MUSIC AS LABOUR

INEQUALITIES AND ACTIVISM IN THE PAST AND PRESENT

Edited by
Dagmar Abfalter and Rosa Reitsamer

Music as Labour

This book brings together research at the intersection of music, cultural industries, management, antiracist politics and gender studies to analyse music as labour, in particular highlighting social inequalities and activism.

Providing insights into labour processes and practices, the authors investigate the changing role of manifold actors, institutions and technologies and the corresponding shifts in the valuation and evaluation of music achievements that have shaped the relationship between music, labour, the economy and politics. With research into a variety of geographic regions, chapters shed light on the various ways by which musicians' work is performed, constructed and managed at different times and show that musicians' working practices have been marked by precarity, insecurity and short-term contracts long before capitalism invited everybody to 'be creative'. In doing so, they specifically examine the dynamics in music professions and educational institutions, as well as gatekeepers and mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion.

With a specific emphasis on inequalities in the music industries, this book will be essential reading for scholars seeking to understand the collective actions and initiatives that foster participation, inclusion, diversity and fair pay amongst musicians and other workers.

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Introduction

Rosa Reitsamer and Dagmar Abfalter

In recent years, a growing body of research has been concerned with creative work, and discussions on music as waged and unwaged labour have gained momentum in fields as diverse as cultural, media and communication studies, organisational, business and management studies, music sociology, the sociology of work and musicology. This edited collection contributes to this scholarship by presenting interdisciplinary approaches to past and present challenges for music as creative labour. The applied considerations of musicians' creative work range, for example, from the impact of techno-logical developments on music professions to managing the blurring of boundaries between professional and private relationships in collaborative music making, and from neoliberal considerations of musical achievements for accumulating economic profit to grassroots initiatives that fight racist stereotypes and sexual harassment during music education and profes-sional work.

This book provides insights into these processes and practices from various disciplines, work contexts and geographic regions, and aims to shed light on the continuity and change in creative labour, which is understood to mean work geared to the production of aesthetic and symbolic-expressive commodities. The changing nature of creative labour is probably best represented in this book through a combination of historical case studies and contemporary analyses. These studies investigate the changing roles of manifold actors, institutions and technologies and the corresponding shifts in the valuation and evaluation of musical achievements that have shaped the relationship between music, labour, the economy and politics. They examine the heterogeneous, ambivalent and contested ways in which musicians' work is performed, constructed and managed at particular times and in specific places and spaces and show that musicians' working practices have been marked by precarity, insecurity and short-term contracts long before capitalism invited everybody to 'be creative'.

A further aim of this book is to stimulate research concerned with questions of how inequalities are challenged but also reproduced by musicians' unions and activist initiatives in diverse musical worlds in the past and present. The interdependence between music, inequalities and activism has rarely been

illuminated in the sociology of work and in organisational, business and management studies, and remains marginal in musicology, popular music studies and music sociology as well as in gender, queer and trans studies. The contributing authors look at the gendered, racialised and class-specific dynamics in music professions such as mining orchestras or itinerant female musicians during the nineteenth century; Black, queer and female DJs and music producers involved in New York's disco party scene in the 1970s; Afghan musicians living in Vienna, Austria and London, UK; female classical musicians coping with inequalities and precarious working conditions; or jazz musicians working in domestic spaces during the Covid-19 lockdown. In so doing, these contributors map existing inequalities in the music industries and explore the diverse forms of activism that foster participation, inclusion, diversity and fair pay amongst musicians and other cultural workers. These accurate and sound analyses challenge the dichotomy of creative work as either self-exploitative and social inequality-reproducing or as a means for creative freedom, self-fulfilment and entrepreneurialism. They benefit not only from the authors' different disciplinary backgrounds and degrees of individual involvement, but also from the applied methodological approaches ranging from (auto-)ethnographic accounts and historiographical analyses to qualitative sociological inquiries.

In this introductory chapter, we aim to accomplish several objectives: First, we will outline the characteristics of creative labour described by critical analyses of the cultural and creative industries. In the second part, we consider music's past as a history of musical life structured around self-organised musical practices and micro-entrepreneurial activities to illustrate that musicians' creative labour is marked by continuities rather than fundamental changes. In the third part, we will turn to the relationship between music, inequalities and activism.

The Changing Nature of Creative Labour

In western industrial societies, artists were considered to be 'outsiders' who assumed an illusory attraction and creative labour was seen as a niche occupation for a selected few. This prestigious yet marginalised position of creative labour and the cultural industries in general was reflected in the fact that, apart from Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno's culture industry thesis (1947/1972), hardly any importance was given to the subject in academia and politics. Since the 1960s, the term 'cultural industries' has been widely used and art and culture has become subject of economic and sociological inquiry and policy debates. Influential works from this time include König and Silbermann's (1964) study on the economic and social situation of self-employed artists in the Federal Republic of Germany or Baumol and Bowen's (1966) first in-depth exploration of the performing arts from a cultural economics standpoint, making a 'powerful case for the economic necessity and rationale for public support (economic welfare) of the arts'

(Kirchner and Ford, 2019: 25). We can also look back on a long history of claims for the value, function and impact of the arts fuelling cultural policy debates and, since the 1980s, on an array of studies dedicated to justifying the economic value of artistic and cultural activities (Belfiore and Bennett, 2008).

The marginalised position of the cultural industries has changed fundamentally since the 1990s as policymakers began using the term 'creative industries' and suggested new definitions in order to reposition these industries as key sectors promising economic growth, future employment and urban regeneration, and to hail labourers in the arts, music, media and design as 'the workers of the future' and 'model entrepreneurs' of late capitalism. As de Peuter (2014: 263) notes, '(t)he figure of the self-reliant, risk-bearing, non-unionised, self-exploiting, always-on flexibly employed worker in the creative industries has been positioned as a role model of contemporary capitalism'.

It is wildly acknowledged that the British New Labour government (1997–2010) with its Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and its vision for 'Cool Britannia' has played a decisive role in this process. In 1998, the DCMS defined creative industries as 'those industries which have their origins in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property' (DCMS, 1998, cited in DCMS, 2001: 5). This definition has proved as highly influential on a global level as it is broad enough to deem as creative such diverse activities as 'advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, designer fashion, film interactive leisure software, music, the performing arts, publishing, software and television and radio' (DCMS, 2001: 3). The UNESCO defines the cultural and creative Industries as '(t)hose sectors of organized activity that have as their main objective the production or reproduction, the promotion, distribution or commercialization of goods, services and activities of content derived from cultural, artistic or heritage origins'. (UNESCO 2009: n.p.) The concept of the creative and cultural industries is used by various stakeholders and is not standardised. Rather, it 'extends to different realities (creative industries, creative goods, creative economy, creative cities, creative regions, creative class etc.) and covers different cultural sectors in academic documents or national strategies' (Benghozi et al., 2015: 11).

After rising in the Anglophone countries and booming in the Global North, the cultural and creative industries have spread across the Global South, labelled, for example, as the 'Orange Economy' in Latin America (Lazzeretti and Vecco, 2018; Buitrago Restrepo and Duque Marquez, 2013). On a local level, the concept of the creative and cultural industries has allowed for diverse adaptions manifesting in the incorporation of neoliberal creative industry policy into urban regeneration plans for various cities and a corresponding increase in the number of people employed in these sectors. In the 2010s, the cultural and creative industries were described as major

drivers and the most rapidly growing sectors of the economies of the so called 'developed' as well as 'developing countries', capitalising US$2,250 billion and creating nearly 30 million jobs worldwide (CISAC & UNESCO, 2015). In 2019, the creative and cultural industries in Europe (EU-28) accounted for a turnover of €643 billion, amounting to 4.4 per cent of the EU's GDP and providing 12 million full time jobs. However, these industries are also among the most affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with a drop in turnover of 31 per cent in general and 76 per cent for music in particular between 2019 and 2020 (EY consulting, 2021).

In academic research, optimistic voices represented by, for example, Charles Landry (Landry and Bianchini, 1995, on the creative city) and Richard Florida (2002, on the creative class) have continued to celebrate these industries for enabling economic growth and offering jobs with great potential for flexibility, autonomy, entrepreneurialism, self-fulfilment and recognition. Self-employed artists and creative workers (in Europe) have been described in this literature as 'an avant-garde of modernization' and found to precede the trend of structural change in terms of precarious entrepreneurship in economy and society (Dangel-Vornbäumen, 2010: 138).

Critical analysts have painted a more realistic and relatively consistent picture of creative labour. They have shown that the jobs offered by the creative and cultural industries since the late twentieth century are overwhelmingly based on self-employed and freelance labour and are marked by insecurity, poor working conditions and little job protection (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011). These jobs rely strongly on reputation and networking (Blair, 2001; Coulsen, 2012), thus requiring dynamic and 'liquid' (Bauman, 2011) strategies in the sense of proactive behaviour in response to emerging and highly evolving contexts (Benghozi et al., 2021). Access to and earning in these jobs are unequally distributed in the global workforce and career prospects are uncertain and often foreshortened (Ross, 2009; Morgan et al., 2013). Research has also shown that most labourers in the cultural and creative industries are to a large extent highly motivated and experience their work as satisfying and intensely pleasurable (Butler and Stoyanova Russell, 2018; McRobbie, 2016). As Gill and Pratt (2008: 15) note, 'a vocabulary of love is repeatedly evinced in such studies, with work imbued with the feature of the Romantic tradition of the artist, suffused with positive emotional qualities'. However, this passion for creative labour and precarious employment that comes with it involves the risk of self-exploitation (Hoedemaekers, 2018). Siciliano (2021) argues in his empirical study on the working practices of music producers and YouTube content creators that 'affective enrollment' (Siciliano 2021) in creative working processes provides the basis for accepting precarious working conditions and self-exploitation. Affect, for Siciliano, is therefore not a side of potential resistance in creative labour; rather '(p)recarity and alienation persist alongside dynamic, sensually engaging labour processes' (p. 229).

While theoretically and empirically diverse, the studies that have elaborated upon the characteristics of cultural work tend to be concerned with the sectors of the creative industries that have experienced pronounced transformations from regular full-time employment to self-employed, short-term freelance-work and 'immaterial labour' (Lazzarato, 1999) such as journalism, television or fashion. In what follows, we discuss two reasons that might explain the scarce attention given to music as labour and suggest a reconsideration of the history of musical labour.

Music as Self-Organised Labour and Micro-Entrepreneurial Activities

A reason for the neglect of musicians' working practices in contemporary analyses of cultural work can be seen in the misleading notion of a single music industry. As Williamson and Cloonan (2007: 305) argue, this notion is an 'inappropriate model for understanding and analysing the economics and politics surrounding music' because its focus lies on the recording industry and a few multinational music companies. Subsequently, the smaller, less economically significant companies and industries in which the majority of musicians find work tends to be ignored. A further, closely related reason for the little attention placed to music as creative labour can be found in the structural conditions of work in the music industries, with recording, live music, publishing and artists and composers as distinct sectors (Williamson and Cloonan, 2007: 311). The vast majority of musicians working in these sectors have never experienced full-time employment, like numerous creative workers in other cultural industries in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, but have always been self-employed freelance workers who often faced precarious working conditions. They heavily rely on self-organisation and grassroots or DIY (do-it-yourself) musical practices and are involved in activities that can be described as entrepreneurial, such as self-promotion, forging professional networks or selling recordings (Haynes and Marshall, 2017). Indeed, as Weber (2004) suggests, we can reconstruct music's past as a history of musical life that amounts to a series of more or less successful micro-entrepreneurial efforts by musicians, given that the number of institutions offering work to musicians was limited at any given time. This historiographic approach, Weber argues, shifts focus away from the individual creative achievements of composers, which lies at the heart of traditional musicology, and towards questions of how musicians carry out their daily business, seek out new opportunities to advance their careers and shape and reshape the nature of musical cultures. While Weber's edited collection, *The Musician as Entrepreneur* (2004), focuses on the careers of high-level classical music professionals in Britain, France, Germany and the United States between about 1700 and 1914, this book is concerned with typical musicians in various genres who have acquired a broad set of skills

and advanced their careers at a particular time and in specific geographical regions.

Fritz Trümpi's chapter considers the ironworks in the Moravian-Silesian region (today the Czech Republic) from the 1890s to the 1910s as one of the few, now almost forgotten venues for music production that offered male orchestra musicians permanent work contracts, although with the double burden of performing in the mining band and doing 'light work' in different areas of the factory. Because of this employment status, Trümpi argues, the mining and factory orchestra musicians were privileged compared to the majority of musicians who worked within the territory of the Habsburg Monarchy and faced precarious working conditions. This large group included, for example, the female itinerant musicians in northwestern Bohemia in the late nineteenth century, to whom Nuppu Koivisto devotes her contribution from the perspective of feminist historical sociology. Koivisto illuminates how these young women without professional musical training earned a living in a male-dominated transnational entertainment industry prior to the advent of recording while facing serious threats of financial and social abuse and even harassment. As Koivisto points out, although these female musicians had to deal with hostile working conditions, they were not simply victims of the patriarchal order. They acted as self-determined and self-organised professionals from modest socio-economic backgrounds for whom a musical career in a ladies' orchestra (*Damenkapelle*) offered a way to climb the social ladder. Mojica Piškor's chapter highlights a historic case of this inseparable relationship between music and technology and its effect on a musical profession. She takes the invention of sound film – the so-called 'talkies' – and its consequences on silent film theatre musicians in Croatia in the 1920s as an example to explore the challenges posed by the new technology on the working conditions and labour rights of local musicians. Juxtaposing the competing discourses of musicians and the owners of music theatres, her study provides detailed insight into how this new technology challenged and deteriorated the working conditions and labour rights of local musicians until their disappearance from the bulletin of the Association of Musicians of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and from performance stages in the early 1930s.

These case studies contribute to a growing literature on historiographic approaches to music as labour (e.g., Rempe, 2019) by drawing attention to musicians' precarious working conditions and entrepreneurial activities in the music and entertainment industries in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One of the first musical forms often described as 'a major democratisation of music-making' (Chambers, 1985: 46) is skiffle, which was originally an African American form played in the United States at the turn of the twentieth century and became, as a whitened hybrid of blues, jazz and folk music, a crucial element in the development of British popular music in the mid-1950s (Inglis, 2010). At that time, when music was controlled by the music industries and little opportunities were offered to challenge the strict

divide between making music and consuming it, many people, particularly urban working-class youth, turned to skiffle, which they produced on home-made instruments such as a bass made from a tea chest and a broom handle. This enthusiasm for grassroots musical performance was further supported by the emergence of rock'n'roll and the rising popularity of British beat groups in the 1960s, also inspiring numerous young women to pick up an instrument and to form a rock band in the years between 1963 and 1967 (Feldman-Barrett, 2014).

In the 1970s, three musical subcultures emerged in the wake of the hippy counterculture, the civil rights movements and second-wave feminism that offered many young people from disadvantaged socio-economic and ethnic minority backgrounds a possibility to both respond to class-based, gendered and racialised forms of oppression and create their own alternative cultural economy with micro-entrepreneurial activities such as producing music, running independent record labels, publishing fanzines and buying and selling clothes to react to the commercial music and cultural industries. These subcultures include punk, which developed as a DIY practice of cultural production in the US but provided young people in Britain with a specific trajectory into music-making (Bennett, 2018), as well as hip hop with its early innovators who lived in post-industrial American cities and introduced an influential model for the development of a musical career. They turned their lack of educational and occupational opportunities into grassroots cultural production and entrepreneurial activities by becoming rappers, music producers, promoters and founders of independent record labels (Rose, 1994; Forman, 2002). Although there exist considerable differences between early local punk and hip hop 'scenes' in terms of music, media, style and identity, they both promoted independence from the commercial music industries that privileged white male American and British rock bands over female performers, artists of colour and unwanted musical styles such as soul and rap in the 1970s and after (Negus, 1992).

Disco can be considered as the third youth-oriented subculture that emerged in the mid-1970s and built an alternative music economy, as Tim Lawrence shows in his contribution. Contrary to punk's devaluation of female instrumentalists (Reddington, 2018) and to the heteronormative hypermasculine stance of rock (Whiteley, 2000) and hip hop (Rose, 2008), disco became a place of work for a cross-class rainbow coalition of people of colour, queers and women aligned with the civil rights, feminist and gay liberation movements. According to Lawrence, this DJ-led dance culture broke with the hierarchies, routines and structures of the American post-war Fordist economy with its factory and office work and contributed to a form of musical labour that was both collective, creative, flexible and pleasurable as well as precarious. Subsequently, Lawrence is suggesting that disco, with its the new music professions and employment opportunities for minorities, was not complicit with neoliberalism, but as a culture paralleled Autonomia, the Italian anti-capitalist, post-Fordist work movement of the 1970s.

Since the rise of disco as a 'progressive version of post-Fordist labour' (Lawrence in this book) and the development of (trans-)local alternative music economies in the 1970s, the worlds of post-punk, rap and dance culture have changed considerably. They remain domains for collective queer, feminist and anti-racist actions and activism, but have also become areas of cultural production in which post-Fordist labour arrangements unite the ideology of creativity with individual entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurialism, however, is not a unitary discourse, and scholars have only recently begun to explore the diverse practices employed by musicians to adopt an entrepreneurial position following the changes in the relationships between culture and society, and between art and money and their increasing association with neoliberal economics. White (2017), for example, shows how young black males living in poor areas in London made use of grime, a music genre with its sonic roots and influences in hip hop, R&B, reggae and the cultural practice of Jamaican sound system, 'to articulate their living conditions, to speak of the lack of opportunity and to create a route to employment through enterprise' (p. 38). These 'artist entrepreneurs', as White calls these musicians, challenged the established notion of entrepreneurship, traditionally understood as a venture that creates material wealth, because they honed their skills through apprenticeship with sound systems and grime crews, created work for themselves and others by working as MCs, DJs, beatmakers and promoters and established small, sustainable businesses with few financial resources. By embarking on these entrepreneurial activities, these young black men negotiated both their experienced exclusion from the commercial music industries and the political and economic effects of social change, precarity and uncertainty in a neoliberal world.

Writers in a Foucauldian tradition argue that neoliberalism is not a purely economic project, but 'normatively constructs and interpellates individuals as entrepreneurial actors on every sphere of life' (Brown, 2005: 42). The discourse of the 'entrepreneurial self' (Bröckling, 2016; Rose, 1999) is thus based on the idea of controlling one's own career through self-organisation, self-marketing and 'network sociability' (Wittel, 2001) and suggests an understanding of one's work as services and goods rather than as cultural and social practices. Since the 1990s, this discourse circulates not only in the realm of popular music production (see, e.g., McRobbie, 2002; Reitsamer, 2011), but has also defunded in higher classical music education and the classical music industry. For Scharff (2018: 23), this shift towards entrepreneurialism in classical music could be seen 'as part of infiltration of neoliberalism … and as form of governmentality that calls on musicians to cultivate an entrepreneurial attitude to navigate precarious work'. John R. Pippen considers in his chapter the entrepreneurship books that describe musical professions as meritocratic and are increasingly being used in the 'art entrepreneurship' curricula taught at American classical music conservatories. He contrasts these books' core messages with the musical practices of freelance Chicago-based new music ensembles. His analysis shows that

entrepreneurship books present new music as a solution to overcome classical music's loss of prestige and funding, while they ignore research on the persistence of inequalities in the classical music industry. New music ensembles, as those studied by Pippen, however, heavily rely on both classical music institutions and the unearned advantages manifesting in access to elite training, work with prestigious educational institutions and skills developed via life-long study and supported by family. These class privileges are in fact necessary to advance a successful career in the classical music industry, but, as Pippen's ethnographic study demonstrates, according to the musicians themselves, their success is owed to a lifetime of musical labour and supportive networks.

Similar to Pippen's study, Michael L. Jones's chapter challenges the links between musical work, entrepreneurialism and neoliberalism by drawing attention to the precarious working conditions of jazz musicians in the UK before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. For Jones, jazz holds a particular position when compared to classical and popular music because the jazz music industry is considerably smaller, and self-employed, freelance musicians working in this industry practice and hone their craft through live improvisation. Mapping the experiences of jazz performers involved in a recording project during the first Covid-19 lockdown, Jones's autoethnographic study demonstrates not only the limits of such concepts as 'portfolio career' and 'gig economy', but also highlights the importance of private spaces as sites of collective creativity at a time when Covid-19 has upturned jazz musicians' ways of creating and performing music together at public venues and has increased inequalities amongst musicians. Formative for the exploration of domestic space as a site of creativity is McRobbie and Garber's (1976 [2008]) work on girls' 'bedroom cultures' where activities such as reading magazines and listening to records were seen as 'safe' for girls' identity work and allowed them to make a statement about themselves as music and media fans. Today, young women are no longer constrained to the private space and actively participate as cultural producers in local music 'scenes' (Leblanc, 1999; Leonard, 2007a) and the night-time economy (Chatterton and Hollands, 2003), but the bedroom remains an important space for expanding their position as an 'active audience' (Willis, 1990) with the production of music (Barna, 2022; Wolfe, 2020) and for counterposing the masculine public space of musical labour and paid work. Jones's autoethnographic study demonstrates that the use of digital technologies in domestic spaces to realise a collective recording project has complicated the extent to which private spaces remain invisible and associated with femininity and unpaid reproductive labour. Emilía Barna's work draws attention to the gendered dimension and dynamics of paid and unpaid work in post-Fordist arrangements of musical labour from a feminist perspective (see, e.g., Barna, 2021). Her study in this book shows how musicians and music industry workers negotiate the boundaries between professional and personal labour in creative collaborations and how women

are required to perform additional 'emotional labour' (Hochschild, 1983) to forge networks and maintain friendships with male musicians. Barna's chapter also shows that, for her female research participants, the Covid-19 crisis and the lockdown in summer 2020 has intensified the inseparability of friendship, care and intimacy from their regular working relationships in music and clearly pushed their working relationships with male musicians and industry workers into gendered situations in which they are expected to put men's concerns and emotional needs before their own, as a mother is typically expected to in heteronormative family constellations.

In addition to the rapidly developing global Covid-19 pandemic, which continues to have a severe effect on the working lives of musicians, war, displacement, migration and flight are further factors affecting musicians' careers and employment opportunities. Marko Kölbl's chapter departs from a transnational perspective on music, migration and labour by focusing on both the historical development of pop music in Afghanistan before and during the first Taliban regime and the presence of Afghan musicians in Vienna and London in the context of restrictive asylum policies and derogatory media narratives that incite anti-Muslim racism and racialised Othering. Exploring the musical labour of Afghan musicians with refugee experiences who came to Europe at different times, Köbl highlights the narratives of belonging afforded by Afghan music performances and the symbolic economy of musical authenticity.

As this brief and incomplete overview of a history of musical life revolving around self-organised labour and micro-entrepreneurial activities shows, the average musician – not the star but the working professional – has been subject to precarious working conditions, job insecurity, short-term contracts and forms of economic exploitation for a long time. Neoliberalism with its glorification of autonomy, creativity and entrepreneurship has further increased musicians' precarious work and living conditions and exacerbated social inequalities in terms of gender, race, class or disability in the music industries. We therefore suggest that, similar to the history of musicians' self-organised labour can be written, a history that not only provides insights into the continuity of musicians' insecurity and precarity but of creative workers in general, a long history of inequalities and activism in the music industries can be recovered to which we will briefly turn in our last section.

Inequalities and Activism in the Music Industries

In their report 'Social Mobility in the Creative Economy', Carey et al. (2021) found that the class origin demographics of musicians put them amongst the most elite occupations in the British economy: 67 per cent come from a privileged background with at least one parent working in a higher managerial, administrative or professional occupation. Subsequently, a widespread concern is currently articulated about the class-related disadvantages

manifest in the pronounced underrepresentation of labourers from a working-class background in music industries (O'Brian et al., 2016). Class, however, intersects with gender, race, disability, skills and place (Collins, 2019), creating multiple disadvantages for individuals. For example, less than a fifth of the musicians signed by British music publishers or record labels in 2018 were female (Bain, 2019) and Black women working in the British music industry experience racial inequalities more often than men (Gittens et al., 2021). According to Smith et al. (2021) the stereotype of leadership in the US music industry as white and male is reproduced by traditional ideologies of gender that define executive roles and shape the working practices within the industry. As a result, female musicians have achieved limited commercial success not only in male-dominated styles like rock music (Kearney, 2017), but in popular music genres in general (Whiteley, 2000); their careers tend to be shorter compared to male musicians, since they obtain fewer industry resources; and their bodies and sexuality are foregrounded instead of their musical achievements (Lieb, 2013).

Systematic gender inequalities have continued in local music scenes where women remain significantly underrepresented at every level of cultural production and across music genres (cf., e.g., for jazz, Buscatto, 2022; for electronic dance music, Gavanas and Reitsamer, 2013; for metal, Berkers and Schaap, 2018; for indie rock, Leonard, 2007a; for classical music, Scharff, 2018). As Cohen (1991) shows in her early ethnographic study on rock culture in Liverpool, UK, this local scene was created by male musicians who perceived women as a threat to their relationships with other men as well as to their creativity. Moreover, women were actively excluded from the networks and music-related activities that fulfil gatekeeping functions regarding the access to knowledge and other resources simply because they were not taken seriously. Gender inequalities span from a lack of access to music spaces to sexist attitudes to practices of taste-making, canonisation and historisation that focus on white men (e.g., Leonard, 2007b; Regev, 1994; Strong and Raine, 2018). In this context, accessing the music industries, including local scenes, continues to be more difficult for female musicians and musicians of colour, even when graduating from prestigious universities.

The music industries are built on a star system and structural asymmetries of power and privilege that provide not only a breeding ground for reproducing inequalities, but also for assault and sexual harassment, as demonstrated by the increasing number of accounts of survivors of sexual harassment made public in the wake of the #metoo movement. According to Hennekam and Bennett's (2017) study on cultural work in the Netherlands, sexual harassment is prevalent in the cultural and creative industries and many women consider it part of their occupation culture and career advancement. They argue that precarity, competition for work, gendered power relations, the importance of informal networks and a lack of regulation are factors that increase the tolerance of sexual harassment. In

respect to classical music education at higher education institutions, Pace (2013) outlines various factors that create an environment for abuse. These include the culture of 'great musicians' rooted in the nineteenth-century values on which higher music education institutions rely; the idea that solo performance 'entails a highly intimate expression of the self, dealing with deeply intimate emotions' (Pace, 2013: n.p.) and the intensity of one-to-one teaching relationships in music education. Bull and Rye's (2018) report on silencing students adds visibility to institutional inaction and students' experiences of staff sexual misconduct in higher music education. Beyond academia, sexual violence frequently occurs at live music events and significantly impacts (predominantly) women's musical participation (Hill and Megson, 2020). Strong and Rush (2018) argue that the systematic abuse of power and the ignoring of violence against women in the history of popular music serve to preserve and protect the reputation and freedom of the white male artist as a 'genius' and as the sole and privileged originator of artistic work in the present (DeNora, 1995; Wolff, 1993), a status rarely accorded to women in the histories of classical and popular music (e.g., Citron, 1993; Reitsamer, 2018; Strong, 2011).

These findings are depressing, but hardly surprising, given that labour activism, workers' unions and feminist and anti-racist movements have been discredited and dismantled through aggressive neoliberal politics that advocate individual responsibility for one's own life and career while eroding the public institutions required for a functioning democracy and reproducing inequalities and white hegemony. Among the effects of this politics is an often strong belief in the notion of meritocracy in line with Florida's story of creative work, which supposedly ensures the success of the most talented and hardworking artists regardless of identity. These meritocratic narratives significantly contribute to obscure inequalities associated with gender, class and other forms of discrimination (Taylor and O'Brien, 2017). Moreover, gender inequalities have become 'unspeakable' and are frequently 'located in the past' (Gill, 2014; Scharff, 2012), while new forms of sexism (Gill, 2014) and justification are employed by musicians, event organisers and mangers to 'undo' feminist politics (Reitsamer, 2021). As a result, there is a noticeable sense among cultural labourers in general that unionisation and collective action are undesirable and no longer necessary in post-race and post-feminist times in which racial justice has been supposedly accomplished (Beltrán, 2014) and feminism is invoked 'to suggest that equality is achieved, in order to install a whole repertoire of new meanings which emphasise that it is no longer needed' (McRobbie, 2004: 255). Gill (2011: 137) suggests that to understand 'postfeminism as a sensibility' allows for an emphasis on 'the contradictory nature of postfeminist discourses and the entanglement of both feminist and anti-feminist themes with them'. A defining aspect of postfeminist popular culture seems to be a preoccupation with the female body which is constructed as a tool for (young) women's freedom, choice and empowerment (Gill, 2011; McRobbie, 2009).

In this context of a post-feminist media culture, we can consider the studies by Christina Scharff and Sally Ann Gross presented in this book. In her chapter on female classical musicians in London, Scharff finds an increased awareness of inequalities in the explicit and insightful accounts of gendered, racial and classed hierarchies both in classical music education and the industry. According to Scharff, these accounts mark a shift in comparison to the narratives presented by the female musicians interviewed for her pioneering book on inequalities and entrepreneurialism in the classical music profession (Scharff, 2018), since women are no longer embarrassed to speak about experiences of discrimination. However, these accounts alternate with the individualist narratives through which the interviewees position themselves as personally unaffected by inequalities (in line with a post-feminist sensibility) while at the same time pointing, for example, to informal practices of community building such as spending time in a pub, which amounts to masculine spaces for work and networking opportunities. Gross's study, based on interviews with an ethnically diverse group of female music industry workers who all described themselves as feminists and who had completed an MA in Music Business Management at London's University of Westminster, comes to similar conclusions. Class, race, gender and place shape the careers of these women, and white, young, female Londoners enjoy advantages over women of colour in making their way from university to the British music industries. Gross's interviewees are articulate about these inequalities and try to compensate for them by using social media channels to organise events about anti-Black racism against women, to accumulate knowledge about the music industries and to promote their careers and micro-entrepreneurial activities. At the same time, they strongly believe in meritocracy and hard work, even though advancing a career in the music industries has caused serious health problems for some, and are positive about their futures against the background of a critical moment of reflexivity in the music industries effected by #BlackLivesMatter and #metoo. Gross's findings resonate with that of Scharff's chapter in that there is increasing awareness of inequalities amongst a younger generation of women, but it remains highly contested.

In order to understand the ambivalence and contradictions that inform the agency of musicians and music industry workers in post-racial and post-feminist times, it is vital to turn attention to the diverse forms of collective actions and activism devised to fight for fair payment and the right of equal participation in the music industries, beginning with the foundation of the musicians' unions in the late nineteenth century. At the time, as Kraft (1996) notes, the expanding leisure market initially meant new job opportunities for musicians, as owners of theatres, dance halls and other entertainment venues regularly hired orchestras and bands to provide live music to their audiences. Subsequently, the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) was founded in 1896 out of the American Federation of Labour to protect the interests of professional musicians working in the music and entertainment

industries. For Stahl (2015), the AFM's origin story is significant because it brings to light the division between musicians as artists and musicians as workers: 'As artists, music makers are independent entrepreneurs, aligned with capital, whose contracts reflect their individual bargaining power. As workers, music makers acknowledge their collective dependence on and subordination by capital' (Stahl, 2015: 138). The latter understanding is fundamental for musicians' unions in order to improve the social and economic status of music makers. The AFM was able to slow down the job losses that resulted from the growth of the recording industry at the beginning of the twentieth century, which disrupted musicians' employment opportunities. The introduction of digital technologies in the 1980s and today's streaming platforms have further disrupted the rules of both musical supply and demand and as a result, certain musical professions and industry actors have disappeared while new professions and actors emerged. Cloonan suggests that for the British Musician's Union, formed in 1893,

> not much has changed in the intervening 120 years … – the music industries still contain unscrupulous employers, a reserve pool of amateurs and semi-professionals helps keep wages low for all but an elite, and those musicians who work for low rates remain the enemies of those who are trying to improve pay.
>
> (Cloonan, 2014: 26)

In his study on the formation of the International Federation of Musicians (FIM) in the UK, presented in this book, Martin Cloonan uses two major events from 1948 to 1949 to paint a picture of musicians as workers within their specific circumstances and the dominating debates within the FIM. Intriguingly, the main issues have stayed the same over the years – getting musicians (fairly) paid and ensuring this remuneration – but the power of the trade unions has diminished dramatically since 1948. However, despite the goal of musicians' unions to protect and advance the interests of musicians, their histories are also shaped by racial segregation and discriminatory practices with regard to women, artists of colour, younger workers, migrants and particularly popular music musicians such as DJs (cf., e.g., for the San Francisco Musician's Union, Miller, 2007; for the Musician's Union of Australia, Dreyfus, 2012; for the British Musicians' Union, Williamson and Cloonan, 2016).

In reaction to the exclusionary practices of the commercial music industries, which were partly reflected by the musicians' unions, female musicians and artists of colour have founded their own, less formal organisations and community structures. 'Women's Music' emerged in the wake of the women's movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s as a non-masculinist, folk-influenced music by, for and about women; the organisation of workshops, concerts and festivals created the spaces for the rehearsal, performance and consumption of 'women's music' and defined another key practice of feminist music-making, alongside the foundation of the record

label Olivia Records and organisations such as the International Congress of Women in Music that helped to promote women's and lesbians' visibility and to combat the patriarchy and misogyny of the music industries (Bayton, 1993). In the 1990s, a younger generation of women become sceptical about second-wave feminism and the DIY separatist approach of women's music with its gender rigidity and new musical cultures began to emerge, exemplified most notably by riot grrrl and queercore. These movements clearly stand on the shoulders of the women's music tradition with the building of alternative structures and organisation for the production, performance, promotion and appropriation of music, but promoted more flexible forms of self-identification by embracing a range of femininities (Taylor, 2012).

Besides these feminist, lesbian and queer collective actions, there exists a long history of Black activism in the popular music industries. According to Mahon (2004), the Black Rock Coalition (BRC) founded in the 1980s continued the long-standing African American practice of forming associations around social, political and cultural concerns. As an organisation that is still active today, it forges connections between artistic production and racial identity that characterised the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and the Black Arts Movements of the 1960s and recalls the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, a Chicago-based organisation formed in the 1950s to support and showcase musicians expanding the jazz idiom. Mahon argues that the members of the BRC who attended its early meetings in New York and Los Angeles 'were not the architects of civil right agitation, but its beneficiaries' (Mahon, 2004: 35). As part of what she calls the 'postliberated generation', echoing Greg Tate's term of a 'postliberated black aesthetic', the members of the BRC

> grew up in the post-civil rights era of legislated racial equality, had access to institutions that previous generations of African Americans might not have dared to image, and developed a set of creative and political predilections specific to their generation. Among these was an interest in embracing and performing rock.
>
> (Mahon, 2004: 35)

Similar to the musicians and activists of the riot grrrl and queercore movements who draw upon the legacy of the women's music tradition and second wave feminism, the BRC demonstrates ties with the Black Arts and civil rights movements, thus building their own models of history and music heritage.

Since the 1980s, discourses on diversity and equal opportunities have increasingly entered higher music education institutions and music industry organisations. As Puwar (2004: 1) notes, 'the language of diversity is today embraced as a holy mantra across different sites. We are told that diversity is good for us. It makes for an enriched multicultural society'. The language of diversity appears in music industry reports and music companies' mission

statements and as a 'repertoire of images' (Ahmed, 2012: 51) in the form of smiling faces of musicians with different ethnic backgrounds. This language is often aligned with 'business case' arguments driven by neoliberal logics. In this logic, diverse organisations are considered as having a better image, performance and ability to attract and retain human capital. Moreover, calls to action also strive for social justice by supporting equal opportunities as a moral imperative. A further rationale can be found in the compliance with diversity management programs, which have reframed the affirmative action programs that started to lose political support in the 1980s (Köllen, 2021; Blejenberg et al., 2010). Indeed, as Ahmed (2014: 53) notes, 'what is problematic about diversity … is that is can be "cut off" from the programs that seek to challenge inequalities within organisations and might even take the place of such programs in defining the social mission of universities' and other public and private sector organisations. Acknowledging the critique of diversity, Sophie Hennekam suggests in her chapter the concept of the 'inclusive workplace' to delineate some of the arguments presented by organisational, business and management studies for the creation of a workplace in the music industries that is both inclusive and diversity-embracing. Hennekam employs a Human Resource lens and draws upon on her earlier studies to demonstrate how the identities of particular individuals and social groups are 'stigmatised' because they are devalued and subject to stereotyping and discrimination in the music industries. Hennekam concludes her chapter by outlining a few avenues for further research, which include embracing an intersectional perspective in order to re-connect analysis of diversity and inclusion initiatives in organisation with the study of inequalities.

In the final chapter, Antonio Cuyler adds a further dimension to history of Black activism in music by investigating on the emergence of the Black Opera Alliance (BOA) that began in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd in May 2020 through the lens of Critical Race Theory, which proves helpful in uncovering the ways white supremacy and racism shape the opera world and its institutions. His work on Black activism draws upon Bank's (2017) notion of 'creative justice' and extends his own earlier definition of the US cultural sector 'as the manifestation of all people living creative and expressive lives on their own terms' (Cuyler, 2021: 113). His phenomenological study on the BOA is driven by the question of whether activism by Black opera professionals could both positively influence their lives and the opera industry towards an anti-racist and creatively just future – as well as how the opera industry should rethink their managerial, recruiting and artistic practices to align with this aim. According to Cuyler, the BOA provides inspiration for other marginalised, oppressed and subjugated groups in and beyond US society. As editors of this book, we hope to inspire reflections on the implementation of the proposals made by Cuyler and the other contributing authors to foster participation, anti-racist and feminist activism and fair pay amongst musicians and other cultural workers.

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1 Ironworks as Venues of Music Production

The Ostrava/Vítkovice Case from the 1890s to the 1910s

Fritz Trümpi

Introduction

The question of music as labour, particularly from a historical perspective, leads to traces that tend to be overlooked by music historiography. Whenever scholars operate on a base of sources that represent historically canonised subjects, they deal with research topics that have to be considered as already pre-canonised. This may be the case when focussing (albeit in the broadest sense) on composers of (considered) importance and their works, examining musical institutions deemed crucial or even exploring the field of historical music reception on the basis of media such as newspaper feuilletons or music journals: stepping out of the paths of hegemonies is thus made difficult, if not impossible, from the outset. Understanding music history as a history of musical labour, however, provides a path towards a reduction of such hegemonies and hierarchies, and it does so primarily by unveiling hitherto hidden musical practices and practitioners. Certainly, processes of exposure could be implemented in manifold ways. The approach pursued for this chapter arose in a research project concerned with the founding and development of musicians' associations in the late Habsburg Monarchy from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century. However, in what follows I will limit my focus to the *Oesterreichisch-Ungarischer Musikerverband* [Austrian-Hungarian Musicians' Association[1]], which was by far the largest and most influential of these associations. This union-like organised association (which, however, never officially joined the trade union movement) was – at least at the time of its formation in 1895–1896 and in contrast to musicians' associations elsewhere (Trümpi, 2020: 36) – strongly oriented towards the socialist workers' movements,[2] aiming at the improvement of the economic and social situation of musicians, especially instrumentalists. By addressing this goal, the association and its journal, the *Oesterreichisch-Ungarische Musikerzeitung* [Austrian-Hungarian Musicians' Journal, hereafter abbreviated as OeMZ], respectively, provided manifold descriptions of the existing working situations of musicians of various kinds, including information on remunerations, job market perspectives and general working

conditions. Although the association's goal was only applied to musicians whose artistic expressions and context of music-making were defined as relevant and dignified by the association, a wide range of music practices were discussed in the OeMZ, even if in negative ways: Both in its journal and at regular meetings, the association addressed the musical fields and groups of players that were rejected for whatever reason (including above all military musicians, but also *Heurigenmusiker* [wine tavern musicians] or *Bettelmusikanten* [buskers]). And both the journal and the minutes of the meetings are to be mentioned as an important source for the present chapter.

In this chapter, I will focus on a genre that was well described and intensively discussed in the OeMZ, namely the *Berg- und Werksmusik*, which refers to musical activities in mines and factories – as I thus rediscovered. This sphere of music-making was widespread in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Nevertheless, it has been largely ignored by musicologists and historians until today and as a result, the current state of musicological research concerning this matter definitely does not comply with the historical significance of the subject. The anthology 'Musik und Industrie' [Music and Industry] edited by Monica Steegmann in 1978 (Steegmann, 1978) still has to be considered the main publication on music production in industrial contexts within German speaking regions and countries – even more than 40 years after its publication. In a review of this anthology from 1982, the musicologist Hanns-Werner Heister postulated that 'no future music history of distinction on the 19th and 20th century will be able to ignore the close link between music, factories and industrial production' (Heister, 1982: 267). Yet, the current body of literature on this topic is scarce and Heister's postulation has thus to be considered largely unfulfilled until today.

Building on this research literature, this chapter thus attempts to bring the genre of *Berg- und Werksmusik* [mining and factory music] back into the musicological discussion. I will primarily look at the music-practical aspects of this genre by focusing on the case of the ironworks of Vítkovice, a town of heavy industry located in the neighbourhood of Ostrava in Moravian Silesia. My research is based on diverse sources such as the bylaws of the Ostrava Mining Orchestra and the personal data files (*Arbeitsausweise*) of musicians of the Vítkovice Factory Orchestra. The Vítkovice ironworks, founded in 1828 and continuously growing during the nineteenth century, were by far the largest of the Habsburg Monarchy. They included coal and iron mines as well as melting furnaces and plants for steel processing, and both the mining and the steel processing sectors had their own music ensembles, whose members were represented by the aforementioned branch of the Musicians Association (Trümpi, 2020: 192–193). Given this historical fact, I will therefore also reflect on interdependencies between the consolidation of *Werksmusik*, as a genre, and the development of the Musicians' Association.

Mining and Factory Musicians: Founding Members of the Austrian-Hungarian Musicians' Association

In 1895, a number of musicians from different parts of the monarchy met in Vienna to discuss the establishment of a musicians' organisation throughout Austria. Among them was a delegation from Vítkovice, and subsequently, Vítkovice became one of only seven branches as soon as the association was founded a few months after the delegates' meeting (OeMZ, III/23, December 1, 1895: 115). Since the very beginning, the Vítkovice branch played a major role within the association with respect to the political agitation of the labour struggle among musicians and the founding of further branches in the bilingual regions of Bohemia and Moravia (Trümpi, 2020: 134–142): In 1906, ten years after the association's foundation, exactly half of the 34 subsequently founded branches were located in Bohemia, Moravia and Moravian-Silesia (Trümpi, 2020: 114). The unique designation of the Vítkovice branch is already indicative of its agitational quality: *1. internationaler mährisch-schlesischer Musikerverein in Witkowitz/1. Mezinárodní moravský-slezský spolek hudebníků* [1. International Musicians' Association of Moravian-Silesia in Vítkovice]. On the one hand, this name without doubt literally referenced the International Workingmen's Association. On the other hand, 'international' also meant 'non-national' in the Habsburg context, manifesting itself in the speaking of diverse languages and the bilingual designation of the branch (which, e.g. also adorned its official letterhead). Indeed, among the roughly 40 branches of the Austrian-Hungarian Musicians' Association around 1910, the one in Vítkovice was among the very few that consistently communicated bilingually in Czech and German. This use of languages subsequently provides information on the inner communication and the language situation within the ironworks' orchestras. Certainly, multilinguality did not necessarily mean that all orchestra members shared the non-national attitude of the branch's leaders, but the branch's minutes show the leaders' ambitions to settle nationalist disputes whenever possible (Trümpi, 2020: 141). And whenever nationalist disputes among musicians arose within other branches and regions, the association's presidium asked the leaders of the Vítkovice branch to mediate the situation. Soon, Carl Waclik (1861–?), as one of the most active functionaries of the Vítkovice branch, became indispensable in this respect, rising to the position of a presidium member and holding the influential position of the association treasurer (Trümpi, 2020: 139).

The organisational relevance of the Vítkovice branch within the newly founded musicians' association is the more remarkable, as the branch's members were almost exclusively *Berg- und Werksmusiker* [mining and factory musicians] who were employed by the *Witkowitzer Eisenwerke* [Ironworks of Vítkovice] and by several mining companies in the surrounding areas. In contrast, the musicians' associations and unions that were founded

in many places in Europe and the USA at that time were usually dominated by musicians of theatres and symphonic orchestras (Spitzer, 2012: 80–81) – and even for most branches of the Austrian-Hungarian Musicians' Association this was the case (cf. Trümpi, 2020: 45). Consequently, the pervasive industrial working and living environment of mining and factory musicians differed fundamentally from that of most of the other groups of musicians represented in the association. The majority of the latter worked in metropolitan or non-industrial small-town environments with predominantly bourgeois or middle-class audiences (e.g. in theatres or in popular entertainment venues like *Nachtcafés* or *Variétés*, but also in the many spa orchestras [*Kurkapellen*] associated with the Musicians' Association). According to the presidium of the Austrian-Hungarian Musicians' Association, these audiences were indeed predominantly non-working class. As a result, with the increasing expansion of the association and the consolidation of the influence of musicians who worked in non-industrial spheres, several presidium members dissociated themselves gradually from the initially strong references to the workers' movements, arguing 'that our income fields are not to be found in the working-class circles, but in other social strata' (OeMZ, XXVIII/4, April 3, 1920: 33). In this respect, the Vítkovice branch fulfilled a special function: despite the presidium's partial renunciation of references to the workers' movement, the branch preserved the connection to the sphere of the working class and also ensured a greater music-practical diversity represented within the Musicians' Association. The benefit, however, was mutual. For *Werksmusik* as a musical genre, the unionisation and thus supra-regional institutionalisation of the musicians meant an upgrade and a gain in status, namely by giving it the same relevance and attention as the other music genres represented in the association. And finally, the fact that *Werksmusik* and mining and factory musicians were part of the musicians' association is also of importance from a historiographical perspective: The musicians' working conditions (like the working conditions of musicians performing in other genres) and the organisational forms and performative practices of mining and factory orchestras were a persistently discussed matter in the association's journal and thus become historiographically detectable and describable.

Specificities of Working Conditions in Mines and Ironworks

Talking about areas of mining and heavy industry around 1900 means addressing the industrial pivot of that time (Brüggemeier, 2018: 9). Ironworks should therefore be considered as an industrial space with specific economic and social qualities, entailing specific labour conditions.[3] In respect to mining, its long history has led to distinctive traditions and cults – Friedrich Engels even called them derogatively 'medieval humbug' (Kocka, 1990: 410). However, these traditions included music, for example in the form of miners' songs: According to the musicologist Wolfgang Korb, the

earliest German mining singing communities date back to the sixteenth century and served not least to strengthen the community (Korb, 1978: 130). Even if these mining traditions altogether were slackening towards the end of the nineteenth century, they continued to move miners toward special solidarity and, where appropriate, joint protests (Kocka, 1990: 411–412). Until the mid-nineteenth century, miners were relatively well-placed compared to other groups of workers, both economically and regarding their social prestige. They could count on state protection, as the mines were mostly state-owned. This severely changed as mining underwent a liberal capitalist transformation from the 1850s to the 1860s and the working conditions deteriorated (Kocka, 1990: 403). This deterioration, in turn, fuelled solidarity and class struggle among miners (Kocka, 1990: 400; 403; 411). According to Jürgen Kocka (1990: 434–435), this developing solidarity applied, at least in German industrial regions of the nineteenth century, to a much lesser extent to metalworkers, mainly because the very hierarchical and differentiated structure of labour in ironworks made union organisation massively more difficult. In Austria, however, the Workers' Calendar of 1873 (cit. in Klenner and Pellar, 1999: 115–116) counted at least six *Metallarbeiterfachvereine* [metalworkers' trade associations] with a total of 2,646 members, but the extent of agitation, for example in the form of strikes, can hardly be compared with agitation in other industries such as mining. The obvious class-conscious conception of the association's branch of Vítkovice mentioned above might therefore be considered mainly as a contribution of the mining section: in the last decades of the nineteenth century, the Ostrava miners were particularly active in labour struggles, as evidenced by various strike actions (cf. Koller, 2009: 195; Klenner and Pellar, 1999: 124). All the more so because the branch consisted of two sections: one representing the Vítkovice factory musicians, the other representing Ostrava mining musicians, with both sections having their own vice chairman (Trümpi, 2020: 192). The mining-related influence might thus have politically dominated the Vítkovice branch of the Musicians' Association and, as a consequence, helped to increase the awareness for the relevance of music and music-making in industrial contexts towards the association's members.

Dual Employments for Mining and Factory Musicians

Investigating the peculiarities of mining and factory orchestras (respectively mining and factory bands)[4] since the early decades of the nineteenth century unveils one of the main original purposes of *Bergmusik* [mining music], namely to provide class identification and self-consciousness among miners and workers. At the same time, however, mining and factory music was also used by the employers as a means to gain a non-material-based workplace commitment from the workers (Korb, 1978: 140). Furthermore, it was used for entertainment and diversion both for the workforce and the general public, since mining and factory orchestras became in many places

important actors within the regional music business towards the end of the nineteenth century, representing the ironworks and its workforce outwardly.

By taking a closer look at ironworks in their capacity as workspaces of musicians, it seems that musicians in mining and factory orchestras were living very modest lives (Eckhardt, 1978: 64). Compared with other forms of professional music-making, however, the living of mining and factory musicians can also be considered solid and stable, at least since the early twentieth century, mainly because of their employment contracts, which were mostly long-term.[5] I would go even further by calling the life of this type of musicians in some respects a privileged one, at least within the territory of the Habsburg Monarchy around 1900: For most musicians, be it in urban or rural regions, contractual employments were hardly achievable, if not completely out of reach. According to an article on the 'Social Situation of Viennese Musicians', published in 1893 in the *Austrian-Hungarian Musicians' Journal*, the overwhelming majority of musicians in Vienna were working in so-called 'ambulant bands' – 'for sure some thousands', as the journal wrote, adding that working in such a band not only meant the lack of contracts, but even the lack of a permanent position within a specific ensemble, as the personnel of the bands fluctuated greatly due to a massive oversupply of musicians in Vienna at that time (OeMZ, I/5, March 1, 1893: 19). Even theatre musicians had, at best, half-year contracts and were employed only in the winter season; during the summertime, however, they had to search individually for engagements, mostly in spa orchestras (Trümpi, 2020: 185–190). These working conditions were exhausting, especially in the long run. Mining and factory orchestras can in some respects thus be considered an attractive alternative.

The stability of employments in mining and factory orchestras had its downside, however. Mining and factory musicians were not only hired as musicians but also as employees who primarily worked in other jobs within the factory, even if they were also employed as professional musicians, which had been the case for the majority since the turn of the twentieth century (Eckhardt, 1978: 70). The historical archive of the Vítkovice ironworks company holds personal data files that consistently confirm dual positions for the musicians. In several cases, the factory musicians had already been employed as musicians before, some of them even in theatre orchestras (e.g., in Olomouc), but for none of them was a formal musical education mentioned[6] (Historicky Archiv Vítkovice a.s./sig. 'Arbeitsausweise' [personal data files]; see also Trümpi, 2020: 197–198). The change of job from a theatre orchestra to a factory band might at first glance give the impression of a relegation, but this was hardly the case with respect to the employment conditions. Nevertheless, a change in workplace was presumably a big step for musicians, particularly regarding the practical aspects of their music-making, including the repertoire, the audience and not least their visual appearance as performers. Musicians in theatres and other urban entertainment venues, including those in spa towns, were generally dressed in civilian

garb. For example, the *Dienst-Ordnung der Karlsbader Kurkapelle* [official regulations of Karlovy Vary spa orchestra] of 1894 gives detailed information about the musicians' dress code, including the colour of their suits and ties depending on the performance time. In contrast, the members of mining and factory orchestras were, at least at official occasions, wearing their so-called *Gewerkstracht*, a uniform-like workwear identifying them as staff of the mine or factory. This was occasionally mentioned specifically in newspaper reviews of the Ostrava band's performances, for example (e.g., *Das Vaterland*, September 3, 1888, 2)[7], which underscores the importance of the musicians' appearance.

However, the vast majority of mining and factory musicians practiced their second job not in the pit nor at the workbench or the machine, but by doing 'light work' in an office or a storeroom, as the Vítkovice *Arbeitsausweise* show and Eckhardt (1978: 70) generally states. Musicians, therefore, usually didn't equally share the shop floor with hard-working blue-collar workers – as Kocka (1990: 419) mentions, there were 'many different labour worlds' within ironworks. Mining and factory musicians can thus be seen as privileged not only among the large number of precariously employed musicians but also among miners and factory workers. Nevertheless, the musicians experienced industrial labour conditions permanently, as the ironwork's space, including its noise, smell and dust was their daily workspace.

The Orchestras' Versatile Work Plans – In the Service of Ironwork's Hierarchies

The Vítkovice bands had to meet extraordinarily versatile work plans – a fact that concerned factory orchestras in general (Eckhardt, 1978: 71). This is best demonstrated by the bylaws of the *Gemeinsame Musikkapelle der Ostrauer Gewerkschaften* [Joint Music Band of the Ostrava Mining and Steel Companies] from 1893 (Historicky Archiv Vítkovice a.s./'Statuten der Werkskapelle'). Its joint character makes it all the more suitable for a representative case study in order to exemplify the fields of activities of this type of orchestra. The Joint Music Band of the Ostrava Mining and Steel Companies was collectively funded by six mining companies around Ostrava, among them also the ironworks of Vítkovice, which, as mentioned before, also maintained its own factory band. According to the bylaws, the band was supposed to consist of 30 musicians who had to play both 'on general occasions' and 'for mining purposes'. The band's predominant purpose was thus to be at the disposal of the companies' and their higher officials (the original term for this group of officials used in the bylaws is *Beamte* [bylaws, § 12]). However, there were limitations in applying the band's services: if it was to be engaged to perform 'for the benefit of political agitation, national events or similar cases', the assembly of musicians was obliged to decide on acceptance or rejection as a collective (bylaws, § 12).

Whenever the officials wanted to organise concerts and balls, they were allowed to do so and to invite guests and charge an entrance fee for the festivities. While five officials were necessary to demand the band's service for a public concert or a ball, three of them were enough for organising private parties with the band's participation, while a smaller 'in-house event' with music could be demanded by only a single official (§ 18). In all of these various options, the company's officials acted as organisers of musical events and can therefore be considered music entrepreneurs of local or even regional relevance (the term 'entrepreneur' – *Unternehmer* – is also literally used in the bylaws, § 18). These different options of hiring the Joint Music Band of the Ostrava Mining and Steel Companies show that it performed for both internal and external purposes. However, in addition to the intended use, the bylaws also specified the venues where the band had to play, namely 'fine and decent hostelry and private places' (bylaws, § 18). According to reviews and concert advertisements, for public events, the most frequently used venue was the factory hotel (*Werkshotel*). The *Gemeinsame Musikkapelle* also played regularly together with the *Witkowitzer Werkskapelle* (Vítkovice Factory Orchestra) for various occasions, purposes and audiences, as well as in different instrumentations and configurations. Both bands furthermore took an active part in public festivities, such as fire brigade or marksmen's festivals (*Österreichische Verbands-Feuerwehr-Zeitung*, XVIII/14, July 20, 1894 [supplement]: 31; *Das Vaterland*, September 3, 1888: 2), and periodically held symphonic concerts, occasionally called 'Elite-Concerts', to perform highbrow orchestral compositions of the nineteenth century (*Mährisch-schlesischer Grenzbote*, cit. in OeMZ, V/8, April 16, 1897: 48). Subsequently, they performed in various settings, sometimes with brass and wind instruments only, but often also in the formation of a symphony orchestra, including strings or with only strings, depending on the occasion. Even if a differentiated repertoire study is still pending, for the Vítkovice/ Ostrava bands and for factory bands in general, a report on the Vítkovice factory musicians' work efforts published in 1895 provides information about the staff's music consumption and perception. This report mentions two regular concerts that had to be performed by the *Werkskapelle* mandatorily every week for the workforce, namely one concert for the workers on Sunday and another for the officials on a weekday (OeMZ, III/9, May 1, 1895: 42). This offers, even if only implicitly, revealing insights into the ironworks' staff hierarchy: obviously, the audience for internal events was hierarchically structured, and this reflects not least the different working conditions of both the workers and officials [*Beamte*]. According to Kocka (1981: 39), the daily working time of the latter was generally much shorter and less controlled by the company management than the working time of ordinary workers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For this reason, and because of shift work, workers could hardly find the time to visit concerts on weekdays. The public consumption of music was thus,

at least until the end of the nineteenth century, obviously class-related even within the factory itself.[8]

However, hierarchical structures within ironworks also become clear in a completely different musical context. Coming back to the *Gemeinsame Musikkapelle* and its bylaws, a remarkable contrast to the so far mentioned performative situations was the band's duty of 'providing the funeral music' (§ 18). The further explanations of this paragraph on funeral music can be considered as another measuring of internal social conditions within the ironwork, as the paragraph refers vividly to the risky working conditions of mining workers. As Franz-Josef Brüggemeier (2018: 122–133) points out, mining labour was more life-threatening than other work due to illness and accidents. And as a result, burials and funeral music played an important role. Thus, the bylaws include precise instructions for how the funeral music should be provided. These instructions not only specify the level of music but also tell a lot about hierarchical relations. For all 'paying employees', as the bylaws state, the funeral music was provided for free, and in case of the death of a family member, the family had to pay less than the usual fee. However, the social position of the deceased person determined the size of the band playing the funeral music: for a *Steiger* [overman or controller], the band had to number 16 musicians; for a foreman (*Oberhauer*), 12 musicians; and for a worker (*Arbeiter*), only eight musicians.

Aspects of the Orchestras' Internal Organisation

It might be hardly surprising that the Joint Music Band itself was hierarchically structured, even though some participatory elements can be identified, such as the musicians' assembly, which met in case of certain requests ('for the benefit of political agitation, national events or similar cases') but at least once a year. However, most of the decisions were made top-down by a joint *Musikverwaltung* [music administration], directed by a *Musikdirector* and three additional members who should have, according to the bylaws, 'a good knowledge of music'. This board coordinated most of the orchestra's tasks, including repertoire planning and financial matters, in cooperation with the *Kapellmeister* [bandmaster], which was generally a very coveted position (Eckhardt, 1978: 82). Regarding financial issues, the bylaws list the band's sources of funding (in the following order): payments from the companies' officials, subsidies from the companies and receipts resulting from the band's performances. However, there was actually no sharing system for the musicians; their fees were paid according to certain rates specified in the bylaws, depending on the type and length of the services, whereupon funeral music was the lowest paid of all music services (§§ 16 and 17).

As mentioned above, musicians in mining and factory bands had generally exhausting positions. According to working reports disclosed in the Musicians' Association's journal, a member of the Ostrava orchestra

complained in 1907 about 'grumpy conditions in the mining band, also because of doing service all day and night long' (OeMZ, XV/15, April 12, 1907: 123). This is all the more comprehensible as music services had to be provided on top of musicians' regular eight to ten working hours daily (Eckhardt, 1978: 71). But dissatisfaction among factory and mining musicians was not only caused by the length of a workday; it also stemmed from the behaviour of the *Kapellmeister*. Complaints of musicians about bandmasters were numerous: Many of them were occasioned by personal struggles, but also, as Eckhardt (1978: 83) observed, by objective conflict factors such as the financial disadvantage of the musicians compared to the bandmaster or the bandmaster's suspicious role as a go-between with the musicians and the directorate. These complaints refer to structural problems of the musicians' labour conditions and as such, they are of high historiographical value and relevance as they give detailed and useful insights into a band's internal processes and practices.

One complaint handed down from representatives of the Vítkovice Factory Orchestra in 1899 that was addressed to the Vítkovice ironworks' director general (OeMZ, VIII/16, July 27, 1900: XIII–XIV) can serve as a revealing example for depicting the epistemological significance of such sources.[9] As this complaint demonstrates, labour conditions not only depended on the bylaws, but also on its very practical implementation. It states that the new factory orchestra's bandmaster was mistreating the band's members in many ways. Accordingly, the band had to 'rehearse daily three hours without a break', even if it had to perform only 'a couple of times every month'. Contrasting Josef Eckhardt (1978: 71), who mentions that factory and mining musicians hardly found the time for practicing their instruments and their level of playing was therefore rather poor, this complaint can be regarded as an interesting trajectory towards a more accurate assessment of the potential playing qualities of factory orchestras. The complaint continues with the fact that the bandmaster had required the musicians to work even in their leisure time by 'writing for free huge amounts of scores of funeral marches'. This demand and its associated practice can be considered as a trace of knowledge about the production of performance material. The complaint mentions furthermore that the Vítkovice musicians were forced to give manifold bribe gifts to the bandmaster to keep their jobs, such as 'cigars, cognac, capons, geese, meat, scores etc.'. These payments in kind corresponded to monthly dues which factory musicians normally had to pay to bandmasters, originally for covering the costs of the management (Eckhardt, 1978: 79). These informal payments provide deeper insights into the internal organisational matters, but above all, it makes clear the extent to which the musicians were dependent upon their bandmasters. The complaint finally concludes that the musicians were severely suffering under the *Kapellmeister*, who was portrayed as a brutal ruler, treating the musicians 'worse than dogs, insulting the orchestra's members regularly with derogatory names'. As a result, many of them 'were becoming mentally ill', while

'some even committed suicide'. These descriptions of the musicians' working conditions offer highly interesting historical perspectives on the multiplicity of performance pressure in the music sector. The fact that this complaint was successful and the factory's general directorate dismissed the bandmaster makes these descriptions plausible and historiographically even more relevant: Descriptive sources like these complaints allow close insights into the work routine of factory musicians and should thus be used as a complement to normative sources like, for example, bylaws.

A Man's World – Concluding Remarks

Without doubt, one might find similar circumstances in any musical field of that period, but this does not diminish the relevance of sources such as these complaints for investigating the history of musical practices, as they increase the historical knowledge about the work routines of instrumentalists. However, these sources represent almost exclusively the working environment of male musicians. A reason for the absence of women in these narratives is their generally very limited access, as players, to most professional musical fields of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Reich, 1993: 137), with the exception of *Damenkapellen* [ladies' bands], a very popular ensemble type during that time period (Kaufmann, 1997; Koivisto, Chapter 2). Concerning Austria, the situation for female musicians can be described as particularly bad, not at least due to the very successful and strongly institutionalised job placement by the Austrian-Hungarian Musicians' Association. The association included only very few women,[10] and membership was required to access and make use of the association's job placement service (Trümpi, 2020: 220). Thus, the massive underrepresentation of women in most professional musical fields was additionally reinforced by the growing unionisation of the music profession in Austria since the late nineteenth century, as an analysis of the development and consolidation of job placements for musicians in the late Habsburg Monarchy demonstrates (Trümpi, 2020: 207–220). Moreover, mining and metalworking was almost entirely male-dominated. In my research, I did not come across any indications of female members in the mining and factory orchestras mentioned above. This absence of female musicians also reflects the fact that very few women were working in the Austrian metal industries. Historian Lieselotte Jontes points out that in the early 1880s, only 6.6 per cent of the mining workers in the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy were female, while in 1884, the employment of women within this sector was prohibited altogether (Jontes, 2014: 168, 174).

Being aware of these limitations, descriptions of musicians' working environments such as those discussed in this chapter can nevertheless expand our knowledge about historical music practices and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of music history by, for example, becoming aware of a greater variety of music genres. This chapter was primarily

concerned with an investigation of musicians' working conditions and the orchestra's internal organisational structure, but a number of other aspects would need investigation in order to arrive at a deeper understanding of the music-historical situatedness of this specific musical sphere. Regarding the working conditions, for example, the job placement process, including job advertisements regularly published in the Musicians' Journal and the selection process, could be considered in more depth. Moreover, the study of application documents for both the instrumentalists and the *Kapellmeister* can provide highly relevant insights, for example, into the quality of playing within *Berg- und Werkskapellen*. Besides these questions, the study of the orchestras' repertoire is of particular importance, even though it requires further intensive source research. These repertoire studies should not be separated from the larger field of reception research, both in terms of media coverage and various audience-related aspects (as occasionally outlined in this chapter). Conducting a meaningful and comprehensive study on *Berg- und Werksmusik* would finally require comparative research on other musical genres and spheres of that time. Elaborating a continuing project as sketched here seems to be extremely worthwhile in order to make music history understandable in all its diversity.

Notes

1 The translation of German source quotations into English was made by the author.
2 The close relationship (also in terms of personnel) between the socialist workers' movement and the musicians' movement has been proven for Austria, at least for its early phase (Trümpi, 2020: 36), where workers repeatedly expressed their solidarity for musicians and vice versa (Trümpi, 2020: 64). This cannot generally be applied to other countries: Rempe (2020: 50–51; 123) proves a closeness to parts of the workers' movement for Germany, but not to the socialist wing, while David-Guillou (2009: 290; 295) claims that the organised musicians in Great Britain, France and the USA explicitly dissociated themselves from 'casual workers' and their movements. In contrast, Williamson and Cloonan (2016: 46) confirm occasional support from other unions for the concerns of the British Amalgamated Musicians' Union (AMU) in the 1890s – albeit at a critical distance (see also Cloonan, Chapter 11).
3 The explanations in this chapter refer mainly to Kocka's account of the history of various industrial work fields, which includes mining labour (1990: 393–412) as well as labour in ironworks (1990: 413–436).
4 A short terminological remark: I will hereafter alternatingly speak of orchestras and bands, according to the historical sources, where both 'Werksorchester' and 'Werkskapelle' are used.
5 Eckhardt (1978: 64–66) points at a shift in the attractiveness of mining and factory orchestras after the turn of the century, caused by a massive increase of military bands in civilian music fields, which pushed civilian musicians out of their fields of employment.

6 'Unofficial' musical education beyond conservatories was manifold and wide-spread, but is historically difficult to trace. There is an obvious lack of research, even for the otherwise quite well-researched music history of Austria-Hungary.

7 The review discussed an appearance of the *Ostrauer Bergcapelle* at the *Landesschießen* [marksmen's fair] in Lower Austria from 1888. For uniforms in factory orchestras, see also Eckhardt, 1978: 79–80. As Meyerrose (2016) shows, clothing was then a central indicator of the social position of its wearers. Therefore, the work attire of spa or theatre musicians may have suggested that they belonged to another social group than the mining and factory musicians.

8 This hierarchy of the ironworks' internal audience is likely to have been widely practised. Cf. also Korb (1978:154), who notes, however, that during the first two decades of the twentieth century, the 'concerts for officials' merged into general 'staff concerts', which were equally accessible to all employees of the factory. Whether and when the two audience groups merged in Vítkovice remains to be researched.

9 It has been handed down because it was quoted in detail at the delegates' meeting the following year: In the minutes of the delegates' meeting, the letter is printed in its entirety, which indicates that it was also to be used for agitational purposes (OeMZ, VIII/16, July 27, 1900: XIII–XIV).

10 In 1906, when the size of the association was at its peak, 18 female members faced 2,839 males (OeMZ, XV/10, March 8, 1907: 84–85).

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2 From Bohemia to the Balkans

Towards a Socioeconomic History of Itinerant Women Musicians, 1860–1889

Nuppu Koivisto

Introduction

This article examines late nineteenth-century women musicians from the Ore Mountains region (*Erzgebirge*) in northwestern Bohemia. Widely known for its itinerant musicians, the region produced a considerable share of the workforce in the variety and restaurant music industry of pre-World War I Europe (Babbe, 2017; Binterová, 2004; Müller, 1993/1994; Kupková, 2020).[1] It was especially well known for its *Damenkapellen* or ladies' orchestras – that is, itinerant ensembles of about 10 to 15 musicians performing in restaurants and cafés all over the world (Babbe, 2011; Bagge, 2018; Myers, 1993; Kaufmann, 1997). Despite groundbreaking publications by, for example, Kaufmann (1997) and Babbe (2011), these orchestras have remained in the margins of music history. Although interest in historical women musicians has been on the rise, it has tended to favour relatively well-known composers with ample social and cultural capital, such as Clara Schumann or Fanny Hensel. By shedding light on *Erzgebirge*-born musicians and their socioeconomic position, this text aims to enrich our understanding of women's musical labour in late nineteenth-century Europe. What were these musicians' socioeconomic backgrounds like? Why did they choose a musical career? And how does their socioeconomic position relate to our prevalent historiographical picture of both nineteenth-century women and music making? Chronologically, this analysis ranges from the 1860s to the 1880s, covering the early, less-thoroughly researched phase of the ladies' orchestra phenomenon. Although the *Erzgebirge* geographically entails a wide range of the border area in both Bohemia and Saxony, I mainly use the term to refer to musicians born in Pressnitz or the nearby villages of Dörnsdorf, Schmiedeberg, Kupferberg, Köstelwald and Sonnenberg, as these formed the focal point of late nineteenth-century ladies' orchestra culture in the area.

My key argument is that understanding women's musical work in late nineteenth-century Europe requires a nuanced sociohistorical analysis, with special attention paid to the intersection of class and gender. Apart from a

few pivotal publications (Ege, 2020; Grotjahn, 2012), intersectional aspects such as race and class have not been widely embraced in the field of music history, although they have been prevalent in recent studies of music sociology (Bull, 2019; Scharff, 2017; Yoshihara, 2008). Reich (1993: 125), for example, has famously suggested analysing nineteenth-century European women musicians as an integrated 'musician-artist class'. This perspective risks monochromaticity by overemphasising the role of the middle class and obscuring socioeconomic hierarchies (Koivisto, 2019: 10). I would like to emphasise that I do not want to undermine the highly important work that many colleagues are doing on well-known women composers (Prince, 2017). Rather, this is to point out that our field of study – including my own research – still focuses mainly on white, upper middle-class, educated women of so-called Western art music, which is a problem that must be addressed within the academic community. As we shall see, the social position of a ladies' orchestra musician was very different from that of a famed soloist or composer, which, in turn, means that gendered assumptions and power hierarchies affected them in different ways.

Methodologically, this article is a combination of microhistory, feminist historical sociology and translocal studies. Finding new microhistorical 'clues' in fragmentary biographical materials on everyday life helps us challenge the canon-oriented perspectives of traditional music history (Zemon Davis, 1997; Putnam, 2006). Feminist historical sociology, in turn, enables us to critically examine patriarchal power structures as well as gendered prejudice, social norms and patterns of behaviour (Miller, 1998). Furthermore, translocal studies give us the chance to analyse the musicians' cross-cultural networks while avoiding the pitfalls of so-called methodological nationalism (Freitag and von Oppen, 2010; Kurkela and Rantanen, 2017). Through these three perspectives, the article thus combines micro- and macro-level scales of analysis.

The sources mostly consist of biographical documents preserved in the District Archives of Chomutov in Kadaň. In addition, the archives hold a collection of 38 women musicians' or musicians' wives' estate inventories, ranging from 1863 to 1897, which have not been used in previous academic research. Since the number of inheritance documents is vast and requires detailed source work, it mainly features in the case study part of this article, with a focus on the musicians' everyday life on tour. To back up the primary sources, newspaper clippings – mainly family memoirs and anecdotes from the periodical *Mei' Erzgebirg'* – have been used, as well as exhibition materials available at the Chomutov town museum, curated by Eveline Müller.

So far, researchers have shown surprisingly little interest in the *Erzgebirge* region's women musicians. The topic has been studied in brilliant and interesting articles and source editions by, for example, Babbe (2017) and Tibbe (2012 and 2011), and examined by local historians such as Werner (2005) and Müller (1993/1994). Musical transfer between Bohemia

and Saxony has also been studied on a more general level (Müns, 2005). However, no comprehensive sociohistorical study on these musicians has been published so far. Thus, this article also draws on more general studies on the social history of ladies' orchestras in Europe (Kaufmann, 1997; Myers, 1993; Rode-Breymann, 2017; Tibbe, 2011 and 2012; Babbe and Timmermann, 2016).

This article is composed of two analysis sections, preceded by a short overview of musical life in the Pressnitz region and followed by conclusions. In the first analysis section, an overview of the socioeconomic status of women musicians in the region is presented. The second part, in turn, focuses on the life and career of Theresia Elster (1848–1866), a flautist from Schmiedeberg. Her story will illustrate and support the larger-scale argument of socially nuanced music historiography.

Musicians in Erzgebirge: An Overview

Geographically, *Erzgebirge* lies in the borderlands between Saxony and Bohemia, which, in the late nineteenth century, were parts of the German and Habsburg empires, respectively. As its name suggests, mining was a central source of livelihood in this mountainous region. It was also renowned for its itinerant musicians, especially those from the town of Pressnitz and its nearby villages, Dörnsdorf, Schmiedeberg, Kupferberg and Köstelwald, just barely on the Bohemian side of the mountain range and today part of the Czech Republic.[2] The area was rural, catholic and German-speaking: at the turn of the century, Pressnitz consisted of a little more than 400 houses and 4,080 inhabitants (Binterová, 2004: 53; cited in Koivisto, 2019: 75). Sadly, the town has not survived to this day: it was demolished in 1973 to make way for an artificial lake (Werner, 2005: 162).

It was largely due to the economic changes brought on by industrialisation that the Pressnitz area gradually became famous for its itinerant musicians and ensembles during the nineteenth century (Babbe, 2017; Binterová, 2004; Kaufmann, 1997; Werner, 2005). As the traditional mining and craft professions declined, inhabitants set out to look for new ways of earning their living. This change was significant for women, who had been contributing to their family income by lace-making and other types of needlework (Babbe, 2017: 306–307; Kaufmann, 1997: 23–24). However, it should be emphasised that Pressnitz was not unique in this respect. For example, the towns of Salzgitter in Lower Saxony and Hundeshagen in Thuringia experienced similar developments (Kaufmann, 1997: 21; Babbe, 2011: 25; on Salzgitter, see also Dieck, 1962). By the second half of the nineteenth century, music had become one of the most important professions in the region, and Pressnitz was referred to as a 'music city' (*Musikstadt*) in local press as early as the 1840s (*Allgemeiner Anzeiger der K. Kreisstadt Saaz*, 45/1840: 358). This line of development was also reflected in nearby villages and visible on an institutional level. In 1883, a local music school

was founded by the Rauscher family, and in 1896, it was granted governmental status, attracting students from various parts of Bohemia (Müller, 1993/1994: 203–207). Despite these developments, music making was itinerant by default in nineteenth-century Pressnitz. In the early days, musical groups from the area wandered from town to town in search for income, often on foot and closely following market seasons. As early as in the 1850s, it was rumoured that over 300 Pressnitz-based musical groups left their hometown every year (Babbe, 2017: 132). These groups were mostly family-based and included women from early on (Müller, 1993/1994; Binterová, 2004). Little by little, the bands adapted to the demands of the modern entertainment industry, playing in cafés and restaurants wherever they could and travelling by steamboat and train (Taufmatrik der Stadt Pressnitz 1888–1905, sig. L125/12, fol. 16; see also Binterová, 2004: 99; Tibbe, 2011). In the 1860s and 1870s, the Ottoman Empire became an especially popular touring destination: according to a local anecdote, a Pressnitz-based ladies' orchestra even performed at the opening ceremony of the Suez Canal in 1869 (Müller's exhibition showboards 26–12 and 26–12b, Chomutov Regional Museum; Panhans, 1944: 9; Koivisto, 2019: 83). At this stage, many of the musical groups started to label themselves as *Damenkapellen* or ladies' orchestras (Kaufmann, 1997; Myers, 1993). It has even been suggested by scholars that the Pressnitz region played a crucial role in the whole ladies' orchestra phenomenon (Kaufmann, 1997; Babbe, 2017), and indeed it seems so. For example, the 'First European Ladies' Orchestra' of Josephine Amann-Weinlich, founded in Vienna in the late 1860s, was considered as the first internationally renowned ladies' orchestra, included members from Bohemia (Babbe, 2011: 41). It is telling that as many as 21.2 percent of the 354 ladies' orchestras that toured Europe in the 1890s and that I studied for my doctoral dissertation originated from Pressnitz or the nearby villages (Koivisto, 2019: 74).

Women Musicians in Pressnitz, 1870–1889: A Socioeconomic Analysis

Biographical records suggest that the musical profession was significantly hereditary in the Pressnitz region (Koivisto, 2019: 76–80). This tendency has also been noted by Eveline Müller, who suggests that the musicians formed a local socioeconomic and cultural subgroup (Müller, 1993/1994: 209). They had their own dialect (*Schallersprache*) and they married amongst themselves – a topical feature even in other music towns, such as Salzgitter (Dieck, 1962: 448–502). This led to the creation of local music 'dynasties', such as the Anger, Bärtl and Fellinghauer families (Koivisto, 2019: 78–79). However, both the Pressnitz-area musical culture as well as the revenue logic within the late nineteenth-century entertainment industry were patriarchal and hierarchical by default. Even though women often formed the majority of the orchestra members, a male-controlled family remained the core unit

of these groups (Müller, 1993/1994: 207–218). Typically, an orchestra was led by a male director and possibly his wife, whereas the other musicians – mostly young women – were employed and taken care of by them. Thus, the orchestra members had little means for negotiating their own salary or working conditions and faced a serious threat of financial, social and even physical abuse (Koivisto, 2021, forthcoming; on working conditions in ladies' orchestras, see Kaufmann, 1997; Myers, 1993). Although women musicians from the upper echelons of society faced different types of gendered prejudice in many respects (Prince, 2017), they operated with a fundamentally different set of social and financial capital and professional networks than their colleagues working in ladies' orchestras.

Against this backdrop, it is enlightening to analyse the socioeconomic position of Pressnitz-based women musicians in the context of patriarchal power structures as articulated by historian Miller (1998). As tight, family-based units controlled by a *paterfamilias* – in this case, a conductor or director – the region's orchestras were based on the traditions of European patriarchy, stemming from pre-modern times (Miller, 1998: 1). As the musical profession arose to compete with and replace traditional branches of rural, family-based handicraft workshops, it is plausible to assume that the same gendered division of labour and male-dominated power hierarchies remained slow to change. On the other hand, *Erzgebirge* had strong mining and handicraft traditions and could thus be described what Miller calls a 'proto-industrial' or 'cottage industry' region, where patriarchal norms were slightly more flexible and where women routinely contributed to the family economy by making and selling products (Miller, 1998: 69–72, 77). Although Miller refers to early modern societies in her analysis, the concepts are applicable on a wider chronological scale, especially in the context of rural communities. Furthermore, as family bands gradually transformed into ladies' orchestras, they became closely tied to the blooming and hectic entertainment industry, which was notably urban, in contrast to the agrarian lifestyle of Pressnitz. A glance into the professions of the parents of Pressnitz-based musicians active in the 1870s and 1880s – that is, during a phase when the family bands were getting more and more popular and starting to (re)brand themselves as *Damenkapellen* (Kaufmann, 1997: 30, Table 2.1) – further elucidates the aforementioned tendencies and supports claims about the family-oriented nature of music making in Pressnitz (see Table 2.1).[3] This was a trend that strengthened over the years – the percentage of musician-parents grew from 24.3 percent to 35.1 percent from the 1870s to the 1880s.

There are some caveats to consider, though. The data has been derived from baptismal records in Pressnitz (SOAL, Taufmatrik der Stadt Pressnitz 1859–1872, sig. L125/10; 1872–1888, sig. L125/11; 1888–1905, sig. L125/12), which means that it only includes the parentage of those musicians whose children were born, baptised or registered in Pressnitz church books. Since the data set thus by default excludes most of the musicians that had

Table 2.1 Most common profession groups of the parents of Pressnitz-based musicians, 1870–1889

Profession	Number	Women	Men	%
Musicians				
Musician [Musiker*in]	71	10	61	29.3
Musician/other profession	5	0	5	2.1
In total	*76*	*10*	*66*	*31.4*
Miners				
Miner [Bergarbeiter*in]	18	4	14	7.4
Bergsteiger*in	4	0	4	1.7
Other	2	0	2	0.8
In total	*24*	*4*	*20*	*9.9*
Burghers and houseowners				
Burgher [Bürger*in]	12	0	12	5.0
Houseowner [Hausbesitzer*in][4]	4	0	4	1.7
Houseowner/other profession	3	0	3	1.2
In total	*19*	*0*	*19*	*7.9*
Carpenters and woodworkers				
Master carpenter [Tischler-/ Zimmermeister*in]	6	1	5	2.5
Carpenter [Tischler*in]	4	3	1	1.7
Other	7	3	4	2.9
In total	*17*	*7*	*10*	*7.0*
Workers				
Day labourer [Taglöhner*n/Tagarbeiter*in]	12	4	8	5.0
Tenant farmer [Häusler*in]	5	0	5	2.1
In total	*17*	*4*	*13*	*7.0*
Shoemakers				
Shoemaker [Schuhmacher*in]	8	3	5	3.3
Master shoemaker [Schuhmachermeister*in]	7	1	6	2.9
In total	*15*	*4*	*11*	*6.2*
Tailors and textile workers				
Master tailor [Schneidermeister*in]	4	3	1	1.7
Tailor [Schneider*in]	2	0	2	0.8
Other	7	0	7	2.9
In total	*13*	*3*	*10*	*5.4*
Bakers				
Baker [Bäcker*in]	5	1	4	2.1
Master baker [Bäckermeister*in]	2	2	0	0.8
In total	*7*	*3*	*4*	*2.9*
Civil servants and teachers				
Civil servant	5	3	2	2.1
Teacher [Lehrer*in]	2	1	1	0.8
In total	*7*	*4*	*3*	*2.9*
Other professions	29	7	22	12.0
Profession unknown	18	3	15	7.4
In total	**242**	**49**	**193**	**100**

married and/or settled permanently abroad, as well as those who remained childless, the results are indicative at best. Furthermore, mothers' professions are rarely indicated, and the numbers for cases in which parents' professions were not mentioned at all remains relatively high. Although the evidence is circumstantial and fragmentary in this sense, it does back up the view of musicianship as a hereditary, key profession prevalent in other sources and previous research.

Upon closer inspection, the musicians' backgrounds presented in Table 2.1 seem to refer to the important mining industry of the region, as well as diverse professions of craftmanship such as cobblers, tailors and carpenters. Indeed, as Babbe has shown, Pressnitz had a firm tradition of miner-musicians (*Bergmusikant*inen*), which would explain the strong ties between these two professions (Babbe, 2017: 306–307). As for craft professions, connections between craftsmanship and musicianship were a common feature in the entertainment scene and among members of ladies' orchestras in Europe (Rühlemann, 2012: 182–183; Babbe, 2017: 316). It is telling that the only Finnish women musicians working in a ladies' orchestra that I have been able to identify so far came from a tailor's family (Koivisto, 2019: 232–241; Rantanen and Koivisto, 2022, forthcoming). In addition, the list includes diverse professions all the way from burghers and houseowners to day labourers, covering the professional structure of a rural town in all its variety. However, straightforwardly agrarian professions such as farmers as well as professions requiring higher education remain marginal throughout the evidence.

As for women musicians, there are some particularities worth mentioning. The Pressnitz baptismal records offer us information on 49 such musicians, who had children from 1870 until 1889 (see Table 2.2). There are three cases, or 6.1 percent, in which parents' professions are unknown. The source material has some considerable limitations, including the fact that women's professions were rarely indicated in biographical records if they were married. Thus, most of the women musicians examined here were unmarried and/or bore their children out of wedlock. However, illegitimate children were not an uncommon phenomenon in late nineteenth-century Pressnitz, and it was not entirely unusual for a couple to start a relationship and found a family before marriage (Koivisto, 2019: 86–87).

In any case, the material suggests interesting deviations when compared to the overall data on musicians' backgrounds. First, the musical profession was much less hereditary. Second, the women's socioeconomic backgrounds seem more varied and, in many cases, more unassuming when compared to musicians in total. The number of teachers and civil servants is relatively high, and master-level craft professionals are also present. On the other hand, references to burghers or houseowners are completely missing, although this group forms a considerable share of the overall data, covering almost ten percent (9.8%) of the male musicians' parentage. Correspondingly, the number of carpenters and woodworkers, bakers and day labourers is

Table 2.2 Most common profession groups of the parents of Pressnitz-based women musicians, 1870–1889

Profession	Number	%
Musicians		
Musician [Musiker*in]	10	20.4
In total	*10*	*20.4*
Carpenters and woodworkers		
Master carpenter [Tischler-/Zimmermeister*in]	1	2.0
Carpenter [Tischler*in]	3	6.1
Other	3	6.1
In total	*7*	*14.3*
Miners		
Miner [Bergarbeiter*in]	4	8.2
In total	*4*	*8.2*
Workers		
Day labourer [Taglöhner*in/Tagarbeiter*in]	4	8.2
In total	*4*	*8.2*
Shoemakers		
Shoemaker [Schuhmacher*in]	3	6.1
Master shoemaker [Schuhmachermeister*in]	1	2.0
In total	*4*	*8.2*
Civil servants and teachers		
Civil servant	3	6.1
Teacher [Lehrer*in]	1	2.0
In total	*4*	*8.2*
Tailors and textile workers		
Master tailor [Schneidermeister*in]	3	6.1
In total	*3*	*6.1*
Bakers		
Baker [Bäcker*in]	1	2.0
Master baker [Bäckermeister*in]	2	4.1
In total	*3*	*6.1*
Other professions	7	14.3
Profession unknown	3	6.1
In total	**49**	**100**

proportionally higher among the women musician's parentage than that of their male colleagues. This is interesting but hardly surprising, considering that the musical profession was seen as a gateway for climbing the social ladder, especially for women. Anecdotes of young women musicians who managed to make an advantageous match abroad were common in Pressnitz and its nearby villages (*Mei' Erzgebirg'* 5/1996, no. 500, 8–9 and 10/1997, no. 517, 7; Müller's exhibition showboard 26-7b, Chomutov Regional Museum).

Even the inheritance records tell us of women musicians from diverse socioeconomic positions. Those who lived longer and married were often able to acquire property or savings, such as musician Anna Malz (sig. IV, 63/53)

and musician's wife Emilia Münzer (1872, sig. IV, 72/254). According to diaries and memoirs, this was characteristic of itinerant musicians from the *Erzgebirge*: not only did they send money home from abroad, but they also saved up to settle down, marry and buy land after retiring from the stage. Musician Marie Stütz (1856–1929), from Sonnenberg, is an illustrative example of this. She forged a career in a local itinerant ladies' orchestra and eventually married its conductor Johann Stütz (1845–1917). After saving up enough money, the couple retired and bought a small inn (*Gasthof*) in their home region (Tibbe, 2012 and 2011). After all, ladies' orchestra members needed to be young and attractive, which meant that the musicians could not count on a lifelong career of performing, unless they chose to found their own orchestra, which was not so simple in the male-dominated world of music directors and impresarios (Kaufmann, 1997: 146 and 148). The documents also tell us about young girls from meagre conditions who had only just started their musical careers but contracted a fatal disease on tour, such as the inheritance records of Josefa Bergner and Franziska Purkart, Justina Huss, Marie Schmiedl, Maria Ludwig and Theresia Bartl (SOAL, inheritance records, sig. IV, 65/199 & 200, sig. IV, 76/171, sig. IV, 77/2 & 272, sig. IV, 79/236). In addition, the inheritance records reveal a great deal about the social positions of early-career musicians as well as their everyday lives on tour. One such musician is Theresia Elster (1848–1866), whose life and career will now be analysed in further detail.

Case Study: Theresia Elster's (1848–1866) Family Background and Career

Theresia Elster was born, out of wedlock, in the village of Schmiedeberg near Pressnitz on October 30, 1848 (SOAL, *Taufbuch der Pfarre Schmiedeberg*, 1837–1853, sig. L71/2, fol. 208–281). Almost nothing is known of her mother Emilie and even less about her father. It seems that Theresia Elster grew up with her maternal grandparents Theresia (born Stockhann, 1799–1878), a musician, and Anton Elster (1790–1860), a lace merchant and a houseowner of lot number 228 in Schmiedeberg (SOAL, *Sterbebuch der Pfarre Schmiedeberg 1836–1888*, sig. L71/10, fol. 251). This assumption is supported by the fact that, by the time of Theresia Elster's premature death, her only close living relatives were her grandmother and her uncle Franz (sig. IV, 67/112, death certificates dated July 20, 1866, in Italian, and July 10, 1867, in German). Interestingly, despite his relatively stable social position, Anton Elster was illiterate – not an uncommon feature in his age group and social framework (see SOAL, *Taufbuch der Pfarre Schmiedeberg, 1837–1853 & 1853–1863*, sig. L71/2 & 71/3). Theresia Elster probably got her education and studied music locally, choosing flute as her instrument (SOAL, sig. IV, 67/112, estate inventories dated July 19, 1866, in Italian, and May 31, 1867, in German).

Like most of her colleagues, Elster began working at a young age, setting out to play in an orchestra. This was a significant financial investment in the future, as Elster had to loan money for her travel expenses and buy clothing on credit before her departure (SOAL, sig. IV, 67/112, death certificate dated July 10, 1867, in German). She left the Austro-Hungarian Empire in November 1865 to tour in the Balkans, Turkey and Russia, crossing the Ottoman border at the town of Orsova (SOAL, sig. IV, 67/112, passport issued in Prague, October 13, 1865). Her destination was the music ensemble (*Musik-Gesellschaft*) of Theresia Stütz, in which she performed at Mr Avieiro's café in the coastal town of Sulina from May 1866 (SOAL, sig. IV, 67/112, Theresia Stütz' testimony dated September 1, 1866). The Stütz family originated from Dörnsdorf in Theresia Elster's home region and included several musicians, such as the aforementioned conductor Johann Stütz, who played in the band during Elster's brief career (for more information on Stütz, see Tibbe, 2011; Tibbe, 2012). Thus, in all likelihood, Elster had gotten her contract via the network of local musicians in the *Erzgebirge*. Even her travel route was a very typical one, as many ladies' orchestras from the region set out to urban areas in the Black Sea region or Egypt such as Constanța, Sulina, Cairo, Port Said and Alexandria from the 1860s to the 1880s (Binterová, 2004: 99). However, Theresia Elster's career abruptly ended after a few short months when, in July 1866, she suddenly became ill (SOAL, sig. IV, 67/112, Theresia Stütz' testimony dated September 1, 1866). A barber-surgeon was called to examine her and she was prescribed medication – alas, to no avail (SOAL, sig. IV, 67/112, receipt dated July 30 [?], 1866). On July 17, 1866, Elster died of 'acute tuberculosis' (*tuberculosis acuta*) at the age of 17 (SOAL, sig. IV, 67/112, doctor's certificate dated July 17, 1866). She was buried in Sulina, and the orchestra's leader, Theresia Stütz, took care of the funeral arrangements and other practicalities such as informing the local Austrian consulate about the incident. This was a customary practice in ladies' orchestras; for example, the paperwork regarding the deaths Maria Ludwig and Theresia Bartl, both of whom passed away in Egypt while on tour, was handled by their employer, conductor Moritz Siegl (SOAL, sig. IV, 77/272, sig. IV, 79/236; on Siegl, see *Mei' Erzgebirg'*, 4/1996, no. 499: 8; see also Tibbe, 2012: 26).

Sadly, Theresia Elster's fate was not an anomaly. Sources tell us of several young musicians who died from contagious diseases such as typhus and dysentery mid-tour (SOAL, *Sterbematrik der Stadt Pressnitz 1867–1920*, sig. L125/144). Tuberculosis was an especially common cause of death, even more so among young adults. A look into the death records of Pressnitz-based women musicians and musicians' wives from 1870 to 1889 reveals that the disease caused an overwhelming majority of deaths among the families – 43 out of the 129 deceased, or 33 percent, died of some form of tuberculosis, with pulmonary tuberculosis amounting to 39 deaths in total. It is possible that the real number is even higher, since medical categorisations such as 'lung paralysis' (*Lungenlähmung*) are vague by modern standards

and do not correspond to our current classification of diseases. It should be noted that the results are indicative, as children under 14 have not been included in the analysis, and not all deaths abroad feature in the registers.

In terms of career planning, Theresia Elster chose her profession out of the necessity to earn a living. As Elster had been sending her wages to her family just before her illness, she owned little more than her flute and some clothes at the time of her death (SOAL, sig. IV, 67/112, Theresia Stütz' testimony dated September 1, 1866). Her most valuable possessions were four complete women's suits, estimated to be worth 150 piasters. Interestingly, the inventory included items that would seem somewhat out of the ordinary for a young girl of modest circumstances, such as a golden ring and necklace, a crinoline and a parasol (SOAL, sig. IV, 67/112, estate inventories dated July 19, 1866, in Italian, and May 31, 1867, in German). Working on the stage demanded elegant attire, as the musicians were expected to entice potential restaurant and café customers with their appearances (Kaufmann, 1997: 156; Myers, 1993: 194–222). This would explain why Elster and her colleagues might have ended up with relatively imposing dresses and accessories. Theresia Bartl, deceased in Alexandria in 1879, even owned what could be called luxury items such as fans, scented soap and perfume bottles (SOAL, sig. IV, 79/236, estate inventory dated September 27, 1879). Violinist Maria Ludwig, who died in Alexandria in 1877, while on tour with Moritz Siegl's orchestra, 'left behind but her few personal possessions' (*non ha lasciato che i suoi pochi effetti*, SOAL, sig. IV, 79/236, estate inventory dated September 27, 1879). These 'few possessions' mainly consisted of her instrument as well as items of clothing and linen, a typical array of possessions. In addition, the records tell us of photographs and letters, which seems to point at a lively correspondence with friends and family at home (SOAL, sig. IV, 79/236). These observations fall in line with previous research on the socioeconomic status of ladies' orchestra musicians in the 1890s and 1900s. According to Kaufmann (1997: 131), their wage levels were in general modest enough and could be compared to those of maids. However, there was financial variation depending on instruments and potential soloist positions.

Financial success and material possessions were, of course, not the only factors in boosting a musician's social status and spreading out professional networks. Although women musicians – especially pianists and singers – had gained access to several European conservatoires by the final decades of the nineteenth century, Elster and many of her colleagues were trained locally and had to earn their daily bread by performing (Kaufmann, 1997: 84–90). On the other hand, local professional networks enabled the musicians to get paid work, and the hereditary and family-oriented nature of music making in the Pressnitz region as well as its cross-cultural dimensions are evident in the inheritance records. Maria Ludwig's eighteen-year-old sister Rosa, for example, worked in the same orchestra as her, and another one of the Ludwig sisters had married and settled in Port Said, probably while on a

concert tour (SOAL, sig. IV, 77/232). Musician Katharina Huss's children, in turn, had ended up all the way in Cracow and Wallachia, and at least two of her sons had taken up a musical career (SOAL, sig. IV, 65/72).

All in all, Theresia Elster's case elucidates the social and economic preconditions for women musicians from the Pressnitz area on three crucial levels. First, she chose the same profession as her grandmother, setting out to earn her living as a musician and aspiring for a stable social position. Second, she started her career in a family-based orchestra from her home region. Third, the profoundly translocal nature of her music-making is evident. It is telling that her inheritance records include documents in Greek, Italian, German and even Arabic script.

Conclusions

Throughout this article, I have been advocating for a sociohistorically nuanced way of analysing the work of women musicians in nineteenth-century Europe. The case of the *Erzgebirge*-based women musicians suggests three key perspectives that could offer fruitful insights for other case studies and theoretical discussions. First, the ladies' orchestra as a family business with strong ties to small-town agrarian communities points to the underlying patriarchal power structures that affected and restricted the work of women musicians. From this point of view, the lines between public, professional careers as a performer and private, domestic gender roles become blurred. Second, the musical profession, with its potential for achieving financial security, helps us to consider women musicians as self-motivated, independent historical actors. They had private and professional dreams and ambitions, and they contributed into the livelihood of their families in a crucial way. Despite challenging working conditions, playing in cafés and restaurants at least theoretically enabled the musicians to socialise across class-borders. Third, the late nineteenth-century European entertainment industry was fundamentally urban and translocal. Lengthy concert tours provided the musicians with the chance to permanently settle abroad if the occasion arose. Musicians from the *Erzgebirge* region ended up married in different corners of the world and, in some cases, brought their families with them. However, the colonial aspect of these endeavours remains largely unstudied.

As Theresia Elster's career illustrates, women musicians from the Ore Mountains belonged to a very different kind of social group than many of the well-known women composers or soloists of the late nineteenth century. We need to remember that not all nineteenth-century women musicians were Clara Schumanns or Fanny Hensels with an aura of middle- or upper-class respectability and contacts to the musical elites of Central Europe. Due to their lower middle- or working-class, agrarian backgrounds and their careers in restaurant music, women musicians from the *Erzgebirge* region have been silenced in the traditional gender history of music.

However, it would be simplistic and ethically questionable to see Theresia Elster and her colleagues as mere passive victims of patriarchal power hierarchies and historiographical negligence. It is true that these musicians had to navigate a male-dominated professional field with next to no legal or union protection, and that they had to endure harassment and abuse. However, they chose their career paths for weighty professional and financial reasons, and there are recorded instances of the musicians teaming up, rebelling against abusive bandmasters and fighting for their rights (Koivisto, 2022, forthcoming). Thus, they deserve to be heard in their own right, as individuals, professionals and pathbreakers in music history.

Notes

1 I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all the archival personnel in Kadaň and Chomutov, especially Michaela Balášová and Jan Hirsch, for their invaluable help in searching for sources. I would also like to thank Stefania Burnelli for enlightening discussions and for sharing her family history with me, which has been of great help.
2 In Czech, the town and village names read as follows: Přísečnice (Pressnitz), Dolina (Dörnsdorf), Kovářská (Schmiedeberg), Měděnec (Kupferberg), Kotlina (Köstelwald), and Výsluní (Sonnenberg). For the sake of clarity, I have chosen to use the German placenames throughout this article.
3 This is an enlarged, enhanced and adjusted version of a similar survey I performed for my dissertation for the years 1870–1879 (Koivisto, 2019: 77–78). To highlight the versatility of the musicians' backgrounds, I have chosen to categorise the professions according to expertise and field, and English translations for different professions have been provided whenever possible. In a few cases, two different professions were announced for the same person on different occasions (e.g., 'houseowner' and 'merchant'). These have been marked in separate rows as 'musician/other profession' and 'houseowner/other profession'.
4 The somewhat vague translation 'houseowner' has been used here to account for potential variation in the social status of this particular group. It is possible – and probable – that at least part of these houseowners rented out rooms as landlords, but the source material used here does not convey any detailed information on the matter.

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3   The MGM Lion's Ominous Roar

(New) Technologies and the Disappearing Profession of Silent Movie Theatre Musicians in Croatia of the Late 1920s

Mojca Piškor

> *The gramophone record – that does not think, nor feel, does not need to eat nor drink – should be eliminated from the places in which it represents merely a cheap surrogate for the living musicians, who do have feelings, but – unfortunately – have a stomach, too.*
>
> The Muzičar (December 12, 1931)

Just one week before the Hollywood musical 'Broadway Melody' was scheduled to premiere at the Zagreb movie theatre Olimp, the owners of Zagreb record and bookstores adorned their shop windows with gramophone records and sheet music of the movie's musical numbers, making these songs widely known and popular even before the movie officially opened in the theatre.

The central and novel role in the broad advertising strategy preceding the arrival of 'Broadway Melody' in the city was reserved for the Zagreb musicians. On the eve of the premiere, May 2, 1930, a small jazz band of nine musicians boarded two open-roof automobiles with instruments in their hands and began a mini-tour of the city centre, stopping and playing one or two numbers from the movie in front of the most popular cafés and restaurants, to the bewilderment and enthusiastic approval of the puzzled guests and curious passers-by. The success of this advertising act was, in the words of the local MGM franchise bulletin Metro Megafon, unprecedented. It proved to be astonishingly effective in stirring buzz around the movie and spreading news of its arrival throughout the city, making this unconventional advertising strategy something to be wholeheartedly recommended for other sound movies coming to Zagreb theatres in the future (Anonymous, 1930d).[1]

If one were to judge by reading through the pages of movie theatre owners' journals and magazines published in Zagreb in the early 1930s, assuming the role of a temporary advertising live act seemed to be one of the increasingly rare employment opportunities left to local musicians in the

already burgeoning business of movie theatres, just months after the intro-
duction of sound technology into the cinemas of Zagreb.

The introduction of every new technology, according to Timothy Taylor (2001: 201), is always accompanied by a mixture of wonderment and anxiety, mirrored in the intertwining discourses of technological determinism and voluntarism. The fact that one and the same technology might simultaneously be a source of utter anxiety about the future and root of buoyant optimism is not as unexpected as it might seem at the first glance (Taylor, 2001: 203). It is, furthermore, useful to bear in mind that the sociotechnical system, understood by Bryan Pfaffenberger (1992: 479) as a 'distinctive technological activity that stems from the linkage of techniques and material culture to the social coordination of labour' is not a system devoid of internal conflicts, contradictions or processes of negotiation. Social choice, tactics, alternative techniques and the social redefinition of needs and aspirations all play a role in its rise (Pfaffenberger, 1992: 499). One particular feature of this process is epitomised in what Pfaffenberger terms 'technological drama' – that is, a discourse of technological 'statements' and 'counterstatements' representing a complex interplay of competing interpretative responses to the dominating system. A technological drama, according to Pfaffenberger, begins with the process of technological regularisation in which

> a design constituency creates, appropriates, or modifies a technological
> production process, artifact, user activity, or system in such a way that
> some of its technical features embody a political aim – that is, an inten-
> tion to alter the allocation of power, prestige, or wealth.
>
> (Pfaffenberger, 1992: 505)

Once established, this system is then subjected to multiple interpretations, tacitly or openly, challenging the dominant discourse. Through these processes of technological adjustment and/or reconstitution, people who lose when a new production process or artifact is introduced try to 'engage in strategies to compensate the loss of self-esteem, social prestige and social power', while at the same time aiming to 'alter discursively regulated social context that regularization creates' (Pfaffenberger, 1992: 506).

In this chapter I will attempt to interpret such an instance of (new) technology introduction and contextualise the technological drama surrounding the arrival of sound movie technology in Zagreb movie theatres in the final years of the 1920s by providing insight into the competing statements and counterstatements of local musicians, movie theatre owners and the general public of the times.

The beginning of the decade saw the first concentrated efforts of the (predominantly) orchestral musicians at establishing an overarching framework for the united struggle and negotiation of their labour rights. A small but significant segment of the membership of the newly established Association

of Musicians of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes[2] consisted of musicians employed by the silent movie theatres. The negotiation of their labour rights proved to be the most challenging task of the Association even before the introduction of the sound movie technology. Despite the membership's initial belief that the new technological craze will be short-lived, it almost instantly brought about the complete disappearance of the profession of the silent movie theatre musician, and thus also caused a considerable rise in the number of unemployed musicians.

The interpretation of the challenges that the introduction of new technologies can pose to the working conditions and labour rights of professional musicians, which I will offer in this chapter, is based on two central corpora of written sources. The first source consists of articles published in the official bulletin of the Association *The (Jugoslavenski) Muzičar*,[3] and is enriched by the second one, comprising excerpts from daily newspaper reports and articles published in the specialised bulletins and journals aimed at movie theatre owners.[4] As rich and informative as these sources might be, they nevertheless offer insight into only one rather general level of the (dis)appearance of the profession of the silent movie theatre musician. Since they rarely mention the names of individual musicians, let alone specify their gender, age or socio-economic background, it is nearly impossible to get to the micro-level of individual experiences of everyday working life and personal reflections on the predicaments of musical labour in this profession. The juxtaposition of these sources nevertheless offers illuminating insight into the complex issues of disparate perceptions of musicians, the intricacies of their creative labour and the deteriorating working conditions incited by the arrival of the newest technology of the times.

Setting the Scene

The Association of Musicians of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes[5] was founded in 1923–1924 through a reorganisation of the previous musicians' associations active in the Croatian, Serbian, and Slovenian administrative and cultural centres of Zagreb, Belgrade and Ljubljana, respectively. From the very beginning, the activities of the new Association were inextricably linked to the publishing of monthly issues of the official bulletin, *The (Jugoslavenski) Muzičar*. The goals of the Association were mainly focused on the unified struggle of professional musicians regarding the issues of their esteem, status and recognition in wider society and arriving at the position from which it would be possible to successfully negotiate various aspects of the musicians' working conditions and labour rights with private employers, state-sponsored cultural institutions and legislative bodies (Šubic Kovačević, 2019). The membership of the Association principally consisted of professional freelance (in the terms of the Association, 'private') musicians and orchestral musicians employed in the existing opera houses.

Early on, the Association formed ties with similar organisations in other European countries,[6] informing its members regularly on the activities and labour conditions in other parts of Europe by publishing translations of articles written by European unionists as well as letters from Yugoslav musicians living and working abroad.

Private – that is, freelance – musicians represented a significant portion of the Association's active membership and were on several occasions singled out as particularly important in the overall struggles of the Association. On the one hand, the Association could freely develop its actions only when it targeted private employers, while acting in state sponsored institutions was at times limited and difficult (Šidak, 1928a). On the other hand, private musicians playing in bars, coffeehouses, restaurants and silent movie theatres were deemed to be in an especially vulnerable position and therefore in urgent need of changes that could be brought upon only through solidarity and a united struggle of all the Association's members. Although private musicians were in many cases earning more money than orchestral musicians, their positions were precarious. They did not have access to the right of an eight-hour workday, weekly rest or paid annual leave; more often than not they received daily pay and were not in a position to negotiate monthly pay, which left them in a difficult position in case of even the shortest of illnesses; they did not have written contracts, let alone contracts containing notice periods; their engagements were seasonal and subject to constant sudden changes; and their old age was perceived as 'a desperate chapter of life of utter misery and destitution' (Šidak, 1928b: 1).

One also must bear in mind that at the time in some contexts, foreign musicians significantly outnumbered the local ones. While in the period between 1918 and 1922, the orchestra of the Zagreb Opera House permanently employed 54 musicians, only seven of them were local, and the ratio only slightly changed by 1929, when ten local and 49 foreign musicians played together in the same orchestra (Kern, 1929: 1). The reasons for this imbalance were numerous, but the most significant was the constant scarcity of skilled professional players of, above all, wind instruments, which led to mainly Austrian and Czech musicians taking over these positions in many orchestras. The situation was even more challenging for freelance musicians, further exacerbated by the constant influx of foreign musicians, many of whom used to stay (and work) in the country temporarily, often only for the duration of the summer season. They were in most cases unwilling to join the Association, which allowed them to circumvent and thus at times even compromise the established principles of employment regulation that bound the members of the Association. The ambivalent stance towards foreign musicians, stemming from the position in which the necessity of relying on them coincided with a constant feeling of threat to one's immediate existence, was considerably deepened in the later years by, among other things, the arrival of sound film technology (Šidak, 1929d; Kern, 1930; Šidak, 1930).

The Spectre of (Mechanical) Sound

Articles explicitly devoted to the silent movie theatre and its musicians appeared rarely in the first five years after the establishment of the Association's bulletin in 1923. The few exceptions predominately addressed the challenges facing the orchestra leaders in providing suitable music for the myriad of movies they accompanied or described the potential benefits of the ready-made solutions that came in the form of published scores of pieces in various editions of European music publishers. When it came to labour rights, which were often mentioned within larger articles stressing the precarious position of freelance musicians (Šidak, 1928a; Šidak, 1928b), the authors habitually made an effort to underline the difficult conditions endured by the musicians employed in the local movie theatres. More often than not, these musicians were forced to play continuously for nine or ten hours a day in poor lighting, cramped spaces and difficult positions that left permanent traces on their bodies. In the words of Jaroslav Šidak, these musicians were effectively becoming 'mere machines with pre-set fixed rhythms of work and rest' (Šidak, 1929a). From what could be deduced by carefully reading through the pages of *The Muzičar,* silent movie theatre musicians did not have weekly rest, since for them, Sunday was the day of most strenuous labour. Neither did they have (paid or unpaid) annual leave, since the nearing of the end of the movie theatre season always brought utter uncertainty and a frenetic search for employment for the coming summer.

From 1928 on, however, articles, short news stories and references to the peril of sound film started to appear in almost every issue of *The Muzičar*. The news was usually sinister and disturbing, warning about the rapid introduction of sound film and the devastating effects this new technological 'craze' brought upon the lives of thousands of movie theatre musicians, initially in the United States and later in the European metropolises as well. The threat of the advent of the sound film, curiously, seemed to be less of a concern to Zagreb musicians and appeared at first only on the margins of the growing concerns and evolving discussions on the devastating impact of 'mechanical music' – in this case, primarily radio broadcasting and gramophone records – on their professional lives and livelihoods. Radio Zagreb started broadcasting in 1926, and music broadcasts were an important part of its daily programme from the very beginning. Radios and gramophones soon became common at Zagreb coffeehouses and restaurants, even the most prestigious ones. The threat of radio broadcasts and gramophone records seemed to be perceived as more immediate to the Association's members' everyday life and labour. The opening article of the May 15, 1929, issue written by Jaroslav Šidak thus cautioned about the 'spectre of the mechanical music', underlining how the financial interests that led to the introduction of gramophones into the places of formerly exclusively live music did not face any resistance: 'The authorities do not have a problem with it, musicians are not screaming against it, the public is not protesting. Everyone

seems to receive this novelty indifferently – as something that just is and must be' (Šidak, 1929b).

The Association's leaders[7] were, nevertheless, attentively following the changes happening in European cities – especially Vienna and Prague, which were 'infected' by the 'sound film psychosis' early on. When in February 1929, news kept arriving of almost 50% of New York movie theatres switching to sound film and consequently dismissing their orchestras, as well as of the introduction of Movieton technology into one of the largest Paris theatres, the conclusion of P. Deutscher in his article in *The Muzičar* on musicians and mechanical music was rather nihilistic: 'But, what are we to do when faced with the progress of science and technology? What could we do? Nothing, absolutely nothing!' (Deutscher, 1929: 3).

When it came to the issue of sound film, views were significantly more optimistic. The article entitled 'Are We to Feel Threatened by the Sound Film?', which appeared in the October 1929 issue of *The Muzičar*, argued that sound film had not yet reached the region mainly due to its geographical location in South-Eastern Europe, where all the novelties seemed to arrive with a significant delay. The new technology was deemed to still be an experiment of a kind, and thus was not perceived as the same kind of threat that general mechanisation was for other lines of work (such as in, e.g., the textile, leather or metal industries). The novelty and the lack of standardisation of the new technological systems, as well as the allegedly insufficient financial power of the owners of the existing movie theatres in the city, were strong enough arguments for considering sound film technology to be something that will undoubtedly reach Zagreb in time, but not anytime soon. These reflections were underlined by the self-assuring mantra of the passing nature of the attraction that every novelty unavoidably brings, as well as by a strong belief that 'the natural music will triumph sooner or later'. Expressed faith in 'human feelings that will eventually prevail' left both the author Jaroslav Šidak and presumably also his target audience in firm belief that, when it comes to the threat of sound film, they can 'rest assured' (Šidak, 1929c).

At almost the same time, the views expressed in the music theatre owners' bulletins published between 1928 and 1932, although not completely devoid of reservations, appeared to be more on the optimistic side in welcoming and preparing the theatre owners for the unavoidable arrival of sound film. Although it might at first appear financially prohibitive, primarily to the owners of smaller provincial theatres, the readers were continuously assured that there was no place anymore for reservations about sound film as a mere novelty sensation; instead, it would be an eagerly anticipated and unavoidable (bright) future for their businesses. In his article 'On the Prospect of Sound Film' published in the December 1929 issue of *Filmska revija*, Josip Zimmermann, owner of a small theatre in the provincial town of Virovitica, acknowledged that a good musical accompaniment contributed up to 50% to the success of a movie but stressed nevertheless that 95% of owners were

still not in a position to finance skilled orchestra musicians, forcing the provincial theatres to rely on less skilled piano players, gramophone records or, in some cases, even local *tamburica* ensembles (Aranicki and Zimmermann, 1929: 5). When movie theatre musicians were even mentioned in the later issues of the same journal, it was almost exclusively to refer to the deficient quality of their playing or to how the problems of their fees and their inability to play for longer stretches of time (required by the increasing demand for a higher number of consecutive screenings) was convincingly solved by the, admittedly costly but ultimately lucrative, investment in the newest sound film technology. By the beginning of 1930, at least from the perspective of the theatre owners, movie theatre musicians had fallen into complete oblivion.

The White Shadows of Oblivion

Just a few weeks after Šidak's (1929c) article dismissing the immediate danger of sound film appeared in *The Muzičar,* the Zagreb Olimp theatre announced that the first screening of a sound film in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia was to take place in its newly equipped hall. The special screening of the MGM's 'White Shadows in the South Seas'[8] prepared for the local press in the morning of November 11, 1929, was received with the utmost acclaim. The journalists' reviews in all the major daily newspapers in the Kingdom lauded the advent of a new movie theatre attraction underlining almost unanimously the crisp and clear sound reproduction as well as the perfect synchronicity of picture and sound. They were equally loud in praising the musical performances on the film's soundtrack, which – in the words of one of the reviews – 'could not be matched by even the best orchestras of the largest movie theatres' (E. D., 1929: 3). The place in the Olimp hall hitherto reserved for orchestral musicians was ominously covered by large yellow fabric bearing the Yugoslavian and American flags. What undoubtedly contributed to the enthusiastic approval was the abundance of natural sounds emanating from the screen, enhanced by the synchronised sound of the whistling of the main actor as well as the calls, melodies and rhythms of the Tahitian islanders, which without a doubt stirred the exotic aural fantasies of local audiences not acquainted with these distant and distinctive sound worlds.

The same level of enthusiasm, unsurprisingly, did not reach the pages of *The Muzičar*. In the following months, the grim consequences of the sound film premiere were still being counted and the resulting developments were deemed to have outdone even the most pessimistic predictions. The fact that sound film arrived in the city in the middle of the movie theatre season, when all the places available to freelance musicians had already been filled and theatre musicians were not yet thinking about possible summer engagements, made the situation even more sinister. Most of the theatre musicians were left with at most a two-week notice period, without any legal

protection. Immediately after the premiere, the Olimp theatre dismissed all of its musicians and was soon followed by other theatres switching to sound film technology (Šidak, 1929d). Although the overall number of movie theatre musicians in Zagreb was not large – even the biggest orchestras counted no more than 12 musicians – a few dozen musicians suddenly left without employment still posed an immediate threat to the established rules of employment, the market value of their labour and the increasingly precarious position of all freelance musicians.

There is no doubt that the leaders of the Association were familiar with the public protests undertaken by similar associations fighting the challenges imposed by the arrival of sound film technology in other countries.[9] Despite the fact that movie theatre musicians were in the previous years considered by the Association as important actors in the united struggle for better working conditions, the desperate situation they suddenly found themselves in, unfortunately, did not provoke any attempts from the Association at publicly protesting the conditions they were facing. Although current developments served as a painful reminder of both the status of the Association and the state of their efforts at securing the social and economic stability of their members, they deemed the countermeasures to be destined to fail and instead focused on other threats to the profession. While the profession of movie theatre musician was effectively disappearing, the other musicians were still there to be counted on, so the Association began a prolonged campaign against the uncontrolled influx of new foreign musicians, who were themselves forced to migrate because of reduced work opportunities from the advent of the sound film, as well as the detrimental effects of the proliferation of mechanical music (Vrk., 1931: 1). The movie theatre owners' bulletins, on the other hand, were at the same time brimming with enthusiastic news of the unexpected success of sound film, the spreading of the new technology to other cities of the Kingdom, the growing interest of the enthralled audience and the booming financial gain witnessed by the visionary owners who were ready to invest into a certain future (Anonymous, 1930a; Anonymous, 1930b; Aranicki, 1930a; Aranicki, 1930b). By July 1930, all of the largest movie theatres in Zagreb had completely switched to sound film technology, entirely dismissing all of their former musicians (Anonymous, 1930c; Vrk., 1931).

Competing Discourses of the Unfolding Technological Drama

When it came to the actual strategy of protests in public spaces with at least a faint belief in possible solidarity and the support of the general public, the history of the Association's engagement in the struggle for the rights of movie theatre musicians reveals that this kind of battle was deemed to be lost even before it started. On the surface level, this definitely seems to be true, but by looking more closely at the discourse emanating from the pages of *The Muzičar*, it becomes apparent that the street-level battle was instead

translated into a long-lasting discursive one. Although far removed from the empowering vision of technological voluntarism, the Association's stance did not represent a complete surrender to the toxic and paralysing discourse of complete technological determinism, either.

As Pfaffenberger argued in further developing the concept of technological drama, the technological processes that embody the intention to alter the allocation of power, prestige or wealth can 'easily be cloaked in myths of unusual power' (Pfaffenberger, 1992: 505). By carefully deconstructing the scarce segments of the movie theatre owners' discourse referring to the musical aspect of (silent and/or sound) film, it is easy to single out two recurring metanarratives – or in Pfaffenberger's terms, 'cloaking myths': one of the superiority of the composed and pre-recorded soundtrack as a constitutive element of sound film, and the other, a closely connected one of the democratising potential of the new technology. The myth of superiority was carefully built and (subtly or openly) reiterated in announcements of almost every new sound film coming to the city. Most often it evolved around the 'obvious' fact that the perfect synchronicity of picture and sound could never be achieved in the live music performances typical of silent movie projections, as well as the 'undisputable' fact that even the best theatre orchestras of the biggest theatres in Zagreb, could never compete with the performance excellence of the music brought by the best musicians in the soundtracks of sound film (Aranicki, 1930a). The myth of the democratising potential, as one of the recuring myths of almost any new technology (Taylor, 2001: 6), seemed to be even more convincing. Very often, the narrative pointed to fact that the audiences in small-town movie theatres were in the era of silent film relegated to poorly performed accompaniment, or even the experience of watching the film in complete silence (Anonymous, 1929a and 1929b). With the advent of new technology, the myth argued, these visitors will finally have equal chances to enjoy the superior performance of highly esteemed singers, orchestras and jazz bands that – only a few years ago – had been reserved only for the citizens of the world's biggest metropolises. In the small provincial towns, in other words, sound film would eventually fill the void left by non-existent opera houses, theatres and concert halls (Aranicki, 1930a).

The reflections and arguments appearing in the articles published in *The Muzičar*, on the other hand, could be read as the counternarrative (or in Pfaffenberger's terms, the counterstatement) arguing against 'the loss of self-esteem, social prestige and social power' (Pfaffenberger, 1992: 506). They could be subsumed under the powerful myth of the endless struggle of Man against Machine. The perception of the musicians as not just ordinary workers but as artists as well easily translated into the continually reiterated opposition of 'mechanical' versus 'real', 'natural' or 'man-made' music, which spilled over into the future struggles against (new) technologies that were deemed as threatening to the livelihoods of professional musicians. The discussions in *The Muzičar* kept moving between seemingly irreconcilable

statements of technological voluntarism and determinism, built upon a series of binary oppositions, such as Man vs. Machine, live musical performance vs. mechanical reproduction, short-lived fad vs. eternal artistic value, commodity vs. art, capital vs. free aesthetic choice. As the struggle to maintain agency in the face of an encroaching technology (Taylor, 2001: 205) was becoming more acute and further complicated by the increasing challenges that being a freelance musician in the beginning of the 1930s brought, the reflections and perceptions of the future of the profession kept sliding between arrestingly optimistic and utterly pessimistic. At times, the resilience of the professional musicians was triumphantly celebrated as destined to win against all the challenges that the new technologies of the future might bring (Anonymous, 1931a: 1). At other times, obituaries of a kind were written for the profession, emphasising the duty of the Association to disclose to the general public all of its hopelessness and despair, as well as to caution anyone considering devoting their lives to music not to do so, since only troubles, constant existential struggles and deep disappointments will follow (Vrk., 1931: 2). In essence, one could read these narratives and counternarratives, statements and counterstatements, as one of the traits of the Modernist age, defined, among other things, by the incessant struggle to 'find a stable ground of being with the promise and peril of science and technological development', as well as one particular localised, but also general, perspective of looking at technology 'through the Modernist lens as both creator and destroyer, as agent both of future promise and of culture's destruction' (Pfaffenberger, 1992: 495).

In Place of the Closing Credits

The sound film crisis undoubtedly left permanent marks on the local music labour market in Yugoslavia, as well as on the future activities of the Association. For one, the number of members of the Zagreb branch of the Association decreased from 270 in 1926 to 200 in 1931, and although it increased slightly by the mid-1930s, in 1940, when the Association dissolved, it consisted of only 205 members (Šubic Kovačević, 2019: 533).[10] Bearing in mind that technologies are not introduced in a cultural vacuum, it is important to consider the other challenges that the social and economic crises of the early 1930s posed to musicians in Zagreb. Although the number of musicians hitherto employed in Zagreb silent movie theatres was rather small, there were other obstacles that made the working conditions of Zagreb musicians – both private and state-employed – increasingly difficult. The economic crisis affecting all levels of society at the time was, in the case of (freelance) musicians, further exacerbated by prohibitive 'live music' taxes for privately owned venues and the onset of legislation mandating the systematic collection of author's rights for music played live in these venues. Freelance professional musicians in search of paid labour were forced to compete with much cheaper and non-taxed 'mechanical' music played on

radios and gramophones in popular coffeehouses and restaurants, as well as with the potential threat of amateur musicians who, in circumstances of unemployment and the general labour market crisis, turned to playing music for additional income. Professional musicians, their highly specialised knowledge and skills notwithstanding, had extremely narrow options for finding employment in other lines of work, while the musical profession – despite years of concerted efforts of the Association's leaders – was still legislatively considered as a profession free to be taken up by non-professional musicians. The popularity of sound film (at least in the first months after its introduction) resulted in the decreasing popularity of live theatres, which were able to survive only because they were funded by the state. The ensuing practice of reducing the number of musicians in theatre orchestras was especially hard for the musicians whose instruments were not common in the orchestras of privately owned venues. Calls for closing the border to foreign musicians in search for employment, appeals to the legislative bodies for the introduction of a tax on mechanically reproduced music in venues previously reserved for live music performance and pleas for a reduction of the taxes in the venues still employing freelance musicians were becoming more pronounced and marked the Association's engagement throughout the 1930s. News of rare reinstatements of orchestras in movie theatres in Manchester, London or Paris, where enthusiastically heralded in the news columns of *The Muzičar*, as were the periodical rumours of Zagreb movie theatre owners considering re-employment of some of their former musicians. By 1932, however, the very mention of silent movie theatre musicians completely disappeared from the pages of the Association's bulletin.

The dire consequences of the sound film crisis left the Association's leaders and members with a bitter taste. Faced with the disturbing reminder of the precarity of their profession, the Association was forced to anticipate the possible impact other new technologies might have on them as individuals and on their profession as a whole in the future. At the same time, the Association urged its members to face the consequences of all the struggles for labour rights that they were unable to finish, often due to the constant internal struggles, conflicts and divisions it faced since its foundation.[11]

The present time brings multiple challenges to the labour rights and day-to-day working lives of musicians. Although the lessons of history are seldom learned, it pays to bear in mind that, paraphrasing the anonymous author of the December 1931 article in *The Muzičar* protesting the encroaching threat of mechanical music, living musicians may have feelings, but, unfortunately, they also have stomachs (Anonymous, 1931b).

Notes

1 Many articles in the bulletins of the 1920s and 1930s that were used in this research were published without mentioning the names of their authors. In some

cases, articles were signed with only the author's initials. When it was possible to reconstruct the full names of the authors from the initials, references are given with their full surnames and included as such in the Reference list.

2 After the official name of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes changed in October 1929 to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, the Association was renamed to The Association of Musicians of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Hereafter, I will refer to the organisation as the Association.

3 *The Muzičar* was published as the official bulletin of the Association from 1923 to 1941. The original name of the bulletin, *The Jugoslavenski muzičar*, was changed to *The Muzičar* in January 1928. At first, the bulletin was published as a monthly, but since January 1933, it was published twice a month (Šubic Kovačević, 2019: 514–515).

4 For the research upon which this article is founded I have read through and analysed all the issues of the Association's bulletin, *The Muzičar*, published from 1923 to 1934. In addition, I have analysed all the articles appearing in newsletters and bulletins aimed at movie theatre owners that addressed the issue of silent film and sound film technology appearing from 1928 to 1934. The movie theatre owners' bulletins and reviews richest in information on the conditions and challenges surrounding the introduction of sound film technology proved to be *The Filmska revija* and *The Metro Megafon*; therefore, they were selected as the principal sources for insight into the movie theatre owners' perspectives and discourses on the technical innovation central to this article.

5 For a more detailed history of the Association, see Šubic Kovačević, 2019; Vesić and Peno, 2017.

6 An overarching international organisation connected to the Association was the International Union of Musicians. Through it, the Association established contacts with other national musicians' associations.

7 Due to continuing restructuring, changing numbers of the Association's branches and subchapters and other internal struggles, the leadership of the Association often changed in the years of its existence. Detailed information about specific names and functions within the leadership can be found in Vesić and Peno, 2017 and Šubic Kovačević, 2019. It pays to bear in mind, however, that in all the years of the Association's existence, only male members were active in leading positions.

8 Initially conceived as a silent film, 'The White Shadows in the South Seas' was later set to music and thus became MGM's first sound film. It was filmed in Tahiti and directed by W. S. Van Dyke and Robert Flaherty. It was the film in which the MGM lion's roar was heard for the first time.

9 For specific histories of the organised protests by musicians and musicians' unions against the introduction of sound film into movie theatres in other European and American cities see, for example, Hubbard, 1985; Fones-Wolf, 1994; Zinn, Frank and Kelley, 2001: 119–155; Williamson and Cloonan, 2016: 76–77.

10 Šubic Kovačević warns that the number of members that appeared in the periodical reports of the Association on the pages of *The Muzičar* should not be considered exact. These numbers varied considerably depending on whether only paying members were counted as active members (Šubic Kovačević, 2019: 533).

11 All of the organisational challenges the Association faced in the years of its existence are elaborated in detail in Vesić and Peno, 2017.

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4 'Work that Body'

Disco, Counterculture and the Promise of the Transformation of Work

Tim Lawrence

Introduction

Growing out of New York's subterranean DJ-led dance scene of the early 1970s, disco emerged in 1974 and went on to become one of the best-selling genres of the decade. Disco's popularisation can be most straightforwardly traced to the opening of the headline-grabbing midtown discotheque Studio 54 in the spring of 1977, the release of the movie *Saturday Night Fever* at the end of 1977, and the success of artists including the Bee Gees, Chic and Donna Summer. To the shock of the music industry, disco out-sold rock during 1978, only for the overproduction of the genre to coincide with a downturn in the economy during the opening months of 1979. The genre's rise and fall therefore spanned the 1970s, a transitional decade that witnessed the decline of industrial capitalism and the rise of post-industrial capitalism as well as the weakening of the traditional white working class and the strengthening of a rainbow coalition of workers aligned with the civil rights, feminist and gay liberation movements. Bubbling under the surface for much of the decade, these economic and social developments burst into explosive view during the summer of 1979 when a rock-led backlash against disco expressed its hostility in terms that were homophobic, racist and sexist.

For the next 20 years or so, disco was widely understood to have revolved around the hedonistic excesses of midtown disco culture, the bad taste of suburban disco culture, the studio-driven artificiality and superficiality of its most popular acts and the commercialism of the companies that sought to profit from the sound. A series of revisionist histories (Echols, 2010; Lawrence, 2004; Shapiro, 2005) subsequently challenged the pigeonholing of disco, foregrounding the democratic impetus of its cross-cultural roots and the significance of its musical contribution. However, the impression that disco contributed to the popularisation of a newly hedonistic, narcissistic and apolitical lifestyle that came to define the 1970s has survived. Disco promoted a 'restless, perpetually unsatisfied desire' and an 'indefinite hedonism' that was symptomatic of a decade defined by its escalating narcissism, replacing 'the production of goods with the production of illusions'

in the shift from an industrial to a post-industrial economy, argues Peter Shapiro (2005: 190–191). Although 'disco may have begun with an inclusive impulse, it drifted toward the exclusive and the aristocratic, and was plagued with a nagging sense of whether poppers, beats, sex and coke could amount to a social vision', adds Jefferson Cowie (2010: 320) in his celebrated history of the US working class during the 1970s. Disco therefore lured a dislocated working-class constituency into its midst with the promise of a 'redemption that wasn't spiritual, political or material but corporeal' (Cowie, 2010: 320), a promise that also left it 'trapped in the headlights of the oncoming cultural paradigm shift' (Shapiro, 2005: 248) that culminated with the rollout of neoliberalism.

Countering the idea that disco was ultimately defined by narcissism, hedonism, individualism and acquiescence, this chapter will argue that disco contributed to the shaping of a new form of post-Fordist labour that recalibrated work through the prism of the declining post-war industrial economy and the rise of the countercultural movement. First, it will explore the links between Herbert Marcuse, the countercultural movement and the emergence of DJ-led dance floor culture. Second, it will outline how the spread of DJ-led partying and the rise of disco produced new forms of post-Fordist work and employment opportunities for minorities. Third, it will analyse how the disco/dance scene recalibrated factory and office structures and relations as well as the meaning of work. Finally, it will argue that disco's reshaping of work didn't make it complicit with neoliberalism, with the culture instead paralleling Autonomia, the Italian anti-work movement of the 1970s that is often cited as the most notable example of anti-capitalist, post-Fordist work.

Herbert Marcuse, Counterculture and the Rise of DJ-led Party Culture

Disco's contribution to the recalibration of work can be traced back to the writings of Frankfurt School critic Herbert Marcuse and in particular *Eros and Civilisation* (1998), first published in 1955. Marcuse critiques Freud's proposition that civilisation is based on the subjugation of human instincts, in particular gratification, to the discipline of full-time work, monogamous reproduction and the system of law and order. Marcuse (1998: 4, 40, 85) argues that 'intensified progress seems to be bound up with intensified unfreedom' and that the pleasure principle is opposed because it threatens a form of civilisation that perpetuates 'domination and toil', with labour 'alienating and painful'. Challenging Freud's theory that a non-repressive civilisation is impossible because of scarcity, Marcuse (1998: 36) maintains that Freud 'applies to the brute fact of scarcity what actually is the consequence of a specific organisation of scarcity'. He goes on to place the relationship between cultural radicalism and political liberation at the centre of his utopian philosophy, developing his new perspectives on liberation

and utopia because, as Douglas Kellner (2004: xviii) notes, 'history and the Marxian scenario for revolution no longer seemed to guarantee revolutionary possibility'.

By the end of the 1960s Marcuse's ideas had become a key reference point for the countercultural movement and the new left (Crownfield, 1970; Rothman, 2017; Kellner, 2004: 2). Theodore Roszak (1968) provided the first definition of counterculture, outlining the movement's efforts to challenge the inauthenticity, poverty and oppressiveness of everyday life – a life defined by hierarchical power, paternalism and authoritarianism, – by discovering 'new types of community, new family patterns, new sexual mores, new kinds of livelihood, new aesthetic forms, new personal identities on the far side of power politics, the bourgeois home, and the Protestant work ethic' (Roszak, 1968: n.p.). Rooted in the demands and aesthetics of the civil rights, gay liberation, feminist and anti-war movements, as well as a 'stormy Romantic sensibility, obsessed from first to last with paradox and madness, ecstasy and spiritual striving' (Roszak, 1995: 91), counterculture also demonstrated how 'work can become play' and the disciplined body a 'thing to be enjoyed' (Roszak, 1995: 109) as cybernetics offers ways for society to be reorganised according to a libidinal rationality. The movement also called for increased autonomy and self-management as well as the liberation of creativity (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2018). More than 'dropping out', the two essential operations of the countercultural movement were 'the refusal of the disciplinary regime and the experimentation with new forms of productivity', add Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2001: 274). Roszak concludes:

> Out of that dissent grew the most ambitious agenda for the reappraisal of cultural values that any society has ever produced. Everything was called into question: family, work, education, success, child rearing, male-female relations, sexuality, urbanism, science, technology, progress. The meaning of wealth, the meaning of love, the meaning of life – all became issues in need of examination.
>
> (1995: xxvi)

The countercultural movement went into retreat at the end of the 1960s as the state clamped down on the anti-war movement, the Black Panthers, LSD and other forms of dissent. Internal contradictions also began to surface, perhaps inevitably. Held on December 6, 1969, the free Altamont rock concert provided a grim denouement to the decade, leaving four dead, scores of others injured and the Rolling Stones accused of staging the show to 'make a sort of *Woodstock West* movie' (Bangs et al., 1970), *Gimme Shelter*, scheming to make money from a supposedly giving gesture. On January 1, 1970, 27-year-old rock critic Ellen Willis (1970) published a withering account of the countercultural movement in the *New York Review of Books*

that referenced her generation's newfound sense of anguish. 'What went wrong?', she asked. 'We blew it – how?' Roszak (1995: xxxii) recalls being asked 'whatever became of the counter culture' that same year. Contributing to the shifting tide, moral philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre published a book-length repudiation of Marcuse in which he argued that 'almost all of [his] key positions are false' (1970: 2). MacIntyre asked what humans will do and how new forms of domination will be avoided in Marcuse's sexually liberated state. 'On this Marcuse is silent, and perhaps he is silent because his account is in fact empty', concluded MacIntyre (1970: 50).

Damaged but not destroyed, countercultural protagonists regrouped, often in relatively safe clandestine spaces, and, as part of the shift, dance floors in New York City became a focal point for a new form of socialisation that embodied countercultural priorities. Beginning in early 1970, two venues – the Loft, a private party hosted by David Mancuso in his warehouse space on 647 Broadway, and the Sanctuary, a public discotheque located at the Hell's Kitchen end of West 43rd Street that became the first to welcome GLBTQ dancers – ushered in a radically new articulation of DJ-led party culture that bore little relation to what had preceded it. Whereas 1960s discotheques featured predominantly white crowds dancing in straight couples to the selections of self-styled puppeteer DJs who regularly interrupted the flow of the music to compel people to buy drinks, the Loft and the Sanctuary attracted definitively mixed dance crowds that introduced a transformative, liberatory energy onto the floor. Sanctuary DJ Francis Grasso and Mancuso responded by entering into elongated call-and-response exchanges with their dancers, giving birth to the practices of beat-mixing and the extended set respectively (Lawrence, 2004). The result manifested Marcuse's call for polymorphic sexual liberation, the cultivation of an aesthetic ethos and the valuing of participation, expression, play and pleasure.

New Sounds, Professions and Employment Opportunities

As DJ-led partying went viral during the first half of the 1970s, DJs, party hosts and discotheque owners innovated new techniques, reshaped sound systems, developed lighting effects and modified spaces to enhance the dance experience. The private party network that grew out of the Loft forged a particularly progressive ritual as organisers refrained from selling alcohol in order to bypass New York City's cabaret licensing law and stay open all night. Meanwhile the public discotheque scene helped popularise the culture as entrepreneurs adopted the Sanctuary's polysexual example. With workers responding to the worsening economic climate by seeking out a cheap form of entertainment that offered cathartic release, the dance floor ritual became polymorphous, communal, democratic, improvisatory and immersive, with new forms of sociality, creativity and physical expression coming

to the fore. Rather than embodying a new form of narcissism, nascent disco culture encouraged participants to partially dismantle, reconstruct and re-programme the self through the generation of collective bliss.

The first genre of music to grow directly and explicitly out of the dance floor, disco emerged as an outline genre in the autumn of 1973 when Vince Aletti (1973) identified a set of recurring aesthetic elements that could be heard in New York's dance spaces, with popular tracks often foregrounding percussion, chanted vocals and the rhythm section along with strings, breaks and crescendos. A Loft regular, Aletti identified Manu Dibango's 'Soul Makossa', a hugely popular record with Mancuso and his peers, as 'one of the most spectacular discotheque records of recent months' as well as 'a perfect example of the genre' (Aletti, 1973: 60). Rising up the *Billboard* charts before it received radio play, 'Soul Makossa' demonstrated the power of party DJs to sell records. Disco subsequently evolved into a more explicitly R&B and soul-influenced genre when the Hues Corporation and George McCrae notched up successive number one singles the following summer, after which independent companies intensified their production of the sound during 1975 and 1976.

Disco was designed to enhance the dance floor experience both physically and spiritually. The prominent four-on-the-floor bass beat, which first became prominent on the recordings of Gamble and Huff along with Norman Whitfield, provided dancers with a simple foundational structure upon which counterpoint rhythms, usually syncopated and funk-oriented, could be layered. Breaks and crescendos punctuated elongated records, providing them with narrative drama. Often chanted or belted out, vocals revolved around the themes of desire, love, showing emotional strength in adversity and the pleasures of the dance floor. Evolving directly out of the widespread preference for long records, the 12-inch single, first released commercially in 1976, became a notable source of radical sonic experimentation and innovation, with remixers able to initially edit and subsequently re-organise the multitrack tapes of any recording, adding or subtracting material to enhance their dance floor appeal. As the decade progressed lyrics that instructed dancers to dance, work their bodies and give themselves up to the music became more prominent, supporting the impression that a new form of music-dance labour was coming into being.

Disco's marginalised protagonists generated new forms of post-Fordist labour, earning money for doing what they did rather than doing what they did in order to earn money. DJs occupied the avant-garde, engaging in verbal and musical conversations with party hosts, dancers and record companies as well as pioneering remix culture from 1973 onwards. Most pioneering DJs were gay, working class and Italian American; working class and straight, Grasso was an exception. A second generation of African American, gay, working-class DJs rose to prominence soon after, with Black, straight working-class DJs coming to the fore in parallel party scenes in the Bronx and Brooklyn. The demographic make-up of the nascent profession made

sense, with DJ back stories and sensibilities aligned with the crowds that were thronging to New York's effervescent dance floors. Beginning with the Tenth Floor, the rise of dedicated all-male private party spaces embedded the prominence of gay DJs within the wider scene. Although women were to a large extent marginalised within the profession, in part because the private party scene along with the influential end of the public discotheque scene was exponentially more popular with gay men than lesbian women, the Sahara opened as Manhattan's first all-female discotheque in 1976 and employed the Black lesbian DJ Sharon White as one of its residents.

The musicians who recorded music for the dance floor also came from the margins of US society. A significant proportion of the records that fuelled the emergent party scene were recorded in Detroit and Philadelphia, with Black musicians occupying the cutting edge in the recording studio. James Brown along with the rhythm section of Ron Baker, Norman Harris and Early Young hogged the credits on the records that progressive DJs turned to time and time again. The recordings of numerous southern hemisphere musicians, among them Manu Dibango and Fela Kuti, also came to the fore through dance floor culture. If instrumental players and producers were mainly male, disco's lyrics were usually delivered by women, most of them African American. Walter Hughes (1994) observes that the LGBTQ dance community's identification with resilient, expressive figures who overcome emotional hardships underpinned its affinity with Black divas, among them Gloria Gaynor, Grace Jones, Chaka Khan, Diana Ross and Donna Summer. The first out-gay recording, Valentino's 'I Was Born this Way', was a disco record, and Sylvester became music's first out superstar. In the recording studio Tom Moulton and Walter Gibbons, both of them gay, pioneered the practice of remixing records and shaped the rise of the 12' single, a format that defined disco's pioneering expression. Immersed in San Francisco's male gay disco scene, Patrick Cowley became as one of the most innovative synthesiser players of the era.

The revitalised private party and public discotheque scene offered additional employment openings to minority workers. The Loft and its numerous offshoots, including the Paradise Garage, which began to hold construction parties in January 1977, were all owned and managed by gay men. Even the straight guys who ran a significant proportion of the city's public discotheque network tended to mix their entrepreneurialism with bohemianism, while the most famous discotheque of all, Studio 54, which opened in April 1977, was co-owned by Steve Rubell, an entrepreneur who came out via the New York dance floor. Meanwhile, the people who populated New York's party venues were variously of colour, female, LGBTQ and working class, with all who sided with the principles of equality, democracy, tolerance and freedom welcome to join in. Together they placed importance on the exploration of new forms of being and sociality, including those that broke with mainstream heteronormative conventions, racial divisions and class exploitation.

Record company owners and their staff also became increasingly mixed. Ahmet Ertegun and Jerry Wexler (Atlantic), Berry Gordy (Motown), Kenny Gamble and Leon Huff (Philadelphia International), Florence Greenberg (Scepter), Henry Stone (TK) and Ken Cayre (Salsoul) worked tirelessly for the promotion of Black music. They helped maintain disco's diversity by hiring the likes of Denise Chatman (Salsoul) plus gay men Ray Caviano (TK) and Mel Cheren (Scepter) to work as promoters. Although the majors were slow to react to disco, David Todd, African American and gay, landed a promotions job at RCA. The authors of the most influential disco columns – Vince Aletti and Tom Moulton – also identified as gay men. Record store owners started to hire store assistants who reflected and were immersed in the culture, including Manny Lehman and Judy Russell (both Vinyl Mania) and Yvonne Turner (Colony). Meanwhile, Record Pool DJs provided record companies with feedback sheets on the popularity of their promotional releases to encourage them to focus their promotional efforts on the best music (Lawrence, 2004).

The gains coincided with the wider opening up of the workplace. As Nancy MacLean notes (2006) of the preceding era, white men monopolised good employment and were considered the core of the nation. However, by outlawing workplace discrimination in addition to ending segregation the 1964 Civil Rights Act triggered a grassroots struggle for employment justice that saw Black and female workers file complaints with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, gaining workplace victories. By the end of the 1970s, African Americans and white women enjoyed 'a presence and a voice' in the workplace 'as never before', argues MacLean (2006: 346), with Latina/os, Asian Americans and LGBTQ workers also making advances, albeit to a lesser degree. The progress occurred within the context of an economy that saw Nixon declare 'we are all Keynesians now' and wages rise to a peak in 1973 before they plateaued in the mid-1970s, when inflation, stagnation and falling profits led the corporations to fight back. Cowie (2010: 239) acknowledges the importance of the struggle for occupational justice yet notes how it turned 'almost solely on breaking down exclusion – gaining access to better and more skilled jobs for women and minorities – rather than linking the project of integration with that of structural change'. It's possible to wonder what workers who didn't fit the white male archetype were supposed to do. Systematically discriminated against in wider society and marginalised within the trade union movement, female and minority workers rallied against the disadvantages they faced, only for it to be suggested that their real responsibility was to campaign for progress for all. Ultimately the dance floor offered them a place to congregate as equals, to relax and, in many instances, to earn a living.

The Recalibration of Factory and Office Life

Concerned as much about tedium as exploitation, the party scene contributed to the recalibration of factory and office life – a timely development given

that an OECD meeting held in 1971 highlighted a deterioration in workers' behaviour and motivation. ('The young no longer wished to work and especially not in industry', observe Boltanski and Chiapello [2018: 174].) Discotheque and private party employees broke with the formalities of the post-war workplace, from the requirement to work a nine-to-five day, five days a week, to the need to dress according to company requirements. However, even apparently menial tasks could become meaningful and pleasurable if carried out in a creative and sociable environment. Initially opposed by the American Federation of Musicians, DJs struck precarious agreements with employers, formed devoted friendships with one another and cultivated a uniquely responsive relationship with their dancing crowds as they innovated a new form of information-based musicianship grounded in the improvised, antiphonal, unrepeatable, elongated selection of vinyl records that cut across genre, time and space. They also formed the New York City Record Pool, a cooperative centre that distributed free promotional records to DJs, established after Steve D'Acquisto and David Mancuso became impatient with the inconsistent, lottery-style practices of the record companies as well as the unfriendly opening hours during which DJs were supposed to pick up promotional vinyl. The labels eventually adapted to the rhythms of the emergent culture, accommodating the irregular waking patterns of the DJs and accepting that the DJ booth could operate as an alternative to the company office as place where information could be exchanged and agreements struck.

With the ex-industrial spaces of party culture's heartland shaping the experience, disco re-imagined what it might mean to work, including when the activity wasn't paid (as was all kinds of labour, from rearing children to caring for the elderly to volunteering for charities and community organisations). The marathon dance sessions that started at the Loft and spread outwards, with parties lasting for ten-plus hours, required a new form of physical commitment, albeit a pleasurable one (and one that was more obviously joyful than the grimace-based activities of jogging or going to the gym, at least if the smiles on the faces of the participants are taken as the measure). The emphasis was on nonstop, immersive, sweaty dancing. The purpose was pleasure and the exploration of a new form of reality. If this was an escape, it was a real escape. Carrying physical and mental memories of the experience as they returned to what some called the outside world, participants often experienced the dance floor as transformational. The dance floor became a place where many people most wanted to spend their time. The end of civilisation, at least as Freud imagined it, was nigh, as society moved to reject the social contract that determined that, in exchange for regular pay, work should be highly structured and prioritised over pleasure, with pleasure experienced within the family unit.

A fully immersive dance floor experience enabled dancers to loosen their concern with the boundaried self – and loosen their egos – by connecting with other dancers through the medium of visceral music. They also discovered that, as Marcuse forecast, the body became re-sexualised when it ceased to

be a full-time instrument of labour, displacing this with a new form of pleasurable labour. 'The regression involved in this spread of the libido would first manifest itself in a reactivation of all erotogenic zones and, consequently, in a resurgence of pregenital polymorphous sexuality and in a decline of genital supremacy', Marcuse (1998) wrote in an unwittingly accurate description of how the evolved dance floor would operate. Having been historically required to sacrifice control of their bodies, LGBTQ, female and of colour dancers were more receptive to entering into the polymorphous terrain of the dance floor than those who came more obviously privileged backgrounds. Nor was the experience restricted to the most progressive venues of the downtown dance scene. As Maureen Orth (1976) noted (rather uneasily) in her description of the Brooklyn discotheque Enchanted Garden in a November 1976 feature published in *Newsweek*: 'There is no stigma attached to girls dancing with girls or boys with boys – and no compulsion to find a mate. For some, discos are an Antonioni film on noncommunication come to life. For others, they are a harbinger of the Somazonked masses of 1984'. Then there were the drugs, which arguably undermined the keep-fit benefits that came with a night of nonstop dancing and confirmed that capitalist society's combination of consumerism and drudgery didn't represent the ultimate expression of human potential. The culture reflected the acid-oriented utopianism of Mancuso's first 'Love Saves the Day' party, for even if successor parties didn't always match the Loft's version of utopia, many of them came close and almost all of them were in one way or another connected to Mancuso's pioneering event.

Historically suspicious of pleasure, and already unsure how to respond to the countercultural movement, the historic Left came to view disco as, in the words of participant and researcher Richard Dyer (1979: 20), an 'irredeemably capitalist' safety valve that encouraged weary employees to find meaningless pleasure in a weekend-oriented activity that distracted them from the task of class struggle and societal change. Disco's success is additionally assumed to have forestalled the possibility of more meaningful action away from the dance floor. The 'total fulfilment' of disco's false promise 'in the fictive realm of the strobe-globe precludes and always exceeds its realisation elsewhere', argues Anne-Lise François (1995: 443). It remained unclear, however, if those who didn't go out dancing were more likely to engage in political action than those who did. And what was the duty of dancers anyhow? Responsibility for the politically directionless nature of the 1970s lay more obviously with the decade's presidents (Nixon, Ford and Carter), the trade union movement and a range of other civic and activist organisations. Emerging as a niche culture generated by outsider participants, disco could never be expected to resolve the deep-rooted and apparently mounting problems faced by the United States, yet it did support the development of an alliance that crossed class, ethnicity, gender, race, sex and sexuality as it explored an essentially basic, cheap, anti-consumerist pleasure. Counterculture had already struggled to combine its disparate elements into

a pluralistic yet unified movement. Black Panther Fred Hampton launched the original 'Rainbow Coalition' as a multicultural revolutionary movement that encouraged participating organisations to support each other's political protests in April 1969, after which Jesse Jackson formed Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity) as a reformist equivalent in late 1971. Less overtly political, yet also more diverse and popular, disco forged its own rainbow coalition, one that encouraged participants to interact with one another, enter into conversations, share music and dance moves and enjoy meaningful, friendly interactions, even forming friendships, in a way that hadn't occurred before. The result witnessed the formation of arguably the first explicit melting pot coalition in the history of New York City – a city built on its reputation for being a melting pot.

Party culture, along with its discotheque/disco manifestation, was also largely resistant to corporate co-option. Aligned with the growing service economy – or the growing focus on buying experiences and information rather than physical products – private parties and public discotheques were owned and run by hands-on entrepreneurs, many of them dedicated to the culture; attempts to corporatise the experience through the establishment of chains were only fleetingly successful. Meanwhile the major labels showed minimal interest in the genre between 1974 and 1977, preferring to back the established sounds of pop and rock, Polydor/MGM's reluctance to promote Gloria Gaynor's 'Never Can Say Goodbye' being a case in point. The corporates were also reluctant to support the 12-inch single, a format that they initially hoped would be available only to DJs, encouraging dancers to buy the seven-inch single followed by the album. However, dancers wanted to be able to purchase the extended mixes they were hearing on the dance floor and their demand for the product persuaded Salsoul to market it commercially in 1976. The new format implicitly challenged the industry's profit model, which sought to maximise income by releasing a sequence of singles followed by an album that would also include the singles. Cheaper to buy than an album, the 12-inch single discouraged many consumers from purchasing a particular album (Lawrence, 2004).

Disco, Post-Fordist Work and Neoliberalism

Small and medium-sized businesses drove the popularisation of disco between 1976 and 1977 before the genre shocked the music industry by outselling rock in 1978. Prelude, Salsoul, TK and West End operated at the cutting edge of the sound. Neil Bogart's Los Angeles-based Casablanca Records, which included Donna Summer on its roster, notched up the most hits, many of them featuring Eurodisco elements that regulated and simplified – or as critics had it, 'whitened' – the disco aesthetic. Music industry trade magazine *Billboard* organised the 'First Annual International Disco Forum' at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York. Suburban discotheque owners Steve Rubell and Ian Schrager opened the flashbulb midtown discotheque Studio 54 with

the support of an investor, generating business through a celebrity presence, media coverage and exclusionary door queues. Independent record and production company RSO released the Brooklyn suburban discotheque movie and soundtrack *Saturday Night Fever*, which provided a whitened and straightened narrowcast version of the culture while breaking box office and album sales records. Although lines of influence could often be traced to the downtown scene – Rubell, for instance, likened his door policy to tossing a salad, or creating a diverse mix of people – the underlying trajectory of these developments was to recalibrate disco in order to market the culture and the music beyond their multiracial, polysexual and predominantly working-class urban base. The corporate sector only co-opted disco on the back of these developments, with Warner Bros. the first to open a disco department in December 1978. Having been slow to enter the game, the majors pumped the market with substandard, generic, personality-less releases. Cowie (2010: 321) maintains that disco, draining the funk out of funk, the soul out of soul and the rhythm out of the blues, quickly came to represent the 'triumph of capitalism over art', but in reality, the hyper commercialisation of the genre didn't happen until 1978.

Heartland blue-collar workers, their livelihoods in doubt, their numbers in decline and their consciousness rising, formed a 'disco sucks' movement that called for the death of the genre and staged various hate acts during the opening months of 1979. Peaking with a record burning rally held in Chicago that summer, the backlash was partly driven by taste. Rock fans had been slow to warm to disco in the first place and when the hollowing out of the genre coincided with worsening economic prospects they became vocal in their opposition. Barely a subtext, the backlash was also homophobic, racist and sexist, with disco seen to have supported the rising influence of minorities just as the white working-class found itself in retreat, 'stagflation' having culminated in an economic downturn during 1979. Although the incremental gains made by disco's rainbow coalition weren't responsible for the deepening uncertainties experienced in the industrial heartlands of the United States, disco brimmed with scapegoat potential. Craig Werner (1998: 211) notes that in addition to driving disco out of the charts, the anti-disco alliance 'also succeeded in destroying the last remaining musical scene that was in any meaningfully sense racially mixed'. Ronald Reagan would exploit the schism, winning over significant numbers of working-class Democrat supporters by foregrounding traditional 'moral majority' values and the primacy of the Christian nation on his way to victory in the November 1980 presidential election.

Cultural values had shifted. When the oil crisis of 1973 tipped the US into recession during 1974–1975, the desire to go out dancing, a cheap way to engender a sense of wellbeing, was understood to be a common-sense response to the worsening economic situation. Yet the downturn of the late 1970s produced a different conclusion: that it was time to stop dancing and knuckle down. Part of the problem was that inflation was spiralling

and the culture that had inflated most visibly during 1978 (while giving the impression of being happy and work shy) was disco. Moreover, whereas the corporations had been willing to support wage rises during the opening years of the decade, by 1978 they had started to win the argument that inflation needed to be controlled through the creation of unemployment, which would place a downward pressure on wages. Other factors that contributed to the problem of increasing costs, including the oil crisis and the Vietnam war, were sidelined as figures such as the monetarist economist Milton Friedman argued that by tackling inflation the nation would also take care of a number of related problems, including a 'generalised erosion in public and private manners, increasingly liberalised attitudes towards sexual activities [and] a declining vitality of the Puritan work ethic' (quoted in Chernomas and Hudson, 2017: 89–90). The music corporations responded to the collapse of disco – a collapse they helped engineer – by introducing disproportionate cuts to their recently opened disco departments and declaring disco dead.

In his influential account of the rise of neoliberalism David Harvey (2005: 19) argues that US corporations and business interests responded to the declining profitability of the late 1960s and early 1970s by embarking on a 'political project to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites'. He traces the shift back to a confidential memo that argued for the strategic rebuttal of those who sought to destroy American business, sent to the US Chamber of Commerce in August 1971, and the establishment of the Business Roundtable as an organisation committed to the revitalisation of the corporate sector in 1972. Embracing Hayek and Friedman, they called for free markets to be recognised as an ethical force that needed to be liberated from the suffocating control of the state through the introduction of deregulation, welfare cuts, the slashing of taxes on corporations and high-income earners and the desirability of unemployment. New York City's fiscal crisis of 1975, during which the banking sector demanded the introduction of austerity-oriented measures that would inform the future rollout of neoliberalism, amounted to 'a coup by the financial institutions against the democratically elected government of New York City' (Harvey, 2005: 45). The ideology of individualism rippled out as the 'narcissistic exploration of self, sexuality and identity became the leitmotif of bourgeois urban culture' (Harvey, 2005: 47). If disco embraced these values, as subsequent critics have argued, then it effectively colluded with this 'counterrevolution from above' (Harvey, 2005: 46).

But did the corporations lead the call for increased flexibility and freedom in the workplace in order to reboot its business model or were their actions responsive? Even if the corporate class devised its new ideological strategy as early as 1971, with the rollout more sustained during the second half of the 1970s (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2018), the development didn't anticipate a wider rethink about work so much as respond to the challenges posed by counterculture. Whether or not the ensuing proto-disco movement exerted any influence on the shift, the music majors were reactive and slow

in their response to culture, treating DJs with suspicion and backing disco late into its cycle. Aside from Atlantic, where 'the top of the company was not that far from the street' according to disco journalist Brian Chin (quoted in Lawrence, 2004: 368), the corporates messed up their co-option of disco, their centralised and hierarchical structures having led them to overproduce a mass of substandard records (Dannen, 1990). The corporate attempt mass market disco through radio rather than the record pools revealed additional Fordist tendencies. The example of disco therefore suggests that the corporations were reactionary rather than proactive.

The repositioning of disco as a predominantly working-class, multicultural and polysexual movement that explored new forms of pleasure, work and sociality, rather than a pliant agglomeration of self-absorbed individuals, suggests it should be considered alongside Autonomia. The comparison almost came about in the late 1970s after *Semiotext(e)* editor Sylvère Lotringer observed how the downtown art and music scene had unwittingly realised many of the ideas explored by Gilles Deleuze, Michel Foucault and Félix Guattari (Lotringer and Morris, 1978); he could have said the same of the DJ-led party/disco scene had he been aware of it. Even if most participants didn't articulate an explicitly left-wing politics, they understood, like Autonomia, that work preceded capital, the innate creativity and productivity of workers becoming the things that businesses turned into profit. Like Autonomia, they understood that even if their labour could never be wholly autonomous from capital it could constantly assert itself as independent. The party scene was also ahead of the curve when it came to recognising that culture could be a meaningful place of struggle – an outlook embraced by Autonomia only after new social subjects (including the marginalised, precarious workers and students) came to the fore and the pirate radio station Radio Alice began to contribute to 'an explosion of creativity and experimentation in new ways of living' (Keir, 2001). Negri might as well have been referencing the downtown party scene when he wrote that the key to Autonomia's new outlook was 'the affirmation of the movement as an "alternative society", with its own richness of communication, free productive creativity, its own life force' that sought to 'conquer and to control its own "spaces"' (Negri, 1988: 236).

Ultimately the failure of the two movements to consolidate and protect their position through the establishment of political alliances made them vulnerable. In Italy, the Autonomist movement unravelled following sustained state repression. In the United States, and in particular New York, the DJ-led party and disco movement survived the national backlash only to find itself newly constrained by the revival of the corporate sector, especially from 1983 onwards. The record-breaking success of Michael Jackson's *Thriller* encouraged the majors to re-enter the dance market. Although some lessons were learned from the disco debacle, the wider expansion of the corporate sector turned New York into a newly costly and increasingly regulated city that led to the contraction of its music and art scenes. In 2008, Elizabeth

Currid (2008) argued that the corporate sector had become so entrenched it threatened to destroy the communities that underpinned New York's creative economy.

Disco's attempt to loosen the strictures of the post-war settlement and the Protestant work ethic didn't turn its participants into the handmaidens to neoliberalism. As Theodore Roszak argues in the reissue of *The Making of a Counter Culture* (Roszak, 1995: xxxiii), 'For all its quirkiness, the counter culture dared to envision a better future, and in fact the one interesting post-industrial vision we have thus far been offered'. Rooted in counter-culture, disco's collective, democratic, creative, flexible, pleasure-oriented praxis mapped out a progressive rather than a self-indulgent/escapist/hedonistic version of post-Fordist labour. Disco only became embroiled in a wider corporate, governmental and think-tank strategy to 'both garner consent as well as support the shift to casualisation' (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2018: 326) as the post-war settlement reached its denouement. The 'work hard play hard' mantra that emerged as part of the epochal shift to neoliberalism amounted to capital's compromise: employees could party hard so long as they remained productive and accepted that their backs wouldn't be covered if they fell.

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5 Hope, Labour and Privilege in American New Music

John R. Pippen

New Music: A 'New' Hope

Calls for reform resound within classical music in the United States. For decades, practitioners have characterised the genre as outmoded, underfunded and poorly respected (see, e.g., Horowitz, 2017). As a result, many have adopted a market orientation in their organisational models and rhetoric of innovation (Moore, 2016; Robin, 2019; Ritchey, 2019). 'New music' is regularly positioned as a solution to losses in prestige and funding. New music is a widely contested term by practitioners, but generally describes recently written musical works and twentieth century vanguards (see further, e.g., Adorno, 2006; Oja, 2000; Ritchey, 2019; Williams, 1997). For the past decade, I have conducted ethnographic fieldwork and interviews with new music ensembles such as Eighth Blackbird, Third Coast Percussion and Ensemble Dal Niente. During that time, these three groups generated most of their income through work with educational institutions, who, in turn, portray ensemble members as models for students and as part of curricular initiatives built around social justice. These groups develop market-oriented brand identities that tacitly celebrate diversity, in seemingly every way, through their repertoire (Pippen, 2019). This branding has reinforced a broader critique of the white supremacy of classical music's repertoire (see, e.g., Huizenga, 2016). New music has thus seemed to offer palliative care to classical music's institutions.

While new music has long been a part of classical music institutions (Lochhead et al., 2019; Robin, 2018), its apparently newfound ability to reform also reflects another, less publicly discussed trend within classical music: its embrace of neoliberal labour ideologies (Moore, 2016; Ritchey, 2019). Neoliberal ideologies prize economic value above all other forms of value, configure the individual as the primary agent of social change and shift responsibility for reform from society to the individual (Brown, 2005; Foucault, 2010; Harvey, 2005). As Moore (2016) has argued, a rhetoric of reform is part of the broader attempts to reinvigorate the value of art music in the United States in part by demonstrating the employability of music

school graduates. By embracing innovation in curricula, higher education programs establish their social value.

The neoliberalisation of classical music culture has encouraged a striking embrace of for-profit business strategies. Prior to the rise of 'arts entrepreneurship' curricula in the 1990s (Essig and Guevara, 2016), classical music was consistently positioned as somehow removed from economic concerns (Kingsbury, 1988). Educational institutions frequently omitted practical business concerns from their curriculum (Munnelly, 2017). However, from the 1990s on, classical music institutions have made profitability a core concern. This is a striking shift from, for example, early twentieth century orchestras that saw financial losses as regrettable, but often necessary (Spitzer, 2012). As part of this turn towards profitability, small new music ensembles such as those that I study seem to present a synthesis of social justice, artistic rigor and profitability. Nytch (2012), for example, describes his work with the Pittsburgh New Music Ensemble as achieving 'explosive audience growth while maintaining the highest artistic standards'. Rabideau (2015, online), president of the College Music Society, describes new music as embodying an 'ethos of creativity and risk-taking'. He encourages students to embrace the precarity of musical labour as a way to create 'a career you will love'. Through such pursuits, these and others argue, musicians can build a better world. Neoliberal ideology promises solutions to both the vicissitudes of the market facing working musicians and the declining social and financial support for art music in the United States.

This chapter demonstrates the rhetoric of reform as normalising unearned systemic advantages – privileges (Crenshaw, 1991; Pease, 2011) – that shape musical education and labour. I first establish how music historically has and has not been considered valid labour. Doing so provides a critical interrogation of the claims of new music as providing reform. Next, I analyse entrepreneurship books that hail new music ensembles as models for change. I focus on books written for a general readership, typically students, because these books are increasingly common to the curricula of musical entrepreneurship (Baumgardner, 2019; Beeching, 2010; Bruenger, 2016; Cutler, 2010; Nytch, 2018; Rabideau, 2018). Authors of these books are typically faculty at schools of music and offer an especially nefarious version of neoliberal dogma. They are often connected with academic literature that similarly – though often in a more critical manner (see, e.g., Callander, 2019; Klamer, 2016) – embraces new music or other small avant-garde arts organisations as exemplifying natural solutions to what are in fact long-term structural problems in capitalism (McRobbie, 2016). Paradoxically, these books portray the careers of virtuosic performers as realistic models for would-be professionals. Uncritically portraying musical professions as meritocratic, entrepreneurship books position new music ensembles as what Sim (2019) calls 'avatars' of the 'entrepreneurial work ethic'. Such figures seem to resolve the contradiction between idealisations of musical labour and the precarious and privileged nature of that labour.

Books frequently omit research that demonstrates persistent racial, gendered and class-based barriers to musical education and professional work. In my third section, I demonstrate how my ethnographic research with elite new music ensembles rebuts the theorisations found in musical entrepreneurship books. While books describe new music ensembles as a radical break from classical music's past, new music ensembles rely heavily on classical music institutions. Professional success in new music also requires unearned advantages such as access to elite training, work with prestigious institutions and skills developed via life-long study and supported via family and professional contacts. By accounting for persistent forms of exclusion, I demonstrate new music as a privileged field of labour and Eighth Blackbird Third Coast Percussion, and Ensemble Dal Niente as an elite class of workers. Despite advantages, however, they remain in states of relative labour precarity. Those who advocate for reform by uncritically celebrating new music as hope maintain the class-based forms of exclusion that shape art music in the United States.

Music in Capitalism

While authors such as Nytch (2012; 2018) and Rabideau (2015; 2018) portray new music as idealised work, it remains bound within a capitalist hegemony in which most people must sell their labour in order to survive. As scholars such as Stahl (2013) and Sim (2019) have argued, musicians, like other workers, remain beholden to capitalist values and social classes. In contrast with their idealised portrayals, musicians have endured precarious conditions throughout history, conditions that continue to the present.

Recent idealisations of new music ensembles stem from broader dynamic valuations of labour. Forms of labour are valued in complex and contradictory ways, constantly intersecting with classed, racialised and gendered identities (Komlosy, 2018). Musical labour has a long history of being viewed as both legitimate – operating within formal church, amateur domestic or civic settings – and as illegitimate (Salmen et al., 1983). Musical work was often not valued because it was considered pleasurable or idle, or, conversely positioned as inspired artistry that transcended the mundane and thus 'non-work' (Miller, 2008). Musical guilds have long worked to improve the social status of secular musicians, a project continued by later professional unions (see Cloonan, Chapter 11). The Romantic era idealisations of art and the artist also created the possibility for improved social status. Such idealisations were, however, widely reserved for men (Tick, 1973) and routinely denied to people of colour (Eidsheim, 2011); music in general was relegated to the domain of leisure (Levin, 2010). Many, if not most, professional musicians encountered negative views of their profession through the twentieth century (Rempe, 2020; Taylor, 2016).

Currently dominant notions of labour have, however, privileged the artist as the ideal labourer. Weber (2011) argued that the dominant notion

of labour was a capitalist work ethic in which people set aside personal pleasure in exchange for long-term economic stability. Neoliberal labour ideologies adapted the capitalist work ethic to embrace pleasure at work, encouraging citizens to find a career 'doing what you loved' (DWYL). As Sandoval (2018: 117) has argued, 'The difference is that in [DWYL], success at work is extrapolated as a consequence of finding pleasure at work, while in the industrial work ethic, pleasure is reduced to work as the only source for potential future happiness'. In the twentieth century, the status of musicians' labour somewhat improved. Business studies, psychological research and cultural studies literatures increasingly saw musical labour as providing personal fulfilment and as ideal examples of teamwork (Brouillette, 2014; Sim, 2019). These views echoed Marx's descriptions of musical work as unalienated labour (Marx and Nicolaus, 1993; Sandoval, 2018), but they omitted Marx and Engels' understanding of personal fulfilment as grounded in non-professionalised activity (Marx and Engels, 1976). From the 1980s on, government agencies, businesses and educational institutions adopted policies that emphasised a heightened level of individual entrepreneurship and DWYL in part as a rebuttal to the perceived alienation of modern bureaucratic middle-class careers (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2018; Brouillette, 2014; Virno, 2003). Boltanski and Chiapello (2018) theorised this period as a 'new spirit' of capitalism that valorised a 'bohemian lifestyle'. 'Creative' work – vaguely defined by advocates to the point of meaninglessness – was celebrated because it would enhance productivity and was viewed as a remedy to the economic downturn resulting from the outsourcing of labour to non-Western countries. During the end of the twentieth century, creative entrepreneurship spread as the new work ethic of neoliberal capitalism, with DWYL central to contemporary notions of the 'calling' used to rationalise people's career choices.

New music ensembles embody the contradictions of neoliberal capitalism. Third Coast Percussion, Eighth Blackbird and Ensemble Dal Niente frequently function as 'avatars' of the entrepreneurial work ethic allegedly resolving the contradiction between the idealisation of musical labour and the enduring precarity of professional work (Sim, 2019). Such views reflect the shifting value of labour in neoliberal capitalism and changes in the social value of art. Public arts policy in the 1980s and 1990s increasingly emphasised an economically profitable model of the artist citizen (Bonin-Rodriguez, 2014; Ross, 2009). At the same time, new music enjoyed a surprising level of commercial success (Rutherford-Johnson, 2017) and new music ensembles increasingly operated as seemingly non-institutionally supported entities (Robin, 2018). New music appeared to thread the needle, as it were, of being both artistically valid and commercially successful. By the late 1990s, when the members of the groups that I studied had entered university, entrepreneurship initiatives had grown exponentially, deploying for-profit strategies and the DWYL discourse as a way to reinvigorate classical music. They certainly generate value from their labour, but their

particular success is also unearned in the sense that it benefits from recent and long-term shifts in the value of musical labour.

Avatars the Work Ethic

Entrepreneurship books combine notions of hard work with DWYL as providing a path towards a financially and personally rewarding career. In such books, ensembles appear as outside-institution 'start-ups', a form of creativity given a privileged place within neoliberal capitalism (Sim, 2019). These models are used as ways to map out the labour market of music, a move that in some ways directly rebuts the anti-commercial stance of older musical curricula. By adopting an entrepreneurial ethic, readers are assured they can overcome any possible challenges. At the same time, the challenges of developing musical skills are only briefly acknowledged and quickly dismissed. Cutler writes in his book *The Savvy Musician: Building a Career, Earning a Living, and Making a Difference* (2010, p. 4) that 'this book assumes you are taking steps to develop into the strongest musician possible'. In *Beyond Talent: Creating a Successful Career in Music*, Beeching (2010: 10, emphasis original) asserts that 'Talent *plus* hard work are necessary but are not sufficient by themselves to yield career success'. Nytch (2018) demonstrates how musical training failed to provide him with a career through an extended personal account of working in a basketball arena concession stand after having completed his Doctor of Musical Arts in composition. These books rightly critique a lack of professional development common in musical higher education (see further Munnelly, 2017). However, glossing over the acquisition of skill hides the collective labour required to train musicians and social systems that create barriers to such training.

All the books use avatars to argue that the application of for-profit strategies will create more work for readers. Examples are frequently performers operating at the top of the profession, like the Kronos Quartet, or even major companies such as Spotify. Avatars are valued both for their ability to reform classical music and for their manifestation of personal authenticity. Rabideau (2018) points to musicians such as cellist Yo-Yo Ma and Melissa Ngan of Fifth House Ensemble as 'artist-revolutionaries' who demonstrate ways to reform classical music. Baumgardner's (2019) *Creative Success Now: How Creatives Can Thrive in the 21st Century* describes working at Yale University with clarinetist Ashley Smith as a case study in the entrepreneurial ethic. Smith appears as a despondent musician unable to live his passions. Baumgardner coaches Smith to identify his 'top values', which include new music and university teaching – goals Smith promptly achieves simply by the correct orientation of his passions. Though an emphasis on budgets is common, the actual finances of specific individuals or consideration of how, for example, people like Smith got into Yale in the first place almost never appear in the 'how-to' literature.

By theorising from such extreme cases, the 'how-to' literature uncritically perpetuates myths of musical labour markets as meritocratic, open to newcomers and requiring the correct DWYL mindset. Research on music education and labour contradicts these claims. Formal school-based musical education decreases as children get older, and students of colour or from lower socioeconomic backgrounds have less access to primary or secondary music education programs or extra-curricular activities (Koza, 2008; Lareau, 2000; Southgate and Roscigno, 2009). Intense pre-college training is widely seen as necessary for entry into music programs (Palmer, 2011), especially the elite programs that employ entrepreneurship authors or that educated the avatars named in their books. The racial makeup of college music majors (Clements, 2009), professional teachers (Elpus and Abril, 2011; Hewitt and Thompson, 2006) and professional orchestras is overwhelmingly majority white (Delorenzo, 2012). Researchers have theorised this overwhelming whiteness as depriving minoritised music students of role models (Clements, 2009) and as reinforcing white and colonialist epistemologies of music (Bradley, 2016; Ewell, 2020; Fink, 2016). Students often study with a small number of professional teachers for many years, and these relationships provide the basis of informal labour networks of professional activity (Kingsbury, 1988; Scharff, 2018; Wagner, 2015). Minoritised groups are required to negotiate racist stereotypes during education and professional work (Kajikawa, 2019; Yang, 2007). While a student of colour needn't necessarily work with a teacher of colour to be successful, doing so can provide richer opportunities for coping with forms of discrimination (Kohli, 2009). Women and gender non-conforming musicians similarly face barriers in musical training and must navigate burdensome requirements to 'perform' their gender in ways that conform to the male gaze and oppressive binary constructions of gender (Bergonzi, 2015; Scharff, 2018). While authors use avatars of the work ethic to paint a rosy picture of the music profession, scholars have shown creative labour as riddled with personal struggle, boredom, alienation and exploitation (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011; McRobbie, 2016; Ross, 2009; Sandoval, 2018). The precarity of work in most creative professions motivates an over-reliance on established producers who have already demonstrated professional success (Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013). Classical and new music labour networks end up focusing on fewer groups and individuals, limiting avenues of access for new participants.

New Music's Privileged Networks of Labour

Classical music's educational institutions widely embrace the portrayal of new music ensembles as avatars. The high esteem in which these ensembles are held obscures the overlapping forms of privilege that structure their labour field. The result naturalises success as coming not from any social advantage, but as resulting from their entrepreneurial work ethic and

from the imminent qualities of the musicians themselves. How does privilege manifest for Ensemble Dal Niente, Eighth Blackbird and Third Coast Percussion? It manifests in the access to elite educational networks, musical training and family resources and support, all of which combine to provide these musicians with unearned advantages of class – privileges – that are in fact necessary for professional success. These musicians are certainly 'savvy', to use Cutler's (2010) term. But by their own accounts, their success owes to a lifetime of musical labour and supportive networks.

The three groups I studied enjoy robust connections with classical music's educational institutions. These connections provide significant advantages on the basis of class, giving musicians access to elite training and facilitating future work via a network of contacts. Nearly every member studied at prestigious schools such as the Oberlin College-Conservatory, Indiana University, Eastman and Julliard. The overwhelming majority have a master's degree, and several have doctorates. All three groups spent formative years at the Bienen School of Music at Northwestern University. Peter Martin, founding member of Third Coast Percussion, described the value of his time at Northwestern in an interview with me:

> In grad school I really started falling in love with contemporary music within the classical sense of that word, and I was kind of fortunate in that I was at Northwestern at a time when I was equally excited with that repertoire [and when] Third Coast Percussion [and] Ensemble Dal Niente started. We were all just like friends that loved new music. So, we just started self-presenting. And Dal Niente was one of those ensembles that just really pushed me because like, man! Dal Niente only programs heavy repertoire *[laughs]*. I mean they're like awesome! And it was so much fun because I was discovering all this repertoire [and] was playing like [Franco] Donatoni and it was just great.
>
> (2014, pers. comm. October 8)

Martin describes how his schooling supported the cultivation of skill required to produce challenging new music. He was afforded the opportunity to develop via intense study with like-minded musicians and had the imprimatur of a high-profile institution. These class privileges intersect with other forms of unearned advantage. Research on the Bienen School demonstrates the persistence of barriers of race and gender. University reports for the years 2006 to 2016 show the School of Music's faculty as overwhelmingly white and male (Northwestern University, 2016), a characteristic criticised by Northwestern music education professor Maud Hickey (2016). Similar calls from Bienen students have chided the School and the new music scene for persistent barriers of access (Zigman et al., 2015). Thus, the network of all three groups was deeply shaped by an institution that reinforced various forms of exclusion.

While the ensembles all grew out of classical music educational institutions, they are often described as changing those same institutions. Ensemble Dal Niente, Third Coast Percussion and Eighth Blackbird operate in a productive tension with classical music, combining change with historical continuity. The social and musical value of new music ensembles is frequently located in their labour and the challenges it seems to pose to classical music's culture of performance. Nevertheless, new music ensembles are celebrated by many professional practitioners, with most concerts occurring on classical music concert series. Press articles often hype the tension between old and new by invoking the enduringly hostile attitude towards new music stereotypically associated with more 'traditional' classical music audiences. A 2018 *New York Times* article titled 'How Do You Teach People to Love Difficult Music?' described attempts by Ensemble Dal Niente and others in terms that maintained the tension between new and classical music:

> For audiences accustomed to Tchaikovsky's lyricism and Mozart's familiar harmonies, [new] music borders on incomprehensibility […]. [Newer forms of] audience engagement contrasts with the more idealized form of listening – sometimes referred to as structural listening […]. Performance series such as Party […] offer listening contexts without the ritualized trappings of the traditional concert model. Dal Niente's Party series is a nod to American party culture.
>
> (Ebright, 2018)

In my fieldwork, however, contrasts between 'the traditional concert model' and the concerts of new music ensembles were far less stark than they might appear in press reviews. Disciplined 'structural' listening was very much practiced by audience members in the concerts I attended, including the 2018 Ensemble Dal Niente Party mentioned in Ebright's article. A somewhat revelrous atmosphere certainly pervaded, but whenever music started, people quietly focused on the music or at least accommodated the attention of others by being silent and still. Classically trained musicians, as numerous scholars have demonstrated, place great emphasis on musical skill in terms that demonstrate ideals of 'pure' sound production, physical efficiency and poise, and such conventions remain largely in practice for all three ensembles (Cottrell, 2004; Kingsbury, 1988; Thorau and Ziemer, 2019). The 'structural listening' invoked by Ebright (elsewhere theorised by Subotnik (1988)) continue to be central to the labour of new *and* classical music. Consistent with the practices I saw in fieldwork, public evaluations of Third Coast Percussion, Ensemble Dal Niente and Eighth Blackbird evaluated labour via notions of disciplined performance and listening, as seen in the following press reviews:

> All four members of Third Coast Percussion are also classically trained, and have a proven record of creating beautiful sounds by hitting things

[…]. 'the piece ends with this sort of almost steampunk, futuristic, really virtuosic quartet on these keyboard instruments that were designed for the piece,' [percussionist David Skidmore] said.

(Kerr, 2014)

These works are notoriously difficult to pull off, requiring unflappable concentration and iron-clad rhythmic consistency. [Eighth Blackbird] pulled it off without a hitch in a bracing, 11-minute reading that expertly produced the intended hypnotic effect.

(Cameron, 2019)

Ensemble Dal Niente is one of our [Chicago's] finest new-music groups but not always as discerning in their repertory as one would wish, as was evident in their set […]. The two works seemed virtually interchangeable in their busy, academic emptiness. Conductor Michael Lewanski drew vital, tautly focused playing from the chamber ensemble.

(Johnson, 2016)

New music ensembles thus remained bound up in the networks of classical music, grounded in the genre's disciplinary musical labour.

While educational institutions recede into the background of musicians' working lives in the entrepreneurship literature, they remain core to the paid work of new music ensembles. Ensemble Dal Niente, Third Coast Percussion and Eighth Blackbird navigated the transition from student to professional via the support of educational institutions and the connections formed during their time as students. Percussion gear, especially when the groups were new, came from their various alma maters, as did sheet music and coaching, rehearsal space and workspace. Such production requirements constitute significant stumbling blocks to any group, and having access to free rehearsal space was a major advantage. Since 2008, much of my fieldwork with the three ensembles has occurred while the groups were in residence at prestigious and well-endowed schools of music. Eighth Blackbird's major initiative with the Curtis Institute of Music (2012–2015), one of the most exclusive education institutions of any kind in the world, saw the sextet perform concerts, hire guest artists, teach classes and perform alongside students. The other two ensembles have had similar relationships; examples include the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center at the University of Notre Dame for Third Coast Percussion and the Darmstädter Ferienkurse for Ensemble Dal Niente. For me and the ensembles, this network created a sense of perpetual reunion. In my fieldwork, I often encountered the same people in different concerts and workshops around the country. Such reunions provided performers opportunities to socialise and to collaborate on future projects, concerts and potential residencies. New projects were often born in the interstitial spaces of institutional-supported meetings, though they could take years to realise. I attended meetings where musicians developed such

projects and worked to find or solicit funding and partnerships from other artists, potential presenters and donors. These partnerships inevitably drew on the people the ensembles had met in the course of previous work, in other words, on their labour networks.

In contrast to the ways that entrepreneurship books gloss over the acquisition of skills, musicians in new music ensembles develop their skills in part via networks of education. Teachers, fellow musicians, families and friends were crucial to developing musical skills. While many musicians had already devoted considerable time to developing musical skills, their work in new music ensembles demanded even more training. In interviews, musicians described training and musical preparation as ongoing challenges. Katie Schoepflin Jimoh, clarinetist for Ensemble Dal Niente, described how she earned her position with the group via a reference from her sister. Even with this advantage, she described her acquisition of skills in new music as arduous:

> But yeah, so when I started with Dal Niente, I pretty much had to learn all the extended techniques just from scratch. Yeah, I didn't know any of them. And I just practiced really hard, and just focused on it more than anything else. I took some lessons with a bunch of people. I mean, if you're really going to play everything on the page, every dynamic, every articulation, every correct rhythm, pocketed nested rhythm, complicated mathematical thing, it's time-consuming. It's just sheer time is required.
>
> (2016, pers. comm. May 31)

Like many who work in new music, this musician had to both invest substantial time and seek guidance from other experts to acquire the skill required to perform with Ensemble Dal Niente. In my conversations with musicians, emphasis on constant learning was a frequent theme and was often discussed as a collective and life-long endeavour. Prior to their professional work in new music, musicians in these ensembles typically spent many years diligently practicing and studying with master musicians. One musician described pre-college training to me:

> When I was four [or] five, I started taking instrument lessons, and then I started taking lessons on a second instrument, too. I played both for about nine years. I guess I was really serious about it by the time I was like ten because I remember people asking me what I wanted to do when I grow up or whatever, and I said that I wanted to perform. So, about the time I was ten I sort of knew that I wanted to do something in the performing world.
>
> (2009, pers. comm. October 27)

Such narratives demonstrate a major commitment not just from individual musicians, but also from families. Many musicians viewed themselves as

fortunate to spend large amounts of time developing both individual and ensemble skills. Tim Munro (2008, pers. comm. May 20), former flutist for Eighth Blackbird, described new music in such terms: 'As soon as I joined Eighth Blackbird, my concept of professional chamber music was changed completely because [of] the enormous amount of rehearsal time that we're allowed to have'. Munro here describes changing his understanding of professional skill *after* winning a job with a highly successful ensemble. He emphasises the benefits of extensive private rehearsal time as unique, a contrast to the brief acknowledgements found in entrepreneurship literature.

Conclusion

All three of the ensembles I studied have, at various times, critiqued or attempted to reform their field. Despite this, they face an uncertain marketplace, both before and especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. Acknowledging precarity, Cutler (2010) advises his readers that 'perhaps luck is a skill. When "luck" does display its pretty face, it often appears as the result of hard work, clear planning, dedicated follow through, and smart choices'. To rebut this incorrectly meritocratic vision, I finish here with an interview with former Eighth Blackbird violinist Yvonne Lam. When I asked about success, Lam pointed to her pride in the sextet's work. However, citing a particular production, Lam explained that booking these productions is a huge challenge:

> Artistically, I found it amazing, the challenge, everything involved in putting that together. And I thought the end product was beautiful. And so impossible to book. Just completely impossible to book and impossible to make money on. And so, you know, we have our [costume] masks just sitting there. The remount is going to take so much effort, and maybe not so much money, because the music is paid for. But we need somebody who's willing to have us there for a day or two to set it up while the theater's dark. And then the unlikelihood of having a run of performances, which would make the most sense, right? But [presenters] don't want that. It's an unproven thing in terms of selling tickets to something that nobody's ever heard of. So those are some challenges that we've faced with the larger productions. But again, I think it's some of the work that is most distinctive to Eighth Blackbird, and I think most memorable for people who have seen it, because they haven't seen anything else like it.
>
> (2019, pers. comm. June 6)

Eighth Blackbird's members certainly worked hard, planned and followed through, to quote Cutler (2010), but Lam still views this project as something of a failure because Eighth Blackbird cannot book it. Cutler's book provides no room to interrogate and critique structural problems such as

the inconsistent governmental funding for the arts or the genre-restrictions placed on musical groups that inhibited innovation. 'How-to' books would seem to chastise Lam because the entrepreneurial spirit provides only one explanation: a failure to correctly innovate.

The labour network of new music is riddled with forms of social privilege. In theorising from individual virtuosi and success stories, entrepreneurship writers erase the everyday costs most people will pay to even have a shot at achieving professional success. Entrepreneurship books normalise privilege and reinforce the hegemony of elite musicians, even as they portray musical work as providing deep personal fulfilment. What's more, institutions' uncritical embrace of entrepreneurship perpetuates systemic privilege. Changing these systems will require collective action from all involved, not simply innovation from musicians such as those in Eighth Blackbird, Ensemble Dal Niente, Third Coast Percussion or, for that matter, Yo-Yo Ma. We must either confront systemic privilege in calls to reform classical music, or admit the hollowness of these calls as shallow protestations of entitled groups.

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6 A Lockdown Recording Project

Jazz Musicians and Metaphors for a Working Life

Michael L. Jones

Introduction

The general stimulus for this discussion of Jazz musicians in the UK was, and remains at the time of writing, the ongoing Corona Virus pandemic. With all live music performance suspended for a considerable length of time, musicians in jazz, a genre whose primary focus is performance rather than recording, have been particularly challenged. As one response to this challenge, a collection of jazz musicians of my acquaintance undertook a remote recording project, partly as a substitute for live performance and partly as a way of developing new skills in the absence of regular gigs and gig opportunities. I discussed their project as a way into understanding more generally how musicians exist as workers within an industry they do not control.

Essentially, for jazz to be jazz it must go on being played in live performance. From a music industry perspective, what concerns me is that, in their working lives, jazz musicians have become both the source and target for a range of metaphors that speak to profound economic change. For example, as Woodcock and Graham (2020) put it in their explanation of the rapid transformation in work security collected as the term 'The gig economy':

> The 'gig' in the term 'gig economy' refers back to the short-term arrangements typical of a musical event. An aspiring musician might celebrate getting a gig or tell a friend that they have got a gig in the back room of a pub or other venue. This is of course no guarantee that they will get to perform regularly. There might be the chance of a repeat performance if they play particularly well or are particularly popular – or it may just be a one-off. They might get paid – either a fixed fee, a share of the ticket price, or payment in kind (some free drinks perhaps). Their expenses might get covered. But also, they might not.
>
> (Woodcock and Graham, 2020: 9)

As they go on to argue, such uncertainty is characteristic of an emergent form of employment that involves an 'estimated 1.1 million people in the

UK' (Woodcock and Graham, 2020: 8) for whom the experience of work is 'typically short, temporary, precarious and unpredictable' (Woodcock and Graham, 2020: 9). In response to irregular performance opportunities and uncertainty of re-booking and adequate remuneration, the typical advice to musicians is that they should build a 'portfolio career': private music industry trainers, the Institute of Contemporary Music Performance, offers '5 top tips on launching a successful music industry portfolio career' (ICMP, 2019) while Youth Music (allied to another private provider, Tileyard Music) introduce the idea of the 'slashy':

> Portfolio careers or being a 'slashy': Musician-slash-Educator-slash-Songwriter-slash-Producer-slash-Marketing Specialist-slash-Entrepreneur is a way of life for many young people.
>
> (Youth Music, 2020)

If we set aside the sheer complacency of this 'advice' (always presented by private providers in a matter-of-fact way and with great energy), we need to realise that 'portfolio career' is an unreliable metaphor, one that originated in the work of Charles Handy. Instructively, in his introduction of the concept, Handy begins with one metaphor, 'Some people make their work the whole of their life … the job fills the whole doughnut' (1995: 70) and then casually transmutes this into another, 'If I adopted a "portfolio" approach to life … I could get different things from different bits' (1995: 71). I will return to this observation, but, from the perspective of a working musician, this metaphor is about as robust as a doughnut.

The third in the triumvirate of problematic metaphors (in addition to 'gig economy' and 'portfolio career') that draw from and speak to the challenges faced by people who want to be musicians is another staple of music career guidance; for example, this from Berklee Music:

> Making music and running an entrepreneurial career are dual roles now required of today's artists. Wearing both hats successfully is a challenge. But, as CD Baby founder Derek Sivers notes, '[t]he skills needed to make a living as a musician are the exact same skills required to be a successful entrepreneur.' According to Sivers, '[m]usicians don't realize that they are already entrepreneurs!'
>
> (Jensen, 2013)

Replete as this is with its encouraging exclamation mark, the Berklee 'advice' accomplishes a feat of conjuring – not only is it necessary for musicians to be entrepreneurs, but this is also easily realised because, apparently, they already are. Whether 'entrepreneur' is a metaphor is open to debate. The term derives from the French 'entreprendre' (to undertake) – as in to 'undertake a challenge' – and its application in English has come to carry with it the positive connotations of 'modern day heroes' (Hyrsky, 1999: 13).

This accretion of connotations may not be identical with the metaphors we have already encountered but 'entrepreneur' serves the same ideological function as 'portfolio career', which is simultaneously to reconcile musicians to their (seemingly ineluctable) market fate and to prepare them for forms of self-management that are closer to self-sacrifice and self-exploitation than career-building. They do this by offering strategies not so much for survival (though they pretend to this) but ones that accomplish the legitimation of music as a precarious calling. Within this, the risk of joint endeavours (almost always with gig promoters in the case of jazz) is borne predominantly by musicians. We encounter much of this logic in the testimony of the musicians in the Lockdown Recording Project (LRP), to which we now turn, where their self-reported experience can be used to confront this clutch of metaphors which do not so much describe them as bind them.

A Lockdown Recording Project

The ensemble involved in the recording project consisted of geographically scattered musicians connected either by friendship or gigging networks: two in Sheffield, two in London, one in Leeds. It consisted of a female vocalist, a female pianist, a male drummer, a male guitarist and a male bass player. As an ensemble they fit exactly Umney's (2016) identification of characteristic jazz units:

> The typical jazz ensemble features four to five instrumentalists, comprising a rhythm section (drums, bass and piano or guitar) and one to two 'frontline' players (most commonly saxophone or trumpet). While musicians may maintain particular bands for extended periods, they usually play in many different groups with a wide network of collaborators. They rarely make a living exclusively from playing jazz, normally diversifying into various settings, ranging from club gigs where they can showcase their own creations, to more prescriptive 'function' events. This diversification is possible because jazz musicians tend to be extremely highly skilled and versatile performers (Pinheiro and Dowd, 2009). Hence, their working lives are diverse and often unpredictable.
>
> (Umney, 2016: 717)

Nothing here would be served by giving deeper, biographical accounts of the players, but they meet all of Umney's criteria. The guitarist and singer are in part-time employment (one in music education, the other in local government) and support their jazz activities through, exactly, 'function' gigs (mostly as background music at weddings, and in restaurants and hotels). The bass player and pianist supplement their jazz playing through quite high-profile support slots across a range of genres and through offering instrumental teaching. The drummer was (until the pandemic) in strong demand for session work. All enjoy a degree of regional prominence with a varied

range of national and international touring experience among them. They have all been active for the past two decades. All have recorded but only ever as session players or in a DIY manner. None had recorded remotely before this occasion.

The recording sessions took place across the three 'home' cities using the Digital Audio Workstation (DAW) software programme, 'Reaper'. Unusually, perhaps, the last instrument to be recorded was drums. All the musicians played to a click track and different musicians played to combinations of individual instruments – for example, once the piano had been recorded, the bass player played to that, the guitarist played to the click, the piano and the bass. This (as will be discussed) is already a long way from jazz (which is quintessentially a live performance music in which individual players, especially when in small ensembles, respond to each other in concert, in the moment). The DAW then allowed for the tracks, separately and collectively, to be 'treated' using the typical recording studio effects of equalisation, reverb, compression and so on; as the bass player who was also the recording engineer puts it:

> I did a fair bit of mixing as I went along, so I would have cleaned up each take as we went, I did a few little edits, moving the odd chord or bass note which was wayward rhythmically perhaps. I also cut bits of the outro section from the guitar and piano.

My interviews with the participants took place after I had listened to the finished mix. These conversations were conducted by a range of means – face-to-face, telephone and email – with some respondents returned to on more than one occasion. The framework for the eclectic range of discussions was always that the recording project was a reaction to the dearth of performance opportunities wherein, in turn, this concern spoke to jazz as a genre and to the nature of the commitment demanded from its players. While much of what presented itself to be reflected upon is anticipated by existing literature (notably the pressures of self-maintenance experienced by jazz musicians – see, e.g., Pinheiro and Dowd, 2009; Dowd and Pinheiro, 2013; Umney and Krestos, 2014; Umney 2016), it remains productive to respond to the particular ways in which the individually internalised and habitual frameworks of jazz are exposed through the responses of its players to a total cessation in live performance practice essential to the genre.

All music takes dedication and comes with a lifestyle that can be problematic to manage, but jazz can be argued to involve a commitment of a different order from pop and from classical music. Essentially, there are very few dedicated jazz gigs and there are many people chasing them and, in jazz (as will be discussed), it is in live performance that the musicians involved realise themselves. Considered in this way, there is something that is 'life and death' about this chasing of gigs. Consequently, such 'chasing' is doubly pressurised, the musicians need gigs for self-realisation and such gigs are

few and far between. These twin negatives then lead such musicians to be exploited (Dowd and Pinheiro discuss 'the jazz field' in terms of 'its inequities', 2013: 459) and, worse still, to self-exploit. Ahead of any closer specification, it takes considerable, even extreme, self-management to stand a chance of making jazz the focus of one's playing life. As the pandemic resolutely refused to retreat, what the LRP helped to surface was not just what is already known (that jazz musicians lead tough lives) but that the advice given to them, and the lessons taken from their duress, can be unhelpfully wide of the mark.

Lockdown and Industry

All professional, semi-professional and aspirant professional musicians were made vulnerable by the pandemic because lockdown closed venues. Clearly, the loss of live music performance opportunities would have also been registered negatively by amateur musicians, but on a genre-by-genre basis, established pop musicians now earn from touring more than from record sales and are the worst affected group, financially. Because, at least in the UK, orchestral musicians are directly employed, they were able to be 'furloughed' by their orchestras but they will have felt the loss or performance and live rehearsal, keenly. Pop musicians who are trying to make career headway are no longer so reliant on appearing in the lower tiers of the live performance circuit (with social media having become a conduit for exposure), but restrictions on rehearsal, music interactions and (where appropriate) public appearances will still have seemed like a brake on career progress. For jazz musicians, though, the loss of live performance is different, and arguably more severe, again.

Essentially, jazz as a music form, and especially for those who dedicate their lives to playing it, exists only in live, public performance and the conditions of such performances are at best precarious and at worst onerous. To illustrate this point, consider Riley and Laing's (2006) research into the UK jazz economy. This is now quite dated but from personal experience and observation nothing has improved since Riley and Laing conducted their study. Typical figures show how marginal is the sector – for example, 67% of promoters reported average audiences of less than 100 people (with 22% reporting audiences of fewer than 50) (Riley and Laing, 2006: 5). The average audience size for tours by British Jazz groups was under 80. One bright spot was festivals (over 200 scattered across the UK) but, tellingly, 45% of festival promoters received grant aid in excess of £10,000 (Riley and Laing, 2006: 6/9). Taken as a whole, it is clear that Jazz, like classical music, relies on a combination of either hidden or direct subsidy to survive ('hidden' in the sense that pubs and restaurants hosted 36% of all Jazz gigs as a way of attracting customers and managing their brands); direct because the Arts Council (at least at the time that the report was compiled) supplied 71% of all funding to Jazz promoters (Riley and Laing, 2006: 10).

If we contrast this marginality with pop music, the contrast could not be more stark. UK Music (the lobbying body formed as an amalgam of UK music industry trade associations) constantly publicises the worth of music to the UK economy. From a music industry teaching perspective, I find their relentless declarations grating because they never drill down into the practices of music companies which, from the perspective of musicians, remain far from enabling and empowering. Even so, as the (pre-pandemic) 2019 'Music By Numbers' report shows, the worth of music is greatly distorted by the income generated from the ownership of rights (whether as songs or recordings) and from the sales of tickets to concerts by major artists and to festivals featuring such artists as headline acts:

> Successful British acts including Ed Sheeran, Dua Lipa and Sam Smith helped exports of UK music soar in 2018 to £2.7 billion. Millions of fans who poured into concerts ranging from festivals to grassroots music venues generated a contribution of live music to the UK's economy of £1.1 billion – up 10% on 2017.
>
> (UK Music, 2019)

Considered in this way, when UK Music declares the robust health of the UK music economy, what the umbrella organisation is really pointing to is how much money is made by the dominant music companies (whether record companies, music publishers or live agencies, promoters and venues). This concerns me as an analyst of music industry, but from the perspective of jazz as a music genre the picture is even more troubling.

As Riley and Laing's (2006) research shows, jazz is a marginal genre, yet it is also one that is recognised globally and confers high status on a small handful of players. Outside of this charmed circle, the lived, grassroots experience of playing jazz and attempting to be a professional musician at the same time (when these are not identical states) is, at the very least, challenging. It is a challenge to find gigs, and when they come, they are almost always to small audiences. Further, with improvisation the core of jazz as a genre, its players depend for their very existence not so much on the poor earnings but on the ontological 'blood transfusions' afforded by playing, itself. Far removed from the gargantuan ticket prices of an Adele concert or the reported £7 million made by Ed Sheeran from streaming royalties from Spotify, alone, for his song 'Shape of You' (Skinner, 2020), a jazz player can only be a jazz player in a gig, with others, whatever the low fee and whatever the personal cost to them as individuals. Without seeking to over-dramatise, jazz players (can) compromise their life experience and even life chances for the ontological security on live performance because, as we will discuss, jazz performance is predicated on improvisation and the creativity this demands from its players – a gig is an assertion and validation of self-hood as much as it is a cultural event. When gigs are taken away, we can see (some of) the bones beneath the skin of jazz as a choice of affiliation for its players. On

this basis, before expanding on some of these claims, or as way into such an expansion, let us encounter the musicians in the LRP and how they reported their motivation and interaction.

Working Together in a New Way

From the perspective of an inquiry into the defining experiences of Jazz musicians, the approach I took in interviewing those in question was comparatively 'light touch'. At the outset, I was interested only in evaluating the cogency of the recording (a song I had written called 'Freight Elevator', about an incident in the life of Billie Holiday). At the same time, I imagined, wrongly, that the pandemic would be a short-lived affair. The implicit force of the answers the LRP musicians gave to my questions only became apparent as lockdown (in all its variants) persisted through 2020 and into 2021. When re-examining those answers, in the months of the prolongation of the pandemic, the more revealing and, perhaps, more poignant, they appeared. The responses appeared to devolve onto five sets of considerations:

Working Conditions

In essence, the 'lockdown project' was simply something to do when gigs had ceased. How the change is characterised is instructive, though:

> The main difference has been that all gigs were cancelled so that whole side of our work disappeared pretty much overnight. I'm in a couple of bands that work regularly and usually pick up other gigs along the way. Obviously, this meant all work-related travel stopped too which for me was actually a relief. I'd had a winter of gigs involving some quite intense journeys and needed a break from it.

What bleeds through this observation is a combination of the reactive and pragmatic nature of a Jazz player's life ('usually pick up gigs along the way') together with how onerous such a regime can be ('quite intense journeys'). Here the life of a musician is not entirely a musical life, and it is one mostly to be endured in order to be a jazz musician.

A further observation made by a different participant was:

> Three gigs I had cancelled at good venues … won't be replaced anytime soon. I have one wedding in the book … and that's all.

Oddly, perhaps, it is the 'in the book' that catches the eye, here – this speaks to the self-managed and individualised nature of the pursuit. Further, the fact that 'three gigs … at good venues' are unlikely to be replaced speaks to the piecemeal promotion of jazz and, regardless of any pandemic, its *ad hoc* uncertainty. With so few dedicated jazz venues in the UK, whether and how,

for example, the UK's leading jazz venue Ronnie Scott's club re-opens is irrelevant to the vast majority of the country's jazz players. The deeper note of despair in the observation is that this reality means that the individual in question is thrown back into the melting pot of market competition with no assurance that she will be remembered should any of these gigs be restored. Tellingly, though, this reality is endured stoically.

Practice

The issue of the musician's perpetual need to practice surfaced very readily in the responses of all the musicians involved, these are three examples:

> Being at home should have meant that practice was more possible but somehow it was hard to find the time, maybe because the kids were home, and also hard to find the headspace sometimes…
>
> Practice has been hard. I've been practicing every day but without the focus of a gig to practice for it's difficult to find motivation and discipline so one tends to end up practicing random and disconnected things with no real direction.
>
> Whilst online is better than nothing, it's no substitute for being in the room with someone.

The need for active, 'in the same room' collaboration is arguably what drives this frustration – these are not classical musicians for whom stamina and absolute precision is of the essence. These are players who exist to play jazz. They accept the conditions of this life-choice: that jazz gigs are irregular and mostly low-paying, and that 'function' gigs and shows and tours as non-jazz players pay the bills. What this habitual form of existence means for these musicians is that they are all 'project'-focused – these particular musicians (as jazz musicians, generally) organise their time ultimately with the next gig in mind. This means that if they booked to play in an Abba tribute band for two weeks, they rehearse the repertoire, they do not 'practice', as such. Without a gig to prepare for, the musicians, here, find it hard to play in a vacuum. Further, jazz is not something that can be practiced for; as we will discuss, jazz playing is definitionally improvisatory, no musician knows what they will play until they play it, and this kind of creative spontaneity is not a direct outcome of practice (whatever the need to maintain strength, focus and dexterity).

Teaching

All of the musicians interviewed teach or have taught (in fact one was employed full-time in a Music College and that person scaled back to part-time in order to spend more time on their own playing). Teaching was represented affirmatively but also (and with no pun intended) instrumentally:

Teaching mercifully did continue, though online. This has had its challenges but getting on board with the tech involved (zoom, webcams etc.) has created flexibility in terms of being able to teach/learn anywhere in the world. It has made the job of teaching more challenging, though not impossible.

Teaching has continued and adapted to changing practices, but it is enough to keep us going financially as we're not going out or spending any money.

Here we encounter (practical and intellectual) compartmentalisation – as instrumental teachers, they teach students to learn and develop skills on a musical instrument, they do not teach 'jazz' as such. Given the rote and regularised nature of such teaching, the teaching musician does not realise her- or himself through this medium but they 'live with it' as a source of income and one that is in no way compromising (in fact, if anything, tuition is a source of dignity and self-determination). The obverse of this positivity is, arguably, that musicians who are used to compartmentalising what they do are perhaps less aware of the negatives of *dividing* what they do (into onerous and fulfilling gigs). This is a dimension of the self-exploitation referred to previously. When self-management becomes self-sacrifice in the management not just of an individual career but of a genre then we need to look more closely at how the industrial dynamics of jazz bear on the life experiences of its players.

Careers

Like many musicians and artists, I started to think about the impact this [the pandemic] would have longer-term on my work, and I found myself thinking more and more about expanding into writing more music rather than the focus being on live performance.

It's also produced some tangible end products that we can release/ promote on social media and generally help to feel like we still have a viable life/career as musicians.

The notion of musical activity accumulating as 'career' needs further reflection, but there is a sense of 'yearning' here rather than an identification of measured progress towards realisable goals. In turn, this cannot help but suggest that, where developmental issues are concerned, being a jazz musician is not something that is convincingly under the control of individual players. In these, almost poignant musings, we encounter 'musicians', more than jazz players. These are the musicians who progress by the 'classical' route of home tuition on orchestral instruments, grade exams and entry into Higher Education, even conservatoires. Three of the players followed this route and two of them are featured here. It is almost as if these two have been lured by a music that, simultaneously, demands their allegiance, at the

expense of themselves, yet at the same time, almost feverishly fulfils their desire to perform in demanding and creative ways – until they are forced to wake from the dream and go searching for their 'work' and 'a career'.

The Recording Project

Recording was represented unanimously as a positive experience, across a revealing range of responses:

> It was an organic development of the first lockdown. There was time to work out techniques and it was one thing we could collaborate with others on despite the distance and the restrictions on meeting.
>
> I found having a few home recording projects to be a good way to connect with other musicians and feel like I was doing something worthwhile. … Mainly it's great to have a creative focus of any kind.
>
> Negatives, the vibe…. It's really hard to make something sound spontaneous (because it can't be) and as someone who's mostly recorded 'live' with the whole band playing at once and bits of separation where possible, it was a different bag altogether.
>
> If we all set up together in a room and recorded live then it would be closer, particularly if people were watching.
>
> Didn't get to comment in real time as instruments were laid down – so not enough ideas input from whole band. Didn't have same sense of camaraderie and experimentation that you would normally have.
>
> Can't play/practice/rehearse with others due to restrictions and this is where a lot of collaboration and creative exchange takes place and ideas for new sets etc.

Consider the terminology here: these interviews were all conducted separately and yet the responses read almost as a single, collective one. In the face of the insufficiencies of the LRP, all of the following are dramatised as positive aspects of making jazz music: jazz is distinguished by its being 'collaborative' and relying on 'collaboration'; it allows one to 'connect'; it facilitates one to be 'creative'; it enables players to become 'closer'; it drives 'camaraderie'; it demands 'experimentation' and 'exchange', and it is always 'spontaneous'. This is a lengthy list of positives and, at the very least, it shows that jazz needs to be played live to *be* jazz; despite the novelty of the LRP for all the players, no-one on any occasion compared the experience of recording to making a record in emulation of a jazz *recording*.

To help us understand this commitment to live performance and to the centrality of this to the raison d'être of such musicians, (to those times when 'people (are) watching'), the work of Hargreaves (2012) is instructive. She observes that 'idea generation' (2012: 363) is the source of jazz improvising. Hargreaves cites an extensive literature that attempts to identify how jazz

improvising is creativity in action. In this, she identifies three forms of idea generation derived from 'two seminal works' (2012: 356), those of Pressing (1988) and Sudnow (2001) referring firstly to Pressing she argues,

> 'Improvisation: Methods and Models' made a notable contribution to jazz research as one of the earliest published cognitive models of improvising. His extensive cross disciplinary reading melds facets of physiology, neuropsychology, motor programming, and skill development with a discussion of intuition and creativity.
>
> (Hargreaves 2012: 357)

From there, and inspired by Sudnow, Hargreaves works through the various creative centres and strategies deployed in improvisation, at one point quoting 'jazz musician and educator Bob Stoloff' (cited in Wadsworth Walker, 2005):

> I don't improvise anything original, as far as I know. I think it's all pieces of stuff that I've heard throughout the years. Sometimes I can even identify it as it's coming out of my mouth, and say 'oh my gosh – there's Dizzy Gillespie, there's Oscar Peterson, there's Joe Morello'.
>
> (Wadsworth Walker, 2005: 118)

If 'idea generation' is a synergy of different physical, mental and cultural resources drawn into play in the performing jazz ensemble, then to be a jazz player is to be in that creative and unrepeatable moment, experiencing the autonomy and individuality of the routes taken by strong and distinct impulses to the music in train. And all this happening within an on-stage, in the moment, shared and yet still individually idiosyncratic identification with a history of jazz performance, one that manifests in playing in and through unpredictable inflections of performance. Considered in these terms, it should be little wonder that the LRP seemed so tepid by comparison. Even so, the 'yearning' and 'poignancy' that is also present in the testimony of the musicians speaks to the strictures imposed by the genre. 'Self-management' seems a benign, affirmative state of self-determination until we recognise it as the management of self-sacrifice. Once we are alert to the permanent and painful conflict between the two states, we confront the jazz musician as someone whose energy is always at the 'red line' because they are forced permanently to balance the effort it takes to play jazz against the reward of the playing, and vice versa.

If this is the reality of jazz for the musicians we have encountered, and if it is reasonable to extrapolate from them across all of the jazz musicians in the UK who are not in the 'charmed circle' (which is always a small one), then how well or how badly are they served by the metaphors that encourage them to sharpen their behaviour to survive on this 'red line'?

The Valences of Metaphor

The competition between musicians in what we can broadly identify as 'popular music' is now more intense than it has ever been. The Reaper DAW referred to previously is free to download, and free downloads of limited packages (with more features released on subscription) is not a formula that everyone need comply with, as Strachan (2017: 23–25) identifies, a musician with a little tech savvy can download a 'cracked' (pirated) copy of one of the leading DAWs, quite readily. One result of this is that at, as reported by 'Music Business Worldwide' (Ingham, 2021), its 'Stream On' event in February 2021, Spotify announced that, every day, it processes 60,000 new track uploads. At a rate of 22 million new tracks a year (and this only to Spotify) then, even if this means that single musicians (or groups of them) each upload ten tracks a year, the idea that 2.2 million musicians will go on to enjoy music careers is patently absurd. This, though, does not prevent the widest range of providers offering services to musicians predicated on the idea that, should they (at a price) follow the guidance on offer, they will go on to do exactly this.

Intense competition between pop musicians is nothing new, it is just that digitisation allows anyone with an iPhone and Garageband or an Android phone with BandLab to make their own album. In pre-internet, pre-DAW days, aspirant pop musicians did what they could to bring themselves to the attention of record companies and other intermediaries who might be persuaded to take them to market and support them there, the rest went back to their 'day jobs'. What music intermediaries represented to aspirant musicians was the potential of competitive advantage inside intense and volatile markets for music-symbolic goods. The problem then was that this gave almost all the power in the relationship to the intermediary – the music company (of whatever kind) decided which musicians looked most likely to become market successes and they adopted risk strategies (at the expense of the aspirant musician) to protect and to help maximise any investment they chose to make (Jones, 2012).

In a new environment, when most of the vast over-supply of pop musicians can now make itself heard by uploading tracks into streaming services, it makes a limited sense to advise these people that they should individually become more 'entrepreneurial' and that they should prepare to enjoy 'Portfolio careers' while they wait for attention to reach critical mass and fame to come knocking. This 'advice' is then made apparently the more persuasive because 'Day Jobs' continuously disappear to be replaced by jobs that seem to look a lot like music ones, only without the lure of 'celebrity' as a reward for the uncertainty, the long hours, the enforced self-reliance and the low pay.

If we map all of this onto our LRP musicians, and onto jazz more specifically, then a range of conclusions can be drawn, both about the musicians themselves and the metaphors that pervade their music-making.

Entrepreneurialism

Umney (2016: 726) has already pointed out that, in fact, when used opportunistically at the expense of fellow musicians, an entrepreneurial approach is usually perceived negatively within a given community of musicians. Even so, what, from the LRP, can be perceived as 'stoicism' (in the loss of 'three gigs … at good venues') can also be read as passivity. If, individually, jazz musicians becoming 'entrepreneurial' offends jazz at its core – by denying the creatively competitive mutuality that defines improvisation – then perhaps jazz musicians could become entrepreneurial, *collectively*. Should jazz adopt a communal, collectivist approach among its musicians then the self-promotion of gigs could begin to fill diaries and the honing of marketing and promotional skills could increase audience sizes. This in turn could raise rates across the board – from dedicated jazz concerts to function events – as branded goods manufacturers demonstrate consistently, market price is as much a function of perceived value as it is the availability of cheaper substitutes.

Portfolio Careers

All the musicians involved in the LRP evince 'portfolio careers', but clearly these come at a continuous and varied cost: 'quite intense journeys', 'hard to find the headspace sometimes'. The lie to the 'Portfolio career' is to be found in its apostle, Charles Handy. What completes Handy's earlier quoted observation is that the guarantee that he could '(see his) life as a collection of different groups and activities' was that 'a part of that portfolio would be "core", providing the essential wherewithal for life' (Handy, 1995: 71). The point here is that *all* of the LRP musicians, and tens of thousands more besides, lack that core and are forced to self-exploit to provide 'the essential wherewithal for life'. Handy's career trajectory was public school to Oxford to an executive position at Shell Oil to a Professorship at London Business School, of all people he is the last person who should be used as a source of advice to musicians.

The Gig Economy

Where the gig economy is concerned, it is appropriate to return to Billie Holiday:

> One day, we were so hungry we could barely breathe. … It was cold as all hell and I (went)… in every joint trying to find work. Finally, I got so desperate I stopped in the Log Cabin Club, run by Jerry Preston … I asked Preston for a job … told him I was a dancer. He said to dance. I tried it. He said I stunk. I told him I could sing. He said sing. Over in the corner was an old guy playing a piano. He struck 'Travelin' and I sang.

> The customers stopped drinking. They turned around and watched. The pianist, Dick Wilson, swung into 'Body and Soul.' Jeez, you should have seen those people – all of them started crying. Preston came over, shook his head and said, 'Kid, you win.' That's how I got my start.
>
> (Dexter, 1939)

Jazz history is a tapestry of powerful narratives. The trouble with narrativising a music genre is that vivid stories distract us from what is uninteresting to encounter and yet vital to day-to-day survival. 'Survival' has long been the watchword, both for jazz musicians and 'freelance' musicians more generally. The 'gig economy' is the latest and deepest twist of the knife in the Neoliberal evisceration of the Labour Movement. The trouble with using the lives of jazz musicians as a metaphor for Amazon delivery drivers and Deliveroo meal transporters is that, unlike the participants in the LRP, for those unfortunate enough to be caught in that (expanding) web, there is nothing 'collaborative', 'creative' or 'spontaneous' about work that is policed by digital platforms which are 'characterized by a core architecture that governs the interaction possibilities' (Srnicek, 2017: 48).

In making this final observation there is no sub-textual 'consolation' intended, either for the LRP participants or their like. Jazz musicians tend to be ones without power within their specific economy and industry. One way of speaking 'truth to power' is to dismantle the metaphors through which these inequalities work their quiet but insistent spell in the discursive construction of the 'place of music' (and therefore the value of musicians) in daily life.

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7 Emotional and Relational Labour in Music from a Feminist Perspective

Emília Barna

Introduction

The lack of an easy separation between 'work' and 'leisure' or 'life', is one of the most widespread observations in the study of cultural or creative labour. The expectation that popular songs are deeply connected to, and expressive of, the individual feelings of the songwriters and/or the artists performing them, embedded in their private lives and based on their personal experiences, is also nothing new. In this chapter, I nevertheless want to scrutinise the relationship between the personal and the professional with the purpose of understanding of how musicians' and music industry workers' experiences are structured by gender relations. I ask, in what ways do professional and personal relationships intersect in the work of musicians and music industry workers? How do these workers negotiate the boundaries between professional and personal in relation to their work – the production of music? How is this work of negotiation divided, and how is it gendered? With this inquiry, I aim, firstly, to shed light on labour in music that mostly remains invisible and explore how that invisibility is at least partly linked to the gendered hierarchies into which labour in music is embedded. Secondly, I wish to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of gender and power relations in the music industries, moving beyond the issue of mere representation (such as the percentage of women in specific genres or roles) to look for underlying factors. Thirdly, I aim to elucidate how cultural production is embedded into broader social networks and relationships, here primarily focusing on friendship ties.[1] Through this, I hope to contribute to a better understanding of the ways in which the social, the economic and the cultural are interwoven in the production of culture. I draw on Hochschild's (1983) theory of emotional labour and Zelizer's (2012) concept of relational work to present an analysis of personal and professional-creative relations from a feminist perspective.

The analysis relies on 36 semi-structured interviews (lasting on average two hours) conducted with Hungarian musicians (singers, instrumentalists, songwriters, composer-producers, DJs) and music industry workers (managers, promoters, sound engineers; many were a combination of these) from

Budapest and other Hungarian towns between 2018 and 2020.[2] The interview subjects represented a variety of popular music genres, including mainstream pop, classic and alternative rock, hip hop, electronic music, jazz and entertainment music (e.g., wedding musicians). Twenty-two were men and fifteen women, which means women were deliberately overrepresented in the study in relation to their actual proportion in the music industries.

My analysis is divided into four parts. The first part presents a theoretical overview focusing on creative labour, emotional labour and relational work in order to establish a framework for the analysis. In the second part, I explore the negotiation of the boundaries and fusions between professional and personal in relation to creative collaboration between musicians, as well as working relationships between musicians and managers, by drawing upon the framework of relational labour. I reflect on the significance of care, and the ways in which aspects of care are gendered in musical labour. The third part looks at the emotional labour involved in networking from a gender perspective, drawing attention to the ways in which the demand of 'being friends with everyone' places additional burden on women working in music, and how this serves to reinforce existing patriarchal power relations. Finally, the fourth part focuses on so-called amateur helpers and looks at how boundaries between (paid) work and (unpaid) assistance are constructed in work around early-career musicians.

Creative Labour, Emotional Labour, Relational Labour

In her discussion of artists as workers in socialist Yugoslavia, Praznik critiques the historical rendering of art and the work of artists as outside of both labour and leisure, arguing that the 'disavowal of the economy' in relation to the work of artists is a bourgeois and capitalist construct (Praznik, 2020: 84–85). Instead, she offers a theorisation of the interconnectedness of aesthetic discourse and economic mechanisms, and in this endeavour, she draws on theories of domestic labour, using 'the feminist critique of the invisibility of women's domestic labour under capitalism to demystify the mechanisms of naturalisation that turn artistic labor into invisible labor' (Praznik, 2020: 86). She argues that there is a parallel between the symbolic prestige assigned to artists while rendering invisible and undervaluing their labour in an economic sense, and 'an idealized femininity (angel in the house) whose normalized work similarly goes unrecognized' (Praznik, 2020: 86; see Shukaitis and Figiel, 2019 for a similar argument).

Praznik relies on the work of Marxist feminist authors (e.g., Dalla Costa and James, 1973), who theorise the household as the fundamental site for the reproduction of the labour force through what has since mostly been referred to as reproductive labour. Reproductive labour encompasses not only giving birth, but all kinds of care and housework performed within the domestic space, which ensures the reproduction of the labour force. This concept of reproductive labour draws attention to the ways in which

practices of love and care have been integrated within the logic of capital accumulation. Globally, reproductive labour is mostly informal, unpaid or poorly paid, and performed within the household, predominantly by women, and in particular by women of colour and female migrant workers working in white middle- and upper-class households (Federici, 2012: 71). On a cultural level, the productive–reproductive labour divide has contributed to the cementing of patriarchal gender relations in capitalism by assigning the former to men and the latter to women. Corresponding to this perspective, I understand the social constructions of femininity and masculinity within this social division of labour, and in relation to the symbolic and material institutions legitimising and maintaining it (c.f. Barna et al., 2017).

At the same time, while industrial capitalism has created this gendered social and symbolic division, this does not mean that the 'feminine' realm of emotions has not become part of the productive sphere. Illouz (2007) demonstrates how in the twentieth century the theory and ideology of management, which drew on 'therapeutic culture' influenced by psychological theory and practice, contributed to a concern with emotions permeating the realm of formal (wage) labour, and creating what she terms 'emotional capitalism'. Hochschild theorises 'emotional labour', that is, the management of feeling sold as labour in a capitalist economy, through a study of the work of flight attendants and bill collectors – 'two extremes of occupational demand on feeling' (Hochschild, 1983: 16). The primary contributions of Hochschild's work include showing, firstly, how the requirement of 'deep acting', which involves a management of our innermost feelings (as opposed to presenting a superficial smile), places a particular demand on workers and contributes to their alienation – not only from their work, but from their own selves. Secondly, she illustrates how both employer requirements and the strategies of workers – deep or surface acting – have shifted along with broader economic shifts affecting the industry. And thirdly, her focus on flight attendants highlights the gendered demands of emotional labour: workers are required to conform to highly sexist demands in line with the gender power structures of their working environment, namely an (at least initially) predominantly male clientele and a female service crew. The theory of emotional labour furthermore highlights continuities between women's social roles rooted in their function in the household and the demands placed on them in the formal world of work. While Hochschild clearly defines emotional labour within a productive labour context, it is also a crucial aspect of the informal and unpaid reproductive labour performed in the household, primarily as care for family members, and closely tied to the role of the housewife and mother.

Similar to emotional labour, artistic creation can be felt as the expression of one's self and therefore deeply individual – yet at the same time, in the cultural industries, it becomes paid labour, and subject to demands of a capitalist economy. More than mere parallels, however, emotional labour is integrated into the labour of cultural workers, as shown by the studies of

Hesmondhalgh and Baker (2008), in the context of the television industry, or Watson and Ward (2013), who explore the specificities of emotional labour in the context of the recording studio.

In order to direct attention to the boundaries between the personal and the professional and the labour involved in negotiating this boundary, I also draw on Zelizer's concept of relational work. According to Zelizer,

> people engage in the process of differentiating meaningful social relations. For each distinct category of social relations, people erect a boundary, mark the boundary by means of names and practices, establish a set of distinctive understandings that operate within that boundary, designate certain sorts of economic transactions as appropriate for the relation, bar other transactions as inappropriate, and adopt certain media for reckoning and facilitating economic transactions within the relation. I call that process relational work.
>
> (Zelizer, 2012: 146)

Based on research conducted in Albania and Macedonia – countries that tend to be neglected in research on cultural and creative labour, which is usually focused on western countries such as the UK or the US – Alacovska (2018) employs Zelizer's concept of relational work to provide a rich account of the various forms and levels of informality in creative work. She 'contend[s] that creative workers' informal labour practices and economic activities are constituted by the meanings and quality workers attach to interpersonal relations' (Alacovska, 2018: 1). Regarding the relationship between the economic and the personal, her empirical results indicate an inverse proportion, namely that '[t]he more socially and spatially intimate and closer the interpersonal relationship, the less the economic benefit. The more socially and spatially distant the relationship, the greater the pecuniary motivation' (Alacovska, 2018: 21).

In the following analysis, I use the concept of relational labour based on Zelizer's theory of relational work to refer to labour that is directed towards social relationships or involves the negotiation of these, especially managing the boundaries between working/professional versus private/personal relationships, and between economic versus creative/aesthetic.

Relational Labour and Care in Musical Collaboration

In the working relationships of music making – that is, relations between band members, between artists and managers, musicians and sound engineers, and so on – professional considerations, both aesthetic and economic, become interwoven with personal feelings and relations. These relationships can be considered as being continually shaped and negotiated through emotional and relational labour. Based on interview data, this section looks at the particularities and significance of such labour in relation to creative

collaboration between musicians and the working relationships between musicians and managers.

The narratives of the interviewed musicians and music industry workers indicated that thinking about and negotiating personal feelings and social relations takes up considerable time and requires deliberate effort, and that this emotional labour is closely tied to the collaborative creative process. Some artists emphasised the necessity of 'tuning in' (a recurring term in the interviews) with their collaborating musicians – whether the collaboration is regular or occasional – before rehearsing or writing a song together, and that this process required setting time aside. 'With [the musicians I currently work with], rehearsals proceed in a way that we get together, sit down, talk, and then begin to make music' (drummer, female, 28).

In the case of regular collaborations, the idea of 'tuning in' resonates with the way in which a female jazz singer links the ability to connect, in a musical sense, to a deeper knowledge of people she played music with. This knowledge stems from a shared, not necessarily musical experience, a sense of having gone through things together:

> The more we know one another within a band, the more we love one another. We are familiar with the vulnerable side of the other person, their evil side, any side. The more you can connect to [the musicians] in a musical way, the more you go through together.
>
> (jazz singer, female, 35)

The singer also emphasises the challenges of managing interpersonal relations and conflicts within a band, a task she feels responsible for in her role as a frontperson. This role also involves managing the affairs of the band in a practical sense, which in her understanding seamlessly blends with care work:

> I have to say that each of [my musicians] has expressed that out of all the projects they are involved in, this is *the band* for them. The number one. But this is probably because I solve everything for them. They really don't have to deal with organising at all […]. They are always paid. I don't screw them over. I keep my word. I love them. I listen to them. I call them, I pamper them.
>
> (jazz singer, female, 35)

In a similar manner, a female drummer talks about her approach to managing conflicts within her band. While she is not in a front role, she still assumes responsibility for maintaining a healthy interpersonal atmosphere within the band.

The frequent account articulated by female musicians of their feeling of responsibility for managing the affairs of their band, for keeping track of issues and commitments in addition to managing personal relations, resembles

the role of a housewife managing the household, with combined responsibilities for emotional and material needs. In some cases, female workers explicitly describe care for musicians with reference to a motherly role, especially if their unwritten 'job description' includes responsibility for the band. However, while this is more characteristic of the women I interviewed, some of the male musicians, notably frontmen, mention similar tasks. In this sense, they can be described as having assumed a feminised role.

The necessity of care was highlighted by the COVID-19 crisis and the first lockdown in spring 2020, when musicians and music industry workers suddenly and unexpectedly lost the possibility to work as performers and use the collective spaces of studios and rehearsal rooms. As a manager interviewed during this lockdown period puts it:

> I'm actually taking [the lockdown period] quite well compared to [the musicians I manage], but at a time like this, it is difficult to provide support as a manager and as a colleague, because you need to be kind of a mum to them. This is how I feel sometimes. […] They are really like small children sometimes, tricky times like this [pandemic] bring out the children in them. It brings out despair in these guys.
>
> (manager, female, 24)

As this quote demonstrates, the COVID-19 crisis has heightened the care aspect of managers' relational labour. For the manager, the crisis pushes the working relationship into a clearly gendered relationship between herself as a 'motherly' manager and the male musicians who tend to behave like children. Moreover, she has the feeling that she is expected to put the musicians' concerns and emotional needs before her own worries, like a mother is typically expected to in a family. Caring, while in a sense part of her job, assumes a gendered dimension and becomes informalised as a result. As Dunaway (2012: 118) demonstrates, in times of crisis, the informal sphere of the household, the primary site of reproductive labour, functions to absorb some of the economic damage through an increased self-exploitation of women – mothers and housewives sacrificing their own needs to care for the rest of the household. In this process, the patriarchal roles of women are reinforced. On a micro-level, the same process can be observed in this example in the specific context of the music industries. In the next section, I look at a further aspect of relational and emotional labour, namely networking, which is similarly embedded in gender relations.

The Gendered Dimension of Networking and Friendship

Besides the articulation of the inseparability of friendship and care from regular working relations in music, another topos frequently addressed by the musicians in the interviews was an insincerity permeating the society of musicians and music industry workers. Insincerity is typically linked to the

imperative to network and to be 'on good terms' with everyone in the industry in the expectation of opportunities that may arise out of acquaintances and 'friendship'. Conversely, engaging in conflict tends to be feared because of its potential to result in a loss of opportunities, reputation and other key assets in the cultural industries (Blair, 2001; Wing-Fai et al., 2015).

The musicians emphasise the atmosphere of immediate, although not necessarily sincere, intimacy that characterises the social spaces of music making, typically live music venues, associated with the drinking, chatting and partying that often takes place following a gig at the venue. One singer characteristically describes this scene of socialisation among musicians and music industry workers as an 'intensive environment' – 'every night is the best night in the world, tonight we're having the biggest party' (rock singer, male, 33). A female musician, however, emphasises the outright falsity of these seeming friendships, which, to her, masks rivalry, bitterness and resentment:

> Your colleagues, people in your profession, come to see your gig, then you sit down to have a beer with them, and after two beers, we are already discussing the number of abortions [somebody's] girlfriend has had. […] And you can't say, listen, I'm sick of you because I know what you have said about somebody, or why you play at that venue, or why is it you that gets the role of, say, drummer at [an arena-filling] gig.
>
> (jazz singer, female, 35)

This utterance needs to be viewed in the context of the musician's own, very clearly articulated and elaborated precarity, which she experiences in her daily working life as a jazz musician: her struggling to get ahead and to secure well-paid and well-attended gigs. The simultaneously perceived necessity of constant networking through 'being nice' and having intimate conversations and the necessity of managing resentment, although not formally part of musicians' work, can be compared to the emotional labour of the flight attendants described by Hochschild (1983). Personal feelings need to be actively managed and suppressed according to the specific 'feeling rules' (Hochschild, 1983: 56–75) of this industry's social space.

Several scholars (e.g., Gill, 2002; Wing-Fai et al., 2015; Wreyford, 2015) have argued that the predominance of informal networking in recruitment in the cultural industries contributes to the reinforcement of a patriarchal structure and racial and class inequalities. The mechanisms behind this 'network sociality' (Wittel, 2001) include the allocation of jobs, positions and resources on the basis of informal reputation, recommendation and acquaintance. In local music scenes that are already male-dominated, these mechanisms ensure that existing circles of favour – frequently referred to as 'old boys' networks' (e.g., Gill, 2002: 82) – and solidarity based on homophily prevail. Moreover, the spaces of informal socialisation tend to be spaces where women are less welcome and involve practices more costly for

women to participate. Some interviewed female musicians note that friend-liness in these spaces of networking, such as pubs and night clubs, is more difficult to perform for them as they feel that it is inseparable from being sexually available. In other words, while being 'nice' is a heteronormative expectation of women, it also carries the threat of unwanted male attention they additionally have to manage. As a result, women employ strategies to avoid looking available:

> As a woman, you need to manage these situations and have methods for dealing with men making advances, that is almost compulsory. […] being kind is the worst thing that you can do. I'm sorry, I know this sounds bad … as this also creates a kind of split in my personality, I'm actually a much nicer and friendlier person than this.
>
> (bass player, female, 33)

For this female instrumentalist, emotional labour includes working on her-self in order to avoid male attention. For a female singer, who articulates a fear of being talked about behind her back, being unfriendly has become part of a strategy to avoid gossip. Describing in her interview how a male instrumentalist who occasionally plays in her band had told her that he found her to be very reserved and stern, and did not know where he stood with her, she mentions how she reacted to this statement:

> I told him, 'listen, they talk so much behind my back, and I have listened so many times to how [a famous Hungarian female singer] is being talked about behind her back in the band that now I'm really afraid of letting [musician colleagues] close to me. I'm really scared of what you will say … like, the 'diva,' and what [I am] like with money, I don't know.'
>
> (singer-songwriter, female, 31)

The musician links her fear to her gender and to her being in a front role in a male-dominated industry where she receives more attention. Similarly, Berkers and Schaap (2018: 18) observe that women active in metal scenes have 'a high *visibility* and consequently they are often confronted with *gender-biased evaluations*, *male gazes* and/or surprised or negative reactions when gender roles are challenged' (emphasis in original). They are evaluated as women rather than individuals (ibid.). The singer quoted above attributes her self-professed stern, unfriendly demeanour – not conforming to the fem-inine ideal of always being friendly and approachable – to the willingness to avoid this attention. These female experiences and strategies suggest that friendship and being 'nice', a general demand of the social world of music events, rather than just a way to get ahead, poses danger for women. This makes it more complicated for them to navigate the scene and demands additional emotional labour to avoid being placed in undesired female roles.

More specifically, the masculine atmosphere of 'hitting on girls' – a practice that was named by several interviewed male musicians – has particular consequences for female workers, since it characterises their working environment. This sexist behaviour has to be tolerated not only by female musicians, but also by managers, among whom there is an increasing number of women, many in their twenties or early thirties, making them, as 'young women', a target of unwanted male attention. Responding 'well' to flirtation while maintaining a professional attitude thus becomes an important part of female music industry workers' emotional labour. A male musician talks about the masculine atmosphere of the live music sphere with reference to the experiences of his manager sister:

> My sister, who is in management, [regularly encounters] these respected older musicians in the profession […] I've heard [them say] things [to her] like, 'what a pretty little girl' […]. After gigs, it is all about drinking together, and you have this little flirting going on, this kind of, hitting on the girls, this kind of banter, and in order to sell your band, you have to tolerate this verbal teasing, which everyone knows exists.
>
> (singer-songwriter, male, 36)

A female manager articulated her experience in a similar way, explaining how boundaries between work and leisure, but also between collegial relations and beyond become blurred in the music industries:

> The music industry has always been like, it's kind of leisure, for those who work in it, it is not simply a job, but something less formal, and boundaries are not carved into stone, so here, relationships between people are not simply collegial. And this might not be a problem in itself, but these boundaries are indeed hard to pinpoint. […] And I do have, for instance, a manager colleague who says she gets comments like, 'for you, sweetie, anything,' 'you're so beautiful.' […] I'm not saying I don't notice, but, you know, I don't care anymore. […] You need to have guts as a woman. It really is an industry ruled by men, and of course, if you are sensitive [it is more difficult], because on a certain level, you have to accommodate these circles. […] I know many girls who put up with things like [colleagues talking to them in an inappropriate way]. [I ask them,] 'why don't you tell them that you are hurt by this? Why don't you retort?' 'Because it's work.' Well, this [kind of attitude] is something I'm not happy with.
>
> (manager, female, 24)

Exploring the emotional labour involved in working in a professional recording studio, Watson and Ward (2013) mention 'tolerance' as something that has be performed by sound engineers in relation to the at times abusive behaviour of clients. 'The nonreaction to this kind of abuse', they

observe, 'maybe [sic] in and of itself a performance of "emotional neutrality"' (Watson and Ward, 2013: 2913). A parallel can be drawn with this 'nonreaction' and the 'not caring anymore' of the above-quoted manager. In Watson and Ward's research, this performance is embedded into a formalised client–service provider economic relationship, whereas in our study, the spaces of networking are informally organised. The fuzziness of boundaries mentioned by female musicians and industry workers arguably further complicates emotional labour in this kind of environment. Moreover, in Watson and Ward's study, probably since all engineers and producers they interviewed were male, the hierarchical power relations are not highlighted. Our research demonstrates that there is much more going on than mere 'tolerance': through the emotional neutrality women perform by tolerating men's objectification, they unwillingly contribute towards the solidifying of their subordinated status in the industry and the masculine atmosphere which informs the music industries in general. An awareness of this effect may be behind the disappointment expressed by the manager quoted above – 'Well, this [kind of attitude] is something I'm not happy with'.

Friendship and Unpaid Labour: The Status of the Amateur Helper

The negotiation of friendship assumes direct economic significance in relation to a group of workers I call amateur helpers. This last section explores the relational labour of negotiating the boundaries between (paid) work and (unpaid) assistance by focusing on the role of this group. Amateur helpers may include friends, relatives or romantic partners of musicians as well as fans who contribute mostly unpaid labour to the advancement of a solo artist or band. In this respect, a parallel can be drawn to voluntary work described by Alacovska (2018), but the examples mentioned in her study are charity gigs by musicians. Such work is still visible, as opposed to the behind-the-scenes contributions of amateur helpers. According to a female singer-songwriter we interviewed, making use of the labour of amateur helpers is a very common practice in the field. In the interviews, contributions of amateur helpers are typically mentioned by musicians at earlier stages of their career. The decreasing necessity of such help was explained by a female artist in the following way:

> I think this is very typical at the beginning [of a musician's career], but then it fades out. This is probably logical, partly because tasks increase and volume gets bigger than what could be done just out of courtesy, and partly because professionalism becomes increasingly important. You can only expect this if you pay a person so that you have a basis for your expectation.
>
> (pop and jazz singer, female, 36)

An artist who was managed by a friend at the beginning of her solo career describes the helper's work in the following way:

> In theory, she was my manager, but in reality, she behaved as my assistant or something like that. I told her, 'have a look at this, write to that person,' and I didn't have to confront people – she did. At the same time, I watched everything she did and how she did it and corrected her. Well, we did it together, really. This is how I usually put it in retrospect.
>
> (singer-songwriter, female, 31)

This quote points to the nature of emotional labour provided by amateur helpers – that is, acting as a buffer between the artist and promoters and other industry actors. The same helper's motivation is described in the following way:

> I think this whole art world really appealed to her [the helper] and she was really happy to be part of it. So she enjoyed being involved in this, and she came along with us to places and enjoyed the buzz.
>
> INTERVIEWER: So, the benefit to her was that she can be a part of something?
>
> Yes, and that she could join us and gain an insider view.
>
> (singer-songwriter, female, 31)

The quote is to be understood as the artist's standpoint, where the reference to immaterial returns partly functions as the artist's justification for not paying the helper. The fact that she uses this as a justification, on the other hand, does not deny, from the standpoint of the helper, a presumed symbolic motivation behind her labour, which is similar to the symbolic benefits – 'subcultural perks" – of participating in subcultural production (Hodkinson, 2002: 124–126), or the 'prestige and glamour' often involved in cultural work (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2008: 102). Nevertheless, the artist clearly indicates that there was, at least temporarily, a conflict between the helper and herself. She goes on to explain that she remained unable to pay the helper, yet at a certain point in her career, she was expecting more than what the helper could perform. 'Because I was also involved [in the work] anyway, we decided that in order to preserve our friendship, we would [terminate our working relationship]'. Despite the willingness to maintain the friendship, this agreement was followed by a period of mutual resentment: 'It is not that I was ungrateful, but indeed, this was a strange situation', says the artist.

While in the case above, the amateur helper did not manage to convert her status into a professional and paid music job, in other cases, being an amateur helper was regarded as a phase – even if a lengthy one – on the route towards professionalisation. A female manager describes such a route, which involved the simultaneous unpaid management of three bands while

finishing a music management degree (she did get a percentage on bookings, which was a separate function). Unlike in the previous case, the basis of her free labour is not close friendship. Rather, she justifies not asking for money by saying that she had not yet acquired her management degree – despite the fact that many managers work in the industry without a certificate, since the two existing Hungarian music management schools have only been operating for the last decade.

> I didn't and still don't ask money for managing them, because for me this is still just practice. I have been with these bands for almost two years now, and if I should get a new project or a new band, I would now have the courage to ask for money. And [my existing bands] are also really willing to give me money [from now on]. And this is really an honour, that they have decided this themselves, that 'we are satisfied with you and now we can give you money for your help.' I mean, I could also have asked sooner, but I always looked upon this as a school. We organised it ourselves.
>
> <div align="right">(manager, female, 24)</div>

The relational labour implied here – the negotiation of her 'intern' or 'professional' status – involved a willingness of her band members, their satisfaction with, and appreciation of, her work over two years. It was this appreciation, together with the work experience, that granted her the courage to do paid work with a potential new band. At the same time, she also implied that she would be willing to continue working for free for her three existing bands. In contrast to Alacovska's observation, where the closer the interpersonal relationship, the less the economic benefit, and vice versa (Alacovska, 2018: 21), this case is different in suggesting that professional, paid status has to be earned by trust and labour and accepted with gratitude. As a result, the economic and the personal go almost hand in hand.

A male artist echoes this linear connection between the economic and the personal from the musician side, although in this case, payment is linked on the part of the band to a certain career phase, measurable in economic status and projected in the future. The musician refers to the indispensable, although unpaid, contribution of not only friends, but also a band member's father:

MUSICIAN: [His] dad, he helps us with everything, for example, drives us around … [we have a group of] about 9-10 [helpers].
INTERVIEWER: Those people who helped a lot at the beginning, are they friends or …?
MUSICIAN: They are friends. Many of my friends from [my home region] helped me at the beginning.
INTERVIEWER: And are these connections still active?

MUSICIAN: They are. We have actually decided that if [our band] manages to make it to the extent that we can charge one million forints, which means […] you are regarded as an act who has made it, because you are able to make a living out of it, then we would like everyone to have a share of this. So that it becomes a thing where those who help us for free now would at one point have something in return.

(drummer, male, 27)

Notably, charging one million HUF (2,800 Euros) or more is only available to very few of the top artists in Hungary (there is no official data on concert fees, but a social media leak in 2018 [*Borsonline.hu*, 2018] confirms this). The conditions given by the artist for paying their helpers are therefore fairly strict and uncertain. However, the point to be made here is not that these artists were particularly uncharitable or indeed selfish, nor that the managers and other behind-the-scenes amateur workers necessarily undervalued themselves. Rather, it appears that, much in the same way informal unpaid labour is necessary for the maintaining of the system of global capitalism, the contribution of the unpaid and informal labour of amateur helpers is a structural feature of the music industries. Scholars have already pointed to the fact that years' worth of investment of time and labour by artists with the hope of establishing careers (which may ultimately never happen) is a structural feature of the cultural industries – Duffy (2016) refers to this 'aspirational labour' and Kuehn and Corrigan (2013) as 'hope labour'. Such labour is performed not only by artists but also by less visible workers in the music industries, many of whom are women.

Conclusions

In this chapter, I presented a number of different ways in which professional and personal relationships intersect in the work of musicians and music industry workers, and analysed the specific, and mostly invisible, emotional and relational labour invested in negotiating these intersections. As I have shown, managing personal feelings and relationships takes up considerable time and requires deliberate effort. Moreover, emotional labour is closely tied to the creative process, the production and the performance of music more generally. This kind of labour was often done by female workers in mix-gendered teams and it was also often linked to a feminine (motherly) role.

The spaces and practices of networking in music are described by workers as masculine and sexist, and working within these spaces demands additional emotional labour from women. I identified two strategies employed by women to manage these spaces: emotional labour invested in performing unfriendliness and emotional labour involved in tolerating sexist behaviour. At the same time, getting ahead relatively independent of masculine networks accentuates the need to rely on the unpaid, informal and invisible

labour of amateur helpers such as fans, friends and family, who, in line with gendered expectations and roles, tend to be women. In the field of culture, the assigning of recognition and prestige, which amount to crucial forms of capital in creative careers, are predominantly tied to work that is visible. As a result, those performing a large amount of invisible labour are more likely to remain in disadvantaged positions, because the invisibility of their labour also means the invisibility of their accumulated knowledge, skills, experience and network – all important resources that ensure invitations for future work in the music industries.

Women's unpaid labour, reinforced through patriarchal and heteronormative gender roles and norms that naturalise it and render it invisible, is a systematic feature for the functioning of global capitalism. This analysis demonstrates that the same mechanisms can be observed operating in the music industries on a local level. However, the realm of reproductive labour, if radically reorganised, may also hold the key to a way out of this patriarchal capitalist system. Ivancheva and Keating (2020) emphasise Millar's (2014) notion of 'relational autonomy', as opposed to an individual understanding of autonomy, where managing economic uncertainty and crisis becomes possible through mobilising relationships of care. As the authors observe, putting a price tag on invisible and unpaid reproductive work, including emotional labour, would offer no long-term solution to the unequal division of labour, as it would merely reinforce the existing capitalist system through a process of commodification (Ivancheva and Keating, 2020: 272). Similarly, focusing merely on increasing the number of women in areas where they are underrepresented, such as the music industries, is also insufficient as this leaves the patriarchal structure unchallenged. As we have seen in relation to networking, women can enter the industry and pursue careers by performing certain gendered roles and functions. What is needed instead is the strengthening of communities and economies of care and solidarity in which labour and rewards are divided more equally, and not rendered under the service of capital. While economic and social crises tend to reinforce the patriarchal division of labour (Dunaway, 2012), crises can also create opportunities for social change. Our research suggests not only that the COVID-19 pandemic has created more emotional labour for women in the industry – for instance, in manager roles – but also that bands and the broader team around bands, including managers, technicians and other behind-the-scenes workers, have functioned as crucial units of social and material support and solidarity. Through a radical rethinking of economic and social relations and the distribution of reproductive labour, such units of solidarity can become sources of social change.

Notes

1 While the relationship between romantic partnerships and creative labour is an equally important area, here I focus on friendship ties.

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8 Afghan Pop in Europe

Migration, Affect and Musical Labour

Marko Kölbl

Musical Labour, the Refugee Experience and Ethnographic Fieldwork

Music rarely enters the public discourse on refugees and forced migration, in spite of the fact that asylum-related research on music and dance has consistently highlighted music's significance within the refugee experience (see Pettan, 1996; Reyes, 1999; Hemetek and Bajrektarević, 2000; Öğüt, 2015; Western, 2020). The refugee experience – a term I borrow from ethnomusicologist Adelaida Reyes (1990) – relates to the processuality of 'being' a refugee. Speaking of an experience rather than an identity category leaves room for varying self-views and positionalities, and thus emphasises how asylum laws and migration policies subjugate certain people to certain experiences of being (labelled) refugees.

Refugee experiences always are musical experiences – 'auditory cultures develop in displacement', as Western reminds us in his thoughts on 'listening with displacement' (2020: 194). Accordingly, this chapter departs from an understanding of music as meaningful in the sense of 'musical ethnicity'. Musical ethnicity, following Stokes, involves 'ethnic reckoning' (2017: 24) and 'ethnic pleasure' (2017: 22) while locating and relocating through sound, particularly through affect via musical codes. The idea of musical ethnicity may suggest a stable ethnic identity with a fixed musical equivalent, resulting in something like a 'mosaic of clearly defined groups' (Ramnarine, 2007: 10). In this chapter, however, the idea of musical ethnicity rather elucidates how music becomes a significant dimension of diasporic belonging, as Ramnarine (2007) shows referring to the study of musical performance in the diaspora.

This chapter draws on research with Afghan musicians[1] in Vienna that I started in 2016, initially focusing on the musical identifications of young Afghan refugees in Austria and foregrounding music consumption and the use of music in everyday life (Kölbl, 2018). The friendships I formed with the initial study's research partners made it possible for the project to develop into a comprehensive study on Afghan musical scenes in Vienna, with my Afghan friends being crucial actors in choosing frames, perspectives and approaches as well as venues and settings. Hence, during the last five years,

many singers, instrumentalists and event organisers shared their knowledge with me in explorative fieldwork. I also visited and documented numerous festivities, concerts and club nights in Vienna. Musical labour constituted a consistent topic in these field experiences. As in many countries of the European Union, asylum law in Austria prohibits asylum seekers from the right to work.[2] Musical labour in refugee settings thus is a delicate topic, since asylum seekers' work is generally impeded, if not illegalised.

This chapter starts by presenting the study's political environment before featuring a discussion of the conceptualisations of musical labour in Afghan musical practice. The main section of the chapter presents ethnographic descriptions of four case studies and is followed by considerations on the affective labour of musicians within forced migration settings.

Afghanistan and the Refugee Experience

For the last 30 years, Afghans have constituted the largest refugee population worldwide (UNHCR 2015). While displacement is a major element of Afghanistan's political history, especially since the second half of the twentieth century, migration from Afghanistan to Austria assumed considerable proportions only during the 'long summer of migration' (Hess et al., 2017) of 2015 and the years before and after – a time period that European governments and media consistently framed as a 'refugee crisis', a crisis 'of or caused by refugees' (Western, 2020: 306). This 'crisis', I argue, was in fact a crisis of Europe, a crisis of political solidarity as well as a crisis of the racist and classist European border regime, whose temporal breakdown allowed for unprecedented border mobility (see Hess et al., 2017).

As of 2021, there are approximately 50,000 Afghans living in Austria, most of which were unaccompanied male minors when they came to Austria (Kohlbacher et al., 2020). After years of waiting for asylum, negative asylum decisions and a withdrawal from subsidiary protection status are common. The Taliban taking Kabul in 2021 might have caused a pause in deportations, but the restrictive asylum policies remain in place. Media discourse on Afghans in Austria constructs a negative image of Afghan refugees, building upon racialising, sexualising and criminalising tropes of Otherness. While refugees from Afghanistan are not considered worthy of asylum, paradoxically, the European imagination views Afghanistan as a failed state, as was illustrated by the sensationalising media coverage of the country's pain and suffering after the Taliban's return in August 2021.

This image of Afghanistan obviously builds upon the political developments and wars in Afghan history, particularly of the last 40 years, from the Soviet-Mujaheddin wars in the 1980s to the first Taliban regime in the 1990s to the US invasion in the 2000s up to the withdrawing of US troops in 2021 and the subsequent second rule of the Taliban. As the country's fate once more takes a disastrous direction, knowledge production in the Global North is complicit in shaping a certain narrative of

Afghanistan. This narrative renders the country virtually into a 'non-place' by focusing on gender inequality, drug trade, local corruption and the atrocities of the Taliban and Daesh without mentioning war crimes of Western troops, as Emran Feroz (2021) points out.

Afghan Music as Labour: From Radio Afghanistan to *Afghan Star*

Conceptualising musical labour within Afghan musical practice requires a closer inspection of musical professionalism and music education in Afghanistan – both of which oppose the reconceived Eurocentric notions of what professional musicians are and what kind of musical education they undergo. Analysing historical accounts of music as a profession in Afghanistan, Sakata shows the rich history of its negative characterisation. One important historic feature is birth right or ascription, which is defined by Sakata as 'hardly ever mentioned by Afghans, yet […] an integral part of their conceptualisations of musicians since the beginning of Islam' (2002: 76).

Historically, most musicians were from disadvantaged socio-economic classes, enslaved people or foreigners, and they inherited their profession from their ancestors. 'Respectable natives' generally were not musicians, whose common characterisation Sakata describes as 'amoral and perverted' (2002: 77). Sakata (2002) also highlights the connection between music and sex work, as well as the feminisation of musical labour in Muslim settings.

The bad reputation of the profession is neatly tied to music's devaluation as 'haram' (sinful, not compatible with Islam). While some exegeses of the Koran declare music as sinful, music is integral to social life in Afghan Muslim society (Sakata, 2002: 35). In the Afghan context, some instances of organised sound do not necessarily correspond to the category of music, like vocal performances of religious text or even the unaccompanied singing of folk songs. The music in question, *musiqi*, rather relates to 'instrumental music', 'professional music', or 'art music' (Sakata, 2002: 44), which forms the domain of professional musicians.

In Afghan musical practice, there is a crucial distinction between professional and amateur musicians (Slobin, 1976; Baily, 1988; Sakata, 2002). Professional musicians – *kesbi* – descend from hereditary musician families. Before the turbulent wars of the last four decades, they worked and lived in particular spaces, such as the musicians' quarter in Kabul, the *Kucheh Kharabat*, documented by Baily (2017) in his ethnographic fieldwork in Afghanistan during the 1970s. Their prime musical labour was playing at wedding receptions and similar events (Baily, 1979). Amateur musicians – *shauqi* – who often came from liberal, 'educated middle-class and even upper-class families' were keen on disclosing their class background and their voluntary (as opposed to hereditary) career choice (Baily, 2005: 215).

For amateurs wanting to make music their profession, Radio Afghanistan was a crucial vehicle (Baily, 1999: 836). From the 1960s on, Radio Afghanistan became a creative hub that not only aired music, but also facilitated music production, music education and music composition and served as a record and tape archive.[3] It provided permanent employment for musicians in orchestras, as singers, composers and teachers and was indeed the 'national centre for musical activity' (Baily, 2001: 18).

Moreover, the station helped to shape a positive image of music as a profession (Baily, 2001: 18) and led to a 'new respectability on amateur-turned professional performers', including significant female singers (Baily, 2005: 215). The need for music suitable for radio broadcasting resulted in the development of a new musical style, one that catered to a nascent Afghan national identity (Slobin, 1974; Baily, 1994) by joining various elements like Dari or Pashtu texts, Pashtu musical style and Hindustani music theory (Baily, 2001). This conjunction of musical elements relates to the diversity of musicians employed at the radio station, mirroring the country's musical pluralism: these included *Ustads* (masters), hereditary musicians proficient in Hindustani music theory, as well as other middle-class amateur musicians and experts in Afghanistan's various regional folk music styles (Baily, 1992: 12). Composers and musicians at Radio Afghanistan created new songs in the new style, but also performed folk songs from different parts of the country in the popular style. Music from Indian and Pakistani movies and popular musics from neighbouring countries as well as elements of Western pop and rock music were also relevant influences, shaping what became today's most thriving musical genre, Afghan pop.

Radio Afghanistan's role as the nation's musical centre also encompassed music transmission. There was little to no institutionalised music education in Afghanistan. Music was not part of the school curriculum, Kabul had no conservatory and Kabul University had no music department – due to the fact, that 'music was not fully accepted', as Baily (2005: 214) argues. While Farooz pointed to the marginalised position of the few music education institutions in Afghanistan in 2016 (2016: 23, 27), five years later, the situation of music education in Afghanistan seemed rather hopeless. The respective institutions fear harsh conditions under the second Taliban regime.

Though the value of music was also controversial before, the first Taliban regime meant a total stoppage of musical labour after 1996. The Taliban issued a ban on all forms of music and dance; the making, owning and playing of all instruments was forbidden. Musicians who had not yet done so left the country and Afghan musical life continued its existence in exile in Iran's Teheran and Mashad as well as Pakistan's Peshawar and Islamabad (Baily, 2017: 103–143).

Even though the denunciation of music continued to have an effect after the fall of the Taliban in 2001 (Baily, 2017: 148–162), musical life quickly

re-emerged. Only four years after the end of the Taliban regime, the private television station *Tolo TV* (Sunrise TV) aired the first season of *Afghan Star*, a televised singing competition show. *Afghan Star* is exemplary for its post-9/11 stances on music in Afghanistan. It had initiated a 'process of normalising musicianship in society', as Olson (2017: 9) argues.

Afghan Star has been running for 15 seasons between 2005 and 2020. With the second Taliban regime's stances on music and entertainment, the show faces adverse circumstances – its future is especially uncertain. As one of Afghanistan's most popular television events, the show made musical performances available on TV and the internet and thus allowed for a great number of Afghans in and outside the country to engage with musical entertainment. Compared to singing contests in the Global North, this specific local adaptation relates to tradition, ethnicity, national identity and social values through the musical style – as is often the case with television singing contests that feature 'non-western' musics (Yang, 2017).

Afghan clerics have repeatedly called for the show to end, arguing its moral incompatibility with Islam (Constable, 2017). The musical performances' socially transformative power became especially apparent when following the debates on female participants. Female contestants, considerably fewer in number than male contestants, regularly sparked public controversies. Participating in *Afghan Star* has exposed women to acts of violence by male relatives or neighbours, and many have had to relocate in order to be safe. To Osman (2014: 883), female *Afghan Star* contestants were 'media martyrs', since their musical performances put their lives into danger but simultaneously stimulated the public debate on women's rights.

Contestants on *Afghan Star* seek to be able to work as musicians. Being awarded with one of the better ranks indeed enables a musical career, not least due to the popularity gained with a broad Afghan audience. Olson's explorative field interviews show that after participating in *Afghan Star*, contestants recorded music videos and performed at parties for a reasonable fee (Olson, 2017: 87). Since the show was available online via Tolo TV's website as well as on YouTube, it has also created a relevant musical forum for the Afghan diaspora. The jury's evaluation gained an educational dimension, since it made professional discourse on the quality of musical performance, stylistic accuracy and vocal ability available to the public. *Afghan Star* was also crucial to the development of Afghan pop music. Wahid Qasemi, the show's music director since 2015, effected a shift from 'westernized pop sounds' to regional folk musics (Olson, 2017: 82).

The contemporary Afghan pop music scene is very much aligned with the aesthetics and musical directions presented in *Afghan Star*. Major figures from the Afghan pop music industry, most famously female superstar Aryana Sayeed, served as the show's judges. Diasporic pop music production follows the show's impulses. Next to Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries Iran and Pakistan, North America and Europe make up the most

important sites for Afghan pop music production as well as for musical labour in the realm of Afghan pop.

Working in Music within the Afghan Diaspora in Europe

Afghan pop constitutes a major field of musical labour for Afghan musicians in the diaspora in Europe. In the following section, I present four case studies: Bahram Ajezyar and Haroon Andeshwar, two male musicians who work in Vienna; an anonymised male musician who works outside the Austrian capital; and Elaha Soroor, a female singer based in London. The accounts foreground descriptions of musical labour based on ethnographic fieldwork carried out between 2016 and 2021.

One of my dearest Afghan friends, Bahram Ajezyar, is one of Vienna's most popular tabla players. He describes himself as a 'wedding musician', not withholding his self-view as an amateur musician, though professionalism clearly characterises his musical labour. He regularly plays at weddings and other private festivities, as well as concerts and musical evenings with various singers and instrumentalists from the Viennese Afghan music scene. Though his musical expertise also covers traditional musical styles, Afghan pop is what is mostly asked for at weddings and other Afghan events. Occasionally he plays at events aiming to facilitate intercultural communication, which are the only occasions for performing for a non-Afghan audience. Other than that, Bahram's musical work takes place in settings with a majority Afghan audience. Although his father is an amateur musician himself (playing the harmonium and singing), Bahram's musical upbringing does not resemble that of hereditary musicians.

Bahram came to Austria with his family during the late 1990s, when he was still a child. His interest in tabla playing arose when he heard a group of Afghan musicians at the refugee camp in Austrian city of Vöcklabruck. His family eventually relocated to London, and in the British capital's well-established Afghan community, he was able to receive tabla lessons from a respected *Ustad*. In Bahram's impression, however, the *Ustad* withheld musical knowledge, not wanting to share everything with his student in order to prevent him from becoming better than his teacher, which for Bahram in a certain way represents Afghan musical education. When YouTube started to become available, he used the platform to further educate himself via videos.

Bahram is a well-respected instrumentalist in Austria's Afghan music scene, with a network reaching to all the bigger Austrian cities and even other European countries. He, for example, was flown to Sweden to play at a wedding. With his tabla playing, he often accompanies singers who play harmonium or keyboard, and frequently also DJs. Though Bahram plays numerous gigs, he also holds a day job – a situation quite common with Afghan musicians in Vienna. There is little support for Afghan musicians, as

Vienna also lacks the relevant institutional support structures. Bahram and his colleague Rafi Mostafazadeh (a harmonium player and vocalist) split the rent for a tiny rehearsal room in Vienna in order to be able to practice and record their music.

Another notable Afghan musician from Vienna is Haroon Andeshwar, a singer and harmonium player. Haroon did not have the possibility of being formally educated as a musician, so like many of his generation, his musical skills are self-taught, as he closely followed and imitated the songs of other musicians. In 2012–2013, he participated in *Afghan Star*'s season 8. After passing the qualifying round, he was invited to Kabul, where he was selected as one of the final 12 contestants and eventually won the season's second place.

Winning second place meant immediate fame. After the show, he gave concerts in all the big cities of Afghanistan. However, the chances of obtaining a successful career in music are low in Afghanistan. Most major Afghan pop artists live outside the country: 'You don't know if there is a tomorrow in Afghanistan and that's why you can't have goals', as Haroon describes aspiring to a career in music in Afghanistan (Andeshwar, 2017).[4] Haroon stresses that Afghanistan is not safe. Although Afghanistan provided him with plenty of opportunities for musical work, life in Afghanistan got too dangerous in 2014 and 2015, a time when most members of today's Afghan community started their flight. To Haroon, the peacefulness of his new hometown Vienna also increases his artistic possibilities:

> If you have peacefulness, you can think well, you can sing well, play well, you have the mental capacity to compose and give concerts.
>
> (interview with Haroon Andeshwar, 2017)

Haroon plays at weddings and private festivities and also gives concerts, but he cannot make a living from his musical work. During the pending asylum status review, refugees are not allowed to leave the country. Crossing the border would have been necessary for Haroon, however, in order to accept the numerous invitations to gigs in other European countries, most often in Germany where the demand for his music is high.

In order to protect the privacy of my research partners' asylum processes, I discuss the delicate matter of Afghan musicians seeking asylum in Austria by means of an anonymous case. Pursuing musical labour can lead to difficult life circumstances back in Afghanistan, as in the case of another male *Afghan Star* contestant who applied for asylum in Austria. The musician had received private musical training from his teenage years on, singing and playing the harmonium in 'classical, traditional Afghan music', as the decision of the Austrian Federal Administrative Court specifies (BVwG, 2018: 1.1.).[5]

The musician left Afghanistan after receiving death threats over his participation in *Afghan Star* from his stepmother's brothers. He was eventually warned that his stepmother's family had hired a contract killer to murder

him. The court's decision cites the musician's reasoning in one of his early asylum interviews: 'When asked […] why he was being threatened with death, he said that there were many Koranic scholars in his family who would consider it forbidden to be a musician and to take part in a music show' (BVwG, 2018: 2.2.).[6] Olson's (2017) thorough study on views on *Afghan Star* supports this claim: he shows that a majority of Afghans would not want a family member to perform on the show, arguing that the low acceptance of family members performing on *Afghan Star* is neatly tied to Afghanistan's 'deep-rooted culture of shame and honor', where the actions of a family member affect the whole family and effectively bring shame on them (Olson, 2017: 61).

The Austrian Federal Administrative Court, however, cannot establish that the musician faces danger 'because of his enthusiasm for music, in particular due to his participation in the casting show' and does not believe that 'the complainant was exposed to a threat from his stepmother's family or that he will be so in the event of his return to Afghanistan' (BVwG, 2018. 1.1.). Especially delicate is the judge's explanation that 'after all, the complainant's music has a traditional Afghan character and does not allow any conclusions to be drawn about Western influences' (BVwG, 2018: 2.2.). Apart from ignorance of the fluid interplay between traditional musical styles and Afghan pop, this statement equates musical traditionality with conservative values and thus low risk while attributing progressivity and endangerment to Western musical influences.

The last example in this section is that of London-based singer Elaha Soroor. She differs from the previous examples in many ways: She is a woman (I have not met any female Afghan musicians in Vienna so far), her artistic path leaves the well-established tracks of Afghan traditional music and Afghan pop, and she makes a living from her musical career. Elaha was born in Isfahan, Iran; her parents left Afghanistan during the Mujaheddin era. Her musical upbringing involved 'very limited exposure to music', as she puts it (Soroor, 2020). This comprised traditional and devotional music as well as bootlegged music from Afghanistan that her father bought – including Vienna-based singer Dawood Sarkhosh, one of the major figures in the Afghan music business, whose Haraza identity and political claims were of significant relevance to his musical output. Elaha joined a group of women performing traditional devotional religious music, but she stresses how her parents' class position affected her musical socialisation:

> In Iran, if I was from a middle-class family, obviously I would have had more opportunities but […] my father was working in a factory and he had six kids and he had to make everybody happy, so it was a little bit tough for me to become a musician […]. You know, music is a luxury, learning music, listening to, even hearing music is a luxury for people who live in poverty.
>
> (interview with Elaha Soroor, 2020)

Due to Iran's discriminatory anti-Afghan sentiments, the family moved to Kabul, where – without her family knowing – Elaha began attending a music school, recalling: '90 percent of the school were boys and me and four other girls, we were the only girls studying in that school, which posed a lot of challenges' (Soroor, 2020). Again, the classed perception of engaging with music was noticeable for her: 'The people who were actually studying music in that school were mainly from upper class society – not all families would let their children to go and study music and art' (Soroor, 2020).

Despite her family's and society's disapproval, Elaha decided to take part in *Afghan Star*, where she was the first Hazara women ever to perform on the popular show:

> When I decided to participate in this TV show, I literally left home. The first challenge was leaving home as a young woman who cannot move alone in Afghan society. Nobody would rent you a room, because it's forbidden for a woman to live without a man – you have to have a family. […]
>
> It was more like a protest for me, but it really opened some other doors, possibilities of finding other ways to shape this image that I didn't really have in my mind because I didn't know what a singer's life could look like, because, you know, I wasn't exposed to that image. I didn't have the internet to see what other pop stars were doing, what other musicians were doing, or which kind of music even exists.
>
> (Interview with Elaha Soroor, 2020)

Elaha, who achieved eighth place on *Afghan Star*'s season 4, stresses the social effects the show had in post-Taliban Afghanistan, since it was 'the first TV show that really showed to the society that there is something called entertainment', emphasising how it gave her hope and encouraged her to 'do something with herself' (Soroor, 2020). She could not pursue her musical career in Afghanistan, however: 'Her outspoken views on women's rights led to an environment of serious personal danger, and she was eventually forced to flee Afghanistan', as Elaha's website states (elahasoroor.com, 2021). After coming to London, she faced difficulties working in music. Musical labour, in her experience, is very hard to pursue when you are subjugated to the refugee experience:

> Musicians, their first job is not music. You know, when you are a refugee, the first thing you think about is to find a home for yourself and to find enough food to eat, and learn the language and the culture and find a way to adjust yourself in the society. When you come as an adult, it is more difficult. For me, it was a little bit tough: I couldn't speak the language at all and I didn't have many friends; my family they didn't want me anymore and I was all by myself.
>
> (interview with Elaha Soroor, 2020)

After arriving in London, not only was living itself full of hardships, but making a living in music seemed impossible, which forced her to settle for an alternative career. Due to her popularity with Afghan audiences, however, she was still invited into different countries to perform, including, for example, at a Nowruz Party in Vienna in 2018, where I first heard her sing. Back then, her musical style was still very much aligned with the commercial needs of Afghan pop music, or what she calls the need of Afghans 'to make themselves happy' (Soroor, 2020), referring to various danceable Afghan rhythm patterns that are widely used in Afghan pop music and the common ways of instrumentalising and melodising. She explains the specific needs of young refugees engaging with music at concerts and parties:

> When I go and play for Afghan refugees, for the community, I know what they want. They're gonna write their song on a paper and ask me to sing it for them. And they would insist that I should sing it in a dancing tune, so they can dance.
>
> (interview with Elaha Soroor, 2020)

Elaha chose another path, however, following her curiosity and creativity in obtaining her own musical language but staying connected to her musical roots and reflecting her identity as she puts it. With Kefaya, a London-based band consisting of jazz musicians, her musical creations speak to a World Music audience – a style that Chaka Grier from Bandcamp calls 'Eclectic Folk' (Grier, 2019). This musical style does not necessarily please the mainstream taste of Afghan refugee communities in Europe: 'If I play whatever I want, they are not gonna be happy, they are going to throw an egg on me' (Soroor, 2020). Elaha, however, is fine with that, noting that her current audience may not understand her language, but understands the music.

Affective Labour and the Refugee Experience

Ethnographic accounts of musical labour draw a consistent image of affective labour as work 'intended to produce or modify peoples' emotional experiences' (Hofman, 2015: 31), as well as to 'produce emotional states' (Tochka, 2017: 3), not only in the sense of feelings but also in the sense of 'connectedness or community' (Tochka, 2017: 3; Hardt, 1999: 96). Unlike Hofman's and Tochka's studies on (socialist) national state policies and the aligned musical cultures,[7] the affective labour of musicians and singers with a refugee experience takes place outside the national imagination, within highly politicised spheres of asylum and social exclusion. Affective labour here does not pertain to national narratives, but rather poses an alternative model of minoritarian agency. The production and commodification of emotions in Afghan musical performances relate to the wider political circumstances as they assist in regulating the emotional impacts of anti-Muslim racism, anti-migrant sentiments and restrictive asylum policies.

Musical labour by and/or for Afghan refugees brings about important affective effects catering to the specifics of refugee experiences. Musicians, especially singers singing in the language(s) of the respective community, not only draw on but also reiterate shared sonic knowledge. Musical performances aimed at an audience of (mostly young male) refugees caters in particular to ethnic pleasure (Stokes, 2017: 22) and ethnic reckoning (Stokes, 2017: 24) in the sense of sonic belonging or musical ethnicity. Observing the refugee audiences at his concerts, Haroon Andeshwar stresses that, since young Afghans did not have the possibility to attend such live concerts in Afghanistan, this form of musical activity constitutes a new experience that many only got to know in Europe. At these community-internal events, dancing is of prime importance. Haroon finds joy in the ways that his music sparks enthusiasm with his audience (Andeshwar, 2017). Elaha Soroor gives similar accounts of the relevance of dancing and enjoying live music, stressing the audience's discontent when the musical codes that it expects are not met, as elaborated in the previous section (Soroor, 2020).

It is important to stress that musical identifications do not have to comply at all with ethnic ascriptions, and that this argument's focus on musical ethnicity runs the risk of culturalising forced migration. However, Afghans in Vienna, as in most European cities, face a strict anti-Afghan door policy in most public clubs, so that events for Afghans that feature Afghan music inevitably become the main spaces for musical entertainment and socialising. A study on musical identifications of young Afghans further shows that Afghan traditional musics and Afghan pop are of high relevance in navigating the refugee experience in Europe (Kölbl, 2018).

Moska Ebadi, a young Afghan woman born in Austria, specifies the affective qualities that Afghan musical performances can have in relation to belonging and cultural identity:

> It also conveys a feeling of home/belonging. For example, I can only speak for myself, because I haven't been over there [Afghanistan]: if I go to Afghan concerts here, I feel like: ok, I am not entirely away from my home.
>
> (interview with Moska Ebedi, 2017)[8]

An important scene for musical labour's affective effects are weddings. Musicians in diaspora weddings not only are musical artists recollecting the musical heritage of the homeland; they also bear considerable responsibility for establishing an atmosphere and spirit that is genuine to the respective community's shared narrative of belonging. Wedding musicians thus are 'workers who provide a service to clients catering to a customer base' (Sakakeeny, 2015: n.p.) – however, in diaspora settings, the customer base is equivalent to a community that shares histories of migration and ethnic or national affiliation.

Afghan musicians in Austria encounter a specific form of affective labour within events aimed to facilitate intercultural communication. These events are directed to a majority audience and thus constitute one of the very few spaces where Afghan music is heard publicly. Unlike other refugee groups, like the Syrian or Iraqi communities, Afghans in Austria rarely play on commercial stages. Within intercultural music events, Afghan musicians are expected to showcase musical diversity, cultural plurality and refugee inclusion. The affective labour commodifies Otherness, pleasing the majority population with 'cultured-ness' – at the same time adding social capital to not only the specific ethnic community but the imagined group of refugees in general. The symbolic economy of musical authenticity suggests a connectedness to routes of belonging and preserving of cultural expressivity in a hostile surrounding, a phenomenon that seems to incite nostalgia in many listeners regardless of their musical socialisation, as I could observe at such events. Afghan musicians here not only become 'good' ambassadors of their culture (as opposed to their 'bad' counterparts featured in negative media coverage), but they also balance the lack of and longing for cultural expressivity amongst majority Austrian audiences.

Conclusion

To establish a career in music, security and peace are necessary preconditions – therefore, for many musicians from Afghanistan, relocation is the only step in order to aspire to a career in music. Still, once in Europe, many Afghan musicians face difficulties in pursuing music as work, often relying on day jobs or side professions.

The specifics of asylum processes and restrictive asylum laws heavily impede musical labour. Refugees are not allowed to work without a positive asylum decision; however, musical labour takes place regardless of the legal conventions and with or without economic exchange. Once granted asylum, musicians face overwhelming bureaucracy concerning their freelance music making, which poses an additional factor of unease and concern during the process of realigning to a new environment, which was already shaped by a challenging necessity to constantly organise one's mere right to stay.

Afghan musicians play a crucial role in managing the emotions of refugees in Europe, especially at live performances. The affective efficacy of musical performances that pertain to the refugee experience is a crucial factor in evoking musical ethnicity and diasporic positionality. Bodily practices, like singing along and dancing, are of central relevance. The specific local positionality of Viennese Afghan musicians further adds to a diasporic appropriation of the city's soundscape. Specific musical creations by Afghan artists based in Austria, or for the matter also in Europe, pertain to a diasporic self-understanding at various local and regional levels.

Musical labour is crucial to the Afghan community, which is pressed by anti-Muslim racism and anti-Afghan sentiments in everyday life. Europe's

consistent narrative of a 'refugee crisis' and media tropes of Afghanistan's backwardness make Afghans the most ostracised community in Austria. Austrian majority society only rarely acknowledges Afghan cultural life – the musical labour done by Afghan musicians in Austria remains unheard. Afghan musical practice, however, is not to be romanticised as an act of resilience; refugees do not survive trauma and human rights violations because music made them resilient, but because of their political autonomy. Afghan musical practice is rather a meaningful tool in maintaining cultural agency and navigating diasporic settings by means of creative labour.

Notes

1 I thank my dear friends Bahram Ajezyar and Elaha Soroor as well as Haroon Andeshwar and Moska Ebadi for their support and help in the research that shaped this chapter.
2 During the asylum process, refugees are not allowed to do any kind of labour without an employment permit – which is 'usually only issued for seasonal work in the hospitality or agricultural sector and only for a duration of six months', as specified by the Public Employment Service Austria (AMS, 2021).
3 Since 2016, the Afghanistan Music Research Centre (AMRC) of the Hochschule für Musik Franz Liszt Weimar in Germany has been digitalising Radio Afghanistan's music archive (www.amrc-music.org).
4 Original in Dari, translation during the field interview by Hamidreza Ojaghi.
5 After a negative asylum decision issued by the Austrian Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum (BFA), asylum seekers have the possibility to file a complaint at the Austrian Federal Administrative Court (BVwG). These court protocols are accessible online, since the Austrian Federal Administrative Court publishes anonymised decisions on complaints against negative asylum decisions online.
6 Original German text:

> Weiter gab der Beschwerdeführer in der Erstbefragung auf die Rückfrage des Organwalters, warum er mit dem Tod bedroht werde, an, dass es in seiner Verwandtschaft sehr viele Koran-Gelehrte gebe, welche es als verboten empfinden würden, Musiker zu sein und bei einer Musikshow mitzumachen (BFA-Akt, AS 19).

All translations from the original German by the author.
7 Hofman (2015) and Tochka (2017) place their studies on affective labour in music in relation to socialist state policies and commonly shared musical practices like *Kafana* singing in Yugoslavia or *Estrada* artists in socialist Albania.
8 Translation from the original German by the author.

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9   'It's a Kind of Macho Culture'

Changes and Continuities in Young Female Musicians' Talk about Inequalities

Christina Scharff

Introduction

For a number of years, I have conducted research on inequalities in the classical music field. In doing so, my main focus has been on negotiations of gendered, racialised and classed hierarchies. As part of this work, I conducted over 60 qualitative in-depth interviews with female, early-career musicians in Berlin and London in 2012–2013 (Scharff, 2018). Six years later, amidst increased public debate on inequalities, I interviewed a similar demographic in London. In this second study, I also used semi-structured qualitative in-depth interviews and drew equally on discourse analysis as well as feminist cultural theory to analyse the research participants' accounts. As I demonstrate in the following, there were changes and continuities in the research participants' negotiations of inequalities in 2012–2013 and 2019.

When I first started to conduct research on the classical music profession in the early 2010s, conversations about, and awareness of, the lack of diversity amongst classical musicians were remarkably absent. This absence was notable not only in industry debates and discussions, but also in the interviews that I conducted with female, early-career musicians in London and Berlin in 2012–2013. Inequalities were 'unspeakable' (Gill, 2014); musicians, like many other cultural workers, tended to disarticulate the existence of gendered, racialised and classed power relations in the cultural sector workforce. This seems to have changed, at least in the UK. Discourse around diversity and equality has gained increased traction in the cultural and creative industries over recent years. In the classical music industry, there are now numerous initiatives that aim to tackle inequalities. These range from campaigns that promote female musicians (e.g., Keychange), some of which are intersectional in focus (HERA) or highlight particular issues, such as parenting (SWAP'ra – Supporting Women and Parents in Opera); organisations which promote accessibility and inclusion for those with disabilities (e.g., the National Open Youth Orchestra); and the Chineke! orchestra, which is Europe's first majority Black and minority-ethnic orchestra. As the double bass player Chi-Chi Nwanoku (2019) observed,

'the lack of diversity in British orchestras, and the arts in general, is at the forefront of current debates in the UK classical music industry'.

As this chapter demonstrates, the increased awareness of inequalities in the classical music profession can also be detected in musicians' talk about their experiences of working in the sector. Based on 18 qualitative in-depth interviews with female, early-career musicians conducted in London in early 2019, I show that inequalities have become 'speakable'. Comparing the findings from the 2019 study to the research I conducted in 2012–2013 (Scharff, 2018), I trace shifts and continuities in female musicians' sense-making of inequalities in the classical music profession. Beginning with a focus on continuities, the first section of this chapter demonstrates that some research participants expressed awareness of gender inequalities but employed individualist rhetoric to present themselves as unaffected by wider social structures. Some also stated that gender relations were changing, seemingly automatically, and portrayed women as the advantaged sex, at least in certain industry contexts. These rhetorical tropes, which serve to disarticulate gender inequalities, point to continuities between the accounts of female musicians interviewed in 2012–2013 and 2019.

As the second and third sections however illustrate, the disarticulation of inequalities was not a common feature of the data I collected in 2019. By contrast, numerous research participants provided detailed and insightful accounts of gendered, racial and classed hierarchies in classical music education and the industry at large. Far from being unspeakable, inequalities were explicitly named. Crucially, the majority of research participants also established direct links between wider structural inequalities and personal experiences. As I argue in the concluding remarks, the move towards a more open discussion of inequalities, and the ways in which they affect individual educational trajectories and career opportunities, marks an important shift. At the same time, I caution against providing an overly celebratory account of this shift. While awareness of inequalities represents an important first step in challenging the status quo, the discussion of inequalities *per se* does not necessarily encourage social change (Brook et al., 2021). Analyses of the turn towards diversity in classical music practice must examine the extent to which existing debates and initiatives facilitate social change and inquire into the wider cultural and discursive context in which these conversations and campaigns are embedded.

Details About the Study

Between January and April 2019, I interviewed 18 female, classically trained musicians who were at an early stage in their careers. Some were still finishing their training, though the majority had left music college in the past five years. In speaking to these musicians for 60 to 80 minutes, I inquired about their views on gender, racial and class inequalities in the classical music profession. Having interviewed 64 female, early-career musicians in Berlin

and London in 2012–2013 (Scharff, 2018), and found that they overwhelmingly disavowed the existence and effects of ongoing gendered, classed and racialised exclusions, I wanted to explore how inequalities were discussed amongst a comparable demographic six years on.

In both studies, I spoke to singers, conductors, composers and instrumentalists. Reflecting the underrepresentation of Black and minority-ethnic musicians, as well as players from working-class backgrounds, the majority of my research participants were white and middle-class. In 2019, I spoke to 3 research participants who identified as mixed race (Black-African/white; Pakistani/white and East Asian/white), 1 as East Asian and 14 as white. One research participant described her background as lower middle-class, 3 as working-class and 14 as middle-class. The research participants were aged between 23 and 31, with the majority being in their late twenties. Most research participants were from the UK, although I also spoke to women who were from France, Australia and Hong Kong, respectively.

As was the case in my previous study, all interviews were recorded, transcribed and subsequently analysed using discourse analysis. Discourse analysis has a long history of exploring how inequalities are constructed and negotiated in talk (Harvey et al., 2015) and therefore serves as a useful interpretative framework. Discourse analysis attempts to uncover patterns in talk by identifying recurring themes and tropes. Rather than blaming individual speakers, discourse analysts are interested in exploring the ideological and political functions of the discursive repertoires they identify. This means that the extracts I provide are examples of the talk of many speakers and it is for this reason that I do not include demographic information about each participant. This is not only consistent with a discourse analytic approach (see Taylor and Littleton, 2012), but also has the advantage of ensuring the research participants' anonymity is protected. In an industry that is overwhelmingly white and middle-class, and where men continue to be over-represented in some sections and sectors (e.g., brass, percussion, conducting, composition, to name just a few), it would be easy to identify particular research participants if I disclosed their instrument or racial and class background. The way I present the data is thus informed by my analytical approach and by ethical concerns.

Continuities: Individualisation, Progress Narratives and the Positioning of Women as the Advantaged Sex

When asking the 2019 research participants about their experiences of working in the classical music profession, specifically in relation to the ways in which hierarchies of gender, race and class had affected them personally, some drew on individualist narratives. Emma discussed the drinking culture that still seems to be prominent amongst brass players. Some brass sections, which continue to be male dominated, have a culture where players

drink before, during and after concerts, and expect other musicians to do so, too. When discussing this ongoing trend with me, Emma, a brass player, called it a 'kind of a macho culture' and subsequently stated 'but it didn't actually affect me'. By using the term 'macho', she gestures towards a gendered dimension, but simultaneously presents herself as unaffected by this macho culture, thus disavowing the links between wider social structures and personal experiences. As Bauman (2001: 9) has argued when discussing the notion of individualisation, personal experiences are increasingly told in a way that 'excludes or suppresses (prevents from articulation) the possibility of tracking down the links connecting individual fate to the ways and means by which society as a whole operates'.

Individualist narratives were not only evoked in relation to gender issues, but also in the context of acknowledgments that the majority of classical musicians in the UK are white. In response to my question of whether she had ever wondered if 'this is a gender thing that's going on here?', Kimberly stated: 'I think I've experienced age things. I think often people judge me for being young … I think that's the thing that I notice the most, actually, that, you know, yeah, age related more so than gender'. She then talked about moments of misrecognition, such as entering a room and her co-workers being surprised by how young she looks. She went on to say:

> KIMBERLY: My last name is very Anglo-Saxon, and I am not *[laughs]*. So, people often are confused when I walk in as well. I've had a couple of times because my name, you know, I probably seem totally English by the name that I have, but that's *[laughs]* not the case.
> CHRISTINA: It's another moment of misrecognition. 'She looks younger and…'
> KIMBERLY: 'And she's Asian' *[laughs]*. Yeah, but I don't … no, I've not. I mean, there is very clearly a dominance of, of European people working in classical music, I think. But, I, yeah, I don't think I've found that a problem personally […]. It's not really been something that I'm worried about, which is good, I guess.

Similar to Emma, Kimberly disavows the potential effects of gender and racial inequalities on her working life.

Kimberly's statements resonate with Cindy's claim about racial inequalities:

> My mum worried a lot when I decided to stay [in London] because of the racism, like I think like, white people's dominance in the western world. But I didn't feel like, actually, London is full of open-minded people. I never got turned down because I'm Asian.

Cindy explicitly refers to racism and ongoing racial hierarchies in her statement, and yet contrasts this with Londoners' open-mindedness to

position herself as personally unaffected by 'white people's dominance in the western world'. In Cindy's narrative, but also in the other narratives discussed so far, personal experiences become uncoupled from broader social dimensions, resonating with the wider trend of individualisation (Bauman, 2001) and echoing existing research on negotiations of inequalities in the cultural and creative industries (e.g., Gill, 2014; O'Brien, 2015) and in the classical music profession (e.g., Scharff, 2018).

In addition to individualist narratives, some research participants drew on other discursive patterns that I had identified in the previous study, namely a so-called progress discourse and the positioning of women as the advantaged sex. By drawing on a progress discourse, research participants emphasised that gender relations had already changed or that they would change, and that such change happens almost automatically. Talking about the ways in which extra work is unequally distributed amongst freelance musicians, often disadvantaging women, Sally stated: 'I think as people are getting older and leaving the profession, I think it's getting better and better. Because people are seeing that it needs to be more diverse'. Offering a similarly hopeful account, Kimberly observed:

> If you look at the accompanists that are working, particularly the old guard, the people who have been playing for 20, 30, 40 years, they are all men. So, it's interesting that I think as my generation comes up, I think as we get older and work more, I think it will be less of a problem.

In these accounts, change is not only conceptualised as happening automatically with a younger generation of players entering the profession, but it is also portrayed as progressive. The possibility that things may change for the worse, which would indicate the persistence of sexism and other forms of discrimination, is not evoked.

Resonating with the optimistic outlook that underpins the progress discourse, some research participants portrayed being female as advantageous in certain industry contexts. Further discussing the drinking culture amongst brass players, Emma and Isabelle made the following statements:

> I was actually wondering whether being a woman would be an advantage in there, because I could kind of claim that I didn't, like I couldn't handle having a drink and that kind of stuff and get out of it much easier than a male student would be able to because to them, they'd be kind of expected to kind of front up.
>
> (Emma)

> I don't ever drink before I play. And I find … I think it's easier as a girl to get away with that. Not get away with it, to do it [...]. They all go to the pub and I'll always say 'Thanks, but no' or I'll get a soft drink. But

> I think if I was a guy, it would be 'Oh, go on, just half a pint.' With me, they just actually, they just leave it when I say 'No.' So, I think it's been easier in lots of ways like that to be a girl.
>
> (Isabelle)

These statements position women as advantaged, at least in relation to the drinking culture amongst male brass players. And while it may be easier for female brass players to turn down a drink, Emma's and Isabelle's narratives elide the exclusionary effects of this form of socialising. Recruitment in the classical music profession is often informal and based on networking (McAndrew and Everett, 2015). Spending time in a pub with colleagues is an occasion where work opportunities are passed on. The associations of brass instruments and alcohol consumption with masculinity, however, mean that female players are more easily excluded from these spaces and networking opportunities.

Some research participants also portrayed women as the advantaged sex because they could capitalise on their appearances to get work. In response to my question about her experiences of being a female musician, Molly told me:

> I think, so overall, I don't feel like I've, that like it's been a negative experience at all. In fact, in some ways, maybe it's, it's sort of helped my career a little bit. Because, I mean, as awful as this sounds but, you know, if you're, if you're a girl, you play cello. It's quite an appealing thing to have on videos. And so, from the pop side, I think it's quite useful to be a girl. And in some ways, I actually think, it's a bit more unfair on male musicians.

Molly's statement constructs women as the advantaged sex, at least 'in some ways'. Notably, female players' alleged advantage is based on appearance, attractiveness ('it's quite an appealing thing to have on videos') and youthfulness ('if you are a girl'). My analysis of the interviews conducted in 2012–2013 identified a similar discursive trope (Scharff, 2018). As I argued then, the required looks are often narrowly defined and often relate to youth; pop work tends to be regarded as less prestigious; and the construction of women as privileged disavows some of the disadvantages that are related to the emphasis on their appearance and (hetero-)sexual attractiveness, such as the prevalence of sexual harassment in the classical music profession (Incorporated Society of Musicians, 2018; Scharff, 2020). On the whole, the trope of women as the advantaged sex – at least in certain industry contexts – the progress discourse and individualist narratives not only fulfil the rhetorical function of disarticulating ongoing gender and intersecting inequalities, but also constitute discursive patterns that I identified in my previous study on negotiations of inequalities. The comparison between

young female musicians' accounts in 2012–2013 and 2019 thus highlights some continuities but also, as I will illustrate in the following sections, important shifts.

Changes: Articulating Gender Inequalities and Linking them to Personal Experiences

There were also changes in the ways in which the research participants engaged with inequalities between the two studies. Most notably, gender, racial and class inequalities in the classical music profession no longer seemed 'unspeakable' (Gill, 2014). Conducting the interviews for my 2012–2013 study, I often felt uneasy when asking the 'gender question' and sometimes research participants did not seem to understand what my related questions about racial and class inequalities were about (Scharff, 2018). This time around, however, I felt that the research participants were very open to discussing inequalities. In fact, many stated that there has been more discussion about the lack of diversity in the classical music profession. According to Felicity, conversations about the low number of female composers were now 'mainstream'; Jessica argued that 'talking about feminism is more … It, like, it's on the agenda of just young people'; and Sally felt that 'people are obviously more aware of' inequalities, 'because it's been in the news'.

Resonating with the shift towards a more open discussion of inequalities in the wider, classical music industry, numerous research participants shared stories of having experienced unequal power relations. Isabelle told me about a male teacher who had taught masterclasses at the music college she had attended:

> In my first class, he just sort of said 'Oh, wow,' and I went up there. Instead of just like … He gave me ten kisses in front of everyone. And then he said, 'Wow, you have such lovely legs' when I stood to play. […] It kind of just got worse over the next few times he came. And he would always be talking inappropriately, talking about sex toys and he'd be talking, and he'd make me whip my arms and he'd be like, 'Oh yes, you whip so hard.' And basically, everyone [watching the lesson] had come to expect that he was going to be like this. So, they were sitting there waiting and waiting to laugh. And he would enjoy it, that kind of reaction from them. And I eventually got then super self-conscious about it and also quite upset because it was like 'I've practiced for hours for this class and then I'm now trying to perform my piece and all he cared about is how I look or what I'm wearing.' It was just so stupid and immature.

Isabelle calls the teacher's behaviour inappropriate and openly acknowledges the effect his misconduct had on her by stating that it made her feel 'upset' and 'super self-conscious'. This story contrasts with her earlier statement – which

she had made in the context of discussing the drinking culture amongst brass players – that being a woman has 'been easier in lots of ways' (see section one). As discourse analysts have shown, research participants' stances can shift throughout an interview. Crucially, contradictions in talk also constitute data and it is the aim of the analyst to explore the ideological and political work these contradictions perform (Edwards, 2003). While Isabelle constructs women as the advantaged sex in relation to the drinking culture amongst brass players, she portrays the teacher's actions as 'inappropriate'. She thus constructs the effects of gender inequalities as context-specific; as a student, she was made to feel self-conscious, whereas the drinking culture amongst brass players means that it can be advantageous to be a woman. Stances on gender inequalities could thus shift throughout the interview.

However, the sheer number and range of stories about personal experiences of inequalities in the classical music world mark a distinct shift from my earlier findings as well as previous studies that also pointed to the disarticulation of inequalities in the cultural and creative industries (see, for example, O'Brien, 2015; Wreyford, 2018). Felicity talked about her experience of studying composition at an elite university, telling me:

> I would say that socially, not particularly the music students, but socially it was a very misogynistic place. But I would also say that there were particular members of, like, teaching fellows and directors of music and staff, who were extremely misogynistic and would go out of their way to belittle me. And also, you know, kind of tell me that I was basically too feminine to be taken seriously.

Felicity uses political language by employing the term 'misogynistic' twice. Similarly, Sally pointed to sexist beliefs and attitudes amongst music educators:

> A teacher that I really respect, said to me, was, I wasn't sure whether I was going to tell you this or not, but we were talking once and he was like, 'Oh, you're like, such a great [brass instrument] player. You need to be a bit more memorable though when you go to places.' And I was like, 'Right, okay.' He was like 'Think of' – then he mentioned two other girls in the department. And he was like 'You know, like they leave, like, a lasting impression. And that's the kind of thing you need to aim for.' And these two girls are both stick thin, blonde, you know, they dress very well. And you think, 'Are you implying I need to look or behave more like these people? Would you have ever said that to one of the boys in my year?'

As opposed to Felicity, Sally does not use explicitly political language in her statement, but nevertheless demonstrates an awareness of the gendered dimension of her experience by asking 'Would you have ever said that to

one of the boys in my year?' Her initial uncertainty as to whether or not she should tell me about this particular incident potentially indicates that these experiences were unspeakable up until relatively recently.

Isabelle's, Felicity's and Sally's experiences all centre on classical music education. However, the research participants provided numerous accounts that highlighted gender inequalities in professional settings, too. Juniper told me:

> I did something last summer where over half the band was female, so there you go. But then it was pointed out so much that I was like 'Why does it need to be mentioned so much?' And actually, a band I'm defin- itely in now, there's one girl in it permanently, and then there was one day where I was on. She was on and another dep, and the boys were joking a little bit too much about how they didn't… They were like 'Oh, it's too feminist here'. I was like 'What do you mean? We are just doing our job.' That made me a little bit cross.

Equally, Jessica, a composer, was aware that:

> Really often there's workshops or whatever that … where I'm the only woman in the room. Maybe apart from the players or whatever. And that is, you know, it's there. It's present. It's something I've thought about. And it, you know, it doesn't stop me from feeling able to speak or from going. But it is still, like, something that makes me feel a bit excluded. And I definitely feel more defensive.

And Suzanne, an opera singer, talked at length about the ways in which female singers' weight was policed:

> I've had coaches before where I've been told that I need to lose weight and that I need to be smaller. And it's just like so frustrating because there's so many physically larger male opera singers and no one bats an eyelid. No one even mentions it. It doesn't even come into their mind. Whereas for women it's just like such a big no-no.

Juniper, Jessica and Suzanne all refer to gender inequalities that they have encountered recently, or still experience on a regular basis. Crucially, these inequalities are presented as consequential: Juniper tells me that the jokes made her a 'little bit cross'; Jessica emphasises that being the only woman in the room can lead to feeling 'a bit excluded' and 'more defensive'; and Suzanne stresses that the policing of female opera singers' weight is 'frus- trating'. Gender inequalities are thus *not* presented as something that is out there, but does not have an effect on individual working lives. Instead, by talking openly about their feelings, and highlighting that 'it's there. It's present' (Jessica), wider structural inequalities – in relation, for example,

to the underrepresentation of female brass players or composers – are very much linked to personal experiences. As such, these narratives break with the process of individualisation that constituted a key trend in discussions of gender inequalities in the 2012–2013 interviews. While some of the 2019 research participants disarticulated gender inequalities by using individualist rhetoric (see section one), the majority was not only happy to discuss inequalities at length and in detail, but also related them to their feelings. The number and range of stories about personal experiences of inequalities points to shifts in female musicians' sense-making of gendered hierarchies in classical music education and in the industry. As the subsequent section will illustrate, this shift was also evident in discussions of racial and class inequalities.

Sharing Experiences of Racialised and Classed Exclusions

Beatrice told me that her parents 'are both from working-class families' and subsequently described the 'people around her' as 'being so lucky':

> Like, my partner, he went to a, like, you know music school. So, from age eight he was at a boarding school studying music. And I hadn't come across these until I was, much later in life, because I'd put off taking music, kind of, seriously by going to uni [rather than music college]. And then, when I find that kind of stuff out, I just think that is so unfair. You know, like, that's so unfair. I didn't even know these schools existed until I was, like, you know, 21. And to know that these young people had been, you know, already had a head start on me before I got to secondary school. I just, like. I find that so unfair. So, I basically feel like I had to do quite a lot of graft, practice, hard work, in order to have the career that I'm lucky to have. And I feel like other people don't have to do so much graft basically. So obviously, I have an interest of, when I've done all this hard work … you know, I paid for the fees, I had to pay my masters for myself. And then to see that, even after doing all of that I'm … I had less chance than a man. Just like, I find that so annoying. You know, 'cause, it's just so unfair. It's just a very unfair industry.

Beatrice points to the intersections between class and gender in her educational and career trajectory and emphasises several times that the industry is 'unfair'. As a woman with parents from a working-class background, Beatrice is acutely aware that she did not have access to the educational and career opportunities that men and musicians from middle-class backgrounds benefit from. She thus highlights the effects of socio-economic divisions and gender inequalities on her educational and career trajectory, establishing clear links between wider structural constraints and personal experience.

Likewise, Jenny told me that she had found going to music college 'quite daunting at first', pointing out that she had 'never played in an orchestra

before, and everybody around me had for years and years basically'. She also remembered an incident where her music college peers asked her which Mahler symphony she liked best, telling me that she 'had never heard of Mahler' and just

> picked a number that was lower than the highest one. And then googled it later. So, I had a lot to learn. But I love playing. And, yeah, just put my head down and kind of worked hard, tried to catch everyone up.

Similar to Beatrice, Jenny worked hard to catch up with her peers. As Bull (2019) has shown in her research on class and classical music education, students from working and lower-middle class backgrounds are invested in hard work as a response to an acute sense of 'precarious belonging' (71) to the middle-class culture of the classical music world. Earlier in the interview, Jenny had discussed her parents' occupations, telling me that her mother was a childminder and her father a math teacher, but that he had worked in a factory when she grew up. Hard work is considered as one possible way to obtain a sense of belonging, bringing to the fore the classed dimensions of Beatrice's and Jenny's statements.

In relation to the wider arguments presented here, it is important to note that Jenny not only discussed how her class background had affected her experience of going to music college, but that she also showed awareness of how her socio-economic positioning affected her career opportunities. Having stated that she had gone to her 'local state school', she told me that she found it hard to get a teaching job in a private school:

> So, I recently applied for a teaching job in a private school, and there, I think it's actually really important when they look at your education. If you yourself have been to a private school, then that actually holds quite a lot of weight, which, in my opinion, is complete rubbish and doesn't make any, any difference […]. But just from my, just from seeing my friends and where they teach and where they themselves went to school. It is so, it seems so obvious that people who went to prestigious schools and private schools can far more easily get into good schools themselves to teach. I don't know whether … I don't know. Is it snobbery, perhaps? I'm not sure.

Jenny describes private schools' perceived bias in favour of privately schooled teachers as 'complete rubbish', wondering whether 'it's snobbery' and thus alluding to a classed dynamic. With her 'local secondary school' education, Jenny positions herself as disadvantaged and names what she perceives to be the effects of her class background on professional opportunities. Again, personal experiences are put into the context of wider socio-economic divisions and the effects of inequalities on individual lives are speakable and traceable.

Likewise, Ruby told me about a particular instrumental section in an elite orchestra, stating that it was

> all white men of a certain age. Sort of, maybe the youngest was 35, the oldest was [unclear], upper limit. But yeah, sort of, in that bracket there's just sort of a type of person who, who does that, and there wasn't … I never really felt like there was any space to be, like, black or a woman.

Further into the interview, Ruby stated that

> sometimes, I joke … you know, I mean, intersectionality is not a joke, but, yeah, it's like, which of my isms am I feeling most today? And it's like, in some spaces … So in Chineke! for example, if … I think the fact … it's because of their intersectionality, the fact that they are all black and have experienced racism actually meant it's like, by far the least sexist […]. This doesn't work across the board, but certainly, yeah, so in Chineke!, like no-one is going to be, like, racist, but yet, they, they may be … Whereas in an all-female orchestra they may be homophobic or they may be … So there's certainly, it's like I'm playing on which ism is … is resonating on that day.

In referring to 'intersectionality', Ruby uses political language and points to different forms of discrimination – sexism, racism and homophobia – and whether she is likely to experience one (or more) of them in particular work settings, such as in Chineke! or an all-female orchestra. In doing so, Ruby draws attention to the ways in which her positionings as black, female and lesbian affect her professional experiences, contrasting an elite orchestra, where there is no space to be 'black or woman', with Chineke!, which is portrayed as much more inclusive, not just in relation to race, but also gender. Again, and similar to her peers, Ruby draws direct links between her positioning and existing exclusions in the orchestral world, pointing to the ways in which they affect her in different settings and, crucially, emphasising that particular contexts are more prone to specific 'isms' (specifically, racism, sexism and homophobia) than others. Thus, gender, racial and class inequalities, but also heteronormativity are all presented as affecting individual experiences. It is notable, however, that the accounts presented in this section are from research participants who are marginalised, especially in terms of their class and racial backgrounds. Crucially, and as I discuss in detail elsewhere (Scharff, 2021), whiteness and its associated privileges were not consistently discussed by the research participants. Similarly, being from a middle-class background tended to constitute a normalised position. Often, privilege remained uninterrogated which, as I will argue briefly in the conclusion, risks reinstating existing normativities in the classical music world and beyond. This observation highlights the need to interrogate class

and racial inequalities from a range of perspectives, including a recognition of privilege.

Discussion and Conclusion

In this chapter, I traced the changes and continuities in young, female musicians' sense-making of inequalities in the classical music world. By analysing interviews conducted in 2019 and comparing the findings to data I had collected in 2012–2013, I argued that inequalities are no longer unspeakable. Resonating with the increased awareness of the lack of diversity in the classical music industry, the research participants spoke about gendered, racialised and classed exclusions openly. This is an important shift, but one, as the first section of this chapter has shown, that is not absolute. Some research participants portrayed women as the advantaged sex, used a progress discourse to portray change as happening automatically and drew on individualist narratives to construct themselves as unaffected by structural inequalities. These discussions of inequalities did not break with the ways in which musicians and cultural workers talked about gendered, racialised and classed power relations several years ago. However, and as I argued in the second and third analytical sections of this chapter, the sheer number and range of stories about personal experiences of inequalities that were present in the interviews mark a distinct shift. The research participants provided insightful and detailed accounts of the different forms of discrimination that they had experienced in the classical music world, highlighting gender but also racial as well as class inequalities and, as in Ruby's account, heteronormativity. Importantly, these inequalities were also presented as affecting individual feelings, thus breaking with the process of individualisation.

As Gill (2018) has pointed out, 'it is only when we begin to acknowledge how unequal our cultural industries are that we can truly start to work on challenging this'. Against this backdrop, and especially the previously documented unspeakability of inequalities, the increased awareness of gendered, racialised and classed power relations marks an important shift. At the same time, we have to avoid an overly celebratory account. As Brook, O'Brien and Taylor (2021) have argued, the recognition of inequality is not enough to ensure social change. As I demonstrate in detail elsewhere (Scharff, 2021), the research participants' detailed discussion and recognition of inequalities does not necessarily pave the way for social change. Discussions about inequalities risk becoming an end in itself, rather than a means to facilitate change (Banet-Weiser, 2018), and can be characterised by a fatalist sentiment that presents structural transformation as impossible (Orgad, 2019). And when inequalities are discussed without an interrogation of privilege, existing normativities risk being reinstalled (Hastie and Rimmington, 2014). My wider findings resonate with Brook's et al.

argument (2021) that there is a need to sound notes for caution, and that awareness and discussion of inequalities does not *automatically* lead to social change.

In addition to exploring the extent to which talk about inequalities paves the way for social change, it is important to analyse the wider cultural and discursive context in which these conversations take place. As I have shown in another publication (Scharff, 2020), the research participants' incisive discussions of inequalities often co-existed with a neoliberal outlook. Discussions about positive action/discrimination (Noon, 2010) were, for example, characterised by an investment in merit and the notion of meritocracy. Several research participants acknowledged structural inequalities but stated that they wanted to be hired on the basis of their merit as players, rather than particular demographic characteristics. As Littler (2018: 2) has however demonstrated, the language of meritocracy has become 'a key ideological term in the reproduction of neoliberal culture'. Many research participants wanted to achieve, and be seen to achieve, on the basis of hard work and merit. Crucially, hard work, merit and competitive participation are not just principles, but have become a moral obligation under neoliberalism (Littler, 2018). The research participants' investment in merit thus represented a discursive site where an acute awareness of inequalities co-existed with a neoliberal outlook.

In conclusion, there is not only a question about the extent to which talk about inequalities facilitates wider social change, but also about the ways in which such discussions may align with, rather than disrupt, dominant cultural currents such as neoliberalism. This means that there is an ongoing need for critical, scholarly analysis of the ways in which inequalities are talked about, and the ideological and political effects these conversations have. Such analysis will not only shed light on the ways in which musicians make sense of the contexts that they work in, but is also crucial when exploring the effectiveness of current and future initiatives that seek to tackle the lack of diversity in classical music education and in the industry more generally. The insights presented here caution against an overly positive evaluation of the shift towards a more open discussion of inequalities in the classical music world.

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10 Women Working in the Music Business

An Alumni Study

Sally Anne Gross

Introduction: From a Wrecking Ball to a Reckoning

This research started with a feminist snap – a moment when I realised that the paper I had started to write back in 2019 for a keynote speech that I gave at isaScience International Conference for Interdisciplinary Research, entitled 'Free Music Free Labour – Women Producing Music In the Music Digital Economy', in which I was questioning the potential of women-led music communities to deliver any kind of liberation for women music producers, needed to be urgently rethought in light of the momentous events of a global pandemic and political unrest following the murder of George Floyd by a police officer in the United States of America on May 25, 2020. The reverberations of these two events appeared to act like a wrecking ball as they fell upon the master's house of the global music corporations as they shook their professed liberal, egalitarian, meritocratic values (Bennett, 2018).

In the midst of the global crisis, this chapter transformed into virtual fieldwork, reporting back from a lockdown. I called out via Twitter, Instagram and email to my students, my friends and my co-workers. Inspired by the work of Ahmed (2017), and in the spirit of what she has called the 'Feminist Killjoy', this work proceeds as a form of questioning what it might mean to live a feminist musical life. The first question always being, as Ahmed (2017) notes, what do we mean when we say *women*? Her answer is 'all those who travel under the sign of *women*' (Ahmed, 2017: 14, emphasis in original) and that includes gender non-conforming and non-binary LGBTQ and Black, Asian and ethnic minority persons. I shall use the term women here in this fully inclusive sense.

This chapter additionally contributes to a growing body of discourse that considers the working conditions of music and the wider creative industries (Banks, 2017; Bennett, 2018; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011), the relationship between culture and subjectivity (Ahmed, 2017; Born and Devine, 2015; DeNora, 2000; Gill, 2017; Gross and Musgrave, 2020; McRobbie, 2020) and the role of professional practitioners within higher education in the UK as intermediaries between the university and industry (Ashton and Noonan, 2013; Gross and Musgrave, 2020; Oakley, 2013). It adds into

these debates the ways in which social media activism, notions of feminism and post-feminist sensibilities inform the ongoing discussions of inequality, exploitation and exclusion within the UK music industry landscape. By hearing directly from these women, it aims to explore the ways in which music mediates their everyday lives and social relationships (Nowak and Haynes, 2018).

The discussions and new initiatives around gender inequality in the music industries in the UK can be traced back to the media storms created by #MeToo and what Bennett (2018) identified as a critical moment in 2013 involving Miley Cyrus and a Wrecking Ball (O'Connor, 2013)[1]. However, nothing from the gender debates sparked by #MeToo back in 2013 could have predicted the widespread acknowledgement of structural racism and inequality that followed the events of the summer of 2020. The global music industries responded with a display of solidarity, when they stopped working for a day to take time out 'to learn', #TheShowMustBePaused (Wheeler, 2020). This second wave of 'industrial reflexivity' (Bennett, 2018) was widely supported by artists and music professionals alike but it was equally heavily criticised by many Black artists and activists as a shallow gesture without any real political implications for Black music or the wider community (Music Week, 2020). By the end of 2020, all of the major music companies espoused support for racial equality, #BlackLivesMatter, gender equality, diversity and inclusivity as well as wellbeing and mental health (BPI, 2021).

Since 2018, the activity around gender inequality in the UK music industry has grown expediently. The publishing of the report *Counting the Music Industry: The Gender Gap. A Study of Gender Inequality in the UK Music Industry* (Bain, 2019) comprehensively revealed the level of gender inequality in terms of artists and songwriters within the recording and publishing industries and was widely reported in the mainstream media. Later in the same year, Bain created the *F List* by reaching out to women via social media. She did this as a reaction to the complaints from festival promoters and live agents who continually claimed there were not enough female musicians for them to book (Snapes, 2021). The *F List* provides an up-to-date directory of female musicians, songwriters and composers, and its creation was enthusiastically welcomed by female musicians. Additionally, *F List* members and directors actively use their platform to call out music events that lack diversity (Bain, 2019). In July 2020, WomeninCTRL, a non-profit organisation that lobbies for women's equality in the UK music industries, published its report *Seat at The Table*, which revealed the racial and gender inequities in leadership positions in music industry trade bodies (Khan, 2020). Again, these findings were widely reported and caused a storm of social media activity and discussion, which led to online events and fed into the initiatives that have subsequently been launched within the UK music industries.

Theoretical Pathways

Using the approach Ahmed offers in her book, *Living a Feminist Life* (2017), of writing oneself in as a way of developing a praxis to engage with the messy contradictory ways in which feminist thoughts and desires become entangled and embodied in everyday living, this chapter hopes to contribute to the ongoing feminist restoration project that seeks to place women and other marginalised subjects at the heart of music histories (Bennett, 2018: 36). In this pathfinding way, the research for this chapter is loosely based on a study conducted by my friend and sometime mentor Sheila Whiteley, alongside her two colleagues Elly Tams and Dan Laughey at the University of Salford, in Greater Manchester, UK, that was published in 2004. The research entitled 'Women and the Cultural Industries', funded by the European Union's European Social Fund, provides historic evidence that many of the issues concerning gender inequalities in the creative industries were already considered a barrier to the development of the creative industries. The Salford study examined the experiences of students and graduates from the University's Creative Industries courses, which included the UK's first-ever course in popular music production. The Salford study provides a historic snapshot in three ways. Firstly, it offers evidence of the ways in which women alumni considered the usefulness of their degrees in relation to their career ambitions. Secondly, it gives some insight into these women's experiences of work and looking for work. Thirdly, it gives the researchers an opportunity to examine how these graduates 'talk about and perceived gender relations in the cultural and creative industries' (Whitely et al., 2004: 48). Aiming as it was in a feminist mode to 'redress the imbalance by providing specific insights into the barriers to women's progression in the cultural industry' (Whiteley et al., 2004: V), thus provided a starting place and set of guiding questions with which to shape this research. Using the Salford study helped to historically contextualise the ongoing gender debates within the current music ecosphere (Gross and Musgrave, 2020). Additionally, the Salford study provides an opportunity to reflect on the role of the teacher-practitioners, the progression of feminist ideas and the integration of neoliberal entrepreneurialism that is now thoroughly embedded and entangled into the lives of musical subjects (Gross and Musgrave, 2020).

McRobbie, in her book *Feminism and the Politics of Resilience* (2020), suggests that this new formation of postfeminism once again appears to reinforce political ambition and conversations on solidarity as it simultaneously reduces such demands to individual action. Amidst this cacophony of activity, McRobbie offers up the '*dispositif*' of 'perfect-imperfect-resilience' as a way of thinking and making sense of what she calls this post-postfeminism. In her analysis, McRobbie suggests the 'perfect' is a white, heteronormative, upper middle-class, feminine ideal with a 'feminist underpinning' (McRobbie, 2020: 2). Such perfection then requires the 'imperfect'

as it offers a mechanism with which to deal with the majority that fall out-side of the 'perfect', with the 'imperfect' acting as counter lever to the 'per-fect'. The 'imperfect' allows for limited diversions from the ideal, for the striving to continue and also for the ideal to be held in place unchallenged. This then begats the need for 'resilience' – the point of recuperation, the point of self-recovery, so that one can return to the struggle for the 'perfect' with no rebuilding necessary, only self-care (McRobbie, 2020). As an instru-ment of postfeminism, the elements of 'perfect-imperfect-resilience' act to keep the neoliberal ideology of individualism and the myth of meritocracy in place like a tourniquet.

There is not enough space here to fully consider the implications or pos-sibilities of these new formations of digital or neo-postfeminism, but the usefulness of a postfeminist sensibility as suggested by Gill (2017) and the naming of 'commodity-feminism' are still important as the contradictions and complexities of this new wave of feminist activists are clearly subject to them.

Chipping Away at the 'Brick Wall': On Becoming a Critical Practitioner

My own position as course leadership of the MA in Music Business Management at the University of Westminster (UK) is instructive here insofar as it is an example of the ways in which knowledge production on such creative industries courses can be shaped in often unpredictable ways. The figure of the industry teacher-practitioner was key in the expansion of industry-facing popular music courses that included music technology, performance and music business in the UK (Gross and Musgrave, 2020). The role of teacher-practitioner is to help students understand not only the skills needed to work within the creative industries, but also how it feels – the emotional and affective aspects of becoming a creative industry profes-sional (Ashton and Noonan, 2013). The teacher-practitioners were siloed conceptually within the academy as part of the employability agendas of making students fit for work, rather than engaging in critical or theoretical work that might question these educational policies or industry agendas. Although teacher-practitioners are often a rich source of insider knowledge and industry networks that can benefit the students' career development, these supposed advantages are not easily measured within the academy.

Within the music department at the University of Westminster, the four courses on offer in 2016 and even now in 2021, reflect the hierarchy of tech-nical abilities and tendencies that exist in music production cultures: master's programs in Audio Engineering and Music Business Management as well as an undergraduate provision that was divided into Performance and Commercial Music Production. These divisions have several opaque manifestations that impact directly on gender as well as racial and social economic outcomes and disparities, even though they are paradoxically

aimed at producing a widening participation agenda (Born and Devine, 2015). Specifically, they centralise individual, masculinised ideals of authorship/production (Born and Devine, 2015). In doing so, non-male students become 'contributors' – session musicians, marketeers, administrators – and additionally reproduce neoliberal ideals of entrepreneurship that again reinforce gender binaries and racial stereotypes (Born and Divine, 2015; McRobbie, 2016). The centralising of employability and transferable skills (Ashton, 2013) leaves little time for imagining different modes of production, let alone living (Gross and Musgrave, 2020). My own attempts within the department to challenge these practices and to develop new approaches were shut down in the male-dominated music department meetings. The MA in Music Business Management has produced 289 female graduates and 226 male graduates since 2004. In comparison, the MA in Audio Production at the University of Westminster, which was launched in 1998, has produced only 78 female graduates alongside 394 male graduates. This data reflects the sharp disparity in music production cultures whereby audio technology appears to create a wall of gender inequality, particularly within educational institutions (Born and Divine, 2015). In 2013, there was a change in leadership: a new female Dean was appointed and a restructuring of the school started. This led me to be resituated in a new cluster of creative industries management courses. At first, I felt completely adrift; however, in the end it allowed me the opportunity to develop new strategies away from the men in music. Space and distance, it turned out, was what I needed.

Creating space for women is a specific Second Wave feminist strategy that aims to give women an opportunity to explore and imagine new possibilities (Ahmed, 2017). As Nowak and Haynes (2018) point out, uncovering the mundane and purposeful practices of music knowledge acquisition is critical to highlight the multiple meanings that musical ambition takes in the life of non-male music production students.

In 2016, I and a small group of women instigated a 48-hour occupation of the recording studios situated at the university's Harrow Campus, which is situated in Middlesex, Greater London. The project, called 'Let's Change the Record', aimed to confront the issues facing women producing music by transforming the gendered space of the recording studio (Gross, 2017). One of the main takeaways from the event was how different it felt for all of the participants to be teaching and learning in an environment dominated by women – this was a totally novel experience for all of us.

Research Methodology

For this study, I adapted the format and questions from the Salford study (Whiteley et al., 2004), adding in new questions on the impact and use of social media in career development and working practices, as well as questions regarding the current debates on inequalities in music, specifically addressing sexuality, ageism, race, class and disability. I sent out the

questionnaire via email and then conducted ten one-hour, semi-structured interviews that took place online between November 2019 and January 2021.

For the most part, my relationship with this group of interviewees started when they joined the course as students and progressed as they graduated to one of informal mentorship and friendship. Most of this group contribute as guest speakers and some are employed as part-time visiting lecturers on the MA in Music Business Management. As such, we are a close group of friends and colleagues, frequently seeking support and guidance from one another. Hearing from them offers a unique opportunity to hear from an 'insider' perspective how the processes of musical subjectivities are experienced (Gross and Musgrave, 2020). As Nowak and Haynes (2018) argue, using friendship as a methodological approach enables access to the diverse cultural practices in which individuals are embedded and enables a deeper excavation of the mechanism through which music operates.

These alumni were aged between 28 and 55 years at the time of the interviews and had graduated from the MA in Music Business Management between 2010 and 2020. They are all in various stages of their career development. The majority described themselves as music industry professionals, with six employed in full-time positions at major music companies. Ten had additional music-based projects or music business ventures outside of their main 'day' jobs. Everyone in this sub-group described their activities as 'work'.

An Alumni Study

As Bennett (2018) notes, there are concerns with regard to the gendering of roles within the music industries, preferencing as they do positions for women within administration and communication. All of the interviewed women employed full-time as music professionals work in the areas aligning with 'normative feminine coding' (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011). One woman is employed full-time in book publishing; the others work in music education as well as pursuing careers as self-employed recording artists, event promoters, independent record label directors, artist managers as well as writers and broadcasters.

The interviewees were also asked about their ethnic origins: six identified as Black, one as Brown, four as White European and two as White British. For 50 per cent, English is not their first language, and 50 per cent had moved to London to attend the MA program at the University of Westminster.

On Bridge Building

All of the alumni said that they joined the Music Business Management MA course hoping that it would improve their music industry career prospects. This was specifically true for those alumni who studied part-time and were

new to London and the white Europeans in particular found adapting to the culture of the music business 'stressful':

Moving to London and joining the course – it was all stressful for these reasons:

a) The catch-22 of needing experiences even if it is a non-paid internship;
b) you feel bad about reaching out and trying to get help – the cold shoulder;
c) work as a waitress meant I did not have time – pressure of London.

(female, music analytics digital media, 29)

The white British alumni interviewed also spoke about the cost of living in London and the difficulty of 'juggling' it all. They had additional creative music work outside of the university but lacked the direct industry contacts they felt they got from the course.

I think I was kind of open-minded. I guess I knew that music and any creative industry is tough to get into, so I guess I just wanted to see what could come out of it. So, I actually went straight into a full-time position at a major music publisher before I had even finished the masters.

(female, music publishing, 29)

The London-based alumni who already had music experience before entering the course can be divided into two groups, one being the two white British women who were in their twenties when they entered the course, both of whom immediately found full-time employment on graduation. Anecdotally, it has been my experience when finding work placements for students that the group easiest to place are young, white, female Londoners. The other group comprised the women of colour over the age of 30 and one European who had been living in London for over 25 years. All of these women said that they joined the course hoping it would increase their industry knowledge, but also importantly improve their own 'self-confidence'. However, the women who were over 30 spoke of the importance of validating their music own business experience in a formal way by gaining a master's degree. This group were already embedded in the entrepreneurial culture of the London music scene. Just as Gill (2017) and McRobbie (2016) observe, what was important to these women was a sense of empowerment and self-improvement, developing their self-image in order to progress.

I wanted to work in the live music sector and the course enabled me to be interviewed for full-time roles in live music. It also enabled me to make contacts who always call on me for part-time work, I wouldn't have been able to make those contacts without the course.

(female, live promoter/book publishing, 34)

The alumni who had started their careers in music as artists, although they had not 'given that up', mentioned wanting to work on 'both sides of the industry' as a reason for completing the course. They also saw having additional entrepreneurial ventures as necessary in the face of the challenges they experienced in terms of both racism and sexism.

> I wanted to be equipped to run my own company and gain a job within the music industry for experience.
>   (female, artist/youth worker/music education, 40)

In the Salford study, their alumni also spoke of having 'sidelines' and unpaid work that they hoped would help them to develop their creative careers (Whiteley et al., 2004: 53). They talked about their 'passion' and the trade-off in terms of the loss of work/life balance (Whiteley et al., 2004: 55). This informality and boundaryless characteristic of music labour has a specific impact on non-males, as Gadir (2017) points out, quoting Conor, Gill and Taylor (2015): 'where work is competitive and limited, women and people of colour are particularly susceptible to discrimination' (Gadir, 2017: 5).

   In Gross and Musgrave's study (2020), the definition of what constituted work was found to be particularly problematic for music workers. It was clear that an economic transaction alone was not applicable; being paid for doing work was often considered a bonus. Just as with the alumni here, all the activities our musical subjects did that were music related were considered to be work. However, they frequently described the time they spent going to gigs or meeting with friends as being work related. The division between work and leisure and any sense of work/life balance appeared to be very difficult to grasp at best and potentially non-existent at worst. For these musical subjects in Gross and Musgrave (2020) and the alumni here, who had joined them in 'the music industry', being entrepreneurial was an essential characteristic. The alumni in my study mirror this pattern of embodying their work even as they acknowledge the contradictions and potential problems caused by having boundaryless relationships between work and play, between friends and colleagues. These issues were summed up by one interviewee as being three of the low points of working in the music industry:

> Work/life balance, confidence and encountering others who behave unprofessionally…
>   (female, record label marketing, 28)

These women talked about themselves in terms of 'brands', 'self-promotion' and 'network developing'. Even the interviewees above the age of 40 were engaged in self-promotional and networking activities, in spite of the fact that they expressed feeling ambiguous or resistant to these concepts. All the interviewees laughed or made jokes about the endless cycle of self-promotion

and several of them talked about how anxious it made them feel. They were all totally aware of the paradox but also felt it had to be done. Thus, they seemed to understand their position in terms of McRobbie's (2020) notion of the 'imperfect', since they felt themselves to be outside of the ideal of the 'perfect' and were committed to the need to be 'resilient' as a strategy for coping in the face of inequality.

For these women, the role of social media goes hand in hand with self-promotion and being entrepreneurial, and these activities were only questioned in terms of their implications for their mental health. Again, rather than resist these strategies, they needed to be prepared to deal with them through self-care.

> I've struggled with health problems that relate back to (and grew from) my juggle with a salaried professional role as a teacher and the upkeep of my musical ambitions. That has been the hardest part of the journey, and one that I'm still on. Although I'm positive about my recovery process, and what I've learnt in terms of what it means to have a sustainable career (and functioning body and mind), I do wish that I didn't have to struggle so hard to build a career in music, as it's unfortunately been a traumatic experience for me.
>
> (female, brand management/musician/activist, 27)

Very few interviewees had a 'back-up plan': they were all totally committed to the idea that they would 'make it' in the music industry and had a 'belief' in themselves and paradoxically in the possibility that their hard work alone would deliver their desired outcomes.

> I think the advantage is to manage your own development and then obviously it just depends on you, and you can quickly enhance your profile, you can quickly build up your value and your worth – I think it is much easier in that sense.
>
> (gender non-conforming, digital distribution/music manager, 31)

In the Salford study, it was easy to observe a postfeminist sensibility in the way these women talked about gender because the female alumni did not see gender as a problem. They saw the creative industries as being about hard work, and being entrepreneurial was part of what you had to do. They did not identify as feminist and expressed negative ideas about 'bossy' women (Whiteley et al., 2004: 63).

On Inequality – The Lift is Out of Order

Once inside the industry, these women found new challenges both in terms of employment and progression as well as the work they felt they had to do to promote themselves. However, for all of them, the issues of sexism and

racism in the music industry were ever-present, as the following quote by a live music promoter illustrates:

> In my opinion the music industry is the worst of all the industries for racial equality. This industry stereotypes. It doesn't have specific access schemes to help those from Black, Asian or minority ethics backgrounds access the industry. There just is not enough work done. In fact, during my master's, somebody in the music industry asked me if I had any ideas. I mean I don't have all the solutions because I'm from an ethnic minority background, but also that person should be looking at their organisation and making changes.
>
> (female, live music promoter, 34)

All of the interviewees were sensitive to the way intersectionality operated in subtle ways within the music environments they worked and lived in. Several of the Black alumni were also actively involved in online events and debates around colourism, specifically misogynoir that is the specific hatred towards black women (Joseph, 2020; Anyangwe, 2015). In the UK music industries, there is also evidence that lighter skinned women are favoured to the disadvantage of darker skinned women and the subject of colourism has generated a lot of social media activity:

> The gender debate is important but I find the angle can be superficial; there are immense issues for Black women, and colourism is a huge problem.
>
> (female, music education/record label and live event promotion, 48)

These discussions have grown and the interviewees here believe that gender conversations should not just be centred on female artists (Jones, 2019) but need to include those working across the music sector:

> Three problems that have hindered my career development; a) ethnicity – racism being female and black; b) gender – sexism; c) lack of access from the lack of privilege.
>
> (female, music business/academic author/record label owner, 49)

Social class was seen to be a significant issue and they were all acutely aware of what they saw as class barriers, especially when it came to entering the industry:

> I feel that my background and my story slowed things down a lot. So, for example there are many younger people in this industry that maybe because they are British or because they come from a different eco-nomical background, they manage to have more working experience unpaid because they could afford to work for free or they just started to work when they were way younger, when I was just trying to sort

out getting my national insurance number. I am not British and I come from a middle-low economic background and didn't have the opportunity to work for free. That all definitely had an impact on my career progression.

(gender non-conforming, digital distribution/music manager, 31)

In the Salford study, little mention was made of class background, with their alumni repeating that working hard was the most important factor, and issues of race were not mentioned at all by the interviewees. In this study, the comments of the interviewees echo the findings of Gross and Musgrave (2020), who found that music professionals would simultaneously refer to structural inequalities whilst appealing to the ideal of meritocracy to explain success or failure.

After a year or two at a major, I'd like to leap into full-time entrepreneurship, grow my businesses around my music and hope re-enter the system in about ten to fifteen years, but as a senior executive with my eyes on heading up a label or doing a joint venture with a major label to create an artist-led and friendly talent-development education hub.

(female, brand management, musician, activist, 27)

For some of the Black alumni, these everyday struggles and contradictions presented a difficult position to maintain:

Being a minority and a woman who is self-managing often means that you're not taken seriously and can often be belittled by both other artists and industry professionals (predominantly men). So, the effort it takes to shrug that off and keep your sanity and vision clear has been challenging and almost made me quit.

(female, artist, youth worker, music education, 40)

The problems of work/life balance continued as a theme for these women, as did 'unprofessional' or 'disrespectful' behaviour and the opportunity to have a family:

Moreover, the music industry isn't empathetic to the caring responsibilities that women choose to take or are given. How can you be a live music promoter or tour manager as a woman if you have children or look after parents and you're freelance?

(female, live music promoter, 34)

On Knowledge Production

Digital platforms and social media have become new centres of knowledge exchange and production across the music industries. The ways in which these women have been actively using social media to reach out to and

build relationships have become a daily practice and part of their lives. It is also how they participate in knowledge production and disrupt existing narratives:

> In the beginning, social media was crucial for me to understand who was working in the industry and who I should speak to – to understand what were the jobs in the industry. It was by going to Twitter, and Instagram was everything, and LinkedIn. I lived on LinkedIn to really understand the market, as well being on social media really helped me to start building a network fairly early even when I wasn't yet working in the industry, and then allowed me to have a very solid network fairly quick and quickly got me recognised as I started to work in the industry.
> (gender non-conforming, digital distribution/artist manager, 31)

Some expressed anxiety about being asked to speak at events and one event organiser talked about it often being difficult to book women for panels:

> Sometimes in my current position we invite women to speak at conferences on panels and they say no or say their boss would be better. So they seem reluctant to take up the offer. It is frustrating.
> (female, music analytics digital media, 29)

Others expressed doubts about the 'endless conversation' and felt there needed to be more research to support arguments for inclusion and historic inequalities and exploitation:

> There needs for more research and factual information to be brought into these discussions from experts, as well as from those with real-life experiences. There are too many people who pander to the industry included on inclusivity panels.
> (female, artist/youth worker/music education, 40)

However, contrary to feeling depressed by this data and the volume of conversations, most of the alumni feel excited and positive about their futures. The renewed urgency of the situation brought about by #BlackLivesMatter and #MeToo has encouraged several of the alumni, and particularly the Black alumni, to become increasingly vocal and actively participate in several of the newly formed initiatives. They see their involvement within these debates as empowering and also as part of their own development, both personally and as music professionals, while also recognising the entrepreneurial opportunities and benefits to their career and reputational development. At the same time, however, they expressed caution about the general outcome, even for themselves:

> I think the other challenge is how can we support minorities in positions of power to feel safe enough to stand for these others – to be supportive and to look after people's mental health, too. There is a lot of work to do to make an infrastructure that can support people taking action.
>
> (gender non-conforming, digital distribution/artist manager, 31)

Interestingly, it was some of the white alumni who expressed their anxiety and doubts about the potential impacts of these debates, referring to the need to 'wait and see'. They were, however, open and able to talk about their own privilege and what they saw as the difficulties of bringing about meaningful change. One spoke about all the senior management being white, middle-class men, but noted how that these men 'knew the business' and 'had the knowledge'. They described the senior roles as being difficult and pressure-filled, and said they did not think they would want that kind of pressure. Another spoke of the possibility that other women coming in might not be collaborative and might just be competition. Several spoke of their bad experiences working with other women and of good experiences working with cis-gendered white men.

All of the Black alumni were seriously concerned that the 'pressure might drop'. There was a lot of discussion about what might happen as we come out of lockdown and concerns that the urgency would be lost or just dissipated like 'yesterday's news' or 'on to the next thing'. Several of them organised events and initiated their own forums online to debate. This was particularly the case for the Black and queer alumni, who were keenly aware of the debates. The majority felt that they were under pressure to get things done, to be part of the action and to get their voices heard. They expressed this as stressful and 'more work', but also as necessary and urgent, very much reflecting the mood of these discussions. These activities were expressed as an extension of the passion that is such a central requirement of music industrial culture (Bennett, 2018).

Conclusion

When comparing this new position of embracing feminism with the findings of the Salford study, which talked of the danger of women being seen as 'wanting to have it all', as well as Bennett's (2018) article, in which bringing up feminism or gender discussion was derided by a senior white male manager he had spoken to, the findings of this research indicate a marked shift. The alumni interviewed for this study were very conscious of structural inequalities and how their own positions were impacted by them. However, it was clear that the recent amplification by women-led initiatives, coupled with the impact of the global pandemic and the events of #BlackLivesMatter, have caused a critical moment of industrial reflexivity in the music industries, and that these events in turn have given these women a new sense of

urgency and optimism. When we lack the time, space and knowledge of feminist theory to reflect in these critical moments of our lives, we must work with what we have, and it is always messy. The clearing of new paths is not easy and these moments are sharp and painful, already being experienced in our 'bones'. The process is ongoing, as Ahmed (2017) makes clear, the ground is shifting but the obstacle of the fantasy of meritocracy is embedded in the language of higher education and central to the creative industries and espoused by the music industries, especially in this 'critical moment'. It is important that in creative industry courses we centralise critical thought, which includes decolonising the curriculum and actively addressing issues of social justice.

Acknowledgement

Note

1 In 2013 Miley Cyrus the former Disney Channel 'tween' star Hannah Montana released a new song entitled 'Wrecking Ball' with an accompany video in which she appears naked swinging on a wrecking ball and simulating oral sex with a sledgehammer. The video attracted much criticism for the way in which the youthful Cyrus appeared to be sexualised and the video was considered to be pornographic. The Irish artist Sinéad O'Connor published an open letter to Miley Cyrus on her blog warning her of the exploitation of the music industries and the damage she might do to herself, the letter was reprinted in full in *The Guardian* newspaper in the UK.

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11 Musicians of the World Unite!

The Initial Years of the International Federation of Musicians

Martin Cloonan

Introduction

This chapter critically examines an attempt to unite musicians across international borders in order to confront common issues via the formation of a collective organisation of musicians' unions. It focuses on the early days of the International Federation of Musicians (FIM), which was founded in 1948 and held its first Congress in 1949. Based largely on the minutes of the organisation's first two full meetings (which were accessed in FIM's offices in Paris), the chapter consists of three parts. The first outlines some previous work, introduces the idea of musicians as workers and charts FIM's formation. Part two analyses the key issues that the organisation addressed in its early days, including debates over which musicians should be organised, relationships with the recording industry, changing technology and the movement of working musicians across international borders. Finally, some concluding remarks illustrate the continuing relevance of the issues that FIM faced in its early days, and that continue to echo down the years.

Part One: Musicians as Workers and FIM's Formation

This chapter emerges from previous research undertaken by John Williamson and myself on the history of the British Musicians' Union (BMU) (www.muhistory.com; Williamson and Cloonan, 2016). The Union was founded in 1893 and still organises and represents musicians in the UK (www.musiciansunion.org.uk). We used its history as a lens through which to provide an account of both musicians' working lives and the industries in which they worked over a 120 period.

A key approach in our work was to consider musicians primarily as workers. We cited others who had previously done this (Williamson and Cloonan, 2016: 8–10) and were less interested in claiming originality than in stressing the implications of such an approach. This entailed recognising that once musicians are categorised as workers, certain things follow, including reflections on the myriad places in which they work and the factors that affect such work. While some issues, such as gender, location and the general

state of the economy, affect all workers, others can be seen as being particularly pertinent to musicians. These include changing technologies, the state of the music industries, competition from other musicians and the main musical genre worked in. As workers, musicians seek employment opportunities in internationally organised industries characterised by intense competition, in which the supply of labour generally exceeds the demand. The overwhelming majority of musicians are self-employed freelancers, and this often militates against the sorts of industrial organisation traditionally associated with trade unions.

Another key variable for musicians is the aforementioned fact that their employment has been international for many years. Prior to the advent of recording, itinerant musicians would travel across continents to perform and singers such as Jenny Lind were touring internationally as early as the 1850s (Waksman, 2011). Rohr (2001: 5) has written that British musicians were hampered by 'their relative lack of professional status, organization, and autonomy [and] foreign competition' and later cites foreign competition as helping to keep wages low (Rohr, 2001: 165). Ehrlich (1985: 17) also reports a long tradition of misplaced resentment against foreign musicians. In all this, it is important to emphasise that if – as with music – workers are working in a conglomeration of international industries, then their rights have to be safeguarded an international scale. This is exactly what FIM attempted to do.

FIM is the collective organisation for musicians' unions across the globe. However, it has hitherto received scant academic coverage. One article comments on its negotiations with the International Federation of Phonographic Industries (IFPI) and the European Broadcasting Union (Miscimarra, 1981) and another looks at trade union organisation in the international entertainment industries (Fattmann, 2002). While other works mention FIM in passing (Parker, 2004; Williamson and Cloonan, 2016) and a former General Secretary has provided an overview (Burckhardt, 1984), overall, as an organisation that has tried to represent musicians' interests internationally for over 70 years, FIM has attracted little academic attention. This chapter seeks to redress this.

With little extant academic or other literature available, the main source for researchers is FIM's own archives.[1] These are contained in the Federation's own offices in Paris and in the Friedrich Ebert Foundation collection in Bonn. Amongst other papers, these archives contain minutes of all of its 21 Congresses and all of its Executive Meetings, as well as reports to conference from the General Secretary. Another archival source is the BMU's Archive at the University of Stirling (https://libguides.stir.ac.uk/archives/mu), containing such resources as the Executive's reports to biennial conferences, which in recent years have included reports on international activity. As noted earlier, this chapter is based on FIM's own minutes of its first two meetings.

FIM was founded at a meeting in August 1948 when 23 representatives of nine European musicians' unions[2] gathered together in Zurich's Congress Hall for four days of what was billed as a meeting of the International Conference of Musicians.[3] The meeting was initiated and organised by Rudolf Leuzinger, President of the Swiss Musicians' Union (Schweizerischen Musiker-Verband). This was an attempt to unite the world's disparate musicians' unions under one umbrella organisation, which aspired to be the representative voice of musicians internationally. While northern Europe was well represented at the founding meeting, and there was also an Italian delegation, notable absences included France, Germany (which sent a supportive letter) and the entire the eastern bloc, although a supportive letter was received from Hungary. It appears that all the delegates were men.[4]

The minutes report that, on the second day of the meeting, 'it was unanimously decided to set up an International Organisation of Musicians' (FIM, 1948: 7) and that the new organisation would be called the International Federation of Musicians (FIM) (FIM, 1948: 26). It was to be based in Switzerland, partly because the Swiss union wanted to secure performers' rights on an international basis and believed that the location of the bureau implementing the Convention on copyright in Berne would help to facilitate this (FIM, 1948: 20–21). It was also agreed that the President should be located in a country outside of the Secretariat's home. The BMU's Bill Batten[5] subsequently became the first President and the UK has held the presidency ever since. Its then-General Secretary, Hardie Ratcliffe, proclaimed that 'The world should understand that musicians have decided to close their ranks' (FIM, 1948: 33).

The context in which FIM was formed is important. This was just three years after the end of the Second World War, at a time when many countries were still struggling to rebuild their economies.

In October 1949, FIM held its first Ordinary Congress in Vienna. This was attended by the seven members of the Executive Committee and 13 delegates from six countries.[6] Again, all the delegates were men. As of 2021, FIM is still in existence, now with 69 member nations – 37 in Europe and North America, 18 in Africa, 9 in Latin America and 5 in Asia and the Pacific.

Meanwhile, many musicians found themselves struggling to find work in the post-war world. Thus, it was reported at the first meeting that 'Economic difficulties' had prevented a Finnish delegation from attending (FIM, 1948: 2), and at the first Congress, the Finnish situation was described as being 'particularly delicate' (FIM, 1949). In 1948, the Austrian delegation reported that '50% of the musicians were without work' (FIM, 1948: 6) – a figure that rose to 70% in 1949 (FIM, 1949: 8). This same year, an unemployment rate of 50% was reported amongst German musicians (FIM, 1949: 31).

Economic and other difficulties made for a somewhat tetchy atmosphere in these early meetings, and while FIM was founded on the ideal of what

Leuzinger described as an 'international family of musicians' (FIM, 1948: 2), a great amount of contention is evident in the minutes. Issues were fiercely debated, and it is clear that delegates disagreed vehemently on not only what a musician was, but also how they should be best assisted. Examples of this are included below.

Part Two: FIM's Early Days

Within the music industries, there were four key areas with which FIM had to immediately engage: recording, publishing, live music and broadcasting. The record industry had begun to organise collectively via the formation of the IFPI in 1933. Within the publishing sector, rewards for musical composition via the assertion of writers' and performers' rights had been established by the formation of various collective management organisations such as the Société des auteurs, compositeurs et éditeurs de musique (SACEM) in France (1851) and the Performing Right Society in the UK (1914). International copyright agreements had been established in 1886 via the Berne Convention. While its organisation was largely undertaken by national promoters, live music was clearly international as artists toured across national borders. Meanwhile, broadcasting had shown its importance throughout the war. In Europe, this primarily meant public sector broadcasting, but there was also some commercial activity such as Radio Luxembourg, which also began in 1933. As FIM formed, these four areas comprised the most important parts of a political economy of music that was still largely organised and regulated on a national basis, but with significant amounts of international work. That economy was located within a world of post-war reconstruction in which the role of the public sector was taken for granted and attempts were being made to build international organisations to counter the sorts of poisonous nationalism that had led to the war.

　　A great deal of time at FIM's first two meetings was inevitably consumed by organisational issues such as how it would be constituted and funded and where it would be located. While these might be seen as the mundane machinations of a new organisation, it is apparent that they were often highly contentious. The minutes contain various references to lively debates and the need for the meeting to be adjourned so that tempers could cool. For example, when the Italian delegate, Mario Montavani, was told in 1949 that his union could only have one vote rather than the three he had argued for (based on the union's membership size), he left the room in protest (FIM, 1949: 13). When the issue was revisited later, there 'was again a very lively discussion' (FIM, 1949: 15), although it was ultimately agreed that all delegates would have one vote each (FIM, 1949: 16). Even a seemingly innocuous issue such as the proposed location of FIM's offices proved to be contentious. BMU General Secretary Hardie Ratcliffe 'did not hide his indignation' when he found out about the costs of secretarial support in Switzerland (FIM, 1949: 29), condemning the apparent materialism of

the FIM staff and declaring that British trade unionists 'are accustomed to sacrifices in order to help the trade union movement' (FIM, 1949: 30). Leuzinger responded by asking delegates 'to regain their previous calmness and objectivity' (FIM, 1949: 30). When the financial report for FIM's first year was received, a 'very spirited discussion arose during which Vital Hauser (Switzerland) criticised the attitude of the Executive and Leuzinger deplored that so important an item had been rushed through by congress' (FIM, 1949: 29), although the report was eventually unanimously approved.

Debate often concerned the appropriate remits of national unions apropos of those of FIM. What emerged was a formulation whereby FIM could make recommendations to its members but not force them to take up common positions. While this would have important implications for the organisation in the longer term, here it is more important to identify those issues that emerged in the first two meetings and then recurred throughout the organisation's history, as it is these that highlight perennial issues for musicians as workers. Here I deal with four such issues: which musicians should be organised, relations with the record industry, changing technology and international touring by working musicians.

Organising Who?

One of the first issues the new organisation had to face was *who* it was representing – all musicians (including amateurs)? Full-time professionals? Semi-professionals? Only those with music qualifications? All those seeking employment? Here, Bernet Kempers of the Dutch Koninklijke Nederlandse Toonkunstenaars Vereniging (KNTV) said that he represented a union of professional musicians, and that 'He expected that an International Musicians' Union would fight against untrained or half trained musicians. Semi-professionals and amateurs should not be protected' (FIM, 1948: 10). In contradistinction, the British delegate, Van Phillips, replied that 'we were not creating an academy of music but a mass organization' (FIM, 1948: 11). Thus, there were different conceptions of what a musician was and therefore whom the new organisation should seek to recruit and represent. A minimal approach might limit membership to those with qualifications in music, whereas a maximalist approach would accept anyone seeking to play music.

The first meeting received reports from each of the delegations. Raoul Dieu of the Belgian Syndicat des Artists Musiciens de Bruxelles reported that in his country:

> The musicians were not well organized. There was a lot of unemployment. The situation was aggravated by the fact that anybody could enter the profession without special qualification. Many musicians did not belong to any of the unions.
>
> (FIM, 1948: 3)

While such an approach illustrated a bias towards orchestral musicians, it was also confirmed that the Union also organised amateur and semi-professional musicians. Kemperts complained that 'the number of those wishing to enter the profession had risen to an appalling degree' (FIM, 1948: 5) and it was confirmed that only qualified musicians could join his organisation, with others joining different unions. In Denmark, it was reported that 'about 800–1000 musicians had not been admitted to the union, because they had not the required qualification' (FIM, 1948: 4). An Italian delegate, Fidele D'Amico, held that 'it was impossible to evaluate musicians working in ensembles and orchestra-musicians in the same way' (FIM, 1948: 17).

Elsewhere, attitudes appeared to be changing, as the Swedish Svenska Musik reported that, in the first 30 years of its existence, it had organised only 'qualified musicians,' but then admitted semi-professionals in 1937, something that changed the shape of the union. As of 1948, of around 16,000 members, only 3,500 were (full-time) professionals; 10,000 were semi-professional and another 2,500 were 'variety-singers, actors, dancers, women keepers of the wardrobe, technical assistants, etc' (FIM, 1948: 6). In Switzerland, the federal nature of the country had resulted in musicians being organised on federal lines in a number of different organisations (FIM, 1948: 6–7). Musicians wanting to join the SMV had to 'prove that they earned their living in the musicians' profession' (FIM, 1948: 7). The most self-aggrandising account came from Ratcliffe, who proclaimed that:

> No employer could afford to employ musicians without a pre-vious agreement with the Musicians' Union regarding the salary and conditions of work. This was the direct consequence of the fact that the union had for several years organized everybody who earned money playing music.
>
> (FIM, 1948: 4, emphasis in original)

He added that 'in Great Britain many musicians earn three times as much as unskilled workers,' that the Union was now engaged in work around cre-ating a demand for music and that 'The legal protection for musicians which was in existence in Great Britain surpassed the provisions existing in any other country of the world' (FIM, 1948: 4).

That this was a somewhat hyperbolic account is less important than the fact that Ratcliffe's intervention raised at least two important points – whether all musicians should be in the same union and whether they should be in a union of performers alongside actors and other performing artists. In fact, Van Phillips qualified Ratcliffe's claim by noting that 'composers and opera-singers' were in other unions, with which the MU was trying to unite (FIM, 1948: 5). It was also reported that in Holland, there were 'several unions of musicians' (FIM, 1948: 5). In Austria, the musicians were a section of the Gewerkschaft der Angestellten der freien Berufe, with

five sub-sections: orchestras; chamber music; dance bands; conductors, composers and virtuosos; and teachers of music and singing (FIM, 1948: 6).

Subsequently, the question of how best to organise musicians – as a united body of musicians, as separate organisations for orchestral musicians and others or as part of larger conglomerates of creative workers – became an ongoing issue. How that question was answered varied across international borders and to this day, FIM has more than one member organisation within some countries.[7] Meanwhile, the first meeting ultimately accepted a proposal from Austria's Dr W. Russ-Bovelino that 'The International Musicians' Union aims at the protection of the interests of *all* musicians in the artistic, economic, social and all other spheres' (FIM, 1948: 6, emphasis mine).

The Record Industry and Performers' Rights

Relations with the recording industry were prominent from the start. A proposal that a delegate from the IFPI be allowed to attend the inaugural meeting was defeated on the basis that this was premature and should be done only after FIM had established itself (FIM, 1948: 2). The most contentious issue here concerned disputes between the record companies and unions over the so-called performing right. When recordings are made, those whose performances have been recorded have certain rights in determining how those recordings are subsequently used. Generally, the 'featured artists' named on the recordings assign their rights to the company issuing the recordings, while the other 'non-featured' (i.e., unnamed) artists on recordings such as session players are paid one-off fees. However, as copyright law developed, the rights of these unnamed musicians to have a role in determining the usage of the recordings gained legal protection, albeit with variations across international borders. The main debate here concerned whether the 'performing right' was to be seen as individual one that could be freely bought and sold (as the record companies and some individual musicians held), or whether it was as a social one, the exercise of which should be constrained in order to limit any potential damage to musicians as a whole (which was generally the unions' view).[8]

Importantly, the use of recordings in public places and in broadcasting was increasing in the post-war years. As record companies generally owned the rights to the recordings, they could charge for their usage. However, as just noted, musicians also had some rights in controlling the use of their performances on such recordings. Determining the appropriate balance of the ownership rights of recordings and the performance right – and the financial rewards which flowed from these – was to cause ongoing debate.[9]

Within FIM, attitudes towards the performing right immediately became a key issue. In 1948, Van Phillips informed that meeting the BMU had forged a valuable agreement with Phonographic Performance Limited (PPL), the record company-owned UK collecting agency for performance royalties, via which the Union – as the representative organisation for the non-featured

artists – received funds annually from PPL for the use of recordings in public.[10] Phillips noted that this had been achieved because of the BMU's industrial muscle, whereby 'the phonographic industry could not do anything without the musicians' cooperation' (FIM, 1948: 31). He stressed that FIM's role should be 'to make the national unions strong' (FIM, 1948: 31), so that, rather than relying on lawyers bringing legal cases in order to improve musicians' working conditions and secure performers' rights, FIM should focus on workers taking action.

The first Congress (1949) saw the IFPI's Vice President, Heinrich Landis, in attendance as the Executive Committee's guest. He noted that FIM had been at the IFPI's own Congress in Amsterdam and so saw his presence as being equal treatment, assuring delegates that 'a good deal of the problems of the musicians could be solved together with the friendly organisations of records [sic] manufacturers and broadcasting companies' (FIM, 1949: 4). Later during the meeting, however, Ratcliffe said that he did not want Landis to be present throughout, as he 'wanted to tell the truth about this Organization' (FIM, 1949: 11). Other delegates also expressed concern at Landis' presence. From the chair, Batten said that this was somewhat difficult when FIM had attended IFPI's Amsterdam meeting. Ratcliffe argued that because the IFPI *already had* a policy on the use of recordings, it was fine for FIM to attend its meetings. However, in contradistinction, FIM's policy here was still emerging and would be determined at this meeting. Under such circumstances, an IFPI presence might jeopardise discussions of that policy. The minutes record that, during this discussion, the 'atmosphere grew tense' (FIM, 1949: 12) as some delegates criticised the EC's decision to invite Landis, while the Swiss delegates could not countenance the invitation being withdrawn. The meeting was adjourned for ten minutes to let things calm down. Eventually it was agreed that Landis would only report to the meeting (FIM, 1949: 13) and Batten undertook to explain the situation to him.

Thus, the relationship between FIM and the record industry was not only a vital one, but also a divisive one. Ratcliffe later said that he was astonished that, as FIM's General Secretary, Leuzinger had spoken in his report of collaborating with the IFPI. Ratcliffe expressed his view that:

> The record manufacturers wanted to establish the right on the record, the musicians wanted to establish the right on their performances. In his opinion the two extremes were diametrically opposed.
>
> (FIM, 1949: 20)

This issue was a profound one for musicians' representative organisations. As the popularity of recordings rose and they were used more frequently in broadcasting and public places, they became more financially lucrative and, in the long-term, income for record companies grew. Under such circumstances, the question of remuneration for the repeated use of one recording of a musician's performance was a highly pertinent one.

There was some philosophical discussion here as Leuzinger argued that there was a debate as to whether the rights of performers 'was considered as a connected right of copyright – consequently as an individual right – or … whether it was considered and treated as a social right (protection of the whole injured profession)' (FIM, 1949: 22). He suggested that FIM had to choose between these two positions or gradations of them. He also noted that it was important to look at the use of recordings in the broadest sense so that, beyond recordings themselves, the performing right 'must be legally fixed also for broadcasting, television, sound-films etc' (FIM, 1949: 21).

Debate over tactics followed. The BMU had made it clear that its success was based on industrial muscle rather than appealing to the good natures of the record companies that made the records and the broadcasting organisations that increasingly made use of them. In short, the question was whether, as workers, musicians' interests were best forwarded by working alongside employers or by confronting them. The former view was taken by the EC as Sven Wassmouth (Sweden) said that 'the E.C. was of the opinion [that] … the defence of the rights of the performing musicians did not exclude the recognition of the rights of the record manufacturers on their products' (FIM, 1949: 21).

However, Ratcliffe suggested that FIM was getting too close to the IFPI and, in broadcasting, the International Radio Organisation. To him, FIM 'had to give up any hope of getting help from these organizations and … had to go our own way' (FIM, 1949: 23). He also felt that the ILO was too focussed the *individual* rights of performers, whereas the *collective* right was more important. For Ratcliffe and the BMU, the performing right was a collective one and even if an individual musician had assigned it to record companies, the collectivity of musicians should still benefit. For Ratcliffe, FIM representatives had to 'choose between individual right and collective protection' (FIM, 1949: 23). This was countered by Hauser, who argued that Ratcliffe was 'absolutely wrong' to think that supporting the individual right would help the record companies (at the expense of musicians) (FIM, 1949: 24).

Overall Ratcliffe argued that

> from the judicial point of view the individual right was justified and had to be defended. But practically we had to aim at an individual right which would work in favour of the collectivity. It did not matter for the time being how we would achieve this aim. *The secondary use of records must be restricted by all means*, and the musicians as a whole should be able to claim money for it.
>
> (FIM, 1949: 24, emphasis mine)

In response, Leuziger suggested that the two sides – collective and individual – were actually not as far apart as it seemed, and supported Ratcliffe by arguing that 'musicians should not only get money from the secondary use of gramophone records, but that this use should be very much limited'

(FIM, 1949: 24). He went on to praise the BMU for getting the BBC's use of records limited to 22 hours music a week (a cut from the previous 52)[11] and said that 'The idea of the BMU that no records should be played where living musicians could be engaged was showing the way to be followed by us' (FIM, 1949: 24). He also said that the IFPI also had an interest in restricting the use of recordings in broadcasting as 'the manufacturers [i.e., the record companies] were right in asserting that secondary use of their products injured their industry too' (FIM, 1949: 24). Here, Leuzinger espoused a widely held contemporaneous view – that both musicians and record companies had an interest in restricting the use of recordings by broadcasters, the former because such use denied employment opportunities to live musicians, the latter because playing records on the radio was held to harm sales. While in the longer term, record companies came to see that playing a record on the radio was effectively an advertisement for it, which was likely to boost sales, the Union never abandoned its position that using records meant less employment for live musicians.

Leuzinger argued that 'The best solution would be if the musicians of FIM could say: that they recognized the individual right but that they agree to accept a generous solution in order to protect efficiently their profession' (FIM, 1949: 25). Wassmouth proclaimed that he 'preferred to protect the whole profession' (FIM, 1949: 25). He also argued that the 'two principles could be put together' (FIM, 1949: 23), for while the performing right 'was an individual right … it had to be dealt with collectively' (FIM, 1949: 26). Wassmouth called for the establishment within each country of a commission to defend this right, while an international commission – dominated by FIM – should also be set up.

Ultimately it was agreed to appoint a committee to determine FIM's policy on the use of recorded music. That Committee – which included all the main protagonists in the debate – met overnight and came up with answers to 18 questions. It was suggested that each nation could decide how best to recognise the performing right and what licensing and remuneration was needed. The Committee also believed that the broadcasting of recorded musical performances and recording of musical performances 'through mechanical means' (i.e., records) should be prohibited, with exceptions determined by the national committees. Such committees or their international counterparts should also levy fees for usage. The Committee also opposed the taping of performances for use either in recording studios or in theatres and concert halls. The secondary use of gramophone records outside of the home 'should be limited to the extent that living musicians are not injured by it,' while 'dubbing on film or other soundtracks has to be absolutely prohibited' (FIM, 1949: 28). Any fees that were due for secondary usage should be paid by the user, rather than by the record company. However, by five votes to four, Congress adopted the position that 'no resolution on the policy of FIM regarding mechanical music be adopted' (FIM, 1949: 29).

The debate here showed that, overall, FIM supported the BMU's positions of being against the public use of recordings outside the home, insisting that performers should be paid on the rare occasions it was allowed and making such payments to a collective organisation, such as was the case in the UK. While the ways in which such policies were implemented (or not) varied across international borders, they were based on two important principles: no recording of music without musicians being paid and no public use of recordings without further payment.

Technology

The public use of recorded music was wrapped up in another key issue – the development of technology. The founding Conference agreed to the immediate establishment of a 'Committee for mechanised music' (FIM, 1948: 15), the partial aim of which was to gather information about how musicians were compensated for the repeated use of recorded music in broadcasting and other public places. This was said to be the 'most pressing (issue) for our organization' (FIM, 1948: 31). A year later when, as President, Batten made his opening address to the first Congress, he warned of 'the great dangers arising from the ever improving mechanisation of music including broadcast and television … which were threatening musicians of the world' (FIM, 1949: 4). On its final day, the Congress adopted a motion that:

> The congress underlines the necessity of protecting the living performing musicians against the detrimental effects of mechanical music and expects immediate help from all competent or entitled national and international institutions and organizations. The congress gives authority to the E.C. of FIM to adopt the measures they would deem necessary for the carrying into effect of such a protection.
>
> (FIM, 1949: 40)

Once again, the context of this motion should be borne in mind. Such protectionist measures were then politically popular. Moreover, new technology in the form of the 'talkies' had had a devastating effect on musical employment in the 1920s and 1930s, as thousands of cinema musicians were made redundant (Roberts, 2014; Williamson and Cloonan, 2016; Piškor, Chapter 3). In addition, musical employment was still struggling to adapt to the post-war environment and the possible displacement of musicians by developing technology was obviously of concern to FIM.

Working Abroad

Another perennial issue was the issuing of work permits to foreign musicians wishing to work across international borders. Opinion was divided here, as an aspiration to spread musical knowledge by encouraging international

touring was met with concerns that local musicians might be displaced by 'unfair' competition from touring foreign musicians. So the history of musicians' international work is also the history of attempts by local representative organisations to restrict the import of musicians into their jurisdictions. Australia (Dreyfus, 2009), the UK (Cloonan and Brennan, 2013) and the USA (Roberts, 2014) provide just a few examples of this.

Unsurprisingly, these issues soon surfaced within FIM. The 1949 Congress received reports of how musicians' unions in countries such as Italy, Norway and Sweden were sent applications for tours by foreign musicians for approval (FIM, 1949: 8–9). It was reported that, in Switzerland, the authorities did not always respect the union's call to refuse a work permit and in response, the union 'wanted to send as many good Swiss light orchestras as possible to those countries from which guest orchestras were coming' (FIM, 1949: 10). The Austrian delegate, Prof. Franz Sirowy, argued that semi-professionals should be excluded from any exchange deals. It was reported that, in West Germany, musicians' unions 'had no influence whatsoever on the admission of foreign musicians' (FIM, 1949: 10). Ratcliffe reported that exchanges were now taking place between the UK and countries such as France so that 'the tendency was no more, as it had been formerly, to close the border hermetically' (FIM, 1949: 8).

This reflected a growing acceptance within FIM that exchanges of musicians were permissible, provided that the domestic unions had some control over the numbers coming in. This mixture of nationalism and internationalism was to continue down the years. It also presented some difficulties for FIM wherein some members wished to keep national policies, whilst others wanted the organisation to take a collective stance. Leuzinger reported that a dispute between three orchestras in Vienna and the Austrian union had led FIM's Executive Committee to take the view that 'FIM should not interfere with internal national questions' (FIM, 1949: 10). However, this decision did not find favour with all the delegations and fierce debate ensued. Hauser opened it by saying that he 'wanted to intensify the exchange between member countries of FIM' (FIM, 1949: 30). He deplored the fact that the BMU had reached an exchange agreement 'with the French Musicians' Union which was not a member of FIM' (FIM, 1949: 30). There then followed a row between the BMU and the Italian MU. The BMU took the view that this was a national question for unions to deal with internally and therefore 'FIM was not in a position to deal with the international exchange of musicians' (FIM, 1949: 30). However, Mantovani insisted that the matter should be discussed as 'the question of the exchange of musicians was considered by the union as one of the most important problems which were to be solved by FIM', especially as the country was 'in a position to export art' (FIM, 1949: 30).

The minutes report that 'a very lively discussion' arose between the two delegations and that the debate became so heated that Batten adjourned the meeting for lunch (FIM, 1949: 30). Following this, Mantovani explained

that it was very important to his union that international exchange 'should be controlled by the musicians' unions and by FIM' and that salaries for foreigners were the same as for locals. It was eventually agreed that both FIM and the national unions should try to control the international exchange as far as possible and that such exchanges should only be agreed provided that both the union of the country of origin and the receiving country had agreed the exchange, with the salary for visitors to be 'a little higher than those of indigenous musicians belonging to the same professional category' (FIM, 1949: 32). However, it was also noted that this could only take the form of advice to members, as FIM could not tell its member organisations what to do.

The question of agents also arose, and it was agreed that if these were to be tolerated, they had to be recognised by the Unions and FIM should set up an international employment bureau if necessary. It was noted that the use of agents was outlawed in countries such as Austria and Italy (FIM, 1949: 35) and Hauser described them as 'parasites.' The meeting resolved that FIM should lobby the ILO to ensure that 'profit-making agencies … be generally and internationally prohibited' (FIM, 1949: 36), although the different legal position in various countries suggested that this would remain an aspiration.

Conclusion

The longevity of the issues discussed in 1948 and 1949 is shown by the Agenda for the twenty-first FIM Congress, held in Reykjavik in 2016. This included motions on performers' rights and travelling musicians (FIM, 2016). There was also continued debate about whether and how FIM should work with employer organisations such as the IFPI and organisations such as the International Labour Office (ILO). So in many ways, not much had changed. The main issue remained how to get performers paid and how to determine the best ways of ensuring this. But the power of trade unions had diminished dramatically since 1948 and rather than relying on their industrial muscle, the move now was towards legal remedy, often via joint campaigns with employers and other allies. The industrial muscle was gone and now, rather than forcing broadcasters and record companies to submit to their will, musicians seemed consigned to lobbying for changes to legislation and working in partnership with those whom they had once opposed.

But musicians remain workers. While their problems are specific to the industries in which they work, they are *workers'* problems. The music industries are becoming increasingly global and, if nothing else, FIM is attempting to offer an international response to this. Looking back at its early days is one way to try to understand musicians' problems on a global scale. For while the musicians of the world have tried to unite, the obstacles they face in doing so remain as hazardous as ever.

Notes

 1 Another step would be to look at the archives of its members and the organisations
   with which it has interacted, such as the IFPI. This awaits development.
 2 Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Holland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and
   the UK.
 3 Whereas the inaugural meeting was called a Conference, all further meetings
   were billed as Congresses.
 4 In the minutes, two of the delegates are identified only by their initials. However,
   their minuted interventions show them to be men. The minutes also reveal that
   it is routinely assumed that all delegates would be men (FIM, 1948: 23) and
   that the General-Secretary would always be a man (FIM, 1948: 25). See also
   references to men in FIM 1948: 23, 28 and 29. This seems to be part of a bigger
   problem as, referring to the BMU, Williamson and Cloonan write that 'trawling
   the Union's archives for references to women prior to the 1970s is an unre-
   warding task' (2016: 238). By the end of the 1970s, just 12% of the BMU's
   membership were women (2016: 238).
 5 Batten had risen to prominence as the BMU activist most active in the campaign
   to restrict working visits by foreign musicians. See Cloonan and Brennan (2013).
 6 Austria, Italy Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK. Czechoslovakia, West
   Germany and Holland sent observers. Greetings were received from musicians'
   unions in Belgium, Finland, Ireland, South Africa and 'some German countries'
   (FIM, 1949: 4).
 7 See https://www.fim-musicians.org/about-fim/membership/.
 8 See Williamson (2015) for how this worked in the UK.
 9 For examples, see Cloonan (2016) and Williamson and Cloonan (2016).
10 See Cloonan (2016) for the history of this agreement.
11 See Cloonan (2016) for how the MU was able to do this through its relationship
   with the PPL.

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12 Towards More Inclusion in the Music Industry

Sophie Hennekam

Introduction

As the workforce grows increasingly diverse, we need more insights in how different groups navigate the workplace from a human resources (HR) perspective. Scholars and practitioners alike have shown increasing interest in managing diversity in organisations. In this chapter, I define diversity as the fact that people differ on many dimensions, such as gender, ethnicity, race, religion, age, marital status, social status, disability and sexual orientation (Kossek et al., 2005). Diversity management started in the United States and has gained ground since the 1980s. The focus in the US was on race and gender as a result of social movements, such as the civil rights movement or the women's rights movement. In the 1990s, the field of diversity management was further developed in the United Kingdom and the scope of diversity dimensions was broadened (Lorbiecki and Jack, 2000).

Organisations and managers have shown interest in diversity management for different reasons. Three rationales for diversity can be identified (Ely and Thomas, 2001). We distinguish between the business case for diversity, in which diversity is argued to bring economic advantages to organisations; the legal rationale, in which organisations engage with diversity to comply with rules and laws; and the moral rationale, where fighting discrimination and promoting diversity is perceived to be the right thing to do. Organisations worldwide are increasingly implementing diversity management programs (Jackson and Joshi, 2004) because of the associated positive outcomes. Indeed, when managed effectively, diversity management has been found to achieve outcomes such as better utilisation of talent and an increase in creativity, leading to better overall performance (Peretz et al., 2015). However, it should be acknowledged that diversity only leads to positive outcomes for organisations and society as whole in terms of enhanced inclusion and equality when it is managed effectively (Jehn and Bezrukova, 2004).

When talking about diversity, the concepts of inclusion and diversity are often used interchangeably. However, it is important to highlight that diversity and inclusion are different, albeit related, constructs. While diversity refers to demographic differences among social groups, including both

visible and invisible attributes, inclusion refers to individuals' perceptions that their unique contribution is appreciated and their full participation is encouraged (Nishii, 2013). Related to this definition of inclusion, I present the concept of an inclusive workplace, referring to a work environment in which individuals of all backgrounds are fairly treated, valued for who they are and included in core decision making (Nishii, 2013). Through an overview of my own work and studies conducted with Dawn Bennett, Sally Macarthur, Cat Hope, Talisha Goh and Jawad Syed, as well as the existing literature on precarious and/or stigmatised individuals in the music industry, I focus on the lessons we can learn from management in how to create a workplace that is truly inclusive and embraces diversity. The chapter uses an HR lens to focus on individuals and social groups in the music industry that are stigmatised as well as the precarious nature of their work. These two aspects are relevant, among others, to creating an inclusive work climate for everyone in the music industry regardless of their gender, sexuality, race/ ethnicity or disabilities. The chapter starts by discussing stigma in the music industry. It then outlines the issue of precariousness, moves to the lessons we can learn from the existing body of knowledge and ends with a reflection on what we know and do and where more insights and work is needed.

Stigma in the Music Industry

Stigma can be defined as 'an attribute that is deeply discrediting' and that reduces an individual 'from a whole and usual person to a tainted, discounted one' (Goffman, 1963: 3). Stigmatised identities are defined as identities that may be devalued in a particular context and subject to stereotyping and discrimination (Crocker et al., 1998).

In my research on musicians and women composers, I have studied two stigmatised populations in the music industry.

First, I focus on the stigma of both male and female musicians with an average age of 32 who are no longer able to work exclusively in the music industry (Hennekam, 2017). Artists feel strongly about their identities as artists (Duffy et al., 2011); as a consequence, when they end up working outside the artistic realm, they may find this difficult psychologically as they leave behind a cherished artistic identity. In other words, they have two professional identities: one as a musician and one as a worker outside the creative sphere. When they chose to combine these identities, they perceive their decision to be forced because they do so out of financial, psychological or physical reasons, not because they want to. We found that when colleagues reacted negatively to the decisions of musicians to start working outside the music industry, this was perceived as stressful by the musicians. They felt the need to 'sell' their new professional identity in relation to their non-creative work. In order to feel accepted by others, they adopted a separation or disidentification strategy. However, when their decision to pick up non-creative work while continuing their musical practice was accepted by important

others, musicians were more likely to adopt integration and accumulation strategies that were perceived to be less straining. Indeed, musicians belong to a community that has clear norms about what is acceptable and what is unacceptable behaviour. Clearly, working outside the creative industries while trying to continue one's musical practice is something one does not do and was objected by fellow musicians. Disapproval of their decision to take on work outside the creative arena led to invalidation of their artistic identities, which the artists found psychologically hard to accept and led to identity conflict. The invalidation of others adds to their own difficulties regarding how they see themselves as we found that they continued to consider themselves as musicians despite their imposed identity as a worker outside the creative industries. This clearly asks for a more inclusive culture in the music industry, in which individuals can work on multiple fronts simultaneously.

Second, in a different study, we investigated how women's gender identities are stigmatised in a male-dominated sector, as is the case for female composers in the music industry, and how they deal with this stigmatisation. Drawing on an international research project on female composers, including two phases consisting of 225 in-depth surveys and 27 semi-structured interviews, we investigated the careers and identities of female composers (Bennett et al., 2019). These composers continue to feel marginalised and believe that their gender disadvantages them in their careers. For example, they highlight the negative impact of gender on the extent to which their work is taken seriously and their limited access to professional networks. In order to reduce this perceived disadvantage, women composers sometimes engaged in stigma identity management tactics that are usually associated with individuals who have invisible stigmatised identities: They concealed their gender during blind auditions or signed their work with male-sounding names in order to increase their chances of success. However, we contend that while concealing one's gender can be advantageous in the short-term, it may not be feasible in the longer term and might produce feelings of inauthenticity. In addition, the findings of our study highlight the intersectionality of gender with age. The female composers noted that while men gain respect as they age, women's ageing is characterised by physical decline and reduced visibility.

Precariousness in the Music Industry

Precarious work has been defined as work

> with a short time horizon, or for which the risk of job loss is high. This includes irregular work, with limited control over workplace conditions, little protection from health, social security, and low income. The concept of precariousness involves instability, lack of protection, insecurity, and social or economic vulnerability.
>
> (Rodgers, 1989: 3)

Previous research has outlined the particularities of work in the creative industries, including the music sector. For example, stable employment is increasingly being replaced by precarious jobs characterised by short-term contracts, part-time work and irregular hours (Evans and Gibb, 2009). In addition, project-based work is common (Eikhof, 2014), which implies that musicians also have irregular income patterns and periods of unemployment (Lee, 2011). As a consequence, there is a high rate of self-employed workers in the music industry (Jeffcutt and Pratt, 2002) who do not have any employment protection (Quinlan and Bohle, 2004). In addition to their irregular employment and income, as well as the lack of benefits and protection, musicians are often required to accept atypical and unsocial working hours and travel for their work (Gill, 2002). The strong competition for work in the music industry leads workers to accept those working conditions.

As we can see, previous research has identified a range of characteristics of creative work that lead to a precarious situation for those workers. The identification of issues and challenges in several countries of the world is helpful for policymakers and can combat social inequality and precariousness. Thus, we have conducted a survey study in three locations: Canada, Australia and the Netherlands. With the aim of identifying common themes and challenges of individuals in the creative sectors, such as the music industry, we have shown that workers in these industries face similar challenges, highlighting the precarious nature of creative work (Hennekam and Bennett, 2017a). Acknowledging this and stressing that creative workers have many issues in common is an important first step in paving the way for workers, organisations, trade unions and other bodies to take steps to decrease the precariousness of creative work. It is important to note, however, that sectorial representatives and unions may not recognise the inequalities in the arts, as they perceive processes to be based on merit, sustaining and reinforcing inequalities and exclusion (Tatli and Özbilgin, 2012) that are as such made invisible and legitimised.

In addition, we argue that we can learn from the challenges that creative workers in the three countries we studied faced in order to avoid similar pitfalls in other countries. However, this cross-cultural study on the precarious working conditions of musicians does not provide many insights into the way musicians, producers or composers self-manage their work and careers. Therefore, we conducted a second study in the context of the Netherlands (Hennekam and Bennett, 2016) looking into the way workers manage a portfolio career that includes multiple concurrent roles, unstable income and professional development as well as their identity as creative workers. The findings show that workers in the music industry tend to have an average of three creative occupations simultaneously and conduct a lot of hidden work (see also Chapter 7 in this volume). In addition, almost half of their activities tend to be unpaid and they report fluctuating income. Also, we found that individuals in the music industry and other creative industries are confident about their creative skills, but feel

they lack the business-related skills they need to successfully navigate their careers. Our study sheds light on which aspects, such as education or unstable incomes, need to be managed by individual workers, managers, organisations and national or supranational institutions in order to better combat social inequality and precariousness. While our study on how musicians in the Netherlands manage their careers is helpful to learn more about music workers in general, it does not say much about the particularities of subsectors of the music industry, such as composition, the recording industry or the music distribution industry.

In our international study on women composers, as mentioned earlier in relation to stigma (Hennekam et al., 2019a), we aimed to shed more light on the career trajectories of women composers, focusing more specifically on how they work: how they enter the industry, gain reputation and support and sustain their careers. We adopted a human capital lens as we anticipated that it would help us to examine the extent to which individuals in precarious occupations such as composition need economic, social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1980) in order to enter, support and sustain their careers. Indeed, individuals in the music industry are known to need these financial resources, which is one's economic capital, to support themselves during their early careers whilst income levels are low and multiple entry attempts are made (McLeod et al., 2009). Next, given the networked nature of work in the music industry, social capital in the form of individual and institutionalised relationships and networks is thought to provide an advantage to workers seeking work and other engagement opportunities (Smith and McKinlay, 2009). Finally, the importance of cultural capital that refers to a bundle of accumulated knowledge and other assets that confer privileges, status and opportunity is emphasised in the music industry by the contingent nature of creative labour and strongly networked methods of obtaining work (Caldwell and Woodside, 2003). In line with human capital theory, we highlight that career success is influenced by a nuanced interplay between different forms of capital and that this interplay is present and fluid across the career lifespan (Hennekam et al., 2019a). More precisely, the composers' relationships with performers, the importance of networks and social capital, the role of social media and online presence, the support of family and external funding, and the prevalence of multiple roles due to changing career aspirations were mentioned by the female composers as important factors in navigating one's career.

Communities of practice can be defined as groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (Wenger, 2010). Our aim was to understand how female composers use online communities of practice to negotiate the traditionally masculine space of music while operating outside its hierarchical structures. They used, for example, social media, such as closed Facebook groups, to connect with other female composers in the world. The findings reveal that the online environment can present a supportive space for female

composers (Hennekam et al., 2019b). Communities of practice can be big or small, local or global, face-to-face and/or online (Wenger, 2010). The female composers created connections across organisational, stylistic and geographic boundaries through the use of online communities of practice in the form of special interest groups, forums or social media. We identified four ways in which women composers use communities in practices as they navigate their careers. Firstly, the online environment provides a 'safe place' where women can connect with other women, overcoming isolation and finding like-minded individuals with whom they are able to share their experiences. The closed nature of specific groups on social media websites or discussion forums and the important role of moderators to avoid hate speech by men were important to ensure this 'safe space'. Secondly, these communities become places where female composers find the support, feedback and mentorship that they struggle to find in the physical world. Thirdly, women use the online environment to create marketing platforms through which they can increase their professional visibility and engage in promotion on their own terms. For example, they could show their work to others and highlight their accomplishments. Finally, female composers use the online environment to act independently and to develop career agency through new learning and knowledge acquisition. Communities of practice have multiple levels and types of participation, and the interplay between experienced members and newcomers was an important dimension of passing on knowledge as well as facilitating the creation of new knowledge and insights (Grugulis and Stoyanova, 2011). Our study suggests that this offers an alternative approach to career development for women in the music industry and provides them with a tool that can be used to circumvent some of the enduring challenges they would normally face. We further show that communities of practice, coupled with individual agency, can be useful in combating structural issues related to social inequality and exclusion, as is explained in more detail below.

It is well-established that inequalities and precariousness are rife in the music industry (Eikhof and Warhurst, 2013). The music sector is dominated by men (Whiteley, 2013), which is problematic as this leads to informal networks of men that can be exclusionary and discriminatory to women (Smith and McKinlay, 2009). Such networks play an important role in decision making, especially during casual social gatherings. In addition to this, there is a strong competition for work, which is often contingent (Eikhof, 2014). This implies that workers in the music industry enjoy less protection at work (Arnold and Bongiovi, 2013) and that they might be incited to accept working conditions or other aspects of work that they would not have accepted if the competition were less fierce. There is a gendered aspect to this, as women are more likely to be in a disadvantaged position here. Moreover, the culture in the music industry can be described as informal, where the lines between work and non-work as blurred. Relatedly, equal opportunity legislation and anti-discrimination policies are sometimes

perceived as structures that slow down the process and inhibit creativity (Banks and Milestone, 2011), giving way to unethical behaviour. In a study conducted with Dawn Bennett in the Netherlands, we investigated the way in which sexual harassment plays out. We drew on 32 in-depth interviews with women working in the Netherlands' creative industries and found that four factors, namely gendered power relations, the importance of informal networks, the strong competition for work and the industry culture, have led to and sustain sexual harassment in the creative industries, including the music industry (Hennekam and Bennett, 2017b). More precisely, those factors were found to influence the extent to which sexual harassment was perceived to be 'normal practice'. This shows how deeply ingrained and accepted sexual comments and advances are. Firstly, we highlight that while the music industry is often depicted as cool, hot and egalitarian (Gill, 2002), gender inequality is an issue (see also Chapters 9 and 10 in this volume). Secondly, we find that sexual harassment is not only prevalent, but also an accepted as 'part of the job', leading to the normalisation of sexual harassment and a necessity to break into the industry and advance one's career.

However, it is not only women who have a hard time building and sustaining their careers in the creative industries; individuals of colour also encounter further difficulties such as racism. Through the use of a multilevel perspective in our study, we have shown that the interplay of micro-individual, meso-organisational and macro-societal factors leads to ongoing institutional racism in the film industry (Hennekam and Syed, 2018). Institutional racism refers to particular and general instances of racial discrimination, inequality and domination in organisational or institutional contexts, such as the labour market, the industry and the wider society (Ahmed, 2012). Drawing on 16 in-depth interviews with individuals working in the film industry, our study findings highlight how macro-level power structures play a role, while on the meso-level, network-based recruitment practices as well as formal and informal learning were found to lead to and sustain racism in the film industry. However, agency on an individual or collective level is observed as a way to break those patterns. For example, artists of colour – and particularly women of colour – tend to engage in positive discrimination to push equality forward; they move to occupations where they are less dependent on others to have more freedom to express unheard voices in the film industry; finally, they function as role models to other women and/or ethnic minorities.

Older workers seem to face a particularly precarious situation in the creative industries, where the number of older entrepreneurs is growing (Mietzner and Kamprath, 2013). Several factors can explain this trend: Previous studies generally distinguish between 'pull' factors and 'push' factors. Push factors include ageism or career stagnation in which older workers are pushed away from the traditional labour market. In this situation, starting one's own business may be the only alternative for older individuals wishing to continue to work. On the other side, older people might be 'pulled' into a career as an

entrepreneur because it is a flexible alternative to organisational employment that offers a more attractive work-life balance, a great deal of autonomy or a more attractive financial incentive. I conducted 43 semi-structured in-depth interviews with older self-employed creative workers in the Netherlands, of which 79 per cent was male, aged 51 to 67, in a variety of creative sub-sectors such as music, photography and visual art, to gain insights into the challenges they face (Hennekam, 2015). I found that the creative industries, with the prevalence of project-based work, networked recruitment practices, low remuneration, unsociable working hours and the need to be geographically mobile, might be especially hostile towards older workers. Indeed, the findings reveal that older creative workers are often forced into self-employment. Age discrimination, negative stereotypes and prejudices were common reasons for leaving their status as an employee and becoming self-employed. Also, becoming unemployed from the age of 40 onwards seemed to be a trigger to self-employment, not because they wanted to do so, but simply because they struggled to find a new job. In addition, a vicious circle that pushed them away from the creative industries was identified. The interviewees explained that, due to a lower income from their creative activities, they increasingly relied on other non-creative activities, resulting in having less time for creative activities, less income and, again, an increased reliance on non-creative activities, pushing them away from the creative industry. An inclusive culture could possibly avoid such a situation.

Lessons Learned

I argue that studying precarious and stigmatised populations in the music industry is important because these insights can be used to create an inclusive workplace for all. Below, I outline the lessons we can learn from this growing body of research and what it implies for the music industry.

Some individuals are in a precarious situation or perceive themselves to be stigmatised. Raising awareness is the very first step that helps to acknowledge that these populations merit further attention and encounter some difficulties that need to be taken seriously. More insights into the issues they face, their wishes and the ways they, collectively or individually, stand up for their rights and needs will help to build an inclusive workplace in which everyone has his or her place and feels accepted. In inclusive organisations, individuals of all backgrounds are fairly treated, valued for who they are and included in core decision making (Nishii, 2013). By proactively creating such environments, for example through monitoring and encouraging major record labels to sign contracts with artists from diverse backgrounds, closing the gender pay gap or putting positive discrimination or quotas in place for underrepresented groups in the music industry, organisations can leverage the benefits associated with diversity. While positive change can be observed (e.g., some highly successful female performers of colour), more can be done to continue this encouraging trend.

However, the creation of an inclusive climate in the music industry requires more than increasing diverse representation and implementing equitable HRM practices. Rather, it has been argued that it requires a change in interaction patterns (Nishii, 2013). Organisations therefore need to create an inclusive climate in which individuals feel they can be themselves. This should increase feelings of authenticity and connectedness or belongingness. It has been argued that two needs have to be met to feel included: belongingness and uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011). Both needs must be met simultaneously to experience inclusion. Uniqueness implies that individuals can bring their whole selves to work, acknowledging their differences or characteristics without using that differential characteristic as the main selling point. Belongingness refers to a sense of belonging where their input is being valued and taken into consideration. For inclusion to happen, individuals have to perceive that they are esteemed members of a workgroup via experiences that satisfy their need for both belongingness and uniqueness (Shore et al., 2011).

Diversity training in which individuals in organisations learn about their perceptions and biases and how they influence their behaviours and practices through exercises and role plays can be useful, as this should lead to increased awareness about how people can differ from one another and how this can be used as an asset for an organisation. Another option would be to create more opportunities for teamwork and interaction at work so that prevailing negative stereotypes can be re-evaluated when individuals encounter new information leading to a change in their preconceived ideas about stigmatised individuals. This can be accomplished through increased contact. Drawing on contact theory, it has been argued that intergroup contact reduces prejudice attitudes and behaviours as 'prejudiced people avoid intergroup contact' (Pettigrew, 1998: 80). Training with the aim of enhancing diversity can take many forms. Affinity networks offer support and career advice and create connections within identity groups (Dobbin et al., 2011). Such networks can be useful for many marginalised groups in the workplace. For example, networks where people of colour can interact with one another and share experiences are clearly helpful; it has also been suggested that organisations and institutions in the music industry could focus on common experiences between multiple groups. Cole (2008) states that one should focus on similarities across social identity groups that appear to have little in common in order to build coalitions. Race-based affinity groups, where people of the same racial group meet on a regular basis to discuss the dynamics of racism, oppression and privilege within their institution, can provide forums for communication and group members can offer insights to help move changes forward. Communities of practice are another vehicle that can provide a 'safe space' for marginalised groups in the music industry.

Trade unions are also paramount in increasing equality, diversity and inclusion in the music industry. There is a large number of freelance and

self-employed professionals in the music sector who cannot rely on organisational policies and practices. For example, self-employed workers do not enjoy the same benefits and protections such as pensions, health insurance, secondary terms of employment and life and/or disability insurance compared to employed individuals, which increases their vulnerability (Underhill and Quinlan, 2011). As such, accommodations are often negotiated by trade unions as part of industry-wide, collective agreements, which puts temporary workers at a disadvantage. The atypical employment forms that are common in the music industry thus call for changes to trade unions' development of strategies, policies and structures (Gumbell-McCormick, 2011). Trade unions and professional associations should consider how they manage some of the worker protection strategies traditionally undertaken by organisations, including access to information and counselling, support, peer mentorship, sensitivity training and multi-organisational agreements on acceptable codes of conduct. This is especially important as precarious employment tends to persist throughout one's career.

Music workers themselves also play a role in the form of collective actions and activism. We saw for example that communities of practice allowed individuals to meet other professionals and build a reputation, without relying on existing networks that can be hostile towards certain individuals. The online space, innovative ways to connect with others and showing agency in the form of setting up one's own business or drawing on the other valued social identities one possesses all seem to help to push equality forward.

It is clear that more work is needed to create an inclusive workplace for all in the music industry. While it has been argued that diversity management should be all-encompassing in order to be effective (Scott et al., 2011), it is also recognised that the culture of an organisation or a sector should generally be completely revised in order to implement practices and policies that lead to an inclusive atmosphere. However, it should be acknowledged that such a transformation is both costly and needs the full commitment of the CEO and top management, while public funding and awards also play a role in the ongoing exclusion of certain groups in the music industry. This is difficult, since many organisations are only superficially engaged with diversity and do not really believe in the underlying rationale of diversity; therefore, they tick boxes and do the minimum to avoid legal problems (Hoobler, 2005). Ensuring equal representation on high-level organisational structures, such as the boards of music organisations, will also help to ensure awareness and inclusion. Inclusion can thus be considered a key issue if one aims to increase equality.

Where Do We Go from Here?

Despite the growing interest in and knowledge base on the inequalities in the music industry, much remains to be done to improve diversity, equality and

inclusion. I end this chapter by outlining a few avenues for future research in order to spur further efforts in this area.

First, more interdisciplinary research in which industry partners and scholars from a variety of backgrounds such as musicology, sociology, education or economics work together is needed, as different disciplines with their own methods and theoretical lenses add different perspectives. Creating synergies through cross-disciplinary teamwork is likely to lead to novel perspectives that can help move research on diversity in the music industry forward. Second, we need to go beyond visible demographic characteristics and acknowledge intersectionality. Intersectionality refers to the reproduction of inequalities through distinct but interdependent systems of capitalist, patriarchal and racial relations (Acker, 2006) as well as to a 'tool' for studying inequalities (Collins and Bilge, 2020). It has been argued that when one focuses on a single social identity, one oversimplifies the situation or, worse, overlooks the complexities related to inequality and power relations, silencing the experiences of the populations that need to be heard the most. Third, applied research would be helpful in seeing what works in practice to foster social and cultural change. This asks for innovative designs and close collaboration with industry partners. This type of research can inform trade unions, associations, organisations and other bodies about what works and what doesn't, as little is known about the effectiveness of strategies to reduce inequities in the music industry. For example, affirmative action in the form of positive discrimination for management positions for women or other minority groups, or more money like public subsidies for types of music that have been associated with certain ethnic groups, might give certain groups access to networks that traditionally have been closed to them.

To conclude, I hope and believe that social change is possible, that the music industry can and should allow all individuals to reach any hierarchical position and that individuals can perform or write any kind of music without being put into particular genres based on their backgrounds. In sum, the music industry can and should be inclusive, meaning that it is a place where all individuals feel they can be themselves, feel supported and accepted and are able to fully develop themselves both personally and professionally. This should lead to a bourgeoning, flourishing industry where all talent is being shown and where everyone can thrive.

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13 Moving Beyond @operaisracist

Exploring Blacktivism as a Pathway to Antiracism and Creative Justice in Opera

Antonio C. Cuyler

Introduction

In 2020, the deadly COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately impacted Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) in the US (Wood, 2020), exacerbating long-suffered cultural, economic, health and political injustices. In addition, managing the virus amidst the killings of unarmed Black Americans such as Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Tony McDade and far too many others compelled a global reckoning with anti-Black racism. As a tipping point of sorts, Mr. Floyd's killing compelled several corporations, foundations, individuals and institutions to make public statements in support of Black lives and pledge a total of $6 billion to fight racial injustice (Williams, 2020).

Yet in August, when asked 'since the death of George Floyd in May, have you personally taken any actions to better understand racial issues in America, a poll found that 51% of Latinx, 49% of Asian and 41% of Black respondents answered 'yes', while only 30% of White respondents did so (NPR, 2020). That only 30% of White respondents answered 'yes' to the question raised in this poll remains disturbing amidst the efforts of some politicians and citizens, who primarily identify as White, to politicise, subvert and undermine fact-based teaching of history informed by Critical Race Theory (American Studies Association, 2021). This reckoning with anti-Black racism has had implications for the US creative sector, too. In dance (International Association of Blacks in Dance, 2020), film (Ritman, 2020), publishing (Deahl, 2020), theatre (Gelt, 2020; McHenry, 2020; The Ground We Stand On, 2020) and visual arts (Dismantle NOMA, 2020; Holmes, 2020), Black people yet again shared disturbing stories of racial discrimination, marginalisation, oppression and subjugation in an industry that has historically viewed itself as 'open' to all.

Music industry professionals responded to Mr. Floyd's killing, too. According to CBS, in a statement calling for an industry-wide plan to address enormous injustice, Wilco frontman Jeff Tweedy wrote, 'the modern music industry is built almost entirely on Black art. The wealth

that rightfully belonged to Black artists was stolen outright' (CBS News, 2021). Movies such as *Bessie*, *The United States vs. Billie Holiday, Get On Up*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* and *Ray*, as well as the TV series *Unsung* chronicle the music industry's ubiquitous inhumane, predatory and ruthless capitalist behaviour towards Black artists of the kind Tweedy described in his statement. Furthermore, a BMG report found that four of the 33 labels BMG had acquired since forming in 2008 showed 'significant differences' in the royalty rates given to Black artists (Savage, 2020). Tweedy pledged to donate 5% of his royalties as reparations (CBS, 2021). Black agents, artists, executives, lawyers, managers, producers and songwriters formed the Black Music Action Coalition to address systemic racism within the music business (Black Music Action Coalition, 2021). In addition, Warner Music Group and the Blavatnik Family Foundation established a $100 million social justice fund (Warner Music Inc., 2021).

In opera, however, Black cultural workers responded differently. An unidentified group used the Instagram handle @operaisracist to share anonymous stories (Chang, 2020). One could view this strategy as a double-edged sword: by sharing anonymous stories without affixing them to a specific person, readers could potentially focus on the content of the story without the distraction of from whom the story came. Conversely, by not identifying the storyteller, the reader could also dismiss the story without appreciating the details of its content. Furthermore, it raised the question of whether this approach to Blacktivism will yield the outcomes Black opera professionals hope to achieve. Therefore, this chapter asks: in what ways might Blacktivism encourage the manifestation of antiracism and creative justice in opera?

To clarify, I define *Black activism* as the use of advocacy and personal agency by Black Americans to lay the groundwork for political action and inspire changes that will positively impact their lives (Lorde, 1984). Kendi (2019: 13) suggested that *antiracism* is supporting an antiracist policy through actions or expressing antiracist ideas. For the purposes of this chapter, I define *antiracism* as abhorring and actively seeking to dismantle and eradicate racist attitudes, behaviours, policies, practices and the lie of White supremacy. Banks (2017) coined the term *creative justice* in the UK. Re-contextualising *creative justice* in the US, I previously defined it as the manifestation of all people living creative and expressive lives on their own terms (Cuyler, 2019).

However, here, and specifically after the litany of Black Americans killed via state violence at the hands of police brutality, I define *creative justice* as the manifestation of all historically discriminated against, marginalised, oppressed and subjugated peoples living creative and expressive lives on their own terms. Given these definitions of *Blacktivism*, *antiracism* and *creative justice*, Critical Race Theory (CRT) is the most appropriate theoretical lens through which to view the phenomenon of Blacktivism in opera. As Lorde (1984: 112) argued, 'the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house'. Using the tools

(policies, practices or theories) of a racist, cisgender, heterosexual patriarchy to critically examine Blacktivism in opera is counterintuitive to the purpose of this chapter, which is to explore Blacktivism in opera as a pathway for envisioning an antiracist, and more creatively just, opera industry.

Theoretical Framework

CRT, according to Parker and Lynn (2002), is a legal theory of race and racism designed to uncover how race and racism work in the law and in society. White supremacy, which gave birth to a particular brand of racism, remains one of the most seemingly obstinate worldviews within US society. CRT, then, proves useful in helping to unearth the ways in which White supremacy and racism appears in opera. Jones and Okun (2001) identified the following as characteristics of White supremacy culture: defensiveness, either/or thinking, fear of open conflict, individualism, objectivity, only one right way, paternalism, perfectionism, power hoarding, progress is bigger, quantity over quality, right to comfort, sense of urgency and worship of the written word. In addition to these characteristics, I add valuing money over human life. The ongoing protests to reopen the US economy even while hundreds of thousands of citizens, primarily Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), were losing their lives during the COVID-19 pandemic supports my assertion.

Furthermore, as Phan (2020) pointed out, operatic White supremacy works in ways that crown White-identified professionals as opera's gatekeepers preventing few, if any, BIPOC from securing the same decision-making power to counter and subvert racist attitudes, behaviours, policies and practices in the industry. To address the enduring issues resulting from White supremacy in opera and to move the industry in the direction of becoming antiracist and more creatively just, opera can no longer rely on White supremacy culture and what Feagin (2020) termed the White Racial Frame for deep and self-reflective critical examination. These are tools of the master. In this chapter, then, I use CRT as the theoretical lens for examining opera's response to anti-Black racism and Black opera professionals' Blacktivism to compel the advent of a more antiracist and creatively just industry (Crenshaw et al., 1996; Cuyler, 2021).

My three main goals in using CRT include: (1) to present storytelling and narratives as valid approaches through which to examine race and racism in opera; (2) to argue for the eradication of racial subjugation in opera while simultaneously recognising that people have socially constructed race and (3) to draw important relationships between race and other axes of power and domination in opera (Cuyler, 2021; Parker and Lynn, 2002; Solórzano and Yosso, 2002). Radically honest counternarratives are critical to articulating and understanding one's lived experience, which is also key to liberation. As Baldwin (1962) argued, what White people have caused Black

people to endure does not testify to their superiority but to their fear and inhumanity.

In CRT, qualitative methodologies enable the collection of textual data to develop authentic and insightful counter narratives. In addition to CRT, I use the critical epistemologies and knowledge embodied by Black thought leaders (Baldwin, 1962; Lorde, 1984) to sharpen my analysis of Black opera professionals' Blacktivism against White supremacy and racism in opera. With CRT, this chapter employs phenomenology – but not in the classical sense of the methodology. In this chapter, phenomenology allows me to reconstruct and hold clear in the reader's minds the sequence of events that compelled Black opera professionals' Blacktivism, which also serves as the phenomenon under study.

Method

This phenomenological study assesses whether Black opera professionals' Blacktivism compelled substantive change that will improve their lives and move the opera industry toward a more antiracist and creatively just future. According to Creswell (2013: 76), 'a phenomenological study describes the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a phenomenon'.

Furthermore, the purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of its universal essence. Qualitative researchers accomplish this by identifying a phenomenon or an object of human experience to study. In this chapter, the phenomenon under study is Blacktivism in opera. Creswell (2013: 149) suggested five to 25 cases for conducting a phenomenological study. However, I rely exclusively on the following textual data: *A Statement from OPERA America: Black Lives Matter* and the Black Opera Alliance's (BOA) *Pledge for Racial Equity and Systemic Change in Opera* as well as the Black Administrators of Opera's *Letter to the Field from Black Administrators*. These texts serve as the sole units of analysis in this chapter. In addition to CRT and phenomenology, I used a content analysis of these textual data to critically examine them for examples of *antiracism* and *creative justice*.

Phenomenon

As the Timeline of Events (see Table 13.1) shows, the phenomenon under examination in this chapter began with George Floyd's killing on May 25, 2020 (ironically falling on Memorial Day, a US national holiday). Two days later, on May 27, 2020, OPERA America, whose mission is to 'lead and serve the entire opera community, supporting the creation, presentation, and enjoyment of opera', released *A Statement from OPERA America: Black Lives Matter*. The statement in part reads as follows:

OPERA America *reaffirms* its commitment to be an agent for change. *Black Lives Matter*.

We acknowledge that many of opera's inherited practices and prejudices have created barriers that exclude people of color from participating. We envision a future that affirms and uplifts Black artists, audiences, educators, trustees, and staff. OPERA America's ALAANA Opera Network provides a forum to identify issues and set goals. IDEA Opera Grants and IDEA Opera Residencies are available to nurture the talent and support the work of Black composers and librettists. Civic Practice Grants help companies build their capacity to serve their communities through robust, mutually beneficial partnerships. OPERA America convenings provide opportunities for individual learning and change; members heard on May 27 from an extraordinary lead speaker and dynamic panelists about how we can create real belonging in opera.

Timeline of Events

I italicised key words and phrases in OPERA America's statement that warrant critical analysis. First, I applaud the service arts organisation for making a statement. However, to describe itself as reaffirming its commitment 'to be an agent for change' struck me as odd. Although OPERA America had begun work on access, diversity, equity and inclusion (ADEI) in 2018, as far as I can tell, they never explicitly and publicly said the words 'Black Lives Matter' (Cuyler, 2021). Second, while they acknowledged that many of opera's inherited practices and prejudices have created barriers that exclude people of colour from participating, OPERA America did not explicitly apologise for the ways in which opera's inherited practices and prejudices have created barriers that exclude BIPOC from participating. As a counter example to OPERA America's statement, the League of American

Table 13.1 Timeline of events

Event	Date
George Floyd's killing	May 25, 2020
OPERA America released *A Statement from OPERA America: Black Lives Matter*	May 27, 2020
Instagram @operaisracist	June 2020
Black Opera Alliance emerges	July 2020
Black Opera Alliance calls for David Tucker's removal from the board of the Richard Tucker Foundation for racist remarks	July 19, 2020
Tucker Foundation removes David Tucker from its Trustees	July 20, 2020
Black Opera Alliance launches *A Pledge for Racial Equity and Systemic Change in Opera*	September 14, 2020
Black Opera Alliance pens *Letter to the Opera Field from Black Administrators*	October 29, 2020

Orchestras' *New Statement on Racial Discrimination*, supported by Flagg's (2020) article on anti-Black discrimination in US orchestras, does a much better job of this. In addition, OPERA America's ability to 'envision a future that affirms and uplifts Black artists, audiences, educators, trustees, and staff', gave me hope, until I read the last paragraph, which demonstrates at least five of Jones and Okun's (2001) characteristics of White supremacy culture: defensiveness, paternalism, power hoarding, progress is bigger and worship of the written word.

After OPERA America released its statement, a few of its Instagram followers immediately responded by calling them out for the racist ways in which they have acted in the past. In addition, an unnamed group released the Instagram page @operaisracist (Chang, 2020) in June 2020. The anonymous stories shared by BIPOC from across the industry evidenced some of the racialised microaggressions that many White opera professionals likely Whitesplained when they first happened. However, if used wisely, these stories can form the basis of an antiracist curriculum for OPERA America and its members. The Black Opera Alliance emerged after these events.

In July of 2020, a group of Black opera professionals established the BOA to 'empower Black classical artists and administrators by exposing systems of racial inequity and under-representation of the African diaspora in all facets of the industry and challenging institutions to implement drastic reform'. Though only a newly minted organisation of Blacktivism in opera, BOA quickly challenged extant power dynamics and operatic White supremacy. This became evident when, during the summer of 2020, David Tucker, son of the famed US tenor Richard Tucker, made blatantly racist comments on social media, according to the *New York Times* (Bahr, 2020). In response to protests in Oregon, Tucker commented, 'Good. Get rid of these thugs and I don't care where you send them. They are a Pox on our society'. He also commented 'pulling the race card is another convenient excuse to modify excellent standards of vocal artistry' in response to Russell Thomas, a Black tenor, who pointed out that the Tucker Foundation had given its top prize, the Richard Tucker Award, to only one Black artist since its inception in 1978.

Via an open letter that described his comments as disturbing, BOA succeeded in achieving Tucker's removal from his father's foundation's board. Phan (2020) described this scandal's importance by stating,

> I remember the first time I received a letter from the Richard Tucker Music Foundation inviting me to audition for the Sara Tucker Study Grant. The letter invited me to the 92nd St Y on the Upper East Side of New York City, where I would sing an audition for a panel of judges comprised of casting directors, music directors, and senior artistic administrators from opera houses around the country. I soon learned that this invitation was a very coveted and special one: only a handful of young American singers deemed the most promising were selected

for these auditions. I never learned who nominated me the years I was invited to audition for the Sara Tucker Grant. All I understood was that it was based on the recommendations of operatic gate keepers and tastemakers who served in the administrations of the nation's top opera houses.

He went on to state,

If we really want to effect lasting anti-racist change in the operatic industry and art form, we need to focus on systems – not people. Because of its reliance on external, industry-wide consultation, the situation at the Richard Tucker Music Foundation presents a unique opportunity to examine the systems that maintain the operatic White status quo.

Although I agree with most of Phan's (2020) assessment, I strongly disagree that the industry needs to focus on systems over people. In my view, the industry should focus on people because they enable systems to operate uninterrupted as they have inherited them. With the right education, however, I strongly believe that the industry can embolden and empower people to cause systems failures that unearth key opportunities for reform grounded in antiracism and creative justice.

After the David Tucker incident, BOA released *A Pledge for Racial Equity and Systemic Change in Opera* on September 14, 2020. The *Pledge* asked the opera industry to acknowledge the artistic and financial contributions of Black artists and administrators and pledge to do the following:

1. Hire Black artists who reflect, at minimum, the racial demographics of our most diverse communities for both outreach and mainstage projects.
2. Require that administrative staff, orchestra members, and independent contractors reflect, at minimum, the racial demographics of our most diverse communities.
3. Program and prioritise works by Black composers on the mainstage, especially those that feature storytelling true to the complexity and broad experience of Black culture.
4. Hire more Black creatives and production personnel at every level of the organisation.
5. Require that visual artists undergo training in successfully preparing a Black artist for the stage.
6. Review the organisation's hiring practices and administrative policies for inherent racism and/or implicit bias.
7. Review the board's recruitment culture and decision-making methodologies for inherent racism and/or implicit bias.
8. Include within the company's official Code of Conduct a commitment to anti-racism and anti-oppression.

BOA's 8-point pledge clearly seeks to outline a comprehensive antiracist way forward that would result in the manifestation of creative justice for many of opera's Black stakeholders. But what about Black opera audiences?

Given opera's enduring financial challenges as a result of audience decline, one of BOA's points should have articulated the ways in which the opera industry could make itself more equitable and inclusive for Black audience members. If one considers that Citigroup (CitiGPS, 2020) found that the US economy lost $16 trillion over the last 20 years, and the film industry loses $1 billion annually as a result of anti-Black discrimination (Dunn et al., 2021), how much revenue has opera lost as a result of discrimination against Black Americans? Conversely, how much revenue might opera generate by becoming antiracist and signifying that it unconditionally embraces all of opera's Black stakeholders? Black audiences have the right to pursue their creative justice in an environment free of racism, too. Otherwise, opera will continue to lose critical cultural, financial, intellectual, political and social capital.

As of March 10, 2021, according to BOA, 85% of US opera companies had responded to the pledge. More specifically, 44% committed to *A Pledge for Racial Equity and Systemic Change in Opera*, while 35% are in progress, 19% have not responded and only 1% replied no. The *in-progress* group shows much promise, as BOA has worked in partnership with companies to personalise the pledge to localise their needs. However, on October 29, 2020, Black Administrators of Opera (BAO) released a *Letter to the Opera Field from Black Administrators*, which reads, in part, as follows:

> Dear Colleagues in the Opera Art Form:
>
> As the opera field continues to grapple with the challenges of both the COVID-19 pandemic and the deeply rooted barriers stemming from racial injustice, we, the Black Administrators of Opera, call upon each of you to help make the necessary changes for greater equity in our field. We are a group that formed in response to the pressing need to elevate the voices of Black administrators in the international dialogue on race and privilege currently unfolding in classical music. At 25 members strong, we represent a cross-section of companies from each budget classification. We work in the areas of diversity, education, community and civic engagement, artistic, production, operations, development, and company culture. Our perspective is distinct yet coordinated with other similar initiatives. *The industry continues to call on our stories and experiences, our creativity, our communities, our expertise, and our networks without ceding power, demonstrating a reluctance to progress beyond a White-centered approach to opera*. Building upon several calls to action within the arts, including the *Pledge for Racial Equity and Systemic Change in Opera*, presented to the field in September 2020 by the Black Opera Alliance, we present the following supplemental list

of actionable solutions for racial equity for arts administrators in the opera field.

1. *Commit to equity in salaries, wages, and promotion opportunities.*
2. **Commit to company-wide racial equity education and professional development.**
3. **Commit to equitable hiring and recruitment practices.**
4. **Commit to company-wide intentional inclusion in the execution of mission and programs.**
5. *Commit to engaging Black communities in an honest and mutually beneficial manner without the intention of solely profiting from their networks, donations, and ticket sales.*
6. *Develop a Code of Conduct for managing discriminatory or racist rhetoric/action from board members, patrons, donors, artists, or guests.*
7. **Commit to adequately funding company Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives and working groups.** *It is demeaning, unfair, and inappropriate to create a working group to address systemic oppression without allocating the financial resources and agency necessary to fund activities, programs, and training. Refrain from hiring large firms with proven practices of White-dominant culture and/or forcing the responsibility of shaping an equitable culture on Black staff, board, and volunteers.*

Current business practices in the opera field are built on structures of exclusion and cannot play a productive role in addressing the issues that plague our organizations. This letter is presented as an additional resource, and we encourage you to prioritize implementing these solutions to fulfill the commitment of honoring Black lives.

Share space with Black administrators. Support Black administrators. Invest in Black administrators. Respect Black administrators.

The time for action is now. We urge you to set a thoughtful, thorough plan in motion immediately. There is a critical need to appropriately address the administrative support necessary to bring about significant and lasting change. We encourage you to devise an empowered, cross-functional team to address these priorities in administration, creating a shared vision of greater equity for our field.

Anonymous.

Certain members of the Black Administrators of Opera elected to remain anonymous for fear of retaliation, an unfortunate reality in a field that prides itself on creativity and storytelling – an unfortunate reality that we will end, together.

Derrell Acon, Jennifer Bowman, Michael E. Braxton, Courtney Clark, Carl DuPont, Ersian Francois, Jessica Jahn, Quodesia D. Johnson, Charles Chip McNeal, Brandon Neal, LaRob K. Payton, Kristian S. Roberts, Alexa Smith, Tracy L. Wilson

The BAO's *Letter from Black Administrators* stated that 'the industry continues to call on our stories and experiences, our creativity, our communities, our expertise, and our networks without ceding power, demonstrating a reluctance to progress beyond a White-centered approach to opera'. This statement signals that opera is not yet truly ready for change. Too often cultural organisations initiate ADEI work without first and honestly acknowledging the necessity for change. If opera truly acknowledged and apologised for the ways in which it perpetuated and profited from anti-Black racism, perhaps then it would open itself up to the kinds of transformation that BOA and BAO have tried to compel.

Second, the letter asked opera to 'commit to engaging Black communities in an honest and mutually beneficial manner without the intention of solely profiting from their networks, donations, and ticket sales'. Although a reasonable request, I am not sure that opera has engaged with any group of people without the intention of profiting from their networks, donations and ticket sales, let alone minoritised communities. Nevertheless, the request here advances antiracism and creative justice in opera because its anti-capitalism. Here, BAO expresses a desire for opera to manage its business with a more humanist framing. Furthermore, BAO's comment that, 'current business practices in the opera field are built on structures of exclusion and cannot play a productive role in addressing the issues that plague our organizations' supports my assertion.

Third, BAO asked opera companies to 'develop a Code of Conduct for managing discriminatory or racist rhetoric/action from board members, patrons, donors, artists, or guests'. Given the heinous stories shared on @operaisracist, this request makes perfect sense and should have been a practice of all opera companies. Fourth, 'It is demeaning, unfair, and inappropriate to create a working group to address systemic oppression without allocating the financial resources and agency necessary to fund activities, programs, and training'. I could not agree more with BAO's observation. Too many cultural organisations have become comfortable asking minoritised professionals to do the heavy lifting of helping them to become anti-oppression cultural organisations without compensating them appropriately for this work or making the necessary budgetary investments. Yet, they want to reap the rewards for this work. I strongly disagree with this practice and all cultural organisations should discontinue it and the under-investment made in pursuing ADEI.

In closing, the letter stated, 'Certain members of the Black Administrators of Opera elected to remain anonymous for fear of retaliation, an unfortunate reality in a field that prides itself on creativity and storytelling – an unfortunate reality that we will end, together'. Initially, the letter cited 25 Black professionals. However, only 14 signed the letter which means that 11 Black professionals did not feel comfortable openly signing the letter. Is operatic White supremacy so powerful and retaliatory that it would cause Black people to only advocate for themselves under the cloak of anonymity?

Clearly, the answer is yes, operatic White supremacy is so powerful and retaliatory that it would cause 11 Black professionals to only advocate for themselves under the cloak of anonymity.

I find this problematic because BAO and BOA have articulated an anti-racist pathway forward for opera. BOA and BAO have done a significant amount of uncompensated work that all opera companies could greatly benefit from if they heed its suggestions. To punish a Black opera professional for signing a letter supporting the institutionalisation of these antiracist requests makes no sense. Instead, the opera companies that employ these brave Black professionals should appreciate their generosity of critique and solutions and reward them with leadership positions. Still, the statement puzzles me because its intent remains unclear. One could argue that those who penned the letter wanted to make space for those who wanted to sign the letter but feared retaliation for doing so. At the same time, perhaps BAO wanted to use the statement to signify that even with several opera companies signing the pledge, some opera companies still have much more work to do relative to power sharing. Whatever the rationale, future research should explore the question of why some Black opera professionals felt comfortable signing the *Letter to the Opera Field from Black Administrators* while others did not.

Conclusions

This chapter explored the ways in which Blacktivism might encourage the manifestation of antiracism and creative justice in opera. Undoubtedly, BOA's activism through the *Pledge for Racial Equity and Systemic Change in Opera* as well as BAO's *Letter to the Field from Black Administrators* will lead to the manifestation of antiracism and creative justice in opera, but only if the opera industry joins Black professionals and commits to following their leadership on addressing the issue of anti-Black racism. As the most marginalised racial group in US society, Black professionals would have the most insights to offer opera about how to become antiracist and more creatively just. Still, I find myself questioning why BAO needed to send the *Letter* although the statement 'the industry continues to call on our stories and experiences, our creativity, our communities, our expertise, and our networks without ceding power, demonstrating a reluctance to progress beyond a White-centred approach to opera' provides some insight. To close, I offer the following as further suggestions for framing opera's path towards antiracism and creative justice.

1. Radical truth-telling about and acceptance of opera's racist history: The opera industry must apologise and reparate for its inherited practices and prejudices that have created barriers and excluded BIPOC. As Baldwin (1962: 10) suggested, 'we, with love shall force our brothers to see themselves as they are, to cease fleeing from reality and begin to change it'.

2. Re-imagine opera as an industry that abhors, rejects and actively seeks to dismantle and eradicate racist attitudes, behaviours, policies, practices and White supremacy now! Waiting is no longer an option. Further advancing this chapter's use of CRT and the use of a new set of tools to envision the future, Lorde (1984: 110–111) asked, 'what does it mean when the tools of a racist patriarchy are used to examine the fruits of that same patriarchy? It means that only the most narrow perimeters of change are possible and allowable'.

3. Commit to realising the manifestation of all historically discriminated against, marginalised, oppressed and subjugated peoples living creative and expressive lives through opera.

4. Similar to BAO's request, require ongoing company-wide anti-oppression education for all individuals engaged in opera. Systems only change when individuals do.

5. Consider the human capital lost because opera has not historically been antiracist and value that capital more than that of those who are racist, no matter their assets, talents, social networks or wealth.

6. Diversify and democratise access to those who can play the role of 'gatekeeper' in opera or completely eradicate gatekeeping by providing access to opportunities through a transparent public forum.

7. Institutionalise these practices in opera and name and call in/out those who seek to disrupt these efforts and those articulated by BOA and BAO, or those who backslide, by holding them accountable along every step of the process. After all, Lorde (1984: 112) argued that 'without community there is no liberation, only the most vulnerable and temporary armistice between an individual and her oppression'.

In writing this chapter, it occurred to me that this study of Blacktivism in opera is also a case study on power. Power in and of itself is democratised and neutral. It does not want to sit in one place for too long, nor is it invested in bad or good, or right or wrong. One pays a tremendous price for hoarding power as research has found that many leaders, which I argue have seemingly unlimited access to power, lack empathy (DDI, 2016). If power is truly democratised and neutral, then the oppressed can also access power at any time. This means that the oppressor only has as much power as the oppressed allows them to have and vice versa.

   The BOA and BAO have accessed power that they may have never had were it not for George Floyd's heinous killing. Though I do not know if and for how long the changes BOA and BAO have advocated for will last, three final observations from studying the phenomenon of Blacktivism in opera ring true for me. First, if BOA and BAO remain determined in their resolve, they have the ability to actualise an antiracist and creatively just opera industry. Their success in the removal of David Tucker from the Richard Tucker Foundation's board supports my observation, as well as

their ability to compel opera companies to sign the *Pledge for Racial Equity and Systemic Change in Opera*.

Second, Blacktivism inspires activism among other marginalised, oppressed and subjugated groups. Because of the emergence of BOA and BAO, the Asian Opera Alliance and LatinX Artist Society in Opera have formed, too. Third, and connected to my second observation, several times throughout its documents BOA used the word *anti-oppression*. Opera would do well to consider the question of what an anti-oppression opera industry would look like. I envision that BOA will inspire similar groups to form for the differently abled, LGBQIA+, gender non-conforming, trans and poor communities. A broad coalition of marginalised, oppressed and subjugated people working together to fight injustice is what Dr Martin Luther King, Jr., envisioned when he started his poor people's campaign. Though I am not sure what will come next for opera, I am certain that BOA and BAO's work makes opera better.

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