................................... 81

Appendix D ........................................................................................................................................... 89
Analytical Framework in Detail................................................................................................. 89
Lyrics ............................................................................................................................................... 89
Harmony ......................................................................................................................................... 90
Melody ........................................................................................................................................... 92

Appendix E ........................................................................................................................................... 94
Written Permission from EMI Music Publishing Australia .................................................. 94

References .......................................................................................................................................... 95
List of Figures

Figure 1. Excerpt 1 from “Who Knows You Better” ......................................................29
Figure 2. Excerpt 2 from “Who Knows You Better” ......................................................30
Figure 3. Excerpt 3 from “Who Knows You Better” ......................................................32
Figure 4. Excerpt 4 from “Who Knows You Better” ......................................................32
Figure 5. Excerpt 5 from “Who Knows You Better” ......................................................34
Figure 6. Excerpt 6 from “Who Knows You Better” ......................................................35
Figure 7. Excerpt 7 from “Who Knows You Better” ......................................................36
Figure 8. Excerpt 8 from “Who Knows You Better” ......................................................37
Figure 9. Excerpt 1 from “Hey Love (The River Song)” .................................................39
Figure 10. Excerpt 2 from “Hey Love (The River Song)” ..............................................40
Figure 11. Excerpt 3 from “Hey Love (The River Song)” ..............................................41
Figure 12. Excerpt 4 from “Hey Love (The River Song)” ..............................................42
Figure 13. Excerpt 5 from “Hey Love (The River Song)” ..............................................43
Figure 14. Excerpt 6 from “Hey Love (The River Song)” ..............................................44
Figure 15. Excerpt 7 from “Hey Love (The River Song)” ..............................................45
Figure 16. Excerpt 1 from “Sink Me” ............................................................................47
Figure 17. Excerpt 2 from “Sink Me” ............................................................................48
Figure 18. Excerpt 3 from “Sink Me” ............................................................................49
Figure 19. Excerpt 4 from “Sink Me” ............................................................................50
Figure 20. Excerpt 5 from “Sink Me” ............................................................................51
Chapter 1: Introduction

As a professional songwriter I’m called to write a significant number of songs each and every year. My publisher will often set up co-writing sessions requiring me to write a song a day for weeks or even months at a time. I’ll also be asked to write specifically for another project and be given detailed stylistic parameters or at times even a predetermined topic. When collaborating with another recording artist, often the emotional content belongs solely to them and my role is to contribute only to the crafting of ideas. For me, this type of songwriting typically happens in the realm of conscious thought. I am given a specific task and I employ a deliberate set of actions to accomplish that task. Although unfair to discredit the value of this work, it is fair to say there is no mystery involved. I am simply the job of a professional songwriter. There is however another songwriting process that is completely different from what I have just described, where songs are born purely from inspiration. These are the songs that come without warning, songs that wake you in the middle of the night, or make you pull the car to the side of the highway in peak hour.

Leonard Cohen once said, “I don’t know where the good songs come from or else I’d go there more often” (as cited in Zollo, 2003, p. 345). This form of songwriting, at least in the initial stages of creation, often seems to happen unconsciously. “Usually I sit down and I go until I’m trying to think. As soon as I start thinking I quit”, says Neil Young when describing his relationship with songwriting (as cited in Zollo, 2003, p. 354). For me it’s almost as if my initial job is to merely catch these songs as they drift past, line by line, like catching butterflies in a net. Although elusive and unreliable, these are the songs that will most often communicate in a way I could never do in conversation, the songs that speak with an emotional voice that I struggle to find in my everyday life.

As a professional recording artist it is often difficult to draw a clear line of distinction between your life and your work, and even harder to expect that your audience will, or even
should be able to make the same distinction. I have found the more honest I can be in my songwriting and the more I can reveal of myself as a person, the deeper my audience is likely to connect to the music. When working in the conscious realm, in order to effectively communicate the things that make me laugh, cry, or fall in and out of love, I have to fearlessly allow those emotional triggers to drive my creative agenda and sway my creative decisions. So how does that process relate to the intuitive aspects of my creative process? Where do these so called mystery songs come from?

It is these questions that have inspired the topic of this investigation, “Creative trigger, creative intent and creative choice: an exploration of where songs come from”. In turn they have prompted the primary research question: what is the relationship between creative trigger, creative intent and creative choice with respect to my songwriting practice?

To add clarity to this primary question, let me further define the terms Creative Trigger, Creative Intent and Creative Choice as they relate directly to this study. Creative Trigger represents the people, places and circumstances that have inspired the creation of a particular work or works. Creative Intent encompasses my intentions and expectations for the work, including both personal and professional objectives, ranging from the romantic to the unapologetically commercial. Lastly, Creative Choice stands to define the actual musical and lyrical choices made in the writing process. Harmony, rhythm, rhyme, melody and the like all fall under the banner of Creative Choice.

On posing the primary question, a useful and necessary set of sub-questions were also identified as follows:

- What are the direct links, if any, between the triggers that spark this intuitive songwriting process, my creative intentions, and the actual musical and lyrical elements embodied in the corresponding works?
• How does this intuitive songwriting process compare to that of my everyday songwriting practice?

• How can a better understanding of my existing songwriting practice be applied to other aspects of my creative work?

The project will be presented in this single research paper, positioning my creative practice in a theoretical framework informed by a review of relevant literature, and the development of an appropriate methodology for analysis. Research will be undertaken in three parts. These three parts or phases can simply be defined as follows:

Phase 1 – Reflection and transcription. In this phase, three songs will be selected from my existing body of original work. Detailed transcriptions of these works will then be conducted along with autoethnographic reflections focused on the events surrounding the works as well as the actual process of composition. These reflections and transcriptions—situated in Appendix A, B and C—will serve as the primary source of data for the study.

Phase 2 – Analysis. This aims to critically examine the three selected original works with analysis seeking to locate aspects central to the creative process—creative trigger and creative intent—and discuss their relationship to the work itself.

Phase 3 – Application. At the heart of this project is a collection of songs exemplified in the included recorded work. It is therefore important that this work be viewed as an integral part of this Masters. By undertaking the recording and production of a full-length album of original music including the three songs chosen for analysis in Phase 1, this final phase aims to highlight how insights gained from the unpacking of my songwriting process relate more broadly to other aspects of my professional practice.

The findings of this investigation will be presented under the following sub-headings. Themes and Patterns and Finished Work will contain observations derived from an analysis
of the reflective data as well as looking at the analysis of the works themselves. *Comparing Mystery Songs and Everyday Practice* will take a broader look at how my intuitive creative process compares to that of my everyday songwriting practice. Lastly, *Creative Outcome* will discuss observations made throughout the recording and production phase of the project and how they relate to the research project at large.

Engaging with the recorded work in conjunction with reading the autoethnographic reflections in Appendix A, B and C will provide the necessary context for understanding this thesis as a whole, and is recommended before proceeding to the subsequent chapters.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review is to situate my project in the field of songwriting, creativity and practice based research, and to highlight how this project addresses a need for more focused investigations into the professional practice of songwriting.

I recently (2013) attended a seminar with Pat Pattison, a professor at the Berklee College of Music, where he teaches lyric writing and poetry. The seminar was focused on point of view, and Pat was using “Eleanor Rigby” (Lennon & McCartney, 1966) to highlight how writers might effectively use third person narrative in their lyric writing. When asked by one of his students if he really believed Paul McCartney thought about any of this when songwriting, Pat simply replied, “No, but you can”. Even in a classroom full of student songwriters it often amazes me how unwilling participants can be to embrace a more deliberate approach to their creative work.

Over the centuries, conceptions of creativity have veered between two broad ideas: Rationalism and Romanticism. Rationalism is the belief that creativity is generated by the conscious, deliberating, intelligent, rational mind; Romanticism is the belief that creativity bubbles up from an irrational unconscious, and that rational deliberation interferes with the creative process. (Sawyer, 2012, p. 23)

Throughout my career to date, this romantic notion of creativity is something that I have encountered from many of my peers, and is something that continues to be propagated by the media, and the music industry at large. In fact, I know many songwriters and musicians who still maintain the idea that by not knowing what chords they are playing on the guitar, or how the notes they’re singing relate to those chords, they are afforded some form of creative freedom. It is however relatively easy to dispute these romantic notions by simply
highlighting musical creativity’s dependence on a “shared system of creative conventions” (Sawyer, 2012, p. 248) and conceding that in order to create music, or in my case, songs, one must first adopt the conventions of the field (Sawyer, 2012). That in spite of the idea that we are creating something new and original, we are in fact operating inside a strict set of musical and linguistic absolutes.

So if we are to use a pre-determined set of tools to write songs, that is existing major and minor scales and related harmony, the English language and its associated conventions etc., does it not make sense to endeavour to try and understand the function of these tools, and how they might best serve our creative intentions? “You can’t talk at all unless you’ve learned a language” explains Sawyer (2012, p. 332), and even the most liberated jazz improvisers play within a musical tradition (Alperson, 1984; Berliner, 1994). Csikszentmihalyi (1996) suggests that an experienced writer will be able to analyse and edit almost in parallel with the unconscious inspiration. The same could also be said for playing or composing music. English sculptor and artist, Henry Morre, explains, “a point arrives where some idea becomes conscious and crystallizes, and then a control and ordering begins to take place” (1952/1985, p. 72).

It seems that in spite of the abundance of research being undertaken in this field, so many creative artists, myself included, still hold on, at least in part, to what is in scholarly circles an anachronistic view of creativity. As discussed in the introduction of this paper, my everyday creative practice is undoubtedly rational, deliberate, and conscious, however there are still aspects of my work, these mystery songs, that lend themselves to a more romantic view of creativity. *The Musical Brain* (Pochmursky, 2009) is a documentary featuring the work of former musician, record producer and now neuroscientist, Dr Daniel Levitin, looking at master-musician Sting to try to better understand the creative process. In the documentary, Sting makes no attempt to disguise his reservations saying:
I’m not even sure asking the question isn’t harmful...even looking at the process, investigating the process of music making which is joyful to me, I’m afraid, I suppose I’m afraid of looking at it too much in case I become unable to do it. (Chapter 8)

In spite of the subject’s reservations about viewing his creative practice through a highly scientific lens, it would certainly be fair to say that just by looking at Sting’s work, one could not deny it demonstrates a highly advanced understanding and application of songwriting craft and music theory.

If then creativity is reliant on a learned understanding and practiced application of relevant conventions—even in the fine arts there is a long standing practice of imitation as a means of cultural transmission (Delbanco, 2002; Gardner, 1973; Sawyer, 2012; Wicklund, 1989)—then much of what we do as so called creative practitioners will at least in part mirror that of existing work from other established artists. When presenting this new work to a public with honest insight into its origins, a public that has become fixed on originality as an ideal, are we, and our work, at risk of being measured as less than first rate (Delbanco, 2002)? This certainly offers one possible reason why such an out-dated, romantic notion of creativity is so prevalent in popular music culture, especially where it relates to the subject of songwriting.

It is relatively easy to locate published material on the subject of songwriting, however, the study of popular music, and more specifically songwriting, is still a relatively new field. The bulk of relevant material is in the form of interviews, autobiographies and memoirs compiled for commercial exploitation and as a result, the lack of scholarly rigour in these publications can present some obvious problems to the researcher. As Bennett (2013) suggests, in spite of the abundance of these resources, these publications come with their own set of limitations. Even though they quite commonly share questions about the practice of songwriting, the answers are often overly romanticised or unreliable. For example, a review
of resources such as Paul Zollo’s (2003) *Songwriters On Songwriting*, the recently published memoir from Australian singer/songwriter Paul Kelly (2010), or an array of other publications including Keith Richards’ *Life* (2010), Neil Young’s *Waging Heavy Peace* (2012) and Sting’s *Broken Music* (2003), revealed that all offered valuable insight into creativity in general, but lacked the level of detail required for a truly academic study.

Bennett (2013) further argues against the reliability of these published accounts as research data, based on the context in which these recollections are made, saying “the attendant romanticising of creativity makes a better press story than would be found in an exhaustively accurate description of how a song is actually created” (The Interview section, para. 10). This overt romanticism is evidenced in Jackson Browne’s response to a question about connecting with inspiration saying, “Sometimes, when it’s happening, it’s wild - it’s like riding a wave” and adding, “It’s like having your finger in a socket. There’s a current running through you. Great ideas occur to you and the last thing you want to do is sit down and shape it. You just want to ride” (as cited in Zollo, 2003, p. 406).

This project addresses some of the key concerns raised by Bennett (2013) by generating its own data through undertaking a self-reflective study of my own professional songwriting practice. By clearly outlining the intentions for the data from the outset, and by staying well clear of any commercial objectives that might adversely influence these recollections, this approach will ensure the suitability and reliability of the reflective data for the purpose of academic research.

An array of resources focused on music theory and songwriting craft were also consulted as part of this study. Dealing specifically with the theoretical construction of popular songs rather than the work of a particular commercially successfully songwriter and/or recording artist as found in the examples above, these publications proved to be instrumental in the overall project design and in developing a framework for analysis.
Pattison (1991a, 1991b, 2009) emphasises the intersection of lyrical elements including rhythm, rhyme and phrase length and how they can be utilised to support ideas and emotions. Perricone (2000) similarly looks at the interaction of melody and harmony and the exploitation of the related compositional variables to create prosody. Where these specific publications were intended to act as so-called “how to” books that a songwriter might employ to help support their creative intentions through the implementation of craft, it was the use of these resources in my day to day practice that prompted me to begin questioning my intuitive songwriting process in the first place. By using this theoretical understanding of songwriting craft as a framework for analysis, it is possible to understand how creative intentions and triggers might be reflected in a particular work, as well as being able to offer some insight into how my intuitive songwriting process compares to that of my everyday practice. The notion of supporting ideas through the appropriate application of songwriting craft could then also be extended to various other aspects of music making including performance and music production.

The research is positioned squarely within the field of practice-based research, “an original investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge partly by means of practice and the outcomes of that practice” (Candy, 2006, p. 3). The positioning of one’s self in one’s own research has often been charged with being excessively personal (Dumitrica, 2010), challenging its academic legitimacy (Sparkes 2000, 2002), though there is an increasingly clear case being made in Australia for the validity of practice-based research. Schippers (2007) simply states, “the desire to bring practice and research closer is evident in activities indicated by universities. In a 2004 survey of tertiary music education by the Australian Music Centre, 79% of universities indicated that they engaged in practice-based research” (p. 34).
In 2012, Australian composer and musician Dr Ralph Hultgren conducted an investigation into his own compositional practice attempting specifically to uncover what drives his desire to compose music. Hultgren contests the manifestation of self-indulgence in this style of research and underlines where value in self-investigation can be clearly found.

Investigating self can bring with it an awareness of why decisions are taken and allow for a thorough connection with the process and utilisation of a work from its conception, through to its delivery in performance. This awareness is not just useful in a personal sense; it may be useful for others who may come in contact with it.

(Hultgren, 2012, Self-indulgence or self-awareness section, para. 3)

In keeping with the recent trends surrounding the marriage of practice and research, like Hultgren (2012), this project seeks to increase my awareness and understanding of the creative process as a whole, by connecting the personal aspects of songwriting—Creative Triggers and Creative Intentions—to a more rigid theoretical understanding of music making. As a result, this project will serve as a useful resource for practitioners and researchers alike.
Chapter 3: Methodology

Focusing on the primary research question, and examining the relationship between Creative Trigger, Creative Intent and Creative Choice within this practice-based paradigm, this project utilizes a range of qualitative methods, including critical reflection, autoethnography, and textual analysis. This multi-faceted approach is intended to elicit a better understanding of the subject through combining an array of research methods.

Phase 1: Reflection and Transcription

In order to begin this initial phase of the project, I firstly needed to decide specifically which of my works to investigate. Already having an acute awareness of my day-to-day songwriting process, it would be important to focus here on unpacking the more intuitive aspects of my work. With this in mind, all selected works were to fall squarely into the mystery song category described above.

My initial intention was to take the broadest possible cross section of my professional work to date, including songs from my previously released albums, Real Street (Sholtez, 2006) and The Distance Between Two Truths (Sholtez, 2010), as well as songs earmarked for the production undertaken as part of this project. These works have been composed at various times over a ten-year period and represent very different stages in my personal, professional and stylistic development. The major hurdle raised by this initial thinking was the question of accuracy and potency of my recollection of events from five to ten years earlier. Even with an array of materials like commercially released recordings, demos, live performance recordings, drafts of lyrics, photographs, production notes and media interviews all serving as useful reflective prompts, there would still be many relevant details lost to time.

Taking the question of accuracy into account and considering its utmost importance to the success of this project, the selection of work to be investigated was instead limited to the
recordings produced during this study, with all works and the events surrounding the
conception of those works having taken place in the 12 to 24 months prior to the
commencement of this investigation. Giving further consideration to the limitations of this
study, this selection was further limited to three songs in total. In addition to the suitability of
these new works with respect to time frame, these works have not had a commercial airing at
the time of this investigation, and therefore are free from any bias based on the perceived
success of the work on a commercial level, as might be the case with earlier work.

Considering that this project is reliant on an unpacking of my own songwriting
practice, it seems appropriate that the first method of investigation and first key step of Phase
1 be critical reflection. These critical reflections on the chosen songs take the form of
allows researchers to dig deeply into their own experience, including the attendant emotions
in ways that may not be possible if they were being interviewed by someone else” (p. 7) and
that “the method not only enables researchers to access personally intimate data with ease but
also to reach readers with their vulnerable openness” (p. 7). Focusing on the events
surrounding the works as well as the actual process of composition, these reflections aim to
spotlight the triggers that have stimulated the creation of these works and the associated
personal and artistic intentions for the work. Simply put, these reflections seek to uncover the
who, what, when, where and why of the creation of each chosen work.

I see the use of autoethnography as a way to further merge my creative practice with
research. Like aspects of my songwriting practice, Ellis (2004) suggests, autoethnography
offers a method that enables the reader to inhabit the story. It should be suggestive and
engrossing for the reader, and employ writing conventions like scene, and plot development
(Ellis & Ellington, 2000). It is through the discovery of autoethnography as a method for
research that I have been able to shape this project and establish a tone of voice for the
project as a whole. Starting with these critical reflections, the resulting data, will be central to rest of this paper.

To complement the data collected through critical reflection, musical transcriptions of each of the chosen works will also be created in this phase. These transcriptions will stand as a formal exemplification of the creative choices made during the songwriting process, detailing the specific musical and lyrical elements embodied in the actual work itself. These data will be presented in full in the appendices of this thesis.

**Phase 2: Analysis**

This section of the thesis will critically examine the three selected original works. Undertaken on a song-by-song basis, analysis will seek to locate aspects central to the creative process—creative trigger and creative intent—and discuss their relationship to the work itself. Drawing on the autoethnographic reflections and detailed transcriptions of each work, specific triggers and intentions for each of the chosen works will be identified from within the reflections using a number of Chang’s (2008) suggested strategies for data analysis, including recognising exceptional occurrences; analysing inclusions and omissions; and looking for recurring topics, themes and patterns (p. 131). In turn, by undertaking an analysis of the compositions themselves, this inquiry will endeavor to locate where those triggers and intentions are evident in the actual creative choices made during the writing process. The textual analysis will look not only at the words themselves, but the lyrical form and structure, melody and harmony, and the intersection of these elements.
Analytical framework. A framework for analysis has been designed to highlight how specific aspects of songwriting craft can be use to support the emotional intentions of the songwriter. In the context of this study, when dealing with aspects of musical analysis, I will be looking very specifically at the songs in question, independently of any sonic fingerprint that may come from the recording process. What I am interested in here is simply the lyrics, lyrical form and structure, and the melodic shape and underlying harmonic structure; these are the elements that might come into play if you were busking on a city street, attempting to perform these songs with a single guitar and voice for example.

To allow for comparisons to also be made between the intuitive creative process behind these mystery works and the everyday work that makes up the bulk of my professional songwriting practice, this analytical framework is derived directly from the theoretical concepts I use in my existing practices, including the work of Patison (2009), Perricone (2000) and Kachulis (2005) on lyrical form and structure, melodic structure and harmonic structure respectively. In spite of the inherent scope of this project making it impossible to also undertake a detailed analysis of any specific works stemming from a largely conscious creative practice, given that the design of this framework for analysis has been deliberately derived from my everyday application of the relevant theory, this methodology will still allow for broad stroke comparisons to be made between the intuitive and conscious aspects of my songwriting practice. An in-depth description of the analytical framework—looking specifically at Lyrics, Harmony and Melody—can be found in Appendix D.

Phase 3: Application

In addition to the more formal written aspects, a significant creative output also forms part of this project. Phase 3 will see the completion of the recording and production of a full-length album. The album will include 11 original works, including the three songs chosen for
analysis in Phase 1, with all aspects of production having been undertaken over the course of my HDR candidature, and in response to the larger research objectives. This final phase will highlight how insights gained from the unpacking of my songwriting process relate more broadly to other aspects of my professional practice. This work will stand as an exemplar for my professional practice as a whole, tying the many aspects of my creative process together.

This methodology seeks to offer a variety of valuable perspectives on the songwriting process, both intuitive and conscious, as well as unpacking various other aspects of professional practice, which are all intended to facilitate a range valuable discussions later in the project.
Chapter 4: Analysis

Critically examining three original works including “Who Knows You Better”, “Sink Me” and “Hey Love (The River Song)”, with all songs falling squarely into the mystery song category—born out of my intuitive songwriting practice—the analysis in this chapter will look firstly at the reflective data discussing evidence of creative trigger and creative intent, and then will seek to locate these creative triggers and creative intentions in the finished works through the process of textual analysis, discussing their relationship to the actual work itself. The analysis will be presented on a song-by-song basis, followed by a discussion in the next chapter of the findings looking more broadly at the analysis as a whole.

Who Knows You Better

“Who Knows You Better”, written in January 2012, is the first of the three works to be investigated as part of this study. In order to explore the relationship of creative trigger and creative intention to the creative choices made in the construction of the work itself, we first need to explore the data captured in the autoethnographic narratives to clearly identify what these triggers and intentions might be. As discussed previously Creative Trigger represents the people, places and circumstances that have inspired the creation of a particular work or works and Creative Intent encompasses my intentions and expectations for the work, including both personal and professional objectives, while Creative Choice stands to define the actual musical and lyrical choices made in the writing process.

Looking now at excerpts from my reflection on the genesis of this work there are several things that stand out as clear triggers. The following examples show my obvious connection to the idea of distance and time, and set up the notion of the characters of Melita and me being intrinsically linked to the concept of home and away: “In a couple of days I will be en route to Los Angeles … it’s going to be nearly 6 months before I see my partner
Melita again” and “The idea of being away is one thing, but to be the one at home is another entirely… I am not the one that will be living in ‘our’ house, full of ‘my’ ghosts” (See Appendix A).

As one reads further into these reflections, specific dialogue with Melita emerges: “Maybe we should just break up… That way you don’t have to worry about me”, prompting the emergence of intent for this work evidenced in my response, “Don’t even think like that. We’re gonna be fine” and “it’s not forever”, leading to the thought, “I just need to keep reassuring her… there is no distance that can’t be bridged” (See Appendix A). From there we see the materialization of the most obvious trigger of all in my statement, “We’re going to be fine… I know you’re gonna be fine, and who knows you better than I know you?” (see Appendix A). In this final statement, actual conversation is evident that ultimately forms the fabric of a lyrical idea, and in this particular case is represented in the title of the finished song.

After looking in detail at this reflective data it is easy to chart the overall inspiration for this work and more importantly identify very specific triggers and intentions, but how are these creative triggers and intentions reflected in the actual song? Initially I began to look at various elements of the finished work in isolation, for example looking at the lyrics as they stand without music, or looking at melody independently of harmony, but found that it was equally important to explore the intersection of these elements, and how trigger and intent might be embedded into this work at those intersections.

Again taking cue from the autoethnographic reflection, “As soon as I have the guitar in tune, I fall immediately into a familiar picking pattern, and… a simple chord progression finds its way under my hands” (see Appendix A), this phase of the investigation will commence at the first creative choice made: the harmonic sequence that underpins the majority of this work.
Harmonic analysis is subjective and different analyses are not uncommon (de Clerq & Temperley, 2011). “Who Knows You Better” was conceived as being in the key of G major and so I will proceed with the analysis in this key, although arguably, due in part to the absence of F# or F natural in the melody, an analysis in the key of C major might have also been feasible in this instance.

Starting with the subdominant IV chord, these chords move step-by-step back to the tonic, back home (as illustrated in Figure 1). As Kachulis (2005) suggests, the tonic chord evokes a feeling of being at “home” (p. 34). All other chords, in varying degrees, can be thought of as “away from home” (p. 141). So by applying this contemporary understanding of western tonal harmony, coupled with the earlier notion of two characters being intrinsically linked to the concept of home and away, from the very outset in this example, the tonic and subdominant chords have been assigned specific character identities that serve to me the songwriter an actual narrative function. Now simply by using these chords in sequence, the harmonic motion alone can begin to tell this story. For example, the simple introduction of a stepwise root motion from IV to I can be seen to imply other details set out in this narrative like, “there is no distance that can’t be bridged” (see Appendix A) solely by the way these passing chords connect the IV to the I.

Moving now into Verse 1 (as illustrated in Figure 2), like the chords, the opening lyrical statement, “If my watch says it's 10, well I guess it’s 3 am where you are” (see
Appendix A) can be seen to mirror the established harmonic movement from away to home. Furthermore, like the reflection suggests, the subsequent lyrics “zoom in closer and closer” with each new line, until she’s “drawing me in too” (see Appendix A). Note also how the final melodic phrase in this verse steps its way back down to the tonic, back home, and so on reaching the chorus, and the question of “who knows you better than I know you”, it seems clear that there can be no one else. The use of direct address in the lyric further adds to the sense of intimacy (Pattison, 2009), again enhancing the connection between these two characters.

Figure 2. Excerpt 2 from “Who Knows You Better”
Looking at the lyrical form and structure in this first verse, every second phrase is notably longer than its preceding line, creating spotlights for the ideas “where you are”, “by heart”, and “drawing me in too”, stopping motion in the narrative just for a moment, with each arrival of the tonic chord (Pattison, 2009). The spotlighting of specific ideas from the application of uneven line length in combination with their strategic pairing with the arrival of the tonic chord also point to the consistency of movement from away to home, from uncertainty to balance, to a place where only these two characters exist.

As we move now from Verse 1 into the Chorus, this certainty is even further amplified by the rapid acceleration of the chord movement, chords changing every two beats instead of every two bars, and the 2/4 bar in 4/4 time, giving the impression that the harmonic return to the tonic has arrived 2 beats early (Kachulis, 2005). Like a game show contestant buzzing in to answer before the host has finished asking the question, the tonic chord chimes in to say, nobody knows you better than I know you. The perfect rhyme, “too” and “you” in the last line of the verse and the first of the chorus (Pattison, 2009) also adds weight to this feeling.

If it was my intention to write a song that would reinforce the certainty of my feelings for Melita, these intentions seem already to be very firmly embedded into the work itself, even at this early stage.

It is worth noting here that unlike the full transcription (see Appendix A) the first appearance of the chorus was originally only four bars in duration with a single lyrical phrase (as illustrated in Figure 3). However, after taking into account certain commercial expectations for the song, most notably the idea that a more typical form with a consistent and repeated chorus structure might increase the song’s potential as a radio single, it was eventually augmented to mirror the longer second chorus as per the full transcription (see
Appendix A). Interestingly, this is the only instance where commercial intentions can be seen to have influenced the work in any quantifiable way.

Figure 3. Excerpt 3 from “Who Knows You Better”

Verse 2 shares many of the same lyrical, harmonic and melodic devices seen in Verse 1, however there is evidence of a subtle but definite shift in feeling present in these new lyrics (as illustrated in Figure 4).

Figure 4. Excerpt 4 from “Who Knows You Better”

The lyrics here begin to suggest an awareness of the consequences of time and distance on a relationship, diminishing some of the preceding certainty. If I love this woman, then so might others, and with me gone, what then? So now with the re-asking of the question
“who knows you better” in the repeat of the chorus, the answer may have somewhat changed. Or at the very least, is there an emergence of doubt?

Although the first line of this second chorus is again set up by the perfect rhyme in the last line of the preceding verse, “to” and “you”, on closer analysis, unlike Chorus 1, the effect of this rhyme relationship is diminished by the presence of rhymes, “new” and “fool” in the anterior verse lines, giving the last line of the verse a stronger feeling of resolution than was present at the end of Verse 1. As a result this creates a slight sense of discontent between the verse and the chorus (Pattison, 2009) compared to earlier. Now who knows you better than I know you? Could it be one of these new fools?

Looking now at Chorus 2, as it was originally positioned in the work as a whole—the first instance of the three line chorus—analysis reveals, by its simple use of an uneven number of lines, the lyrical form adds to the feeling of imbalance and uncertainty set up in the lyrics of Verse 2 (Pattison, 2009) as illustrated in Figure 4. With the same question being asked here in each of the three lines, it is interesting to also note that with each re-asking, the phrases are shortened slightly until the “I” present in the lyrics of the first two phrases, “Who knows you better than I know you” and “Who knows you better than I do” is lost in the third and final phrase, “Who knows you better”. It could be argued that the disappearance of “I” by the third asking of the question acts as a subtle reminder that with time, my place in this relationship is not guaranteed.
Like the uneven number of lines, the inconsistency in the number of bars in each harmonic phrase continues to disrupt the stability in the chorus with a four bar harmonic phrase followed by a three bar phrase and lastly a six bar phrase. The chords underpinning the second lyrical phrase build on this again, specifically holding the ii (two) chord, Am, for two whole bars instead of resolving back to the tonic after only two beats as set up in the previous progression (Kachulis, 2005). The melodic movement even further supports this instability with the last note of phrase two resisting an expected resolution back to the tonic in favor of less stable tones (Perricone, 2000).

From Chorus 2 the song moves into an instrumental break, further developing the idea of home and away at the mercy of distance and time. We now see the absence of any passing chords joining our two characters. Instead this section starkly contrasts the I and IV, home and away, Melita and me, with four bars of each chord repeated (as illustrated in Figure 6).
Looking back at my reflection it is interesting to see this reconnection to my initial trigger with, “I haven’t heard from Melita in a while. Putting the guitar down, I head out to check in”, and in turn this reconnection inspiring the bridge and final chorus (see Appendix A).

In the bridge (as illustrated in Figure 7) we see the addition of three simple lyrical phrases, and in keeping with the way the lens broadened from verse one to verse two, the view is again widening here to further examine the inevitability of distance and time. The uneven number of lines in this bridge section again adds to the feeling of imbalance and uncertainty (Pattison, 2009). This is accompanied by the introduction of the dominant chord ending each of the three harmonic phrases. The dominant chord, or V chord, is the most unresolved (Kachulis, 2005, p. 35) and is used here to end each of the three harmonic phrases, suggesting an even greater separation between characters.
Largely coloured by the bridge we move into the third and final chorus. This is in essence a repeat of Chorus 2, but with some alterations (as illustrated in Figure 8). First we see the omission of the return to the tonic in the third phrase, replaced instead by four bars of the ii chord. The ii chord functions here as a musical answer to the question “Who knows you better” with the unresolved nature of this harmonic phrase suggesting uncertainty. This effect is amplified further by the melodic phrase supporting this lyrical question ending here on the second degree of the scale, a fundamentally unstable tone (Perricone, 2000).
Chorus 3 ends with the addition of a fourth and final phrase, a repeat of the original one line chorus. This fourth line, as suggested by Pattison (2009), makes this final chorus more stable than the earlier three-line version. The return of the word “I” in the final lyrical phrase brings my character firmly back into the picture, coupled with the melodic and harmonic resolution back to the tonic all serving to again remind the listener of the certainty of that original communication. As a result, one might argue that by highlighting the imaginable risks of distance and time on this relationship, as underscored by creative choices present in the body of this work, the work itself might suggest empathy from my character to Melita’s, promote precautionary measures that will lead to a successful outcome, and ultimately prove that “there is no distance that can’t be bridged” as stated in my autoethnographic reflection (see Appendix A).

Hey Love (The River Song)

Written in January 2011 in response to the devastating floods in Brisbane and the surrounding region, “Hey Love (The River Song)” is the second work to be examined as part
of this research project. Before beginning to discuss the work itself, let us again review the autoethnographic data (see Appendix B) in search of Creative Trigger and Creative Intent. Like in “Who Knows You Better”, this reflection also looks quite specifically at the workings of a relationship, but in the case of “Hey Love (The River Song)”, it is the romance that exists between a city and its river that is at the centre of this example. As the introduction to this narrative unfolds, with the city responding to the increasing reality of the coming flood, there is an obvious transition in the way the river is portrayed. From the opening statement of, “Brisbane has always been one of those great river cities”, to “we not only rely upon our river, we love her” and eventually, “our beloved river is now swollen and angry” (see Appendix B) we see the importance of the changing nature of that relationship as a key creative trigger in this work.

The narrative also focuses on a more personal observation of the situation and comments on several key stimuli like, “I am, for now, fixed on the TV. The same bad news is on every channel” and “with the modern world temporarily on hold… it feels a lot like an earlier time, and Brisbane has seemingly adopted a kind of village mentality” (see Appendix B). It’s the emergence of this idea of a “village mentality” that we see triggering thoughts of old movies depicting a time long past, where one might expect to hear “the dull roar of a sea shanty coming from the village tavern, as the fisherman and the town’s folk await the inevitable” (see Appendix B). From these images come thoughts about songs and more specifically the intention to uncover “what our song might be like; a tale of love, loss, betrayal, tested faith, and the shifting measure of luck” (see Appendix B), to write our own sea shanty if you will.

Evidence of the influence of this imagery and the emerging intentions for this work can be found in the work itself from the very outset. The first chords we hear, gently strummed in 6/8 time, mimic the rolling of a boat on the water, with the simplistic rhythm
and harmony creating a mood already somewhat like a sea shanty (as illustrated in Figure 9). This overall feeling is consistent throughout the work and as we will see later in the analysis, this initial instrumental introduction will eventually become the basis for the song’s all important chorus sections firmly embedding my intention for the work into its rhythmic and harmonic fabric.

![Figure 9. Excerpt 1 from “Hey Love (The River Song)”](image)

Moving into Verse 1 and the first entry of the vocal line, it is in the lyric and the lyrical form and structure that very specific evidence of the creative triggers identified earlier can be seen in the work (as illustrated in Figure 10). Both the narrator and audience are absent from the observations made in the lyrics in this verse signifying the use of third person narrative. Pattison (2009) suggests that if we “think in terms of film”, third person narrative “is the long-distance view” (p. 112).

In the words themselves “silent and heavy, the river she turns”, we see the personification of the river and its romantic relationship to the city with “turns through a city that loves her” as described in the narrative reflection (see Appendix B). This intimacy is then offset by the wide-angle lens of the verse’s use of third person narrative, which works effectively here to set up the scale of this unusual scene.
Figure 10. Excerpt 2 from “Hey Love (The River Song)”

The lyrical structure of this opening verse with its even number of lines suggest balance and believability, a telling of the facts (Pattison, 2009), however a closer look at the lyrics in this opening verse reveals an XAAA rhyme scheme which in spite of its even number of lines implies a hint of instability or imbalance. “What creates the instability…is the odd number of A’s. There’s a mismatch between the number of lines, and the number of matched elements” (Pattison, 2009 p. 208). This instability is further supported by the use of additive and subtractive rhyme types in the absence of a more stable perfect rhyme (Pattison, 2009). The harmonic structure in this example adds again to the suggested imbalance with the final harmonic phrase left unresolved (Kachulis, 2005), breaking the expected pattern of the first three phrases which all resolve back to the tonic (as illustrated in Figure 10). The presence of these structural elements and their inference that everything is not perfectly in place runs parallel to the story as told in the autoethnographic reflection. After all, the nature of the relationship between river and city is about to change quite dramatically (see Appendix B).

Like in the narrative reflection, which presented both a personal perspective and a broad detached view, as the song moves now from verse to chorus we see this change in perspective mirrored in the lyrics. The wide angle of third person narrative is replaced by the more intimate and personal direct address (Pattison, 2009), as the lyrics in Chorus 1 deal with
the reality of the coming flood and how it might effect me personally (as illustrated in Figure 11).

![Chorus 1](image)

Figure 11. Excerpt 3 from “Hey Love (The River Song)”

Looking again at number of lines, and rhyme scheme in Chorus 1, it is valuable to see the lyrics on the page.

*Hey love, where will I be*

*When all of this water flows out to the sea*

Even though the words themselves and the fact that they are asking a question suggest uncertainty, the even number of lines, AA rhyme scheme, and the use of perfect rhyme between “be” and “sea” all support the idea of balance and resolution (Pattison, 2009). This is also evident in the harmony with its resolution back to the tonic (Kachulis, 2005) and again in the melody, utilizing the harmonic minor scale, with the final melodic phrase moving entirely in conjunct motion from the 7th degree of the scale, all the way back down to the tonic (Perricone, 2000).

Verse 2 deals again with the relationship of the city and the river, this time with the lyrics set in second-person narrative. “Second-person narrative actively forces us to say, ‘this character could easily be me’” (Pattison, 2009 p. 136), a contrast to the wide angle of third-person narrative used in Verse 1, and as a result the betrayal we see here in the words “when
you think you can trust her she changes her mind” (as illustrated in Figure 12) feels very personal.

Figure 12. Excerpt 4 from “Hey Love (The River Song)”

In the lyrical structure of Verse 2 we again see an even number of lines suggesting balance and believability, but Verse 1’s less stable XAAA rhyme scheme has been replaced here with a more stable ABAB. The increased resolution we get from this new rhyme scheme works to support the believability and the mater-of-factness of the words themselves.

Now as the song moves back into the chorus (as seen in Figure 13), there is the addition of two new lines of lyric, and a slight alteration in the final melodic phrase, defiantly ending on the 2nd degree of the scale, signalling also for the harmony to forgo its expected resolution back to the Em in lieu of a momentary pause on the B7, supporting the words “pray that the river comes down”, and setting up the bridge. This newly introduced melodic and harmonic tension is further supported by the absence of the perfect rhyme seen in lines one and two, replaced now with the subtractive rhyme of “ground” and “down” (Kachulis, 2005; Perricone, 2000; Pattison, 2009).

More evidence of the embedding of Creative Trigger and Creative Intent in this work, taken from the first paragraph of my narrative reflection, “if you are lucky enough to live on its banks, or even catch a glimpse from your window, it may even serve as a measure of prosperity” and the later thoughts surrounding “the shifting measure of luck” (see Appendix
B), can be clearly seen in these new chorus lines with the words, “measure my luck by the height of my ground”.

Figure 13. Excerpt 5 from “Hey Love (The River Song)”

At this point in the work, the “coming up for air” moment in my reflection highlights a reconnection to the creative trigger with, “I expect it wont be long until the gravity of this song pulls me back under, but for now the silence and the wait seems fitting. For an instant I’m back in the reality and the inevitability of this coming flood” (see Appendix B), with the resulting bridge section (as seen in Figure 14) directly reflecting the feelings outlined in the autoethnographic data, “Will the tide be as high as predicted? Will this rain ever stop?” (see Appendix B).
Looking at the entire song so far there have been only short moments of rest between lyrical phrases, where in the bridge the first two phrases are each answered with two entire bars of rest. “Pray for a break in the weather” and wait. “Pray for a merciful tide” and wait. “The levee is not gonna hold if the water continues to rise” and now moving into a four bar instrumental section again we wait as the arrangement steps its way through the chords of the chorus highlighting further the growing anticipation. Note also the melodic shape of the final phrase of the bridge as it slowly climbs to the 5th degree of the scale, with the harmony following suite, hanging on the dominant chord in the final bar, its complete lack of resolution adding even more to the tension (Kachulis, 2005).
Figure 15. Excerpt 7 from “Hey Love (The River Song)”

The third and final chorus is a repeat of Chorus 2 with lyrical, melodic and harmonic variations appearing in the final phrase (as seen in Figure 15). The line “pray that the river comes down” has been replaced with “pray that the missing are found”, a reminder of the tragedy of this event. Of further interest here is the melody and harmony, with the harmonic and melodic resolution back to the tonic arriving half a bar earlier than expected, as set up in bar 28. This appears to ultimately reaffirm the inevitability of the coming flood and serve to remind the listener that time is fast running out (Kachulis, 2005; Perricone, 2000; Pattison, 2009).

Sink Me

“Sink Me” was written over two days in late 2011 and is the third and final work to undergo investigation as part of this project. With each of the preceding works having been written in one short sitting, a review of the data surrounding the invention of this particular work reveals some interesting differences with respect to Creative Trigger and Creative Intent. Most notably, what can be identified in the data as the initial trigger and intention for the work has, by day two, become marginalized by the emergence of something bigger,
making this example unique in comparison to “Who Knows You Better” and “Hey Love (The River Song)” (see Appendix C).

Stemming from the interruption of a phone call and my statement, “I am going to write the greatest sync-able song ever written, and it shall be called, ‘Sync Me’” (see Appendix C), it would be reasonable to suggest that the initial trigger and intention for this work were rather trivial in nature, with the work initially designed to simply “lighten the heavy mood of a stalled collaboration” (see Appendix C). However on day two, after a reconnection with the initial work, it is the work itself that has become the Creative Trigger, stimulating its development into something more significant.

With respect to the initial song idea, the reflective data detail the moment of reconnection, and highlight how specific elements found in these opening lyrics like “If I sail my ship” and “If I stay with you” work to portray the “archetypal damned if you do and damned if you don’t picture” (see Appendix C). In turn, this picture prompts comparisons between the lyrical scene setting and “my own life as a musician” leading to the established intent to “tackle this idea” in song (see Appendix C). The continued use of this comparative lens serves as a key creative trigger for the rest of the work.

Further to the triggers and intentions discussed above, the suggestion of environment being key in triggering creativity is also evident throughout the reflective data surrounding this work, as suggested in my statement, “I love the idea that the objects we share space with and the view from our window play a huge part in our creative output” (see Appendix C). This concept is touched on again later in the reflection with the writing of verse three, inspired by the old leather books filled will tales of the ocean. “Sitting on top of the bookshelf not more than a metre from the piano, bound in weathered brown leather and at least a hundred years old, is a pair of books entitled, ‘The Story of the Sea’” (see Appendix C).
Looking now at the work itself, starting with the opening two verses, the initial intention of humour and the “sync me” trigger that stemmed from the incoming phone call can be seen in the repeated lyrical refrain of both verses and title of the work *Sink Me* (as seen in Figure 16).

![Fig 16](image_url)  
**Figure 16. Excerpt 1 from “Sink Me”**

Looking individually at these first two verses, with their balanced structures, matched pairs of repeated lines supported by the repeated harmonic resolution back to the tonic (Pattison, 2009; Kachulis, 2005), everything is working to fortify the certainty of these two independent lyrical statements, “If I sail this ship… it’s gonna sink me” and “if I stay with you… it’s gonna sink me”. But when viewed together, these two rather matter of fact lyrical statements raise the question, if I’m doomed either way, how do I choose, somewhat overshadowing any structural balance (Perricone, 2000). The inspiration for the rest of the work emerges from the realization that these verses speak directly to my own personal situation, as seen on day two of the writing process (see Appendix C). Thoughts surrounding “my impending trip away, another expedition back to the USA” (see Appendix C) are immediately reflected in the subsequent creative choices, specifically in the lyrics of the B
section with the repeated line, “forgive me for me restless soul”, the melodic phrases descending, with the first phrase ending on the 5th degree of the scale, the second most stable tone in the scale (Perricone, 2000) and then to a full resolution to the tonic, signifying an acceptance of fate; “the life of a fisherman” or in my personal case, “the life of a traveling musician” (see Appendix C). The same melodic motion is mirrored in the harmony here with the root movement descending in step-wise motion from D7 back down to the Am (as seen in Figure 17).

Figure 17. Excerpt 2 from “Sink Me”

Interestingly, in addition to the final melodic phrase of the B section, three out of every four melodic phrases of my original two verses all resolve back to the tonic. This for me seems to mirror the song’s narrative as it attempts to express an acceptance of this life, and an acceptance of the fact that some things simply cannot be changed. In spite of the risks, the fisherman, or the musician, still has to go, and the on-going struggle for balance is simply a part of that life.

The autoethnographic reflection (see Appendix C) demonstrates the use of the comparative lens identifying further parallels between the fictitious scene set in verses one and two, and in my own life, this time centred on the idea of superstition. These ritual
precautionary measures are reflected in the lyrics of this new verse in the form of a simple list (as seen in Figure 18).

Figure 18. Excerpt 3 from “Sink Me”

Still utilizing the same 12 bar form of the earlier two verses, this new verse nearly doubles the previous word count, with these extended lyrical phrases adding a sense of acceleration in the story at this point of the song, mirroring the accelerated bustle of the shipyard in preparation for a voyage and increasing the listeners’ sense of anxiety, hence the need for these nonsensical superstitious precautions we see present in the lyrics. The final statement in the lyric of this verse leads directly into another 12 bar verse, this time played instrumentally (as seen in Figure 19), adding further weight to the feeling that nothing more can be done to alter the outcome, that “the rest will not be up to us” (see Appendix C).
From the instrumental, the song moves into a repeat of the B section followed by a fourth and final verse, this time with the addition of one extra lyrical phrase (as seen in Figure 20). These concluding lyrics, a return to the ideas outlined in the original two verses, restate the narrative’s central predicament, with the balance of the matched final two lines and the repeating harmonic and melodic resolution back to the tonic all working to support its inevitability, while in contrast, the now uneven total number of lines and opposing viewpoints in the lyric are working against that balance, heightening the sense of risks and supporting the question, if you’re damned if you do, and damned if you don’t, what do you choose (Pattison, 2009; Perricone, 2000; Kachulis, 2005)?
With each of the three chosen works unpacked here in detail it is important to look now at the analysis as a whole. The following chapter will present findings as they relate to specific research questions and to the broader topic of this investigation.
Chapter 5: Findings

In order to address some of the research questions posed by this project, this chapter will discuss observations derived from the analysis. Firstly it will present an overview of my observations from the study of the reflective data, highlighting some of the emerging themes and patterns with respect to Creative Trigger, Creative Intent and Creative Choice, and discuss the results of the musical analysis, focusing on how specific creative triggers and intentions relate to the actual finished work. In turn it will also offer an impression of how this intuitive songwriting process compares to my everyday songwriting practice. Lastly, by looking at the creative outcome of this project, it will aim to highlight how this increased understanding of my songwriting process translates to other key aspects of my creative practice.

Themes and Patterns and Finished Work

This initial section of the findings will address the question: what are the direct links, if any, between the triggers that spark this intuitive songwriting process, my creative intentions, and the actual musical and lyrical elements embodied in the corresponding works? It will look at themes and patterns emerging from the reflective data with respect to Creative Trigger and Creative Intent, and how these elements relate to the finished work and the creative choices made throughout the writing process.

By looking at the analysis of reflective data surrounding the three specific song examples, it is clear that in all three cases these mystery songs are the result of a complex intersection between all three creative elements, Creative Trigger, Creative Intent and Creative Choice. However, if we were to focus on each of the investigated examples separately, and each of the creative element individually, given that in each instance the actual triggers and intentions varied greatly from song to song, it would be easy to miss some
interesting and valuable observations. For that reason I have elected to address the findings of this analysis with a more holistic approach. Although the data as a whole arguably still shows a degree of randomness, by focusing on key aspects in the narrative data, analysis reveals the emergence of some obvious patterns.

**Creative trigger and creative intent.** It is quite apparent that all three songs investigated here have evolved as a direct response to a specific set of circumstances, but almost every day I encounter something or someone that could potentially inspire a song and yet does not, so for that reason alone, creative trigger is evidently not enough. In these examples, it would seem that a specific intention for the work must also be present, creating a bridge between creative trigger and creative choice. Data from these reflections suggest, regardless of the trigger, personal objectives for each of the works were established before any initial creative choices were made, even if on occasion they were to shift over the course of the creative process.

In “Who Knows You Better” for example, we can see these three factors playing out in order, trigger, intent, and choice, with the creative trigger quite obviously being my personal relationship and the tension and mixed emotions surrounding my going away, followed by very deliberate statements of creative intention like, “I just need to keep reassuring her” and “but it’ll be a song for her” (see Appendix A), long before any actual songwriting had begun.

“Hey Love (The River Song)” sees this pattern repeated again with this song triggered by initial observation of a city reacting to impending disaster, and the idea of the “village mentality” (see Appendix B) leading to thoughts of old movies and sea shanties. Out of these images emerge the intention to uncover “what our song might be like” (see Appendix B), with initial creative choices—harmony and rhythm—being made in direct response to that intention.
Highlighted again in day one of” Sink Me”, the initial trigger of the phone call is followed by the intention to relieve the pressure of a stalled collaboration and in turn followed by the creative choices made in the composition of the first two verses.

This initial pattern of trigger, intention and then choice was further reinforced by looking at obvious breaks in the flow of ideas during the writing process, where pauses in creative flow were typically overcome by a reconnection with the initial creative trigger(s) followed again by a clear affirmation of intent before the emergence any worthwhile lyrical or musical ideas. This scenario can be observed on day two of “Sink Me” with my reconnection to the initial rough recording, the establishment of a new intention, with day one’s objective to simply “lighten the heavy mood of a stalled collaboration” (see Appendix C) replaced by my target attempt to communicate the struggle to find a balance in my own life as a traveling musician, followed by my sitting at the piano to unravel the songs B section (see Appendix C).

Again in “Who Knows You Better” we see a pause in creative flow overcome by physically placing myself back in the room with Melita to check in with those original triggers and intentions, before making any further creative choices.

So with trigger and intent so visibly dependant on one another, how do they now relate to Creative Choice? How are these elements related to the actual creative work?
**Creative choice.** With respect to Creative Choice and its relationship to the finished work, as can be seen quite conclusively in the analysis of these three chosen songs, very specific musical and lyrical devices have been employed throughout the intuitive creative process that serve to embed the creative triggers and intentions into the actual musical text. Most obviously and expectedly we see these triggers and intentions evidenced in the meaning of words themselves, and in two out the three examples this extends to actual real world conversation being employed as a repeated lyrical refrain and in turn used in the actual song titles with “Sink Me” and “Who Knows You Better”.

Taking into account the way these works were composed, with largely no conscious thought given to the implementation of craft, it was surprising to see how significant a role the lyrical form and structure, and melodic and harmonic structure played in the embedding of these triggers and intentions. Analysis shows numerous instances in each song where these non-lyrical elements work in parallel with the narrative, as observed in the arrival of the first chorus of “Who Knows You Better”, with the acceleration of the harmonic movement, the introduction of the 2/4 bar in 4/4 time, and the perfect rhyme between “too” and “you” in the last line of the verse and first line of the chorus, all adding to the sense of certainty suggested by the words themselves.

It was also observed that at times the lyrical form and structure, and the melodic and harmonic structure provided a form of body language, adding additional context to the actual lyrics, and allowing for the song as a whole to communicate certain emotional complexities that would not be apparent from a simple reading of the lyrics. For example, in the opening verse of “Hey Love (The River Song)”, the words themselves offer little more than a descriptive scene setting; however a closer look at the lyrical structure reveals the use of an XAAA rhyme scheme, which implies instability with its disproportion of lines and matched elements (Pattison, 2009). The use of additive and subtractive rhyme types in the absence of a
more stable perfect rhyme further adds to the unstated instability (Pattison, 2009), and in this example, the harmonic structure further promotes imbalance with the final harmonic phrase of this verse left unresolved (Kachulis, 2005), breaking the expected pattern of the first three phrases where there was resolution back to the tonic.

To go a step further, analysis also revealed occasions where certain creative choices played an actual narrative function, reflecting aspects of creative trigger and creative intent, completely independent of any lyrics. In “Hey Love (The River Song)” this is evident in the underpinning rhythmic and harmonic structure as it mimics the rolling of a boat on water. With “Sink Me” the actual song form plays a part here, with an instrumental section following the lyric “the rest will not be up to us” and as a result suggesting that nothing more can be done to alter the outcome. Lastly, looking at the analysis of “Who Knows You Better”, we see the tonic and subdominant chords being assigned specific character identities, and by manipulation the relationship between these chords the harmonic structure alone begins to reflect aspects trigger and intent.

These examples alone clearly highlight the complexities in which Creative Choice is linked to trigger and intent. So now with an increased understanding of these creative building blocks, and of my intuitive creative process, it will be interesting to discuss how this compares to my day-to-day work as a professional songwriter.

**Comparing Mystery Songs and Everyday Practice**

As highlighted earlier in the methodology chapter of this paper, in spite of the established analytical framework being based around the theoretical concepts I employ in my existing practice, without undertaking a detailed analysis of specific songs derived from my conscious songwriting process, which the scope of this project simply cannot accommodate, it would be difficult to discuss any comparative observations between my intuitive and
conscious writing processes in too much detail. The analysis of my intuitive process has however been unpacked in more than enough detail to offer some extremely valuable observations about where it sits in relation to my everyday songwriting practice as a whole.

If I were to comment on aspects of this study where I observed any real difference between these two creative processes, it would primarily be in relation to trigger and intent. When thinking about my everyday songwriting practice, it would be fair to suggest that unlike the investigated mystery songs, which have their origins in creative trigger, more often than not, intention is the key jumping off point here—from the simple aim of writing a song in an allotted time, to the establishment of more elaborate stylistic or commercial intentions. Next, it would not be uncommon for creative choices to be made in response to those stylistic or commercial intentions in the form of a chord progression or melodic figure, and in some cases the beginnings of a lyric, even before the question of what am I going to write about—Creative Trigger—is even considered. From there however, like the above investigation, it would be fair to say once creative triggers and intentions are clearly defined, these elements are employed in similar ways regardless of which process we are describing.

Looking again at my definition of Creative Intent, and its inclusion of both personal and professional objectives for the work, it is also interesting to note that there initially appeared to be no obvious expectations for the finished mystery songs. In fact, even when written to communicate something seemingly very specific, the reflective data showed no immediate effort to connect the song with its intended audience. In the case of “Who Knows You Better” for example, this song existed in its entirety for almost a year before I ever played it for Melita, and by that time, I had already returned from my extended trip away.

With respect to my commercial intentions for a specific work, in my day-to-day work as a songwriter, often a session will start with a discussion of the intended commercial use for the work, be it a song for a television series, or a pitch for a popular recording artist, but
contrary to the bulk of my professional work, commercial intentions did not seem to play a part in the initial writing of these mystery songs and the creative choices made. It typically was not until commercial opportunities for a particular work emerged over time, as I began to consider performing the songs live, or began to prepare them for recording, that this newly imposed agenda had any real influence on the creative choices made, with all three of the examined examples undergoing some very minor changes to improve their suitability for performing and recording, even if it was as simple as a change of key.

In the introduction to this report, when making that very clear distinction between my work as a songwriter, and these so-called mystery songs, it is important to admit that I expected this part of the study would to some extent highlight how these mystery works differed in their actual construction to songs that had been quite obviously composed with much greater attention to detail and with a conscious application of theory and craft. With respect to Creative Choice, what I expected to find through this analysis was that in spite of my fascination with these mystery works, they were in fact naive in their structure when compared to my work at large. However, as I drew back the veil, and separated these mystery songs from the circumstances in which they evolved, the answer to the question of how this intuitive songwriting process compares to that of my everyday songwriting practice could only be that there appeared to be little difference. The tools and techniques that I have acquired over my many years as a professional songwriter, whether formally learned or simply developed through diligent practice and self-exploration, were being intuitively employed in support of my creative intentions in largely the same way as when I am working deliberately and methodically. My inspiration and intentions for a particular work, what ever they might be, are embedded into the work itself using the very same musical and lyrical devices.

In the documentary *Sound City*, songwriter and musician Trent Reznor says:
I remember when I was five I started taking classical [piano] lessons. I liked it. I thought I was good at it, and I knew in life I was suppose to make music… I practiced long and hard and studied and learned how to play an instrument that provided me a foundation where I can base everything I think in terms of where it sits on the piano… When writing music today rarely do I sit down and think, oh this should resolve to the suspended you know, I don’t think of that shit, but subconsciously I know I do. I like having that foundation in there. (Grohl, 2013)

It appears that like Reznor, the solid theoretical foundation that I have built throughout my many years of practice as a professional songwriter has become as much a part of my intuitive process as it is part of my conscious one. Bastick (1982) suggests intuition is a result of retrieving learned experience that one no longer recognises as learned, rejecting traditional ideas about intuition being linked to the metaphysical or mystical. This idea is supported further by McIntyre (2006) who states, “Creative ideas do not come out of nowhere. Creative ideas come from a deep well of experience and training in a specific area, whether it’s music, painting, business, or science” (p. 202).

Coming to better understand this relationship between the intuitive and conscious aspects of my songwriting process is for me one of the most significant and valuable outcomes of this project. As a result of these findings it has highlighted the value of both of these creative processes and has further fuelled my thirst for on-going creative development through a continued pursuit of conscious and deliberate learning.

Creative Outcome

As outlined at the beginning of this paper, the included recorded work, in addition to standing as a significant creative outcome in its own right, was intended to broaden the context to this inquiry. This production embodies numerous other important facets of my
professional practice in addition to the compositional aspects, making it a useful lens through which to address the final research question: how can a better understanding of my existing songwriting practice be applied to other aspects of my creative work?

It is interesting to see how insights gained from the unpacking of my songwriting process relate more broadly to other aspects of my professional practice. One thing that was evident almost from the conception of this project was a shift in the way I engaged with certain works in performance, both live and in the recording studio. Looking back now at the analysis of the reflective data, it is evident that my creative process is intrinsically linked to intention, with intent evolving out of a specific set of creative triggers or inspiration. These triggers and intentions are then embedded into the finished work through the appropriate application of craft.

Now in performance, the act of critically reflecting on the intention of a certain work in order to truly reconnect with the work emotionally had an immediate effect on my relationship to the material and to the outcome of those subsequent performances. When approaching a solo performance for example, live or recorded, in the same way that the creative choices made during composition were employed in support of those intentions, so too am I able to employ appropriate performance conventions to further support the work as a whole. As a result of this synchronous performance approach amplifying the songs’ actual intent, it feels at times the guitar playing and singing in this context are able go almost unnoticed by the listener, with the performance being instead focused more on the messages contained in the songs than merely a display of musicianship.

With respect to my work as a producer, these attempts to reconnect with the origins of a work, and to better understand my creative intentions, have informed the way I engage with arrangements and communicate my expectations to the musicians I am working with. By communicating my ideas on what the songs are about and the circumstances in which they
were written, the musicians have been much better equipped to appropriately support those intentions when performing in the studio. To put it simply, I have essentially tried to replace the question of what to play, with why. In the same way that the triggers and intention that inspired the songwriting were found embedded into the work through harmonic, melodic and lyrical choices, so too can they be reflected in the arrangement and performance choices made by this shift in communication style. For example, instead of stating that the rhythmic underpinning might need more continuity throughout the track and asking for the drummer or bass player to maintain a particular rhythmic figure, I might simply explain that this is a song about being caught in what feels like a never ending loop with no way of breaking away, so let’s try to think about how we can better support that feeling rhythmically.

This approach has been central to all the recording undertaken for this research project and has informed an array of creative choices made on this project’s journey to completion, from my selection of musicians that I felt would be most likely to respond openly to this style of direction, to conversations with the mixing and mastering engineers about tone shaping and the application of ambient effects and how those choices might best support my intention for the work.

Undertaking this production as part of the larger research project has most definitely helped me to connect my songwriting process much more strongly to other aspect of my professional work, especially in the area of performance. The act of doing has been key in embedding these ideas into my actual daily practice. As a result I feel this particular recording is by far the best reflection of my actual creative intentions to date. These benefits have also begun to positively inform my involvement in other creative projects, including my work as a non-played session musician, third party producer, and collaborative songwriter.

With the findings discussed above aimed at addressing each of the sub-questions posed at the beginning of the study—looking at the interplay between trigger, intent and choice, a
comparison of intuitive and conscious songwriting practice, and the effects of this study on other aspects of music practice—it will be interesting now to explore how these findings address the broader aims of this project.
Chapter 6: Conclusion

The title of this research project implies a desire to uncover where songs come from. Looking back, this was certainly an ambitious endeavour. One only needs to skim the pages of Rolling Stone Magazine to unearth countless explanations ranging from the bizarre to the divine. Neil Young suggests, “I can just only guess as to what is really going on there, I can’t tell you… so I’m not even going to bother to say because I have no idea” (as cited in Zollo, 2003, p. 355). Again Young’s viewpoint here highlights the concerns raised by Bennett (2013) over the need for more reliable and rigorous studies into the field of songwriting practice. By my own admission, the art of songwriting is not without mystery. In some respects, as a result of this research, I feel as though I have uncovered infinitely more questions than answers, questions that in the scope of this project would be impossible to even begin to address. In fact managing the scope of this project was one of the biggest challenges I faced, and to my own admission there were several areas of investigation that I would have liked to explore in significantly more detail if it were not for the limitations imposed by the inherent Master of Music structure.

As I move beyond this investigation and into the next phase of my professional and academic pursuits, I will undoubtedly continue to explore creativity, the complexities of the conscious and unconscious mind, and how they relate to the practice of songwriting and music in general. I am also keenly interested in further expanding my understanding of harmony and melody and the theory surrounding lyrical form and structure, and how those elements can be used both as a method for the development of new work and in the analysis of existing work. As a direct result of the findings of this project, continuing to investigate the parallels between conscious and intuitive songwriting will most certainly form a significant part of my on-going academic work. I am also expressly interested in how I might continue to add to the emerging field of songwriting research by applying some of the
methods employed in this study to the study of other songwriters and their practices, as well as looking in detail at the practice of collaborative songwriting.

As discussed earlier, often times, songwriters and musicians carry the belief that knowledge has the potential to hinder spontaneity and creativity, and are cautious about learning too much. For me, this project would surely indicate this is not something we ought to be concerned with. “Certainly in pop music and rock and roll, that’s not the problem” suggests Paul Simon. “The problem is people don’t know enough” (as cited in Zollo, 2003, p. 113).

As a direct result of undertaking this investigation, I have added greatly to my own understanding of songwriting practice in a variety of ways. From looking at the interplay between Creative Trigger and Creative Intent, I take with me a clearer understanding of how these elements inform my creative choices. For example, in all three works analysed, regardless of the trigger, no creative choices were made before creative intentions for each of the works were established. Reconnecting with those intentions was also key in overcoming breaks in creative flow. The way in which these Creative Triggers and Intentions were so deeply embedded in the work itself again highlighted how strongly these creative elements were linked. This was clearly evident not only in the meaning of words themselves, but in the numerous instances in each song where non-lyrical elements like form and structure, and melody and harmony worked in parallel with the narrative, offering a form of body language. At times creative choices were even assigned narrative function, reflecting aspects of creative trigger and creative intent, completely independent of any lyrics.

The benefits of understanding the relationship between creative elements also translated to other aspects of my professional practice. I found this to be true with respect to my work as a performer, with this investigation having an immediate effect on my relationship to the material and in turn the performance outcomes, this time with
musicanship giving way to an absolute focus on the central message of the song. My experiences in the studio were again similar, with the way I engaged with arrangements and communicated my expectations to the musicians all now linked back to the origins of a particular work, and to my initial creative intentions. By clearly defining my intentions, craft—be it conscious or intuitive—can be employed in absolute support of these ideas.

For me however, the most encouraging and by far the most significant outcome of this investigation is the idea that my intuitive practice is intrinsically linked to the conscious work I do on a day-to-day basis. In spite of my initial expectations that this study would reveal these intuitive works to be somewhat naive in their construction when compared to my work at large, analysis revealed little difference. The solid theoretical foundation that underpins my professional songwriting practice is as much a part of my intuitive process as it is of my conscious one. Through the continued pursuit of conscious and deliberate learning I can become more intuitive.

It could be argued that those illusive “catching butterflies” moments of intuitive songwriting come as reward for persistent hard work, and that the reason for the mystery is simply that unlike the conscious crafting of an idea, one needs to looks a little closer in order to see the sticky tape and glue that holds these mystery songs together.

So then, do songs simply come from hard work? After all, even when undeniably inspired, and with the clearest of intentions, the songs don’t write themselves. One still has to do the work. Talking about his own songwriting practice, Leonard Cohen states, “why shouldn’t my work be hard. Almost everybody’s work is hard” (as cited in Zollo, 2003, p. 332). It is certainly not my intention to suggest that this work is arduous. For me it is more about the challenge and the commitment to being a songwriter, commitment to consistent practice and a thirst to better understand the craft, so that I can endeavour to write better songs, songs that will hopefully be full of mystery and wonder for the listener.
“So that is the most powerful combination, when the craft contains so much commitment that it becomes art. When those two things come together - craft and art - that’s where the magic comes from” (Jackson Browne as cited in Zollo, 2003, p. 418).
Appendix A

Reflection and Transcription: Who Knows You Better

Neat little piles cover my studio floor. There’s a tangle of cables and foot pedals that I expect to need for gigs. A selection of tools, strings and gadgets sit on top of a heavily scarred, brown-fiberglass guitar case, punctuated with fragile stickers that have long given up trying to convince reckless baggage handlers to heed their warning. Next to the guitar is a small stack of books positioned with my laptop, and beside that, an international power adaptor sitting with headphones and travel pillow. Two pairs of jeans and two pairs of shorts make a pile, while t-shirts and socks make another. Old sheets are draped over the studio equipment to keep the dust off while I’m gone. This is my life in its simplest imaginable form, waiting to be packed into one empty suitcase.

In a couple of days I will be en route to Los Angeles. Although not uncommon, in fact this will be somewhere in the vicinity of my fifteenth trip to the USA in the last few years, this time I am planning to be there for the better part of a year and it’s going to be nearly 6 months before I see my partner Melita again.

Melita and I have been together now for just over 10 years and although this has been a difficult decision for us to make, we both agree that it’s something that I need to do. I have been presented with some fantastic opportunities to develop my songwriting craft in LA and so off I go to ‘live the rock-n-roll dream’, only in this dream I won’t get to have my cake and eat it too.

Over the last few days there has been an impressive display of ‘brave face’ on the part of Melita. I can’t help but think how unbelievably supportive she has been through this. The idea of being away is one thing, but to be the one at home is another entirely. Where I’m heading, there are no familiar hallways, no left hand turns into the lounge where I am
expecting to see her stretching on the couch or tinkering in the kitchen, and no other-side of
the bed that should be occupied. I am not the one that will be living in ‘our’ house, full of
‘my’ ghosts.

“Maybe we should just break up,” Melita says quite matter-of-factly. “Maybe it’d be
easier. That way you don’t have to worry about me.” I know she doesn’t mean it but I do
think I understand what she means. In a way she’s saying that she wants me to achieve my
dreams no matter what, and that she won’t stand between the music and me. “Don’t even
think like that. We’re gonna be fine.” I fire off in reply, “it’s not forever.” There is no
uncertainty in my mind about how I feel. She is the one constant in my vision of the future. I
just need to keep reassuring her that we are much bigger than six months away and there is
no distance that can’t be bridged. “We’re going to be fine,” I say as we share a quick hug,
adding. “I know you’re gonna be fine, and who knows you better than I know you?”

With that last sentence a light comes on in my head. Controlling the light switch is my
alter ego, the songwriter. He has heard the words “Who knows you better?” and followed
them into the rabbit hole. The last thing I should be doing with only a few days left at home is
chasing a song, but that argument is easily silenced by, “but it’ll be a song for her.”

With Melita now busily occupied at the other end of the house, I have found my way
back into the studio and have unpacked my guitar, a Collings 00, bought especially for the
recording of my last record. This has since become my “one” guitar, at least in times when I
find myself heading for the airport.

As soon as I have the guitar in tune, I fall immediately into a familiar picking pattern,
and as the situation with Melita continues to weigh heavy on my mind, wondering how we
are really going to deal with this separation, a simple chord progression finds its way under
my hands. Over the chords C, G/B, Am and G, I begin singing that one simple phrase, “who knows you better than I know you”, my chorus, and in no time I settle on a melody.

Now, putting this initial idea aside, my mind is simply floating away as my hands continue to circle through chords on the guitar. After some time ideas begin to form and I find myself thinking about an opening verse, looking at the details of our life together. Now the chords from the chorus, with the sequence unchanged, have at some point slowed down, moving now in quarter time, as if to offer an opportunity for these emerging verse lyrics to paint our world in slow motion.

The scribbles of images and ideas in my notebook are all beginning to fall into line now, with lyrics seeming to zoom in closer and closer with every new line, until finally I’m there with her and she’s “drawing me in too”. I quietly sing to myself the words:

*If my watch says it’s 10*
*Well I guess it’s three am where you are*
*You’ll lie sleeping on your side*
*I could almost trace the lines by heart*
*Hair a pretty mess*
*Your slow and steady breath, drawing me in too*

*Now who knows you better than I know you*

For a moment, the sound of Melita moving about the house steals my focus, but as I negotiate the shortcomings of my hurried handwriting and sing through my verse and chorus again, the world outside this room quickly falls away.

With the guitar now leaning precariously against the wall, I am focused on my notebook. For verse two, I’m looking for a slightly wider lens, forecasting a little further into
the future. The pile of winter clothes sitting by the open guitar case reminds me of how far away I’m going to be in just a matter of days. As we move into summer here, I will soon be confronted with a repeat of winter. Thinking about all the great summers Melita and I have shared I know I’m going to miss her, and all the weekend beach getaways. My mind is filled now with images of surf, sand and sunburned skin. I can almost smell the salty air and the coconut scented tanning lotion as lyrics are seemingly falling onto the page.

*Sunburned summer shoulders*

*You're careless, but I've told you that*

*Smiling like it's new*

*Attracting every fool, like you didn't mean to*

*Now who knows you better than I know you*

Now again with guitar in hand, as I play through the entire song so far, this second appearance of the chorus feels as though it could expand a little, making it feel like less of a refrain and more like an actual chorus. After a couple of improvised attempts two extra lines are added. From there a simple repeated two chord instrumental break seems to feel right, and as the chords ring I find myself thinking about what lies ahead.

Judging now by the depth of the string indents on my fingertips, I have been at this for longer than I realized. I haven’t heard from Melita in a while. Putting the guitar down, I head out to check in.

She is sitting quietly on the couch reading, looking up from her book for just long enough to offer a smile. That’s typically her signal to me that she knows I’m working. It’s also my cue to get back to work.
Where was I? Maybe I should catch some of this in my little recorder. It’s not often like me to not get at least a rough recording in my phone. Playing it all the way down to the break feels good to me and I immediately have ideas for a bridge. After a little trial and error I think I have it.

All I need now is a final chorus, but after simply repeating what I have in chorus two, I feel I want to augment the form again slightly. It needs to close with one last repeat of my original question “Who knows you better than I know you”.

With the guitar now back in its flight case, latches snapping closed one by one, I realize that this will be the last time in quite a while Melita will hear the sound of my music drifting down the hall and I feel heavy with sadness. As I wander in to the lounge where she was earlier I find her, perfectly in place, still reading. As I settle into the couch beside her she closes her book, and for the longest time we just sit, both saying nothing.
Who Knows You Better?

Mark Sholtez

\[ j = 96 \]

**Intro**

C G/B Am G

(Instrumental)

**Verse 1**

If my watch says it's ten, well I guess it's three a.m.

where you are

You'll lay sleeping on your side, I could almost trace the

lines by heart

Hair a pretty mess your slow and steady breath

drawing me in too

**Chorus**

Who knows you better than I know you?

Who knows you better than I do?
AN EXPLORATION OF WHERE SONGS COME FROM

Verse 2
46 C
\[ \text{Sun-burnt summer shoulders, you're careless but I've told} \]
G/B
50 Am
\[ \text{that} \]
G
54 C
\[ \text{Smiling like it's new attracting e'ry fool} \]
58 Am
\[ \text{like you didn't mean to} \]
G
\[ \text{D.S. al Coda} \]
\[ \text{Now who} \]

Interlude
CODA φ
62 C add4
\[ \text{(Instrumental)} \]
66 G
\[ \text{1.} \]
\[ \text{2.} \]
\[ \text{1 guess} \]

Bridge
72 C
\[ \text{things change with distance and time} \]
G/B
\[ \text{But I bet} \]
Am
\[ \text{there's nothing about you I won't recognise} \]
G
80 C
\[ \text{Like the way you like to change your made up mind} \]
G/B
\[ \text{Now who} \]
Chorus

84 C   G/B   Am   G

Who knows you better than I know you?

88 C   G/B   Am

Who knows you better than I do?

91 C   G/B   Am

Who knows you better?

96 C   G/B   Am   G

Who knows you better than I know you?
To me Brisbane has always been one of those great river cities. We look to our river for industry, transport, recreation, inspiration, and if you are lucky enough to live on its banks, or even catch a glimpse from your window, it may even serve as a measure of prosperity. As a city, we not only rely upon our river, we love her.

Six weeks ago I was sitting on the back deck of a friend’s new house in West End, having a few early Christmas drinks and thinking, wow, I wish this were my place. They had only just moved into what was a magnificent house on the banks of the Brisbane River and I could have easily sat there on that deck forever, just watching as the water slowly pushed past, carrying with it all manner of life.

But now, in a matter of a few short weeks, it is as if everything has changed. Like in a story from the Old Testament, the skies have since been torn open, and our beloved river is now swollen and angry.

As everything is forced to shut down, I am, for now, fixed on the TV. The same bad news is on every channel. My home sits on high enough ground, making me one of the fortunate ones, but so many friends and colleagues may not be so lucky, with the forecast seemingly worse with every update. A muddy brown torrent is racing towards the city taking with it cars, homes, businesses, and in the very worst of cases, life.

Thousands have been forced to evacuate their properties. Hundreds of thousands are without power. Raw sewage is spilling into the floodwaters. Bridges are closed. The Inner-City Bypass is now closed. Phone services are struggling. Emergency services are exhausted. The dam is at 190 per cent capacity. To the west, the death toll has just risen to twelve, with two more bodies found in the devastated Lockyer Valley, and fifty-one people still missing.
And for Brisbane, our worst is supposedly not due to arrive until 4 o’clock tomorrow morning. There is an immeasurable amount of water coming to carry what’s left of this region out to sea.

With the modern world temporarily on hold, businesses and schools closed, it feels a lot like an earlier time, and Brisbane has seemingly adopted a kind of village mentality. People on higher ground are opening up their homes, or heading into the worst effected areas to help in any way they can. But as evening comes, and the hum of commotion dims, the city waits; no one entirely certain of where they’ll be standing come the light of the morning.

If this were an old black and white movie, I might expect to hear the dull roar of a sea shanty coming from the village tavern, as the fisherman and the town’s folk await the inevitable.

*She came to me all in my sleep*

*Lowlands, Lowlands, away, my John*

*I dreamed I saw my own true love*

*My Lowlands, away!*

*(From “Lowlands Away”, origin unknown.)*

And as I fall further into that image, I begin to wonder what our song might be like; a tale of love, loss, betrayal, tested faith, and the shifting measure of luck. Lost in that daydream, while the city waits in silence, I reach for my battered old nylon string guitar, and over the simplest of chords I begin to sing. Arriving together are a few lines of a lyric and a simple melody, and as I sing these emergent lyrics for the first time, the chords instinctively follow suit. Now more poem like than song, in almost one single stream of thought, lyrics are
rushing at me. Like the coming water, this song now too seems inevitable. Both chords and melody continue in support, but not as a result of any conscious effort from me.

Silent and heavy
The river she turns
Turns though a city that loves her
She speaks not a word

Hey love, where will I be
When all of this water flows out to the sea

And back again, without pause, to what I know now is verse two, with the chords and melody mirroring the previous verse.

And just like a lover
In a matter of time
When you think you can trust her
She changes your mind

This time moving into into a longer second chorus.

When it comes to chasing down a song, like an ultra marathon runner, I have seemingly unlimited patience and endurance. This is something that I have developed over many years of practice, the countless days in which nothing comes easy, or you find yourself with production deadlines that won’t wait for inspiration to strike. Sometimes I’ll sit in silence for hours; sometimes I’ll take to the guitar or piano in a workman like manner exploring countless possibilities until a solution appears. Tonight however, the waiting has barely lasted
long enough to commit ideas to the page, and catch the occasional work in progress recording.

This is not the norm for me, and putting the guitar aside for just a moment feels like I’m coming up for air. I expect it won’t be long until the gravity of this song pulls me back under, but for now the silence and the wait seems fitting. For an instant I’m back in the reality and the inevitability of this coming flood. Will the tide be as high as predicted? Will this rain ever stop?

The words for my bridge seem obvious now, and over the muted pulse of the guitar, in one last burst, I improvise the entire bridge section, and with the guitar still playing in that same muted voice, step my way through the chords of the chorus. Following this instrumental, and again without need for hesitation, the final chorus is sung along with its altered lyrics, a comment on the most tragic consequences of an event like this.

All there is left to do tonight is play the entire song once through for the sake of my recorder and see what the morning brings.
Hey Love
(The River Song)

Mark Sholtez

\[ \text{Intro} \]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Am} & \quad \text{Em} & \quad \text{Am} & \quad \text{Em} & \quad \text{Am} & \quad \text{Am} & \quad \text{G} & \quad \text{B7/F#} & \quad \text{Em} \\
\end{align*}
\]

(Instrumental)

\[ \text{Verse 1} \]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{C} & \quad \text{B7/F#} & \quad \text{Em} & \quad \text{C} & \quad \text{B7/F#} & \quad \text{Em} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Silent and heavy the river she turns

9

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{C} & \quad \text{B7/F#} & \quad \text{Em} & \quad \text{Am7} & \quad \text{B7} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Turns through a city that loves her she speaks not a word

\[ \text{Chorus 1} \]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Am} & \quad \text{Em} & \quad \text{Am} & \quad \text{Em} & \quad \text{Am} & \quad \text{Am} & \quad \text{G} & \quad \text{B7/F#} & \quad \text{Em} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Hey love, where will I be when all of this water flows out to the sea

\[ \text{Verse 2} \]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{C} & \quad \text{B7/F#} & \quad \text{Em} & \quad \text{C} & \quad \text{B7/F#} & \quad \text{Em} \\
\end{align*}
\]

And just like a lover in a matter of time

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{C} & \quad \text{B7/F#} & \quad \text{Em} & \quad \text{Am7} & \quad \text{B7} \\
\end{align*}
\]

When you think you can trust her she changes your mind

\[ \text{Chorus 2} \]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Am} & \quad \text{Em} & \quad \text{Am} & \quad \text{Em} & \quad \text{Am} & \quad \text{Am} & \quad \text{G} & \quad \text{B7/F#} & \quad \text{Em} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Hey love, where will I be when all of this water flows out to the sea

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Am} & \quad \text{Em} & \quad \text{Am} & \quad \text{Em} & \quad \text{Am} & \quad \text{Am} & \quad \text{G} & \quad \text{B7} \\
\end{align*}
\]

To Coda

measure my luck by the height of my ground and pray that the river comes down
Bridge

Pray for a break in the weather

Pray for a merciful tide

The levee is not gonna hold if the water continues to rise

D.S. al Coda

(Instrumental)

CODA φ rall.

pray that the missing are found.
Appendix C

Reflection and Transcription: Sink Me

I’m sitting in an unfamiliar studio in the suburbs of Brisbane, sinking comfortably into an old couch. A repurposed bedspread fails to conceal the worn out condition of the leather upholstery beneath. The windows in the room are boarded up to keep the busy road noise out, making the dull orange glow of a single lamp the only available light. It’s only 11am, but it might as well be the middle of the night in here. This is no doubt a great space for recording, specially designed for keeping the world at bay, but I’m not sure it’s the best place for creative writing. It’s a little too stark and lifeless for my taste.

I love the idea that the objects we share space with and the view from our window play a huge part in our creative output. Whether I’m writing on the road, or home in my own room, the environment most definitely serves to add colour to my work. I recall a few years ago, sitting in a friend’s house in LA, writing what could only be described as a “cowboy song”, and wondering where in the world that came from. I later noticed there was a photograph I had passed in the hall of a weathered old man wearing a ten-gallon hat, and another of the same man leading a horse by the reins hanging on the opposite wall.

My own writing room is full of the peculiarities my partner and I have collected over our many years together, and occupying its four corners you will find a tarnished old tuba left over from WW1, an old wooden go-cart, a pogo stick, a stack of old drums, a collection of skateboards, a well travelled guitar case, a didgeridoo, and an art deco valve radio. The walls and shelves are ripe with old leather-bound books and a collection of nautical oddities from shells to ship’s lanterns, spyglasses and sextants, and even a large hook and pulley from an old fishing boat. Partly obscured by a black Yamaha upright piano, one entire wall of this room is painted with a giant wave, inspired by the famous Japanese artist, Kitagawa.
Today however, along with two co-writers, I will be confined to this unsympathetic studio space, and so far there is little more to show for our efforts bar a title, a few generic guitar chords and some random mumblings of lyric and melody. We are only an hour in but to me, it already seems like we are heading for one of those days that requires the persistent, defiant push of pencil to paper. This is the work of a songwriter.

It’s usual practice when working in collaboration with other writers to unplug from the ever present threat of distraction, or at the very least to turn your mobile phone on silent, but today one of my accomplices has forgotten to flip the switch and so the somewhat uncomfortable silence, and the weight of expectation, is lost to the welcome ringing of an incoming call. And with the realization that the handset is displaying an unfamiliar number, “sorry” quickly turns into, “I’d better see who this is”.

From what I can gather, the call is from a publisher, informing his writer that a song from his catalogue is to appear in a prominent US television program. This means both exposure and money for the writer, so this type of news is always good news, and the call is of course followed by brief period of celebration.

Salutations quickly turn into statements like, “we all need to get more of these kind of synes” (sync being short for synchronization, and referring specifically to having music synchronized to vision in a television or movie production), and “we should be trying to write something today that would work for sync”. The reality is, anything you write has the potential to work in TV or film provided it supports the narrative in the vision, but certain shows can often lean towards a particular style of song and many writers often do try to pitch specifically for that.

“I am going to write the greatest syncable song ever written, and it shall be called, \textit{Sync Me}”, I pronounce jokingly. Improvising silly songs is something I like to do for fun.
They can often lighten the heavy mood of a stalled collaboration, and even offer some welcome ideas from time to time. Sometimes they simply remind me that if I can write a throwaway song on the spot, I should be able to write something worthwhile with a little extra effort.

Without as much as another thought, I take my guitar in hand and with a single motion I begin to play and sing.

*If I sail my ship into this storm*
*If I sail my ship into this storm*
*It’s gonna sink me*
*It’s gonna sink me*

*And If I stay with you here on the shore*
*If I stay with you here on the shore*
*It’s gonna sink me*
*It’s gonna sink me*

My two co-writers are sitting across from me laughing and singing back the “it’s gonna sink me” refrain as I reach for my little voice recorder. As fast as I can hit record I play it again, as close to the original version as I can remember. Every songwriter knows that catching these things can often be the trickiest part. Sometimes I can improvise an entire song and have little to no recall only moments after, but luckily this time it’s all very much in tact. I feel happy to have this little ditty filed safely way for later as my writing partners begin to turn their attention back to our collaborative work in progress. My comedic efforts have seemed to breathe some needed life into our session and focus is now back to where we were
before the phone call, although part of me wants to head for home and fully set sail on my “Sink Me” idea.

Two days later I wake up early, around 6am. As my partner scurries about, preparing for an early start at work, I’m lazily noodling with my mobile phone. According to my calendar I have the entire day earmarked for writing but have not scheduled any willing collaborators. My mind begins to wander in search of something to work on and I am quickly reminded of “Sink Me”. After a series of clicks and turns on my voice recorder, I am back in the moment.

“If I sail my ship” and “If I stay with you”, paint an archetypal damned if you do and damned if you don’t picture that is not entirely unlike my own life as a musician; forever setting sail into uncharted waters while my lover lays waiting. Well maybe not quite that romantic, but similar nonetheless, and with another extended trip away on my horizon it feels like an appropriate time to tackle this idea.

I’m not sure if I’m the only one, but nine out of ten times I sit at a piano, the first chords I play are always the same 3 or 4 chords. For me it’s typically a ii V I progression in the key of C, and as I sit now at my slightly out of tune Yamaha upright, appropriately pressed against the giant Kitagawa wave, this morning is no different. My foot instinctively anchors the soft pedal, it’s only just gone 6:30am, as my hands move predictably from Dm9 to G13, G7b9, and back to the C6. Now as I begin to cycle again through those same chords, thinking about my impending trip away, another expedition back to the USA, I sing the words, “Forgive me for my restless soul”. Did I just write my B section? Wait, what key was my original idea in again? A minor? Without hesitation, I sing the same lyric and melody, only this time I’m trying to find my way back to Am. D7, C, Bdim and Am, is where my fingers land, and without needing to alter my melody at all, this new harmonic progression sounds perfect.
Now, the more I think about this idea of setting sail into the great unknown, the life of a fisherman if you will, the more I see its parallels with the life of a traveling musician, and something that has always amused me working as a performing artist is the many wonderfully colourful pre show rituals that go on behind the curtain. I’ve seen countless singers drinking all manner of exotic potions, dressing rooms painted and furnished entirely in white, lucky charms, lucky shirts, lucky hats, unlucky socks, and I have always been mildly entertained by the age old notion that wishing someone good luck before a performance is of course, extremely bad luck, hence the alternative “break a leg”. This to me does not seem at all too far removed from the countless superstitions that over time have surrounded boats and life on the water. My older brother had a boat for many years and even he stood firm on the centuries old superstition of no bananas and no suitcases on board.

Sitting on top of the bookshelf not more than a meter from the piano, bound in weathered brown leather and at least a hundred years old is a pair of books entitled, “The Story of the Sea”. Punctuated by beautifully hand drawn illustrations are a collection of stories, fact and fiction, about the ocean and the people who dared to cross her. These pages are littered with tales involving superstition, from the curious notion that it’s bad luck to be spoken to by a child with red hair before setting sail, to the indication that you mustn’t have a woman on board your vessel for the ocean could get jealous resulting in treacherous seas. And so with verses one and two of my story clearly highlighting the fisherman’s predicament, these eccentricities and delusory precautions would surely make for a perfect third verse. Ideas and images begin to shuffle around in my head as I now find myself searching for rhythm and rhyme.

Although extremely useful in the conception of my B section, the piano now seems too formal and static, but the instant I have guitar in hand I’m back to core of this idea, and the
rhythmic energy of the initial rough recording. As a result, my emerging lyric seems to immediately fall into line.

So I'll take no woman on board with me
To give no reason for a jealous sea
Appease my superstitious mind
And stay well clear of the red haired child
Say good buy but never good luck
And the rest will not be up to us

Now as I play what I have of this song so far, as if on autopilot an instrumental verse follows verse three and leads to a repeat of the b section, ultimately finishing with a final verse. A hybrid of verses one and two, but with one added line; a line that like the bulk of this song, just appeared, perfectly in place and perfectly timed.

If I sail my ship into this storm
If I stay with you here on the shore
If I answer either siren's call
It's gonna sink me
It's gonna sink me

Reaching for my recorder now to capture a rough once through of the song in its entirety I’m surprised by the time. It’s only five minutes after 9 and I am happy with what I’m hearing as I listen back to the recording. Do I start on another song? I wonder if anyone will be free to co-write later today? Better still, is anyone free for lunch.
Sink Me
Ballad of a Fisherman

Swing

\[ \text{\textcopyright Mark Sholecz} \]

1. If I sail my ship into the storm, If I
   stay with you here on the shore

2. If I
   sail my ship into the storm
   stay with you here on the shore

1&2: It's gonna

sink me
It's gonna sink me

For me

For me

So I'll take

no woman on board with me
to give no reason for a jealous sea

pease my superstitious mind and stay well clear of the red haired child

say goodbye but never good luck and the rest will not be up to us
AN EXPLORATION OF WHERE SONGS COME FROM

If I sail my ship into the storm
If I stay with you here on the shore
answer either siren's call
It's gonna sink me
It's gonna sink me.
Appendix D
Analytical Framework in Detail

**Lyrics.** My initial assumption was that the bulk of the lyric analysis data would be found in the words themselves. The simple act of asking, what are they saying and what does it mean, will of course be an important aspect of the analysis of the lyrics, but it is certainly not the only thing to be investigated. It will also be important to consider what might be learned from looking at the lyrical form and structure, and specifically the intersection of various lyrical elements including rhythm, rhyme and phrase length (Pattison, 2009).

Dealing with the act of lyrical composition, Pattison (2009) describes five structural elements present in every song as number of lines, line length, rhythm of lines, rhyme scheme and rhyme type, and highlights how they are used to support the works intended emotion. "These elements conspire to act like a film score and, in and of themselves, create motion. And motion creates emotion, completely independent of what is being said" (p. 180). By manipulating a listener’s expectation for balance with respect to number of lines, line length, rhythm of lines, rhyme scheme and rhyme type, the songwriter can alter the perceived stability of that section or idea. For example, even numbers of lines are perceived by the listener as stable, and odd are perceived as unstable. The same applies to the length of lines: two even length lines heard one after the other will feel balanced or stable, but by choosing to shorten or lengthen one of the two lines, that balance can be upset. Again the same principle can be applied to rhyme scheme and rhyme type. For example, disrupting the predictability of an expected rhyme scheme (i.e. substituting the typical ABAB scheme for ABBA) will result in a lesser sense of stability. Maintaining an expected rhyme scheme but moving away from the use of perfect rhyme in favor of assonance or consonance rhyme for example, can be used to similarly destabilise a section. Lastly, the rhythm of lines, or phrasing, can play a
considerable role in a song’s emotional communication. The act of singing a particular word on a the down beat of a bar will have a different emotional impact then placing that same word on an unaccented beat; the latter feeling again less stable than the former (Pattison, 2009).

*Harmony.* Like the majority of popular music released for commercial consumption today, the songs to be investigated in this study will rarely depart from the use of simple diatonic harmony, and again, I will be mostly interested in how the use of particular chords, both individually and in sequence, are used in a particular work to create a sense of stability or instability.

For the purpose of this study, and to increase the ease in comparing and discussing chord progressions, roman numerals will be used to denote specific chords based on their respective scale degree. In addition, uppercase roman numerals will be employed to indicate chords with a major third, while lowercase numerals will indicate chords containing a minor third.

*Tonic, dominant, and subdominant chords.* The tonic chord, or the I (one) chord in any key is the most important. For the listener, the tonic will evoke the greatest sense of resolution, a feeling of being at “home” (Kachulis, 2005, p. 34). All other chords, in varying degrees, are unresolved and can be thought of as “away from home” (Kachulis, 2005, p. 141). This effect is particularly evident when a chord other than the tonic appears at the end of a melodic phrase or section (Kachulis, 2005).

In direct contrast to our tonic, we have the V (five) chord, or dominant chord. If we were working in the key of C major, the dominant chord would be G. The dominant is the most unresolved within the key, and when used appropriately this “sense of tension or lack of resolution in your harmony helps to reinforce those feelings in your lyrics” (Kachulis, 2005,
When working in a minor key, there are “several dominant-type chords that build tension. The Vmin chord and the♭VII chord are the two most common” (Kachulis, 2005, p. 37). Possible dominant-type chords in the key of A minor would be E Minor, G, and E.

Lastly we have the subdominant, or IV (four) chord. Typically this is “more stable than the dominant, but less stable then the tonic” (Kachulis, 2005, p. 35).

**Harmonic cadences.** For the sake of clarity, a harmonic cadence is essentially any progression of at least two chords that concludes a composition, a phrase or a section (“Cadence or Close,” 2012). The most relevant to this study, and most common harmonic cadences are the **Perfect Cadence** and the **Interrupted Cadence**. The Perfect Cadence (or Full Cadence) moves from the dominant V to the tonic I. “The full cadence is the strongest motion from ‘away’ to ‘home’” (Kachulis, 2005, p. 143). The♭VII to I minor may also be classed as a perfect cadence when working in a minor key, along with the V to I minor (Kachulis, 2005). Ending a phrase or section with this full resolution back to the tonic tends to feel very stable.

The Interrupted Cadence (or Deceptive Cadence) occurs when the dominant finds a point of resolution that is not the tonic, sounding somewhat resolved but significantly less than that of a perfect cadence, for example when the V moves to the VI minor (G7 to A minor, in the key of C major) (Kachulis, 2005).

**Imperfect Cadence** (or Half Cadence) ends on the dominant chord, and can be effectively used in creating tension. It can be commonly found at the close of a verse or pre chorus section to set up a return to the tonic in the chorus (Kachulis, 2005).

The **Plagal Cadence** occurs when the subdominant is followed by the tonic. Most commonly found in major keys, the plagal cadence moves from IV to I, coming home in a
more subtle way than the perfect cadence does. The plagal cadence is typically used at the
end of hymns to harmonize the lyric “amen”. The II minor to I can also be used to similar
effect (Kachulis, 2005).

It would be also worth noting that the 7th can be added to any of the V cords discussed
above and any of the chords may be inverted, but in the case of the perfect cadence, the
inversion will diminish its effect of finality. A chord should be considered inverted when it
appears in a position other than its root position (“Cadence or Close,” 2012).

**Melody.** It is not my intention to discuss melody in any great detail, but it will be
useful to establish a few terms to describe the shape of a particular melodic phrase and a way
in which to look at specific notes in a melody and their relationship to the overall sense of
melodic stability.

Melodic motion can be divided into two categories: Conjunct Motion, where notes
move in intervals of a second, step by step through the scale, and Disjunct Motion, in which
the melody leaps by intervals larger than a second (Perricone, 2000). Typically a vocal
melody will consist primarily of conjunct motion as it feels the most comfortable and natural
for the singer, but it’s most often the melodic leaps that will make it more memorable
(Perricone, 2000).

For looking at specific notes in any given melody, Perricone (2000) offers an
extremely useful lens, based on the harmonic series, which aims to highlight the perceived
stability or instability of a given tone. “All tones within an overtone series are measured by
their relationship to the fundamental; likewise all tones within a diatonic system are measured
by their relationship to the tonic note” (p. 9). He goes on to explain that, “there is always one
tone, the tonic which is the most stable. Other tones having a good relationship to the tonic
are also labeled ‘stable’” (p. 9). He later suggests, “Tones with a more distant relationship to
the tonic are labeled ‘unstable’” (p. 9). When working within minor keys, the tone tendencies of the first 5 degrees of the minor scales function similarly to that of the major scale, however the 6th and 7th degrees vary slightly on account of the varying natural, harmonic and melodic minor scales (Perricone, 2000).
Appendix E

Written Permission from EMI Music Publishing Australia

From: Arif Chowdhury (Arif.Chowdhury@sonyatv.com)
Sent: Friday, 13 June 2014 12:42:54 PM
To: Mark Sholtez (markmyword@hotmail.com)
Cc: Maree Hamblion (Maree.Hamblion@sonyatv.com)

Hi Mark,

We refer to your enquiry dated 12th June 2014 regarding to use for research at QCM/Griffith University and to include extracts of these lyrics and transcriptions of the works listed below as part of the written paper for your thesis as part of your analysis.

Please be advised that EMI Music Publishing Australia Pty Limited confirms 100% copyright ownership representation of the works listed below, unless otherwise indicated:

Who Knows You Better – Mark Sholtez
© 2014 EMI Music Publishing Australia Pty Limited (ABN 83 000 040 951) Locked Bag 7300, Darlinghurst NSW 1300. Australia International copyright secured. All rights reserved. Used by permission

Hey Love (The River Song) - Mark Sholtez
© 2014 EMI Music Publishing Australia Pty Limited (ABN 83 000 040 951) Locked Bag 7300, Darlinghurst NSW 1300. Australia International copyright secured. All rights reserved. Used by permission

Please be advised that we approve this use for the above works only for your analysis only, for the territory of the World only, for non-commercial use at QCM/Griffith University subject to the terms/conditions listed below:

1. EMI Music Publishing reserves all other rights to our work from this publication, including, but not limited to, photocopying, engraving or any other format, including the collection of all income under AMCOS and CAL photocopying license or any other voluntary or statutory license.
2. Above copyright ownership acknowledgements supplied by us is used in this project, for the territory of the World only.
3. You may require further permission from us for the works listed above for any digital or any other use not stated in your request.
4. We have waived fees for this use.
5. Strictly non-commercial use only.
6. Educational purpose only.

Best regards,

Arif Chowdhury
Print Music Manager
Sony/ATV Music Publishing (Australia) Pty Ltd
Suite 1, Level 2, 8 Hercules Street | Surry Hills | NSW | 2010
Locked Bag 7300 | Darlinghurst | NSW | 1300
Tel: +61 (0)2 9324 9654 | Fax: +61 (0)2 9324 9606
References


Bennett, J. (2013) “You wont see me” – In search of an epistemology of collaborative songwriting. *Journal on the Art of Record Production*, (8).


