

## From the Margins to the Mainstream: Jazz, Social Relations, and Discourses of Value

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### Introduction: The Margins and the Mainstream

Throughout much of its comparatively brief history, jazz has tended to be viewed as a somewhat marginal music, enjoying neither the straightforward commerciality of rock and popular music, nor the levels of public support afforded classical music and opera. The etymological lineage of the term 'jazz' itself—as a slang word for sexual intercourse—was never a promising start, and the music has always remained a little risqué for mainstream tastes. It was perhaps only at the height of the Swing Era—a good decade or two before Elvis first gyrated his hips—that jazz could lay claim to being a genuinely mainstream popular music. As Gunther Schuller has argued, "It is undoubtedly the only time in its history when jazz was completely in phase with the social environment, and when it both captured and reflected the broadest musical common-denominator of popular taste in the nation" (6).

Schuller's perspective is something of a prevailing trope in standard histories of jazz, which tend to suggest that the Swing Era was the final fading moment of popularity for jazz, the music becoming increasingly esoteric and peripheral to mainstream tastes as it embraced the category of 'art' from bebop onwards. These histories have a considerable degree of accuracy: the harmonic complexity and improvisational fervour of the typical bop combo was far from the user-friendly sound of big band swing, and the forbidding outer reaches of 1960s free jazz was plainly antithetical to the notion of a mass audience. Moreover, the marginal, 'alternative' status of jazz was simply confirmed by its stereotypical socio-cultural associations, from the bordellos and prostitutes of New Orleans to the alcoholism and drug addiction of the nightclub scenes in New York and Los Angeles—associations that crossed freely over stylistic and racial boundaries.

Contrary to the typical arguments outlined above, however, in the post-World War II years, jazz occupied a curiously paradoxical discursive position within North American culture, combining its 'outsider' role with a significant degree of mainstream exposure. The period of the late 1950s and 1960s saw the recording of Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue*, which remains the highest selling jazz album of all time; Dave Brubeck's album *Time Out* was enormously successful, and the quartet's tours to college campuses introduced a new, younger audience to jazz; the Blue Note label produced a series of hard bop and 'funky jazz' recordings that are amongst the most popular of all jazz styles; and jazz was featured prominently in many Hollywood movies and network television series. As *Billboard* magazine noted in 1959, "The late '50s—rather than the '20s—may yet go down in musical history as the real 'Jazz Age'" (qtd. in Khan 31). Notwithstanding such rhetoric, however, throughout this period of mainstream visibility, jazz retained its semiotic associations with substance abuse, criminality, and the seedy side of life, and I address this paradoxical positioning of jazz in more detail in the first section of my paper, employing the signifying potential of jazz in film and television in the 1950s and 1960s as a case study.

It was not until the 1970s that jazz began to occupy a contrasting role in the public imagination, and by the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century the discursive and social positioning of jazz was markedly different than that of the post-war decades. In this current period, a populist conceptualization of the music, linked to a narrowly defined notion of the jazz canon, has functioned not only as a marketing category, with its associated connotations of taste and sophistication (which are rather curiously at odds with its previous negative stereotypes), but has also served to influence the increasingly mainstream positioning of a delimited, neo-traditionalist category of 'jazz' in which particular styles and forms are privileged over others. I address these issues in the second section of my paper, citing specific examples of the discursive employment of jazz as a marketing category, and employing the PBS documentary *Jazz* and the Jazz at Lincoln Center program as brief case studies in the mainstreaming of jazz culture. As I indicate in this section, these developments have been met with considerable scepticism within the still relatively young field of jazz studies, which has tended to adopt a critical, contextualist perspective on the history and growth of the music.

Concurrent with these developments, and in sharp contrast to the discursive role of jazz as a marketing category or a historical style, some more contemporary and challenging forms of jazz and improvised music have exhibited a rather more conflicted relationship with the cultural mainstream, claiming—or having claimed on their behalf—an oppositional politics, linked to often romanticized notions of marginality. In some circles, these musical forms have been employed as the locus for discussions of the role that such forms might play as models for social change. In this case, significant rhetorical claims, linked to a wide range of socio-political benefits, are made on behalf of contemporary jazz and improvised music. In the final sections of my paper, employing the Guelph Jazz Festival and its associated research initiatives as a case study, I engage critically with the sometimes problematic discourses that

have served to frame these projects, situating them within broader debates regarding the social benefits and impacts of the arts.

In this paper, then, examining the manner in which particular discourses have served to shape and influence broader social understandings of various forms of contemporary jazz and improvised music, I explore the somewhat conflicted relationship that these forms of music have had with both the mainstream and the margins, examining the value claims made on behalf of these forms from a cultural, social, and political perspective. I conclude by arguing for a somewhat more realistic view of the socio-political potential of a wide range of contemporary forms of music-making.

## Mainstream Marginality: Jazz in Film and Television in the 1950s and 1960s

For a period of more than a decade, from the early 1950s to the end of the 1960s, the sound of many Hollywood films, and of much prime time television, was dominated by jazz.<sup>1</sup> In these movies and television shows (primarily police and detective series, and their close cousins, the private eye, secret agent, spy, and action-adventure genres), the music of choice was the hip, urban sound of hard swinging big bands and hot jazz combos. The influence was broad and deep, involving a remarkable roster of many of the most prominent composers and arrangers of the period, active in both jazz and film: Henry Mancini, Elmer Bernstein, Lalo Schifrin, Pete Rugolo, Johnny Mandel, Leith Stevens, Fred Steiner, Nelson Riddle, Neil Hefti, and Quincy Jones, to name only a few. Several high-profile jazz musicians contributed film soundtracks and television show themes, including Duke Ellington, Count Basie, John Lewis, and Dave Brubeck. And the bands that played this music were similarly abundant with talent, drawing on some of the finest musicians and arrangers from the West Coast jazz scene, including Shorty Rogers, Shelley Manne, Pete Candoli, Barney Kessel, Red Norvo, Benny Carter, and Oliver Nelson.

In a period when the youthful innovations of rock and roll were in the ascendant, it is fascinating to observe the continuing popularity of jazz on both the large and small screens,<sup>2</sup> belying any comfortably linear history of popular music that regards the advent of rock and roll as a decisive historical break, in which jazz is finally and categorically displaced from the category of 'popular' at a point in the mid-1950s—a perspective fuelled by movies such as *The Blackboard Jungle* (1955) which featured Bill Haley's "Rock Around the Clock" on its soundtrack and, in a telling transitional 'moment,' presented the smashing of a teacher's prized jazz record collection by leather-jacketed punks as the ultimate act of rock and roll rebellion.<sup>3</sup>

Notwithstanding such popular discourses, the prevalence of jazz-based scores on film and television in the 1950s and 1960s points to a considerably more nuanced understanding of popular music history, relocating jazz from a somewhat esoteric margin to a rather more mainstream centre and acknowledging its continuing influence in this period. But the influence was, indeed, a curiously paradoxical one in which jazz, in this more mainstream media manifestation, was valued primarily for its connotations of marginality. A consideration of several examples will serve to illustrate the curiously 'mainstream marginality' of jazz in this period.

In some cases, the jazz presence in movies of the 1950s came in the form of biopics such as *The Glenn Miller Story* (1953), *The Benny Goodman Story* (1955), *The Five Pennies* (1959), and *The Gene Krupa Story* (1959). In common with the broader Hollywood biopic genre, most of these were rather dubious as history, but certainly contributed to maintaining jazz in the public eye throughout the course of the decade. But more significant, perhaps, than the jazz biopic was the extent to which jazz or jazz-influenced scores dominated the soundtracks for several significant films of the period, including, for example, Alex North's *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1951) and Leith Stevens's *The Wild One* (1953), which featured jazz trumpeter Shorty Rogers and his orchestra. Other notable examples of jazz scores include Johnny Mandel's *I Want To Live* (1958), which featured Gerry Mulligan and Art Farmer, and Henry Mancini's Latin-tinged *Touch of Evil* (1958). Elmer Bernstein produced raucous jazz-based scores for two powerful 1950s movies: *The Man With the Golden Arm* (1955), with Shelley Manne and Shorty Rogers in supporting roles, and *Sweet Smell of Success*, (1957), which featured Chico Hamilton's quintet in the nightclub scenes.<sup>4</sup>

It is interesting to note the manner in which jazz is called upon to signify in these movies, almost inevitably connoting the seamy underbelly of contemporary life and serving to instil a remarkably persistent image of the music in mass consciousness. The examples are multiple: Susan Hayward's grim portrayal in *I Want To Live* of the real-life Barbara Graham, executed for murder in San Quentin in 1953; Marlon Brando's classic 'outsider' role as the motorcycle gang leader in *The Wild One* (Woman in Cafe: "What're you rebelling against, Johnny?"; Brando/Johnny: "Whaddya got?"); Frank Sinatra's forceful performance as the heroin-addicted jazz drummer Frankie Machine in *The Man With the Golden Arm*; and Tony Curtis's compelling role as the pathetically conniving press agent Sidney Falco in *Sweet Smell of Success*. And in Robert Emmett Dolan's score for *The Three Faces of Eve* (1957), it should come as no surprise that the sleazy vamp manifestation of Joanne Woodward's multiple personality is accompanied by, well, a sleazy vamp, a virtual parody of smoky jazz debauchery.<sup>5</sup>

By the late 1950s, then, the signifying potential and clichéd stereotypes of jazz were well established, and composers for film and television were happy to exploit the seedy semiotic possibilities that the music offered. Album cover designers were in on the act too: Peter Appleyard's 1960 album, *Percussive Jazz*, made these links explicit, including a version of Bernstein's *The Man With the Golden Arm* and featuring a photograph of an oversized hypodermic needle on the sleeve. The point was further emphasized by Fred Steiner, a veteran TV composer who contributed scores for multiple episodes of *Gunsmoke*, *The Twilight Zone* and the original *Star Trek* series. In his own reflections on his music for *Perry Mason*, which featured a young Raymond Burr as the principled defence attorney and ran on CBS for 10 years, from 1957-1966, Steiner notes that he felt,

the music for 'Perry Mason' should be a combination of his two sides: the suave, well-dressed man about town, so that you had a kind of sophisticated sound. Then you have him dealing with criminals and crime, and historically, you associate jazz with the lower, seamy side of life[. . .] At that point, R & B was the big thing, and the[. . .] idea became to write something that would have a contemporary beat for that side of him, and yet have this symphonic sound to represent him as the kind of guy who goes to the opera. (qtd. in Burlingame 141)

So the equation here is fairly straightforward: jazz horns and a loping R&B beat equals sleaze and sweet strings equals sophistication. Many television shows of the 1950s exploited the music in a similar manner, and hip jazz became the ubiquitous soundtrack for an endless parade of police, detective, and private eye series, cementing the semiotic links between jazz and seamy urban criminality. Steiner's music for *Perry Mason* was one of the earliest jazz-influenced television show scores, although Ray Anthony's 'jazzed-up' version of Walter Schumann's score for the police series *Dragnet* (NBC, 1952-59) preceded it by several years and became the first television theme to make it into the singles charts.<sup>6</sup> Henry Mancini's score for the private eye show *Peter Gunn* (CBS, 1958-61) won Mancini two Grammy awards, and the soundtrack album spent 10 weeks at the top of the *Billboard* popular album charts, remaining on the charts for 117 weeks. The *Peter Gunn* album was so successful that RCA responded with a follow up album six months later: *More Music From Peter Gunn* went to number seven in the charts and stayed in the charts for 35 weeks, receiving six Grammy nominations.<sup>7</sup>

Following the success of the *Peter Gunn* album, RCA released an album of jazz arrangements of Dave Khan's music for the hard-boiled detective yarns in *Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer* (Syndicated, 1958-59), arranged and conducted by Skip Martin. In his liner notes to the album, Spillane observed, "These sounds of violence fit Mike just like his all-season trenchcoat: crisp, strong and pulsating, yet with an underlying streak of sentiment" (qtd. in Burlingame 39).<sup>8</sup> In 1959, Nelson Riddle, long-time collaborator with Frank Sinatra, produced a jazz-inflected theme for *The Untouchables* on ABC, and, in the same year, Elmer Bernstein, better known for his work in film music, scored *Staccato*, which ran for two seasons on NBC and ABC (1959-60). *Staccato* starred John Cassavetes as private eye Johnny Staccato, who played jazz piano in his spare time at Waldo's, the Greenwich Village night club that was his favourite hang-out.<sup>9</sup> The single "Staccato's Theme" reached number four in the UK charts in 1959.<sup>10</sup>

There are many more jazz-influenced examples to be cited, including Pete Rugolo's music for *Richard Diamond; Private Detective* (CBS/NBC, 1957-60) and *The Fugitive* (ABC, 1963-67), both of which starred David Janssen<sup>11</sup>; Lalo Schifrin's popular themes for *Mission: Impossible* (CBS, 1966-73) and *Mannix* (CBS, 1967-75)<sup>12</sup>; Quincy Jones's score for *Ironsides* (NBC, 1967-75)<sup>13</sup>; and Jerry Goldsmith's theme for *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.* (NBC, 1964-68), a series that also included music by Lalo Schifrin, Mort Stevens, and others, arranged and conducted by Hugo Montenegro.

But by the late 1960s, the presence of rock music in television soundtracks was becoming more common, and the influence of jazz began to wane.<sup>14</sup> By the mid-1970s, then, a generational change among composers for television saw rock music become the *lingua franca* for television crime shows, typified by Mike Post and Pete Carpenter's themes for *The Rockford Files* (NBC, 1974-80), *Magnum P.I.* (CBS, 1980-88), and *The A-Team* (NBC, 1983-86). As Post noted of his music with Carpenter for *The Rockford Files*, which won them a Grammy award in 1975, "[It] was our turn: guys who were raised on Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, and the Rolling Stones . . . It's going to be thundering guitars now guys. That's all there is. It isn't five saxophones anymore: it's thundering guitars" (qtd. in Burlingame).<sup>15</sup> It was clear by this stage, then, that the era of Mancini and Bernstein was long gone and whatever stereotypical signifying potential jazz possessed in the 1950s and 1960s was no longer relevant in these later decades.

### Marketing, Metaphors, and Marsalis: Jazz Enters the Mainstream

The development of Fusion in the 1970s ushered in a new period of popularity for jazz, ultimately spawning Smooth Jazz, a musical form whose mainstream positioning was—and is—verifiable in the market place. With the advent of the clean-cut, be-suited, neo-classicist "Young Lions" in the 1980s, spearheaded by the Marsalis clan and various alumni of Art Blakey's Jazz Messengers groups, it was clear that jazz had moved some significant distance from its

sleazy associations of the 1950s and 60s. Indeed, by the time of Clint Eastwood's biopic *Bird* (1988)—in which the figure of Charlie Parker is defined as much by his drug and alcohol addictions as by his music—these associations had begun to look curiously anachronistic, and represented a discursive positioning of jazz that had to be learned anew by a contemporary audience.

In more recent years, jazz has apparently moved even further from its previously marginal social positioning to a considerably more mainstream role in contemporary cultural life. Writing over a decade ago, Krin Gabbard could observe that “even television commercials testify to the music's rising cultural capital[. . .] Advertisers no longer use jazz to connote[. . .] nightlife and slumming[. . .] jazz can now signify refinement and upper-class status” (*Jazz* 1-2). In some senses, this ‘mainstreaming’ of jazz is nothing other than a crude marketing exercise, simply exploiting the music's new-found social acceptability, whether by selling condominiums, golf clubs, cars, or airlines.<sup>16</sup>

On the condominium front, according to Ottawa's Urbandale property developers, “Word on the street is that Jazz homes are the hottest thing to hit the market in a long time” (“Urbandale”). In its newspaper advertisements, the developer promises to “Jazz your world” and “Jazz up your life” with a choice of three exciting models: Acapella, Duet, and Harmony. The Winnipeg-based Jazz Golf company offers Harmony and Melody drivers and irons, alongside the Ensemble and Jazz Festival golf club sets, and the Jazz Boogie set for juniors. Jazz Golf promises to “help you find your rhythm,” and invited us to “swing into 2006 with our newly designed Jazz line of clubs” (*Jazz Golf*).

Introduced into the European car market in 2002, the Honda Jazz “continues to perform and bring new, younger customers into Honda's network” (*Honda*). Honda's marketing strategy is aimed at a primarily younger—but ‘mature’—demographic and offers interesting insights into their choice of brand name: “Key target customers are 20-35 year old males and females without children, particularly early adopters, who are perhaps buying their first car and perhaps their first Honda; young families aged 30-40; and empty nesters aged 55 plus who may well have previously owned a Honda” (*Honda*).

And in his speech launching Air Canada's *Jazz* subsidiary in March 2002, the President and CEO noted that

Our new name is a metaphor for who we are and where we are headed. We are an airline that prides itself on its creative spirit, freshness, youthful attitude, and energy[. . .] The qualities I have mentioned are what define us as an airline, and what makes us different. Our new name, we feel, is the perfect metaphor to reflect who we are and what we want to be. We are a great airline, and a great airline deserves a great name (“Air Canada”).

So contrary to its previously sleazy signifying potential, ‘jazz’ is exploited here as a metaphor for spirited creativity and youthful vigour: we're clearly a world away from the heroin-addicted Frankie Machine of *The Man With the Golden Arm*, or the “lower, seamy side of life” implicated in Steiner's music for *Perry Mason*.

In the world of CD marketing, alongside the now ubiquitous Diana Krall, Michael Bublé, and Jamie Cullum, the *Cool Jazz Collection, Vol. 2: Modern Classics* (produced by the Canadian specialty channel *Cool TV*)<sup>17</sup> features ‘classic’ jazz artists such as Rod Stewart, Jann Arden, Paul Anka, Elvis Costello, and George Michael. In a curious and rather contradictory manner, given its eclectic choice of performers, the CD succeeds—at one and the same time—in both expanding and narrowing the scope of the contemporary music known as ‘jazz.’

Such crass marketing aside, there can be little doubt that jazz—or, more accurately, a particularly narrow conceptualization and manifestation of jazz—is now firmly established in the cultural mainstream in a very real and tangible fashion, whether, for example, in Ken Burns's \$14-million PBS documentary *Jazz*, or in the heavily-funded Jazz at Lincoln Center program. These examples serve to illustrate, however, that this mainstream version of jazz simply conforms to dominant cultural ideologies (in which Wynton Marsalis often seems heavily implicated), and has little to say about developments in post-1960s jazz, including free jazz, jazz-rock fusion, free improvisation, and the diversity of hybrid musical forms and styles that have developed in the last twenty years or so. Moreover, these examples also betray a narrowly Americo-centric perspective in which the burgeoning European jazz scene is barely acknowledged.<sup>18</sup>

Although the Burns PBS documentary website and the Jazz at Lincoln Center program both incorporate a significant educational component—for which, one reluctantly concedes, they are to be applauded—given the delimited musical perspective that informs these projects, their pedagogical potential is at best necessarily partial and at worst positively harmful as a result of their aggressive rejection of those musical forms that fail to conform to the ideology of mainstream jazz stereotypes. These are issues I have addressed elsewhere:

As someone who teaches a course in jazz history, Ken Burns's *Jazz* represents a decidedly mixed blessing. There can be little doubt, as many of Burns's supporters claim, that the series was successful in introducing

a new audience to the music and its history, and in raising the general level of public awareness of this musical form and its cultural significance. Such arguments, however, serve to elide the particular discursive and ideological framing of jazz history which the series offers. In my own teaching, I encourage students to consider the series not simply as an 'objective' resource, but rather as a cultural text which is, itself, part of the discursive construction of jazz history[. . .] Such an approach, I would argue, is crucial to an understanding of the contested nature of jazz history, suggesting a conceptualization of jazz as a living music, just as vital and relevant in its eclectic 'postmodern' incarnations as it was in the days of the 'Great Men' chronicled in Burns's highly selective narrative. ("Burns" 94)<sup>19</sup>

In the case of the Jazz at Lincoln Center program, a narrowly neo-conservative understanding of the 'classical' jazz canon<sup>20</sup> has been mobilized in support of a high-profile, publicly-funded jazz series within a major American cultural institution. In October 2004, the Lincoln Center opened the \$131 million US, 100,000-square-foot Frederick P. Rose Hall, known as the House of Swing. In an early press release, Marsalis was quoted—somewhat ominously perhaps—as saying that "The whole space is dedicated to the feeling of swing" ("Jazz"), thereby firmly establishing a stereotypical conceptualization of jazz performance that has been sadly evident in his programming for Jazz at Lincoln Center.<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, as Nate Chinen noted in a New York Times article, Marsalis is "armed with a big idea: that jazz is a model of democratic action, and a prism through which American culture can be understood" (2.1).<sup>22</sup> Given the qualities that have served to characterize Marsalis's music and cultural practice over the last 25 years—an axiomatic assumption of cultural superiority, a narrow nationalistic chauvinism, a fundamentalist faith in tradition, and a hostile dismissal of difference—it would appear that Marsalis's vision of jazz does, indeed, serve as an accurate metaphor for the current state of American democracy. I think I prefer Air Canada's metaphors.

### Discourses of Value: The Impacts and Benefits of the Arts

At the same time that jazz was being drummed into service as a marketing metaphor and narrowly reconceived in line with the neo-conservative visions of Burns, Marsalis, and their associates, various forms of contemporary jazz and improvised music continued to develop, independent of these mainstream pressures and often self-consciously—and proudly—aware of their cultural marginality. The roots of this perspective can be traced back to the bebop revolution of the 1940s, in which primarily black musicians adopted a specifically non-commercial stance in the face of the commercial success of a predominantly white swing music. Since that time, the marginal status of particular forms of jazz and improvised music has often been linked to an oppositional politics, most notably in the Black Nationalist agenda of 1960s free jazz.<sup>23</sup> Claims for the socio-political potential of artistic practice are not peculiar to jazz, however, and the discourse of social and political relevance has been a common trope in various arts disciplines.<sup>24</sup> In this section, I address these broader debates in more detail before going on to examine some of the specific value claims made on behalf of various forms of contemporary jazz and improvised music, highlighting the contested relationship that such forms have had with both the margins and the mainstream.

In the realm of cultural policy and arts funding, it was common throughout the 1980s and 1990s to justify the funding of the arts in economic terms, with reference to an endless list of primarily economic benefits, including urban regeneration, tourism promotion, business investment, service industry development, and job creation. Although this economic perspective is still prevalent—perhaps even dominant—in arts funding debates, many of the arguments have now been somewhat discredited,<sup>25</sup> displaced by a series of alternative justificatory claims, including heated debates over the question of the 'instrumental' versus 'intrinsic' benefits of the arts and their cultural and social value—debates that prove to be highly relevant in the context of arguments on behalf of the broader socio-political impact of jazz and improvised music.

The high-profile Rand report, *Gifts of the Muse: Reframing the Debate About the Benefits of the Arts*, has been a central document in these debates, although in its argument on behalf of "aesthetic experience and its intrinsic benefits" (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras, and Brooks 44) its conclusions remain highly problematic. The report builds a compelling case against the often rather shaky evidence that supports many instrumental benefits arguments, but ultimately fails to arrive at a convincing alternative. The authors' faith in intrinsic benefits is built on equally shaky ground, with little in the way of hard evidence to support their claims. Drawing on a typically mystified notion of "aesthetic experience" (44),<sup>26</sup> the authors argue for "intrinsic benefits" which are of both "private value" and—somewhat paradoxically, given their undeniably 'instrumental' nature—"of value to society as a whole" (xv). Moreover, the language of intrinsic benefits is likely to remain a hard sell to hard-nosed policy makers, who—perhaps not surprisingly—might be looking for somewhat more 'tangible' returns from the public purse. As Noël Carroll has argued, the claim that art is intrinsically good does not, in itself, warrant government support (33-34).

Throughout the document, 'the arts' remain essentially undefined, their content and meaning apparently self-evident. The closest the report comes to any theoretical discussion is to inform the reader, with reference to Shakespeare and Tolstoy, that "One way of defining 'great art' is by its continued effect on the public sphere throughout time" (McCarthy, Ondaatje, Zakaras, and Brooks 42). In a related footnote, the authors note that "Although we are referring to the arts in general in this report"—and note here the phrase "the arts in general"—"we recognize that not all art provides engaging aesthetic experiences that can speak to generations of appreciators. Some contemporary art, for example, does not attempt to communicate aesthetically and to provide compelling experiences" (42). Sadly, the authors offer no examples of these allegedly sub-par forms of contemporary art. What do they have in mind here? Abstract art? Conceptual art? Performance art? Contemporary dance? Free jazz? Free improvisation? Thrash metal? Slasher movies? The "arts in general," it would appear, are actually the arts in particular.

Popular culture fares especially badly in the report: indeed, the phrase does not actually appear in the text, and popular forms are simply equated with "commercial entertainment" (73). In their treatment of popular culture, the authors reveal a set of attitudes and values that are at best rather outmoded and at worst tiresomely elitist: "popular music and film" (54) are characterized as almost wholly social experiences that, it seems to be implied, might act as stepping stones to more 'genuine' artistic experiences. That this form of retrograde cultural discourse appears in a major commissioned report published in 2004 is unfortunate, to say the least, and the report would have benefited greatly from a more detailed discussion of the interface between 'the arts' and popular cultural activities, and from a critical engagement with the forms and practices of the cultural and creative industries.<sup>27</sup>

My key point here is that the arts have always been a profoundly social activity, have always had instrumental benefits, have always been part of a mixed economy of subsidized and commercial activity that the outmoded discourse of 'aesthetic experience' and 'intrinsic benefits' only serves to obscure. While the typical art lover may indeed seek an 'aesthetic experience'—whatever that might be—I would suggest that they also seek entertainment, distraction, amusement, pleasure, emotional response, and social engagement: categories of experience that both 'high art' and 'popular culture' are equally capable of providing. It is perhaps in this pragmatic blend of human experience that arts and cultural activities find their most convincing justifications for government support, succumbing neither to the blatant economism of 'instrumental benefits,' nor to the traditional aestheticism of 'intrinsic benefits.'

Somewhat more persuasive proposals are to be found in John Holden's publication, *Capturing Cultural Value: How Culture Has Become a Tool of Government Policy*, produced for the British organization Demos, which characterizes itself as "a think tank for 'everyday democracy'" ("About").<sup>28</sup> Going beyond the now rather stereotyped dualism of the debate between 'instrumental' and 'intrinsic' benefits, Holden turns to a number of alternative 'languages' in proposing a revised understanding of cultural value, drawing on anthropology, environmentalism, intangibles valuation, and recent debates around the notion of Public Value. Holden arrives at a richly complex conceptualization of cultural value, but one that, although it may address the multifaceted aspects of contemporary culture in a more thoroughgoing manner, perhaps presents a number of problems in terms of its policy actualization. Cultural policy makers who have satisfied themselves for two decades or more with instrumental arguments built on somewhat dubious tourism figures and rather dodgy service industry employment statistics may balk at the practical and theoretical demands of Holden's scheme, which encompasses "enhanced trust in public bodies"; "equity and fairness"; "cultural systemic resilience"; "cultural value"; "well-being"; "prosperity and employment"; "learning"; "value for money"; and "recognition of value within the community" (*Capturing* 53-55). Notwithstanding these caveats, it is perhaps unfortunate that Holden's monograph has not been met with the same level of debate as that generated by Rand's *Gifts of the Muse*.<sup>29</sup>

Similarly provocative is Eleonora Belfiore and Oliver Bennett's recent essay, "Rethinking the Social Impacts of the Arts," which interrogates many of the historical assumptions underlying the various claims made on behalf of the arts. In addition to two more commonly understood discourses—the "positive tradition," which posits the "therapeutic, humanising and educational functions of the arts" (143); and the "autonomy tradition," which can be summarized in terms of "arguments in favour of 'art for art's sake'" (145)—their analysis also addresses the sharply contrasting "negative tradition," which suggests that the arts are a corrupting or distracting force in society" (141).

This less familiar, but no less influential, 'negative tradition' has a lengthy history, which can be traced back to the fifth century BC, and to Plato's "powerful rejection of[. . .] trust in the epistemological role of the arts, arguing that the poet and the artist have no privileged access to superior knowledge and understanding" (141). In its more contemporary manifestations, the 'negative tradition' can be understood to encompass a wide range of issues, including, for example, the censorship of 'troubling' forms of art, 'effects' research into the supposedly harmful impacts of film and television violence, concerns that "indulging in artistic activities can have the undesirable (and ethically problematic) effect of distracting us from worthy concerns or from the moral duty of direct action when the circumstances require it,"<sup>30</sup> and the acknowledgment of "doubts about the widespread belief in the moralising and humanising powers of the arts" (143).<sup>31</sup>

On the basis of their historical review, Belfiore and Bennett suggest that “the ‘negative tradition’ is as robust as the ‘positive tradition’, which can be seen as predominant in today’s debates over cultural policy and arts funding[. . .] the existence of such bodies as the Board for Film Classification testifies to the persistence of the idea, Platonic in its essence, that it befalls upon the State to protect vulnerable and impressionable groups (such as the very young) from the damaging effects that might arise from exposure to certain types of films” (147-148). Belfiore and Bennett’s conclusions are especially relevant in the context of my current discussion:

The claims for what the arts “do” to people, and the ways in which the arts have the powers to deeply affect both individuals and communities, are in truth a lot more nuanced than contemporary cultural policy debates suggest[. . .] the versions of the civilising, humanising, healing and educational powers of the arts[. . .] have become detached from the complex intellectual traditions that gave rise to them. As a consequence, they display little awareness of their own philosophical origins, the social and political context in which they were elaborated and their later developments[. . .] Hopefully, by highlighting the problematic side of the “art is good for you” rhetoric, and by tracing the trajectory of what we have called the “negative tradition,” the simplistic characterisation of the social impacts of the arts that seems orthodox in contemporary policy debates can be successfully overcome. (148)

For reasons that hardly need elaboration here, contemporary jazz and improvised music are cultural forms that were far from major players in earlier economic value arguments. They seem rather better placed, however, to participate in current debates regarding the broader cultural and socio-political value of the arts, which I have summarized briefly above. But if we are to look to contemporary jazz and improvised music for forms of value and benefit that go beyond the strictly musical to encompass the social and the political, then—given Belfiore and Bennett’s conclusions, and in light of some rather more empirical, contextual issues—we must also acknowledge the inevitable limitations involved in any such agenda, issues that I pursue in the following sections.

### **New Social Relations?: The Romanticization of the Margins**

Issues of social value and political relevance have been crucial to the development of a series of research initiatives centred on the Guelph Jazz Festival and the University of Guelph in Ontario, Canada. In addition to the Festival’s long-running Colloquium, in 2004 a team of University of Guelph faculty members launched the online journal *Critical Studies in Improvisation/Études critiques en improvisation (CSII/ÉCI)*, which forms only part of a larger research project entitled “Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice.”<sup>32</sup> As noted on the project website, this project “explores musical improvisation as a model for social change [. . . and] plays a leading role in defining a new field of interdisciplinary research to shape political, cultural, and ethical dialogue and action” (*Improvisation*). The project has been supported to the tune of \$2.5 million by a Major Collaborative Research Initiative (MCRI) grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and also receives financial support from a wide variety of public and private sector sponsors.

At this point, a little Full Disclosure seems appropriate: I have been a regular participant in the Colloquium since 2001, I was a contributor to the inaugural issue of *CSII/ÉCI* in 2004, and, since 2003, I have been a Research Collaborator with the “Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice” research project. The extent of my involvement in these research initiatives over a number of years offers a clear indication of my commitment to their overall aims and objectives, which forms part of my broader contribution to a sociologically-informed, contextualist analysis of issues in contemporary art and culture.<sup>33</sup> Even as a member of the research team, however, I find myself rather sceptical with regard to some of the discourses that have served to frame the overall development and mission of the various projects. Most notable among these has been the agenda outlined in the editorial for the inaugural issue of *CSII/ÉCI*, in which the authors state, “We agree with the pioneering insight of Jacques Attali that music exists to help us hear the sound of change” (Heble, Waterman, and Arroyas).

The call for papers for the 2006 Guelph Jazz Festival Colloquium, *Sounds of Hope, Sounds of Change: Improvisation, Pedagogy, Imagination*, and the related call for papers for the December 2007 special issue of *CSII/ÉCI* on “Improvisation and Pedagogy” were somewhat more detailed in their reference to Attali’s work:

Music, as Jacques Attali has argued in his pioneering book *Noise*, “is a tremendously privileged site for the analysis and revelation of new forms in our society.” Music exists, he tells us, to help us hear the sound of change. “It obliges us to invent categories and new dynamics to regenerate social theory, which today has become crystallized, entrapped, moribund.” Commenting explicitly on the prophetic force of post 1960s free jazz and improvised music, Attali argues that improvisatory music-making heralds the possibility of “new relations among people.”<sup>34</sup>

My own scepticism with regard to Attali's work suggests the need, however, for a reappraisal of his rather idealized claim that free jazz was a prime example of a music that heralded "the arrival of new social relations" (20) and offered the possibility of the "emergence of a truly new society" (133). Indeed, it must be noted that Attali regarded free jazz as ultimately "condemned to failure" (137) in its broader socio-political ambitions, arguing that the "sound of free jazz [. . .] subsided, after being contained, repressed, limited, censored, expelled" (140).<sup>35</sup> Moreover, Attali's comments are made on the basis of a cursory two and a half-page analysis of a music with which he seems barely familiar, making some rather curious errors: misidentifying the black drummer Beaver Harris as the white keyboard Paul Beaver (he of Beaver and Krause fame) (171), misnaming Harris's orchestra project (the 360 Degree [Music] Experience) (139), misidentifying the white composer Carla Bley as black (138), misidentifying the date of the formation of the Jazz Composers' Guild (1959 instead of 1964) (138), and misspelling Archie Schepp's [sic] surname (138).

In a tiresome recycling of the worst of Adorno, the term 'Repetition' functions in Attali's text as a coded dismissal of what might be characterized as 'actually existing popular music,' and—in response to the apparent failure of free jazz and the spectre of 'Repetition'—Attali suggests the need for "a truly different system of organization[. . .] A music produced by each individual for himself, for pleasure outside of meaning, usage and exchange" (137): a somewhat shaky, specifically masculine, curiously apolitical, and rather hedonistically solipsistic foundation, perhaps, for a communitarian agenda of new social relations based on improvisatory music-making. Attali therefore represents an extremely problematic and, I would suggest, profoundly unhelpful guide in any progress toward 'new social relations' and the emergence of a 'truly new society.'

Similar problems attend Susan McClary's somewhat romanticized claims in her "Afterword" to Attali's text, in which she celebrates "outsiders" and "groups traditionally marginalized" as contemporary representatives of Attali's concept of Composition, which, according to McClary, "has been actualized and is proving quite resilient" (157). Gary Tomlinson has noted some of the potential problems inherent in such discourses of marginality: namely, that they "can collapse into a monologue of empowered speakers speaking with themselves about marginalized and excluded others" (73).<sup>36</sup>

Suggesting that the "new movements" of Composition "signal not simply a change in musical taste but also of social climate," McClary argues that Attali's work demonstrates "the crucial role music plays in the transformation of societies" (158). Acknowledging Attali's debt to—but arguing his distinction from—Adorno (153-154), McClary accepts Attali's problematic categories of Composition and Repetition uncritically, suggesting that the music she valorizes under the heading of "new modes of Composition[. . .] is far more vital than the music of Repetition, which has deliberately and systematically drained itself of energy" (157-158).

Such arguments owe much to hackneyed Frankfurt School orthodoxies and have striking parallels with earlier attempts to propose a 'people's art', untainted by either traditionalist conceptions of art or the commercialism of mass culture. Inherent in such attempts is an implicit rejection not only of 'high art,' but also of existing forms of popular culture, in favour of an 'ideologically correct' paternalism, which simply echoes the conservative paternalism of traditional autonomous aesthetics. David Chaney's observations on Marxist attitudes toward popular culture are more broadly relevant here:

Even within Marxism, despite beginning with a self-avowed philosophical attack on established beliefs, there had in practice been a successful evasion of discovering or articulating an indigenous aesthetic in popular culture. Instead of confronting real issues, cultural theorists had too often been hijacked by the intellectual hubris of formulating an 'appropriate' culture for the masses. (13)<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, McClary's idealized celebrations of marginality are somewhat compromised by the fact that some of the 'outsider' individuals she cites are now thoroughly mainstream figures, including Philip Glass and Laurie Anderson. Despite the considerable cultural capital that has accrued to figures such as Glass and Anderson over the years, even the most optimistic reading suggests that it would be nothing other than wishful thinking to assume that their musical and cultural activities have somehow been successful in 'transforming societies.'

Moreover, focusing on the contemporary jazz and improvised music scene, the 'marginality' or 'outsider' status of aspects of this present-day scene remains highly debatable, as does the question of the 'new social relations' implicated in this scene. For example, many of the key figures at the cutting edge of current jazz and improvised music are comfortably ensconced in the American university system: Anthony Braxton at Wesleyan, George Lewis at Columbia, Fred Frith and Joëlle Léandre at Mills College, Anthony Davis and Mark Dresser at UCSD, Ray Anderson at Stony Brook. Whatever one may think of the American university system, and notwithstanding misty-eyed memories of 1960s militancy, one can hardly characterize it as a contemporary bastion of radical marginality.<sup>38</sup>



Similarly, the contemporary 'outsider' status of a figure such as John Zorn—the prototypical “bad boy of new music,” as Francis Davis described him in the early 1990s (“Zorn” 97)—remains somewhat moot, given that Zorn now runs a successful record label with a catalogue of over 400 marvellously recorded, beautifully packaged, and well-distributed releases. And, on the topic of record labels, it's worthwhile pointing out that the pioneering label HatArt, responsible for some of the most challenging jazz and new music recordings over the last 30 years, was, for the first 25 years of its life, financially supported by Swiss Bank Corporation—another somewhat dubious representative of cultural marginality.

### **The Marginal Mainstream: Co-option or Institutional Power?**

All of this is not meant to suggest that our idols have feet of clay, however: on the contrary, the mainstream can be a powerful position from which to speak, and the increasingly mainstream social positioning of the individuals and institutions noted above has acted as an important enabling mechanism in pursuing their musical and cultural projects. It is also worthwhile pointing out that jazz is not the only previously 'marginal' contemporary form of cultural expression to have experienced a shift to a more mainstream positioning in recent years. Something similar could be said, for example, about wrestling, about thrash metal, about pornography, about tattoo art, or about body piercing,<sup>39</sup> and it is interesting to observe the manner in which contemporary culture embraces—and thereby 'mainstreams,' or perhaps 'co-opts'—previously socially peripheral, oppositional, or taboo phenomena.

The issues involved here have intriguing parallels with debates in the visual arts regarding the historical 'co-option' of the avant-garde. At the centre of these debates are Marcel Duchamp's readymades: everyday objects he exhibited in the gallery as 'art,' thereby offering a wry critique of the art gallery system. The readymades included a bottle rack, a snow shovel, and, perhaps most infamously, a urinal signed with the pseudonym “R. Mutt.” Beyond perennial questions of philosophical definition—as Steven Goldsmith has suggested, Duchamp's readymades “have become the central hurdle over which any attempt to define art must leap” (197)—the readymades have also prompted a more socio-historically grounded debate regarding the institutional 'co-option' of the aesthetico-political potential of these artefacts by the very 'artworld' which, as Arthur Danto has suggested,<sup>40</sup> makes the readymades possible in the first place.

As Paul Mattick has observed, it was ultimately the case that Duchamp's readymades “had to be manufactured in series to meet the demand of museum collections” (130), a process in which Duchamp himself was a willing, if perhaps (one might like to think) ironic participant. Thus, notwithstanding the critique implicit in Duchamp's provocation, Mattick argues that “the museum by folding the readymade within its embrace removed the sting of its challenge to earlier conceptions of art” (130-131). Andreas Huyssen clearly shares Mattick's view, suggesting that “Dada's frontal attack was unsuccessful[. . .] because even then bourgeois culture was able to co-opt any kind of attack made on it” (147).

Some observers, however, adopt a rather different attitude toward such notions of 'co-option.' For example, citing Huyssen's notion that “*co-option* by society implies neutralization,” Nicholas Zurbrugg suggests, considerably more optimistically, that, “On the contrary, it could be argued that the assimilation of dadaist or surrealist concepts signals the conceptual *invasion* of the public sensibility and the triumphant institutionalization of innovative ideas” (138). In rather more measured tones, resisting Serge Guilbaut's thesis that, ultimately, abstract expressionism became simply a tool of American Cold War propaganda, Casey Blake has argued that “A single minded focus on capitalism's ability to co-opt a once-pure avant-garde[. . .] obscures the extent to which modern art itself enjoys a significant degree of power as a result of its institutionalization over many decades” (249).

I trust that the point I am making here with regard to contemporary jazz and improvised music is clear: although it is now necessary, I am arguing, to acknowledge the increasingly mainstream cultural positioning of some aspects of these previously 'marginal' or 'oppositional' musics, I am also suggesting that this acknowledgement need not signal the weakening of their aesthetic, social, or political potential. Indeed, the fact that Braxton's Wesleyan professorship, for example, has given him the stability and security over a significant number of years to continue to pursue his musical, philosophical, and educational projects is a cause for considerable celebration.<sup>41</sup> But the celebration needs to be tempered with a healthy dose of realism, involving a reconsideration of the notion of marginality.

### **Conclusion: Utopian Limits**

I argue above that when jazz achieved mainstream exposure in film and television of the 1950s and 1960s, it did so in a rather paradoxical manner, being allowed entrance to the mainstream in order to connote marginality. The present-day social and cultural positioning of various forms of contemporary jazz and improvised music is significantly different, but no less problematic. On the one hand, certain narrowly-defined popular and neo-traditionalist forms of

jazz now circulate relatively freely in the musical mainstream, although this 'mainstreaming' of jazz culture has most often been at the expense of the increasingly rich and diverse range of music that now falls under that rubric. On the other hand, and especially in the context of the various Guelph projects highlighted above, claims for the socio-political potential of certain forms of contemporary jazz and improvised music have often been framed within romanticized discourses of marginality, based on somewhat dubious readings of the history and development of these cultural forms. Moreover, and perhaps more significantly, although jazz may now appear to have achieved a degree of mainstream status, whether in terms of its prevalence as a marketing metaphor, or in terms of its presence on public television and in the context of major cultural and academic institutions, its role within the broader mainstream of contemporary culture remains, for want of a better word, marginal.

In a recent article entitled "Is Jazz Popular Music?," Simon Frith noted that jazz record sales on both sides of the Atlantic account for no more than 3% of the total market (14).<sup>42</sup> Furthermore, of this small percentage, "the vast majority of sales came from a small number of big names and the back catalogue. Between 2002 and 2004 Jamie Cullum and Norah Jones thus accounted for around half of jazz sales in the UK[. . .] In 1999 Kenny G accounted for the same percentage of jazz sales in the USA" (14).<sup>43</sup> Figures such as these suggest that those actively involved in new forms of contemporary jazz and improvised music represent little more than 1% of record buyers, which in turn tends to indicate that they represent an even tinier percentage of the overall population of these countries.

Hence, leaving aside the 'mainstreaming' exploits of Ken Burns, Wynton Marsalis, and *Cool TV*, and acknowledging the genuine mainstream success of figures such as Diana Krall and Norah Jones, it becomes clear that more challenging forms of contemporary jazz and improvised music remain resolutely minority tastes, which tends to circumscribe rather severely the utopian and far-reaching claims made regarding the development of 'new social relations' or 'the transformation of societies' based primarily on free jazz and the avant-garde. This represents, perhaps, a somewhat less romantic vision of the consequences of marginality. The often fanciful rhetoric of Attali and McClary—which is no more than a simplistic and problematic version of the 'art is good for you' rhetoric identified by Belfiore and Bennett (148)—imposes on specific forms of contemporary music an extra-musical agenda and socially transformative role that they—on their own—are poorly equipped to address or enact.

In their editorial for the inaugural issue, the editors of *Critical Studies in Improvisation* acknowledged the need to "assess the (often utopian) claims made for the social and cultural impact of improvisation" (Heble, Waterman, Arroyas), although the continued deference to Attali's highly problematic work in the discourses that inform the various Guelph research projects tends to severely compromise any such level-headed assessment.<sup>44</sup> Perhaps it is time for these projects to move beyond the idealized visions of outmoded political rhetoric, à la Attali, or the romanticized celebrations of 'marginality,' à la McClary, in favour of a considerably more pragmatic—and considerably more realistic—perspective on contemporary music-making, acknowledging not only the positive socio-political potential of improvisatory creative practice, but also its social and political limits.

In his most recent book, George McKay offers not only a celebratory account of the "cultural politics of jazz in Britain," but also a cautious and perhaps somewhat grudging acknowledgement of the limits identified here. In the context of a body of published work on social activism and oppositional politics, McKay's analysis of jazz and improvised music tends to avoid broad utopian claims in favour of a focus on 'micropolitics': as McKay suggests, "micropolitics matter, and are rarely as small as appearance suggests" (x), and he highlights the manner in which British improvising musicians have "explicitly or implicitly interrogated cultural value and social hierarchy through music making" (241). But McKay's scepticism—and his recognition of the socio-political limits identified above—is evident in his attitude toward the wilful marginality of the free improvisation scene in Britain (see Note 44) and toward the improviser Eddie Prévost's claims of community-building: "The notion of constructing what Prévost calls 'a community' through the music is an important claim, though this may equally be no more substantive than the carving out of a specialist audience or a niche market" (231).<sup>45</sup>

Notwithstanding the ostensibly 'political' nature of much of his own work, similar reservations are evident in Bob Ostertag's perspective on the relationship between music and politics. In a discussion session with his collaborator Pierre Hébert as part of the Guelph Jazz Festival Colloquium in 2006, Ostertag argued that involvement in 'politicized' forms of music and creative activity remains distinct from direct political engagement and action. As Ostertag suggests, a piece of improvised music given a 'political' title remains music, not politics. The key point here is the nature and extent of the 'political' rhetoric and claims made by those involved in what are essentially artistic pursuits. Ostertag's own reflections on the broader social and political impact of his artistic practice are distinctly non-utopian: "If my music and films motivate anyone to sympathize more with political causes which are dear to me, that is wonderful, but my work is not made with that intention and I am more than skeptical that my music (or anyone else's) could be in any substantial way successful in this regard" (Ostertag).<sup>46</sup>

In their various mission statements and public texts, the Guelph research projects have situated themselves firmly within the rhetoric of the 'positive tradition' of arts benefits, emphasizing the "civilising, humanising, healing and educational powers of the arts" (Belfiore and Bennett 148)—in this case with specific reference to claims made for the socio-political value and benefits of improvisation and improvisatory music-making. But the work of Belfiore and Bennett, coupled with the socially marginal positioning of particular forms of contemporary jazz and improvised music, offers a cautionary and persuasive reminder that such benefits cannot simply be assumed, suggesting that the discourses that frame these claims need to be firmly located within their "own philosophical origins[. . . and] the social and political context in which they were elaborated" (148).

This would involve not only a rejection of the thinly veiled elitism and the critique of mass culture inherent in concepts such as Attali's 'Repetition,' and a refusal of what Chaney has identified as "the intellectual hubris of formulating an 'appropriate' culture for the masses" (13), but also a critical engagement with the products and artefacts of mass or popular culture. Indeed, if we are genuinely interested, in any truly global sense, in "the crucial role music plays in the transformation of societies" (McClary 158) or in the manner that music heralds the "arrival of new social relations" (Attali 20), then the assessment of the contributions of avant-garde musical practices and improvisatory music-making would no longer occupy a privileged analytical position (accompanied by often extravagantly utopian value claims), but represent only part of a significantly broader analysis—and somewhat more sober evaluation—of the social, cultural, and political impacts of contemporary music, in *all* its various guises.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to the work of Jon Burlingame, a tireless chronicler of film and television music, for much of the television-related material in this section.

<sup>2</sup> In this period, there was a genuine synergy between the well-established Hollywood film industry and a still relatively young television industry. It is worthwhile noting that a more contemporary, if perhaps somewhat less inspired, form of synergy has been evident in recent years, with many of the television shows discussed here making their way to the big screen in the context of a Hollywood film industry that seems increasingly bereft of its own ideas: I have in mind, for example, *The Fugitive* (1993), *Mission Impossible* (1996), *The Saint* (1997), *The Avengers* (1998), *The Mod Squad* (1999), *I-Spy* (2002), and *Miami Vice* (2006).

<sup>3</sup> A similar, if somewhat less dramatic, example of this trope is offered in Barry Levinson's film *Diner* (1982). Set in Baltimore in 1959, the movie characterizes a historical period when a young man's eclectic record collection—in this case, that of the obsessive cataloguer and filer Shrevie—could happily encompass rhythm and blues, rock and roll, jazz, and Tin Pan Alley crooners. But the transitional nature of the period is highlighted in an exchange between Eddie, the football and crooner fan, and the pompadoured Boogie, played by Mickey Rourke. When asked who he prefers, Johnny Mathis or Frank Sinatra, Boogie replies simply: "Presley."

<sup>4</sup> Several movie scores of the period were written by prominent jazz musicians, including *Anatomy of a Murder* (1959) by Duke Ellington, *Odds Against Tomorrow* (1959) by John Lewis, and *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud* (1957)—Louis Malle's first film—for which Miles Davis contributed a largely improvised jazz soundtrack.

<sup>5</sup> As a brief aside, those in doubt about Dolan's interpretation of jazz or his understanding of jazz history should turn to *Birth of the Blues* (1941), an early Bing Crosby vehicle in which Dolan acted as Musical Director. The birth of the blues was apparently a primarily white affair, in which, as the movie poster suggests, Rochester, the black janitor, was relegated to sweeping the floor.

<sup>6</sup> Schumann's theme embroiled him in a plagiarism lawsuit with Miklos Rozsa, who claimed that the theme was derived from his music for the 1946 movie *The Killers*. The case was settled out of court for \$100,000 and a fifty-fifty split of all future royalties, although Rozsa never received screen credit.

<sup>7</sup> Although the *Billboard* charts (Whitburn) are hardly the last word on popular music history, they are indicative of broader trends and serve to illustrate the musical eclecticism of the period, suggesting that rock and roll formed only part of what was a remarkably mixed economy at the time. From 1956 to 1959, for example, the list of number one albums included those by Harry Belafonte, Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, Ricky Nelson, Johnny Mathis, The Kingston Trio, Bing Crosby, Martin Denny, and Mantovani, as well as the soundtrack albums for *South Pacific*, *Oklahoma*, *The King and I*, *Flower Drum Song*, *Around the World in 80 Days*, *Gigi*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Music Man*, and Mancini's music for *Peter Gunn*.

<sup>8</sup> In the same year, Count Basie contributed a new theme for NBC's *M Squad*, which starred Lee Marvin. Basie was not the only jazz musician to write a TV theme song: in 1961, Duke Ellington scored the pilot episode of the short-lived *Asphalt Jungle* (ABC); and in 1964, Dave Brubeck contributed the theme for *Mr. Broadway* (CBS), which starred Craig Stevens, who had played Peter Gunn. The show also featured orchestrations by the jazz saxophonist and composer Oliver Nelson.

<sup>9</sup> Cassavetes's piano playing was ghosted by the renowned film music composer John Williams, who styled himself "Johnny" at this youthful stage in his career.

<sup>10</sup> On the other side of the Atlantic, a similar use of jazz-inspired material, mixed with more than a hint of classical sophistication, was evident in several British crime and detective series of the 1960s, including Edwin Astley's scores for *Danger Man* (1960-68) and *The Saint* (1962-69), Laurie Johnson's music for *The Avengers* (1961-69), Ron Grainger's work on *Man in a Suitcase* (1967-68) and *The Prisoner* (1967-68), and, slipping into the 1970s, John Barry's theme for *The Persuaders* (1971-72).

<sup>11</sup> Rugolo had previously worked with Stan Kenton's big band and was involved as an A&R man for Capitol Records, producing recordings by Nat King Cole and Harry Belafonte, as well as Miles Davis's classic *Birth of the Cool* album, for which he also provided the title. Rugolo's music for *The Fugitive* is a fascinating mix of jazz and classical influences and stands as an interesting example of Third Stream music circulating in the mainstream. It is interesting to note that the opening credits for *Richard Diamond, Private Detective* were designed by Maurice Binder, who went on to work on the James Bond movies.

<sup>12</sup> Schifrin's theme for *Mission: Impossible* won him two Grammy awards, and spent 31 weeks in *Billboard's* Hot 100 chart. The album's Grammy for Best Original Score remains the only one awarded to a television soundtrack. Commenting on his use of 5/4 for the theme—a relatively uncommon meter that had first been brought to public attention by Dave Brubeck's *Take Five* (1959) several years earlier—Schifrin noted that "There is something unpredictable about five/four" (qtd. in Burlingame 206). Schifrin's subsequent theme for *Mannix* is in 3/4.

<sup>13</sup> Jones was one of the few black composers working in television at this time, and his theme for *Ironsides* features some distinctively late-60s touches, including electric piano and wah-wah guitar alongside a jazz brass section. The piece also includes an early example of the use of the Moog synthesizer in the opening bars, although Jones has noted that there was little resistance to the innovative use of the Moog from television executives, because "they didn't know what the hell it was" (qtd. in Burlingame, 48). The theme received something of a modest revival by being featured in the soundtrack to Quentin Tarantino's *Kill Bill* (2003).

<sup>14</sup> Themes such as Earle Hagen's *The Mod Squad* (ABC, 1968-73) and Mort Stevens's *Hawaii Five-O* (CBS, 1968-80) represent an intriguing fusion of jazz and rock influences, although, as a friend of mine remarked, if you can go dance to them, they're probably not jazz. (Thanks to Gina Brown for that one).

<sup>15</sup> It is worthwhile noting that the theme for *Miami Vice* (NBC, 1984-89) by Jan Hammer, who had previously worked with Jeff Beck and John McLaughlin's Mahavishnu Orchestra, reflects a mixed inheritance of rock and fusion—in this sense, one might argue that a jazz sensibility remained prevalent in television music into the 1980s, reflecting the changes in jazz in the same period. Something similar might be argued about the theme by Bill Conti (of *Rocky* fame) for the detective show *Cagney & Lacey* (CBS, 1982-88). (Thanks to Brian Priestley for the *Cagney & Lacey* reminder).

<sup>16</sup> Although the Utah Jazz basketball team, founded in 1979, might be thought to be exploiting the signifying potential of 'jazz' in a similar fashion, it is worthwhile noting that the franchise simply inherited its name from the team's previous incarnation, the New Orleans Jazz (1974-79), which was named to reflect its host city's cultural heritage.

<sup>17</sup> See <http://www.canada.com/topics/entertainment/tvchannels/cooltv/index.html>.

<sup>18</sup> See Stanbridge ("Burns" 93-94). See also Atkins and Nicholson for a broader international perspective on these issues.

<sup>19</sup> For further critiques of Burns's documentary, see, for example, Gabbard ("Ken Burns's 'Jazz'"), Ratliff, Davis ("I Hear"), and Radano ("Myth").

<sup>20</sup> See, for example, Sales, Taylor, and Marsalis.

<sup>21</sup> For further commentary on Marsalis, see, for example, Lees, Nisenson, Porter (“Traditionalism” and “Majesty”), Gray, and Nicholson.

<sup>22</sup> Chinen continues, “This notion, first articulated to him by Mr. [Albert] Murray and Mr. [Stanley] Crouch, has since been advanced by Jazz at Lincoln Center with the fervor of religious dogma and the adaptability of a political agenda. It served as a central conceit of *Jazz*, the 2001 Ken Burns PBS mini-series that spotlighted Mr. Marsalis not only as a commentator but also as a savior of the tradition. To a certain extent this has become the official story of jazz in the public sphere” (2.1).

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, Kofsky and Wilmer.

<sup>24</sup> These are ongoing debates in which I have been an active participant for over 30 years, whether as an arts manager, music promoter, or academic.

<sup>25</sup> See Stanbridge (“Detour”), for a summary of these issues.

<sup>26</sup> This form of language simply invokes the “mystified doctrine of aesthetic value” (Norris 217) that Christopher Norris has identified as characteristic of the Romantic poets, a doctrine that the discipline of musicology would go on to inherit as one of its standard rhetorical tropes. Noting the “parallels between the religious discourse exemplified in the sermon and the musicological discourse that[. . .] is a prominent feature of the discipline as institutionalised in North American universities” (19), David Gramit has suggested that this trope virtually represents an article of faith in traditional musicology, in which ‘aesthetic experience’ is regarded as “essentially unspeakable” (29)—“an experience no words can adequately describe” (32). Lawrence Kramer makes a similar point when he argues that “Musical autonomy[. . .] is a chimera; neither music nor anything else can be other than worldly through and through. Immediacy cannot be the authorizing locus of a discipline, for immediacy is a performative effect. What’s more, it is an effect which, when mystified or idealized, functions to empower the persons, institutions, and social groups in control of its production” (Kramer 9).

<sup>27</sup> On the cultural and creative industries, and the ongoing definitional debates surrounding these sectors, see, for example, Cunningham, Hartley, and Hesmondhalgh and Pratt.

<sup>28</sup> See also Holden’s related Demos publication, *Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy: Why Culture Needs a Democratic Mandate*.

<sup>29</sup> Belfiore and Bennett adopt a somewhat more sceptical perspective on the work of the “Demos pamphleteers,” arguing that “in linking this ‘new language’ so closely to funding issues[. . .] there is a real danger that we will end up not with a more nuanced understanding of the value of the arts but with more advocacy disguised as research and yet another round of policy-based evidence making” (138).

<sup>30</sup> The comments by the composer, improviser, and film-maker Bob Ostertag on his decision to leave musical pursuits in favour of direct political activism in El Salvador in the 1980s are directly relevant here: “I lost all sense of urgency about music. What was the point of another little show at an obscure underground venue for a handful of in-the-know hipsters when death squads in El Salvador were murdering over 200 people a day, American aid to the regime was ramping up, the revolutionary movement was gaining momentum by the day, and there was simply no time to lose? If the choice was between music and politics, it was a no-brainer” (Ostertag).

<sup>31</sup> Citing Karen Hanson, Belfiore and Bennett observe that “faith in the humanising role of the arts is inevitably undermined by the ‘the emblematic, but historically real and genuinely problematic figure of the cultivated Nazi officer’” (143).

<sup>32</sup> In addition to its base at the University of Guelph, the project also involves satellite centres at McGill University and the University of British Columbia.

<sup>33</sup> For a summary of my research work, see <http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/stanbridge>.

<sup>34</sup> The quotation is taken from both Calls for Papers. It is interesting to note, however, notwithstanding the high profile afforded Attali’s work in these documents, that no reference to Attali appears in the editorial of the special issue of *CS/E/C* on “Improvisation and Pedagogy” (Vol. 3 No.2). In his article in this issue, Scott Thomson adopts a somewhat more sceptical perspective on Attali’s work (Thomson), although one that remains considerably less sceptical than my own.

<sup>35</sup> As John Corbett has observed of this passage in Attali's text, "Who says so? [. . .] Perhaps Attali should ask an American musician like Milford Graves or Fred Anderson or Mr. Braxton himself what it's been like to play dead music for these last fifteen years" (Corbett 3).

<sup>36</sup> Michael Bérubé's observations on the academic discourse of literary marginality are similarly relevant here: "it is by now axiomatic to post-Romantic thought that the rhetoric of marginality can be a powerful enabling device, even though marginality itself is synonymous with disempowerment: to claim to speak from the margin is paradoxically to claim to speak from the position of authority, and to describe a margin is to describe an authoritative challenge to hegemony [. . .] Margins are real, but they are always relational" (16-17).

<sup>37</sup> Cornelius Cardew's People's Liberation Music, formed in 1973, represents an especially idiosyncratic example of this phenomenon. Cardew's embracing of Maoism led him to publish his essay "Self-Criticism: Repudiation of Earlier Works," works which he held to be the products of a "politically backward composer wrapped up in the abstractions of the avantgarde" (Cardew 97). By adopting a more "populist" approach, Cardew hoped to "promote amongst progressive people a conscious and critical attitude—and finally an attitude of rejection—towards bourgeois music and encourage them to turn their attention to, and integrate themselves with, the progressive forces in present-day society, namely the politics and culture of the working class in its upsurge to wrest political power from the hands of the monopoly capitalist class" (101-102). But the fundamental problem with this "eccentric brand of socialist realism" (Gillmor 1003) becomes all too clear when one encounters the banality and triteness—both musical and lyrical—of the People's Liberation Music, which Georgina Born has characterized as "crudely determinist" (Born 74). Eddie Prévoist, co-founder of the improvising group AMM, of which Cardew was a member in the 1960s and 70s, has noted "Cardew's idea of projecting to the workers, and from this extraordinary privileged social position—it felt very uncomfortable at the time, and with hindsight seems so wrong" (qtd. in McKay 205). Notwithstanding Cardew's virulent anti-bourgeois rhetoric, Tony Bennett's observations on the problems of attempts to appropriate the discourse of bourgeois aesthetics for socialism appear especially apposite in this context: "such discourse produces its ignorance and, however benign, an accompanying condescension which serves as a blockage to both political analysis and cultural policy formation" (165).

<sup>38</sup> It must be noted that the situation in Great Britain is markedly different. In response to the wilful marginality of Derek Bailey—"The more conducive the setting is to freely improvised music, the less compatible it is likely to be with the kind of presentation typical of the music business" (Bailey 141)—George McKay notes, "Bailey accepts, indeed privileges, the noncommercialism or anti-commercialism of the field. Trying to ply a lifetime trade producing a music that thrives only *outside* the music business is a startling, energizing, engaged, perverse, or destructive life project. Quite possibly, it is all five. Apart from free improvisation, is there a single other modern cultural realm that offers absolutely *no* possibility of significant reward for its most accomplished performers—*ever*? Experimental classical music, contemporary dance, the postmodern novel, conceptual visual art—all have their (relatively) powerful cultural champions, some or many financial resources or patronage, recognition and validation, some form of career structure or opportunity. Only in improvised music (in Britain) do you start at the bottom, as it were, and stay there—even when you have reached the pinnacle" (McKay 229-230).

<sup>39</sup> Thanks to James Hale for that insightful observation.

<sup>40</sup> In his seminal article, "The Artworld," prompted primarily by the work of Warhol—in the shape of his infamous *Brillo Box* (1964)—Danto argues, "What in the end makes a difference between a Brillo box and a work of art consisting of a Brillo box is a certain theory of art. It is the theory that takes it up into the world of art, and keeps it from collapsing into the real object which it is [. . .] It is the role of artistic theories, these days as always, to make the artworld, and art, possible" (141-142).

<sup>41</sup> Wesleyan, it would seem, is considerably less fickle than the Arista record label. On Braxton's relationship with Arista, see Radano (*Critical*). As an aside, the fact that Braxton's mid-70s work on that label has been out of print and unavailable on CD for over 30 years is one of the great scandals of the age (although Mosaic Records has recently announced plans to reissue Braxton's Arista and Freedom recordings).

<sup>42</sup> More accurately, jazz record sales accounted for 2.6% of the UK market in 2004; in the decade 1993-2002, jazz record sales represented between 1.9 and 2.3% of the US market.

<sup>43</sup> On the influence of the reissue market on the jazz record industry, see Cuscuna.

<sup>44</sup> As noted above, the absence of any reference to Attali's work in the editorial for the special issue on "Improvisation and Pedagogy" is perhaps indicative of a modest, and welcome, shift in perspective.

<sup>45</sup> In his rejection of the tendency to “utopianism” (4) evident in Christopher Small’s perspective on free improvisation, and in his self-reflexive analysis of “the pedagogical imperative of musical improvisation” (1) within the context of a specific, Toronto-based musical scene, Scott Thomson reveals a similarly qualified faith in the potential of “micropolitics” (Thomson).

<sup>46</sup> Thanks to Bob Ostertag for confirming, in a May 2008 e-mail correspondence, the views he expressed at the 2006 colloquium session and for sharing with me the introductory chapter from his forthcoming book.

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