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Building Bridges with Music:

A Qualitative Analysis Exploring the Use of Music and Music Therapy in Peacebuilding from Different Perspectives

Johanna Möller [1*]

[1] Department of Music Therapy, ArtEZ University of the Arts Enschede, The Netherlands
* johanna.moeller77@gmail.com

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Abstract

Background: The use of music in a peacebuilding context has increasingly gained popularity among peacebuilders, musicians, music educators, community musicians, and music therapists alike. Recent studies show that music can be a valuable tool to help facilitate peacebuilding.

Objective: Music in peacebuilding engages professionals from many different backgrounds. The aim of this study was to gather different perspectives to gain a deeper understanding of whether and how music can be used to enhance and facilitate peacebuilding. Special attention was paid to the use of music therapy.

Method: Semi-structured interviews (*N* = 8) were conducted with peacebuilders (*N* = 3), music therapists (*N* = 2), musicians (*N* = 1), and music educators (*N* = 2). Thematic analysis was applied to analyse the data.

Findings: Three themes were analysed in detail: (1) aims of using music in peacebuilding, (2) musical frameworks, and (3) music therapy.

Discussion: Peacebuilders, music therapists, community musicians, music educators, and musicians all contributed to this research by sharing their expertise. Interestingly, the experts had similar views on how to approach the use of music in peacebuilding.

Conclusion: Experts within the field should collaborate and exchange their knowledge to gain a better and broader understanding of the use and application of music in a peacebuilding setting.

Keywords: music; music therapy; peacebuilding; music in peacebuilding; different perspectives

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"You're the voice," as John Farnham sings in his same-titled song, can have a significant meaning for many who have been silenced. Silenced because of war, silenced because of violence, silenced because of dehumanization. Music can be an offering, a present, a bridge to overcome the silence and learn to speak again. Music connects the past, present, and future and can therefore be a wonderful tool to help people express and process emotions. This paper seeks to portray the important and vital role music can have for people affected by violence.

War and violence are nothing new in our society. Especially nowadays it seems like the number of conflicts around the world is constantly rising. The effect these conflicts have on individuals, groups of people, the environment, and society, also seems to be intensifying. Furthermore, the immediate access to news and social media constantly infuses our daily lives with news and images of conflict and makes it impossible to ignore the facts. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees UNHCR states that at the end of 2022, "The number of people forcibly displaced by persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order grew by 21 percent standing at an estimated 108.4 million" (UNHCR, 2023, p. 2). Of these 108.4 million people, 35.3 million are refugees, 65.5 million internally displaced people, 5.4 million asylum seekers, and 5.2 million people in need of international protection (UNHCR, 2023, p. 4). Overall trends and predictions present an increasing number of forcibly displaced people worldwide (UNHCR, 2023, pp. 7-8), which is enhanced by ongoing wars like the one in Syria and Sudan, the war in Ukraine, and most recently the Israel-Palestine conflict. Interestingly, according to the most recent findings published by the Peace Research Institute Oslo [PRIO], there is a worldwide trend towards less battle-related deaths (PRIO, 2019, para. 2). However, "researchers are concerned […] about the increase in the number of conflicts where external states are involved. This is because such conflicts tend to last longer and be bloodier" (PRIO, 2019, para. 1). Our world has become more and more interconnected. In conclusion, the way wars are being carried out is changing, which can have significant consequences worldwide.

These findings are important; however, they do not include the number of deaths related to post-war scenarios. Many people lose their lives because important infrastructure has been destroyed by war, e.g., hospitals, educational institutions, health care systems, agriculture, lack of food and water supply, and pollution of air and land. Furthermore, the long-lasting psychological effects war can have on people are also not considered or represented within these studies. According to Bensimon et al. (2008), war veterans, of whom many develop post-combat stress, which often leads to post-traumatic stress disorder, struggle with finding their way back to their normal lives. People who have had to flee their home countries and resettle in a new country or who have experienced political unrest, internal displacement, and inter-ethnic conflicts within their home countries, have experienced traumatic situations while fleeing from persecution and war (Borczon, 2016; Dyregrov & Yule, 2006; Gupta & Zimmer, 2008; Woodward, 2012). Most of the time trauma cannot be avoided and they are already traumatized when they arrive (Mallon & Antik, 2021). These facts should encourage us to think about and redefine what peace and war mean in the 21st century so that we can move towards peace with more confidence and certainty. Including music into our thoughts towards a more peaceful future might be of more significance than we think.

The use of music in peacebuilding is a field that holds great potential and that might be able to help us redefine war and peace in different contexts. Connections between these two seemingly different fields have already been made by peacebuilders (Galtung, 2015; Urbain, 2015, 2019), researchers (Johnston, 2010; Robertson, 2010, 2018), musicians (Bergey, 2019; Bergh, 2010, 2011), music educators (Opiyo, 2015; Sandoval, 2016), and music therapists (Hassanein, 2023; Vinader, 2015) alike. Current literature about the use of music in peacebuilding examines and links elements of music and music-making such

as harmony (Howell, 2018), the use of musical spaces (Levesque & Ferguson, 2020), community building (Ostashewski, 2020), identity formation of individuals and groups (Robertson, 2019, 2020), emotional expression (Dieckman & Davidson, 2018), and dialogue (Gottesman, 2016, 2018) to peacebuilding processes. Nevertheless, literature about the explicit use and application of music in a peacebuilding context is still rare. Based on these findings, this study was conducted to unearth some of the ways music can and has been applied in a peacebuilding context. Therefore, the leading research question for this study is: *How do experts from different knowledge and educational backgrounds, such as peacebuilders, musicians, music therapists, community musicians, and music educators, approach and implement music in a peacebuilding context from their perspective?*

The sub-questions, that will briefly be considered in the discussion section of this paper are: *What are some of the differences and similarities between the different approaches to using music in peacebuilding? What can peacebuilders, musicians, music therapists, community musicians, and music educators learn from each other?*

This paper is written from the perspective of a musician and music therapist who has the privilege to daily witness what fascinating effects music can have on individuals, groups, and oneself. While writing, editing, and updating this paper, the author lived in three different countries: The Netherlands, Aotearoa New Zealand, and Germany. These countries all have their own unique cultures and challenges and the different perspectives on peace and music within these countries informed the thoughts and ideas presented in this paper. The author's personal conversations with various people who work in either music or peacebuilding, and who see the benefits of blending both fields, were the primary inspiration for this study. The outcome of this research is based on conversations, in form of interviews, with experts who have valuable knowledge and experience in different fields of interest including peacebuilding, music, music therapy, community music, and music education. Interesting, inspiring, and important perspectives on how music can be integrated in peacebuilding contexts were outlined and explained in the interviews.

To maintain clarity and avoid confusion while reading, it is important to note that the term music in this paper refers to all musical interactions, music therapy approaches included, the interview participants encountered with their groups in a peacebuilding context. Additionally, in this paper, music therapy will be looked at in more detail. The World Federation of Music Therapy (WFMT) defines music therapy as follows:

> Music therapy is the professional use of music and its elements as an intervention in medical, educational, and everyday environments with individuals, groups, families, or communities who seek to optimize their quality of life and improve their physical, social, communicative, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual health and wellbeing. (WFMT, 2011)

As reflected in the citation above, when the term music therapy is mentioned in this paper, it refers to the use of music therapy specific approaches and techniques that aim to support and enhance overall wellbeing.

The following section provides the reader with an overview of the literature and theoretical framework of this paper and defines the terms being used.

Literature Review

To gain a better understanding of how peacebuilding, music, and music therapy relate to each other, it is helpful to look at each field separately and then draw links between them. The following literature review first outlines what peacebuilding is and how it is viewed in the context of this paper, then presents the links between music and peacebuilding, ending with an overview of how music therapy relates and can contribute to a peacebuilding process.

On Peacebuilding

Before diving into the subject matter more deeply, the author would like to express that they are not an expert in the field of peacebuilding. The definitions outlined below are based on thorough literature research and the author's own insights and understanding of what peacebuilding might mean in the context of this paper and its intention to explore the use of music in peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding as a scientific field has established itself throughout the past decades and a lot of research is being done within the field (Autesserre, 2017; Behr, 2018; Boulding, 1995; Brigg, 2003; de Coning, 2018; Galtung, 1969; Lederach, 2015; Lederach & Lederach, 2010; Schirch, 2004; Webel & Galtung, 2007). Something the author noticed fairly quickly is that defining peacebuilding is a difficult undertaking. Peacebuilding neither has a fixed definition nor is it a static concept or process that must follow a specific set of rules or activities (Lederach, 2005; Urbain, 2020). It is more of a fluid, shifting concept that changes throughout time. Nevertheless, the works of Johan Galtung, who helped coin the term peacebuilding, provide some helpful definitions of peace that can help with understanding the concept of peacebuilding. He distinguishes between positive and negative peace. Negative peace refers to "the absence of personal/direct violence," "peace without justice," or a "false sense of peace" (Galtung, 1969, p. 183). Positive peace on the other hand is defined by the "absence of structural violence" which Galtung also refers to as *social justice* (Galtung, 1969, p.183). Positive peace refers even more to the "attitudes, institutions and structures, that when strengthened, lead to peaceful societies" (Galtung, 1969, p. 183). Working towards positive peace can be seen as the core aim of peacebuilding work. This is underlined by various other scholars in the field. Urbain (2020) and Schirch (2004) both state that in practical terms, peacebuilding can be seen as an attempt to define ways of action towards peace within a specific context, culture, or community. It is important to note that peacebuilding describes a variety of different activities that relate to relationship-building and that all have the same goal in mind which is "to prevent, reduce, transform, and help people recover from violence in all forms, even structural violence that has not yet led to massive civil unrest" (Schirch, 2004, p. 6).

More recently, the concept of adaptive peacebuilding describes the idea that "it is crucial […] that the societies and communities that are intended to benefit from a peacebuilding intervention are fully involved in all aspects of the peacebuilding initiative" (de Coning, 2018, p. 7). This suggests that peacebuilding is given its meaning by the people affected by violence in a specific cultural and social context and their needs and visions of a peaceful future. This way of looking at peacebuilding gives the people affected by violence the agency and opportunity to act for themselves and what they need. On the other hand, Behr (2018) argues that finding common ground amongst each other in a situation of conflict is usually not that simple: "Otherness is always and already a specific articulation of the primary human experience of difference" (p. 336). Consequently, this means that peacebuilding is also about working with differences such as opinions, religions, belief systems, personal needs, and even aspects such as language, cultural backgrounds, systems, and political structures that contribute to creating an image of difference. Behr (2018) states that, "Whether, or not, we act in a peaceful way is therefore a question of how we approach, think, and negotiate difference(s)" (p. 336). This adds to the complexity of defining and thinking about what peacebuilding means and links back to the importance of relationship-building.

After having outlined the term peacebuilding and its definitions, it is important to the author to explain how the term is perceived in the context of this study. It might be helpful to divide the word into its two components: "peace" and "building." According to the literature listed above, "peace" in peacebuilding seems to stand for a long-term vision of peace and is not linked to a specific intervention, activity, or timeframe. It envisions an

image of peace for the future. The word "building" in peacebuilding, describes an active process where everyone involved, envisions and rebuilds structures grounded within the same core values. Therefore, in this paper, the term and concept "peacebuilding" is regarded as and is representational for an active process. Since music making, a predominantly active process (e.g., improvisation, singing songs, songwriting), can accommodate many peacebuilding aims (e.g., relationship-building, communication, collaboration, community-building), it is a great medium to support peacebuilding processes. This paper, therefore, aims to outline how music in a peacebuilding setting can be used as an active process that helps work towards peace.

The following section supports, underlines, and solidifies these thoughts with theoretical and scientific foundations.

Music and Peacebuilding

Multiple studies about using different forms of art in peacebuilding have been published (Bergh & Sloboda, 2010; Boulding, 2000; Grant et al., 2010; Mitchell et al., 2020; Schank & Schirch, 2008; Woodward, 2012). Elise Boulding, one of the few women female scholars within the field of peacebuilding, claims that "music, art, dance, theatre, poetry—and sheer play —are all expressions of peace culture when they reflect humanity's sense of beauty and reverence for life" (Boulding, 2000, p. 196). Boulding also holds the vision that "social transformation […] requires imagery about the desired future as part of the dynamics for achieving it" (Boulding, 1995, p. 415). Similar ideas are shared by John Paul Lederach, another leading scholar in the field of peacebuilding. He refers to peacebuilding as a creative act to help imagine a new future and reimagine relationships. In his book *The Moral Imagination* he points out the importance of creativity as being something that brings images and maybe even solutions to conflict into existence that have not existed in that way before (Lederach, 2005, p. 73).

Creativity and using one's imagination are also very important elements in music-making. Music can therefore be seen as an important lens we can look through toward conflict resolution, transformation, and peacebuilding. Music can also serve as a medium with which we can express and shape our visions of peace—we can make it audible within and through a musical creation. Bonde (2007, 2019), Smeijsters (2012), and Jungaberle et al. (2001) refer to music and metaphors which can provide a new and exciting perspective for the use of music in a peacebuilding context. Some authors believe that the core feature of music is that music is by nature metaphoric (Bonde, 2007; Zbikowski, 2008). Direct links to the use of musical language can be made when we talk about concepts such as harmony, dissonance, attunement, or synchronization that all relate to peacebuilding work. Listening to each other and establishing a connection are as much a part of peacebuilding work as they are a crucial premise for making music together. Bonde (2019) describes metaphors in music as "an opportunity to (re)create and (re)interpret our life world by adapting meaning from one area of life and transferring it to another" (p. 141). This is because music can function as the symbolic representation of something other than itself. Why this can serve as such a powerful tool for peacebuilding can be best described with help of the "metaphorical circle" proposed by Jungaberle et al. (2001). Jungaberle et al. (2001) suggest that during a musical interaction, topics or concerns of our everyday lives can be woven into the musical process and made audible (p. 12). If we turn that idea around, musical parameters, such as harmony, rhythm, timbre, volume, modality, etc., within a musical creation (e.g., improvisation) can also be transferred back to our everyday life concerns and then become "musical metaphors" (p. 12). In a peacebuilding context one could for example think of non-musical terms specifically related to peacebuilding (e.g., peace, dialogue, relationships, healing, community, etc.) and use music to make them audible. The process of choosing instruments, thinking of a melody, a rhythm,

harmonies, and timbre that represent the chosen word, changes the way one feels about the word and its meaning instantly. Bonde (2007) strengthens these ideas: "When we try to understand and verbalize the mysteries of music, we use knowledge from other domains to enhance and communicate our understanding" (p. 64).

The paragraph above mainly focused on the influence music has on building peace, but it is also important to keep in mind that there is not one single type or vision of peace one is working towards in a peacebuilding and music context. Howell (2022) presents different types of peace that can be achieved with the help of music. In her paper, *Peaces of music: Understanding the varieties of peace that music-making can foster*, she describes what these different types of peace entail and how music supports these visions of peace, such as "intergroup learning and understanding, everyday peace, dialogic peace, justice-seeking peace, inner peace, and imagined peace" (Howell, 2022, pp. 158–164). This notion of different types of peace links back to Behr's (2018) statement, described in the peacebuilding section, on how peacebuilding is about working with differences and learning to overcome them. The definition and meaning of peacebuilding can differ greatly depending on the context one is working in. This also means that the aims one is working towards differ which, consequently, influences the use of music.

Music Therapy and Peacebuilding

Throughout time, music has been associated with healing in many ways. Music can support healing processes and wellbeing and can be used to positively influence people's behaviours, emotions, and thinking processes (Hiller, 2015). Nowadays, music therapy is a field that embeds the ideas mentioned above into a scientific network. Music therapy has become a profession that is supported by university programmes, neuroscientific insight, and the overall notion within society that music can offer a unique way to healing. Furthermore, research from the field of music therapy and its effects on trauma, healing, wellbeing, and emotions offers promising findings that can also be relevant for peacebuilding work (Hunt & Legge, 2015; Juslin & Sloboda, 2010; Koelsch et al., 2010; Peretz, 2010).

There are many definitions of music therapy, but in general, music therapeutic interventions, techniques, and approaches, are used to discern musical structures within music, such as rhythm, melody, harmony, and tonality, to work on (clinical) goals that are tailored to the needs of the individual one is working with (see American Music Therapy Association or the World Federation of Music Therapy websites). The main thought of including music therapists working in peacebuilding contexts as part of this research is that trained music therapists might be able to provide valuable insight into the practical applications of music therapy in a peacebuilding context due to their extensive therapeutic background knowledge. This idea is supported by Wheeler (2015) who describes the work of a music therapist: "Music therapists use the unique qualities of music and a relationship with a therapist to access emotions and memories, structure behaviour, and provide social experiences in order to address clinical goals" (p. 5). In combination with experts in peacebuilding this could offer powerful insights into how music can be used to transform conflict.

Regarding the context of music therapeutic interventions and their aims, the reviewed literature shows that the use of music therapy is mostly related to populations who suffer from traumatic experiences due to violence and conflict, and marginalised or vulnerable groups of people. Some of the literature describes goals in music therapy, such as identity formation (Robertson 2019, 2020), relationship-building (Baker & Jones, 2005; Gulbay, 2021), or social justice (Vaillancourt, 2012), that align with goals set in a peacebuilding context. Other articles outline the use of music therapy in peacebuilding-specific settings such as refugee camps (Beck, 2019; Enge & Stige, 2021; Felsenstein, 2012; Lenette &

Sunderland, 2014; Mallon & Antik, 2021; Parker et al., 2021) or war-affected regions (Hassanein, 2023; Heidenreich, 2005; Ng, 2005; Woodward, 2012) and can therefore be linked to peacebuilding work. This affirms that including music therapy approaches and techniques in peacebuilding processes is both possible and valuable. Hassanein (2018) underlines this thought by stating that "music therapy [in peacebuilding] could serve as a bridge between creativity, accessibility, and conflict transformation" (p. 3).

Additional insight and knowledge on how to use music therapy in peacebuilding could, for example, be gained from the way music therapists apply different music therapeutic approaches in specific contexts. Creative Music Therapy is an improvisational- and music-based approach (Aigen, 2014). Music is used to establish a connection and facilitate expression among individuals without having to use words. In a peacebuilding context, for example, this could be useful if one is working with a heterogenous group of people who come from different cultures and do not speak the same language. Music can serve as a bridge to overcome these barriers and offer new ways of connection. The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music (GIM) uses musical experiences to stimulate an individual's imagination and evoke images that lead to an exploration of self (Ventre & McKinney, 2015). This is supported and guided by verbal consultation and insights with the therapist. This approach could be modified to benefit a peacebuilding context by creating an opportunity for individuals to reimagine hope, peace, and visions of their future with the help of music. Community Music Therapy (CoMT) is "context-sensitive and resource-oriented, focusing on collaborative music making and attending to the voices of disadvantaged people" (Stige, 2015, p. 233). Stige (2015) states that CoMT practices can be directly linked to conflict transformation since CoMT aims can, in some cases, focus on human rights and needs (p. 236). This is an important insight that can be valuable for the use of music in peacebuilding since these aims align with aims in peacebuilding such as reducing structural violence and building relationships across divides that focus on human needs (Schirch, 2004; Urbain, 2020). In combination with different intervention techniques such as songwriting (Baker, 2013), improvisation (Bruscia, 1987, 1988), singing (Baker & Uhlig, 2011), body percussion (Romero-Naranjo et al., 2014), and drumming (Bensimon et al., 2008), peacebuilding-specific aims such as emotional expression, identity exploration, group cohesion, and relationship-building can be strengthened.

Because there are important studies that point towards the benefits of using music therapy in peacebuilding and because this kind of literature is still rare, the main research question for this study is: *How do experts from different knowledge and educational backgrounds, such as peacebuilders, musicians, music therapists, community musicians, and music educators, approach and implement music in a peacebuilding context from their perspective?*

Method

Design

The core idea behind using music in a peacebuilding setting is that these music projects hold the potential to contribute to transformation not only for the people involved (facilitators and participants) but also for society at large. Therefore, this study has adopted a transformative research paradigm. The transformative research paradigm seeks to question and investigate the privileges and societal values that come along with doing research within specific cultural and societal contexts (Mertens, 2007). Furthermore, the transformative paradigm is based on the idea that research can contribute to raising awareness for marginalized groups of individuals and at the same time carries the potential

to contribute to societal change (Mertens, 2017). Based on the ideas above, the transformative research paradigm serves as a lens through which the researcher can frame their responses and can seek to contribute to social justice and human rights issues through their research (Mertens, 2010). Due to the nature of this study's research question, the transformative research paradigm is applied to support the voices of project facilitators, researchers, and scholars who do not often have the time and opportunity to process, analyse, and share their data while working on projects and in community settings.

The aim behind this study is to gather in-depth knowledge about the work being done within music and peacebuilding projects and contexts, and to draw this knowledge together. Valuable knowledge and insight into the field can easily go missing because of lack of time and resources to record and present data. The present study aims to outline and support the voices of experts working in the field and the people affected by violence they work with. This can help illuminate the important role music can have in peacebuilding and how music can potentially benefit people affected by violence.

Participant Selection

Experts ($N = 8$) from the field of music therapy ($N = 2$), peacebuilding ($N = 3$), community music/music education ($N = 2$), and musicians ($N = 1$) were sampled purposefully, based on the broad criterion that they were working in a peacebuilding setting with music or music therapy. This included experts who were conducting research about using music or music therapy in a peacebuilding setting, or experts who were working with music or music therapy with displaced people (internally displaced or refugees) and with people affected by conflict, violence, or war in all parts of the world (e.g., Guatemala, Sudan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Palestine, and Colombia). Music in peacebuilding is still quite a small field, so it was more likely that the scholars involved in the field know of and have heard of each other. In the case of this study, not every interview participant was known to the author prior to conducting the interviews, but they had heard of them and knew about their work and were also asked to participate in the study by the author. In addition to that, the participants were informed about the purpose and intention of the study and were asked to give verbal consent to be interviewed and recorded before the interview was conducted on Zoom. To assure participants agreed to their data being shared anonymously as study findings or with external audiences, written informed consent was sought retrospectively.

Knowing that each of the chosen interview participants were experts in a specific field and in a specific part of the world, it was seen as a great chance to learn more about different cultural perspectives and exchange knowledge, especially since there is still a lot to learn about implementing music or music therapy in peacebuilding. It was a true pleasure to be able to connect with these very knowledgeable and inspiring experts who are continuously contributing to the field of music in peacebuilding. At the same time, the researcher was constantly aware of the potential for researcher bias and how that might impact the data. This point will be discussed in more detail in the ethics section of the paper.

Data Collection: Interviews

Qualitative data was collected by conducting semi-structured online interviews with seven open-ended questions via Zoom. The interview questions were formulated by the author of this study based on information arising from the presented literature review and the author's own ideas and thoughts on how to best gain insight into how music or music therapy is applied in a peacebuilding setting. Consequently, the questions asked are partially subjective. The questions were then divided into five broader topics that were

explored: (1) peacebuilding, (2) music or music therapy (depending on each interviewee's field of expertise), (3) connections between music or music therapy and peacebuilding, (4) practical implications, and (5) recommendations. Later, the same topics were used as a guideline for generating themes and codes in the process of analysing the data. Each expert was asked the same questions, although occasionally there were additional questions asked that related to research some experts had already conducted on the use of music or music therapy in peacebuilding or that were related to their specific background knowledge.

Data Analysis

In this study, Thematic Analysis was applied with the help of the qualitative analysis software MAXQDA Analytics Pro 2022. Thematic Analysis, as defined by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2012), is mainly used to analyse qualitative data, and to determine themes and ascribe codes to specific segments of data. It is "a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 2). The six-step process for Thematic Analysis was used to approach and position the data within the purpose of the study: (1) familiarizing yourself with the data; (2) generating initial codes; (3) searching for themes; (4) reviewing potential themes; (5) defining and naming themes; and (6) producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2012).

Alongside generating codes and themes, a logbook and memos, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), were kept by the researcher documenting the researcher's reflexive processes and thoughts and ideas arising from the data. According to Terry et al. (2017), "Coding and theme development are assumed to be subjective and interpretative processes" (p. 20). The authors expand on this thought by looking at "the analysis … as something created by the researcher, at the intersection of the data, their theoretical and conceptual frameworks, disciplinary knowledge, and research skills and experience" (p. 20). Keeping this in mind, the author is aware of the subjective and interpretative nature of coding in this study and emphasizes the fact that no investigator triangulation was applied to this study.

Within the framework of Thematic Analysis, an inductive and deductive approach was simultaneously used to code the data. The inductive approach describes "a process of coding the data without trying to fit it into a preexisting coding frame, or the researcher's analytic preconceptions. In this sense, this form of thematic analysis is data-driven" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 83). In contrast, a deductive approach "tend[s] to be driven by the researcher's theoretical or analytic interest in the area and is thus more explicitly analyst-driven" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). For the present study this meant that the interview questions, tailored to answer the research question, automatically served as a guideline for some emerging themes. At the same time, new themes emerged from the data itself.

The researcher did not adjust any interview questions to challenge or confirm emerging themes but kept asking each interviewee the same questions throughout the study. This was done to ensure the collection of a broad variety of answers to the research question and to gain an in-depth view of the state of the field. Every sentence stated by an interview participant that was used within this paper is clearly identified as such to avoid false data fabrication or plagiarism. It is important to mention that the author is the sole person who gathered, analysed, coded, and interpreted the data and is therefore aware of the fact that this can easily lead to subjective interpretations and strong researcher bias of the data.

Ethical Considerations

This study was completed in 2022 as part of the music therapy master's program at ArtEZ University of the Arts in the Netherlands. Prior to conducting the study, the research

protocol was reviewed internally by a team affiliated with the master's program, who evaluated the research questions, design, and ethical considerations. The study has since been approved for publication by the research participants, the research mentor, the research supervisor, and the head of the music therapy department at ArtEZ University of the Arts in the Netherlands.

Upholding ethics in qualitative research is an important endeavour, especially when conducting research on a topic like music in peacebuilding with expert interviews. Since qualitative research relies on information and data from participants and interpretations and evaluation of the researcher, it is difficult to detach results and interpretations from the immediate environment and cultural influences the researcher is exposed to during the research process (Stige et al., 2009). Therefore, it is important for the researcher to have an appropriate framework that can help with securing the validity and credibility of the results and that also considers the interview participants' rights.

Stige et al. (2009) suggest the EPICURE model that provides a helpful guideline for researchers involved in qualitative studies. The individual letters of the acronym stand for "*engagement* with a phenomenon or situation, *processing* of empirical material, *interpretation* of the evolving descriptions, and *critique* in relation to research processes and products" and provide guidance for "dealing with preconditions and consequences of research, with *critique*, *usefulness*, *relevance*, and *ethics* related to social situations and communities" (Stige et al., 2009, p. 1507). In the present study, the two most urgent challenges faced are how to deal with the interview participants' rights and the role of the researcher. The following will outline how both challenges were taken into consideration throughout the study.

In the case of this study, it is important to note that the author has been interested, involved, and engaged in the field of music and peacebuilding for quite some time prior to conducting the study. The author was very inspired by the interviews with the experts in the field of music in peacebuilding and felt the pressing need of wanting to share these valuable insights with others. Monthly meetings with other scholars in the field were part of the motivation to conduct this study but also may have influenced the results. This could have led the researcher and author of the study to "lean toward certain themes, to actively look for evidence to support their positions, and to create favourable or unfavourable conclusions about the sites or participants" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 260).

Pre-conceived ideas of the author on the topic may have influenced the results in a negative way, meaning that the results might not be documented and interpreted as neutral as they might have been, if the author had not had any knowledge on the subject at all. Stige et al. (2009) go on to say that "the value of qualitative research therefore relates to reflexivity in the sense of regarding the nature and impact of the engagement. Sensitivity of and reflection on the researcher-as-instrument is thus asked for" (p. 1508). It was important to the author of this study to keep a reflexive attitude by writing down notes, memos, and thought processes while conducting the study and evaluating the data. Complete absence of researcher bias cannot be ensured but the potential for it, particularly where it may be unhelpful, was reflected upon while evaluating the data throughout the whole study. On the other hand, it can, in some cases, be valuable to know more about the field prior to conducting the study since the researcher has an in-depth overview of what still needs to be researched in the field in more detail and knows which scholars are involved in the field. Data evaluation can also be more sufficient because the researcher knows exactly which research findings can contribute to new knowledge in the field and which findings are not that relevant. For this study, this meant that research and interview questions could be asked more directly and could be specifically tailored to the research purpose with the use of prior knowledge.

According to Stige et al. (2009), "It is essential [in qualitative research] to prevent situations in which the research process and the publication of results harm participants

and their communities" (p. 1511). In the case of this study, each interview participant was informed about the purpose and intention of the study and was asked to give their verbal consent to be interviewed and recorded before the interview was conducted on Zoom. Prior to the actual interview, each participant was given an overview of what was to be expected during the interview via e-mail (e.g., how long the interview would take, the interview questions, further contact information). This also clarified what was expected of the interview participants and secured the participant's rights (e.g., being able to opt out at any time, voicing of any concerns, confidentiality, etc.). It was decided that this study would not include a detailed overview of who took part in the study to secure the privacy of the interview participants. This was mainly done because the field of music in peacebuilding is quite small and there is a chance that the interview participants might know each other. In addition to that, the author has decided to keep the interview participants' names anonymous to provide more privacy around the information given. The recorded interviews were deleted after the data had been analysed with the author being the sole person who had had access to those interviews.

Findings

Through analysing and coding the data, ten categories emerged that were relevant for understanding the use of music or music therapy in a peacebuilding setting from different perspectives: (1) different backgrounds of people conducting projects in the field; (2) definitions and understanding of peacebuilding; (3) main connections between music and peacebuilding; (4) general information about conflict; (5) values and aims of using music in peacebuilding; (6) ways music can be applied to support peacebuilding processes; (7) music therapy in peacebuilding; (8) cultural aspects; (9) music in peacebuilding project organization; and (10) the future of the field. These ten categories were then divided into two main topics that helped understand how music is used in a peacebuilding context: *Theoretical Knowledge and Background* which included categories (1) – (4) and *Practical Applications* which included categories (5) – (10).

Since this is a lot of information to lay out in one article, the author has decided to focus on three categories from the second topic *Practical Applications* which are: (5) the values and aims of using music in a peacebuilding setting; (6) ways music can be applied to support peacebuilding processes; and (7) music therapy in peacebuilding. This decision was based on examining existing literature on the topic and the notion that there still seems to be little information available about these specific categories. This decision was further solidified after having conducted the expert interviews in which the interviewees provided significant information, valuable knowledge and important perspectives on the topic. These three categories were thought to be the most appropriate to gain insight into the research question: *How do experts from different knowledge and educational backgrounds, such as peacebuilders, musicians, music therapists, community musicians, and music educators, approach and implement music in a peacebuilding context from their perspective?*

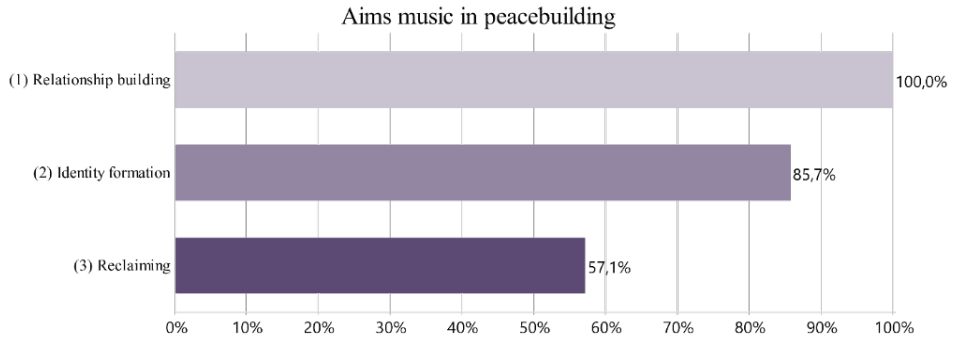
In the following section of the paper these three categories will be outlined in detail and the findings will be supported by quotes of the interviewees.

The Value and Aims of Using Music in Peacebuilding

Regarding the value of using music to support peacebuilding, interview participants mentioned broader perceptions such as making music together can help people feel a deeper and stronger sense of connection and belonging to themselves, others and the world: "I strongly believe that playing music together, musicality, listening to music, loving music, being transported by music, allows you to know and to learn about the world" (PB[1]). Additionally, music can enhance and strengthen qualities such as listening (to each other),

teambuilding, and creativity that are integral parts of peacebuilding: “My intent [was] wanting to create a more peaceful environment, at least different behaviours, different ways to listen, to really actually hear what other people are saying behind what they’re saying” (MT[2]). More specifically, three aims emerged from the data: relationship-building, identity (re-)formation, and reclaiming. The definition of these aims was interpreted by analysing the coded segments of the expert interviews by the author. The aims mentioned below portray what the interview participants were trying to achieve with music in a peacebuilding setting. These aims are also mentioned in conventional peacebuilding contexts without the use of music (Lederach, 2005, 2015; Schirch 2004). Music can be of great support with working towards and reaching these aims. Figure 1 illustrates how often the three aims were mentioned by the interview participants and Table 1 presents relevant codes within these aims and participant quotations that relate to these codes.

Figure 1. Aims of Using Music in Peacebuilding.



(1). *Relationship-building* was mentioned by every interviewee. According to the evaluated interview data, building relationships is the first step that needs to be taken in the context of music and peacebuilding. In this context, relationship-building seeks to set the foundation on which the following aims (mentioned below) can build upon. By building relationships, facilitating dialogues and discussions, creating trust among each other, providing a safe space which is rooted in respect, the groundwork for healing processes is being laid. Additionally, this aim incorporates some very important musical concepts that can support the relationship-building process such as listening, sharing, creating, and making music together.

(2). *Identity (re-)formation* can be seen as the second step. It includes different themes such as connecting to and experiencing of the self, expression of emotions, self-care, recognition of the self after conflict situations (rehumanizing) and reconnecting this new sense of self into the context of the immediate environment.

(3). *Reclaiming* a sense of self and community for individuals affected by conflict, violence and war can be seen as the third step in peacebuilding facilitated by music that emerges from the data. Whereas identity (re-)formation is more about the personal experience and exploration of the self through music, reclaiming goes one step further. Reclaiming refers to restoring resilience and ancestral roots of origin. This is often a big challenge when you find yourself within an environment that you once thought was part of you but has now been devoured by conflict, violence, or war. This includes not only buildings but also family members, friends, and one’s sense of self.

Table 1. The Value and Aims of How Music Can Be Used to Support Peacebuilding Sample Quotes.

Aim 1: Relationship-building	
Code	**Participant Quotes**
Dialogue	[Using] your creativity, in particular musical creation, musicking, playing together, to really get to know the other person, as a respectful entity. So, this kind of really open communication through dialogue is the starting point. (PB) We talk about politics, economy and all kinds of things about their culture. (MT)
Sharing	[Musical expression] brings the whole self that moves through the whole body as it's being shared. (PB) Even when you are in a disagreement music allows the multiplicity of voices. (Com. Mus.[3])
Providing a safe space	[You have to be aware of] what kind of environment you have to create and what kind of an atmosphere you have to create for people to feel safe with you. (Com. Mus.) [Creating] ground rules for things that are not allowed or things that are allowed. (MT)
Listening	Music starts from listening, so it automatically pushes you in the direction of listening to others if you are playing together. (Com. Mus.)
Respect	[Music helps you] to respect others and their needs, their opinions and their differences. (Com. Mus.)
Aim 2: Identity (Re-)Formation	
Connection	Working across communities that have been estranged really deeply from one another and drawing youth from those communities together. (PB) I think if music reminds us of the truth of our connectedness—that's a sacred art. (Mus.[4])
Expression	Music is a medium of expression, and of empowerment, you can learn something about your abilities to express yourself in a different mode. (Com. Mus.)
Self-care	There must be in your toolkit, a way to elevate your own way of thinking, of being, of feeling your life condition … and music is really good with that. (PB) Love and care for yourself. (Com. Mus.)
Recognition	[Music can] help children find what is at their centre. (MT) Exploring your needs, your background, the things that you care for. (Com. Mus.)
Reconnection	When music speaks to a kind of collective experience that is, at the same time, deeply personal and intimate it sort of moves from that inner to the outer worlds… (PB)
Aim 3: Reclaiming	
Acceptance	Hear things that are hard to hear. (Mus.)

	Coming to terms with people or views that are very different from yours. (Com Mus.)
Giving voice	Even embedded in like a single song, you have the presence of kind of many voices held together in one. (PB) Music allows the multiplicity of voices. (Com. Mus.)
Creating a narrative	It's a practice of storytelling through music which allows that memory to stay alive in different ways and be passed down. (PB)
Healing	If we're not healed inside ourselves, it's really hard to accept others still, when our trust has been absolutely fractured at the very core. (MT) Humanizing each other, sometimes rehumanizing those who've been dehumanized. (Mus.) But if you're in a really, really bad mood, or if you've been horribly traumatized and you're full of hatred, I think you need to change that first before you can have a dialogue that can be conducive to peacebuilding. (PB)
Drawing upon the past	Those are the voices (ancestral voices) that they're bringing into the present through music as they're kind of remaking a world in many ways. (PB) [...] reclaiming that identity that's really been profoundly dehumanized, but not at all eradicated. So, there's a real pride in that form of resistance as well. (PB)

What transpires from the examined interview data, is that these three aims, as well as how music can support and enhance them, in the order outlined above, can be a helpful model to call upon when working in a post-conflict context. Music supports the aims of building relationships with others and oneself, (re)forming one's identity after it has been completely shattered at the core, and reclaiming a lost sense of self, identity and community, that are already relevant to the process of peacebuilding. This model also provides a good framework for project facilitators—it suggests that one could work on all the aims at the same time or work on them individually. Even though the aims build upon each other, they can still be used in various ways in different situations. Just like peacebuilding, the model should not be understood as a fixed step-by-step process, but rather as a fluid, adaptable concept tailored to the needs of the people one is working with.

As determined above, the aims that are mostly worked on, when using music in peacebuilding, are closely related to the metaphoric nature of music as proposed by Junaberle et al. (2001) or Bonde (2007). The paper now considers how music has been practically used in a peacebuilding context, according to the interview data.

Ways Music Can Be Used to Support Peacebuilding Processes

The data showed that the way music is used to facilitate peacebuilding depends greatly on the context one is working in and the group of people one is working with. Furthermore, it transpired that the use of music needs to be carefully thought through and sensitively applied. This indicates that music is not used in the same way in every context due to various predetermined and, in some cases, unknown aspects (e.g., cultural settings and backgrounds or varying needs). The seven musical frameworks (presented in Table 2), that can be useful in different peacebuilding contexts, emerged from analysing the interview

data and were used across a variety of different settings: music as dialogue, music as a resource for joy, music to establish connection, music as a buffer between silence and speech, switching to music when words fail to speak, music after dialogue, and music in a workshop setting. On the one hand, these frameworks represent the way musical metaphors can be used to facilitate peacebuilding (Bonde, 2007, 2019; Lederach & Lederach, 2010; Robertson, 2018, Smeijsters, 2012) as outlined in the literature review of this paper. On the other hand, they also outline project structures (e.g., long-term projects, workshops, or in some cases therapy), group activities (singing, drumming, improvising, etc.), and group formations (e.g., working with people from the same cultural background affected by the same type of violence; or working with opposing groups, presumably, but not necessarily, from different cultures; or working with individuals or small groups) that can be useful in this context. Therefore, the frameworks represent a mix of musical metaphors and approaches/techniques one can use in a peacebuilding setting.

Furthermore, the frameworks presented are based on the interpreted data and were used depending on the context the project facilitators worked in. They are useful suggestions for implementing music in peacebuilding and draw upon the metaphoric nature of music, as described by Bonde (2007), Zbikowski (2008), Smeijsters (2012), and Jungaberle et al. (2001). Additionally, they offer practical ideas of how to implement music within these frameworks. Table 2 presents the music frameworks as defined by the interviewees.

Table 2. Outline of Musical Frameworks in Peacebuilding.

Musical Frameworks	
Code	**Participant Quotes**
Music as the dialogue	Christians and Muslims had gathered to sing each other's sacred music together. [That] is a profoundly humanizing thing to do. It's respectful. It's open. It's rehumanizing. (Mus.) The music does all the work, let the music lead. (PB)
Music as a resource of joy	I wanted the children to have a little bit of, let's say, exile from the situation, like an hour in which they could really forget about the oppression that this occupation by Israel is causing, and also by internal conflicts. (Com. Mus.)
Music to establish connection	Because of the music we connected. So that's a big moment for us. If I were just a therapist, like any other kind of therapist, I don't think we even would've met in the first place—through the music, we started connecting. (MT)
Music as a buffer between silence and speech	[The people one works with] can regain their own humanity, through nonverbal communication through music, expression, and communication, then they can gain back enough to use language. (PB) You can create the possibility of dialogue where it's dead, with music. (PB)
Switching to music when words fail to speak	I find that people switch into it when they're really at a loss for words, when words really fail to describe a feeling or an emotion or an experience, that you really can't capture in the limitations of spoken language. (PB)

Musical Frameworks	
Code	**Participant Quotes**
Music after dialogue	Music is what you do after you finish the verbal dialogue. (PB)
Music in a workshop setting	[...] workshops where I work with people (Com. Mus.)

Furthermore, the experts were asked about musical activities and techniques they used to incorporate music into their peacebuilding projects. Some of the activities that were implemented are circle singing, singing in general (songs of the group participants' culture, different musical styles), song writing, drumming, and improvisation (with voice or instruments). Table 3 provides an in-depth overview of the practical applications of music and how experts from different fields use music within the described musical frameworks.

Table 3. Practical Use of Music (Therapy): Activities and Techniques from Different Perspectives.

Interviewee Background	**Activities/Techniques Used**
Community Musicians	Musical games, movement games. Singing songs: greeting songs, closing songs, songs from different parts of the world and any language, songs from the culture one is working in, all types of circle singing. Collective creative processes: song writing, nonverbal teaching—good musical work is needed, always with the idea of joy and fun.
Peacebuilders	Getting to know each other through music: types of music where it looks like everybody's going to agree to play together. Creating activities together as much as possible e.g., "just" drumming or humming together. Combining different styles of music existing in the culture (e.g., traditional Afro Colombian music with Hip Hop).
Musicians	Validating and encouraging each other's natural musical proclivities and singing songs together to connect.
Music Therapists	Active music making: composing songs, working improvisationally, rhythmically, atonally, and using different types of tonal instruments. Do not get "stuck" in the conventional, traditional, typical way of doing music therapy. The music of the culture should be at the core (e.g., Sudanese music).

The musical frameworks and practical use of music described above show how versatile the use of music in a peacebuilding context can be. Therefore, the group facilitator needs to be very flexible, well-equipped, and prepared for different types of situations. The frameworks and practical uses of music provide important information for group

facilitators working in a peacebuilding context. The group facilitator can select the presented frameworks and activities that best suit their given context and can therefore specifically cater to the needs of the group of people they are working with. A lot of what happens in a peacebuilding and music context arises within the moment—the group dynamics can be very fragile and unpredictable so the facilitator needs to have a good set of tools they can draw from to support the group processes in a safe and meaningful way.

Music Therapy in Peacebuilding

This section covers some ideas about the use of music *therapy* in peacebuilding. The use of music therapy in a peacebuilding setting is thought to be a valuable and useful way to approach the aims in peacebuilding. In the literature review, there is literature suggesting that the field of music therapy could provide some important and valuable ideas and thoughts for the use of music in peacebuilding (Hunt & Legge, 2015; Juslin & Sloboda, 2013; Koelsch et al., 2010; Peretz, 2010). Since this paper aspires to outline and pay special attention to the use of music therapy in a peacebuilding setting, all experts were asked to comment on their ideas of the use of music therapy. Table 4 offers an overview of the different perspectives on the use of music therapy in peacebuilding.

Table 4. Music Therapy in Peacebuilding from Different Perspectives.

Interviewee Background	Participant Quotes
Community Musicians	I am convinced that music can be therapeutical. Of course, you can go and research how it works in reality. But you can also feel it. You can also feel it from the empirical point of view, you can feel how music affects people on a therapeutic level, even without the research. Of course, you can do the research to understand how, but I think music can be therapeutic. Also, because for myself it has been therapeutical.
Peacebuilders	You need to use language to really come to healing these kinds of terrible stories that have happened to you, music is not enough. I would say, music therapy is great, but people also talk and confide and trust. We still need specializations, we need music therapy as a very specific job with specific training, you don't want to start fooling around with people's health. It's a very strict field. And it must remain like that. However, there are some music therapists who are really able to contribute to activities outside the clinical world, and very much for peacebuilding. It's the difference between the therapeutic use of music and music therapy. [One can say] I am using music therapeutically. But it's not music therapy because music therapy tends to be quite individual or small group.
Musicians	[Music] is the only non-tangible, mood-altering drug. It has no physical form or substance. And yet, it's a mood-altering drug. That's a wild thing to consider.
Music Therapists	My work also led away from the actual nuts and bolts of music-based therapy, which was what I was there to do of course, but I was really looking at it from a bird's eye view, sort of a helicopter view of what the arts are all about: why art, why music?

Interviewee Background	Participant Quotes
	And so, we were there as trauma experts. And we weren't because nobody really had that training in their background. We were aware of things like culture shock and trauma, of course, but not really with a deep understanding of it, other than to know that it could appear in clusters of behaviours in different ways.
	I feel like they do need someone like a music therapist who is trained to not only make music, but also the therapy part. So, it's not a conventional way to practice music therapy. But all the knowledge and experience and skill sets that music therapists get through the training I think is so valuable. And it's so important, and almost like necessary, I can see it's necessary for working with those kinds of people who went through a lot.
	When we talk about music therapy we talk about improvisation and different kinds of musical genres and different kinds of music that might be used for certain reasons. But for this context it's really about the music of the culture (e.g., Sudanese music) because of the idea of peacebuilding and the situation in the country at this moment. We are not doing weekly music therapy sessions together. That's not happening.

It is important to note, that all interview participants stated that they think that music therapy can be very valuable in a peacebuilding context. It can be very helpful to have in-depth therapeutic background knowledge on trauma, especially in peacebuilding. The quotes present both helpful aspects, things to consider, and limitations of using music therapy to facilitate peacebuilding. All interviewees agreed on the fact that music can be therapeutic. This is captured very nicely in a quote by one interviewee: "I am convinced that music can be therapeutical. Of course, you can go and research how it works in reality. But you can also feel it" (Com. Mus.). The limitations of using only music were also outlined. One interviewee mentioned, "You need to use language to really come to healing these kinds of terrible stories that have happened to you, music is not enough" (PB).

There are many ways music and music therapy can be applied in a peacebuilding context. The following discussion section aims to draw these findings together and provide the reader with an overview of the most important results, how they link to the reviewed literature, and what the results imply for the field of music and peacebuilding.

Discussion

The leading research question for this study was to find out how experts from different backgrounds, e.g., music therapists, peacebuilders, musicians, community musicians, and music educators working in peacebuilding, implement music in a peacebuilding context. The literature reviewed in the chapters above provides a lot of helpful and necessary information that reveals relevant links between the two seemingly different fields for example music and music-making (Howell, 2018, 2020), the use of musical spaces (Levesque & Ferguson, 2020), community building (Ostashewski, 2020), identity formation of individuals and groups (Robertson, 2019, 2020), emotional expression (Dieckman & Davidson, 2018), and dialogue (Gottesman, 2016, 2018). It has therefore created a solid foundation to work with. Nevertheless, there is still a high need for more

information on the topic. The reviewed literature mainly presents broad concepts of using music in peacebuilding whilst only hinting towards practical implications. This study therefore aims at providing more information on the practical use of music in peacebuilding by making use of the interdisciplinary nature of the field and including scholars from various backgrounds.

The collected data turned out to be very extensive and could not completely be included in this paper. In this case, only the data that was thought to provide the most relevant contribution to the use of music in peacebuilding, and that provided the most information to answer the research question, was shared. The following will provide a closer look into the three topics presented in the results section. These findings will now be linked to and situated within the broader context of music and peacebuilding.

Value and Aims of Using Music in Peacebuilding

Relationship-building

Relationship-building was mentioned by all interviewees, when asked about their values and aims for using music in peacebuilding (see Figure 1). The interviewees stated that relationship-building was primarily related to building connections among the group(s) of people affected by violence they were working with, especially between the participants themselves and between the group facilitator and the participants. The concept of musical dialogue as part of relationship-building was described as follows by one interviewee: "[Using] your creativity, in particular of musical creation, musicking, playing together, to really get to know the other person, as a respectful entity. So, this kind of really open communication through dialogue is the starting point" (PB). This aligns with Pruitt's (2011) work, in which the author also discusses how music can be used as an alternative tool for people in conflict areas to engage in dialogue due to music's inherent features of both speech and non-verbal communication.

Providing a safe space, listening, and respect provide a solid framework for relationship-building activities. The importance and aim of relationship-building in peacebuilding is also stressed by Schirch (2004) and Lederach (2005). Relationships are both the starting point and context in which cycles of violence happen and which generate new energy that can help transform and overcome conflict (Lederach, 2005). Making music together focuses on establishing connection, respecting, sharing, and listening to each other through different musical activities within a community (Lenette & Sunderland, 2014). This was also the opinion of the interviewees—with music, it is possible to allow many voices to be heard next to each other: "Even when you are in a disagreement music allows the multiplicity of voices" (Com. Mus.).

Identity (re-)formation

Identity (re-)formation was found to be the second most important aim of using music in peacebuilding (see Figure 1). The interviewees mentioned aspects such as music could "help children find what is at their centre" (MT) or music could help with "exploring your needs, your background, the things that you care for" (Com. Mus.). These are all essential parts of identity (re-)formation, especially in conflict situations in which the individual's whole world is turned upside down. Different aspects related to identity formation mentioned by the interviewees are *self-care*, *expression*, and *recognition*, all of which are relevant in music and peacebuilding contexts. Music therapy, especially, can be connected to the idea of self-exploration (e.g., in creative music therapy practices) and strengthening a person's identity through music (Aigen, 2014; Aldridge, 1989).

Additionally, the concept of forming one's identity with the help of music is related to

peacebuilding and has been explored in other studies (Robertson, 2019, 2020). The essence of what identity formation entails for the use of music in peacebuilding is captured in the following quote by an interviewee: "Music is a medium of expression, and of empowerment, with which you can learn something about your abilities to express yourself in a different mode" (Com. Mus.). This again points towards the metaphorical component of music, described by Bonde (2007, 2019), Smeijsters (2012), and Jungaberle et al. (2001), that can be very valuable in a peacebuilding context. This is an important finding since this emphasises and outlines the connections that can be made between music and peacebuilding in terms of offering individuals a creative way to express themselves and envision peaceful futures.

Reclaiming

In the aftermath of conflict, people need to reclaim their sense of self. Music can be a valuable tool to support this process and can offer healing. Both peacebuilders and musicians emphasized this in the interviews. One interviewee stated that music can help "reclaim that identity that's really been profoundly dehumanized, but not at all eradicated" (PB). The term dehumanization is often used in a peacebuilding context. It tries to portray the horrendous effect war and conflict can have on individuals: the loss of individuality, humanity, and dignity. On the other hand, the use of music in peacebuilding can help with rehumanizing the self and others. Individuals who have experienced this sense of rehumanization are then able to help others. Peacebuilders, as well as musicians, talked about this process of rehumanization. A quote from one interviewee captures this: "Humanizing each other, sometimes rehumanizing those who've been dehumanized" (PB) is what can happen in peacebuilding with the help of music.

The interviewees stated that reclaiming is also closely connected to healing and has a significant influence on the peacebuilding process: "If we're not healed inside ourselves, it's really hard to accept others still, when our trust has been absolutely fractured at the very core" (MT). The interviewees also mentioned concepts such as *giving a voice*, *acceptance*, and *healing* as part of reclaiming which are concepts that appear in peacebuilding and music as well as music therapy literature (Lederach & Lederach, 2010; Stige & Aarø, 2011). Healing is also an essential aspect of music therapy and is closely related to the concept of sound healing as defined by Crowe and Scovel (1996):

> If, however, specific frequencies, overtones, instrument timbre, rhythms, and sound combinations are affecting body structures, energy systems, and brain waves of our clients, it would seem that we, as professionals would want to know how and if these effects are occurring so that our work can be even more effective. (p. 27)

If music has unique features that affect people's body structures and brain waves, as described in the quote above, it is important for experts in the field to be aware of these effects and the positive and negative consequences this could possibly have on the people one is working with in a peacebuilding context.

Ways Music Can Be Used to Support Peacebuilding Processes

Peacebuilding takes place in countries worldwide (Heidenreich, 2005). All interviewees have worked or are currently working in a variety of places and different contexts, such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Sudan, Colombia, Japan, the United States of America, Germany, and Palestine. Therefore, not every peacebuilding context is the same and experts working in the field need to be sensitive, adaptable, and flexible. The seven musical frameworks (see Table 2) that transpired from the data serve as a pool of ideas that music therapists, musicians, and peacebuilders can choose from depending on the context their work takes

place in and the aims they are working towards.

The musical frameworks (see Table 2) outline a variety of different ways music can be used to support peacebuilding. One interviewee stated, "People switch into [music] when they're really at a loss for words when words really fail to describe a feeling or an emotion or an experience, that you really can't captivate in the limitations of spoken language" (PB). The fact that people switch into music automatically to express themselves is an interesting finding. It points towards music being a natural tool of expression people draw upon when they are at a severe loss for words as described by Volgsten (2012).

People in different contexts from different cultures have different needs and find themselves in different stages within the peacebuilding process. One of the interviewees, who had worked in Palestine within an acute context of conflict stated, "I wanted the children to have a little bit of, let's say, exile from the situation, like an hour in which they could really forget about the oppression that this occupation by Israel is causing, and also by internal conflicts" (Com. Mus.). Another interviewee said:

> Because of the music we connected. So that's a big moment for us. If I were just a therapist, like any other kind of therapist, I don't think we even would've met in the first place—through the music, we started connecting. (MT)

The use of music therefore varies depending on the immediate environment and context one is working in, so not every suggested musical framework applies to every setting. All interviewees emphasised the importance of paying attention to the needs of the people they were working with: "their musical map, their musical history, their musical narrative" (PB).

Furthermore, community musicians, music educators, and musicians provided information on organising workshops and projects. They talked about the practical use of music which provided detailed information about how they implemented music in peacebuilding according to the aims (Table 3). Activities such as *circle singing*, *songwriting*, *improvisation*, *singing songs of the group's culture*, and *body percussion and movement* were mentioned. Similar results were published by Lenette and Sunderland (2014). They analysed how different musical activities contributed to well-being in conflict, refugee camps and resettlement settings.

Additionally, all interviewees paid particular attention to reflecting on their privileges and opinions, always keeping in mind that they were approaching peacebuilding and the use of music from a Western perspective. One interviewee stated that it would be beneficial to "meet some authentic indigenous people who will tell you a completely different angle on the question" (PB). All interviewees talked openly about having to be flexible, open, and adaptive and stated that this was important since they had also encountered difficulties with cultural differences such as language, religion, and the use of music: "There are lots of differences in terms of culture, but I think the religion part was the biggest difference I experienced" (MT), and "Each community has their own level of rules and their own ideas of what you can do and what you cannot do. But in general, I had to take care not to overstep social norms" (Com. Mus.).

The presented musical frameworks and practical applications are meant to serve as inspiration for the possible uses of music in a peacebuilding setting. Project facilitators and the people involved should carefully consider their use. Furthermore, the interviewees stressed that music should not be seen as the only tool to use in a peacebuilding setting—it is important to keep in mind that the use of music is connected to many layers of culture and identity (Brown, 2002; Moreno, 1988).

Music Therapy

As mentioned before, the term music therapy in this paper, refers to the use of specific

music therapy approaches and techniques, such as Cognitive-Behavioural Music therapy (CBMT), Community Music Therapy approaches (CoMT), The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music (GIM), Creative Music Therapy (Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy), songwriting (Baker, 2013), or improvisation (Bruscia, 1987), that music therapists use within therapeutic settings. Both interviewed music therapists stated that music therapy in a peacebuilding setting lead away from their experience of conventional ways of doing music therapy. Both music therapists are clinically trained and have a lot of work experience in the clinical field. One music therapist said that they were looking at music "from a bird's eye view, sort of a helicopter view of what the arts are all about: why art, why music?" (MT). Another music therapist mentioned that they were not doing conventional weekly music therapy sessions with improvisation, as they used to, but were rather focusing on the music of the culture (Sudanese music) in the context of peacebuilding. This aligns with the notion of an interviewee who mentioned that music therapists can also apply music therapeutic activities outside of a clinical context, in peacebuilding for example. This was also something that O'Grady and McFerran (2007) reported. They conducted a study about the relationship between community music and community music therapy. The authors clearly state that music therapists have unique skills that can be of value in a community context. According to the study mentioned above, music therapists were seen to be especially good at prioritising the participant, considering the value of aesthetics more, and knowing about the influence of culture in music therapy (O'Grady & McFerran, 2007). However, there are also some limitations since music therapists mainly work in clinical spaces and with small groups of people or even individuals.

What transpires clearly from the interview data is that there is potential for using music therapy in peacebuilding, yet the exact use and situation where and how music therapy might be especially beneficial still needs to be explored in further detail. Furthermore, the therapeutic use of music to hold emotions and help integrate feelings into the here and now is emphasized. But music can also amplify uncomfortable emotions, cause pain, and can be used for manipulative purposes (Fast & Pegley, 2019; Hintjens & Ubaldo, 2012). Working in a peacebuilding and music setting requires sensitivity and flexibility but also the awareness of the fragility of a moment created within music.

Another aspect mentioned about the use of music therapy in a peacebuilding context was that it is crucial to be careful with how therapy is integrated. This relates closely to the project's aims and the context a project facilitator finds themselves in. Some of the interviewees had experienced that therapy in general was not a common thing in some cultures and, in many cases, was attached to stigma within society. Nevertheless, it is good to have background knowledge about trauma because it will be something one is confronted with in a peacebuilding setting. According to some studies, people who are directly or indirectly affected by violence and war develop symptoms of trauma (Enge & Stige, 2021; Mallon & Antik, 2021; Millar & Warwick, 2019; Uguak, 2010). Sometimes even witnessing a violent event can be very traumatizing. Sounds are often connected to traumatic experiences, which is important to be aware of when using music in a peacebuilding setting (Bensimon et al., 2008).

One of the interviewed music therapists mentioned that music alone is not enough: "Music therapy is great, but you need to use language to really come to healing these kinds of terrible stories that have happened to you" (MT). This implies that, in their experience, language and communication play an important role in peacebuilding work and must go hand in hand with the use of music. This thought was supported by one of the interviewees from the field of peacebuilding: "We still need specializations, we need music therapy as a very specific job with specific training, you don't want to start fooling around with people's health. It's a very strict field. And it must remain like that" (PB). This statement serves as a reminder, that scholars working in the field of music and peacebuilding do not

have to do and know everything—everyone has their own specializations and knowledge about a specific topic (for example music therapy, peacebuilding, music education, or research). Peacebuilding settings are very diverse by nature, so it is important to work together and support each other.

The Multidisciplinary Nature of the Field

Most interviewees recommended that exchange among practitioners from different backgrounds is crucial for the future and development of music in peacebuilding. This was also stated by an interviewee: "The more that there are musicians, or these connections being made and kind of in conversation and made across different places I just think it's such important work to lead" (PB).

This study clearly portrays that peacebuilders, music therapists, musicians, music educators, and community musicians all have similar ideas, concepts, aims, and aspirations when it comes to using music in peacebuilding, and at the same time, they all have extensive knowledge in different areas of expertise. This is an ideal chance to start exchanging ideas, views, and knowledge among all people working in the field where many fields of expertise merge into one.

Future Research

Future research must include collaborations and joint research projects considering the multidisciplinary nature of the research topic. The interviewees outlined this clearly with their answers and arguments for using music in peacebuilding. The expert interviews showcase that further research is valuable and needed to gain a deeper understanding of how and when music can be best applied in a peacebuilding context. Music in peacebuilding is a field that carries a lot of potential, and many valuable (research) projects about the use of music in a peacebuilding context have already been conducted. Nevertheless, more case studies and further research on how music is used, practically and on-site, would be of great value to help understand the use and value of music in peacebuilding even better.

It is also necessary to include more researchers (from different parts of the world) in future research to help with recruiting the participants/experts, conducting the interviews, and evaluating the data. Finlay (2002) points out that "our behavior will always affect participants' responses, thereby influencing the direction of findings" (p. 531). Therefore, including more researchers would add multiple different perspectives, more exchange among researchers and would add more depth to the research findings. Rethinking the research design might also be helpful. Perhaps a survey would be more fitting to gather data with a bigger sample of interview participants.

One could also consider analysing the role culture plays in using music in a peacebuilding context. A more extensive study, with more interview participants from different cultural backgrounds, on how music can be helpful to facilitate peacebuilding would be of great value. This would help with gaining an even deeper understanding of how music can be applied in different peacebuilding settings around the world. The present study mainly portrays and outlines how people who were educated in the Western world work with music, peacebuilding, healing, therapy, trauma, conflict, community, etc. in a peacebuilding and music context. The interview participants talked about what it was like to work in different cultural settings since there are different notions of what peace means, and what music is in different cultures all around the world. Since this was not the focus of the study, this aspect is not included in the present paper.

Limitations

The transformative research paradigm applied in this study focuses on cultural aspects and values of society that construct reality and expects the researcher to preserve a reflective attitude towards their research (Mertens, 2010). The researcher's ability to reflect on their privileges, background, and own values while conducting the study and analysing the results and how this might influence the results was an essential part of the present study. Since "qualitative research is interpretative research; the inquirer is typically involved in a sustained and intensive experience with participants" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 260). This was the case in the presented study. Therefore, the limitations of the present study clearly arise from the potential for researcher bias and the influence of preconceived ideas the author might have had prior to conducting the research. Even though a reflexive attitude and open mindset of the author were kept and attended to while analysing the data, personal bias influences the results due to the nature of the study. This is not uncommon when qualitative research is conducted by a sole researcher (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Furthermore, many different views from different backgrounds were involved in this study and composed the results, but there are many more experts in the field who could've been included in the study. It would have been helpful to have more researchers involved in the study who could have helped with recruiting a wider variety of experts. Finlay (2002) supports this idea by saying that conducting qualitative research requires the researcher to be highly reflective and subjective throughout the whole research process. This is not an easy undertaking and can easily lead to misinterpretations or biased interpretations of the collected data. This is especially the case with interview data in which the results can potentially be adapted to a preconceived notion or idea of what the outcome should look like. Having more people analyse the interview data could reduce researcher bias.

The quality of this study was assured by the researcher's in-depth and intensive engagement with the research topic and data. Furthermore, the quality of this study was assured by upholding the principles of the EPICURE model, suggested by Stige et al. (2009), for researchers involved in qualitative studies. This was done by making sure that every step of the research process was performed ethically by protecting the participant's rights and by upholding a reflective research attitude throughout the entire research process. Since the questions posed during the interviews were only semi-structured, they also left a lot of room for interpretation and long explanations. The results automatically had to be summed up into smaller portions by the author.

Conclusion

It is worthy to note that musicians, peacebuilders, music therapists, community musicians, and music educators all clearly see the value of integrating music in a peacebuilding process. All interviewees had a very similar way of looking at music in peacebuilding. They provided insights into different perspectives from different knowledge backgrounds which can be helpful to gain more insight into the field in the future. Even though the settings project facilitators work in can vary enormously, the intention of wanting to work together with a community towards a more peaceful future is the same for all interview participants.

This study shows how music can be used to offer new perspectives and serve as a resource for imagining this future. Music, especially when working in a peacebuilding setting, can teach us to look for ways towards peace from a different perspective. This study also portrays how music can help with conceptualizing our ideas and images of peace by using music's innate metaphorical nature to describe peace. As one interviewee stated so nicely:

> I think music and poetry and allowing people to create visual art for that matter is a really healthy way to process that stuff, our own woundedness, our own toxic history. There are various ways to get it out. One is violence. Another one is art. And of the two I'm all for art because the violence just leads to more toxicity and more brokenness. (Mus.)

At this point, it is important to note and remember, that music is only one of many creative outlets that can be valuable in a peacebuilding setting. Peace, just like music, is a creative process and needs to be reinvented and redefined constantly. This is why peace links so nicely to the arts—they are also innately creative. Peace does not only imply a set concept of values whose definition varies from individual to individual, but peace also comes along with a feeling, an emotion, that is bigger than we can describe with words and that we can sometimes only feel. Through music we can envision and embody a need for peace that is not rooted in an idealistic and romantic view of peace, but that is composed of the lived realities of many people who still suffer greatly from violence due to war, conflicts, and oppression of all sorts.

The author hopes that the present study outlines and portrays the potential of and need for music in peacebuilding in our society. Music in peacebuilding can take on as many shapes and sizes as there are people living on this planet, including different cultures and backgrounds, and is not a fixed concept available to only a few. The aspiration behind using music to facilitate peacebuilding is connected to the hope and vision of a better future and the wish to strengthen the ability to reconcile with the past through creativity and expression.

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About the Author

Johanna Möller has always been interested in music and how it affects our health and wellbeing. Her passion for music and peacebuilding comes from her experiences living and travelling abroad and learning from different cultures. She believes, and has seen, that music therapy is a powerful tool that can bring a lot of happiness to individuals and communities alike. Johanna holds a master's degree in music therapy from ArtEZ Enschede, University of the Arts in The Netherlands. She has worked for Raukatauri Music Therapy Trust in Whakatane, Aotearoa New Zealand, and is currently practicing at the University Clinic in Freiburg, Germany, where she is working with children and young adults in the mental health department.

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[1] "PB" is short for expert in the field of peacebuilding.

[2] "MT" is short for expert in the field of music therapy.

[3] "Com. Mus." is short for expert in the field of community music.

[4] "Mus." is short for musician.