

**SPECIAL ISSUE**

Guided Imagery and Music: Contemporary European perspectives and developments

Article

‘Soundscapes’: A Norwegian music programme in the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music (GIM) elucidated through individual GIM therapy

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ABSTRACT

This text focuses on the music-listening practice of the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music (*BMGIM*). *Soundscapes*, a music-listening programme comprising only Norwegian music, is described and illustrated through the practice of GIM with a female executive in her mid-thirties. After offering a brief overview of the GIM method, including development, training, and the music in GIM, I then turn to the development of the music programme *Soundscapes*. Thereafter, I discuss the music programme’s potential to evoke images related to Norwegian landscape and culture. The main themes in the GIM process, ‘in motion’ and ‘belonging’, link to the client’s renewed line of development. I suggest that music and music-listening can promote images and transformative experiences where nature and cultural belonging are core elements, and that this is particularly evident when the *Soundscapes* programme is incorporated into GIM therapy.

KEYWORDS

music programme, soundscapes, Guided Imagery and Music (GIM)

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INTRODUCTION

Sometimes we make music ourselves. At other times, the music-listening experience is at the forefront. This text addresses music-listening through the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music (GIM). The music programme *Soundscapes*, comprised of Norwegian composers and compiled by Aksnes and Ruud (2006, 2008), is described and elucidated in this article through an example of

individual GIM practice. There is a short presentation of the listening method, followed by a presentation of the music programme and an example of the use of *Soundscapes* in clinical practice.¹

¹ This text is a variation and an expansion of the book chapter: “Soundscapes. Et norsk musikkprogram i musikklyttemetoden The Bonny Method of Guided

THE BONNY METHOD OF GIM

Development and training

The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music (GIM) was developed in the 1970s at the Psychiatric Research Center in Baltimore (USA) by the violinist and music therapist Helen Lindquist Bonny (Bonny 2002; Bonny & Savary 1973; Summer 1988). GIM is a music-listening process that allows for a variety of images to emerge while listening to classical music in a relaxed state of mind. It is an in-depth therapeutic method where music is used to promote the exploration and expansion of inner experiences (Goldberg 1995).

GIM is known all over the world, and the field continues to expand. Practical development, expansion of theory, new music programmes and research all contribute to the development of the method (Bruscia & Grocke 2002, Bruscia 2016). The application of GIM ranges from treatment in psychiatric care to music-listening for people undergoing self-development processes. The GIM training is usually several years takes the form of modules where clinical practice and theoretical reflection are vital.

GIM as a method

GIM is a music-centred method with music-listening at its very core. It includes specific music programmes and a procedure for performing a session (Bruscia 2016; Bruscia & Grocke 2002). GIM combines music-listening with relaxation, visualisation and conversation. It offers the opportunity for music-listening at different levels of consciousness. Listening to music in a relaxed state of mind allows for different forms of images to emerge. 'Imagery' or 'image' refer to "experiences of music during the listening phase of GIM, including images in all sensory modalities, kinaesthetic images, body sensations, feelings, thoughts and noetic images (an intuitive sense of imaginal events that arise outside of other imagery modes)" (Goldberg 2002: 360). Researchers have demonstrated that GIM can change counterproductive behaviour, reduce stress, empower people to solve problems, and increase access to creative personal resources (see, for

example, Beck 2012; Bonde 2002; Körlin & Wrangsjö 2002; Trondalen 2010, 2015).

A GIM session in its classical individual format lasts for 1½-2 hours and consists of five parts. GIM starts with a pre-conversation (Prelude) to promote a theme or a metaphor as a starting point for the music-listening experience - the music journey. This verbal conversation forms the basis for the therapist's choice of music. Then follows a relaxation phase (Induction), in preparation for the music journey, where the client is lying down or relaxing in a recliner. During the core segment, the music journey (30-40 minutes), the client tells the therapist about her experiences. The therapist listens intently and periodically makes nondirective verbal comments to support the client to try to describe the experience; to stay close to it and to feel the full impact of it (Grocke 2005). The therapist assists the client in exploring and staying close to her experiences through a supportive and non-judgmental dialogue. During the music journey, the GIM therapist writes down the client's words for her images. The client gets this transcription when the session is over, while the therapist keeps a copy. When the music has ended, the GIM therapist encourages the client to finalise her images and return to an awakened state of mind (Return). After the music-listening has finished, the experience is processed in a conversation with the therapist (Postludium). This segment is often combined with circle-drawing ('mandala', Kellogg 1984), the use of clay, movement, or other creative forms.

The music in GIM

The original 18 core music programmes in GIM comprise classical Western art music, mainly from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries (Bonny 1978; Meadows 2010). Over the years, music therapists have used a variety of music genres, and today there are about 100 music programmes (Bonde 2009). Accordingly, the musical content is subject to discussion. The music programmes have different names – for example, 'Caring', 'Relationship' and 'Affect Release' - and consist of carefully selected movements/pieces. The programme is created to support and deepen different psychological needs; for example, the experience of unconditional support, or a symbolic goodbye to (one aspect) of life (Bonde, Pedersen, & Wigram 2001: 89).

In an interview with the American music therapy professor Nicki Cohen (2003-2004), Bonny accentuates the importance of the structure of the

Imagery and Music" (Trondalen, 2017). Thanks to the publisher, who has given informed consent to publish the text in English.

music, dynamics, melodic variation, pitch, rhythm, expressive quality, and instrumentation. The qualities that characterise the music can be equivalent to the way our emotional life unfolds. The music mirrors and promotes what is active in the client's awareness in the here and now; our inner life fluctuates with the life that pulsates in the music. Furthermore, Bonny draws attention to the recording itself, and to the quality of the instruments. This is important, particularly since the music is experienced differently in a relaxed state of mind compared to the way in which we experience music through everyday listening (Bonny 1978).

SOUNDSCAPES

The development of the music programme

The idea behind the *Soundscapes* programme was to develop a new programme based on a local music tradition within a European classical canon; specifically, a music programme with only Norwegian composers.

"The music should be of Norwegian composers, and there should be sufficiently agreed upon 'national' elements to afford references to local culture and geography." (Aksnes & Ruud 2006: 52)

The programme should include an affective-intensity profile with points of high intensity towards the end of the programme, and take into account therapeutic dimensions like 'holding' and 'stimulation'. Holding links to a musical space, i.e. a home base for the client to feel safe; while stimulation relates to the expansion of a musical terrain (Summer 1995: 38-39). The first pieces of music should facilitate 'the transition from the induced, altered state of consciousness to the sounding of music' (Aksnes & Ruud 2006: 52). They say,

"When music was selected, we considered the actual mood of the individual piece, as intuitively reflected in Hevner's mood-wheel. Both score-based analysis and phenomenologically based self-listening procedures were utilized in the process." (Ruud 2005: 15)²

² Hevner's (1937) "mood wheel" is a systematic model of feelings and moods that can be expressed musically, of

The evaluation process included analysis of the scores, a structural music-listening procedure, in addition to a phenomenological open-listening (Ferrara 1991). The result became the music programme *Soundscapes*, which consists of seven short pieces. The Norwegian professors Hallgjerd Aksnes and Even Ruud developed the music-listening programme as a part of the research project *Musical Gestures* at the Department of Musicology at the University of Oslo (Aksnes & Ruud 2006, 2008).

Soundscapes comprises of music from the Norwegian composers Geirr Tveitt and Johan Svendsen, which seem to fulfil the criteria for "national elements as well as the metaphorical and metonymic 'affordances' we wanted to research" (Ruud 2005: 15).³ The metaphorical and metonymic affordances are not connected to language alone, but include the whole human being's sensory-motoric system with its complex interaction of cognitive processes. Another reason for the choice of music was Aksnes' (2002) expert knowledge of Tveitt's music.

In addition to the working procedure presented above, the music was also tried out through nine music-listening sessions with people with different music-listening competencies. Based on this feedback, and the researchers' heuristic knowledge, one piece was replaced. The following music was chosen (Aksnes & Ruud 2006: 52):

No.	Title	Duration
1.	Geir Tveitt. <i>O Be Ye Most Heartily Welcome (Vélkomne med æra)</i> From: A Hundred Folktunes from Hardanger, Op. 151, # 1 Naxos 8.555078	3:41

which we as listeners recognize and react to (Bonde, 2014, pp. 61-62).

³ *Metonymy*, (from Greek *metōnymia*, "change of name", or "misnomer"), figure of speech in which the name of an object or concept is replaced with a word closely related to or suggested by the original, as "crown" to mean "king" ("the power of the crown was mortally weakened"), or an author for his works ("I'm studying Shakespeare"). A familiar Shakespearean example is Mark Antony's speech in *Julius Caesar*, in which he asks of his audience: "Lend me your ears" (Encyclopaedia Britannica 2008).

2.	Geir Tveitt. <i>Consecration of the New Beer (Uppskoka)</i> From: A Hundred Folktunes from Hardanger, Op. 151, # 7 Naxos 8.555078	2:35
3.	Geir Tveitt. <i>Stave Church Chant (Stavkyrkjesteve)</i> From: A Hundred Folktunes from Hardanger, Op. 151, # 5 Naxos 8.555078	1:29
4.	Geir Tveitt. <i>Snow Goose on the Glacier (Rhupo pao Folgafodne)</i> From: A Hundred Folktunes from Hardanger, Op. 151, # 23 Naxos 8.555078	3:34
5.	Geir Tveitt. <i>Concerto No. 2 for Hardanger Fiddle and Orchestra (Konsert nr. 2 for hardingfele og orkester)</i> From: Hardanger Fjord Aurora NCD-B 4945	4:19
6.	Geir Tveitt. <i>Piano Concerto No. 1 in F major, Op. 1, 1st Movement (Klaverkonsert nr. 1 i F-dur, op. 1, 1. sats)</i> Naxos 8. 555077	7:02
7.	Johan S. Svendsen. <i>Last Year I Was Tending the Goats (I Fjol Gjætt'e Gjeirinn)</i> Op. 31. Simax PSC 1097	4:32

Table 1: Soundscapes

Several recordings were examined. For pragmatic reasons, the researchers chose productions available to an international audience, mainly within NAXOS (Marco Polo) (Ruud 2005).

Soundscapes in practice: An example from individual GIM

Ann was a sporty Norwegian female executive working in an international business firm. She was in her mid-thirties and experiencing unsolved issues in her life that seemed to impede her work performance. Ann had five GIM sessions over a period of four months. She came with a mission, as she wanted to explore what she described as her 'rucksack of sadness'.⁴ The GIM therapy also

⁴ This care example is published in full length as a research case in the article "Exploring the Rucksack of

included elements from life coaching, presented as homework. The author performed the sessions; hence, the author is both researcher and GIM-therapist in the setting. Such a double role may present challenges for those trained in traditional view of experimental design and quantitative analysis" (Robson 2002: 314). However, the present study is a qualitative one, where the researcher uses herself as both participant and observer, and is therefore a first-hand source of information and empirical closeness to the phenomena. Bruscia argues (1995a: 71):

"Thus, the researcher may be both participant and observer. This active engagement gives the researcher the first-hand experiences and empathy needed to understand the subjects or phenomena from an inside perspective."

He continues: "The only way a researcher can study another person is to experience that person's behavior within an interpersonal context" (Bruscia 1995b: 395). Therefore it is only the researcher's experiences of the events and subjects that she is able to grasp and, in this way, the interpersonal context in itself becomes important. Different researchers will always experience the same situation in different ways. The music programme was chosen on the basis of Ann's here-and-now focus, in addition to the therapist's "intuitive choice".⁵ The client has given informed consent. She is anonymised in the text and the name used is a pseudonym.

Session 1

In the first session, Ann listened to the music programme *Caring* (Bonny & Keiser Mardis, as cited in Grocke 2002: 130-131). In her imagery, Ann is sailing but has to return due to bad weather. She meets her father who passed away years ago. Her father looks after her throughout the image on an eagle. Ann is mourning. She visualises her grandmother and grandfather at *The Place* (which

Sadness. Focused, Time-Limited Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music with a Female Executive" (Trondalen 2009-2010). The present text, however, focuses on the exploration of the music programme *Soundscapes*, which elucidates especially through session four in the client's GIM process.

⁵ Intuitive choice is understood as an immediate and creative mobilisation of the complete experience the therapist possesses (Eide & Eide 1996).

is both a real place and a house in reality), where she used to spend her childhood vacations. She wishes that she does not have to be so strong all the time. It is hard to breathe. At her father's funeral, she meets an old woman, who tells her about her childhood.

Drawing: Ann draws a globe inside a circle. On the globe, she draws some small countries of the European continent. The globe is only partially covered with dry land; the rest of the globe is empty.

Session 2

In the second session, Ann listens to *Relationships-M* (Bonny 1978; Bruscia & Grocke 2002, Appendix B). She visualises beautiful dresses and luxury. Ann enters a concert hall and becomes aware of the oboe, before going on a sailing trip. She experiences a clearing in the forest, where she encounters Robin Hood and Cinderella. Ann travels to rivers and castles. Flutes and birds are important, together with an ice-blue colour.

Drawing: Ann draws a princess with a crown wearing an ice-blue ballgown.

Session 3

In the third session, *Nurturing-M* (Bonny 1978; Bruscia & Grocke 2002, Appendix B) the images vary a lot. There are dark skies, beautiful nature and old furniture. Ann sees her grandmother and grandfather at *The Place*, and is back in the old church at her father's funeral. She connects to the oboe and bassoon, and she recalls kindergarten and the play *Peter and the Wolf*. Ann is in the mountains. The nature is stunning and it is warm and beautiful.

Drawing: Ann makes a drawing of *The Place* seen through the porthole of a ship passing by.

Session 4: Soundscapes

During session four, Ann listens to the music programme *Soundscapes* (Aksnes & Ruud 2006, 2008). Tveitt's *Welcome with Honour* evokes changes between different boats and colours, as well as between the past and the present. The colours change from brown to white. On board the boats there are many people. The images remind Ann of romantic paintings of nature by the Swedish painter Carl Larsson. Ann is dancing while holding a parasol. Reeds cover the lake and the image is very green - "*Like a painting by Claude Monet*", she says

Listening to Tveitt's *Consecration of the New Beer*, the images also include rotating movements, fog and a steamboat. Ann visualises herself in the Danish author Karen Blixen's book *My Africa*, as she meets decorated elephants.

Tveitt's *Stavkyrkejstev* (*Stave Church Chant*) leads into a world of fairy tales. Ann meets with a narrator of the Norwegian folk tale *The Fox Widow*⁶. She sits down and visualises the whole scene as it is in the animated movie of the story. The image moves to another animated Norwegian movie, *Flåklypa*. Within this movie, she meets with the Arabian princess and then with Solan⁷. Ann reflects upon how strange it is to encounter all these images.

Winter photos in black and white dominate during Tveitt's *Snow Goose on the Glacier*.

When Tveitt's *Concerto No. 2 for Hardanger Fiddle and Orchestra* plays, the imagery turns to a ballet scene, with a prima ballerina on stage. Then Myllarguten⁸ turns up and Nøkken⁹ plays the violin. Ann is aware of the huge waterfall close to her. The scenery changes to Gudbrandsdalen¹⁰. Ann

⁶ The storyline of the fairy tale is as follows: Mr. Fox is dead. His widow, Reve-enka (literally "the fox widow"), sits alone in her empty house with only her trusty feline maid Korse for company. Three suitors—the Bear, the Wolf and a young Fox—come to her door. The movie *The Fox's Widow* has almost achieved celebrity status in Norway for its sparkling animation, superb staging, enchanting characters and music by Bjarne Amdahl.

⁷ The storyline for this very famous animated movies is: 100 miles north, to the east and up, is Flåklypa, the home of bicycle repairman Reodor Felgen, and his two assistants – Solan Gundersen, morning bird and natural born optimist, and Ludvig who is a true pessimist. Sponsored by oil sheik Ben Redic Fy Fazan, they build the car "Il Tempo Gigante", and the race of the decade is on. The Arabian Princess arrives with the oil sheik but falls in love with the optimistic Solan. This movie has achieved celebrity status in Norway.

⁸ Myllarguten is the most acknowledged Norwegian folk musician (fiddle player) to this day, and by far the most legendary.

⁹ The Norwegian (and Swedish) Nøkken (*näcken, näkki, nøkk*) is a male water spirit who plays enchanted songs on the violin, luring women and children to drown in lakes or streams.

¹⁰ The Gudbrand Valley (Norwegian: Gudbrandsdalen) is a valley and traditional district in the Norwegian county of Oppland. The Gudbrand Valley is the main land-transport corridor through South Norway, from Oslo and central eastern lowlands to Trondheim and Møre and Romsdal.

visualises Sinclair's men: the Scottish Army¹¹ arrives. Prillar-Guri¹² blows the lur¹³. Ann *hears* everything very vividly. The music is very powerful, described as "very fussy". She does not see them clearly but hears the Scottish army coming closer. It is just around the corner. An orchestra is arriving, tuning their instruments before playing. It turns out there is Landskappleik¹⁴ at Lom. Ann travels to Sjàk and is aware of all the log cabins. She finds the images fussy and exhausting.

During Tveitt's *Piano Concerto No. 1 in F major, Op. 1, 1st Movement*, a young woman emerges wearing old-fashioned clothes. The flowing foci are on the music and the instruments, piano/grand piano, oboe/bassoon, and wind instruments from the 18th century. Two people play piano. Ann moves between them. 'The Lady' dissolves – and disappears.

During the final selection, Svendsen's *Last Year I Was Tending the Goats, Op. 31*, the weather is nice. Ann is cross-country skiing in the forest. It is Easter time and the snow slowly melts. Ann enjoys the experience very much. She visualises ski tracks emerging, pointing straight ahead.

Drawing: Two people are sitting in a rowboat on a sunny day.

Postlude: In the verbal conversation afterwards, Ann talks about how it is to travel in time and space. She also notices there have been more musical instruments in this journey than in the

¹¹ The battle of *Kringen* (Norwegian: *Slaget i Kringom*) involved an ambush by Norwegian peasant militia of Scottish mercenary soldiers who were on their way to enlist in the Swedish army for the Kalmar War. The battle has since become a part of folklore in Norway, giving names to local places in the Ottadalen valley. A longstanding misconception was that George Sinclair, a nephew of the George SinclairRr, 5ht Earl of Caithness was the commander of the forces; in fact, he was subordinate to Lieutenant Colonel Alexander Ramsay.

¹² Pillarguri is a semi-legendary figure who, according to oral tradition, was a woman from Sel, Norway, who played a key role in the Battle of Kringen in August 1612. Hence, a peasant militia force of around 500 decided to ambush the Scots at Kringen (the narrowest part of the valley). The terrain chosen by the Norwegians made ambush very effective. The Scottish force was resolutely beaten.

¹³ A lur is a long natural blowing horn without finger holes that is played using the embouchure.

¹⁴ Landskappleik is an annual convention and competition in Norwegian folk music and dance. The arrangements are ambulatory and move every year to a new place.

previous sessions. Ann is surprised.

Homework: "Be aware of how you feel and how you behave whenever different situations arise at work, with friends, and when you are alone". The aim of this assignment is to notice – and later reflect on – what is happening within and around her. Such reflective work forms the basis for choosing and controlling her own life in different settings (self-agency, Stern 1985/2000).

Session 5

The very last session, *Caring* (Bonny & Keiser Mardis, as cited in Grocke 2002: 130-131), evokes the colour green, identical to the colour of a desk placed in the basement at *The Place*. Ann visualises many green avenues, many strong colours, flower meadows, and the harvesting of hay. Cinderella emerges. Ann returns to her desk at work, which is covered with administrative documents, and recognises she "has too little space". She changes the light bulb and throws out the linoleum from the basement at *The Place*, saying, "It is useless". It is summertime and she returns to the house where she lives in real life.

Drawing: She draws a big, blooming red flower with green petals.

REFLECTIONS

"Music works but I don't know why – something has happened", Ann said in the last session (Trondalen 2009-2010: 8). Indeed, many things happened to Ann at a variety of levels during the GIM process. One metaphor for change was Ann changing the light bulb, which may have presented her with a new (and brighter) perspective on life. She experienced a variety of images like body sensations, visual images and kinaesthetic experiences. She felt the instruments and the music were more evident towards the end of the GIM process. During the five sessions, she met significant people in her life, like her father and an old lady who told her about her childhood. In addition, she travelled to important places in her life (for example, *The Place*). Ruud (2003: 122) writes:

"[...] BMGIM facilitates the release and construction of emotions and images. These may be organized within scenes and identified as characteristic scripts which inform us about how the client/traveller tends to meet situations in general. [...] The personally felt and subjectively experienced state may help the client/traveller to gain contact with his or her self and to reorganize the scripts."

The music afforded a variety of interpretations, and Ann, as a listener, appropriated (DeNora 2000) the music in her own way. The images offered a myriad of feelings about time and space. 'Travelling' together with an emotionally available and experienced GIM therapist enabled processing of the experiences in a relational and context-sensitive way. Ruud (2003: 122) says: "Being contained by an empathic guide may help the clients to accept their feelings and recognize and accept the ownership of their own emotions".

This means focusing on personal resources, but without avoiding troublesome or painful experiences in the client's life. Through musical experiences, at an implicit level (implicit relational knowing), together with an exploration at a semantic level, the client was supported in her mental, emotional, physical and spiritual integration (Trondalen 2016). Such a contextual understanding, focusing on cooperation and intersubjective exchange between client and therapist, can support the client in releasing self-healing forces and personal empowerment.

Ann's GIM process was discussed through a qualitative research case, a single instrumental case study (Stake 1995). The analysis was performed through a phenomenologically inspired procedure (Trondalen 2007, 2009-2010). The data comprised transcripts, drawings, transcribed conversation and reflexive notes. Occasionally, written scores were examined to tie them together with the images from the music-listening journeys.

During the procedure of the analysis, the different texts were arranged in chronological order in one document and treated as one unit. I read the text many times and used an open coding: that is, the codes derived directly from the client's description of the experience (e.g., *Sun*). The codes were then intuitively grouped together into code families (e.g. *Sun* belonged to the code family *Nature*). Descriptions were sometimes connected to more than one code. In turn, code families were linked to a super family, which was a meaning unit consisting of two or more families (e.g., *Sun* belonged to the code *Nature* and to the super family *Belonging*, which also included *Family*). These meaning units, or super families, constituted the headings in the discussion.¹⁵ Through this analysis, two main themes emerged, *In Motion* and *Belonging*. The first main theme (i.e. super family), *In Motion*, comprised the subthemes *Feelings*,

Affects, *Body Sensations*, *Visual Images* and *The Aspect of Time*. The second main theme included the subthemes *Family*, *Roots*, and *Nature*.

IN MOTION

The subthemes *Feelings*, *Affects*, *Body Sensations*, *Visual Images* and *The Aspect of Time* underpinned the main theme *In Motion*. Feelings and affects seemed to be in fluctuation. Ann often changed from, for example, crying to no tears, from easy breathing to problems with breathing, and moving from place to place. Visual images were linked to movement in nature, such as waterfalls, sailboats, waves, melting snow, and an emerging ski track. Movement was also created through the variety of imagery scenes, the diversity of instruments, multiple colours, and the experience of changes in the perception of the body. One drawing seemed to represent a turning point: *The Place* seen through the porthole of a ship. It was as if the here-and-now met with the past; for example, through the visualisation of meeting deceased people, like her father and an old woman, in the present. There seemed to be a movement in time, from the past towards the future, symbolised in a here-and-now drawing. In the journeys, Ann moved between unknown and known territory while travelling in time and space. In addition, the music was in motion.

During *Soundscapes*, Ann connected the music directly with different instruments, colours, Africa, the Scottish army, Sinclair, mountains and valleys, and with story characters like Cinderella, Nøkken, and the Fox Widow. Ann's images seemed to be in accordance with Aksnes' and Ruud's close analysis (particularly of the fifth piece in) of the music programme *Soundscapes*. They hypothesise:

"[...] this music would lead to metonymical associations drawn from the cognitive domain of 'the national'; a domain affording a vast range of images that are essential to the cultural meanings attributed to folkloristic works of music. [...] it seemed that most subjects manage to integrate the stereotypical images within their own personal narrative, transforming the 'national' images to suit their own need." (Aksnes & Ruud 2006: 55)

Ann linked many of her visual, auditory and kinaesthetic experiences to Norwegian nature and culture. However, her images were not reduced to only such experiences. One example of another dimension was the experience of time; sometimes related to here-and-now experiences, other times

¹⁵ For a thorough description of the research methodology, see Trondalen (2009-2010).

connected to a journey in previous times. In addition to this was the intentional experience of activities not only connected to the past or the present, but to possible - and sometimes anticipated - future scenarios (for example, sailing, travelling, and dancing).

BELONGING

The second theme in the analysis (Trondalen 2009-2010), was *Belonging*, including the subthemes *Family*, *Roots*, and *Nature*. Ann met with her deceased father, went to *The Place*, which was connected to the best memories (summer vacation as a child) and the worst (her father's funeral). She found strength in hearing narratives about her childhood, while also being aware that her father was following her through the image of the owl and an eagle. The owl is often associated with death and is synonymous with wisdom and learning; the eagle is associated with nobility. It is a symbol of strength and rebirth, conjuring up striking similarities with the legend of the Phoenix rising from the ashes (Biedermann 1992; Shepherd & Shepherd 2002). These birds, with their influential qualities, looked after her and gave her strength throughout the journeys (Trondalen 2009-2010). Images linked to 'belonging' included mountains, waterfalls, flowers, meadows, hay-harvesting, forests, sea and waves - not to mention the colours linked to the stunning images of nature. The musical journey indicated a 'Hero(ine)'s Journey' (Clark 1995), where Ann set out on a solo journey, met trials and tasks, before her return - and reward. Finally, she threw out the old linoleum and decided to invite friends to *The Place* - her place - which was situated within the most stunning and demanding nature of Norway.

Through musical experiences, drawing and verbal processing, it seemed as if Ann made peace with her past and moved onward as an uplifted woman, anticipating a new future. Ann seemed to restore a renewed identity through musical relational experiences. I suggest these experiences built upon recognition, belonging and the experience of being alive and present in her own life. The experiences, not least while listening to *Soundscapes*, afforded images, metaphors and symbols (Bonde 2007) which were integrated into the client's personal narrative. Aksnes and Ruud (2006: 56) show similar findings:

"Our results also indicated that the travelers' images of national stereotypes were received positively, being integrated into the travelers'

personal narratives, and giving access to private memories and identification with local landscapes."

Ann transferred the experiences from the GIM process into her own life. She decided to use her inheritance, *The Place*, to a higher degree than before. Ann decided to throw out (the real) linoleum in the basement and invite friends for the first time to her Place as well. In her professional life, she asked for a new office and a bigger desk. She felt she had acquired a new foothold suitable for a woman in her mid-thirties with responsibility in a business firm.

A MUSICAL SOUL-SCAPE: A RENEWED LINE OF DEVELOPMENT

Soundscapes was chosen on the basis of the client's cultural roots, and as a follow-up to the client's introduction to *The Place*, which was situated where water perforates the mountains, eventually creating fjords. During the music-listening experience, Ann seemed to connect her inner soul-scape with the musical soundscape, and eventually nature and cultural images emerged. She linked to different instruments, both referential, as a metaphor, and as analogy (Trondalen 2016).

The musical journey, containing music from only Norwegian composers, seemed to offer images connected to Norwegian experiences through nature and memories. It seemed as though one conceptual entity ('folkloristic music') could provide access to other conceptual entities (such as mountains, fjords, hay-harvesting, and forests) within the same domain of 'the national'. However, my experience indeed resonates with Aksnes and Ruud (2006: 56):

"Furthermore, the findings of this project indicate that during the process of selecting musical works for BMGIM programs, a phenomenological listening procedure enables the therapist to have some measure of control over the images afforded by the music - although it will, luckily, never be possible to foresee all of the rich images afforded by the musical creativity of each individual traveler."

The therapist, on her side, attuned herself to the client's experiences, listened intently and supported Ann to describe her experience through different senses, to stay close to the experience, and to feel the full impact of it (Grocke 2005). Central in such an attunement process were the dynamic forms of vitality; the inner experiences of being alive which

are always open to interpersonal relating. The process of attunement is primarily connected to *how* this happens, more than the content per se (Stern 2010).

The role of the music might have facilitated the development of vitality, creativity and personal resources through a relational music-listening experience (GIM). Contemporary neuroscience and brain research show that music is operated by brain structures closely related to motivation, reward and emotions. For example, peak emotional arousal during music-listening releases dopamine, a neurotransmitter which plays a crucial role in reward-based learning (Koelsch 2010; Salimpoor, Benovoy, Larcher, Dagher, & Zatorre 2011). Music, then, is multi-layered: an agent in itself, a way of communicating, a field of exploration, in addition to a re-creation of the musical relational experiences in the moment. From this, it follows:

“The deepest nature of art (here music) is inscrutable and linked to human existence. Music as an art form is multidimensional, alive, and created in a participating here-and-now. Seen from an artistic perspective, expressive and receptive music experiences are ambiguous, multilayered phenomena unfolding in time and space, yet paradoxically not bounded by these characteristics. Music allows for a variety of experiences at different levels while supporting the creation of new life stories. The phenomenal music therapy relationship then emerges as an art form—a field of relational lived experiences—emerging from an inborn, communicative musicality.” (Trondalen 2016: 89)

Music can support images and transformative experiences. It might, however, be questioned whether the client actually remained in an altered state of consciousness for the whole time, as associations and visual images linked to movies, and similar, might point in a different direction. Nevertheless, the images came from the client herself, as they added personal value to Ann’s life. Therefore it’s important that we have a reflexive understanding when exploring the music’s functions and meaning, especially in relation to the client’s experience and perspective. Meaningful relational experiences through GIM can support re-creative musical soundscapes, which may have significant meaning - both for the client and the therapist.

CLOSING COMMENTS

The basis for this text was the music-listening method the Bonny Method of GIM. *Soundscapes*, a

music-listening programme composed of Norwegian music only, was described and illustrated through a series of GIM sessions with a female executive in her mid-thirties. Having offered a brief overview of the method of GIM, including development, training, and the music in GIM, I then turned to the music programme *Soundscapes* before discussing the programme within a therapeutic process. The discussion section focused on *Soundscapes*’ potential for supporting images connected to Norwegian landscape and culture. I suggested connecting the client’s main themes from her GIM process, i.e. ‘in motion’ and ‘belonging’, to the client’s musical soul-scape and a renewed line of development in her life. Ann said the music worked, even though she did not know why. She related her comment to how she was able to take more care of herself in her daily activities. This was especially true when dealing with friends. Ann also told her boss she needed more space and a bigger desk, which she got. Finally, the text suggested that music and music-listening through GIM could promote images and transformative experiences where nature and cultural belonging were at the very core, not least through listening to a music programme like *Soundscapes*.

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