

**TEACHING UNIT**  
**Cyprus and Italy, a wonderful meeting.**  
*Paola Anselmi*

**Musical goals**

The children are expected to:

1. Sing in tune the refrain of the melody *Ntili ntili* from Cyprus and sing as well some of the original words (indicating the main characters) with melodic accuracy and good pronunciation, following the song performed by the teacher.
2. Sing some of the original Italian lyrics (indicating the main characters) of the Italian material *Alla Fiera dell'Est*, with melodic accuracy and good pronunciation, following the song performed by the teacher.
3. Get familiar with the binary meter and being able to accompany the main pulsations (steady beats) either by using their voice, body (body percussion) or the available instruments.
4. Get a first contact with an odd 7/8 meter, which is largely used in the traditional folk music in Greece and Spain, through a preparatory activity aimed at reaching the main goals.
5. Understand the structure 'verse – refrain' (rondo').
6. Express the main melodic and rhythmic characteristics of the refrain of the Cypriot song by using their body movement.
7. Be able to graphically represent the selected movement.
8. Explore the concept of *accumulation* both in musical and mathematical terms, as an interdisciplinary experience.
9. Practice attentive and engaged listening (Campbell).
10. Represent some forms and actions associated with graphic representations, through their body, at a very certain point of the musical activity.
11. Be able to follow a complex musical score, by coordinating their singing, individual movement and actions in group.
12. Recognize a similar musical structure (rondò – verse/refrain) although it is sung in different languages.
13. Explore different musical styles (such as *Rap*) in creating a new original product that merges two traditional materials from Italy and Cyprus.
14. Integrate a new musical text into a musical context by respecting meter accuracy.
15. Experience the difference existing between recitation and intonation of a song.
16. Understand the different contrasting concepts belonging to musical language (such as *forte/piano* – *slow/fast* – *staccato/legato*) by means of their body experience and their consequent graphic representation.
17. Develop motion coordination both at individual and group level.

**Socio cultural goals**

The children are expected to:

1. Increase their awareness of the sound of foreign languages and compare their own language musical perception with the one of other countries, having the same roots.
2. Facilitate the comparison between two different traditional materials, despite their similarities: *Alla fiera dell'Est* (Italy) and *Ntili ntili* (Cyprus).
3. Merge two materials coming from different countries into a new single musical and creative event, while keeping clear, at the same time, their original identities.
4. Include all the activities in the daily programme, both in their original and new forms, in class, in free playing and at home.
5. Sensitize families to discover their own traditional material; to share other countries' materials, while enhancing the sense of tolerance and welcoming acceptance of other people and traditions, through their relation with the children involved in such experience and the teacher.

### **Educational goals**

The children are expected to:

1. Learn concepts coming from different subjects through their musical experience.
2. Enhance their associative memory between graphic representation, body movement and musical material.
3. Enhance their attention and concentration skills in listening.
4. Get used to share their own ideas and opinions, and have the chance to consolidate their personal critical thought.
5. Learn how to express their own opinion both verbally and by using musical examples and behaviours.
6. Respect others' opinions and ideas as the foundation to build new common experiences and reflections.

### **Children's age**

6 years old

### **Children's prior knowledge and Skills**

Children are at first grade of primary school, they never have music experiences in group, but individually in different contexts:

- Ability to coordinate listening, singing and expressive moving.
- Good language skills and ability to articulate and reproduce words and sounds.
- Ability to read simple sentences.
- Capacity to share opinions and to express emotions, feelings, ideas, solutions to produce new material based on different music sounds, verbally, musically and moving.
- Knowledge of numbers and their progression.
- General knowledge of the surrounding world.
- Capacity to represent shapes suggested with pictures or drawing with their body, both individually and in couple.

### **Materials**

Sound material: *Ntili ntili* (Cyprus), *Alla Fiera dell'Est* (Italy) – new instrumental version merged both materials.

Objects: papers, coloured markers, chinese sticks.

Teaching aids: the book of story *Ntili ntili* – animals and stories characters pictures – the puppet of a wizard.

Instruments: drums, made out of metal intruments: triangles, cimbolini, sonorous bars whose tonality is coherent to the one chosen for the songs.

## **Lesson Plan 1: the magical spell and a wizards friend**

### *Musical goals*

The children are expected to:

1. Isolate the refrain while listening the musical story of *Ntili ntili* and represent it through a certain action.
2. Sing in tune the Greek refrain by respecting its rhythmic pulsations and correctly pronounce it as well as some Greek words.
3. Follow an informal score.
4. Perform rhythmic ostinato (steady beats) or rhythmic patterns, while keeping them consistent with the binary meter and using their body or playing small melodic and rhythmic instruments.

5. Express the perception of the refrain's rhythmic and melodic elements through a body movement.
6. Recognize a formal structure of a rondò: verse/refrain.
7. Get familiar with the concept of "accumulation".

*Description of the lesson plan, its processes and strategies*

1. As soon as we enter the class we tell the children that a friend has come to visit us and as we show them the puppet of a wizard (which was previously hidden behind our back), we tell the kids that the wizard has come from far away to meet new friends and that he speaks a language which is different from ours.

Since we don't know each other at first he is a little bit frightened but as soon as we become friends we will ask him to play with us using his magic wand. ( the wizard's spell will be the rhythmic pattern found in the refrain of the song *Ntili ntili*- Cyprus, which will be introduced shortly).

nti i li nti i li o lo ghrou son man ti lin

3

nti i li nti i li o lo ghrou son man ti lin

He will be able to transform us in animals or objects that the children will have to mimic by using their bodies.

2. We will ask the wizard to teach us a spell in his native language and we will be able to learn the greek spell: "*Ntili ntili ologhrouson mantilin, Ntili ntili ologhrouson mantilin*", copying the rhythmic pattern we previously executed, reciting it in a mysterious way.

We'll repeat it several times, following the rhythm set by the wizard's magic wand and we'll have to choose a way to share it with the children:

We could give them a wand (like a chinese stick, for example), asking them to wave it while casting our spell.

We could use the spell in order to stir a magical brew.

We could accompany the spell with some beats on the legs.

We could....?

We could ask the children what they would like to do while we cast the spell, or we could wait for one of them to make a different motion during our game.

3. The wizard will tell us he would like to make us listen to a new song, in which his spell will have been integrated and he will ask us to pay attention while listening to it (recorded music), as soon as we hear the spell we'll have to make the action that we have chosen together to make.

At first we'll have to make it together with the children and then gradually let the children recognise the spell by themselves and act on their own preference, by making the actions decided together with their teachers or maybe by creating new variations. If the variation is interesting and coherent to the musical material we could highlight it and share it among all of the children, trying out new actions connected with the musical phrase and gradually transforming the way of emphasizing the chorus/magical spell into the listening experience.

4. The wizard will show us a book he likes very much and will share with us a story from his homeland, about a girl that every night weaves a golden handkerchief for her beloved and about many other things and many other characters that will appear...

5. We'll read a book together with the children, finding some elements and proceeding with an 'interactive' reading, that is open to question, (what animal is this? Can you see the girl with the golden handkerchief on this page?) using their native tongue in order to narrate the story to the children, focusing particularly on the main characters (the handkerchief, the mouse, the candle, the cat, etc.) and telling them the names of these characters in the original language. (In the case of Italian children we could make them listen to an old version of a song sung several years ago in a notorious children's music festival, in Italian as well as in Greek).
6. We could draw pictures (or make the children draw pictures during the school hours dedicated to artistic disciplines) of the main characters and play with their Greek names: the teacher will have to place the pictures on the floor in a row in order to give the kids the opportunity to visualise in a 'collective' experience the order of appearance of the characters throughout the story.



7. We'll listen to the song in Greek, inviting the children to listen to the names of the previously drawn characters in the song, linking them to the characters found in the book (the teacher could point them out)- we could also divide the story into individual cards or project the pages of the book on a LIM board in order to help the children see as well as possible and have more moving space throughout the experience. Consequently the children will start singing the names of the main characters and the spell/refrain only in Greek by themselves, in an experience of engaged listening.
8. If we actually know a musician colleague who sings in Greek and can play a traditional instrument (like a bouzouki, to make an example) we could invite them to sing the story in class and we'll ask the children how listening to 'live' music compares to listening to recorded music in terms of emotion and timbre.
9. If the children show a fast increase of familiarity with the song's refrain we could make them accompany the listening by singing along during the refrain and making a few motions of body percussion or we could give them small instruments (maybe made out of metal, since its timbre is quite similar to magical sounds – triangles and cimbalini or sonorous bars whose tonality is coherent to the one chosen for the song).

*Evolution: for Greek children who already know the song we could, after having read the book and listened to the song, mix up all of the drawings, ask them to listen to the song without looking at the illustrated story and sort the drawings of the characters following the order in which they appear throughout the story (while still singing along to the refrain), thus creating a 'melodic-narrative line' on the floor which will allow the children to experiment an experience of great concentration and gradually building an informal score.*

10. Let us reason together with them on what happens in the story, introducing the concept of accumulation (more characters appear, the musical part gets longer). It is the case to ask ourselves (in the case of Italy and Spain) if us or even children from other countries have a song and a story similar to ours.

Let's talk about it with the teacher as well.

11. At this point the wizard will ask the children to express through a motion the spell and waves his wand while we sing along to the refrain of *Ntili ntili*.  
Each child is to be asked to express their motion and show it to their classmates: each child is asked to remember their action as well as the ones made by their companions, in order to help whomever will forget them, while the teacher sings along to the song without articulating any words, using the actual lyrics only for the refrain/spell. If the class happens to be particularly numerous the children are to be divided into two groups, one of which will live this experience on the following lesson.
12. We will end our lesson by inviting the children to tell their families the story concerning the golden handkerchief and to ask their parents or other relatives, if they know the melody, to sing together showing them the motion they had chosen to make during the lesson; if they do not know of the song the children shall ask them whether in the repertory of their homeland there is a song similar to that one... in the following lesson the children will tell us about it.

#### *Expected outcome*

- Recognize and practice the rondò structure: verse/refrain
- Recognize, sing in tune and create a refrain in Greek within the musical story, while moving at the same time.

#### *Evidence of learning*

Children listen to the musical story of the golden handkerchief and they are able to recognize the structure verse/refrain in the production of a same gesture- expressive movement when the refrain comes. They talk about the sound of such a new language and the story development, they tell their classmates about their shared experience with their families.

### **Lesson Plan 2: Graphic representation of movement towards an experience of informal score interpretation**

#### *Musical goals*

The children are expected to:

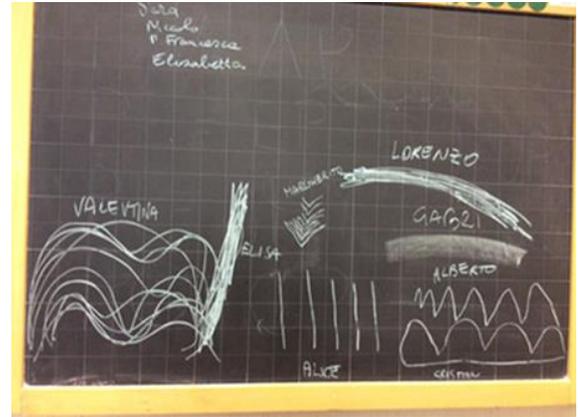
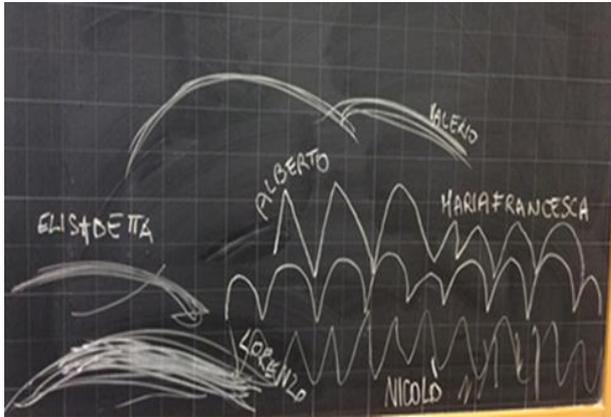
1. Create graphic signs representing their own way of “feeling the melody” of the refrain following the musical story of Cyprus.
2. Recognize musical aspects in the refrain of “*Ntili ntili ologhrouson mantilin*” (steady beats, accents, intervals, *legato/staccato*) in different representations created by each child and try to gather them all into one single common key event.
3. Understand the concept of accumulation in a cross-cultural experience and link it with another experience of musical listening.

#### *Description of the lesson plan, its processes and strategies*

1. If we are working in a class where there are scholastic materials, as soon as we greet the children we could show them an example of mathematical accumulation : we could use felt pens or copybooks in order to show the children how the number of objects becomes bigger through “accumulation” by adding one item to another, or: everything I decided to take before plus one new item.
2. Let us return on the story of *Ntili ntili* and connect our experience with the scholastic material to the musical one by listening to the song. In fact in our story too the music and the characters “accumulate”, always keeping what was there already and progressively adding a new element. (Let us remind the children of the work with the drawings on the floor). We will then ask the children whether they have to tell us of any experience their relatives shared with them.
3. Let us go back on the work concerning the expression of movement inspired by the wizard’s spell: if the activity has not been completed by all of the children, let us finish it by allowing all of the children to express their motion and let them express their opinions on the quality of

movements expressed by their companions.

4. The movements are quite beautiful indeed, but since they are so many, we will need to “fixate” them and we will invite each child to represent their movement on the blackboard; they’ll write their name next to their representation.



5. At the end of the experience we will individuate together which graphic representations are similar to another and we will place them into groups according to their similarities and then draw them on A4 papers. This way we will start to find a silver lining useful to associate our musical movements to the spell/refrain. Let us sing or listen to the recording and- following our movements according to the groups and the order suggested by the drawings.
6. Let us reason together on how movements belonging to different people can be so graphically close to another and how they can be converted in just one sign which still represents the movement of each child.

#### *Expected outcomes*

Make representative movements associated with the musical characteristics of the song *Ntili ntili*.

Understand the possibility of using music to merge different expressive elements suggested by the same children, without any judgement or prevarication whatsoever.

Understand the concept of accumulation in a listening experience.

#### *Evidence for learning*

Children will represent their movement by means of graphic expressions in accordance with the rhythmic and melodic elements contained in the refrain, and they will show therefore their ability to recognize such similar musical elements in different graphic representations. They can express different examples of accumulation by associating them to maths and music.

### **Lesson plan 3: Meeting between Italy and Cyprus**

#### *Musical goals*

The children are expected to:

1. Consolidate their learning of the Cypriot song, both at melodic and rhythmic levels.
2. Get familiar with an odd 7/8 meter that characterises many Greek and Spanish musical materials.
3. Represent forms (individual experience) and actions (experience in couples or small groups) through their body, and link them to their graphic representations or verbal expressions.
4. Identify the last beat of the odd meter and stress it by a very precise action (such as jumping, touching their nose, clapping hands, staying still).
5. Experience the difference between movement and immobility.

6. Identify similarities and differences between *Ntili ntili* and *Alla Fiera dell'Est*.
7. Create and follow an informal score by merging all elements coming from both musical materials.
8. Make ostinato and rhythmic patterns in a binary meter through their body or by means of little instruments, and use the same accompaniment for both musical materials (*Ntili ntili* and *Alla Fiera dell'Est*).

*Description of the lesson plan, its processes and strategies*

1. After having greeted the children let us remember our activity on the story of *Ntili ntili*, with the animals and the various elements that can be found in the story and let us start our activity by playing a game consisting of “obstinate formulas” in 7/8 at the end of which the children will have to “freeze” trying to mimick the shape of something that will be suggested to them throughout the game.

Drum Set

jump ing and jum ping hop touch ing and touch ing pop

clap ping and clap ping clap freez ing and freez ing STOP!

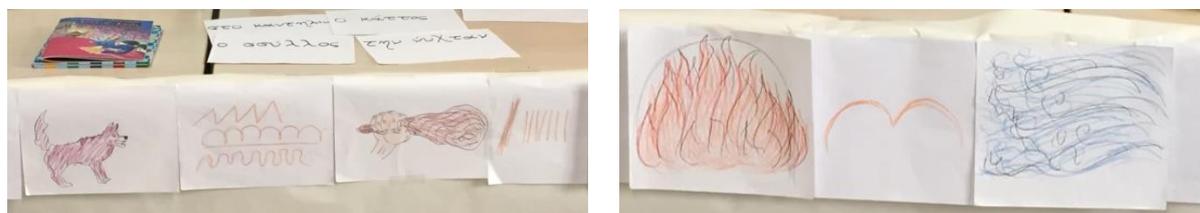
- Jumping and jumping hop (jump up and down).
- Touching and touching pop (let's “ring” our noses).
- Clapping and clapping clap (let's clap our hands).
- Freezing and freezing STOP!!!

(We will have to freeze completely mimicking the shape of the suggested item—like a tree, a bird or perhaps a dog - by practicing the rhythmic sequence in 7/8, after having played with the shapes we could invite the children to draw representations of actions in couple, like two animals hugging).



2. We'll invite the children to follow the symbolic representation of objects and people present in the story of *Ntili ntili*, following our suggestions regarding the shapes to assume and interpreting in a personal way the representation of the animals and the items that can be found in the story of the golden handkerchief.
3. We will place our drawings in a row, alternating the characters' representation according to the order present in the story (mouse, cat, dog, stick, etc.) and an A4 sheet, which is to symbolize the fusion among the similar movements graphically represented by the children.
4. Let us listen yet another time to the song, representing while maintaining our body perfectly still the character which appears in the story and is shown by the drawing and while moving or

body in an expressive way the graphic sign deemed to represent the refrain. Provide children with the opportunity to sing the refrain and express themselves through movement at the same time: this will help you understand the accuracy in their intonation as well as in their coordination level between movements, voice expression and correct pronunciation.



5. Let us discuss with the children this last event, asking them what they liked the most and what they would like to change instead.
6. If no child is to share with the class a personal experience concerning similar songs known in their family, let us introduce the song *Alla Fiera dell'Est*, telling the children the story behind it, its provenience, and, singing a part of it with our voice in an expressive manner, let us observe their reactions.
7. Let us listen together to a (recorded) part of the song, inviting the children to look for similarities and differences between this song and the previously practiced one: comprehension of the words aside (whether they were in a different language), in a musical field the children will be able to recognize the structure in form of *rondò* and the presence of the concept of musical “accumulation”, practicing an experience of deep listening.
8. Let us tell the children how the action unwinds, and, naming all of the characters, let us ask the children whether the different music and the different language, even though the narrative content is the same, spurs in them different feelings and emotions and, if this is the case, why do they think this happens.
9. Let us remember together with the children the concept of “accumulation”, which is to be found in an exactly identical way in both songs, inviting them to listen and repeat the names of the subjects present in the song in their original language and connecting them once more to the drawings.
10. We could finish the lesson by executing the Italian song sung by the teacher suggesting to the children a possible interpretation: the drawings are to be given to different children, the teacher will have to sing the strophes (or will have to play the recording) and when the animal, the item or the human character appear in the lyrics the child who has the connected drawing will have to go stand in a previously chosen place, thus giving birth to an animated score which allows to visualize “physically in the space” the concept of “accumulation”.
11. The children who do not have a drawing can accompany the refrain with percussion elements, made on the body or through instruments, alone or paired up with someone else, thanks to the experience of binary meter felt in the previous lessons.. Provide them with the opportunity to expand the *ostinato* in personal rhythmic patterns. This will allow you to check the level of adequacy of their rhythmic interventions and, if necessary, enhance their practice. When our song comes to an end we will ask to the children not to stop and to keep maintaining the binary pulse on the body or with the small instruments that they have been using as rhythmic *ostinato*.
12. Let us start singing *Ntili ntili*, making the children focus on the fact that with the same rhythm we are able to sing along to both songs. We will further develop this discovery starting from the next lesson!

#### *Expected outcomes*

- Build an informal score following the song development and the formal structure: verse/refrain.
- Represent the accumulation concept in a visible physical experience in space, generating a “live” score that each single child can experience.

- Perform the same rhythmic accompaniment with great accuracy (on steady beats or rhythmic patterns as ostinato, proposed by children), while singing the two merged songs.
- Coordinate in-tune singing with movement.

### *Evidence for learning*

Children can listen or sing *Alla Fiera dell'Est*; they sing the refrain of the song from Cyprus by coordinating their singing with the selected movements. They can move in space and choose either to listen or to follow an informal score on the floor or on the wall.

## **Lesson plan 4: Creating together an intercultural performance**

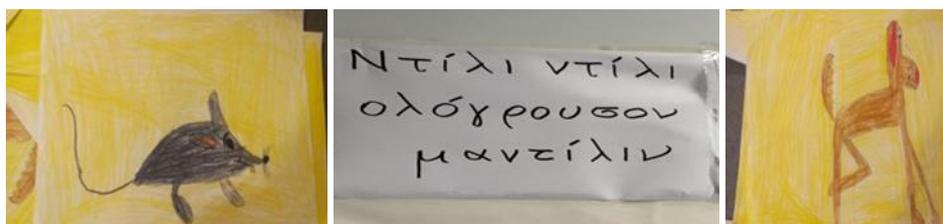
### *Musical goals*

The children are expected to:

1. Create a language and musical *incipit* by merging the two different materials' *incipit* in a style that children can choose on their own.
2. Build an informal score, by merging all different musical, motion, graphic and artistic elements resulting from the previous lessons.
3. Perform a new musical and cross-cultural material based on the informal score that children created within the group of the class, to be eventually shared with their families.

### *Description of the lesson plan, its processes and strategies*

1. After having greeted the children, we will start from our discovery made in our previous lesson: on the same "ostinato ritmico" we can sing along to both songs: the greek and the italian one. Let us try starting from there: we will remind the children the spell (the rhythmic pattern which characterizes *Ntili ntili's* refrain) which will help them in maintaining a regular pulse in the "ostinato" (the children can choose together how to express the "ostinato", whether with the help of the body, of musical instruments or even sonorous objects).
2. As the children perform the "ostinato", the teacher could try and sing small sections from both songs.
3. We will reason together with the children on the possibility of creating a new song which could include elements from both songs, keeping in mind the fact that the story told by both songs is basically identical, as well as the structure of the song itself. Even without asking, the children will take notice of the fact that the only substantially different part in the songs is the beginning: in fact in the cypriot version the main character in the beginning is the girl who weaves the golden handkerchief; on the other hand in the italian song the main character in the beginning would be the father who goes to the market to buy a mouse for two coins.
4. We will invite the children to find a new beginning, originating from the incipit of the two stories. We will help them with their creation by easily coordinating their ideas, without influencing the contents. The unwinding of the same narrative story could alternate between the italian strophe and the greek refrain, or viceversa. If the case were the first one the informal score we already saw could be modified, again placing in a row the drawings but this time alternated to the greek refrain, written on A4 sheets.



5. Once a new beginning has been decided upon, we can try to put it into music using musical genres totally different from the one already used as well, like rap; or we could just recite it and then start singing as soon as the accumulation starts.
6. As we reach this point we will sit together with the kids and thoroughly examine all of the elements we could use to perform the two songs that “have met”:
  - a. A new beginning created by ourselves and put into music or recited by the group. (We could write and read this new beginning in our mother tongue: this would mean that if this activity were to be done in Spain , in just one song we would find three different languages).
  - b. A song that allows italian strophes and greek refrain to meet.
  - c. All of the drawings representing the characters of both stories and the A4 sheets containing the greek refrain/spell written in its original language.
  - d. The physical representation in the space of the concept of accumulation.
7. Let us create a new informal score, which shall begin with the new start created by the children and then shall alternate the drawing representing the character called in the song and the refrain written in greek, until the song comes to an end.
8. We will build together with the children a visual representation of the accumulation of musical material. Our score is to be developed on the ground and behind each drawing there is a small group of children representing the drawn animal. The children will be standing while reciting and singing their own beginning, then they will start singing the actual song (They can sing on an instrumental musical base, sing it a cappella or listen to the strophes sung by the teacher and chime in only for the refrain with their voices) and every time an animal or a character is called throughout the song the correspondent group shall sit down. As the song develops itself getting longer and more and more characters are called in it we will be able to see a huge increase of children sitting down while the standing ones decrease sensibly.  
By the end of the song all of the children will be sitting down behind their formal score, in order to sing along to the final refrain.

*Final expected outcome, evidence and sharing*

Together with the children we will build several informal scores, which will be made completely by them, as they will have made the drawings, representing their movements through a graphic sign and will have created a completely new stylistic and narrative product. The children will also be able to follow the self made scores by singing and moving as well. Children will perform the final event and be able to coordinate their voice, individual movement and rhythmic accompaniment by using different timbres (body percussion and little instruments).

The teaching unit could end with an open lesson, during which the children could introduce the final product and also tell their parents about the whole process they went through in order to create it , thus involving their families in the realisation process by letting them sing along the refrain or a small rhythmic ostinato on steady beats in binary meter. Therefore, children will be able to share their reflections on the chance they got to understand how two different musical identities could merge and play together to create a new single musical one, while respecting both, at the same time.