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Sarah Hanson
California State University, Monterey Bay

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California State University, Monterey Bay

Music Rehabilitation Programs in California State Prisons

Sarah Hanson

Music and Performing Arts Senior Capstone

Lanier Sammons

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Abstract

With 2.3 million people in the United States prison system, reducing recidivism rates in prison is crucial. One of the most prevalent ways California has been able to reduce recidivism and encourage less punitive measure on prisoners is through music rehabilitation programs. This research explores the current prison population, history of music rehabilitation in prisons, positive and negative psychological effects music can have on inmates, an active music rehabilitation program (Dance Kaiso), and how inmates have been utilizing these programs. By exploring the current prison population and how music rehabilitation began in the United States and California, there's a clearer understanding of the people that are receiving this method of support. With the help of past research conducted on a variety of prisoners and people under severe stress, depression, and anxiety it helps introduce the psychological effects music can have on prisoners. The last thing to be addressed is the actual implementation and utilization of Arts-in-Corrections music rehabilitation program, Dance Kaiso in the minimum to medium security Correctional Training Facility. Through this research, I hope to provide insight on a huge group of people that are often overlooked and unsupported and how to provide them with the tools to reduce stress and anger, encourage healthy communication, create a positive sense of self that they can reference in and out of prison.

CURRENT PRISON POPULATION AND THE HISTORY OF MUSIC IN PRISON

Prison Statistics

According to a 2018 report conducted by the Prison Policy Initiative, titled "Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie 2018" nearly 2.3 million people are incarcerated in American

prisons, jails, and juvenile facilities (Sawyer and Wagner). A similar study conducted by the Prison Policy Initiative found that for every 100,000 people in the United States, 698 are incarcerated (Kajstura). With an incarceration rate so high, the United States is responsible for almost 25% of the world's prison population, but less than 5% of the world's total population (Travis et al.).

In comparison to the rest of the United States, California is considered a progressive state that endorses less punitive measures. However, according to California's Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's *Prison Census Data* from 2013, there were 134,339 people in the state's total institution population. A more recent study from 2017, found that 581 people in every 100,000 in California are incarcerated. Although these numbers establish California as a progressive state in comparison to other states in the U.S., its incarceration rate is more than double most democratic countries around the world, including the United Kingdom, Portugal, Canada, France, Italy, and many more (Sawyer and Wagner).

California State Prison's Population

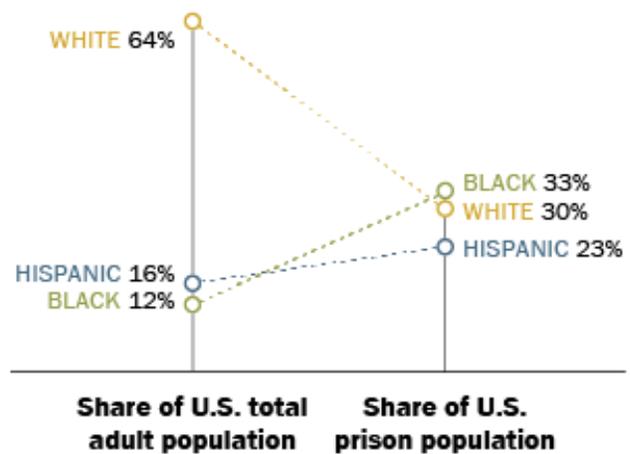
Within California's prison population, people of color are dramatically overrepresented, while women's incarceration rates are drastically low and continue falling in comparison to their male counterparts. California's Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation found that 29% of male prisoners were African-American, but only 6% of California's male residents were African American. More subtle increases of 1-2% from total population to incarceration rate occurred for the Latino and Native American populations. However, the most prevalent decrease in resident population versus prison population happened with white men. White men making up 40% of the male population in California but only 26% of the incarcerated population in California (Sawyer

and Wagner). As seen in Fig. 1, there are major discrepancies between people of color's incarceration rates versus white people's incarceration rate in the U.S. as a whole. In a 2016 study and survey conducted by California's Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, 4,180 per 100,000 African American men were incarcerated while 420 per 100,000 white men were incarcerated. Fortunately, these racial disparities have decreased in recent years and are showing more signs of equalizing (Gramlich).

As for the large gender gap in incarceration rates between men and women, there are 29 per 100,000 women incarcerated versus 635 per 100,000 men incarcerated. Fortunately, regardless of gender the incarceration rates are decreasing in California because they are practicing less punitive measures and 'decarcerating' state prisons. The large gender gap will most likely always remain because "among the many cultural universals is the fact that men in every society are so much more criminal and violent than women" (Kanazawa).

Blacks and Hispanics are overrepresented in U.S. prisons

Total U.S. adult population and U.S. prison population by race and Hispanic origin, 2016



Note: Whites and blacks include only those who are single-race, not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Prison population is defined as inmates sentenced to more than a year in federal or state prison.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Figure 1: Pew Research Center's graph results on race discrepancies in prison

Why Does Prison Exist?

A pretty big question that arose while conducting my research was why does prison exist? What is its ultimate purpose in today's society? Prisons were first established in the United States in 1790, with 4 major purposes

1. Retribution; punishment for crimes against society and depriving criminals of their freedom.
2. Incapacitation; the removal of criminals from society so they can no longer harm innocent people.
3. Deterrence; prevention of future crime and helps provide a warning to people thinking about committing crimes.
4. Rehabilitation; activities designed to change criminals into law abiding citizens through educational courses in prison, teaching skills, and offering counselling ("Purposes of Prison").

Retribution, incapacitation, and deterrence are all initially achievable through putting people in prison, a state of confinement or captivity for persons convicted of serious crimes. However, rehabilitation takes time and effort that goes beyond physical boundaries and deterrence, rehabilitation focuses on improving the psychological, emotional, and mental well-being of an incarcerated person. Rehabilitation also includes equipping the incarcerated person with tools that will help them succeed, thrive, and acclimate to society once they are released.

History of Music Rehabilitation Programs in Prison

Rehabilitation programs were first put into effect in the United States in the early nineteenth century by Quakers in Pennsylvania. Since this time, rehabilitation programs are primarily used as tools to help inmate's reorientation into society. Rehabilitation is largely being

attempted through “improved or improving religious activities, academic or vocational education programs, correspondence courses, library services, recreation, and social education” (Coulter and Orvo). Recreation and social education rehabilitation programs include music, art, dance, poetry, and other similar courses that give inmates positive coping methods and provide a time for positive socialization.

Implementation in women’s prisons

Music rehabilitation programs were originally started and practiced in women’s prisons, as a way to encourage ‘domestic behaviors’ and reinforce traditional gender roles in society.

References to music rehabilitation programs in women’s prisons began in the mid-nineteenth century and were primarily used to prevent silence and heighten sociability so inmates were less likely to commit criminal acts (Harbert). These programs weren’t introduced into male prisons until the mid- to late-twentieth century due to the female criminal being seen as completely different from the male criminal. The government found music rehabilitation more beneficial to women because music and femininity were so closely associated with one another that, at the time, it was a female criminal ‘only hope’ to restore domesticity and femininity (Harbert).

The Delta blues hit pop culture

It wasn’t until the Delta blues and blues hit popular culture that music in prison was brought to the mainstage. For instance, once the 1950s Nashville inmate doo-wop group the Prisonaires and musicians like Lead Belly achieved success, it was clear that Americans accepted and encouraged the idea of music in prison. John Dougan argues that American audiences started

accepting black prison music because “two circumscribed roles for African American men come together: the criminal and the entertainer” (Dougan).

But little did white America know that African-Americans in prison had long been singing and using music as a release from the physical, mental, emotional, and racist hardships they were facing in the penitentiary daily. During the 1930s to 1940s in Mississippi “every Delta black knew how easily he could find himself on the wrong side of the fence” due to the blatantly/institutionally racist laws (separate but equal) and jobs provided (sharecropping). Since many African-American men ended up in prison in the South “the old comforting, healing, communal spirit of African singing cooled the souls of the toiling, sweating prisoners and made them, as long as the singing lasted, consolingly and powerfully one.... Group singing, drumming, and other rhythmic practices were essential to an African heritage of sociability that further sustained the black convicts and helped keep them ‘normal’ and humane” (Lomax 259). From this point onward, many in the public and throughout the government realized the positive and healing effects music could have on inmates.

The Introduction of Music Rehabilitation in California Prisons

“Established by the California State Legislature in June 1980, Arts-in-Corrections was modeled after the Prison Arts Program launched in 1977 at Vacaville's California Medical Facility under the direction of the nonprofit William James Association” according to a 1983 report by Larry Brewster, a public policy professor at the University of San Francisco's School of Management (qtd. In Linn). The program was designed to improve the quality of the prison experience for both inmates and staff by highlighting the rehabilitation aspect of the prison system. It was also used to encourage a better institution-community relationship through concert

series and community service art projects (Linn). The program ended up being a big success that gained support from state legislature and government officials throughout California. However, in 2003 California had a budget crisis that required major budget cuts to many valuable state funded programs.

The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitations' (CDCRs) was one of the places major budget cuts took place, leading to Arts-in-Corrections being defunded in 2003. A few organizations continued volunteering and fundraising in certain prisons, but ultimately Arts-in-Corrections was completely dismantled. However, while the program was in danger of being defunded inmates rallied for its return and shared stories of how it transformed their lives (Linn). With the support of state legislators and California governor Jerry Brown, Arts-in-Corrections was refunded in California prisons with a \$2.5 million budget for seven new programs. In order to continue the program and insure its future funding and success, all seven programs had to document all their experiences and improvements with inmates in three categories: re-entry, relationship with family, and mental health (Frey).

Since 2013, nine more organizations have joined Arts-in-Corrections with a total of sixteen groups teaching at 36 facilities in California. The following organizations have contracts with Arts-in-Corrections to provide rehabilitative art services;

1. The Actor's Gang, based out of Los Angeles and serving at 9 different facilities
2. Alliance for Traditional Arts, based out of Fresno and serving at 17 different facilities
3. Dance Kaiso, based out of San Francisco and serving at 2 different facilities
4. Arts Council of Kern, based out of Bakersfield and serving at 3 different facilities
5. Fugitive Kind Theater, based out of Los Angeles and serving at 2 different facilities
6. Fresno Arts Council, based out of Fresno and serving at 5 different facilities

7. KALW, based out of San Francisco and serving at 2 different facilities
8. InsideOUT Writers, based out of Los Angeles and serving at 8 different facilities
9. Muckenthaler Cultural Center, based out of Fullerton and serving at 2 different facilities
10. Marin Shakespeare Company, based out of San Rafael and serving at 7 different facilities
11. Prison Arts Collective at California State University, based out of San Bernardino and serving at 4 different facilities
12. PEN America, based out of Beverly Hills and serving at 1 facility
13. Riverside Arts Council, based out of Riverside and serving at 3 different facilities
14. Red Ladder Theatre Company, based out of San Jose and serving at 8 different facilities
15. William James Association, based out of Santa Cruz and serving at 17 different facilities
16. TheatreWorkers Project, based out of Los Angeles and serving at 1 facility

Arts-in-Corrections' sixteen organizations work together and with the 35 state prisons throughout California to help reduce recidivism rates by instilling positive behaviors, communication methods, and self-assurance in inmates.

PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND MUSIC REHABILITATION PROGRAMS IN PRISON

There is a strong correlation between a person's emotions, identity, sense of self-assurance, and memory and their experience with music. Almost everyone has an experience with music that brings about uncontrolled emotions or feelings. However, music itself, surprisingly, has no inherent meaning or emotional context; its powerful impact comes from the contact zone. The contact zone is a "connection between the physical body and the social body" a real or imagined place in which "interaction, communication, and mutual impact take place" (Brauer). From the time that a person reaches the contact zone the effects of music and the

emotions attached “are strongly linked to experiences, those at the time of listening as well as past experiences that have already been internalized by the listener” (Brauer). Arts-in-Corrections music rehabilitation programs attempt to reach inmates at this contact zone and instill positive emotions, experiences, interactions, and sense of self. A very disheartening example of the relationship music and the contact zone can have on prisoners is best exemplified through the use of prison orchestra’s and singing on command in Nazi concentration and extermination camps.

Psychological Effects of Music in Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camps

In the summer of 1935 at the Esterwegan camp in lower-Saxony Germany, Nazi

conductor Willi Stien

constructed an orchestra of

sixteen prisoners (Fackler).

These prisoner orchestras were

forced to play German military

marches and classical music

by “Robert Schumann, Franz

Schubert, Johann Strauss,

Johann Sebastian Bach,

Ludwig van Beethoven, or

Johannes Brahms, arias by Gioachino Rossini, Giacomo Puccini, or Giuseppe Verdi” (Brauer).

From 1935 onward, each concentration or extermination camp created by the Nazis incorporated an orchestra and singing on command into their camp proceedings. The orchestral music was

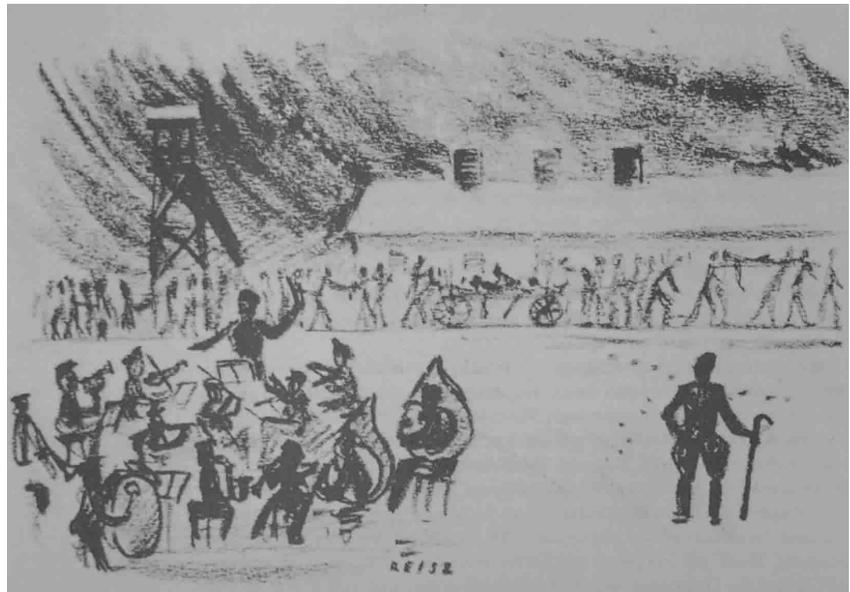


Figure 2. This drawing was made secretly in Birkenau by Francois Reisz. It shows the camp orchestra playing as work details returns to the camp; they carried out the dead on stretchers and handcarts (published in Projektgruppe Musik in Konzentrationslagern, ed., Musik in Konzentrationslagern(Freiburg i.Br., 1991)

used to accompany “quotidian camp procedures” such as welcoming new arrivals to the camp, performing while prisoners returned from their work in the fields, and when prisoners were being sent to the gas chambers. When the orchestra performed for new arrivals, it provided a sense of comfort and eased their transition into concentration camps because their experiences with music, leading up to this point, were positive so it made the concentration camps less daunting. Once prisoners began to hear the orchestra daily as they returned from their work in the fields, their contact zone with music turned negative and incited a sense of desperation and hopelessness. These feelings were only enhanced once prisoners began associating music with death. When the orchestra performed during the selection of inmates that would be sent to the gas chamber, “musicians [and the music they played] thus functioned as a harbinger of death” (Brauer).

By 1943 there were two separate orchestras; a men’s and women’s orchestra. These musicians suffered deep emotional trauma and torture because of what the music they were playing represented. For the members of the men’s orchestra, their time as musicians was especially heinous because they were “were forced to play in the orchestra in addition to working in labor battalions” (Brauer). Having to play in the orchestra and work in the fields led to a “sense of desperation, physical illness, and even death among orchestra members” (Brauer). A similar tortured psychological and emotional effect happened to the women’s orchestra, with less physical strains because they weren’t working in the fields. Because of these orchestra’s function as the harbinger of death and deceit, musicians in both orchestras lost their identity, positive sense-of-self, and reason to live.

One of the last two surviving member of the Women’s Orchestra of Auschwitz, Esther Béjarano mentions that because of her time playing in the orchestra “Music was no longer a

pleasure. We played only because of the order, never for ourselves. I had always liked to sing, but singing was spoiled for me in Auschwitz” (Brauer). Along with the concentration camps orchestras, prisoners were forced to sing on command for the Nazi guards and camp commanders. Singing on command was used to “break them inwardly, to destroy the certainty of their memories, identities, and humanity” (Brauer) and further exercise absolute power with intimidation tactics that “frightened, humiliated, and degraded them [the prisoners]” (Fackler). In Juliane Brauer’s journal article “How Can Music Be Torturous?: Music in Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camps” she manages to perfectly explain the effects music can have on inmates;

Combining music with complete control over the prisoners’ bodies allowed for the potential rewriting of those aspects of a prisoner’s identity that had been derived from music and musical experience. The body is revealed to be an embattled symbol of self-determination and heteronomy. In this struggle between the self and an external force for control over the body, the mindful body is subject to violent deformation. The self, which otherwise serves as a resource for resistance and survival, is violated and, in the most extreme cases, destroyed.

However, daunting this quote may be, it perfectly encapsulates the bond that a person creates with music in the contact zone. And although the example of music in Nazi concentration and extermination camps is heartbreaking, it is vital to showing the deep connection and effect music can have on prisoners.

When music is used in prison to enhance a prisoner’s self-assurance and identity it helps create a positive contact zone that they can refer to and reference later on in life. Because “the perception of music is strongly linked with experiences and emotions that have already been

internalized by the listener.... Music therefore serves in a positive way as an excellent medium for identity-building, formulating a self-conception, and preserving a sense of self-assurance” (Brauer). Music rehabilitation programs in prison allows inmates an escape from their severely controlled lives in prison. Sociologist of music Tia DeNora sees music as “means through which emotions themselves are produced, modulated, and acted out” making it a “reflexive constitution of that [internal emotional] state.” Essentially music acts as a tool for survival and helps inmates elicit emotions, renew and reshape them, and further supports self-assurance (Brauer).

Current Studies Regarding Music Therapy and Rehabilitation in Prison

Almost all prisoners experience varied levels of anxiety, depression, hopelessness, loneliness, and loss of personal identity during their time in prison. Prisoners enter into an aggressive, violent, and overcrowded space where their autonomy and freedom are completely stripped. Many studies have further proven that because of the violence, overcrowding, and loss of autonomy “inmates suffer from higher levels of mental and emotional distress (i.e., low self-esteem, loneliness, depression, stress, fear, anxiety, and anger) in comparison with the general population” (Castellano & Soderstrom). Music therapy and rehabilitation have been especially effective in reversing the negative effects that prison can have on inmates.

In previous studies conducted on people in high stress environments (i.e. college students, dementia patients, preadolescents with behavioral, learning and emotional disorders, and forensic psychiatric patient) relaxing music has decreased the “activity of the sympathetic nervous system, resulting in dampening the arousability of central nervous system. It exerts its relaxing effect by synchronizing body rhythms with those of the musical selection” (Bensimon, et al.). Once this happens music can have two functions; effectively dampen background noise

that usually provides added stress to the individual and offer an auditory stimulus that can have a positive relaxing effect. In 2011, Alf Gabrielsson interviewed nearly 965 people over the course of ten years and recorded their experiences with music. When those with stress, uneasiness, anxiety, and depression were interviewed on their experiences with music, the general consensus was that “music can express and arouse positive feelings such as calmness, security, happiness, strength, vitality, hope, and liberation, feelings that are incompatible with pain” (Gabrielsson). When people were interviewed on their feelings and thoughts while performing they found that when performing music, musicians focus on producing music not what they should do to produce it, which helps the musician disconnect from the trials they may be facing in the real world.

In 2015, Moshe Bensimon, Tomer Einat, and Avi Gilboa conducted a study surveying the effects relaxing music had on prisoners suffering from depression, anxiety, and anger, titled, *The impact of relaxing music on prisoners' levels of anxiety and anger*. In the study they had two separate treatment groups one was exposed to relaxing music for three weeks (Wing 1) while the other had no exposure to any music for three consecutive weeks (Wing 2). In the first week there was little to no difference in the anger levels of the inmates between Wing 1 & 2, but subtle improvements in their anxiety levels. By the end of the study, Bensimon, Einat, and Gilboa found that “state anxiety measurements changed substantially from baseline for the treatment group but not for the comparison group after 1 week of manipulation” and “state anger measurements decreased moderately from baseline for treatment group but not for comparison group” (Bensimon, Einat, & Gilboa). The inmates anger levels did not decrease as substantially as their anxiety levels because “anger, unlike anxiety, is reduced if there is a perception of control and a perceived ability to overcome a stressor” (Bensimon, Einat, & Gilboa). If inmates

are directly involved in the music being played (i.e. playing piano, drumming, singing, etc.), they exercise control and are able to overcome their stressors further reducing anger levels.

Introducing relaxing music and offering chances for inmates to play music themselves, helps lower their anxiety and anger levels that prison has helped develop and provides a positive contact zone that they can return to in the future.

DANCE KAISO AT THE CORRECTIONAL TRAINING FACILITY

Prison Statistics

Dance Kiso was founded in 1987 by Wilfred Mark, Robbin Frey, and Val Serrant.

Dance Kiso teaches authentic African-derived folkloric music and dance forms of the Caribbean (“Dance Kiso”). Dance Kiso was originally introduced in elementary schools and juvenile facilities in San Francisco and Oakland. When Arts-in-Corrections was re-introduced in 2013, Dance Kiso applied for the grant and was offered a contract that same year. Directors Robbin Frey and Wilfred Mark first worked in Salinas Valley State Prison (SVSP), the Psychiatry Inpatient Program (PIP), and the Correctional Training Facility (CTF). Five years later, Mark and Frey teach Dance Kiso classes at the Level 4 institution Salinas Valley Prison and the minimum-security institution Correctional Training Facility, both in Soledad (Frey and Mark).

Before Mark worked at the California prisons, he volunteered at several juvenile facilities throughout Oakland and San Francisco teaching Afro-Caribbean drumming to young adults. Once Mark transferred to working with prisons, he was grateful for his time volunteering at juvenile facilities, because it was extremely impactful and helpful when transitioning into teaching in prisons. Frey worked on and off with Mark in the Juvenile facilities, but her main role for the corporation is administration-based. According to Mark and Frey, once they enter the

prison to teach their students, they are considered “nobodies” who aren’t respected by the correctional officers in the prisons. According to Frey they are seen as just “one step above the prisoners”.

General Information about their current class at the Correctional Training Facility

The Correctional Training Facility is the minimum-security institution at Soledad State Prison. This means that most of the inmates have less than two years left and are extremely well behaved with hardly any strikes against them. Dance Kaiso is taught weekly at the Correctional Training facility with two separate classes on Tuesday and Wednesday. The class contains 16 students; however, each class varies in size depending on the week. Dance Kaiso’s classes usually have a minimum of 14 inmates and a maximum of 20 inmates involved, with their age and ethnicity varying greatly. There is currently a 40-person waitlist for this once-a-week, two-hour class. Once an inmate has completed 2 hours of their class, they get a week off their sentence; this helps increase class size and attendance. However, sometimes this incentive is not great enough, and if a student misses more than 3 classes without explanation, they are kicked out to make room for those on the waitlist. The class last for 36 weeks, with breaks for holidays, from mid-September to late-June. Depending on their musical growth and work, the students sometimes put on performances for the rest of the prison at the end of their academic year.

As explained above Mark comes in weekly to teach his classes. Mark exercises a relaxed and carefree style of teaching that allows inmates more freedom over decision and improvisation. This can sometimes be an issue because he’s not as strict on students who randomly join the class, sign in for other people, or come for a few minutes then leave. Frey comes to the class monthly to see how the students are progressing and insure monthly reports being written for the

class are in line with what Mark is teaching. Frey doesn't allow as much freedom for improvisation. She prefers students spend the time learning these rhythms and making sure they know them instead of allowing them the freedom of improvisation (Frey and Mark).

Dance Kaiso's class at the Correctional Training Facility, Tuesday November 6th, 2018

On November 6th, 2018, I had the opportunity to observe Dance Kaiso's Tuesday night class in the gymnasium

at the Correctional Training Facility in Soledad, California (see Fig. 3). The class starts out with the students stretching, jumping, and moving around to a simple beat played by one of the other students.

By having the students

move around and stretch, it encourages them to carry on an active lifestyle and introduces more blood-flow and movement than they normally get in prison.

Once the students are done stretching, the class practices different drumming methods. Because the class experience levels vary greatly, Mark always has the class go around in a circle practicing bass (hitting the rim of the drum with your palm), tone (hitting the middle of the drum with the tip of your fingers), and timing. With these three exercises, the students are able to get a



© California Arts Council

Figure 3: Merts, Peter. Photograph of Dance Kaiso Drum Circle (Picture no. 2). Peter Merts Photography, California Arts Council, Oct. 2018, http://petermerts.com/galleries/30_prison-art/413-drumming-at-ctf/

fundamental understanding of what creates rhythm. With this exercise, the students are taught patience and attention to detail. Having them learn each part of the drum and its purpose in creating a rhythm forces them to pay attention and be patient when learning how to correctly execute all the intricate parts of the drumming.

Mark then has the class do a listening exercise where he plays a rhythm, and they repeat that same rhythm one-by-one around the circle. With this exercise, the students must pay close attention to what rhythm Mark is playing and how they can execute it themselves. It also helps the students focus in on how to perfect their own drumming style and not worry too much about how their classmates are executing the rhythm. During this exercise, some students had a harder time than others executing the rhythms Mark was playing, but ultimately, they were met with support from fellow students and the teachers when lost or confused. The general atmosphere that accompanied the space was positive, encouraging, and welcoming. The class makes sure to stay very attentive to every movement Mark does or rhythm he creates. It's very clear that the students respect him and are excited to learn from the knowledge he has to offer on Afro-Caribbean drumming.

After Mark completed teaching the students specific rhythms one-by-one, he starts an exercise where half the class plays one rhythm, and the other half plays another complimentary rhythm. The rhythms that Mark chooses from are normally calypso from Trinidad, samba from Brazil, or rumba from Cuba. These diverse rhythms are perfect for any skill level to pick up; they can be potentially being very complex rhythms to challenge the students that have attended the class for years, or they can be very simple rhythms that are easy for a first-time attendee to pick-up. While the two different groups in the class are playing complimenting rhythms with one another, Mark and Frey usually encourage the students to get up and dance (see Fig. 4). Mark

will demonstrate a traditional Afro-Caribbean dance and more confident students will get up and follow his lead. Mark also makes sure that he allows the students enough creative freedom to dance how they want. He watches what they are doing and how they're moving and manages to mold it with his own understanding of Afro-Caribbean dancing. The students cheer one another on, smile, laugh, and, of course, keep the rhythm going. After practicing these different rhythmic styles, Mark allots time for a 10-minute break where inmates can socialize, play basketball, or continue drumming.

When the inmates return to class, the rest of the time is spent improvising. Mark asks the class to come up with their own rhythms that the rest of the class can repeat, build on, or dance to. During this time, the inmates are able to practice freedom and control in a space where they usually have neither. The improvisation session also calls for a lot of listening, observing, and respecting of one another's rhythm and the groups sound as a whole. When the whole class is playing one student's rhythm, it gives the student a sense of confidence and pride that they were able to create something that other people are using and enjoying.



© California Arts Council

Figure 4: Merts, Peter. Photograph of Dance Kaiso Drum Circle (Picture no. 8). Peter Merts Photography, California Arts Council, Oct. 2018, http://petermerts.com/galleries/30_prison-art/413-drumming-at-ctf/

Once the two hours are concluded, Mark congratulates and commends the class and individual students on a job well done. Frey and Mark also encourage their students to practice outside of class in order for them to really improve and give them positive coping methods or healthy mental practices they can use at any time during their conviction.

Dance Kaiso's Effect on Inmates

Many of the students expressed that their time as students of Mark and Frey have helped them disconnect from the hardships they are facing in prison and gave them a place to talk and express themselves freely. One inmate claimed that being able to get away from the social stresses that they are surrounded with in prison by simply beating on a drum is extremely helpful and further reduces any anger, anxiety, or self-doubt they had entered the room with. According to Frey, prison is its own world that is hardly ever able to interact with the real world. Prison has its own meal options, social structures, currency, laws, and more that are often much more stressful and prevalent than the real world. With a social oligarchy that impacts nearly everything in the prison, the Arts-in-Corrections programs are one of the only spaces prisoners are unrestrained from social expectations. Dance Kaiso has been able to create a group of diverse students that are able to work together, help one another, and have a positive space for social interaction that mirrors that of the real world.

Ultimately Dance Kaiso provides its students with a positive contact zone that they can return to weekly in prison and once they leave prison. In each class the inmates are learning extremely valuable skills like communication, self-assurance, freedom of expression, relaxation techniques, and of course Afro-Caribbean drumming. Mark and Frey teach these classes with the

hope that students will utilize the musical skills they have been taught in their daily lives, both in and out of prison.

CONCLUSION

With nearly 2.3 million people in the prison system, there must be changes made to help support this huge populations mental, emotional, and physical health and prevent recidivism. Music rehabilitation programs have proven to be especially helpful and beneficial to reducing stress and anger, encouraging healthy communication, creating a positive sense of self, and giving inmates a contact zone with music that can help them in and out of prison. By providing inmates with classes that engage their artistic, social, and emotional expression, the government is staying true to its fourth, and possibly most fundamental, purpose: rehabilitation.

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