
How Professional Performers Manage Performance Anxiety

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Abstract

Many treatment studies have been undertaken to determine the effectiveness of standard psychological treatments for musical performance anxiety. However, little has been undertaken in the way of naturalistic studies to examine the strategies employed by successful professional performers in managing performance anxiety. This study attempts to ascertain these strategies as a basis for developing programs for the education and training of developing musicians and those prone to experiencing performance anxiety. Thirty professional performers from the classical and jazz fields, with a national and international profile and soloist experience, were interviewed on an in-depth basis by the researcher. It was found that these performers all experienced some degree of performance anxiety and viewed it as an accepted and positive part of performing provided they were able to maintain control of it. They achieved this by preparation prior to performing and using a variety of musical, cognitive, behavioural and lifestyle strategies. Most performers felt that a better understanding of these strategies should be provided in the training of musicians.

Introduction

The aim of the current study was to ascertain the ways in which successful performers manage performance anxiety. It was reasoned that the professional success of such performers was due, in part, to the psychological strategies they employed for managing performance anxiety. If these strategies could be ascertained then they may prove useful for the education and training of younger musicians and those prone to difficulties with performance anxiety.

Two quantitative studies have attempted to examine how performers manage anxiety (Steptoe and Fidler, 1987; and Wolfe, 1990). Steptoe and Fidler (1987) surveyed anxiety amongst professional, amateur and student orchestral musicians ($n = 65$) to assess cognitive self-appraisal. They found that catastrophising self-state-

ments were more likely to be used by subjects with high performance anxiety whereas realistic cognitive self-appraisal was most common with musicians reporting medium levels of performance anxiety. A study by Wolfe (1990) surveyed 162 amateur and professional musicians asking them to describe strategies they found effective in coping with performance anxiety. Wolfe found that the two most common groups of strategies "deep breathing/relaxation/physical activity" and "thorough preparation/practice/coaching" accounted for almost 40 per cent of the total number of coping strategies employed.

The results from the Steptoe and Fidler (1987) and Wolfe (1990) studies are useful in suggesting some behavioural and cognitive strategies for the management of performance anxiety. However, the range of the treatment strategies suggested by these studies is somewhat limited because there is little indication of how an individual performer could best integrate the use of several strategies in coping with performance anxiety. Because both studies used a survey approach they do not allow for an exploratory and detailed account of the strategies used by successful performers in managing performance anxiety. For the purpose of this study, and to extend the work formerly undertaken by previous researchers, a qualitative approach using interviews to provide a more intimate and detailed account was employed based on similar studies with sports competitors (see, for example, Anshel, 1990).

Method

Interviews

The type of interviews conducted in this study was focused or semi-structured interviews. Guidelines for interviewing suggested by Miles & Huberman, 1984; Brenner, 1985; and Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell and Alexander, 1990 were adopted as much as possible. These in-

cluded maintaining an egalitarian role between the researcher and informant, focusing on the informant's account as the valued one with the researcher's perspective not being seen as more valid, and finally, placing an emphasis on understanding the informant's views in a language that is natural to them.

Given the time constraints high profile professional performers are subject to, it was necessary to obtain as much relevant information as possible within a restricted time limit. The length of interviews ranged from 1 - 2 hours and an interview guide listing areas for questioning with a possible ordering of the questions was employed (see Appendix). Interviews were conducted at a place convenient to each performer and included hotels, performing venues, agents' offices and private homes. Audio-tape recordings were made of the interviews and verbatim transcriptions onto word processor were made from these.

The analysis of the data was carried out using the computer program NUDIST (Richards & Richards, 1990). This program facilitates online text searches and code and retrieval operations which allow the researcher to gather together information on a particular issue from all the interview data. This meant that comments made by interview subjects on relaxation, for example, could be compiled into one document and progressively analysed. The coding process employed followed guidelines suggested by Minichiello et al. (1990) and Miles and Huberman (1984).

Subjects

Subjects were chosen on the basis of recommendations by key personnel within performing organisations and music institutions, and by individual performers. Subjects were selected from the classical and jazz music fields and within these fields as wide-ranging a selection as possible was chosen e.g., opera singers, orchestral musicians, chamber musicians and concert soloists. Further selections were made on the basis of type of instrument played, age, sex and nationality. 'Successful' musicians were chosen on the basis that they were full-time profession-

als who had performed at a national and international level, had made recordings and were exposed to frequent solo work. One 16 year old performer was selected because she was considered successful for her age even though she did not meet all the criteria for 'success' of the professional artists. The researcher was interested in how much this performer would reflect the practices of the older performers.

Subjects were drawn from the following organisations: The Sydney Symphony Orchestra, The Australian Chamber Orchestra, The Australian Opera, The Sydney Conservatorium of Music, The Canberra School of Music, The Australian Broadcasting Commission, and Independent Music Agencies, as well as individual performers. The Australian Broadcasting Commission provided a source of featured international artists who were touring Australia performing in concert schedules around the country.

Of the performers selected, 20 were male and 10 female. Their ages ranged from 16 years to 68 years with a mean of 44 years. Twenty three of the performers were classical performers comprising 11 orchestral musicians, 7 singers, 4 pianists and 1 conductor. The jazz performers all performed in small jazz ensembles. In terms of origin of training, 21 of the performers had received their principal training in Australia, 4 in Europe, 2 in Great Britain, 1 in the USA, 1 in Russia and 1 in New Zealand.

Results

The Nature of Performance Anxiety

It seems that even successful performers experience performance anxiety. All the performers interviewed admitted to having experienced symptoms of performance anxiety to varying degrees. No symptoms of performance anxiety stood out as common to all performers. The most frequently mentioned symptoms included general tension, trembling of various parts of the body, increased cardiovascular activity, negative thoughts, sweating and clamminess, hot or cold flushes, nausea, dry mouth and 'butterflies'. The instances of dry mouth

were restricted mostly to woodwind players and to one singer. Other symptoms were increased breathing rate, severe apprehension, distracted thoughts, isolating behaviour, memory blanks, increased visits to the toilet, adrenalin rush and dullness.

Performers were more likely to experience anxiety in performance situations where they felt more exposed musically. These performing situations included especially important concerts, concert recitals, and concerto performances. Performers often went through different phases of experiencing performance anxiety during their careers. Early in the performer's career performance anxiety tended to be at its worse. This was usually at a time when the performer was a student or just establishing his/her professional career. For most, the ability to manage performance anxiety increased with experience. However, experienced performers might still experience increased performance anxiety later in their careers when they took on a new challenge such as, for example, an orchestral musician becoming a Principal in an orchestra.

Performance anxiety for me was worse in the very beginning ... you've got the difficulty of "How can I get my first engagement?", "Who's going to bother engaging me?" ... it's the doubt again - "Is my first concert going to be good enough for them to ask me to do another one?" and gradually as time goes on and you get a repertoire under your belt and you get used to the whole business, you relax. (Conductor)

Causes of Performance Anxiety

The three most common causes of performance anxiety identified by the performers were; 1) not being sufficiently prepared; 2) a general sense of insecurity performers may feel as a result of their personality or psychobiological state; and 3) being unable to perform the music required not because of under-preparation but because of a lack of ability, for example, students who ambitiously try to perform above their level.

...the two main things for me is a feeling of inadequate rehearsal, preparation for whatever reason that may be. (Pianist)

Benefits of Performance Anxiety

While all the performers experienced performance anxiety they indicated that they were able to keep it under reasonable control. They were asked to rate how well they managed their performance anxiety on an 11-point rating scale ranging from a score of zero for "no control" to 10 for "complete control". A summary of the scores is given in Table 1 (see Question 27, Appendix).

Table 1: Performers ratings of how well they managed performance anxiety

	Rating	Frequency
	0-5	0
	6	2
	7	8
	8	13
	9	6
	10	1
Total No:		30

Mode=8; Range=4(6-10); Standard Deviation=0.9; Mean=7.9

Only one performer gave a rating of 10, indicating he thought he had complete control of performance anxiety. Ninety per cent of the performers gave a rating of 7 to 9, indicating they believed they generally had reasonable control of their performance anxiety. Two performers scored 6, indicating that their control was less certain.

The large majority of performers indicated that they believed performance anxiety could be useful when under control as well as being harmful when out of control. Only one performer did not believe there were any beneficial effects of performance anxiety. The main ways in which they thought performance anxiety could be beneficial were: it gives the performer a 'hyped up', excited feeling as they approach the performance, it helps the performer achieve a mental focus and alertness that is beneficial to performing, and it can provide an extra source of inspiration which might not occur in a non-performance situation.

I couldn't perform without it. I would always have it ... I've always had it ... I don't even know what it is to be without it. I wouldn't want to perform without it. (Jazz singer)

There can be a heightening too of mental process, I think always an edge of performance anxiety is necessary. (Flautist)

Managing Performance Anxiety

The performers used a large array of long-term and short-term strategies to manage performance anxiety. In the long-term, performers tend to rely on musical strategies when preparing for a performance. As the performance came closer they relied more on psychological strategies, both cognitive and behavioural. It became clear that performers mostly managed performance anxiety by preventing it from happening in the first place, as well as having emergency means of controlling it 'on the spot' as it arose. The following categories are not completely independent and necessarily contain some overlap.

Cognitive Strategies

The types of cognitive strategies most commonly used by performers included the use of positive self-talk, visual rehearsal, task oriented thinking, "loss of self" and mental rehearsal of the music. Not all performers used all these strategies and there were other strategies that were used less commonly as well as these ones mentioned here.

A majority of performers (69%) used *positive self-talk* as a way of preparing for performance. Even the most proficient and experienced performers felt moments of self-doubt before going on stage. Self-talk tended to be used closer to the performance as a way of affirming the performer's sense of self-worth and preparedness. Many performers used standard reminders to themselves as a way of achieving this.

If it was a really big occasion and I really felt "I hope I can do well"... I would then give myself a little lecture on the fact that I had been cast in this role as that must mean that there was no-one else around who could do it as well at that stage... think about the fact that I've done it before, why not be able to do it again, and that my voice was born with me and my talent

was born with me. I would know that I had done everything to learn the role and prepare the role well and I would have given myself a chance physically to be ready for it and then just go and do it. (Opera singer)

The large majority (80%) of performers used some form of *visual rehearsal* as a way to prepare for performance. To do this they rehearsed the performance situation by visualising themselves going onto the stage, playing through the performance and acknowledging the audience at the finish. Performers felt this helped decrease the shock and novelty of actually being on stage.

I can sit there and imagine myself walking on stage, I don't know where, wherever... you train it, it's like a flight simulator. (Violinist)

By the nature of what they do performers are frequently hearing music "playing in their head" in an apparently unplanned way. While preparing for a particular performance this internal music takes on a more purposive form and performers *mentally rehearse* the music they are preparing for. This can happen at any time and may or may not be planned.

... before the concert or even earlier than that, if it's a difficult piece and I'm working on it at home, I often mentally rehearse when I'm driving the car or walking down the street when I haven't got the instrument with me. (Trombone player)

The *performance goals* performers set for themselves appeared to have particular importance in their being able to manage performance anxiety. These goals tended to take the focus away from the audience as being threatening. The majority of performers (67%) mentioned that it was important to engage and inspire the audience. Generally, performers reasoned that audience members have attended a concert because they want to hear a good performance and not to find fault with the performer.

... ultimately to reach the audience or part of them... and move them in some way... perhaps take them out of themselves ... maybe if they've got problems or worries that they forget those for a while and enjoy life and enjoy the experience. (Jazz pianist)

For several performers entertaining the audience was not their primary goal. They considered it more important that the performer realise his/her own musical expression through the performance while being true to the composer's intent as they understood it. At the same time, they felt it necessary that the performer enjoy the performance, as well as the audience.

I know you've got to enjoy it before they do, I think that is very important, if you don't enjoy it yourself you do lessen the chance of them enjoying it. (Jazz violinist)

I would consider the composer first and then I consider myself second, in spite of the fact it's all for the sake of the audience but I'm still trying to re-interpret. (Clarinetist)

Many performers (50%) indicated they try to come as close to technical perfection as possible. However, some cautioned against slavishly putting this last goal before all else.

I feel that the only way that I can really make a good performance of anything is to go with the flow in the music and forget about the technique. Once I'm in there I should be making music and not playing notes... (Trombone player)

For the jazz performers there was a sense in which they aimed to be true to themselves - something they found difficult to express in words.

... there is a sort of feeling of rightness about something that I will get and it will vary from moment to moment but whatever it is at the time I try to go for that. (Jazz guitarist)

... you've got to actually feel it, you can't just sing, you have got to feel it. You've got to believe it. (Jazz singer)

Quite a few performers (30%) emphasised the importance of *loss of self* during the performance. Loss of self was the opposite of excessive self-consciousness and egoistic concern with "How am I doing?". "Loss of self" represented a kind of third person orientation in which the performer acts as a vehicle through which the music is played, almost acting as an observer.

I'm just doing the physical work and the music is working ... you just feel a peace within yourself which is ... I can't describe it you tap

into something which isn't you and you're just an instrument for it to flow. (Violinist)

Before a performance most performers (62%) tried to achieve a particular *performance focus* which set them up psychologically for the performance. Several psychological strategies were used to achieve the preferred performance focus. One way of achieving this was by becoming more *task oriented* in thinking. Task oriented thoughts were thoughts concerned with the mechanics and dynamics of performing rather than non-task oriented thoughts which had only peripheral relevance to the task (performing) in hand.

Just concentrate ... on what I'm going to do ... on mostly the fundamentals of my instrument as far as gathering my thoughts ... making sure my basic fundamentals such as embouchure and technique are in place, very basic things as a tool you need to start playing. (Jazz saxophonist)

Some performers (24%) were aware that their *alertness and excitement* grew in anticipation of the performance and were conscious of controlling their build-up. Quite a few (38%) felt it important to maintain a calm and relaxed attitude as much as possible during the day of the performance.

Well I like to use the word 'psyching yourself' in a way ... I have to control my build-up to the performance because of what's happening if I get myself excited too early, I have to stay very excited for a very long time and that often interrupts me in performance. (Opera singer)

The performer needs to maintain a performance focus not only before the performance but also during the performance. The performer can become distracted by thoughts about the audience and thoughts about peripheral matters. They can also be influenced by factors outside their control such as bad acoustics, lighting and temperature variations.

I don't think about the audience in that sense... I think about them in an eye contact sense. It's difficult ... you have to have eye contact but you don't see them. (Jazz singer)

Making *mistakes* is a reality for all performers. Most performers (85%) try to

accept a mistake as a past event and maintain their focus on the present.

I've got to consciously forget them. The worst thing you can possibly do is to dwell on them ... What you've got to do is try and convince them that what they heard was not a mistake but was what the composer originally wrote or was a mis-hearing. (Pianist)

Behavioural strategies

The majority of performers indicated an acute awareness of their levels of physical arousal and muscular tension when approaching a performance. Many used behavioural techniques to maintain their physical arousal at an optimum level and to reduce tension before the performance. This was particularly important on the day of the performance.

One of the common techniques employed by performers (71%) was to slow down their *breathing* rate and breathe in a more diaphragmatic way. While some practised diaphragmatic breathing in a systematic way, others simply relied on taking a few slow, deep breaths before walking on stage. Most performers carried out these exercises instinctively and had not been taught them formally.

Before I go on stage ... I'll do some deep breathing just to sort of settle the nerves. (Opera singer)

Almost half of the performers (43%) used some form of *relaxation* to reduce bodily tension. Some of these had formally learnt specific techniques, e.g., autogenic training, but many had worked out their own forms such as massage or simply lying down on the floor thinking relaxing thoughts.

... I'm making sure that my neck and my shoulders are loose, all my tension goes to my neck. I've been having massages lately to try and get rid of this tension in my neck ... deep breathing, trying to maintain a calmness in yourself. (Opera singer)

Gaining extra *sleep* by sleeping in on the day of the performance or, more commonly, by taking a mid-afternoon nap of half an hour to two hours on the day of the performance, was considered very valuable by most performers (78%).

I prefer to have a little lie down in the afternoon on the day of the performance. (Clarinetist)

On the day of performance many of the performers liked to *rest* and take it easy and avoid having to deal with other demanding responsibilities as much as possible.

... a pretty relaxing afternoon, doing nothing just thinking about it (the performance). Occasionally I'll go out and mow the lawn or something like that to take my mind off it altogether ... I try and keep as cool and detached from anything that's going on here at home as possible. (Double bass player)

A large number of performers (60%) carried out some form of *physical activity* before performing. Such activities included stretching, warm-up exercises, yoga, finger exercises, the Alexander Technique. Although the activities varied, the chief purpose was to loosen the muscles, reduce tension, increase blood circulation and correct posture. Quite a few performers (40%) did not do any form of physical preparation before performance, suggesting, it was a very individual choice.

On the day of the performance it appeared that most performers followed a *pre-performance routine* which gave the performer a greater sense of security and allowed the build-up to the performance to be controlled.

A common part of the pre-performance routine for performers was to *arrive early* for a performance to allow time to set up equipment or instruments in an unhurried fashion and to make the performing venue familiar before the audience arrived. At the performing venue itself, many performers liked to have some *time alone* before going on stage, to achieve their performance focus.

Well the first thing is I really want to forget that there's a concert until the occasion arises. I went out onto the harbour this morning for a nice boat trip, had a nice lunch and then we walked all the way back ... then before you came I had an hour ... a good nap and then when we're finished this interview I'll go and have a jolly good shower or a bath and shave and shampoo and it sets me up, that's the count-down as I call it. I always like to get to the venue in plenty of time to get used to the

sort of ambience ... I take quite a long time to get into my clothes and into my dinner suit and usually walk around a bit, I suppose it must be a sort of nerves ... There's a sort of enthusiasm, I quite look forward and can't wait to get on and see how it goes ... My routine is I have to have it I have to do it ... even to the extent that I suppose if my wife's around for too long I tell her to bugger off, I like to be alone for 10 minutes ... I'm probably thinking about one or two tricky corners of the piece coming up ... probably thinking of the basic tempo for the first few bars. (Conductor)

Musical strategies

Musical preparedness was seen by performers as essential in the management of performance anxiety and long-term preparation was highly emphasised.

I do quite a lot of basic technical work on a regular basis, and coming up to a major performance I increase that rate to as much as I can bear to do or as much as there is practical time to do without trying to wear myself out (Flautist).

You try and keep your chops up, as we say in jazz. Try to keep your technique up by just being in good shape on the instrument. You either practise or if you've done a lot of work, if you've done a lot of performances that in itself is enough (Jazz guitarist).

Part of the long-term practice schedule for most performers involved them practising performing. They did this either by *simulating the performance* during their practice or exposing themselves to *preparatory performances* by playing for family, friends or associates.

When I'm by myself I even bow at the end and get up and actually go through it because I feel that really helps. (Pianist)

... as I get closer to a performance I much more think of performing in practice. When I'm practising, I'm stopping and going over things backwards and forwards, when I'm practising to perform I don't stop at all. (Flautist)

Many performers (52%) liked to vary their practice during the last week prior to the performance. On the one to two days before the performance they might taper off their practice and only do sufficient to keep their fingers or vocal chords working. Nearly all the performers (97%) used mental rehearsal of the music and might

read through the score and words of their performance at this time.

A good *warm-up* on the instrument, or with the voice, prior to the performance was often a part of the pre-performance routine for performers. As well as physically preparing the performer, this also had the psychological effect of reassuring them that their sound was there.

Lifestyle

The performers as a whole did not seem to be a particularly fit group of people. There was a general awareness that exercise is good for overall health and some saw exercising as being of benefit for performing and some saw it as having no benefit. Slightly more than half the performers engaged in regular aerobic exercise of at least a moderate level. There was little change in exercise routine coming up to a performance. For those who did exercise regularly there sometimes was a drop-off in exercise before performance because of the extra time taken up in rehearsals.

Most performers described their *diet* as healthy or balanced. Prior to the performance most performers' diets changed so that the major meal of the day was taken some hours before the performance and there was an emphasis on eating sustaining foods. Prior to performance one of the performers indicated an increase in intake of alcohol, about one half continued at their usual level and about a half reduced their intake. Most performers reported having a cut-off time before performance beyond which they would not drink alcohol. Only one performer indicated a regular increase (marijuana) in the use of drugs either prescribed or non-prescribed. Three performers took beta blockers for medical reasons and six indicated they had experimented with taking beta blockers at some time in their performing careers and occasionally still used them. A half of the performers took natural remedies such as vitamin pills and garlic on a regular basis. Coming up to the performance several performers took natural remedies as a way of preparing for the performance. Figure 1 presents a summary of the main short-

and long-term strategies used by the performers in preparing for performance.

Training and Education

Without exception all the performers indicated they had had no formal training on how to deal with performance anxiety. The main methods of gaining information had been through self-exploration by reading and experimenting with different strategies, advice from colleagues, and help from teachers and non-music professionals.

Figure 1: Summary of preparation strategies for managing performance anxiety.

MUSICAL	COGNITIVE
Long-term:	Long-term:
Practice	Building confidence
Familiarity with music and style	Mental rehearsal of music
Preparatory performances	
Simulating performances	
Short-term:	Short-term:
Tapering off practice	Performance goals
Warm-up on instrument	Loss of self
	Task oriented thinking
	Excited and alert attitude
	Positive self-talk
	Visual rehearsal
	Mental rehearsal
	Calm and relaxed
BEHAVIOURAL	LIFESTYLE
Long-term:	Long-term:
Various physical activities	Maintaining physical health
Short-term:	Short-term:
Time alone before performance	Resting on day of performance
Following pre-performance routine	Adapting eating and drinking pattern
Relaxation and breathing	Napping/extra sleep
Various physical activities	Arriving early for performance

A large majority of performers (76%) said they thought that some education of performers was beneficial and various strategies were suggested. The most commonly mentioned ones were to provide tuition in specialist anxiety management techniques such as breathing, relaxation, meditation, posture and concentration which could be provided by non-music professionals; provide discussion and explanation of the issues involved in performance anxiety; and emphasising the constructive uses of performance anxiety.

Coping with Performance Anxiety when it Happens

While performers had an array of means of preparing which allowed their performance anxiety to remain at manageable and constructive levels, they also employed strategies to deal with performance anxiety when it occurred unexpectedly. These strategies tended to be psychological in nature and able to be employed 'on the spot'. The most frequently mentioned strategies were using positive self-talk, using breathing exercises, and employing task oriented thinking. Some performers also mentioned the strategy of keeping going by 'pushing' through their anxiety.

Conclusion

The results suggest that the experience of performance anxiety is common to all performers at whatever level of performing, or type of performing with which they are engaged. They also suggest that the nature of the symptoms of performance anxiety experienced by performers is very individual. These symptoms can be more or less apparent during different periods of the performer's career, or in different performing situations. The sample of performers interviewed in this study viewed performance anxiety as a natural part of performing and, with one exception, thought it had a useful role to play when under control. Most did not claim to have full control over it and, in fact, saw complete control as detrimental to the performing process. They felt that some performance anxiety created an edge of uncertainty in performance which allowed for spontaneity, excitement and

the unexpected to happen, all qualities desirable in a good performance.

The results indicate that the performers interviewed had developed psychological, musical and lifestyle strategies for managing performance anxiety. Most of these strategies were employed to prevent excessive build-up of performance anxiety before it occurred. They could also be employed 'on the spot' as the situation required. The musical strategies were mostly employed during long-term preparation for performance, with the important ones being thorough practice of the pieces to be performed, and preparatory performances.

The psychological strategies tended to be used more in short-term preparation and incorporated both cognitive and behavioural strategies. The cognitive strategies included the use of positive self-talk, visualisation of the performance situation and stage movements, mental rehearsal of the music, setting of performance goals, attempting to achieve a 'loss of self' during the performance, engaging in task oriented thinking, feeling excited by the performance and wanting to enjoy it, assuming a positive attitude towards the audience, not dwelling on mistakes or on factors outside of the performer's control, and dealing effectively with personal negative criticism.

The behavioural strategies included the use of breathing, relaxation, sleep, physical activity, and following a pre-performance routine. The lifestyle strategies involved some adaptations in lifestyle, maintaining general health, and adjusting alcohol and food intake before performance.

Most of the performers thought it would be of benefit to provide some assistance to developing performers, at least in helping them understand the processes involved in performance anxiety. The results suggest that for performers experiencing severe performance anxiety the usual means of assistance within the music profession is likely to be insufficient and the help of non-music professionals, such as psychologists, may be beneficial.

One important implication of the study is that all of the strategies mentioned by the performers for managing performance anxiety could be taught by knowledgeable professionals. Consequently, future research could test the effects of teaching these strategies to performers who experience excessive performance anxiety. Future research could also examine the benefit of incorporating such strategies in the educational development of the young performer. An understanding of the theory and application of such strategies could prove to be a valuable asset in the store of the music teacher's skills.

This study is based on the author's doctoral dissertation, "The Development and Evaluation of a Modified Cognitive-behavioural Treatment for Musical Performance Anxiety", completed at the University of Wollongong, Australia in 1993.

The author acknowledges the assistance of Dr Saroja Shrinivasan who acted as research supervisor during this study.

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About the Author

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Appendix - Interview Schedule

A. Biographical Information

Age Sex

Singer? Instrumentalist? Which instrument?

Primarily a soloist? Part of ensemble or orchestra?
Other ?

B. Lifestyle

(For all questions ask for general levels and prior to performance)

Q 1. Sleep Q 2. Exercise Q 3. Diet

Q 4. Caffeine Q 5. Alcohol

Q 6. Cigarettes Q 7. Drugs (prescribed or non-prescribed)

Q 8. Other substances (e.g., natural remedies)

C. Performing

Q 9. Have you always wanted to be a performer (Prompt - age ?) ?

Q 10. As a performer what are the goals you hope to achieve in a performance?

Q 11. How do you prepare for a performance? (Prompts - mental; physical and otherwise.)

Q 12. Of the strategies you use to prepare for a performance, which do you think are the most effective?

Q 13. What is happening while you are performing? (Prompts - mental, physical and otherwise.)

Q 14. How do you deal with mistakes when you are performing?

Q 15. What happens after the completion of a performance? (Prompts - mental, physical and otherwise.)

Q 16. How do you deal with criticism from others about your performances?

Q 17. When you compare your best performances with your worst ones, what do you think has made them that way?

Q 18. What factors outside of your control can influence your performance?

Q 19. Do you feel different during practice, rehearsal and in performance? If so, in what ways?

Q 20. What attitude do you have to the audience before, during and after a performance?

Q 21. What attitude do you have towards other performers you are performing with?

D. Performance Anxiety

Q 22. What do you think performance anxiety is?

Q 23. What do you think leads someone to experience performance anxiety?

Q 24. Do you experience any of the symptoms of performance anxiety, and if so, what? (Prompts - mental, physical and otherwise.)

Q 25. If you experience performance anxiety how do you cope with it? (Prompts - mentally, physically or otherwise.)

Q 26. Are there some performing situations that you feel more anxious in compared to others? If so, why ?

Q 27. How well would you rate yourself as being able to control your performance anxiety, generally?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No										Complete
Control										Control

Q 28. Generally speaking, do you see performance anxiety as being an aspect of your performing that is useful or harmful, or both ?

Q 29. At what stages of your career has performance anxiety been better or worse? (Prompts - as a student; early professional; experienced professional.)

Q 30. Have you received any training or information on how to deal with performance anxiety during your career?

Q 31. Do you think anything should be done about educating or training musical performers in the understanding of performance anxiety? If so, what?

Q 32. Is memorising music or words important for your performances ? If so, how do you go about doing this?

Q 33. What is your attitude to your instrument?

E. Preparation Strategies

Do you use any of the following strategies in preparing for a performance?

Q 34. Visualising certain aspects of performing?

Q 35. Mentally rehearsing certain aspects of performing?

Q 36. Thinking particular thoughts to yourself?

Q 37. Practising 'performing' (Prompt - playing as if it is a performance.)

Q 38. Relaxation exercises?

Q 39. Breathing exercises?

Q 40. Physical exercises?

Q 41. Sleep?

F. The Psychology of Performing

Q 42. Do you think psychological factors play a part in performing?

Q 43. (If yes) What do you think the psychological aspects of performing are?

Q 44. (If yes) How important are the psychological aspects of performing in achieving a successful performance?

Q 45. As a successful performer what do you think makes you successful in terms of how you approach performing compared to unsuccessful performers?

H. General Comments

Q 46. How have you found it answering the questions in this interview?

Q 47. Any general comments you would like to make?

Special Focus Issues

Technology in Music Education

The use of technology in various areas of music teaching and learning has emerged not only as a highly effective pedagogical method in music education but also as a powerful tool for use by both teachers and students for music performance and creativity. The forthcoming "Technology in Music Education" Special Focus Issue planned for *December 1994* will aim to draw together a representative body of contemporary research and opinion associated with the various applications of technology in music education. This will include the development and use of instructional software and computer-based information environments for computer-aided learning in music, the use of MIDI musical instruments and other hardware for music learning, performance and composition, the use of technology-based music curricula in schools and tertiary

institutions, the use of technology as a means for evaluating music learning and for testing of musical abilities, and the use of technology as a tool in music education research.

Music Education: The Other Side

Music education is more than what happens in classrooms; it is more than one way of thinking about a subject and how it can be taught. A special focus issue planned for *June 1995* will be devoted to cross-cultural approaches, plus the potential of "other" systems of instruction in music education. Other systems may include alternative philosophical and pedagogical schemes; ways of teaching and learning in early childhood, old age, and community settings; or an examination of how music is taught in non-western based education.

A RSME Subscription Order Form can be found on page 50.