

Live Performance, Touring and Music in the Digital Age

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Abstract

Live Performance, Touring and Music in the Digital Age

The purpose of this research is to understand the importance and necessity of live performance to the music industry and the state of the music industry in the current digital revolution/era. What is still quite a “manual” aspect of the music industry, live performance and in particular touring, still figures quite heavily in the working life of musicians both major label and grass roots alike. The music industry has benefitted significantly from constant advancements in digital technology as well as suffering greatly with technology facilitating the piracy of music as a product.

The work comprises a history of live performance and touring with a discourse of some of the key topics surrounding live performance such as authenticity, experience and cultural capital. Alongside this there is an exploration into alternatives to touring and live performance and their successes and failures. There is also a discourse of how and where music has developed with technology and who was responsible for it. The research draws from a number of sources including my own experiences websites, magazine publications and books. The work of Simon Frith and Philip Auslander has featured significantly in this work, with Auslander’s *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* being a key source in this area.

Introduction

Origins and Reasons for Research

In late December 2010 my band The River Card, a DIY Hardcore band from Manchester and Stoke-on-Trent, were coming to the end of our full US tour. We were playing a small evening show at a venue called Party Expo at 929 Broadway, Brooklyn, New York. It was at this show that I started to make a short tour video to document our experience through the tour, purely for my own memories and for a little bit of fun. The tour video was not much of a success, as really I had left it far too late to get any great footage as there was only a week or so left of the tour. The video comprised of mainly pictures in a slideshow format with a small amount of videos added later. After we played the show at Party Expo, I started conducting short interviews gaining some of the other members of the tours thoughts and insights towards the highest and lowest points of tour. The responses differed from person to person. I asked these questions to Eric, a stand in guitar player for Unrestrained, a DIY vegan hardcore band from Vermont. It was Eric's response to the question of what his highest point of tour was that really interested me. Instead of talking about a specific show we played or a landmark we visited, he talked about the people he was with and the tour in general; the experience that he gained. He says "Pretty much every other part of the tour was er, was er, the high point, playing shows with excellent people, making some new great friends" he also follows this a little later with "being cramped in a van with er fourteen people for thirty days, that's er, that's er, ya know I wouldn't want to be anywhere else".¹ It was this response that really led me to this research. I asked myself, what were the reasons for this being Eric's highest point of tour? Personally, my lowest point of that tour and many others was probably being stuck in a van with a lack of sleep and spending vast amounts of

time driving in the middle of nowhere. It was strange to me that someone else could value that experience so differently and hold it in much more regard than I did.

When thinking about this video further, more questions and ideas were raised about the current state of live musical performance and touring, the main one being, why do bands still tour? In a time of global recession many bands and artists such as Iron Maiden, The Rolling Stones, The Who and even Queen without Freddie Mercury as the frontman, choose to take their act on the road and complete huge touring schedules sometimes spanning over two years with huge financial costs and implications. I am not naive enough to think that The Rolling Stones' experience is the same experience that I had during my own bands tour but, they must have had their own reasons to tour, as we had ours. This statement alone raises the issue of what are the differences between local grass roots bands and major label artists? How do our experiences differ? Other than the obvious monetary gain for major label artists, do they have personal motivations to tour which could be similar to my own reasons for touring and playing music live?

The touring aspect of being a band will represent one side of this research, as I believe to understand the touring aspect of the music industry you need to consider the current state of music and performance in general. In an age of technological development there have been huge steps of incorporating these technologies into the music industry, not only in recording but also in live performance. In what ways has technology impacted the music industry? Who were the key figures of these transitions and how did they do it?

Definitions and Meanings

Whilst conducting the informal research for this work, there are certain terms and arguments that arise time and again. In order to conduct this research it would be critical to

define some of these key terms that have figured so prominently. The purpose of this section is to situate some of the different ideas and theories surrounding these terms that figure so often within this research.

One of the main ideas surrounding this research is “live music”. It is the word “live” which is the first term that really cements its self throughout this study and is often a topic of vast discourse among academics and journalists, often splitting opinion. A key source when considering this research was Philip Auslander’s *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (1999). Auslander puts forward a suggestion that the live event is “real”. In regards to the word “live”, one dictionary definition when referring to live in terms of performance is “heard or watched at the time of its occurrence; *esp.* (of a radio or television broadcast, etc.) not pre-recorded.”² It is probable that everyone will have their own thoughts and opinions towards what live means and how it figures within music. These opinions will differ slightly but just looking at that definition alone, it states quite clearly “not pre-recorded”. It is arguable that thirty to forty years ago this would have been difficult to dispute. The technology surrounding audio capture and recording was extremely limited in terms of studio recording let alone incorporating this into live performance. Currently it is the boundaries in what a band or artist can do in terms of their live performance which is constantly being redefined due to rapid and constant developments in technology that is constantly occurring. Allan F. Moore states that “technology may itself set limits on what can be conceived” (Moore, 2001: 120), later he follows this by saying “recently this may have become less the case” (Moore, 2001: 120). When considering the evidence put forward it is difficult to dispute, just exploring some of the production styles over time it can be seen that technology is not slowing down.

One example of the use of pre-recorded media would be an artist like Madeon, a French electronic DJ musician, whose work is centred on the use of samples and pre-recorded audio snippets. One of his more famous remixes is called *Pop Culture*.³ It is a song based on the idea of taking samples from thirty nine songs creating a track for his own live performances.⁴ He uses multiple famous and well known (within a popular music context) samples from a multitude of stars. In the video he released on his YouTube channel, it shows him showcasing some of “his” ideas and the way in which he brings each sample in and how he uses them together. This is a clear example of present day musicians using pre-existing material to create music for live performance.

A further contrasting example to Madeon would be the “resurrection” of Tupac Shakur (2Pac) at *Coachella Festival 2012* in California.⁵ Shakur passed away in September 1996 after being shot in Las Vegas, yet at *Coachella* he appears on stage during Snoop Dogg and Dr. Dre’s set. 2Pac appeared at *Coachella* with the use of a hologram system with which, Snoop Dogg and Dr. Dre interacted with the hologram of 2Pac.⁶ This is another example of some of the different ways in which artists are using technology to test the limits of their performance.

The question that figures when looking at both of these examples would be, is this live? Obviously the hologram of 2Pac is not “live” due to it being a holographic projection, but the use of it as a part of an artist’s set could be considered live. Auslander uses a quote from Jon Pareles, a *New York Times* popular music journalist who was writing about the use of computer generated musical instruments and automation within live concerts. Pareles discussed that he was not ready for this new approach to live performance and that “the spontaneity, uncertainty and ensemble coordination that automation eliminates are exactly what I go to concerts to see” (Auslander, 1999: 85). In the setting of this research Pareles’

thoughts are narrow minded and ultimately failing to embrace a digital future. Things are changing and they are changing rapidly. This music created by artists like Madeon is credible, popular and is also being performed in a live setting. Whether people agree that using samples and automated instruments is live or not, it can't be argued that these artists are staging a performance incorporating music and technology.

There was a key issue that kept reappearing in Auslander's *Liveness* and was arguably an underlying theme throughout Auslander's writing; much of Auslander's discussions and theories resort back to a debate of the "authenticity" and "inauthenticity" of music, particularly when looking at a catalogue of rock music. It is worthy of mention at this stage before attempting to define authenticity as a term that it is primarily a major concern of postmodern thinkers. Fredric Jameson displays this with the following, "the existential model of authenticity and inauthenticity whose heroic or tragic thematics are closely related to that other great opposition between alienation and disalienation, itself equally a casualty of the poststructural or postmodern period" (Jameson: 1991: 12). He summarises a quote from Simon Frith saying that Frith suggests "that authenticity can be heard in the music, yet is an effect not just of the music but also of prior musical and extra-musical knowledge and beliefs; that what counts as authentic varies among musical genres and subgenres" (Auslander, 1999: 66). Erich Hertz highlights a chilling example of this:

Many claims about Joy Division's authenticity rest on the tragedy of Ian Curtis's suicide. That is, when you listen to that depressing and moody sound, those introverted and isolated lyrics, you know that Curtis must have meant those feelings because he acted on them; he was not faking.

(Edgar et al., 2013: 138)

Hertz is here suggesting that the act of suicide validates any question of authenticity surrounding Joy Division. Gracyk (1996: 180) would also concur with Hertz as he too uses the example of Ian Curtis but also two more of Kurt Cobain's suicide and Sid Vicious' overdose. Moore defines authentic "as what we trust because it issues from integrity, sincerity, honesty" (Moore, 2001: 199). Auslander later states that, "while rock culture can accommodate multiple definitions of authenticity, the concept of authenticity has also always been exclusionary" (Auslander, 1999: 67). This is similar to the opinion of Moore, who states "It has been used to bestow integrity, or its lack, on a performer, such that an 'authentic' performer exhibits realism, lack of pretence, or the like," (Moore, 2011: 199). Gracyk highlights his view on authenticity, "The taint of authenticity appears when musicians present emotions that do not appear from their own lives" (Gracyk, 1996: 224). He takes this further, "Rock authenticity posits an absolute dichotomy between the inner and the outer, between the true self and the socially constructed mask" (Gracyk, 1996: 226). It is Moore who gets into the theory surrounding authenticity with his use of words such as integrity, realism and earlier, sincerity and honesty. In terms of this research it is within this context that authenticity will be used. Authentic means true to life or true to its natural form, something that is real and genuine.

Moore also suggests that there are three types of authenticity. The first being 'First person' authenticity or *authenticity of expression*. This arises when an originator (composer/performer) succeeds in conveying the impression that his/her utterance is one of integrity, that it represents an attempt to communicate in an unmediated form with an audience. To back this point up, he uses Paul Weller's singing on the song '*Changingman*' as an example. The way in which Weller sings suggests "a voice made raw from intense

emotion (shouting/crying).” This suggests to his listeners that they have been “perceiving real emotion” (Moore, 2011: 200). The next type of authenticity he puts forward is ‘Third person’ authenticity or *authenticity of execution*. This arises when a performer succeeds in conveying the impression of accurately representing the presence of another. For this point he uses an example of Eric Clapton’s work with the band Cream. “Within the blues rock movement of the 1960s, it became a matter of ideology that to employ the ‘blues’ within a thoroughly different social context, by venerating its originators, thereby enabled the appropriation of their very authenticity” (Moore, 2011: 200). This is a suggestion that by paying homage to, adoring or worshipping someone seen as original they validate their own authenticity. His final type of authenticity is ‘Second person’ authenticity or *authenticity of experience*, in that the other is complicit. “This can be said to occur, then, when a performance succeeds in conveying the impression to listeners that their experience of life is being validated, that the performance is ‘telling it like it is’ for them, that it represents them” (Moore, 2011: 201). For this point, Moore uses the work of U2 to enforce this point. “The stylistic attributes there articulated for fans a place of belonging, something which distinguished it from other cultural forms, those which promised ‘mere entertainment’, or those belonging to hegemonic groupings” (Moore, 2011: 200). In a previous publication Moore defined this as ‘place of belonging’ as a ‘centeredness’, which he describes as “an active lifting of oneself from an unstable experiential ground and depositing oneself with an experience to be trusted, an experience with centre” (Moore, 2011: 200). So the experiences the musicians convey and the subject of their music suggests authenticity.

Another key aspect of this research is what Auslander labels as the “mediatized”. It is a term of sparse use and has limitations in its application. The word media suggests an idea of newspapers, magazines, television and other journalistic communication methods and

companies. The definition for mediatized in the *Oxford English Dictionary* suggests that mediatized is when something is “reduced in power or effect by the interposition of a mediating agent. By extension: rendered subject to the controlling influence of the mass media”.⁷ Again for the purpose of this study it is in this context in which the term mediatized will be used. This is one of the questions of this study; if the media has an effect on the live performance of music and how and why has it affected the music industry? When reading Auslander’s *Liveness* there is an overwhelming impression that this is not where his definition ends:

I often employ the term “mediatized,” admittedly somewhat loosely, to indicate that a particular cultural object is a product of the mass media or of media technology.

“Mediatized performance” is performance that is circulated on television as audio or video recordings, and in other forms based in technologies of reproduction.

(Auslander, 1999: 5)

Auslander discusses a quote from Jean Baudrillard by saying that:

For Baudrillard, mediatization is not simply a neutral term describing products of the media. Rather, he sees the media as instrumental in a larger, socio-political process of bringing all discourses under the dominance of a single code.

(Auslander, 1999: 5)

This is situating not only where live performance is at this current moment in time but the music industry itself. Western music and performance is at a stage where exposure is vital.

Column inches, internet exposure, radio time and airplay are the ways to drum up publicity around a musical act; not necessarily through performance or the quality of music produced from the act. This doesn't necessarily cover every form of music or musician but is arguably true for major label acts. This again taps into the differences between grass roots bands and major label artists. Local smaller acts do not have the same opportunities for publicity available as the major label acts. Major labels acts have publicists and A&R representatives who take care of that side of the business on their behalf. Smaller acts have limited tools available to drum up their own publicity, one of which has to be live performance.

Auslander is suggesting that if something has the ability to be reproduced then it has succumbed to being mediatized. This is potentially true to an extent, but the statement has its limitations and should be approached with caution. The reproduction is true and real within its socio, political, cultural and economic context in which it is received. To suggest that anything that has had any form of reproduction is mediatized is flippant and flawed.

Notes

¹ Comments taken from a tour video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8NWS8uMa3_A. Accessed November 2012.

² Definition taken from: <http://www.oed.com/>. Accessed November 2012.

³ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lTx3G6h2xyA> this is a link to Madeon's Pop Culture (live mashup) video. Accessed November 2012.

⁴ Lena (2004) puts forward an interesting perspective on samples within music, particularly rap and the distinctions and parallels they draw.

⁵ For Further reading on Tupac Shakur at Coachella and the holograms effect, see Harris (2013).

⁶ This performance can be seen via: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?gl=GB&v=TGbrFmPBV0Y>. Accessed November 2012.

⁷ Definition taken from: <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/251635>. Accessed June 2015.

Methodology

There are a number of key questions being investigated within this work such as, why is live musical performance still important to the music industry and why is it still a necessity, and how is the digital age affecting live musical performance? When looking at live performance and touring a number of further questions and discussions have also arisen such as the effects of social/cultural capital on performance; possible alternatives to touring and live performance; with a comprehensive discourse of the history of live performance and travelling musicians. Also then considering the second section of this work regarding music in the age of digital culture, this thesis will attempt to investigate the ways in which authenticity is challenged; the effects of technology on performance; independent labels and their effects on the practises and traditions of the music industry; contemporary notions of liveness and mediatized in the current digital performance. There are a number of methodologies that other academics and writers have already used that will reflect throughout the work leading to the latter conclusions.

There has already been an investigation into the discourse surrounding the key terms that have surfaced whilst conducting this research and how others have applied them to their work, but it would be appropriate for these terms to be outlined and in what use they will be employed and situated within this research.

The term live is obviously one of the most prominent aspects in the main body of this work. A substantial amount of the discourse and pre-existing research and thoughts surrounding this term are focussed on the debate of real versus fake or truth against lie; Auslander also blankets this with the term liveness. The term live isn't as easily defined as had been originally presumed. The situation and the circumstance of the musical

performance alter the idea of what live is. When you consider Auslander's discussion of the Milli Vanilli scandal, live is different for the different participants in that situation. What was live for Fab Morvan and Rob Pilatus (the members who didn't sing lead vocals on their records but got the credit) will have been different to the performers who actually sang on the record. What Morvan and Pilatus were doing will have been real for them, that was real in their situation. To many this was a lie, these performers were not singing live and were lip-synching to pre-recorded music. It is for these reasons that an exact definition cannot be given. There are far too many variables that circle the term to pin down a fully justified definition. However, for the sake of this research the term more often than not has been used to signify public performance or performance that is framed and staged as anything can happen and is unscripted.

Authenticity is another term that appears to go hand in hand with a discourse on live performance or performance studies. This study has not been intended to focus on authenticity as a topic; however it is something that directly correlates with live performance. This intended use of the term authenticity is similar to the way in which Fonarow discussed credibility and beingness. Fonarow's ideas are based around whether an artist's music or performance is credible and appropriate with the artists' genre or performance characteristics. Is their performance believable and does it also keep within the heritage of that genre? There are many attributes that contribute to the notion and ideology of authenticity as a musician or performer. Something that is believed to be a preceding version or even a sister concept of authenticity is the term hype. Hype is a term often discussed in the many different current musical scenes throughout the world, which indicates an expectation that a band or artist will be good. Bands can be referred to as a hype band if some of their members have been in previous "authentic" bands or if their first

release is particularly good. There is always a dilemma as to whether a band can live up to this hype which is believed to be completed once the artist demonstrates their authenticity as a band and performers, which is often done through live performance or their follow up recordings.

The term digital age also appears a number of times with which a number of different connotations are associated. For the purpose of this research, it will be used in the sense of digital and technological development. The rate in which these digital and technological developments are occurring is exponential. These developments are making musical creation and performance far more accessible. It is allowing people with minimal musical theory and knowledge the opportunity to partake in these activities that originally may have not been possible.

Mediatized is a term that has been taken from Auslander and adapted to fit this research. Auslander sees mediatized as a “product of the mass media or of media technology” (Auslander, 1999: 5). This definition alone is too broad and not specific enough for the purpose of the field. When the term is used within this work, it is implied with the purpose of “media” such as social networking and journalism. Social networking has become an extremely integral part of the unsigned, independent and amateur music industry. It is arguably easier to sustain a working band with the outlets and sites such as Facebook, Myspace and Bandcamp than it will have been before. For bigger bands (bands or artists with major labels, PR representation or management), this avenue of social networking is not a necessity, as they have greater financial backing to promote the record, band or gigs as needed. However, major labels are now adapting these forms of promotion.

The work being undertaken involves the collection and analysis of qualitative data from a range of sources, these sources primarily being from books, journals, audio visual

(DVD and television formats) and some elements of ethnographic research through the writing of a tour report and incorporating my own experiences with the music industry. In the literature review, some of the key discourses and concepts have been highlighted as already set out in this subject. The nature of this topic of research means that the sources available become very contemporary in a short time frame, this results in a huge challenge to overcome as it is important to offer fresh ideas on the questions being investigated.

As mentioned above, ethnographical research is a method that has been used to collect some of the data for this research. Fonarow uses ethnographic research and some of her own previous experiences to formulate the conclusions she reaches in her title *Empire of Dirt*. As stated in the literature review of the said title, there are downfalls and limitations of Fonarow's work but it does offer up some interesting points. The method of ethnography for her research was particularly effective as it created a relatable feel to her writing and also showed she was documenting what she considered her invaluable experiences. The field of ethnographic research has been used when completing this research in the completion of a case study. Fonarow put forward her own theories and conclusions that were all centred on her experiences in the indie community and live indie music performance. A week long case study of life on tour with my own band The River Card was completed. Upon completion a "tour report" was compiled establishing some of the practises and features of an unsigned amateur touring band. The tour report allowed me to critically reflect upon my own first hand experiences of being part of a tour offering a different dynamic and perspective to this research that other writers and academics could not offer a view of. Examples and objective reinforcement of the report has been embedded throughout the thesis.

Literature Review

In terms of this research it would be important to discuss and assess some of the key theory and ideas already surrounding the topics of live performance and music in the “digital age”. It would be worth highlighting again that although there is a significant amount of writing on performance styles and digital music, however these sources are often contemporary. These sources have become very dated with some conclusions no longer valid or disproved. This is not necessarily a flaw of the academics and writers of these sources; they worked with the evidence and knowledge they had at the time of writing. As things have progressed, we are able to address and question their conclusions comprehensively.

Auslander on Liveness, Mediatized and Authenticity

One writer and academic who has already been discussed within this work is Philip Auslander, most notably in his book *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (1999). Auslander also goes back to some of his points of *Liveness* in his later book *Performing Glam Rock: Gender and Theatricality in Popular Music* (2006). The source is split into three main chapters with an introduction and conclusion also available. It is the third chapter that is centred on the live performance of music with a lengthy discussion surrounding the controversial group Milli Vanilli in the late 80's.

Liveness is an attempt at discussing how the media and other technologies have begun to possibly affect the live performance of theatre, music and the courtroom. It addresses the ways in which live performance in a context that is arguably a possible refusal to embrace the future, not only from Auslander himself, but also from some of the different sources he uses. One example of this is in *Liveness'* introduction where Auslander suggests

that he is sometimes “mistaken for someone who does not value – who is even antagonistic toward – live performance” (Auslander, 1999: 3). He argues against this by stating:

My interest in the cultural status of live performance derives directly from my sense of living in a culture in which something I continue to value seems to have less and less presence and importance.

(Auslander, 1999: 3-4)

Auslander here is already residing to the point in which he believes live performance is slipping in importance. In terms of music this isn't necessarily true for every style, genre or artist. Finally he finishes this point by saying:

The resulting assessment of the situation of live performance in a culture dominated by mass media has not made me optimistic about its current and future prestige, as understood in traditional terms.

(Auslander, 1999: 4)

This again cements the idea of Auslander being stuck in the past and not wanting to step forward with technology. Using words like ‘traditional’ suggests nostalgia and a longing for ideas of the past. This is a significant downfall of this source, understandable as the source had been written in 1999, but a failure to see what technology and the future may bring is flawed thinking.

Auslander offers a definition for the word live from Steve Wurtzler:

As socially and historically produced, the categories of the live and the recorded are defined in a mutually exclusive relationship, in that notion of the live is premised on the absence of recording and the defining fact of the recorded is the absence of the live.

(Auslander, 1999: 3)

Auslander summarises this quote by saying:

In other words, the common assumption is that the live event is “real” and the mediatized events are secondary and somehow artificial reproductions of the real.

(Auslander, 1999: 3)

It is the use of the words ‘real’ and ‘artificial’ that are interesting here. It is an easy assumption to make in that Auslander has already decided that the real is live performance and that the artificial is everything else. It seems Auslander’s overall thoughts on a performance that has succumbed to “mediatization” are arguably that it is no longer live. At multiple points in his work Auslander argues that when mediatization occurs we are not witnessing a real or live performance, he quite explicitly argues this when discussing television programmes recorded before a live studio audience. For example he puts forward:

The current practise of taping before “a live studio audience” is a simulation, rather than a replication, of the conditions of live theatrical production. The presence of the

studio audience on the television screen and soundtrack implies that the program is a record of a real event.

(Auslander, 1999: 22)

Auslander puts forward a case that this process is a simulation and not a reproduction and these are the necessary signs to convey that the performance is live. He follows this by saying “because the programs are edited, however, the home audience does not see the same performance as the studio audience, but sees a performance that never took place” (Auslander, 1999: 22) this can also be generalized to music and not just television and theatre.

Auslander revisits an issue throughout this book, questioning what is live and what is not. This concept needs to be addressed with caution as it is not that simple when categorizing this issue. Auslander does frame many different arguments and points, concerning what live is and what it is not at various instances in his work, which does provide a lot of research and areas to question. Auslander also discusses the ‘Milli Vanilli scandal’ in the 1980s and the groups’ use of simulation potentially deceiving millions of people when the news broke that neither of the two performers in the group actually sang on the records. Auslander is concerned about the use of simulation and it would be a rational assumption to make in that he saw Milli Vanilli as the lowest point of this ‘Live versus Simulation’ debate that he argues. This is then contrasted with examples of Eric Clapton’s performance on MTV’s *Unplugged* which was also released as an album and Nat King Cole’s posthumous duet with his daughter Natalie, for her rendition of her father’s song *Unforgettable*. This is an incredibly effective part of Auslander’s work and an area of research that relates to this research. Overall on this discussion, Auslander still suggests that

it is the issue of mediatization that caused this problem of simulation, which is seen in small quotes such as “regime of simulation” (Auslander, 1999: 109) and his persistent blaming of MTV which is most clear when he states “is it possible that simulation can be brought into the system of power to be used by capital to maintain its dominance, as I have suggested in my paranoid interpretation of machinations of MTV?” (Auslander, 1999: 110)

There is also an ongoing theme where Auslander appears to situate live performance and mediatization as working in opposition to one another, rather than together. “The question of whether mediatized performance will come to be valued over live performance in the culture at large will be answered by the next few generations” (Auslander, 1999: 59-60), further to this he also discusses an analysis of “other media” and its relationship to theatre from Patrice Pavis who refers to this “other media” as “contamination” (Auslander, 1999: 40). Auslander finishes this by saying:

All too often, such analyses take on the air of a melodrama in which virtuous live performance is threatened, encroached upon, dominated, and contaminated by its insidious other, with which it is locked in a life-and-death struggle. From this point of view, once live performance succumbs to mediatization, it loses its ontological integrity.

(Auslander, 1999: 41-42)

This, as argued, is not the opinion of someone who can see the benefit of mediatization; but should it be expected that someone who is primarily a traditionalist would see the benefits of mediatization. Auslander does offer one example of where mediatization does work with live performance in a lengthy footnote. Auslander offers this idea as a side note when it

could arguably have a little more prominence as Auslander makes a valid point. He uses the example of professional sports and that:

The live game can take place because of the income the teams receive from the companies that broadcast the game, who derive income, in turn, from advertising during the game. In many instances, the same capital interests are behind both live and mediatized cultural objects.

(Auslander, 1999: 27)

The money invested through advertising companies and sponsors feeds into the revenue for teams enabling them to buy more players or invest the capital in their club or team, in turn, arguably making the game better and developing the sport. Particularly in the UK, there is a large football culture with some clubs and teams bringing seventy thousand plus fans to a game, with some games also being televised. This is a clear example of both mediatization and live performance working together for a benefit to both. Auslander also generalizes this point to live musical performance by saying

In many instances, the concerts themselves do not turn a profit (which is one reason why they are now usually underwritten by sponsors from outside the industry). They do, however, serve to advertise the recordings that, if successful, will be enormously profitable and more than make up for losses incurred by the concert tour”.

(Auslander, 1999: 27)

Auslander does make a valid point here as you now often see tour posters with various commercial brands plastered across the poster who are obvious tour sponsors. Some clear examples of this would be the Vans Warped tour in the US and the London iTunes Festival here in the UK which are two successful examples of live performance and touring which are being underwritten and part funded by major corporations. Auslander seems to gloss over this whole point and questionably avoids this issue and what it may do for his research.

Authenticity is also a big concern within this source. When looking at the third chapter Auslander bases a lot of his debate around the authenticity of rock music, this shouldn't be too much of a surprise as the title of the chapter does say it includes a discourse in rock authenticity; but in terms of his research, Auslander labours on this issue. The issue of authenticity needed to be discussed due to the nature of his research but not necessarily at the length that it has been. The source is aiming to discuss live performance in a mediatized culture not the authenticity of rock. In the third chapter Auslander is suggesting that a majority of the issues he raises, resorts back to whether it was authentic and inauthentic or whether it was real or fake. As an example, when discussing the "Milli Vanilli Scandal", Auslander's point returns back to authenticity repeatedly:

The intriguing aspect of the Milli Vanilli scandal is that those commentators did not simply dismiss it as the logical outcome of the of the pop audience's indifference to authenticity. It was seen, rather, as signifying a crisis in the ideology of authenticity with implications well beyond the specific case.

(Auslander, 1999: 86)

It would be disputable to understand why Auslander would be trying to apply the same rules of rock authenticity to a German pop group; Auslander did say earlier in the book that “Milli Vanilli was not a rock group: It was a pop dance group whose audience would not be expected to be concerned about authenticity” (Auslander, 1999: 85).

Overall the source is well written and is very convincing, but it is arguable that Auslander had already made up his mind on some of the key issues he was setting out to investigate and is often caught in the past with some of his more traditional views in terms of live performance. Looking at when *Liveness* was written, it was right on the brink of when the internet became a key aspect of how an audience digests music. Auslander had these traditional views that in a way almost hold back the possibilities of this book. The Milli Vanilli example is seen as a crisis in the music world but lip-synching was becoming a noticeable trait of pop music at the time. Auslander had an opportunity to embrace the digital age that was impending with an age of piracy and digital downloading just on the horizon, Auslander had the opportunity to tackle these debates rather than centring on rock authenticity. In his conclusion Auslander states that his project had been:

analysing the situation of live performance in a mediatized culture [...] Almost all live performances now incorporate the technology of reproduction, at the very least in the use of electronic amplification, and sometimes to the point where they are hardly live at all. But the influence of mediatization on live events is not simply a matter of equipment. Some live performances, such as certain Broadway plays and many sports events, are now literally made for television: the live event itself is shaped to the demands of mediatization. Others, like Madonna’s concerts and Disney’s *Beauty and the Beast*, recreate mediatized performances in a live setting.

(Auslander, 1999: 158)

Even after everything considered, he still concludes that acts such as Madonna and her concerts are just mediatized performances in a live setting. His conclusions are actualisations of his objective.

Hegarty and Halliwell on Progressive Rock, Theatricality and Authenticity

The next book titled *Beyond and Before: Progressive Rock since the 1960s*, also held key ideas and writing in this area of study. The book is a joint effort from Paul Hegarty and Martin Halliwell and sets out to discuss every detail of progressive rock music since the 1960s at great length. This book has particular importance as it discusses some interesting aspects of performance although it does have its limitations in application.

The book is split into two distinct parts. Part 1, *Before and During*, in which the writers discuss how progressive rock developed as a genre and who the key musicians and bands were in doing this. They discuss what progressive rock is and where it took influence from. Some notable chapters of their work were *The Concept Album* and *Performance and Visuality*.

The section *Beyond*, discusses the fall from mainstream popularity that progressive rock experienced in the mid to late 1970s and what happened after the “high phase” of progressive rock. It also looks at the reasons for this and what was spurned from this genre in to other music.

The introduction sees the writers set out to define what progressive rock is and what its key characteristics are. They start by summarising the work of Bill Martin who outlines three dominant characteristics of progressive rock; he then later moulds this into a four-

point model. Firstly he says that progressive rock is a “true synthesis of different musical forms” (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 5). Martin discusses the difference between some of the 1960s bands like The Beatles and progressive rock bands and the ways in which they “included elements of classical music or music from outside European traditions” (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 5). Martin makes the point that:

In full-blown progressive rock, the synthesis is much more complete in the following way: when we hear the presence and juxtaposition of harpsichord and sitar [in progressive rock tracks], this sounds much more like something that has been part of the music all along.

(Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 5)

What Martin is suggesting here is that when progressive rock bands incorporate these instruments and influences that go beyond the usual rock standards, progressive rock bands do it right where others fail to truly incorporate them.

Martin’s second point was that of musical virtuosity being a key element of progressive rock. Hegarty and Halliwell discuss virtuosity in progressive rock and how it is often criticized for being self-indulgent on the behalf of the musician. They suggest that “progressive rock musicians, especially in the 1970s were talented, skilful and creative” (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 9). They then further question whether this:

“Hindered or helped musical creativity, particularly as progressive bands were interested in different ways of writing and performing as a group and of developing

ideas into integrated concept albums rather than filling out albums and concerts with tracks featuring virtuoso solos”.

(Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 9)

The writers put forward two problems with the use of virtuosity as a defining feature of progressive rock. “First, virtuosity was often praised for its very existence, hence the move to painfully long concert solos in the 1970s as an extension of jazz group practise” (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 10). They also put forward that often the worst offenders would be rock bands that did not receive the classification of progressive rock but stayed truer to a more blues rock style such as The Who and Led Zeppelin. Secondly, Hegarty and Halliwell state that more significantly “it is simply not true that progressive rock either required or always had very skilled musicians” (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 10). It is easy to agree with the writers here over Martin, as virtuosity wasn’t as they suggested inherent to the music. It could be argued that musicians with greater technical ability could have written better music but that is almost true for any music or genre.

Finally Martin’s third characteristic is that progressive rock is “inherently, if not permanently, English in origin: that is, it derives from a particular collision of influences in English Culture” (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 5). Donnelly also suggests similar and that it was a genre “dominated by British groups” (Edgar et al., 2013: 172). Again this is debateable as not every progressive rock band was English. There were progressive rock bands from the USA and Europe so it wasn’t just an English phenomenon. Progressive rock may have arguably originated in England and some of the most successful bands were English, but to say it is a defining characteristic of a genre is too broad to be generalised. These comments

of Martin are just some of the earliest indications of the bias that is shown to progressive rock throughout this source.

In the chapter, *Performance and Visuality*, Hegarty and Halliwell discuss the theatricality of progressive rock performance. They state, “A fusion of mythology and sonic innovation came together in the performance of 1970s progressive rock, echoing multimedia art forms of the late 1960s and highlighting an ongoing interest in theatricality and visuality” (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 119). They later follow this with:

It is easy to dismiss the indulgencies of mid 1970s rock groups as indicative of a decadent music industry, but the preoccupation of progressive bands with visual media – performance, ritual, theatre, masks, costumes, lighting, film, video, typography and artwork – reveals a variegated aesthetic, often treated with a high seriousness but sometimes marked by humour, whimsy and glimmers of self-parody.

(Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 119)

Here there is a suggestion that progressive rock bands were acting out their deepest performance fantasies and again restating the point concerning progressive rock incorporating external influences and extra musical practises into their performance. An example is given of Emerson, Lake and Palmer and some of their tour practises such as Keith Emerson being suspended in the air to play the grand piano at ELP’s April 1974 California Jam appearance, to strengthen these points.

There is also a discussion of the similarities between rough theatre and holy theatre with progressive rock performance. The writers put forward that “holy theatre is an attempt to find a suitable language for invisible forms through the restaging of ritual: rough theatre

recalls the ‘low’ performance of vaudeville, comedy and a theatre of noise” (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 120). They follow this further by saying “Holy theatre deals with the ‘hidden impulses of man’ that move beyond corporeality, rough theatre deals with earthly realities and bodily pleasures” (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 120). It is argued that progressive rock of the 1970s combined versions of both these types of theatre into performance, “fusing them in different ways and with divergent aesthetic and, at times, political ends” (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 120). It is difficult to disagree with the writers here as progressive rock musicians did incorporate theatricality into their performance. Progressive rock wasn’t the only music to do this, as glam rock also incorporated theatricality, which the writers don’t acknowledge.¹ The writers suggest that progressive rock tended to favour holy theatre but they also suggest progressive rock had rough theatre tendencies. “Despite the grand gestures and profound themes of progressive rock in the 1970s, albums and gigs often combined low musical elements or included comic sections that kept the performance grounded or fractured theatrical illusion” (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 122).

Hegarty and Halliwell do attempt to tackle the issue of mediatization and how it came to affect progressive rock. This is done without the writers offering up any form of their own definition or interpretation of the term. They rule out mediatization occurring in the 1980s with MTV or the use of big screens at live concert shows but instead they go with Auslander’s idea of mediatization being traced back to electric amplification and experimentation with reverb and echo as definition for the term. They also offer some of their own examples of designer instruments like the modular moog used by the progressive rock group Emerson, Lake and Palmer in 1972. This definition alone doesn’t cover the scope of what mediatization could be. During the 1960s and 1970s this may have been perceived as a form of mediatization but this can now be seen as a development in technology, the

same in which the piano developed from keyboard instruments like the harpsichord. This then followed with “such musical mediatization was heightened in the late 1960s and 1970s, when the visual dimension of performance began to be taken seriously” (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 122). This statement is discrediting of the visual aspects of live performance before the said period. Was the hip swivelling of Elvis Presley not taken seriously in the late 1950s? Was the theatricality of Little Richard’s performance of *Bama Lama Bama Loo* and *Whole Lotta Shakin’ Goin’ On* during ABC’s television show *Shindig!* in 1964 not taken seriously?² The example given by Hegarty and Halliwell of Emerson from Emerson, Lake and Palmer playing his modular moog with his buttocks in 1972 is similar to the performances of Little Richard in 1964 which could be considered not an effect of mediatization but arguably a choice of playing style.

There is then an addressing of “experiments” used by progressive rock bands such as costumes, projected slide tape and grease paint. They put forward that:

Without sophisticated visual technology, a spotlight on the costumed singer in the centre of a concert stage arguably lacked the drama of a cinematic close-up, but the use of image projections to tell stories to echo cover art, the deployment of props, or even the distribution of merchandise such as T shirts emblazoned with reproductions of album covers and band iconography functioned as proxies for the close up and helped to mythologize bands in the process.

(Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 123)

This is arguably again not something that is native to progressive rock but it would be fair to suggest that it does definitely help to mythologize bands like the writers suggest. There is an

overall suggestion here that progressive rock musicians were spontaneous and unpredictable particularly when looking at live performance. Spontaneity is a key aspect of all live performance as it leaves the audience guessing and not knowing what is coming next. Spontaneity suggests purpose whereas as if liveness is considered as a concept it can be seen differently. Liveness is what can happen, what can't be foreseen; liveness cannot be stopped. Spontaneity on the other hand is a conscious action by a performer and not an effect or cause of liveness.

Hegarty and Halliwell acknowledge the 'tension' between live performance and the record. They point out arguments from Auslander and Gracyk (Gracyk as quoted in *Liveness*, 1999.), regarding this issue and relate this argument to progressive rock. "Nonetheless, performance and recordings had a symbiotic relation, particularly in prog, we would argue, in that fans wanted to see and hear the fullness of album tracks away from a studio setting" (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 124). This could really be said true of most music not just progressive rock, is the whole point of a band touring an album, to go see tracks from that album performed live?

There is an extensive chapter titled *The Concept Album*, which involves an in depth discussion of the concept album and the extravagance of the package that comes with purchasing an album. The writers put forward that:

The concept album allowed scope for narrative, for genre mixing, for instrumental development that echoed jazz and sonata forms, and for lyrical complexity that was not possible in shorter form or even in single extended tracks.

(Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 65)

They follow this with “the full blown concept album would expand on a theme over many tracks, and match this with musical and formal structures that advanced over the course of an album” (Hegarty and Halliwell, 2011: 65). They fail to offer up any other definitions of the concept album or what other academics have written about the concept album. The second quote above is the general understanding of the term the concept album, but there could have been more evidence offered.

One of the most obvious limitations of this chapter and arguably the book is that it lacks the ability to be applied to different genres and styles of music. It is so focussed and centred on progressive rock; it becomes difficult to generalize it. Although the authors do discuss artists outside of progressive rock such as Marvin Gaye and The Sex Pistols at certain points; these instances are often merely to enforce or reiterate their point concerning progressive rock and not to offer up an alternative point. The concepts of mediatized, liveness and authenticity are all offered in terms of progressive rock. It is difficult to consider their conclusions for anything other than progressive rock. The title is *Beyond and Before*, all the aspects and arguments of the source pull back towards progressive rock. As stated earlier, *Beyond and Before* does lack the ability to be generalised but it also becomes biased at different stages throughout. It comes across in their writing that the writers are avid fans of progressive rock and that they believe it to be superior to all other music. On the other hand the source is very in depth, sometimes overly so, but is probably a must if you are interested about the smaller less significant details regarding progressive rock and its cultures and practises.

Fonarow on Indie aesthetics and zones of participation

A third book that put forward some further key material was *Empire of Dirt: The Aesthetics and Rituals of British Indie Music (2006)* by Wendy Fonarow. Fonarow sets out to discuss the British Indie music scene (primarily mid 1990s) and some of the discourse surrounding the scene which Fonarow herself refers to as the “indie community”.

The book is split into six main chapters of discussion with further subheadings for each chapter. One of the most notable chapters in terms of this research is *Performance, Authenticity, and Emotion*, in which Fonarow discusses indie’s version of authenticity during the “rituals” of performance. The writer uses a different methodology in this book when comparing this source with some of the others already approached, which is that of an ethnographical research method from the viewpoint of an anthropologist. This methodology brings some interesting and different conclusions in comparison to other researchers.

A small statement that could be made about this source and Fonarow’s writing in general, is that her writing style is much more relatable than others. This isn’t suggesting a reader needs to agree with every statement or concept that she makes, but readers may have some of their own past experiences that relate to some of her experiences and the topics of discussion within this source.

In the short introduction of the source above, some key words and phrases like “ritual” and “community” were stated as they surface many times when reading this source. Fonarow uses these words to describe what indie music is and what it is like to be at an indie music show. With the use of these words Fonarow suggests that indie music and indie live performance is much more than just music and performance. Words like ritual suggest religion and the use of the word community puts forward the idea of a way of life, ideas that

go much further than the boundaries of a recording studio or a venue. Fonarow provides a description of what she perceives ritual to be:

In this book, I treat musical performance as ritual. Rituals address cultural conflicts and contradictions. Indie music performances and ideology are an expression of cultural values regarding the role of art, emotion, the body, asceticism, youth and the nature of creativity in modern western industrial society.

(Fonarow, 2006: 2)

For the sake of this work this is an interesting viewpoint. Ritual has already been discussed and has connotations of religion ingrained in its meaning. On the back of this, if you remove the religious connotations, ritual can also suggest routine. Routine is not a direct definition of the word ritual but when an action is repeated like the boring day to day activities of life, these things can begin to feel like ritual. The way that Fonarow values musical performance as ritual is interesting, as arguably people use the opportunity of gigs, shows and performances to escape the mundane and everyday activities of life. Further to the points already made regarding ritual and community, the use of the words also suggest extra musical influences, similar to that of Hegarty and Halliwell. Whereas Hegarty and Halliwell suggest that progressive rock music and the performers are influenced by extra musical themes; in indie music it seems that indie music feeds the community and culture with cultural values such as art, emotion and youth, which is fed back to the music and performance at shows and gigs through the different participants.

When looking at the community aspect of live indie music and the culture associated with the music, Fonarow discusses it as a mainly youth phenomenon. Fonarow suggests it is

something that is temporary and is something that the majority of participants eventually leave due to stepping into the “adult world” of family and work. This is arguably true as these everyday activities can make it difficult and tiring to partake in gigs and shows. Following on from this Fonarow discusses the rejection of the indie community which is often accompanied by the rejection of its values. The writer does later acknowledge that this isn’t a consistent theory and those that don’t reject the community can often “become professionals – record industry personnel, musicians, or sexual acolytes – dedicating their life to this art” (Fonarow, 2006: 23). Fonarow also suggests that for these professionals “the liminal space of the gig is the only place that feels like home” (Fonarow, 2006: 23). Again, Fonarow is suggesting something more than just music or performance, something extra musical.

Fonarow also chooses to discuss authenticity in her writing. Not to the lengths that Auslander or Hegarty and Halliwell do, but it is a theme that appears in her work at various points. Fonarow offers a definition of the indie version of authenticity followed by a much shorter version of a general definition of authenticity:

Indie’s notions of authenticity include performing one’s own material and valuing a working-class identity despite a primarily middle-class audience. For indie, “authentic music is personal, live, youthful, organic, self-made, original and motivated by concerns of artistic expression rather than commercial acquisition.

(Fonarow, 2006: 188)

The more general definition that Fonarow offers is “authenticity addresses a difference between what is read as real versus artifice or sincerity versus deception” (Fonarow, 2006:

188). This second definition is much more in the thinking of Auslander, particularly with the use of the words deception and artifice.

This authenticity discussion is followed by a discussion of what Fonarow describes as the “sister concept of authenticity” in the music world, credibility. Fonarow suggests credibility is “the cultural capital of the music world” (Fonarow, 2006: 18) , Fonarow adds to this that “credibility is not how much money one has or how many records one has sold but the respect and honorific status one is accorded in the community” (Fonarow, 2006: 189).

Fonarow states that there are different ways that each of the different members of the indie community secures their credibility. In terms of indie musicians “credibility is something one possesses based on one’s music, one’s lifestyle, one’s social class, one’s persona and one’s performance” (Fonarow, 2006: 190). For the audience members credibility is “manifested in liking credible bands” (Fonarow, 2006: 190). This shows an indie fans ability to distinguish differences in aesthetic value. Fonarow does add that some personal taste needs to be expressed by the indie fan or the fan may be seen as a “follower” and unable to tell the difference between good and poor indie music. For the professional, credibility is demonstrated through “working with credible bands or artists, or working at a credible independent label or a credible company” (Fonarow, 2006: 190). Fonarow summarises this entire section by stating “for all members, credibility is an association with credible artists, and therefore a band’s honorific status and believability is a central concern for all” (Fonarow, 2006:190). The latter part of the quote is agreeable, however the first raises questions. Do the musicians of the indie community gain credibility through touring with or promoting other indie bands? Do they gain it through the music they write? It would be easy to say a mixture of the two but more research is needed in how bands or artists gain their credibility. Fonarow doesn’t explore this point enough. Looking at the credibility of

professionals, Fonarow said that they demonstrate credibility through working with other credible bands or independent labels. In her introduction of this book, Fonarow discusses her time working at Domino Records and at various points she also references and “name drops” Peter Hook, New Order, The Libertines and others in the acknowledgements section. It could be argued that Fonarow is seeking to demonstrate her own credibility within the indie community and the credibility of her work by associating herself with Domino Records and these figures of the indie community. This is not necessarily a negative or a positive to Fonarow’s work but more of an observation.

A little further into the source, Fonarow puts a slightly different spin on authenticity. Fonarow discusses the idea of “beingness”. Fonarow describes “beingness” as the word she uses to describe “an emotional presence viewed by participants as authentic” (Fonarow, 2006: 192). Before reaching this concept and description, Fonarow precedes this with a more extended definition of beingness:

In looking for the real, the authentic, the credible in a performance onstage, the audience and critics want the musician to *be* rather than to act. They want to believe that the musician is being himself, that the performance onstage has some truthful relationship to the world beyond.

(Fonarow, 2006: 191)

This again is another instance where the discussion is situated within what is real and what is not; but Fonarow is suggesting that for indie performance to be real there must be no fakery, no simulation, only the true. If an indie musician is only “being himself” then surely

there can be nothing truer. Fonarow discusses four ways in which beingness is conveyed in indie performance.

A lack of stress on virtuosity - Fonarow suggests that indie gigs differ greatly to that of classical music performance. The composition/sheet music is the “sacred text” and the performance of this text is judged on how well the performance recreates this text.

Fonarow argues that indie is different, “although it has a musical text, indie privileges the live over the written or recorded forms” (Fonarow, 2006: 192). Fonarow continues to say that indie bears more resemblance to jazz performance due to indie’s “valuing of spontaneous creation” (Fonarow, 2006: 192). Fonarow summarises these points:

For indie, the live performance is the originary art object, and the CD is the reproduction. Recordings can be modified by forms of technical wizardry, but it is in the show that a band can reveal if it is true conduit of musical revelation.

(Fonarow, 2006: 192)

Due to this idea that the live event is the primary text, Fonarow suggests that errors are not an issue and that there is no set template for the indie show. Errors only become an issue if they disrupt the show. These errors or issues are seen by the crowd as “components of an original live event” (Fonarow, 2006: 192),³ this is enforcing Fonarow’s idea that the indie audience value the spontaneous over routine or technical ability. Another interesting point when looking at this source and contrasting it with Hegarty and Halliwell’s, is the different ways different styles of music can value a characteristic or writing style such as virtuosity. As highlighted in Hegarty and Halliwell’s source, in the music of the bluesy influenced classic of

bands such as Led Zeppelin, virtuosity arguably takes priority over every other aspect of the music and performance as a sign of authenticity. In indie this would have a negative impact on the authenticity of a band or performance. Arguably this is a sign of Auslander's "next few generations" being concerned less with the authenticities and practises of the past and a rejection of the traditions and blueprints as laid out by bands before them.

Not registering the visual gaze of audience members – "A major convention that demonstrates that indie performers are "being" is their self-presentation as totally absorbed in music and not overtly aware of the nature of performance as spectacle" (Fonarow, 2006: 193). Fonarow goes on to say that performers use "gaze strategies" to avoid contact with audience members as for performers making eye contact with a member of the audience can be awkward. Fonarow furthers this idea by saying that the gaze strategies that bands use such as closing their eyes or focussing their gaze on other performers suggest an image of "being, not posing" (Fonarow, 2006: 194).

Refraining from commentary during performance – Fonarow suggests that indie performers avoid "commentating" on a performance or reacting to things during the performance as this would suggest that the performer is not "in the moment".

Performance details that suggest that a musician approaches the performance analytically deny the central illusion of beingness. Audience members are usually dismayed when performers criticize the unfolding performance. Commentary or criticism, reflexive forms of speech suggest that the performer is not in the moment but rather analysing it. Meta speech, complaints about equipment or requests for

the crowd to move forward are problematic because they take the audience out of its reverie and draws attention to the staged nature of the show.

(Fonarow, 2006: 194)

Once again this is arguably true, but in opposition to this it could be argued that the ticket purchased, an audience gathered in one location, the stage or the merchandise stalls for the bands and labels would also suggest the event is staged. The whole point of a musical performance is that the very event is staged no matter how greatly the indie scene wants to distance itself from and reject traditional rock values. At the same time in other genres and other performance cultures these same rules do not apply. For example, examining the video of hardcore band Down to Nothing's Sheffield UK show in December 2012, the vocalist repeatedly asks for the crowd to move forward and holding the microphone for members of the audience to come and get involved with shoutbacks.⁴ The band position themselves further back on the stage so members of the audience can stage dive constantly throughout the show.⁵ These actions are analytical but it is not having a negative influence on the show. This isn't an example of them not "being" or not "in the moment", this is adding to the spectacle of the performance, of the show. It is allowing the crowd to participate in different ways to that of audiences of other genres of music. It gives the audience member the opportunity of being in the moment as well as the musician.

Avoidance of mainstream performance postures –

In an attempt to display themselves as "being" and as authentically present, indie performers actively eschew traditional generic rock and roll postures and facial

expressions. The postures of the mainstream are considered empty forms that represent inauthenticity”

(Fonarow, 2006: 195).

Fonarow follows this with some examples of these “rock and roll” postures and expressions such as ‘the pained expression of the guitarist wheedling away at his “axe” and “the head flung back jaw agape, the guitar thrust forward from the groin as a phallic expression’ (Fonarow, 2006: 195). This example is interesting, as the bands that probably influenced and inspired some of the indie musicians the writer is discussing were probably responsible for expressions like these. For these musicians this was a way in which they would have been seen as authentic, this was their authenticity. This would have been seen as a stadium rock musician totally immersed in the music.

Indie utilizes performance conventions that present performers as wholly involved in a singular unfolding event. Idiosyncrasies of live performance are considered a contribution to rather than a distraction from a show. These are indie’s conventions to suggest to audiences that what they are seeing is real.

(Fonarow, 2006: 195)

From this quote you can still see that Fonarow is focussed on discussing what is real and what is fake in terms of musical performance which is similar to the thinking of Auslander. It seems to be a major feature of the discourse that surrounds live musical performance. A counter argument to this is; can you truly distinguish what is real and what is fake? The research offered by Fonarow and Auslander isn’t substantial enough to do this. When

Fonarow talks of these four strands of beingness; it is debateable that she is suggesting that indie is rejecting the clichés of rock forms of the past such as progressive rock, glam rock and blues rock. But this could be seen as a criticism of authenticity. Musicians are concerned more of being authentic within the musical culture in which they represent rather than actually “being”. If they are consciously avoiding the gaze of others or avoiding mainstream performance postures then the performer is analysing what they are doing; this refutes this theory of beingness.

Fonarow also gives a detailed contextualisation of what she calls “the zones of participation”. Fonarow suggests that indie shows have different zones of participation and each zone of participation has different behaviours and characteristics that are associated with it. It is also remarked that the demographic of each zone differs vastly as well. The age group of zone one is primarily the young, ranging between fourteen and twenty one years of age. And those outside of zone one are of an older age.

For the audience at a gig, there are different kinds of participation depending upon location. Activities that are appropriate in one area are entirely inappropriate in another and could result in ejection from an event. Some areas are marked by intense physical interaction, often in ways that are rarely seen in other cultural settings. Other areas are characterized by physical distance and inactivity.

(Fonarow, 2006: 80)

Fonarow does also add that these rules of zone participation only really appear when a gig is well attended and that if the show is well attended they almost always appear. It also

mainly applies to non-seated venues as venues that are seated present issues such as structural boundaries. Fonarow breaks the audience down to three zones:

Zone One - Zone one is described as the area closest to the stage and is made up of the front rows of the audience along with the people in the front sides. Fonarow also describes the activities that members of zone one participate in as follows, “there is often a high degree of movement in most of zone one – dancing, jumping up and down, and head shaking. In addition, zone one presents the opportunity for having intimate bodily contact with strangers” (Fonarow, 2006: 82). Other activities are also discussed such as crowd surfing and stage diving along with the circumstances in which these behaviours are appropriate.

Zone Two - The second zone is very different to that of zone one. Whereas the activity in zone one seems centred around movement, intimacy or being close to the band; zone two is more analytical or “contemplative”. Zone two is situated directly behind zone one and extends towards the back of the venue away from the band and the stage.

Rather than exhibiting the wild and physically exuberant displays of zone one, zone two audience members are physically circumspect and deeply focussed on the performance. The different mode of comportment in zone two also concrete phenomenological consequences; the experience of the gig has to do with contemplative focus rather than physical engagement.

(Fonarow, 2006: 105)

Zone Three - Fonarow puts forward the following description of zone three:

Zone three is primarily composed of three distinct segments of the audience: those who are indifferent to the particular performance or band, those who are temporarily engaged in other tasks, such as going to the restroom, getting a drink, or buying band merchandise, and those who are music industry professionals.

(Fonarow, 2006: 122)

It is also stated that for the “music industry professionals” zone three is habitual whereas the other examples are temporary and can change throughout the performance. Fonarow also suggests that the professionals that inhabit zone three “display relatively little interest in the ongoing performances, important machinations related to the running of the music industry are nevertheless taking place” (Fonarow, 2006: 123). This is quite an interesting point as it changes the functionality of a music performance away from being a social event into a working environment. Obviously there are the people like the bar staff or security guards, who are clearly working; but it is the people associated with the band that are still working completing tasks such as networking with other professionals. The zones of participation theory is a very different approach to that of Auslander and, Hegarty and Halliwell. Fonarow looks to explore the different ways in which the audience react not only with the performance onstage but with the other participants of the performance such as the audience and venue staff. It suggests a higher level of inner cognitive analysis and sub conscious actions than may have first been perceived when attending a gig. In places I feel there is not enough substantial evidence to support the finer aspects of this idea but the overall arguments are very plausible.

Similar to that of Hegarty and Halliwell, I think there are some obvious limitations to this source. It is very much focussed around the indie music industry and makes it much more difficult to generalize to others genres and types of performance. However, some of the theories discussed such as the zones of participation are extremely relatable on a personal level. Again, similar to the book on progressive rock, the writer appears to show a lot of bias towards indie music and the practises that go along with it. At the time of when the majority of data was acquired for this source, indie may have not been seen as the mainstream and a “popular” music. The impression is given that indie music is a sub-culture or an underground music. Since 2005 onward, indie and the garage rock style bands have almost become the mainstream and chart driven, much more than the early 1990s. It is arguable that some of these practises still occur in particular for major label acts. Fonarow addresses the tiring debate of authenticity and offers alternatives in the form of credibility and beingness. This is refreshing as the ideas look to address the differing opinions of authenticity. Similar to the criticism of Auslander, Fonarow fails to address the effects of mediatization. Indie will have seen the beginnings of the digital age so there would have been an adoption of these early digital methods by indie bands rather than traditional major label rock methods.

Notes

¹ For further reading see Auslander (2006).

² This can be seen through the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ze7X5ZQekQU>. Accessed January 2013

³ There is a more lengthy discussion regarding signs of performance in the Live Performance section of this work. However it would be worthwhile of mentioning Barthes. Barthes discusses some of the different aspects

and symbols of wrestling that indicate that a “staged” sport is actually real. See endnote 26 from the Live Performance and Touring chapter.

⁴ Shoutbacks are when a member or members of the audience take the microphone and shout the lyrics back

⁵ Footage of the Down to Nothing show can be seen in: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hndPr7QMT7g>

Accessed March 2013.

Live Performance and Touring

Everybody probably has an idea of a definition of the word tour. Each definition will slightly differ to the different disciplines that the word can be applied to. As an example, a musician's definition of the word tour will be quite different to that of say a cyclist, although they will probably share some of the same fundamental ideals. For this work, the word tour is referred to and is intended from the perspective of a musician or group of musicians going from venue to venue playing a concert, gig or show in a different country, state, town or venue each night of the tour. This would also involve some form of travelling in one way or another but most often with the use of a plane, van or tour bus; or via a combination of these methods. Touring is most commonly seen across the disciplines for its travelling aspect of the definition already given rather than the activities completed whilst on tour. A current popular use of the word tour is the way in which it is being adopted by young holiday makers of "lads on tour".¹ When the term is used for this reason it doesn't usually apply for the same reasons. The "lads on tour" are not there for their own economic reasons but more often than not for the spending of money instead of making money like a musician or band would be. The point of a "lads on tour" type holiday is arguably to consume excessive amounts of alcohol and sleep with lots of different partners. I understand the limitations of this argument and that it is quite a general statement but if you consider "documentary" style TV programmes like Channel 4's *What Happens In Kavos* or *What Happens In Sunny Beach* you will see this mentality and theme being glorified and occurring throughout the programmes.²

Another popular use of the word tour would be its incorporation of the word into the phrase "what goes on tour, stays on tour". Samantha Brett in her blog describes this phrase as an "unspoken male pact that for centuries can never be broken".³ This is

interesting for two reasons, firstly, this description gives the use of the word tour with an almost sacred connotation and meaning in which men will defend; secondly, why would people be interested in what other people did whilst on their tour or in this case glorified holiday? If you look at the titles of the television shows mentioned above, they are also using this phrase in short implying this idea of what goes on tour must stay on tour and as though it is a privilege to get an insight of these “tour” antics. These phrases of “what goes on tour, stays on tour” and “lads on tour” also imply that the people on tour could be partaking in activities they shouldn’t be or that they wouldn’t want their friends, families or colleagues back at home to know about. One of the obvious drawbacks of these shows is that they are breaking this tradition of what goes on tour is secret. They are lifting the lid and spilling the secrets so to speak. To relate this back to popular music would be the way in musicians have also adapted these phrases. UK metalcore band Bring Me the Horizon released a tour video titled *Lads on Tour* documenting their experience on one of their previous tours.⁴ UK all girl pop group The Saturdays, released a six episode documentary for Channel 4 titled *The Saturdays: What Goes on Tour*. The documentary follows the group on their 2011 sell out UK tour, showing the ups and downs of tour life “through the eyes of the girls”.⁵ If you are familiar with both bands you can probably imagine there is a big difference between what happens on a Bring Me the Horizon tour and a tour that The Saturdays are on, but there is one common characteristic that all musicians, including these two, will share if they tour. All touring musicians are going to different geographical locations and performing music. Two vastly different bands from very different genres and styles of music still rely heavily on touring and completing extensive tour schedules regularly.

Touring also has some further different connotations such as “being on the road” or “in the van”. These connotations again revolve around the concept of travelling to different

places and spending large amounts of time doing so. There is a fictional novel by American writer Jack Kerouac titled *On The Road* first published in 1957. The novel is based on the events of Kerouac and his friends' travels in the post-war beat generation. The story follows writer Sal Paradise and Dean Moriarty as they travel by any means, including hitchhiking, across America. They often find themselves in precarious situations or sleeping rough, which only adds to this so called mysticism and the romance of being "on the road". Kerouac goes into great detail describing the scenes and locations that the story and characters travel to. The book itself conjures different thoughts and emotions as the story unravels regarding travelling and "the road" through these descriptions. "Carlo and I went through rickety streets in the Denver night. The air was soft, the stars so fine, the promise of every cobbled alley so great, that I thought I was in a dream" (Kerouac, 1991: 43). Quotes like this suggest a beauty to the road, almost as though you have to see these picturesque locations to believe it. The book was also later made in to a feature film in 2012. There are also blogs dedicated to touring and the stories that go with touring. One such blog is In the Van Again⁶ run by Ulf from the band Anchor, a vegan straightedge hardcore band from Sweden. The description for the blog is as follows:

In the Van Again is a collaborative effort between you and me and what brings us together, the love for music - the love for Hardcore. The urge to show and share it with the world. My name is Ulf, and when I was 14 years old I started my first hardcore band. Since I was 19 my life has revolved around a tour schedule. This blog is meant to be an outlet for me to share my stories from the road, as well as sharing content I might stumble upon that falls under the same category. I'd be more than happy if it would be your outlet too.

Again this description uses phrases like “share my stories from the road” and “the urge to show and share it with the world”, which adds to the aura that surrounds touring and live music. It is as though musicians have an impulse or an urge that they have to try and fight and can’t control in regards to not telling you their stories and that if they do divulge secrets from the road that everyone needs and must know. The punk band Shelter also released a song with the same title off their album *When 20 Summers Pass* released in 2000. The lyrics and concept of the song are based around the concept of touring. Whether it be the fictional work of Kerouac’s *On the Road* or the amateur blogging of Ulf’s *In the Van Again*, to the tour documentary and music video built up from stock tour footage; that being on tour or on the road is cool. It is arguable that musicians have a huge affection with touring.

Is touring as enjoyable as musicians would like you to think? This research so far has built up the perception that musicians and performers romanticise over the road and have an overwhelming affection for it. Luke Morgan Britton describes an alternative perception in his article for *The Guardian* in which he interviews and speaks to various musicians and members of the touring industry.⁷ The basis for the article is that “over 60% of musicians have suffered from depression or other psychological issues, with touring an issue for 71% of respondents.” The concern that musicians are suffering for the sake of touring is potentially damaging for the performance industry; if musicians have health issues because of touring, potential touring musicians may avoid touring altogether. There is this idea that musicians love the road and being out on tour but it is something that can’t be necessarily said for everyone. He then goes on to quote a discussion with Kate Nash regarding her early career, “I think I was probably overworked [...] I was doing huge tours and having two days off and then going out again. It burned me out.” There is this viewpoint of the major labels

that emerging artists need to go out on tour and tour non-stop, arguably to build up a strong fan base and keep promoting the music. There is an interesting point in the article where Britton refers to hotel rooms like “prison cells” for those musicians with anxiety. What is interesting about this is the contrast that can be drawn with the tour report in appendix A, I hoped for a carpet or a rug so I didn’t have to sleep on a tiled or wooden floor. These aspects of touring affected the experience gained. For amateur artists there isn’t the option of prison like hotel rooms, it’s whatever is available.



Figure 1 – A picture depicting the sleeping arrangements on The River Card’s US 2010 tour. Photo by Mascha Arts.

Amateur musicians do not have the luxury of hotel rooms; it is floors, sofas or whatever bed you can make out of the limited materials available. This is not to judge major label artists but to show a comparison. There is also an indication by Britton that in the article that musicians struggle to return to “everyday life” after tour, that they can’t adjust to the mundane or the lack of itinerary of a tour. Again, this indication is also made in appendix A.

A further question to this is whether musicians enjoy touring for playing shows/performing or whether it’s for the travelling that needs to occur for the tour to be a tour? When touring, bands can travel to some of the most exotic destinations; this doesn’t necessarily mean the show or gig will be good when they arrive. The way I value a show as a performer has many different factors such as how many people attended the show, how much the crowd got involved with the show as well as other things. If you consider the points made in appendix A, there is often a reference to the attendance of an audience at shows on numerous occasions. If few people attend the show the crowd interaction at the show will be minimal or reduced, this doesn’t always mean the show isn’t a success but personally for me I prefer these things. A band or artist like The Rolling Stones, Metallica, Kings of Leon or Rihanna won’t struggle for people to attend or for people to interact at a show; so the way in which they judge or perceive the success of a show to be, will be quite different. It is an expectation that a band or artist like the previously mentioned will value the success of a show not by the above factors but more likely for the amount of money made or lost. This is arguably how a label or the act’s management would perceive the success of a show or tour, not necessarily how the performers would necessarily perceive it. Adorno asks a question of whether the cultural industry fulfils its function of diverting minds:

If most of the radio stations and movie theatres were closed down, the consumers would probably not lose so very much. To walk from the street into the movie theatre is no longer to enter a world of dreams; as soon as the very existence of these institutions were no longer obligatory to use them, there would be no great urge to do so.

(Adorno and Horkheimer, 1979: 138)

This is an interesting counter argument to the way in which live performance has been approached previously within this work. Adorno may have a point if considering the context of cinema and theatres. However it may not be true of live performance. There are too many variables to contend with when considering musical performance. There are more benefits from seeing live performance in person rather than through a screen. Consumers can have the option to bypass the movie theatre in favour of the DVD that will eventually be released. This is not necessarily true of live performance. It is arguable that you need to be there as a member of the audience to fully immerse yourself in the experience. A DVD of the tour will not fulfil the need for performance.

A History of Touring

Touring isn't a particularly new idea. Musicians have been travelling and touring for hundreds of years for some reason or another. The current formation and setup of the "touring band" that we would recognize today started to take shape in the 1950s with the birth of rock and roll developing from jazz and the blues. It is also noticeable that around this time certain technological developments were occurring such as electric guitars and amplifiers which would allow musicians to travel to different dance and swing halls as

smaller streamlined acts instead of the earlier larger swing band formations. Some of the first instances of touring occurred in the 18th and 19th century. As far back as then there was a need for musicians to travel.

The more research gained on the subject of touring, the more one particular reason for touring has become apparent, financial. This isn't necessarily a surprise as live performance is quite a significant aspect and part of the "job" for musicians. Musicians are offering a product when they perform, a commodity; something that more often than not an audience member has to purchase a ticket as a condition of entry. A live performance by a performer is a display of skill, talent, knowledge and in some cases years of dedication and practise. When considering musicians before the 1950s and going back as far as the 18th and 19th centuries there was a huge need for musicians to travel. Musicians needed to gain further opportunity. The more "famous" musicians were able to take advantage of patronage from the rich but local musicians had to expand their horizons and search further afield. Cyril Ehrlich discusses the attraction of London and the appeal it had to musicians.

The cities and liberties of London and Westminster, the boroughs of Southwark and parts adjacent, comprised the largest, fastest-growing and most prosperous urban centre in Europe, with twice the population of Paris, thrice that of Vienna. It therefore offered more market opportunities, as distinct from patronage, than anywhere else, and acted as a magnet to musicians throughout Europe.

(Ehrlich, 1985: 3)

This is the rise of the public concert. Ehrlich describes this period as to when the commercialization of music began occurring. Musicians began stepping away from the

previous constructs of patronage and private funding to what we can now consider a public concert. According to Ehrlich “the change is symbolized by Haydn’s removal in 1791 from the Esterhazy to Solomon’s London concerts. It is also doubtful whether a musician made a more abrupt transition from the past to present” (Ehrlich, 1985: 3). This is interesting as at the time Haydn was one of the biggest names of the classical period stepping into uncertainty and away from almost thirty years of patronage with the Esterhazy’s. He was moving away from what was at that time his home, job and guarantee of income. There were no guarantees that his works at the Solomon concerts were going to be a success, this was a risk. According to Ehrlich patronage was in decline after 1770 and he attributes this to a number of reasons. Firstly, perhaps because aristocrats became less willing to devote years of study to an instrument, and because the extension of city nightlife “made concertgoing seem rather a tame way of spending an evening” (Ehrlich, 1985: 4); this idea was giving live performance a function. Musicians were pulling the rich from their courts and houses to the city. The audience were now going to the musician rather than the musician going to the audience. Gracyk categorizes this idea as entrepreneurship as “Concerts became money making ventures, designed to please the bourgeois crowd who could afford the fee” (Gracyk, 1996: 199). Ehrlich discusses the demise of patronage further stating that “the court ceased to be the focal point of musical life” (Ehrlich, 1985: 17). Gone were the conditions of superior pay, security and access to artistic stimulus. Patronage was now “to provide little more than a minor source of direct income, and potentially remunerative social contacts for concert engagements and lessons” (Ehrlich, 1985: 17). Ehrlich gives us an earlier example of this happening when John Bannister opened a room in a public house in White Fryers in December 1672, which attracted what is described as “shock performers in towne, and much company to hear” (Ehrlich, 1985: 5). These

beginnings of music in public in England are variously described as “a landmark in the social history of the art” (Ehrlich, 1985: 5), and a “fundamental realignment from performances where the musicians relied on the generosity of his listeners to these where the audience was only admitted if it paid beforehand” (Ehrlich, 1985: 5). This whole period for music and live performance was the start of musicians taking control of their own work and industry. Musicians could now control what they wanted to do and how they wanted to do it. Haydn when under the patronage of the Esterhazy house was bound by the terms of his contract and agreement with the Esterhazy family. He would have had to compose and perform for the pleasure of others not for his own free will. Obviously Haydn was probably quite content with the terms and conditions that he had with the Esterhazy’s as he spent a large amount of his life and career under their patronage, but Haydn was now, as Ehrlich stated moving from the constricting past to a more commercial present. Some of these characteristics that were apparent in 1672 still hold true to popular music today. Live musical performances still occur in the back room of pubs and clubs with audiences paying before they enter. This is potentially the birth of the “pub” gig.⁸

Some musicians had an alternative reason for touring in the classical and romantic eras. Musicians like Paganini, Mozart and Liszt toured extensively to show their technical skill. This doesn’t discredit the skill of other musicians of the same periods, but these three were particularly known for this reason. Mozart, as a young boy, travelled to many different cities and courts giving performances and recitals with his sister Maria Anna by their father Leopold. This was to showcase their prodigious talents and exposed them to other known musicians and composers at the time which furthered the Mozart family name among the aristocratic circles in the European courts. Similar occurred for Franz Liszt who again as a young boy, Liszt moved to Vienna to further his musical education and stature within the

music industry. However Paganini was slightly different in that he didn't tour till later in his career. According to Ehrlich who cites work by G. I. C De Coursey discussing Paganini's tour through England, Scotland and Ireland that "his belated entry into the lucrative international market has been attributed to the need to prove he was more than a technical wizard" (Ehrlich, 1985 46), Ehrlich also suggests that it also "surely had something to do with the evolution of that market" (Ehrlich, 1985: 46). In terms of this research it is easy to agree with the latter of these reasons more so than the other. A musician with the notoriety and the "celebrity like" status of Paganini would have clearly found the financial gain of his 1831 tour heavily in his favour.

The concept we have of touring in popular music today bears little resemblance to the travels of Haydn, Mozart and alike. However there were setups touring throughout Europe and America, which share some similarities and characteristics with the present day idea of touring. These setups were family bands and "singing mountain-troupes" that were travelling and giving performances across the continents. Stylistically these bands share very little with popular music, but their reasons for and the way in which they toured does. There is limited writing on this subject but Hans Nathan wrote quite extensively on the topic in an article for *The Musical Quarterly* in 1946. The basis of the article documents mainly the work of the Rainer Family. The Rainers were a Tyrolean family band that was arguably the first of their kind and most significant of these mountain bands. They toured extensively throughout Europe (their homeland of Germany most prominently), England and the USA. A lot of these families performed songs in an "alpine" theme and style folksongs whilst in their national costume. Nathan discusses the nature of the tours completed by these bands:

These troupes sang wherever they could seat an audience: in concert halls, in so-called “museums” where curiosities were exhibited, in churches and even in barns. They travelled all over America, sometimes in their own shaky carriages. Often they were on the road for many weeks, singing at a different place every night.

(Nathan, 1946: 64)

He also cites a quote when discussing when the Rainers first left their home in 1824 “We journeyed on foot, and had each with us a bundle with our clothes” (Nathan, 1946: 68). Both of these quotes are quite provocative and almost romantic in a way. The idea of these musicians travelling in “shaky carriages” or by foot with just a bundle of clothes really propels this notion of being “on the road” and paints an almost poetic picture of the Rainer’s on tour. These images can be related to the ways in which we perceive a popular music tour. This idea of being in a shaky carriage is almost comparable to the struggling rock band in their twenty year old Ford Transit van struggling to get from gig to gig. The Rainers toured England which Nathan describes as “the paradise of money hunting foreigners” (Nathan, 1946: 71), extensively in 1827 and then over a decade later in 1838. The Rainers gained a lot of notoriety and success on their first tour giving a great number of performances. When they returned eleven years later they toured with the Destin family. The families gave performances in London from the February to the April of 1838. Nathan states that “By this time both families were public favourites, but the Rainers did not repeat their former triumphs, a new audience had to be sought elsewhere” (Nathan, 1946: 71). This again is this recurring theme of reaching new audiences and expanding ones reach. Bands need to continue to tour to gain new fans. Bands will often visit the same place and play the same venue, but it is arguably essential that they either reach new audiences or

play new cities or venues. This idea seems to be just as important now as it was back in 1838. Shortly after this tour of England the Rainers travelled to New York and began a four year stay in America travelling and performing significantly across the country. This is a clear example of a group of musicians broadening their reach. The Rainers received similar notoriety across the Atlantic and made considerable financial gain.

It would also be important to consider some of the limitations of touring that musicians had to endure back in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The musicians of those eras did not have the facilities or opportunities that are available to some of the present day musicians. There were no planes, cars or busses during those times and the quality of the rail networks were limited till later in the nineteenth century. Boats were also an alternative form of transport that will have been available and most likely used. There also wasn't the number and volume of luxury accommodation and hotels at the disposal of musicians. Musicians will have had to have taken these conditions into consideration before starting out on their travels. Ehrlich discussed the touring habits of Eliza Salmon. "Eliza Salmon (1787-1849) was capable of travelling 40 miles in a week, before railways facilitated such journeys, singing every night. In 1820 Spohr paid her £20 for a single aria placed near the concert's end because she had another engagement six miles away, on the same evening" (Ehrlich, 1985: 45). This is quite a stark contrast if you compare this experience with the possibilities available to popular musicians today. They can sometimes give multiple performances and appearances across cities and countries in the same day which could be attributed to the developments and improvements in transport. Notably so was The Flaming Lips in June 2012. The band played eight gigs in 8 different cities from Memphis to New Orleans entering the record books in the process breaking Jay Z's record of seven concerts in 24 hours in November 2007.⁹ The Flaming Lips completed their 24 hour tour

with the help of a tour bus and alternatively Jay Z completed his with the use of a private jet.¹⁰ Jay Z travelled from coast to coast playing thirty minute sets in each city. The potential and options for musicians today is so vast that almost anything is possible. Musicians would obviously not be able to complete schedules like these every day and not everybody would have the money or a private jet at their disposal to do so, that said, as these technologies develop travel becomes cheaper in turn making records like this more achievable for more musicians. Eliza Salmon was obviously making the best of what she had and receiving £20 for a single aria was extremely profitable for her particularly when she could combine one off performances with other engagements in the same day. Forty miles will have been considered a long distance and a necessity for her livelihood at that time and it will have been essential for her to further her name in a competitive market; Jay Z will not have needed to do this for the same reasons. It isn't too much of a surprise that musicians like Haydn became very comfortable under the patronage of others.

The Reasons for Touring and Performance

Earlier there was a discussion framed regarding a certain feel of romanticism towards live performance and nostalgia from musicians retired and current. For musicians, performing live or being on the road is a day job for those who have the opportunity to go full time with their music or for others it's just a pastime or hobby. The experiences and memories gained from both sides are just as important no matter the size of the band, artist or musician. My own personal experiences are something I cherish and love. There are a number of ways to question why touring is still important. Firstly there is a need to examine it from the aspect of the musician. Without musicians, performances or tours quite simply wouldn't occur. It was earlier questioned whether it was the performing aspect or the travelling aspect that

touring musicians preferred. This is an answer that is completely subjective and there isn't a definitive yes or no answer to the question. It would be assuming to presume that a large amount of musicians enjoy the exhibitionism that goes hand in hand with performing live, the need to be seen, to be heard, to be there; as well as the travelling side. Auslander suggests one reason that benefits not only musicians but fans alike and that it is a concept of "cultural" or "symbolic capital". This idea has no monetary value, other than the entrance fee to a performance, but has a priceless effect for all who value it and are involved.

"Cultural capital" is the idea of worth given to bearing witness to a performance or an event. It can also be used when talking about a first press of a record or an original t shirt of your favourite band from the 1980's. Auslander puts forward that symbolic capital suggests a depth of knowledge or commitment to a band, which in terms of rock and popular music is particularly true. This isn't just a theory that is particular to music; it's an idea that can be transferred to almost any major event such as being in New York when John Lennon was shot or being in Wembley Stadium when England won the World Cup in 1966. It's worth is only determinable by people who are interested as not everybody holds the same value in regards to symbolic capital. This idea suggests advantages and higher status within a music scene/industry that bands or artists are associated with. Sam Shepard collates his cultural capital in the form of his book *The Rolling Thunder Logbook*. The book follows Bob Dylan and his entourage including Joan Baez, Joni Mitchell and beat poet Allen Ginsberg, during The Rolling Thunder tour in the early 1970s. Shepard kept a personal account of happenings and situations that occur during his time on the tour which makes for an interesting read:

Dylan comes back for a second set with a diamond earring dripping down his neck.

"Simple Twist of Fate" with his hard cowboy heel driving into the stage below. As I'm

watching this heel of his and seeing the precision of it and hearing the way it resonates clear down through the floor, up through his body, through the song, into the microphone, and out into the hall, it suddenly flashes on me that this thing is beyond pop music. This thing is ancient ritual.

(Shepard, 2005: 73)

Shepard gives a further example later in the source when discussing the Madison Square Garden performance at the end of the tour:

The whole joint is like one huge humming organism. I thought I left this whole thing behind up in the North of Maine, but here I am. No way to talk out on this one. No way for anyone to deny the power of this event.

(Shepard, 2005: 170)

Examples like these wouldn't be possible without the notion of authenticity which is a fundamental theory for this concern and in particular rock. It was earlier discussed the definition of authenticity in terms of others and the way in which the term will be used in regards to this work. But to reiterate, authenticity concerns the real versus fake, true versus false. When thinking about the above examples, it is Dylan's level of authenticity that validates the symbolic capital for the different people present. Shepard describes it as "ancient ritual" and "power" of the event, which is a further example suggesting that there is something more than just talent happening here; it is something that goes back further than Dylan's life. Ritual again suggests something extra-musical, something divine. It is the audience who are gaining the symbolic capital which is clear through Shepard's description

of the events and situations. *The Rolling Thunder Logbook* in turn then furthers Shepard's authenticity due to the nature of the account he gives. He benefits through his affiliation with the tour and Dylan even though he is not a musician; his work is gaining rock authenticity although he is not a musician.

The above are descriptions of symbolic capital from the perspective of audience members but other members of the music industry will have different associations and symbolic capital to gain. The symbolic capital gained by musicians will be very different to other members of the industry. Musicians can gain symbolic capital through the places they have been to, the tours they have worked on and the people they have met. These experiences probably don't mean much to anybody else but to the band they are irreplaceable.¹¹ It is difficult to speak for others but artists from the different levels of the music industry will be proud of their achievements and the symbolic capital gained through their experiences of touring too. On the *Rolling Thunder* tour Dylan "sold out" the Madison Square Garden in New York City, which is an incredible achievement. Not every musician gets the opportunity to play at a venue the size of the Madison Square Garden, let alone sell it out. Having the ability and the fan base to attain such an achievement is a real credit to Dylan's career and music. Not every musician will get the opportunity to play Madison Square Garden but each musician's version of selling out Madison Square Garden will differ to the level in which they are within the industry. I got my own version when I got to play 924 Gilman Street in Berkley California with my own band.

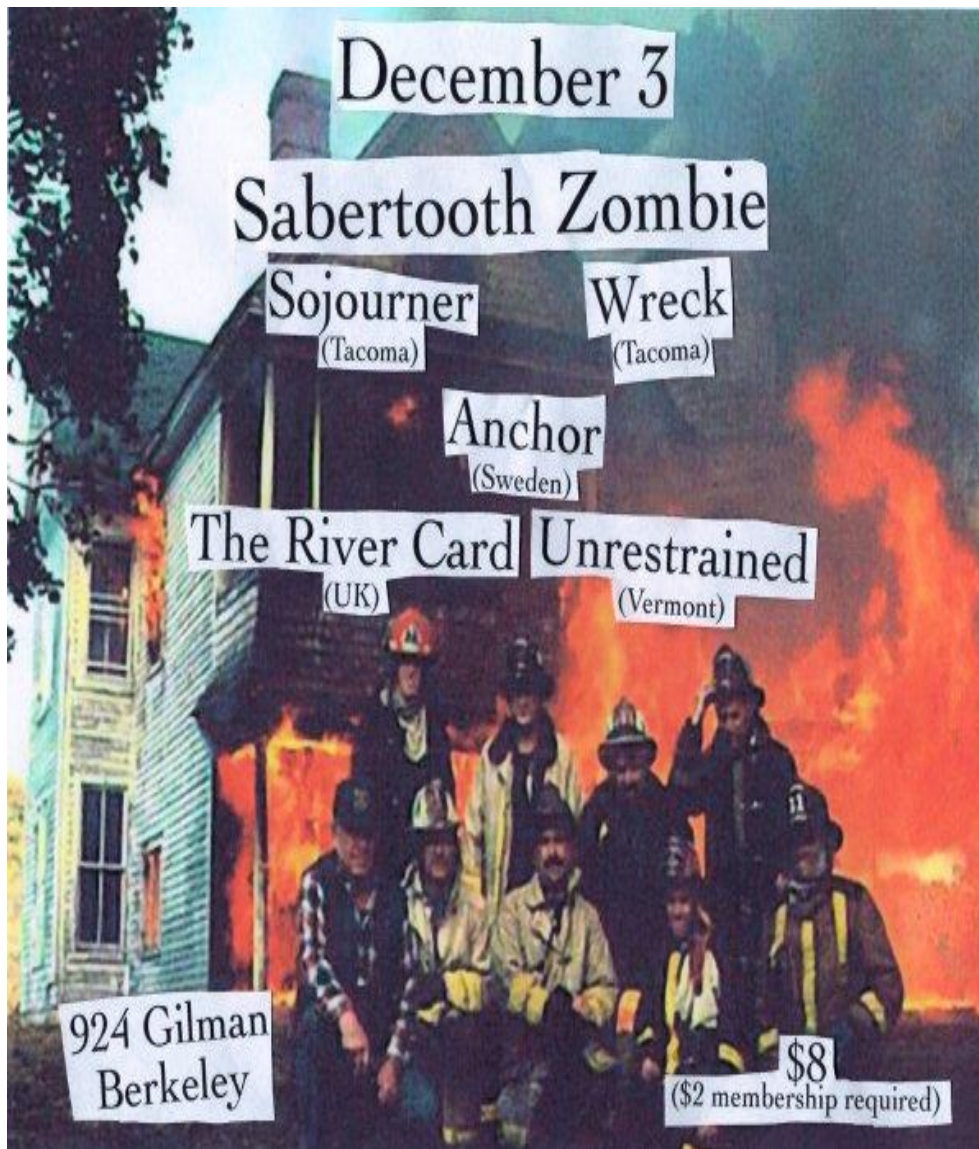


Figure 2 - The flyer for 924 Gilman Street show. – Unknown credit.

The show wasn't particularly great, none more standout from the other shows on the tour.

924 Gilman Street has a huge sentimental value to me as a lot of my favourite bands like Poison The Well, Champion, Pennywise, NOFX and Green Day have previously played the venue over the years. I grew up watching videos of bands playing at Gilman Street and looking at posters and flyers of shows for Gilman Street wishing I could attend. 924 Gilman is "An All Ages DIY, Volunteer Run, 501(c)3 Nonprofit, Music & Art Community Space Since 1986".¹² It is a venue that is heaped in history and authenticity but only for members of the

worldwide rock, punk and hardcore community. A YouTube video went viral in 2014 titled *My First Punk Show – Iron Chic –Don’t Drive Angry* which follows the story of a father taking his six year old son to his first show to see Iron Chic at 924 Gilman Street.¹³ The video starts with the father picking his son up from school and driving long distances to the show. They arrive and pay in and watch the show. At the end of the video, the son is filmed talking and hanging out with the singer of Iron Chic at the end of the show. The video furthers the six year olds authenticity which is then validated by the video evidence increasing his authenticity further. The fact that the child is even at a show at that age, let alone the fact that it’s at 924 Gilman Street, sends his authenticity through the roof. The amount of symbolic capital available to the child is huge and he will have a video to remember the experience by. This experience is all facilitated by live performance. Without the performance from the band, the video is pointless, there would be no symbolic capital, there would be no authenticity gained or shared. There is no real way to exchange live performance in terms of this aspect.

For music fans it is important to gain symbolic capital. It has already been suggested that symbolic capital creates a hierarchy within musical scenes, and that symbolic capital gained by fans and musicians differs. With that in mind it would be worthwhile to think about some of the other ways in which symbolic capital can be gained. It has been discussed how it can be gained through live performance but there are other opportunities. It isn’t too difficult to spot the opportunities as they are often marketed in a particular way. It usually refers to an item or an event and the descriptions often include words or phrases such as “limited edition”, “anniversary special”, “original line-up” and so on. Many bands have different lines of this style of merchandise. If you look at the online store of Metallica and

search for 'limited', a short list of items are then presented for purchase. The *Six Feet Down Under EP – CD*¹⁴ was selected. The opening description for the item is as follows "Eight song limited edition EP only available in Australia/New Zealand and the Met Store". The EP is a collection of "live" performances "Compiled from fan submissions of bootlegs, sound board tapes from the vault, and live multi-track recordings". The fact that it's a limited edition item and is also limited to where and how it can be purchased increases its authenticity, resulting in an increase in the items symbolic capital. There is also a similar occurrence on Coldplay's online store, the same search can be performed and for the sake of this research, *X & Y Lithograph*¹⁵ was selected. Again the description is similar to that of the Metallica product; "This lithograph is a limited edition collectible. It shows the cover from the successful X&Y Album. Each lithograph measures 690mm x 970mm and has been silk screened. Every lithograph is hand numbered 1-500 and comes with a certificate of authenticity". When an item is marketed and advertised in this manner, it suggests that the product is a must have and to not stall in purchasing and that the band themselves are endorsing it. Live performance and touring does not necessarily directly benefit from items such as this, however there are sometimes "tour editions" or items only exclusive to a certain tour and the Metallica example discussed above is clearly linked to live performance as it's a compilation of live tracks.

There is a similar occurrence with the marketing of live performances of a similar nature. There are opportunities for fans to be at events which will boost their symbolic capital more than just a normal performance. There is an example below which is a screenshot of a post from the band The Script's Facebook. The post details an opportunity to attend an exclusive concert with the help of Vodafone and Sony Xperia GB. The mechanic

of the promotion centred on the purchasing of a mobile phone, once completed the fan could claim their tickets for the “exclusive” performance.

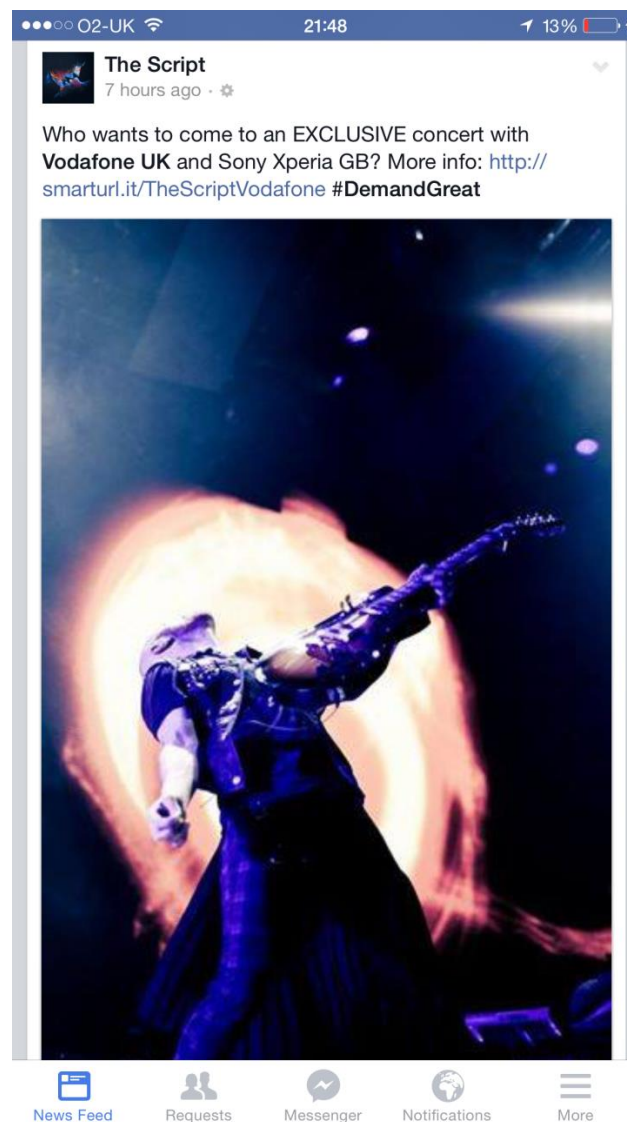


Figure 3 - Screenshot of The Script's Facebook post.

The marketing of the promotion and the use of the word “exclusive” suggests that the event will have an element of intimacy; the fan will be closer to the band, it is exclusive. Whether that's the case or not the diehard fans of the band may even buy a mobile phone just to get tickets to a gig or at least influence their decision making when purchasing a new mobile phone. The cultural capital of the performance is potentially worth more than the price of the mobile phone for the fans.

The issue that arises when looking at symbolic capital is how symbolic capital gained through the sale of records compares with the symbolic capital gained through attendance of a live performance? This research is looking for a possible alternative to live performance so it is important to establish whether one of the iterations of symbolic capital is more important than the other. Records are more often personal experiences with music whereas live performance is communal with the people who attend the performance. In their dialogic book *Music Grooves*, Charles Keil and Steven Feld discuss how they listened to records.

CK: When you're sitting down and listening to the records, it seems to me real important to understand how people listen together, how guys bond around music. Around the time we were getting out of high school there was that Miles Davis *Walkin'* album, and we would sit there listening to particular phrases by J.J. Johnson, putting the needle back to hear how he phrased each part, or we'd listen to little moments, a little four bar break by Wild Bill Davidson, maybe fifty times together and just shake our heads and marvel over the control, the power, the perfection of it.

(Keil in Keil and Feld, 2005: 6)

This is a listening to of records which has communal elements to it. Steven Feld however discusses how listening to music "was a real private experience" for him:

SF: I remember when I discovered headphones – the ultimate way to tune out my parents and the world was with headphones, what an incredible invention! They got me through high school! [...]

CK: Headphones were never a thing for me, never. It always feels funny to me to put on headphones when I'm working at the radio station and have to wear them. They feel like an imposition. I never have gotten into listening to music on headphones.

Fifty years on the planet and I feel they remove me from the world . . .

(Keil and Feld, 2005: 7)

Feld then goes on to conclude this discussion with the following statement:

SF: Music was both the ultimate private thing and the ultimate public thing for me.

Private because the headphones took the rest of the house, family and suburbs and erased them. Public because it was the most social of all things I could do with my friends . . .

(Feld in Keil and Feld, 2005: 7)

Feld's opinion here sits on the fence a little; however they both make incredibly valid points. If you consider how Keil and Feld originally listened to records in the form of LP's and vinyl's versus the current possibilities of devices with thousands and thousands of songs available, they were probably very limited in opportunity. Before the invention of headphones there wouldn't have been the possibility of personal listening as the options will have been to listen to music through the wireless, record player or live at a performance. Frith offers an alternative way to look at this point by stating "the musical experience has been

individualised. Music is no longer a necessarily social or collective affair” (Frith, 1996: 237).

This concept is slightly limiting as it isn’t easy to generalise it to all styles of music but there is a point to be made when questioning it in terms of popular and rock music. Performance however has always been communal with an element of being impersonal. It’s arguable that the communal aspect of a gig is a key purpose of performance as an event; fans of the performing artist congregating together and appreciating their idol/s and to share space with other people who also appreciate what’s on stage.

With all this in mind there is a central concern for the performance industry which is to try and make an impersonal experience more personal. There is a need to make performance intimate and for major label acts to remove the big event experience. Major acts will mainly play stadium shows and major festivals, in this way they are a victim of their success. Fans will pay substantial amounts of money to go see their favourite acts, purchase the merchandise; fans expect more than just a performance. There’s an expectation that there will be an experience and an atmosphere. This isn’t just a concern for fans. Musicians and their entourage are responsible for creating this atmosphere and experience. But that isn’t to say the performers can’t benefit from the experience and atmosphere themselves. Killswitch Engage played a small festival in July 2014 at The Electric Factory in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Vocalist Jesse Leach and guitarist Adam Dutkiewicz discuss their experience at the festival:

Leach: I dunno man; seriously I’m at a loss for words. I haven’t seen a show, obviously cos of the shows we play, I haven’t seen a show like this in a long time that I’ve been onstage usually I’m in the crowd. You guys, we’re gonna remember this show for the rest of our lives. You guys as a community embraced us knowing we

travel the world playing metal and we love you for that. This is for hardcore from the 80's to the 90's till now. Cheers man.

Dutkiewics then adds to this with:

Dutkiewics: Yeah, it's uh, I gotta say, we're used to playing some like radio festivals and bullshit where there's this like huge barrier between the band and what the fucking kids in the crowd wanna do. I grew up fucking listening to hardcore, I went to clubs, I fucking know how it is. You wanna go out and party with the band, you wanna fucking have a good time right? [Crowd cheers]. You wanna dance, you fucking wanna sing along. With these barriers its bullshit, I love this so much. Thank y'all so much for hanging out with us tonight; it's so much goddamn fun.¹⁶

There are some interesting things to note here. This wasn't just a view of one member of the band as two members shared their opinion, backing each other up. There is an animosity towards and rejection of the structures and processes (barrier at front of stage) of the places in which they usually perform; it would also be worthwhile to note Dutkiewics' appreciation in not having a barrier at that show. The band hasn't had to create this atmosphere themselves as no barrier is a characteristic of the festival but it benefits them either way as the experience will have been as memorable for the band as it was the audience. There is also a need to push the idea that they are similar to the crowd, an idea of we now know because we were once where you are. This final idea also in a way pushes the bands authenticity, their comments shows a depth in their worth as they are veterans of the scene/community to which they are performing. It also suggests that the audience can

achieve what Killswitch Engage have achieved as they were once in “the crowd” too. For young fans and aspiring musicians this is incredibly important. It could give them the belief and inspiration to go on and fulfil their own dreams and “make it” in the music industry. This is something that is not transferrable from a recording as this is dialogue. They could talk about it in interviews but an aspiring musician may get less inspiration from watching a video of or reading an interview in a magazine or something similar. It is the authenticity of the comments of the bands like Killswitch Engage and their performance that give them the ability to inspire. This isn’t to say that records can’t inspire but live performance is different. Live performance has the element of chance or possibility and that could be heightened by a fan seeing their idols in the moment performing on stage.

Further Reasons and Alternatives

As stated earlier there is a result that increasingly appears when investigating this concept of why musicians and bands tour and that again is financial. It’s hard to avoid that there is a huge amount of money to be made by record labels and their artists through touring. Some further questions stem from this idea; How much? Is the amount of money made more than the outlay costs? How much does an artist make after label and production costs? It’s hard to answer all three of those questions but Ray Waddell goes some way to offer some answers. In his article for *Billboard* magazine he contributes an article titled ‘*In A Year When Album Sales Fell And The Economy Sank, The Real Money Was Made On The Road*’.¹⁷ The title itself is thought provoking. There is a clear suggestion that touring has become more important financially than records which is an industry power shift. “If anyone had any doubt that touring is where the money is in the music business, a quick look at the top Moneymakers for 2008 should hammer the point home”. He then goes on to say:

Regardless of genre, retail sales or radio play, each of the 20 acts on Billboard's Moneymakers list toured in 2008. (Taylor Swift mostly opened for Brad Paisley but doesn't get credit for that revenue). For almost all of them, touring generated the most revenue. And in a year when recorded-music sales declined yet again, many earned more at the box office than ever before.

(Waddell, 2009)

With a rise in digital piracy it isn't much of a surprise to read that recorded music sales had declined¹⁸ but it is reported a considerable amount of these "Top 20 Music Money Makers" had made most of their money through touring. If you look at the complete list of 20 compiled by *Billboard*, the amounts made by the artists is staggering. Waddell uses the example of Madonna (who tops *Billboard's* list of "Top 20 Music Money Makers in 2008) and her *Sticky & Sweet Tour* in 2008 which reportedly took \$229,886,340 at the box office. Waddell also suggests that up to 40% of this figure may have been spent in production costs due to the tours "extravagant production" according to industry estimates. This doesn't include merchandise sales but Waddell estimates that Madonna "raked in more than \$18 million in sales, not counting her licensing business". If all these figures are believed to be true, then it would be hard to deny why an artist like Madonna will tour. However, it is advisable when using these figures as they are all referred to as "estimates" and "reported". If the reports are true or even remotely true then It's not really a question about breaking even it's more about how much money do the artists want to make. With figures like this it's almost like printing money as each performance, each tour is payday, and a good one at that.

Waddell raises a further point within the same article which is also interesting “Of course, nothing helps reduce tour production costs like more touring. So Madonna will perform another run of concerts this summer -- 25 shows in the United Kingdom and Europe -- which will add to the take of the top-grossing tour by a female or solo artist”. There is a suggestion that Madonna would need to tour more to reduce her tour production costs. It is questionable whether an artist would need to tour more to reduce their production costs. Surely touring would incur further production costs for hired equipment as it’s uncertain that Madonna or the people that represent her will not own much, if any of the equipment used to make the tour possible. It is more likely that Madonna extended the *Sticky & Sweet* tour to make more profit which makes these production costs seem less significant. If the reported figure is correct then why would you not as a successful artist? It is also worth mentioning that the first leg of the *Sticky & Sweet* tour ended in December 2008 and the second leg started in July 2009. There were seven months in between the two legs so it’s not as simple as adding some extra dates at the end of the tour. She went back out on a separate stint again reinforcing this thought of making more profit instead of reducing production costs.

Macklemore and Ryan Lewis made some of their contract offers quite public on their 2012 track *Jimmy Iovine* of the album from the same year *The Heist*. The lyrics of the song detail the terms and conditions of a record deal that Jimmy Iovine, chairman and co-founder of Interscope Records, offers the duo. Macklemore has openly admitted that he has never met Jimmy Iovine in person and the song is a fictional story based on some of his and Ryan Lewis’ interactions and experiences with major labels. When talking with *Interview* magazine, Macklemore says that he chose Jimmy Iovine because “he’s the most visible major label president in the game”.¹⁹ It’s probably safe to say that Macklemore and Ryan

Lewis weren't happy with the offers being presented to them by the labels due to the nature of the song. The song follows the story of Macklemore's lead up to his "fictional" meeting with the label and the emotions he is going through beforehand. Towards the end of the track the lyrics begin to detail the "offer" presented. The lyrics of the song at that point are as follows:

Finally see an office with a mounted sign, heaven sent.

Big block silver letters, read it out loud: President.

This was my chance to grab that contract and turn and jet

Right then felt a cold hand grab on the back of my neck

He said: we've been watching you, so glad you could make it.

Your music, it's so impressive in this whole brand you created

You're one hell of a band, we here think you're destined for greatness

And with that right song we all know that you're next to be famous

Now I'm sorry. I've had a long day remind me now what your name is?

That's right, Macklemore, of course, today has been crazy.

Anyway, you ready? We'll give you a hundred thousand dollars.

After your album comes out we'll need back that money that you borrowed (mm-hmm)

– So it's really like a loan.

– A loan? Come on, no!

We're a team, 360 degrees; we will reach your goals!

You'll get a third of the merch that you sell out on the road
Along with a third of the money you make when you're out doing your shows
Manager gets 20; booking agent gets 10.
So shit! After taxes you and Ryan have 7% to split!
That's not bad, I've seen a lot worse,
No one will give you a better offer than us (mm-hmm).

I replied I appreciate the offer, thought that this is what I wanted.

Rather be a starving artist than succeed at getting fucked.²⁰

Keeping it in mind that the story is fictional but it is based around their experiences with labels in general. The final amount that the artists are supposedly left with is "7% to split". It seems ludicrous that an artist would take home that little money on their way to "becoming a star". There is obviously a lot of potential for an artist to make a huge amount of money with that deal, however that would require a huge amount of sales to do so; but the reality is that a manager and the booking agent can get more than the artist. But if you contrast that with the money they could potentially make from selling merch on the road and when they're out doing shows, it's not surprising why an artist would choose to perform and tour. Again, this offer in the song is fictitious but is based on prior experiences and previous offers. It's also worth noting that Macklemore and Ryan Lewis chose to record, produce and release *The Heist* independently through Macklemore LLC giving themselves more control and power over their music. They could now control what deal they had and how much money they wanted to make (obviously depending on sales). I can relate this back to my

own band and the decisions we made to release our music independently without a label; as a band The River Card have never been pressured into doing a tour or record by anybody outside of the band. This example of Macklemore and Ryan Lewis is a step back to a DIY ethic similar to that of smaller grass roots artists but replicating it on a bigger scale. A further question that leads on from this is why don't more artists take a similar approach to Macklemore and Ryan Lewis? The answer to this in short would be risk.²¹ There is a chance that Macklemore and Ryan Lewis might not have been successful and that the record could have flopped. If you had a record label offering you \$100,000 dollars to "reach your goals"; it would clearly be difficult to turn down. I would also suggest that some artists would struggle to have the startup funds to create such projects as this and fulfil their dreams. Creating records and completing tours is not cheap so the offer of a label would offer a viable and realistic option.

Another alternative to touring that has been chosen by a number of artists in recent years and is comparable to the patronage experienced by musicians like Haydn and Liszt in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Artists like Celine Dion and Britney Spears, have been taking up a residency (for these two artists mainly in Las Vegas) and performing a show numerous times at the same venue throughout the year. Britney Spears' act is titled *Britney: Piece of Me* and is an attraction available through the Planet Hollywood Resort. The show is described in the following way through the Planet Hollywood Resort Website:

With 15-plus years of chart-topping hits under her belt, pop star Britney Spears is back and better than ever in her Planet Hollywood Las Vegas show, *Britney: Piece of Me*.

Britney performs all her infectious dance songs, as well as tracks from her latest album. But don't expect a recreation of her music videos. Her intense performances are way more electrifying - some even dreamlike and daring. Whether Britney's flying across stage, singing in a ring of fire or dancing in front of multiple mirrors, this shining diva knows just how to work it.

Located inside The Axis at Planet Hollywood, the 4,500-seat theater provides a pulsating Las Vegas concert experience. And with state-of-the-art light and sound effects, the venue feels like a nightclub. The Axis houses the world's largest indoor projection screen, resulting in an explosive theatrical experience. Get ready to relive your favorite Britney moments and dance the night away.

Britney: Piece of Me proves to be a sexy, action-packed Vegas show from start to finish.²²

The description given tries to steep Spears and her performances in authenticity with comments such as “don't expect a recreation of her music videos. Her intense performances are way more electrifying - some even dreamlike and daring”. It's discrediting what Auslander considers the mediatized and fake (recreating music videos) and promoting the real (intense performances). There is also an element of intimacy being pushed with the description of it feeling like a nightclub. Along with this they want to promote the show as having all the production of a normal concert show, which would suggest better value for money and cultural capital. What's important here with this idea of residency is there has almost been a step backwards with its similarity to musical patronage, the money for musicians like Haydn and Liszt versus the pay packets that Britney Spears and Celine Dion will have received is vastly different but all musicians and performers mentioned in this

discussion will have benefitted from the security and guarantee of always having a booking. Ticket sales won't have affected the staging of a show. These residencies remove the travelling aspect of touring yet the artist is still performing a similar schedule to that of a touring artist. There will still be merch on sale and there is still a crowd at each performance so there are further similarities with touring but it's the lack of movement that makes this choice really interesting and arguably more prosperous for the artist. With no movement, would surely mean cheaper production costs. The artist can still provide the same show nightly with the same production without having to reproduce it in a new venue. Transport costs are kept down which for a touring entourage that someone like Britney Spears would have is huge. An earlier discourse of how artists have often travelled to gain further fans or success, to broaden their appeal and name has been given. In this case you have an artist performing regularly in Las Vegas, an incredibly popular holiday destination in the USA. What is happening in this situation is you now have an audience coming to an artist rather than an artist going to an audience. Not every person who attends one of these shows is going to just see this show but having a residency like this means it allows for opportunity, an opportunity for an audience member to attain some cultural capital whilst on holiday. By doing this the artist, promoter and venue are cornering and taking advantage of a different market, the tourist. DJ's in locations such as Ibiza and Ayia Napa "perform" in similar circumstances as they can often take up residencies in nightclubs and bars in these resorts with the audience going to the artist. But in this case, for the audience in a nightclub, it might not necessarily matter who the DJ is as the audience may more than likely go to the club either way. The nightlife and social scenes of Ibiza and Ayia Napa is the draw here and not necessarily the music being played. An audience might be more inclined to attend a certain club if a more famous DJ was playing that night but again this might not be the

deciding factor. Cost of entry or drinks offers might affect an audience's decision to go to a certain club.

As previously discussed, this work is researching alternatives to touring and performance. The next concept involves the removing of performance in public altogether. It is important to question whether public performance is still necessary for musicians and the industry. Theatre is one form of performance that has gone through hardship to continue and progress as an art form with the outlet of cinema and television.²³ There is a discursive construct regarding the digitisation of art later but the alternative that is being suggested is a digital format. In August 2014, Nicki Minaj released the video for her single *Anaconda* through the online music video channel and platform Vevo. The video received an incredible amount of plays through this service which allows users to watch videos for free. Minaj took to social media to promote the video and talk of its success through social media, including Instagram.

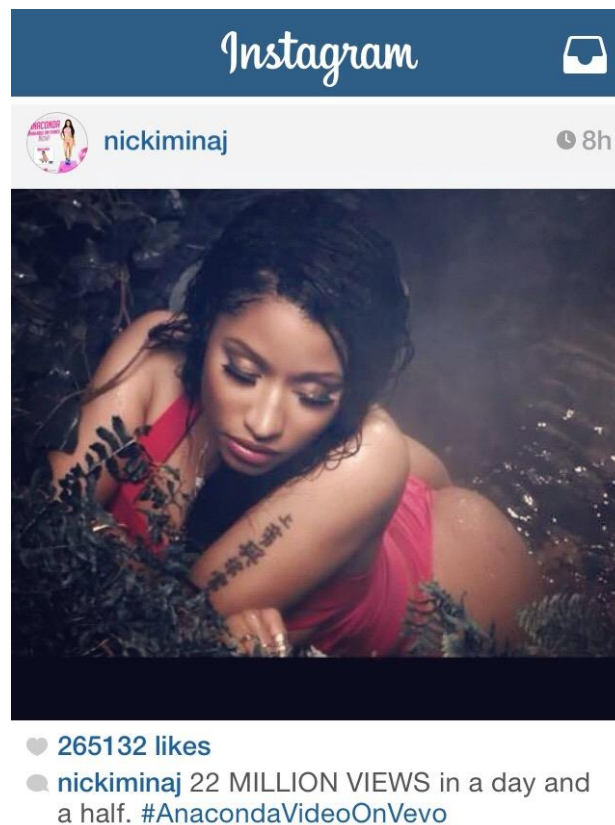


Figure 4 – Screenshot of Nicki Minaj Instagram post.

As you can see Minaj boasts that the video had been viewed 22 million times in a day and a half. That figure is astounding and far outweighs any reach a public performance could manage in the same time frame. If Nicki Minaj charged say just \$1 per view of the video or for a download of the file then 22 million dollars could have been made minus costs. It's very probable that a price tag on the viewing or downloading of the video would have affected the 22 million figure that she is boasting on Instagram; but Minaj will have almost certainly made a lot of money from the music video if she had charged for it in some manner. It is worthy of mention that Minaj will have received payment in the form of royalties but the money she could have made in comparison to specifically charging people to view the video would have been substantially more. The concern here is, why has this format not taken over public performance and touring for the major label music industry? Minaj reached 22 million views through one online format; this does not take into

consideration other platforms like Apple's iTunes (where the video will have been available for purchase). It wouldn't be possible for Minaj to give an authentic "live" performance to that many people in the same time frame. She could have recorded a video of a live performance of the song but that also would have come with complications. Auslander discusses the ways in which Madonna's tours were based on recreating her "mediatized" music videos closely in a live setting as it is the "assumption that the audience comes to the live show expecting to see what it has already seen on television" (Auslander, 1999: 31).

Auslander reduces this point down to the idea that "within our mediatized culture, whatever distinction we may have supposed there to be between live and mediatized events is collapsing because live events are becoming more and more identical with mediatized ones" (Auslander, 1999: 32). There is a feeling here that Auslander is implying that the audience is almost being fooled into thinking that what they see is real when it is indeed a "mediatized" and fake performance. He also correlates this idea with the practice of staging live reenactments of televisual events. The overall point is that the mediatized is becoming the stimulus of the live. This may be true in these instances; however, there has been a rather solemn reminder of the presence of "liveness" in a mediatized influenced performance. During the staging of *Peter Kay's Phoenix Nights* at Manchester Arena on January 31st 2015, actor Ted Robbins collapsed mid performance with the show being cut short instantly.²⁴ This is a clear reminder that live is live. This isn't something that was faked, it wasn't staged or scripted. Life and "liveness" is unpredictable with endless possibilities. It is also possible for the fake or scripted to still appear real. Roland Barthes discusses some of the symbols needed to make a performance, in this case wrestling, real. Barthes presents an idea that the audience requires signs or gestures which signifies that what they are seeing is real. In turn he suggests that by just the mere presence of a particular character such as

Thauvin, who plays the role of “the bastard”, will signify the way in which and how the crowd will react due to the very image of his body and persona. He goes further to compare wrestling to the art of pantomime, “Wrestling is an immediate pantomime, infinitely more efficient than the dramatic pantomime, for the wrestler’s gesture needs no anecdote, no decor, in short no transference in order to appear true”.²⁵ There are differences between pantomime and wrestling as pantomime is clearly a fictional story or act similarly to that of wrestling. However, for wrestling, its success lies within its ability to appear real and true. Wrestling requires the crowd to believe that what it is seeing is true to make it a sport and not a pantomime. Wrestling will always have a “liveness” surrounding it, similarly to that of the staging of Peter Kay’s *Phoenix Nights*. No matter the outcome of a match which will already be decided before the participants enter the ring, the participants can succumb to the possibility of opportunity or injury. The point here is that authenticity has its limitations when discussing an event as a spectacle in the presence of an audience. It is the unpredictability of live performance that an audience is interested in. Gracyk adds to the argument on this debate:

Live performance has atrophied, leaving no room for spontaneous musical expression or artist-audience interaction. Once it was a performing art, with the focus on the performance. Now it’s a mere show – fully rehearsed and no room for artistic spontaneity – and a backdrop for partying.

(Gracyk, 1996: 177)

This is a presumption that nothing can be spontaneous, that it is no longer live. But the example of Ted Robbins is a counter argument to this. This is not to say that the audience at

Manchester Arena that night wanted to see Ted Robbins fall ill or that an audience member at a wrestling event would want to see a wrestler is injured, but it is the edge of the seat moments and unscripted incidents that can show an audience that what they are witnessing is real. In response to the earlier question of whether a “mediatized” video could replace live performance, it would be hard to suggest that it would. No matter the viewing or download figures of videos or music there is still a huge amount of money to be made by a band or artist being on the road. Auslander (1999) puts forward a further argument of Gracyk in that live performance is what now supports the mediatized article and that recording has become the primary objective of rock culture. Auslander questions if we accept Gracyk’s suggestion of rock being a primarily recorded form, then why is live performance still important to rock culture? Auslander answers this by saying, “Looking at the production side of rock, this question appears to be easy to answer: the primary function of live performance is to promote the sale of recordings” (Auslander, 1999: 64). It’s hard to refute this point as it is often the case that a band or artist will write a new record and go on tour to promote the record. A record label may see that the primary concern of live performance is to support the recordings but an artist or performer could see this differently as, previously discussed, a performer has different interests to fulfill as well as financial. There are different goals and aims for the performer versus the business executive.

With this research it is important to avoid being lured into the various debates on performance and performance theories as this can often be the focus of many other academics and authors. But it has been necessary to frame these key ideas and concepts surrounding live performance. It is important again to note that there is a detrimental lack of sources and academic writing on both aspects of the chapter, particularly when

considering touring. It appears as an area that holds great value and importance to the music industry yet is avoided by the academics. This chapter touches on some of the practises of the music industry. Now that there is an established understanding of live performance and touring, it needs to be addressed and situated within the music industry in what is coined the “digital age”. It is here that a further understanding of how performance and touring can be juxtaposed with developing technology and mediatization.

Notes

¹ The term is also adopted by females but for the sake of the work I gave the example of males.

² A description of the said TV shows can be found here: <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/what-happens-in-sunny-beach-and-kavos>. Accessed March 2014.

³ http://blogs.theage.com.au/lifestyle/asksam/archives/2006/08/what_goes_on_to.html. Accessed March 2014.

⁴ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FugVYynhHJk>. Accessed April 2014.

⁵ The first episode of the documentary can be watched through the following link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqCW5XfwMMI>. Some details regarding the programme can be found on the Channel 4 website: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YqCW5XfwMMI>. Both accessed April 2014.

⁶ <http://inthevanagain.tumblr.com/>. Accessed April 2014.

⁷ Information taken from: http://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/jun/25/musicians-touring-psychological-dangers-willis-earl-beal-kate-nash?CMP=share_btn_link. Accessed June 2015.

⁸ This mental image of John Bannister opening a room in a public house resonates with my own experiences as seen in appendix A, when we had a show in the upstairs of a pub in Leeds.

⁹ <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/flaming-lips-break-jay-zs-record-for-most-shows-in-24-hours-20120629>. Accessed August 2014.

¹⁰ http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/life/music/news/2006-11-19-jayz-tour_x.htm. Accessed August 2014.

¹¹ I concur with this point on a personal level as these are the ways in which I have gained symbolic capital.

¹² Description taken from: <http://www.924gilman.org/>. Accessed October 2014.

¹³ <http://propertyofzack.com/post/88050246185/father-takes-six-year-old-son-to-his-first-punk-show>.

Accessed October 2014.

¹⁴ <http://www.metallica.com/products/six-feet-down-under-ep-cd.asp>. Accessed October 2014.

¹⁵ [http://coldplay.fanfire.com/cgi-](http://coldplay.fanfire.com/cgi-bin/WebObjects/Store.woa/wa/product?sourceCode=COLWEBUKWGBP&sku=COL37789)

[bin/WebObjects/Store.woa/wa/product?sourceCode=COLWEBUKWGBP&sku=COL37789](http://coldplay.fanfire.com/cgi-bin/WebObjects/Store.woa/wa/product?sourceCode=COLWEBUKWGBP&sku=COL37789). Accessed October 2014.

¹⁶ Comments transcribed from Killswitch Engages performance 24th July 2014 at *This is Hardcore* fest. Video accessed through: <http://hate5six.com/player.php?album=3025177>. Accessed November 2014.

¹⁷ Article taken from: <http://www.billboard.com/articles/news/269423/madonna-tops-2009-music-money-makers-list?page=0%2C1>. Also the full magazine spread can be read through google books at: https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=W6e7tlhHmP0C&pg=PT24&lpg=PT24&dq=forward+merch+billboard&source=bl&ots=a2ddiCc0Y6&sig=CrIoTM_IsuMwbVa90y1LkhJ4dIM&hl=en&sa=X&ei=rJu9VPahK8nX7Qbo8oDQAw&ved=0CCEQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=forward%20merch%20billboard&f=false both links accessed January 2015.

¹⁸ There is a further discussion on the effects of piracy in a further chapter of this work.

¹⁹ Information taken from Macklemore's interview with Dan Buyanovsky for Interview magazine. <http://www.interviewmagazine.com/music/macklemore-ryan-lewis-the-heist/> Accessed January 2015.

²⁰ *Jimmy Iovine* lyrics transcribed from Macklemore & Ryan Lewis' record *The Heist* released on Macklemore LLC in 2012. The song also features Ab-Soul as a named credit.

²¹ There is a further discussion on DIY and independent labels in the next chapter.

²² Quote taken from: <http://www.planethollywoodresort.com/shows/britney-spears-las-vegas.html#.VMK5kE1ybIV>. Accessed January 2015.

²³ For further on this debate see Sontag (1966) and Auslander (1999).

²⁴ Information on this can be read at: <http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/ted-robbins-collapses-moment-theatre-8556785>. Accessed February 2015.

²⁵ <http://homes.chass.utoronto.ca/~ikalmar/illustex/Barthes-wrestling.html>. Accessed June 2015. Excerpt is noted through the link to be taken from Barthes and Lavers (1972).

Music in the Digital Age

It is difficult to pinpoint where the “digital age” really began when thinking of live performance and music. People growing up now will probably take for granted how technology has developed and how easy it has made accessing art, music and performance. No longer do people have to queue up at their local record store to buy the latest releases and records. We live in a world now where the amount of time we have to wait for new music depends on the speed of the internet connection being used. A band or artist can release a new single or record and it can be available for purchase within the hour. These steps forward in technology are incredible and have facilitated a meteoric growth in digital distribution.¹ All a fan needs to do is go to a website or digital store such as Amazon, iTunes or Google’s Play Store and mp3’s (or similar equivalents) are available at the click of a button on a mouse or a tap of a screen. You no longer have to even get a form of payment out of your pocket as many sites store your payment details on their servers which is a scary thought to comprehend. The distribution of music is not where this digital phenomenon ends. You can now purchase music from the very device you listen to the music from. The quality of the music available is incredibly high fidelity with crystal clear sound with playback facilitated by devices with staggering capabilities on headphones with some of the finest speakers ever created (so far!). We used to perceive music only as sound and audio which then progressed to notes or dots on manuscript paper but now it is seen as bytes of data and space on an iPod and not space or moments in time. We live in a multimedia world with a need, necessity in fact, to have the latest technology. These tiny devices have changed how we function as humans from not only how we communicate with each other but also how we consume products and media. Mobile phones, tablets, netbooks, mp3 players even

watches now are all connected to the fastest internet networks with ultra-fast download and upload capabilities we have ever seen.² Mary Lyon Oliver discusses these technology advancements in her paper on performance studies:

There has been a major shift in society's relationship with technology with an exponential rise in the development of, and dependency on personal digital devices. These new technologies have significantly altered our patterns of behavior and we have moved to a world in which we are, in the words of Sherry Turke 'always on'. Viewing the world through a screen has become a ubiquitous and even twenty-four-hour-round activity.

(Oliver, 2013: 7)

This term of always "being on" is an accurate description of the situation technology is in currently. Technology has the potential to be active and "live" whenever the user needs or wants. Technology has allowed musicians and performers to become stars almost overnight with people and audiences able to "like" and "share" things they like instantly. A current example of this is the case of Gordon Hill, "The Wealdstone Raider". Hill became an internet sensation due to a video of him at a football match going viral;³ the video was uploaded to YouTube and was shared across many different social media sites and networks with Hill quickly becoming famous. Hill went on to release a charity single *Got No Fans* which reached number five in the UK music charts at the end of December 2014 and has carved himself a new career. His success may be short lived but it is no doubt that The Wealdstone Raider got his five minutes of fame due to technology. Justin Bieber, someone who could be considered a credible musician found his fame in a similar way to that of the Wealdstone

Raider. Videos of Bieber at the age of thirteen were discovered by an artist manager who saw "potential" in the teen star. Bieber since then has gone on to become one of the biggest and most famous musicians and performers. Again, all made possible with the outlet of technology. Angela Barnes and Philippa Hall wrote an interesting article for Sky News titled *YouTube users Turn Clicks Into Cash*. The article is centered on the possible revenue streams available to "internet sensations". The opening line is thought provoking and arguably true, "Not long ago, a Top 10 hit on iTunes wouldn't have been possible without the backing of a major record company, but social media has changed the rules." This comment alone shows the power shift of the music business. Barnes and Hall go on to discuss the process in which an artist or film maker can go through to make money from their videos through YouTube.⁴ The power has been put into the consumer's hands and removed from the record labels. You can now cut out the middle man (record labels, management companies etc.) With the outlet of social media we now have the possibility of deciding who the next big thing/star is. There is no brainwashing or being told what to listen to. Listeners have the free will to choose what they want to listen to with access to do this being the easiest it has ever been.

Not everybody connected with the performance industry are entirely happy with the element of "ease" that has come hand in hand with the development of technology. As well as benefits, technology has also brought significant downfalls and hazards to the music industry in the form of piracy. Technology has made the pirating of media, particularly music, film and television a huge concern for all parties involved. The current copyright laws and strategies for tackling pirate material are inadequate and not fit for purpose; although many of the governments and politicians of the world are trying to tackle this issue and consider piracy as a major crime. With the ability to lawfully distribute music with ease comes the ability for people to unlawfully distribute music with ease through file sharing

and peer to peer sharing software. It is the latter that is the central concern for the multimedia industry, the illegal distribution of illegally acquired materials is detrimental to the profits of the people that own the material as quite frankly piracy is stealing.⁵ Piracy of music came to a heated peak with the case of Metallica versus Napster. Metallica (and other companies and parties) famously sued Napster for copyright infringement in 2000 with Napster settling later in 2001. Napster was a free peer to peer file sharing service which allowed users to share their mp3's and other files with other users of the service with artists receiving no royalties for their work. This is taking money directly away from the musicians and their representatives pockets as each download was a potential sale of a record or CD. It is not surprising, with everything considered, that the artists and labels were going to act; it was more a question of when. Metallica drummer Lars Ulrich said the following regarding the lawsuit with Napster, "Our beef hasn't been with the concept of sharing music[...]The problem we had with Napster was that they never asked us or other artists if we wanted to participate in their business".⁶ Hip-Hop Artist Dr. Dre also took action against Napster and made the following comment on the matter, "I work hard making music - that's how I earn a living[...]Now that Napster's agreed to respect that, I don't have any beef with them".⁷ It's difficult to believe that the whole issue was due to Napster not asking for permission, it is doubtful that Metallica and other artists will have allowed their music to have been distributed for free with their permission. However, again considering everything discussed, it does not matter whether it was with permission or not, the distribution of Metallica's or any other artists' music through Napster was unlawful. It would also be worthwhile of mentioning the backlash that faced Metallica during and after their challenge on Napster, not only from their fans but from other artists too. Lee Marshall stated:

The backlash that Metallica received came because they are a group of artists who have transgressed the fictional border between art and commerce. Had a record label filed the lawsuit, the public would not have supported them but there would not have been such an outrage: companies are understood to exist to defend their commercial interests.

(Marshall, 2002: 9)

Marshall makes an interesting and incredibly valid point here; would Metallica have received the backlash they did, if they would have chosen to challenge Napster through their label representatives and not themselves publicly? Lars Ulrich became the figurehead of the “anti-Napster” campaign, speaking publicly and in court during the lawsuit. Metallica are seen as a band and not a business whereas a label is seen as a business so would be expected to act as a business. The actions of band members appearing in court will have possibly be seen as “un-rock ‘n’ roll” like. Piracy could be perceived as rebellious by going against the system and breaking the regular cultural conventions and morals. Metallica’s authenticity will have been brought into question through their actions as the way in which they conducted themselves as a band was not as expected and did not conform to the expectations and standards of the rock community. You could compare piracy of smaller bands versus piracy of larger major label bands. Dr. Dre said that making music was how he made his living, smaller local bands don’t necessarily have the ability to earn a decent living from music full time. It wouldn’t really concern me if somebody was to say illegally download my own band’s music. I would be happy that someone was taking an interest in my band. My hope would be that they would maybe purchase the record at a later date if they have the opportunity. As I don’t make a living from my band it doesn’t take money or

more specifically, a living, out of the pockets of mine or my fellow band members. As a band we don't make a lot of money from what we do and we very rarely make a profit. If someone downloaded our record there is a potential that they would talk about it with a friend and spreads our music through word of mouth or social media. The overall profitability and financial situation of my band is not my main priority, our aim is to just not lose too much money whilst building a respectable reputation as a band. If someone doesn't buy the record and chooses to download it, the artist has not lost anything as they did not have it in the first place. The music industry's dispute with Napster was at the turn of the century and is still as prevalent today as it was back then. There are now more websites and different ways in which people can share music.

With the increase in broadband and downloading capabilities, movies and music are now being pirated online through websites, moving from pirate VHS cassettes, DVD's and CD's. The owning a physical copy of a product whether it be an authentic or legitimate copy is no longer a concern for the consumer. Kusek and Leonhard reinforce this idea with the following statement, "If you can hear whatever you like, whenever you want to hear it, then you don't have to "own" or physically possess the music" (Kusek and Leonhard, 2005: 4). There has been a step away from physical forms of media to digital formats ever since digital music media became possible. Kusek and Leonhard have a theory for this as well:

Fewer people are purchasing CD's not because they can get the music for free but because they are simply spending their money elsewhere. Therefore, it should be no surprise to record companies that young music fans are turning to file-sharing instead of spending their limited allowance funds on something that just doesn't seem worth the money, when compared to what else is available[...] CD's were

developed to replace vinyl with a better quality, more portable, and more durable product. When CD's came onto the market and everyone had to convert from vinyl to digital. Though that boom was unsustainable over the long term, everyone enjoyed it no wonder, just crank out the old stuff again, repackage it nicely, and rake in another huge round of cash.

(Kusek and Leonhard, 2005: 82)

If you look at the above statement from Kusek and Leonhard it can be reduced to three issues; firstly why would people pay for something they can get for free? Secondly what else is available, and finally was vinyl really that problematic? Kusek and Leonhard highlight a model of business here that has been in place for a long time. There had been a huge shift from vinyl to CD for the reasons that they highlight. Fans and consumers were encouraged to repurchase their current vinyl collection for the CD version. With sales of new and current vinyl records; labels, artists and distributors have started distributing the vinyl records with download codes or cards which allows purchasers to legally acquire a digital version of their "physical" copy. Amazon have also started doing something similar where if you purchase a CD or vinyl from the Amazon Store which has the "AutoRip" feature; it appears digitally in the Amazon Music app available on multiple user interfaces along with the other digital music that you own already on your device. This option of "ripping" music is still and always has been available for people who purchase CD's. As when a CD is inserted into a personal computer, users have been able to "rip" a copy for their digital collection too. The ability for fans and consumers to do this with all physical forms of music is evidence that the music industry is trying to adapt to what fans not only want, but it also gives the consumer a safe and legal way to do it. It is almost as though the music industry has made a U-turn on what

they had once opposed. The music industry have fought and sued against the emergence of digital formats. What was once unacceptable has now become the acceptable. The phrase if you can't beat them join them comes to mind.

Kusek and Leonhard say they don't think people aren't purchasing CD's because they can get it for free elsewhere, however considering the current economic state the world finds its self in, it is a very plausible concept to consider. The current economic pressure that a significant amount of the world's population are facing, with huge cutbacks in spending and people struggling to make ends meet resulting in them living month to month; why would people pay for it? The internet and file sharing has created an element of anonymity which is coupled with a lack of accountability meaning people can partake in the illegal sharing and downloading of media almost guilt free. If people aren't concerned with being caught and have no guilt over doing so with the possibility of being caught being extremely remote, then the opportunity to "steal" media of all varieties becomes a lot more appealing. When music moves away from the live arena and into the realm of being a product then stealing music becomes a faceless crime. Music loses its sense of life and the artists' personality when music is received as a product and not as an experience. It's harder to steal something that is live in comparison to a file on the Internet. Frith also adds to this idea:

Digital technology threatens the very basis of music business profit. The rights income occurring from 'ownership of a musical property'. This has led to an intense campaign for changes in the copyright law so that the legal myth of the 'fixed' sound is retained even as storage conditions 'unfix' it.

(Frith, 1988: 6)

It appears that labels and artists seem to be the only people connected with the music industry to be concerned with the advancements of digital technology and its effects on piracy. More and more people are downloading music than ever before with fans concerns' being only where they can get their music for as cheap as possible and not necessarily for as legal as possible.

Something else to consider is the almost non-existent effect of piracy on live performance. The ability to illegally distribute live performance is incredibly difficult. Any audio recording that's made from a live performance or gig is difficult to capture with results being incredibly poor quality. Pirates would not be able to take the equipment they would require to achieve a good quality recording. It would be too cumbersome and difficult to conceal and unless using a direct feed/bounced down mix from the sound desk; a normal microphone would not be close enough to the performance/performers to make the copy worthwhile. The development of mobile phone technology and its ability to capture and edit full 1080p HD quality videos has allowed fans to make decent quality videos of live performance and distribute them through social media networks like YouTube and Facebook all from the very device they were captured . It's debatable whether these videos are piracy or a documentation of what occurred during the performance, but their popularity is growing with a huge rise in unofficial "live" videos. Again, these videos are much more effective the closer the camera operator is to the performance, so videos of major label acts at large stadium shows or festivals will be of a significant inferior quality in comparison to smaller grass roots acts at shows in pubs and clubs. In this case technology has been detrimental to the development of pirating live performance. With every new device release, mobile phone makers take further steps closer to overcoming this problem.

You could question whether a development in these technologies will affect the purpose and function of amateur footage and media in the industry.

There is a further suggestion from Kusek and Leonhard in that the music industry needs to alter the way in which it approaches digital technology. "It will be abundantly clear that trying to sell overpriced plastic discs to people who have ubiquitous online access to the entire vault of music will be like trying to sell snow at the North Pole" (Kusek and Leonhard, 2005: 8). This statement raises the question; in what ways can the music industry sell the "product" of music legally, cheaply and digitally? Internet radio offers one alternative which allows users to create their own "radio station" which streams music and suggests further suggestions based on what you search and listen to. What was originally quite a bespoke service with a limited choice of sites has now become an oversaturated market. A simple search of Internet Radio on any search engine will return you about 120 million results all relating to the term.⁸ Internet radio works on the premise of streaming music from company servers straight to the personal computers and listening devices of users. Music playback on most Internet radio stations is interrupted by advertisements every few songs which will also be a further form of income for the Internet radio companies. Some Internet radio sites offer 'ad free" playback for an upgrade or subscription fee. In 2015, Spotify is one service provider that is dominating the market. Spotify was launched in 2008 has become an extremely popular method of listening to music legally, cheaply and digitally.

With Spotify, it's easy to find the right music for every moment – on your phone, your computer, your tablet and more.

There are millions of tracks on Spotify. So whether you're working out, partying or relaxing, the right music is always at your fingertips. Choose what you want to listen to, or let Spotify surprise you.

You can also browse through the music collections of friends, artists and celebrities, or create a radio station and just sit back.

Soundtrack your life with Spotify. Subscribe or listen for free.⁹

Spotify is quite possibly the biggest music streaming site on the Internet with over sixty million active users, with fifteen million of that figure subscribing to pay for the service.¹⁰

Looking at the above statement taken from a press release of Spotify, they give users a choice; subscribe or listen free. By giving users the option you are accommodating everybody, even for the people who can't afford it have the opportunity to listen to new music. Spotify are offering a situation and setting in which everybody benefits. What are the reasons that make Spotify the popular choice of digital music streaming? All of the current services like Rdio, Deezer and Blinkbox are of a similar nature to Spotify. They all offer a similar product at a similar, if not the same price, with the same quality of audio playback as Spotify. According to Roland Waddilove it isn't necessarily the music that users are swayed by:

The services are so similar that really this streaming music comparison boils down to who has the best software. Spotify's website and apps are preferred to the others, making it the best service, but Deezer is very good and is very close behind in second

place. Google offers a broader service with online storage of your own music, streaming, and (coming soon) Music Key videos, which some people may prefer.¹¹

Listening to music has now been reduced to the simplicity of its operating software and the ease of a listening devices usability. This reinforces the idea that music fans are less concerned with receiving a packaged product but more of a service. It would appear that it isn't just software that is changing the listening habits of music fans. Waddilove puts forward another observation:

There are many streaming music services and for the price of a CD each month, you can have not one album, but tens of thousands containing millions of tracks. It makes sense to subscribe if you love listening to music and with unlimited access to so much, you will discover new sounds you never knew existed.

Not only has recorded music become the most accessible it's ever been it's now available in an "all you can eat" fashion with Waddilove quite rightly pointing out for the price of a CD. Kusek and Leonhard discuss a "music like water" operating model where music and media are the equivalent of a utility service like water. They put forward a case concerning the necessity of water for human survival yet it is controlled in a monopolistic fashion by the water companies and conglomerates of the world. They also add to this that even though a huge portion of the western world have clean drinkable water plumbed straight to their homes, people still pay for a premium product of water in the form of bottled water such as Pellegrino and Evian at a much higher cost in ratio to the quantity. They ask the question in 2005 of whether this model would work for the music industry. With it currently being 2015

the music industry has the benefit of hindsight and can see that Spotify and similar services are a close equivalent of this. The issue of piracy has a cheap rival in the form of streaming. Streaming offers a safe and virus free access to music avoiding the torrent sites and blogs which are plagued with virus filled pop ups ready to infect the users' personal computers. Not everybody will choose to pay for music and some will still choose to illegally download, but 15 million paying subscribers to Spotify alone is a significant step towards moving away from piracy. Even though there are still a significant number of free users to Spotify, the music industry still wins. The music industry still receives money from the advertising revenue generated through ads played every few songs. On the before mentioned press statement from Spotify, they state that they have paid two billion dollars to rights holders since its launch in 2008. That's a substantial amount of money that would have previously been lost to the power of piracy.

Early 2015 saw the release of a new streaming service called Tidal, backed by New York hip-hop artist Jay Z. The release for the software had an elaborate and ambiguous marketing campaign signing up some of music's current biggest and most popular musicians such as Nicki Minaj, Kanye West, Madonna and Rihanna. Little teaser clips were released through social media creating hype and preparing music fans for the software's big release. Tidal claims to bring a higher quality of sound to the market and exclusive artists that won't be found on other sites. This way of isolating artists and making them exclusive to specific streaming sites has been met by criticism from some musicians themselves. Lily Allen posted comments on Twitter which were later reported on by *NME* magazine:

I love Jay Z so much, but TIDAL is [so] expensive compared to other perfectly good streaming services," Allen wrote on Twitter. "He's taken the biggest artists & made

them exclusive to TIDAL... people are going to swarm back to pirate sites in droves sending traffic to torrent sites."

Allen continued: "Up and coming artists are going to suffer as a result. Maybe I'm missing something, and really it's amazing and will change everything for the better."

The singer later added that Spotify, Tidal's main competitor, "is not the enemy of the artist", before stating: "I don't think music should be free, at all. But I'm afraid that we have to adapt as the world and technology advances... I care about the future of music, I care not for the current business structure."¹²

Again, there are a number of interesting concerns to address here. As in Allen's words "TIDAL is so expensive...He's [Jay Z] taken the biggest artists and made them exclusive to TIDAL" suggesting that if people can't afford or ultimately do not want to pay the subscription fee that TIDAL intend to charge for their streaming service and "exclusive artists", fans will resort to piracy once again. Allen is suggesting that the success of Spotify isn't the exclusivity of certain popular artists but it's the broad spectrum and choice of music they offer at a "reasonable" price in an accessible way. Towards the end of the above passage Allen discusses the need for the music industry to "adapt as the world and technology advances". When speaking earlier about piracy being a faceless crime as it steals from the artists, here you have an artist clearly in discussion about making a sacrifice on a personal level to see the advancement of the music business. Allen is concerned with adapting the way in which technology is shaping everything we've ever known about music from the creation of, to the distributing of it. The music industry has often been criticised for

its failure to adapt to the new technology crazes. Kusek and Leonhard are often critical of the music industry for this, 'One could argue that record companies' refusal to adapt to technological advances and comparative pricing structures created this "digital monster" in the first place' (Kusek and Leonhard, 2005:124). Steve Knopper also remarks on the same issue:

Norio Ogha knew record label executives weren't exactly going to welcome the compact disc like the Second Coming of the Beatles. They'd been getting rich for four decades off LPs, and this industry had a track record of brutally opposing advances like the 78 rpm single and, yes, the vinyl record itself.

(Knopper, 2009: 22)

Something to also consider would be when major label music becomes completely free legally. This probably sounds too good to be true and you're probably thinking you don't get much for free in this world these days. One major label artist tried to give their latest record away free of charge in 2014 with the help of Apple. U2 released their record *Songs of Innocence* through Apple's iTunes store to its 500 million users. What was meant to be a huge step forward in the world of music distribution and a PR dream, quickly turned into a PR nightmare. iTunes users had the album installed directly on to their devices (all devices that were linked to their iTunes account including tablets, mobile phones and personal computers via iCloud), without any prior consent. This was met by strong criticism by many iTunes users and people from across the industry. Adam Sherwin in his article for *The Independent* quotes US rapper Tyler the Creator as saying that discovering the free album on his iPhone was "like waking up with a pimple or like a herpes ... Fuck Bono. I didn't ask for

you, I'm mad."¹³ Paul Quirk, the chairman of the UK's Entertainment Retailers Association was also quoted as saying in the same article that "This vindicates our view that giving away hundreds of millions of albums simply devalues music and runs the risk of alienating the 60 per cent of the population who are not customers of iTunes. How can we really expect the public to spend £10 on an album by a newcomer?" People felt so strongly about the issue that Apple had to release a piece of software to remove and delete the record from the accounts and devices of disgruntled users. Why was the release such a failure? U2 are a big band with a huge following of loyal and devoted fans. There will have been many U2 fans who will have been overjoyed at the chance of owning U2's latest album for absolutely nothing. There are fans who will pay anything for records as their devotion to a band or act is priceless so, to receive something for free that you may as a fan have spent ten to twenty pounds for, would have been greatly appreciated by those fans. It is not entirely clear how many U2 fans were subscribers to iTunes but there were supposedly 81 million iTunes users who "experienced" *Songs of Innocence* and 26 million users who downloaded the entire album.¹⁴ This is less than twenty percent of Apple's 500 million iTunes subscribers but it is still quite a considerable amount of people to download an album either way. Even though 26 million is a lot of people, if you compare that against the 474 million people who chose not to download the record when it was there free to the world; the number of people that didn't download it when they had the opportunity to, completely overshadowed the number of people who did download it. It appears that it is not necessarily free music that is the appeal of digital music but choice. Internet users have put the music industry in crisis due to the high volume of people illegally downloading music for free that is occurring, but when someone can download something, even when it is from a band as popular as U2, people chose not to. People still have tastes and that taste might not be U2. Would Apple

have been more successful offering its iTunes subscribers a choice of albums from different artists or even better still, the option to download any album from its store for free? Most likely would probably be the answer. By using just one band Apple were alienating a significant portion of its users from an opportunity of free music, not because of the ability or the opportunity to download music but purely because people don't want to waste the time or digital space required to download or listen to *Songs of Innocence* because they simply do not like U2.

The music industry and the record labels in particular don't appear to approve of changes to their business and operating models. The industry becomes comfortable in what it does and avoids the risks in which it takes, but why such hesitation? There are clear gains from the step into digital. There is already a discussion regarding the mobility, accessibility and superior sound quality of digital music, but there is still a distinct opposition. When music became digital the record labels lost control over their "product". The record industry, particularly the RIAA (Recording Industry association of America) and major technology companies spent millions in trying to control the digital limitations of content and its ability to be shared. But this is arguably one of their biggest oversights. They are trying to limit technology but technology continues to grow and develop.¹⁵ Even if they could stop the pirates it would more than likely be a temporary measure. It's almost certain that a user would be able to eventually "crack" the block whether it is a software or hardware hack. Software developers are creative, intelligent and very resourceful. The growth of technology and particularly digital technology is developing and progressing aggressively. Its growth since the 1980s versus its development up to that point is staggering. This is why it is important for the music industry to follow Lily Allen's advice and "adapt". One artist who could be considered to have done this is Beyoncé. In December 2013 Beyoncé released a

completely digital album through Apples music store iTunes.¹⁶ It was Beyoncé's fifth studio album and was titled *Beyoncé*. The record consisted of fourteen songs and seventeen videos. Not only had Beyoncé embraced the audio side of her work but also the visual and compiled it all in to one digital package. Beyoncé herself described it as an "exclusive visual album" which allows her to "speak directly to her fans".¹⁷ Beyoncé talked in great detail about her inspiration behind creating her "visual album" and how it really was "her" album. She released it through her own company on her own terms:

I feel like people experience music differently. I remember seeing *Thriller* on TV with my family, it was an event. We all sat around the TV and I'm now looking back, I'm so lucky I was born around that time. I miss that immersive experience. Now people only listen to a few seconds of a song on their iPods, they don't really invest in a whole album. It's all about the single and the hype. It's so much that gets between the music and the artist and the fans. I felt like I don't want anybody to give the message when my record is coming out. I just want this to come out when it's ready and from me to my fans. I told my team I wanna shoot a video for every song and put them all out at the same time. Everyone thought I was crazy, but we're actually doing it, it's happening.

She then goes on to say in the same video:

I wanted to make this body of work and I feel like it's something that's lost in pop music. I wanted people to hear things differently and have a different first impression, not just listen to a ten second clip but actually be able to see the whole

vision of the album. It was important that we made this a movie, we made this an experience. I wanted everyone to see the whole picture and to see how personal everything is to me. I would make my best art and just put it out, and that's, that's why it's out today.¹⁸

It is interesting that Beyoncé said she wanted to make the record an "experience". Trying to make records and recorded music an "experience" has been a central concern for the music industry for quite some time. Recorded music in the most part is a lifeless product. In live music you see the act of creating, you see the way in which a guitarist picks their electric guitar in the fast solo or the way in which a singer may strain to reach that really high note. It's these moments of personality, the moments of "live" that are missing from records that can't be reproduced in a studio recording. Auslander quotes Grossberg as saying "the importance of live performance lies precisely in the fact that it is only here that one can see the actual production of the sound" (Auslander, 1999: 78). Beyoncé is trying to bring life and show how "personal" this record is to her, she is trying to do this through the medium of music videos. Music videos are a contentious choice as they can be considered a "mediatized" product of the music industry. "Video is the primary experience of music in a mediatized culture. Because that experience is constructed to lack plenitude, the consumer seeks out the sound recording - not because it contains the musical experience to which the video refers but in order to complete the experience initiated by the video" (Auslander 1999: 92). It is arguable that Beyoncé chose to release her "visual album" in this way for the reasons that Auslander suggests. However choosing to release it in this way gives her fans the option in how they perceive her music. They can choose to listen to just the audio or they can choose the video. The video can stimulate and provoke in a different way. The

videos that come with *Beyoncé* contain scenes of home movies from her childhood and other videos of Beyoncé with her daughter and husband. There are also the expected “staged” music videos for some songs but Beyoncé used a mixture of both styles when releasing the album. The personal and home videos here are being used to authenticate the recording in terms of it being intimate and personal. Would the record be any less authentic without the videos? Possibly, but without the images of her crafting her skill as a child and being a mother to her daughter; you may not pick up on these themes in just the music alone. The videos bring a different dimension to the average pop record although these videos are as staged and mediatized as any other pop music video. Both the videos and music in this format have the same importance. Neither matter more than each other and both are there for the same reason, to make money and top the popular music and video charts. For Beyoncé it may act as a way to validate her music and make it personal but for a fan it just makes it easier for them to access two thirds of an artist’s usual output, the music, the video and finally the live performance; with the latter serving to promote the earlier two. The route of releasing an album digitally was quite ground-breaking for a major label artist. Smaller grass root acts only have the option to release in this fashion as sometimes it's the only choice. The cost of printing or pressing vinyl records and CDs is quite excessive with some bands not able to create physical copies of their work. One of my own earlier bands had this very issue. We released our first (and only) EP online through MySpace, allowing people to download the tracks for free. The reason for doing this was purely financial. For some there are no "artistic" reasons like Beyoncé, they just cannot simply afford it. As 16-19 year old part time workers with no label backing they may have no other choice. The older I've got, the easier financing musical projects has become. I and other members of my band are in full time employment with much more disposable income to

use. The prospect of losing maybe two to three hundred pounds to release music doesn't seem so daunting. In the time before these developments in the internet, there was the possibility that some of the greatest music was being written which people may never have had access to because the band members couldn't afford to record or release their art.

Earlier the question was asked: was vinyl that problematic? Halligan offers a “cliché” of the thoughts of British jazz fans of the 1950s and 1960s in that:

The vinyl record was only able to communicate a fraction of the artistic prowess and abilities of their icons. It was the live experience that was the actual measure of, and true encounter with, the jazz musicians whose work was often understood to be predicated on authenticity.

(Edgar et al., 2013: 106)

This argument can be said true of any media that has the ability to be a recapitulated form, although these clichés are the kind of thoughts and resistance vinyl and other mediatized formats are met with. The reputation of vinyl had been left in tatters with the entrance of CDs as they were more "portable, durable and better quality". But not everybody has had to change to digital alternatives. House music and club DJs had been able to stick to their records and vinyl with some fans also choosing to still purchase physical copies of work. The hardcore, punk and metal communities also kept these values with a lot of bands and labels choosing to release on all formats and not just one or a select few. In recent years there has been a distinct nostalgia for vinyl, a format that looked almost dead and buried ten years ago; with the digital age beginning to take shape and cementing itself as the future. In April 2015 an official Vinyl Countdown chart was reintroduced to the industry as record numbers

of vinyl have been sold in the last year alone. Fans and consumers of all genres have turned back to the format. It would be prudent to note that the overall amount of vinyl sales still account for a very small portion of overall music sales but the growth of sale in regards to vinyl as a format is extraordinary. Rob Horning suggests an alternative reason for his own return to vinyl "My craving for these purely idiosyncratic consumption experiences has something to do with wanting to enjoy something unsharable, something that can't go viral, as though that might authenticate it in the solipsistic counter-reality I try to create for myself".¹⁹ The norm is currently becoming to download or stream music, so to go fittingly with rock ideology purchasing vinyl would be against the grain and a rebellion against the norm with rock and alternative vinyl sales topping the chart. But if the quality, durability and portability are all below par, what has been the reason for resurgence in sales? Do people miss the crackle as you place the needle on the plastic? Do people like the fact that you have to almost just sit there and listen to the record because it's not portable so you can gain a better connection with the music? Or is it because if you drop a vinyl it might shatter meaning you have to take extra care when handling them? What was originally a negative aspect of an object can be quickly turned into a positive. Vinyl LPs or 7 inch records often come with the option of being different and slightly unique with sometimes limited pressings of certain colours or designs creating a need to purchase and a higher value for the object within the genre and its community. Another simple, yet crude and completely objective explanation for the resurgence in vinyl is possibly just because vinyl is cool. Young music fans in the 1990s and early 2000s were growing up at a time when CDs were the primary option for purchasing music. They may have also had access to vinyl through their parents and grandparents. The way in which my father spoke about vinyl was that he had a love for his collection similar to that of Horning. For him it was more than just music. This

made them precious and cherished, I never got that same feeling with CDs. McCourt suggests that there is even less emotional connection with digital files in comparison to physical alternatives:

Digital sound files lack potential emotive contexts altogether. They are just data, metadata, and a thumbnail, and therefore emotionally less valuable than a medium you can hold in your hands. Through their immateriality, digital files cannot contain their own history. Unless they are burned onto a CD, they have no physical manifestation. No history is encoded on their surfaces, since they have no surfaces. If a digital product is enshrined in a physical form, like an LP or CD, it is regarded as being valuable. When a product is delivered in a string of bits, rather than presenting itself in a physical form, it appears to have less value. The result is that the world of commodities and the world of things continues to separate and our notions of value become separated from the material purchased. Diminished or non-existent physical property undermines the notion of intellectual property.

(Mccourt, 2005:250)

By being a digital format, music as a product, is not any less valuable. Due to its lack of “emotive context” it could be less valuable due to its ability to be reproduced. If you delete a digital file by mistake it is easy to replace or recover. However if you do not take care of a vinyl or CD, its quality is compromised if not ruined altogether. Kusek and Leonhard stated that the music industry basically resold the same vinyl products in a CD format in nice new packaging for which the industry raked in "another huge round of cash". What is almost laughable is the same thing is occurring again but it is now CDs that are being repackaged

and resold in the vinyl format. It has almost gone full circle once again. Some things change and some things will never change; In this case the thing that will never change is the way in which the music industry looks to make a quick and easy sale at a high price with fans and consumers lapping it up without even questioning it. It is almost certain that there will be more and more titles appearing and being released on vinyl in the coming years with vinyl again returning as one of the most popular ways to consume music.

Indie Thinking

The music industry has seen a huge shift of power in recent years with the major record labels, recording studios and distribution companies being completely bypassed altogether. The advancements in technology have allowed people, and we aren't talking people who are trained with the skills to record and distribute music; almost anybody can now write, record and distribute their own music for a surprisingly small amount.²⁰ What was once a huge point in a band or musicians career, where they got backing from a major label that signed them up and gave them huge sums of money to record their album; artists no longer need to take that route.

For veteran artists, this newfound independence from major record labels means a shocking, liberating new world. They began their careers when labels had just about every bit of leverage possible in the star making process. An artist who wanted to make a record needed studio time – and that cost money, which meant a sizeable loan from a label. An artist who wanted to get a single onto a radio playlist needed connections – and that usually meant a label executive who had the money to hire an independent promoter. An artist who wanted to sell millions of copies of a record

needed a big-time distributor with the clout to push CDs into big stores like Best Buy or Target – and that meant one of the major label’s subsidiaries like WEA or CEMA. Today it’s not necessary to hook up with a label to do all these things. An artist can make a record cheaply and professionally, using software like Pro Tools. An artist can forgo the radio building buzz and exposure online via do-it-yourself websites like MySpace, viral videos on YouTube, or any number of social networking websites like Facebook and Garageband.com. As for distribution, who needs crates, trucks, warehouses stores, or even the discs themselves? Artists can follow Radiohead’s example and simply distribute the music essentially free online.

(Knopper, 2009:246)

We are seeing a growing number of what you could call “amateur” artists breaking the market and securing a career or a supplementary income, when in times gone by their music will have been lost and their hopes of being a musician will have just been a dream. Robert Strachan indicates that independent labels almost work in opposition to major labels and are motivated by being the antithesis of the major record label ethos.

Outside of such boundaries [major labels] lie a whole host of amateur and semi-professional bands, hobbyists record labels and reissue imprints, collectors, fanzine writers and small scale distributors working across a variety of genres. This is not to deny that the record industry is a dominant institution; rather that its very dominance either may be studiously ignored or may inspire industrial and aesthetic strategies which are perceived as counter-hegemonic (or at least at odds with the dominant aesthetic paradigms of the recording industry).

(Strachan, 2007:246)

One way in which this can be seen is through many independent labels not issuing contracts to artists or bands. In the documentary *Blood Sweat + Vinyl: DIY in the 21st Century*, the different owners of Constellation Records, Hydra Head Records and Neurot Records all talk about their choice not to offer contracts. Ian Ilavsky of Constellation Records says the following on the topic “Constellation is utterly worthless to anybody in the entertainment industry. I mean we have a good faith agreement with everybody”.²¹ Major labels work on the premise of issuing an artist a contract and developing the talent over a number of albums or years so the investment is long term. With the amount of money that a record label will invest into an artist on just one record, the investment and goals need to be long term. It’s the best chance they have to make their money back. That is the aim of a major label, to make money but the independents can have a different goal. Steve Von Till of Neurot Records puts forward his reason for starting a label in the same documentary:

For us it’s tied into Neurosis [Steve Von Till’s own band]. Neurosis, ya know we give all these bands that we’re putting out, it’s Neurosis’ money. Ya know, it’s, we sold our records, we don’t take any profits home, we reinvest it to be able to put out other peoples music. So we’ve sacrificed, ya know we’ve sacrificed our own resources to be able to put out something that we like and something we want to get behind and support it...At a certain point in our existence we realised that all that really mattered, aside the fact we remain true to ourselves and that we are doing this for our own personal and self-centred reasons; why we’re creating music, was that um, what our legacy is that we leave behind. We’re the ones recording and

doing all the hard work in promoting it and everything, then that's craftsmanship.

That's true art, that's coming from, um, a more traditional value of where our music comes from.

Obviously not every independent label will work with the same ethos as Steve and Neurot Records, but it is an admirable ethos nonetheless. Neurot have put themselves in a selfless light using their own profits made from their own band, to fund the releases of music for other artists. However it is worthy of mention that they will be making a living doing something they love, so there are other personal benefits. There is also a huge amount of personal investment of the label owners as they don't only finance these projects but they put their time and effort into something that they helped create such as the artwork and promotion. By also using a word like "sacrifice" it suggests they put others before themselves, something that you possibly wouldn't get from a major label. Both types of label are businesses, with major labels being focussed on turning a profit which is not necessarily the main priority of an indie label. Strachan discussing the work of Bordieu puts forward that "small-scale popular music practitioners tend actively to shun the economic capital favoured by large-scale cultural producers in favour of (informal) symbolic capital" (Strachan, 2007:246). When Steve Von Till talks about legacy and Strachan discusses symbolic capital, it could be classed as both one and the same in this case. The attaining of symbolic capital is the best legacy someone from the industry can be associated with and leave behind. To have the knowledge that you broke a band or released one bands record that went on to "make it" and get that major label contract; not many people associated with the industry will be able to top that. The A&R talent scout who discovered Justin Bieber will always be known as "the guy who discovered Justin Bieber"; in fact for those individuals

they may not ever be able to top or even match that achievement again. But the size of the break is relative to the size of artist and label. Thirty Days of Nights Records who released Bring Me The Horizon's first EP in 2004 titled *This Is What the Edge of Your Seat Was Made For* was just as important in relation to TDON Records' "size". Bring Me The Horizon went on to sign to major label RCA, would this have been possible without the help of TDON Records? Possibly not, working with an independent label does create exposure and it also means someone else other than yourself and the rest of your band has a vested interest in your music which would imply the label would promote the band. When considering the evidence put forward by the different indie label representatives in the *Blood Sweat + Vinyl* documentary, there is an overwhelming sense of intimacy and community between the workers of the label and its roster of artists. The independent label knows the band and knows its market. An independent label will often specialise in a particular style or genre and not branch out from that style which is where the sense of community will originate. These labels will be run by active members of the same musical community using their own authenticity and experiences to appeal to the people they are selling their labels music to. Members of these labels will probably be seen at shows in their town or buying new music in the local record shops (for those that still prefer record stores). This is crucial for an independent label. An independent label needs to operate within the expected behaviours of the musical scene and community for which they represent. An independent hip-hop label will not release a Norwegian black metal record because it is not what is expected of them. No matter how popular, successful or profitable that black metal record may turn out to be, the release would not occur. Labels will release subgenres of the same style but not completely different. They may alienate the market to which they already sell to, many of which will buy a release because it is that style.²²

There are a growing number of smaller do-it-yourself labels out there all working under this “indie” moniker, but it is Strachan who coins them as “micro-independent Labels” (Strachan, 2007: 247).²³ What’s the difference between a micro-independent label and a “regular” independent label? Not much, they all partake in the same “label tasks” such as producing and distributing a release. It’s arguable that it’s the pedigree of the band that a label is dealing with or the amount of units sold by the label that really differentiates them. What is interesting isn’t the difference between the micro labels, independent labels or even the major labels; it’s the simple fact that all three types of label are concerned in the sale, distribution and promotion of music albeit for different reasons.²⁴ Anyone can start their own micro label and one person to do that was Max Harper when he created Neutral Words Records in 2012. Operating out of Leeds UK, Neutral Words Records created their own DIY micro-independent label that does not require any external financial backing and has been releasing music ever since. But Neutral Words don’t just release music, they design the artwork for the records, they print the artwork, they press the merchandise to go alongside the record release as well as the marketing and publicising of the bands and their music; they do practically everything themselves. Indie and micro labels allow smaller bands and artists to get their music out and published where previously they may never have gotten a chance. A major label will press an artist’s record in multiples of tens to hundreds of thousands of units at a time creating a huge breakeven limit making releasing a record a huge risk for a label.²⁵ Small independent labels will reproduce records in much smaller quantities meaning a much lower breakeven point creating less of a risk for a label to put a record out. This makes it easier for smaller acts to get their music released as the indie labels don’t have as much to lose. But we are now seeing a rejection of the standard musical practises as earlier mentioned. Indie labels were some of the first labels to adopt these new

principles not because they were more technologically advanced, but because it was more economical and beneficial to do so. Labels were able to offer the music of an artist in all the different formats like vinyl, CD and digital. If anything the major labels would have had the financial backing to adopt the new digital trends. They would have had the capital to easily purchase the necessary technology hardware such as servers and high speed internet connectivity devices. The indie labels are working on limited financial backing so realistically it would be expected that the independent labels would be behind on the times but this was not the case. With the upgrade of mobile phone and broadband networks it became easier to share music, again, as earlier discussed.

One of the most radical changes to the music industry is the way in which music is being promoted. Similar to that of distribution, the traditional ideals of promoting and marketing music has changed dramatically. In one of the earlier quotes from Strachan within this work, he says that artists can “forgo radio”; this is indeed true, but not only forgo radio, but printed publications and media like magazines and newspapers too. With the outlet of social media everybody can be a marketing and promotions specialist. Small labels have the option of reaching a worldwide audience through just a couple of websites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr and Google’s Blogger site. An artist or label can target their audience and pinpoint who they are appealing to. Again this cuts out another sector of the industry and makes it, not just easier, but ultimately possible for the limited personnel of an indie record label to compete with and achieve what the major labels have. What major labels achieve with hundreds, even possibly thousands of employees and personnel globally, micro labels like Neutral Words Records can do with one. Obviously the grand scale of the operation is vastly different, but both are selling, distributing and promoting music. No longer is a “fancy” website needed; as with Facebook you can advertise tours, post

videos and pictures of your band, put your latest music up for streaming and listening with ease. Facebook has erased the need for learning HTML code and learning how to create and design webpages. Facebook allows users such as artists or labels to do this simply and easily. Facebook pages aren't incredibly unique and are quite simple; in contrast to this however they can be incredibly effective. They are standardised and all come with the same features but they are easy to administrate. A mass audience can be reached and engaged in just a single post that will inform anyone that is interested about when a bands latest album is out or some new merchandise that has been added to their merch store or Big Cartel page. These posts can even be promoted and pushed by boosting them from as little as £3 with an indication of how far the post will reach and to whom it will reach. Frith also makes a further suggestion:

In technological terms anyway the world is becoming the local and global: the national level no longer matters when every household has access to the global media flow, when every small producer can, in practice, directly service the global greed for images.

(Bennett et al., 1993: 23)

The internet has facilitated the ability to allow anyone to contact and converse with their favourite artists and celebrities by sending them a tweet or commenting on one of their social media posts through Facebook and Instagram. The bridge and the gap between amateur, independent and major label has been reduced by these developments in social media.

Another of the biggest developments within the music industry hasn't only been technological but in the attitudes of the people working within it; the realization that anybody can get involved and be a part of an industry that has been ruled and controlled by the major companies and media. David Wood of hardcore bands Terror and Down To Nothing offers his thoughts on the matter during a Down To Nothing show at the Broomhall Centre in Sheffield, December 2012. After acknowledging the efforts of the promoter he goes on further to say:

That guy has, er, broken his back for hardcore and I think he's a good example for everyone to follow. You don't have to be in a band. You can book a show, you can make a zine, you can feed bands on tour...pay on the door – go to a show. Being a hardcore kid is cool.²⁶

There is encouragement from artists like this which is raising awareness of how much help like this is needed in the “amateur” music and DIY world. Strachan also adds to this

The dialectic elements of DIY discourse champion the possibility that people other than the media professionals can engage with, and successfully promote, symbolic goods which fall outside of the tastes and economic imperatives of the established or mainstream media industries

(Strachan, 2007:254)

By more and more people getting involved with music on an amateur level, the more this will become the standard and benchmark for the music industry. The major labels are

adopting what the independents have been doing but it makes sense and it's economical.

The more the independent labels and amateurs continue to push their businesses, bands and labels alongside the continuing advancements in digital technology; the greater chance of derailing, or at least creating some speedbumps for the music industry and the major labels that control it along the way.

Technology and Live Performance

The main discussion of this chapter so far has mainly gravitated around the sale and distribution of music as a product. Arguably this is where the music industry has seen its biggest growth in recent years, however there has also been significant changes in the live music industry over the same period. The production around a live performance has become a huge component for bands and artists with the limits of performance being surpassed with every new piece of kit being developed and integrated into a live performance setting. Previously this work has briefly touched on areas of technology in performance such as 2Pac's hologram at Coachella in April 2012 but this is just a single area and function of technology within the rapidly growing performance industry. In what started as a manual world of musical production; people pulling levers or sat up top of stadium rigging to move the spotlight to the center stage to capture the audience's undivided attention on the star performer. All of these tasks can now be coordinated and controlled by just one person sat with a laptop, tablet or smartphone from the sound engineer's desk. The most advanced technology is being brought to the entertainment industry making almost anything possible.

It is hard to believe that there was a time before microphones, PA systems and amplifiers. How did the orchestras of the times before these technologies reach the volume

needed for people to hear the performance the audience had paid to see? How did people see the opera without the jumbo screens throughout the concert hall? All valid questions but with simple answers, like volume in numbers, buildings built with greater acoustics which helped the sound flow throughout the concert hall and guests brought theatre glasses (binoculars essentially) to see what was on stage or being performed. If that wasn't good enough then it was tough luck and cheaper tickets were sold indicating a lesser quality experience. But this wasn't enough and it didn't have to be enough. Cunningham discusses The Beatles' sell out show in 1965 at Shea Stadium, New York. It was widely publicized that the screams and shouting of the crowd (particularly the adoring female teenage members of the audience) made it incredibly difficult for anyone in the stadium including the band, to actually hear what song the band were playing:

It seems a preposterous thought now but they were amplified by the timid house tannoy system – the same used to announce baseball scores to the Shea's regular sporting patrons. Much was learned from the Shea experience, PA systems got bigger. There was a clear need for technology to get better. It was affecting live performance.

(Cunningham, 1999: 14)

Examples like The Beatles show at Shea Stadium in 1965 just simply wouldn't be tolerated these days. As with the growth of technology, so too has the expectations of what a crowd will experience technology-wise at a show. If an audience watches a popular music performance one month and then goes back to the same venue again the next month to watch another popular music performance, the crowd will expect the same level of

technology. If there were jumbo screens at the first concert then there must be jumbo screens at the next. The crowd will have been conditioned in what to expect as that level of technology is now the standard set. Smaller musical scenes and their crowds will have different expectations of what technology to expect at a performance. Smaller bands will hope that there is a “decent” house PA available at the pub or club in which they are performing, or that the band that are bringing the backline for the show will have guitar cabs and not small 50 watt practice combo amps; otherwise their performance might struggle, similar to that of The Beatles at Shea Stadium. Every performance will have similar issues; the only difference is they are relative to the “size” of the artist or band. Frith refers to these differences as “ideologies of professionalism” (Frith, 1988: 4). The cost of staging a performance has risen considerably in recent years and the necessity for “customer satisfaction” has risen along with it. People are paying to be entertained and it is essential that they are. As discussed earlier, the possibility to spread good word through social media can be just as easy as the negative. One bad performance, remark or action and the entire world will and can know about it in just the time it takes to create a Facebook post or a tweet on Twitter. An audience member in the current market can be paying well into the hundreds if not thousands for tickets to shows, concerts and festivals so in effect that paying customer want to be able to see and hear what they are paying for.²⁷ There is only so far symbolic capital will stretch particularly if an audience member has paid £150 a ticket to see their favourite artists.

It is when live music moved from the pubs, clubs and music halls to stadiums, festivals and arenas that we really started to see the growth of technology in performance and the production of performance. Cunningham attributes The Who as being the first adopters of these sorts of venues in the UK. They first did this in 1971 when The Who

headlined a Bangladeshi benefits concert at The Oval cricket ground. Three years later in May 1974, The Who then played the first of two concerts at Charlton Athletic as Cunningham describes “the giants of the pop world began to make the transition into stadiums, signifying a major turnaround both in terms of profit and scale of production” (Cunningham, 1999: 15-16). The adoption of venues like these did indeed allow performers to explore their fantasies and inspirations to create wild stage and performance concepts. Cunningham gives an example of Pink Floyd’s live performances of *The Wall* at London’s Earls Court in 1980 and 1981.

Who would have thought that the wild ideas of building a polystyrene wall between the audience and the band, gradually during the first half of the concert, would go down well with ticket buyers? And yet this was high drama, complemented by an army of lifelike Gerald Scarfe Puppets, the trademark inflatable pig, an exploding Stuka bomber, and Cinemascope film projections across the entire width of the “wall”, which at the end of the show, was ceremoniously “blown up”.

(Cunningham, 1999: 17)

He credits these staging concepts and possibilities to “rock theatres”.

“Mile End, Edmonton, Brixton and Charing Cross Road. These were the venues together with the Rainbow (previously known as the Finsbury Park Astoria), became the heart and soul of rock culture in London throughout the Seventies, serving as a brilliant development ground for many rock and pop legends”.

(Cunningham, 1999: 16)

He then goes further to add that larger acts like The Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd and so on opted for bigger venues to due to “their ability to accommodate more than 15,000 people at a time” and their “vast open spaces”; as the venues in which bands and artists performed got bigger, so too did the possibilities of performance. Sometimes the only limit of these possibilities is the size of the stage or the room. When bands realized there was a demand for live performance there was a realization of profit to be made. The cost of staging productions like Pink Floyd’s were obviously significantly higher, but with the increases in venue capacity came a greater potential to make substantial money and profit through ticket sales. This style of stage production has continued to this day with artists like Iron Maiden, Lady Gaga and U2. U2’s 360° tour is reported to have grossed over \$736 million dollars with one of the most technologically advanced stage concepts to date. It had a giant claw that covered the stage, a million piece video wall, 300 members of crew; the technology used is relative to the time it occurred in musical history. Cunningham describes this style of performance and production as “mega productions” and goes further to say:

The key to this increased trend towards “mega production” ultimately lies with the audiences who have grown up with MTV. When MTV burst on to the music scene in the early 1980’s not only did it provide an ideal vehicle for the talents of a whole new generation of imaginative promotional video directors it also increased the publics expectations of live performance [...] No longer was it acceptable for these bands to saunter on stage with a few pretty lights and expect to wow the crowd. And with CD quality now accessible to ever record buyer, only the best live sound reinforcement would suffice in the concert arena.

(Cunningham, 1999: 19)

It is at this point that a familiar crisis is reached. The argument and debate of what takes ontological priority and how is a performance judged? In this digital era, Auslander's argument reinforces Cunningham's point in that a performance is judged by its mediatized versions, which in this case is the music video experienced through music television or the internet.²⁸ Auslander also references what he calls the "theatricalization of live performance of rock music" as the beginning of this argument.

If, as I have suggested, the theatricalization of rock music in the 1970s was an important innovation that proved to be a condition of possibility for music video, then live performance now imitates music video imitating live performance, and is thus another example of live performance's recapitulation of mediatized representations based originally on live performances [...] Video is the primary experience of music in a mediatized culture.

(Auslander, 1999: 91-92)

By using the earlier example of Beyoncé's "visual" album, this arguably enforces Auslander and Cunningham's opinion, as the album was released in a digital format as video and recordings. However it is difficult to reduce the complexity of ontological priority to how somebody listened to or experienced music. To say that video is the primary experience of music is questionable even considering the example of *Beyoncé*. In the digital era we experience music in a variety of ways from music videos to online streaming to computer game soundtracks. The primary experience of music is different in each cultural context in

which it is experienced and the geographical location to which it occurred. It would be silly at this point in music technology development to make the assumption that video is the primary experience when looking at the digital landscape available. In the times before MTV and music television, an audience will still have had an expectation of what they were going to experience. The audience will always expect the hits and the songs they know and love in a way that is entertaining and fulfilling whether that is with technology or without. It is possible that in the digital era an audience's expectation of what technology will feature during a performance or at a concert is affected by the internet and the knowledge of how technology has developed. Search engines such as Google and Bing make it possible for the audience to get a pre-existing knowledge of what has happened previously during other concerts on the tour. In the times before the internet audiences didn't have that opportunity. The audience of Pink Floyd's performance of *The Wall* in 1980 and 1981 will not have known what to expect other than their existing experiences of Pink Floyd shows and shows of similar bands. The internet has become the primary experience for a lot of things including live performance due to the streaming of it. Edgar et al. question "What live event is not visually documented in one form or another?" (Edgar et al., 2013: 12). This is an important question when considering technology in performance:

The live event now occurs in the glare of a protean media apparatus: digital in form, global in reach, and instantaneous in broadcast and yet, in the live relay of images and recordings to the social media sphere, highly individualized.

(Edgar et al., 2013: 12)

If the artist or the label that represents them isn't making a video of the performance then the fans in attendance of the show are, these "homemade" fan videos are creating expectations for other fans and is an effect of the development of the internet.

Now, rather than primarily seeing fandom as a form of resistance, [Henry] Jenkins uses [Pierre] Levy's concept of "collective intelligence" to understand present day fan activity. From this perspective, audiences work together in order to produce texts, sharing knowledge, ideas and approaches. According to Jenkins, such collaborative activities have come to fruition because of the proliferation of home computing software and the continuing rise in internet access.

(Edgar et al., 2013: 59)

Carter and Coley then continue with their exploration of Jenkins' work. Jenkins coins this new stage of fan activity as "the new participatory culture" (Edgar et al., 2013: 59). This is then broken down into three strands:

1. New tools and technologies enable consumers to archive, appropriate, annotate and rearticulate media content.
2. A range of subcultures promote DIY media production, a discourse that shapes how consumers have deployed those technologies.
3. Economic trends favouring the horizontally integrated media conglomerates encourage the flow of images, ideas, and narratives across multiple media channels and demand more active modes of spectatorship.

(Edgar et al., 2013: 60)

Fandom and this style of participatory culture media and texts are important for the music industry for a number of reasons. These media and texts like the fan video are also important factors for symbolic capital; a self-shot video has more symbolic value than aesthetic due to it being an artefact of being present at the time of occurrence. A good quality amateur video from a smartphone allows an audience to relive the moment and reminisce over the experience. It is also a great way to authenticate an experience due to the physical evidence gained.

On the other hand the notion of the all-important “being there,” and so only fully consuming by attending, has been bolstered by the social media imperatives of social media: to report and provide evidence of oneself at the event – conceptualizing oneself therefore as part of the event.

(Edgar et al., 2013:12)

A viewer may not get the “full sensory experience” that an audience member really wants, but by typing an artist’s name into a search browser they will gain access to millions of results including, music, music videos and videos of “live” performances. Using Auslander and Cunningham’s “theatricalization of rock music in the 1970’s” as a point of debate; there were fewer opportunities for an experience with music. The audiences at the time had radio, records and performance. Video gave people another option; another way for them to engage with music and performance. For the industry, the music video was just another form of promotion in which was intended to raise awareness to an artist’s impending release.

Notes

¹ For further reading see Mortimer et al. (2012).

² This list is not intended as exhaustive. Many devices or items of technology available come with internet installed or connection available.

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAhEFuq62-I> Accessed February 2015.

⁴ Link to article: <http://news.sky.com/story/1095207/youtube-users-turning-clicks-into-cash>. Accessed March 2015.

⁵ For further reading on the effects of piracy and file sharing see Waldfogel (2010), Handke (2012) and Jeong et al. (2011). All offer different and contrasting views into the effects of piracy and file sharing in relation to specific markets or sales details. The majority of the research within these works indicates the almost obvious conclusion that illegal file sharing and piracy reduced the number of legitimate purchases and revenues recouped from consumers.

⁶ Comments taken from: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/1436796.stm>. Accessed March 2015.

⁷ Dr Dre's comments taken from the same article stated in endnote 6. Accessed March 2015.

⁸ For this point I used Google. Search completed April 2015.

⁹ Information taken from the "About Us" section on the Spotify website: <https://www.spotify.com/uk/about-us/contact/> Accessed April 2015.

¹⁰ Information taken from Spotify's press page: <https://press.spotify.com/uk/information/> Accessed May 2015. The press statement doesn't include a date of release but the information does appear to be the most current release.

¹¹ Comments taken from Waddilove's article for *PC Advisor* magazine titled *Best streaming music services 2015 UK: Spotify vs Play Music vs Blinkbox vs Rdio vs Deezer*. <http://mobile.pcadvisor.co.uk/test-centre/audio/3586277/best-streaming-music-services-2015-uk/>. Accessed May 2015.

¹² Comments taken from Luke Morgan Britton's article for *NME* Dated 6th April 2015: <http://www.nme.com/news/lily-allen/84247>. Accessed May 2015.

¹³ Information taken from: <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/features/free-u2-album-how-the-most-generous-giveaway-in-music-history-turned-into-a-pr-disaster-9745028.html>. Accessed May 2015

¹⁴ Information taken from Eddy Cue, Apple's Senior VP of Internet Software and Services, interview with *Billboard*: http://www.billboard.com/articles/news/6274359/itunes-numbers-u2-songs-innocence-album?utm_source=Sailthru&utm_medium=email&utm_term=biz_breakingnews&utm_campaign=Breaking%20News. Accessed May 2015

¹⁵ For a more comprehensive read on some of the steps and processes that the music industry took to increase the security of their products see McCourt and Burkart (2003)

¹⁶ *Beyoncé* the record has since been released on other formats, but at its time of initial release it was exclusively a digital release.

¹⁷ Information taken from an article on the sky news website. The article doesn't indicate an author but can be accessed at the following location: <http://news.sky.com/story/1181889/beyonce-surprises-fans-with-digital-only-album>. Accessed May 2015.

¹⁸ Both comments taken from the same video which can be accessed at: <http://youtu.be/lcN6Ke2V-rQ>. Accessed May 2015.

¹⁹ Comment taken from: <http://thenewinquiry.com/blogs/marginal-utility/vinyl-re-enchantment/>. Accessed June 2015. Horning offers further reading on what he calls “vinyl re-enchantment”.

²⁰ For a comprehensive reading of the aesthetics of independent labels particularly when concerning with indie music see Hesmondhalgh (1991).

²¹ Information taken from *Blood, Sweat + Vinyl: DIY in the 21st Century*. Dir. Kenneth Thomas 2011.

²² Again listening to the different members of the owners of Constellation, Neurot and Hydra Head Records (as well as artists and records store owners) within the *Blood Sweat + Vinyl* documentary, all remark about a certain level of “trust” that say a Hydra Head record will sound like a Hydra Head record because they have come to trust and understand what Hydra Head are looking for in artists for their roster.

²³ There may be other instances of usage of this term, but this is the first I’ve come across.

²⁴ This is arguably one of the overall themes of Strachan’s work but is an obvious observation.

²⁵ For further reading see Toynbee (2000).

²⁶ Comments were made in between songs taken from the following video available through Ashley Rommelrath’s YouTube channel. The video can be found at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BawAH6No41c>. Accessed June 2015.

²⁷ A weekend Leeds Festival 2015 ticket would have cost £215 including fees, information taken from:

<http://leedsfestival.seetickets.com/event/leeds-festival-2015/bramham-park-leeds/833082?src=lf2015WB1>.

Accessed June 2015.

²⁸ It is difficult to just refer to MTV now, as the actual channel MTV plays very little within its daily programming. When I use the phrase “musical television”, I’m referring to all the music video television channels that are available, not just MTV.

Conclusions

The task undertaken here has been to assess the different ways in which we as people, fans and consumers experience music with two main concerns; firstly live performance and touring, and secondly in the digital age. The effects of both have had a profound effect on how we interact and digest media and will continue to do so.

A resounding conclusion when looking at both aspects of this work is the impact and implications of financial reward and failure on the music industry. These “rewards and failures” are fundamental to the way in which the music industry operates between the different areas of the industry from the performance, recording, business sector (A&R, promotion, distribution and so on), the major and to the amateur. It isn’t a surprise that the capital reward affects how the industry operates as with almost any business there needs to be a pot of money to invest from. It makes more sense for that business to spend the money it makes rather than the shareholders and owners having to invest further money. A lack of funds can affect output and quality. More often than not, the less you put into your project (album/tour) the less successful it may potentially be. If you look at the tour report (see appendix A) written alongside this study, one of the key themes is the overriding need for all aspects of the tour to be financially viable. It is a necessity for amateur music making. As amateur musicians are financing their projects from their normal day to day lives and income, it is important that it is invested wisely and put to its best use. The aim of the game for many amateur musicians including myself is to simply not lose money, and if it is lost, then a limited amount is sacrificed. What is interesting is how freely independent labels and amateur musicians will invest their own money into projects that regularly fail to return a

profit.¹ The “professional” music industry use the profit line and money made as a marker for success and this is not a marker that fits all areas of the industry. Gracyk reiterates this:

[G]iven the cost of making and distributing records, one’s ability to continue to make records, as opposed to simply playing live shows as a source of revenue, depends primarily on publishing and recording royalties and thus on successful record sales. If nobody likes your first record, there may not be a second.

(Gracyk, 1996: 184)

Major label artists are only worth the money they make to the business, if that slows down or dries up so to speak, they may be dropped as an artist from that label roster. An amateur’s perception of success is more often based on immeasurable indicators such as personal satisfaction and the reviews it gathers from the cultural context it is set within. With the development of cheaper and superior quality technology, outsiders such as amateurs and independents are partaking in the music industry for pleasure in contrast to an actual business.

Another interesting aspect of liveness and performance that became apparent through this research is the importance of a live performance to go to plan. For major label acts there are huge sums of money invested from their labels; the audiences at these shows may have also paid huge sums of money not only for a ticket but for the expenses of getting to a performance. When circumstances occur that affect performance as an event, an attitude of “the show must go on” is taken by those involved in the performance. This can be seen in the example of Dave Grohl of the Foo Fighters breaking his leg at a gig in Gothenburg Sweden. Grohl leaves the stage where it is made clear to him the extent of his

injuries. He then returns to the stage and continues performing waiting for a medical team to bring him a cast.² Again referring to appendix A, even at a grass roots and amateur level there is still a need for the show to go on. The venue for the show burnt down and the headlining act went to Liverpool to play at another show to ensure they still got paid their guarantee. Not every show has the opportunity to continue as sometimes the issue is quite serious. It would seem that the acceptable reason for cancelling a performance is when it becomes life threatening for someone involved with the performance as seen in the earlier example of Ted Robbins during the live staging of *Peter Kay's Phoenix Nights*.

With the framing of earlier instances of the travelling musician and the reasons behind touring, it is simple to establish that touring in general is still a necessity to gain new fans and broaden their reach as a band. Even as far back as the 18th century, musicians had been travelling to spread their name, as stated most notably by Ehrlich (1985) and Nathan (1946). For present day big money artists like Madonna, The Rolling Stones, Kanye West, Nicki Minaj and so on; it is still as important as it is not just their name that they are spreading but a brand.³ There is also a necessity for the act of live performance in the current context as with the outlet of technology there has also been an increase in the act of simulation (lip-syncing, miming etc.)⁴; so it is important that an artist or band can demonstrate their ability to cut it live. Although in this digital period we now have other means and methods to connect with fans and audiences. There are a multitude of tools like social media, internet blogs, TV and others that have become accessible to all. These tools are all important to the continued growth of the industry.

It is at this point the legitimacy of the argument of “rock authenticity” is brought into question. With the lines of creativity and musicianship being challenged, the very basis of rock authenticity is finding its self at the centre of a crisis. Academics and writers, in

particular those of the contemporary sources used for this research, are determined to equate their findings and evidence back to rock authenticity struggling to generalise their conclusions in the contemporary context.⁵ A new term needs to be sought and in this case I offer digital authenticity. Rock authenticity is concerned with the real versus fake, the live versus the staged and the true versus the mediatized; but the mediatized can be argued as having its authentic. The example of Beyoncé's "visual album" should not and cannot be judged against rock authenticity. The mediatized music videos of her digital record are not authentic for rock and do not follow the traditional "rock" blueprint; but they should be considered digitally authentic as they allow her to validate her authenticity through a digital medium. Grossberg suggested "what is considered authentic in the context of one subgenre is not necessarily seen that way in another" (Auslander, 1999: 67); this is a sentiment that rings true with the idea of digital authenticity. It is not an intention to offer digital authenticity as a counter concept but more as a sister concept. As discussed in the literature review of this work, Fonarow offers credibility as a sister concept of authenticity but credibility does not adequately cover the issues present when discussing digital culture and media. The fundamental ideas of being "real" or "true", in the case of digital authenticity, are gained and established in alternative processes. To what extent can this term be applied? Performance and recordings have been flippantly categorized as "mediatized" and "inauthentic" due to their technological qualities. Performance has new inherent characteristics that do not conform to rock authenticity. Whereas an audience at a performance still have a concern of cultural capital, they now have a way of documenting it as a process investing in their own stature as a member of the musical community. It is documented on social media and the internet through artefacts of fandom as Carter and Coley suggest. These artefacts in the opinions of Auslander, Hegarty, Halliwell, and others

would be seen as inauthentic. They are the antithesis to what they understand and love about liveness and performance. These digitally authentic artefacts are forms of cultural capital which allow us to draw a parallel with live performance. It is difficult to deny them as mediatized due to the obvious influence of technology but not in the negative context that some academics infer the term of mediatized. The continued growth of technology and its use will continue to alter and develop digital authenticity as a concept because as more opportunities occur for digital influence to the more artists and performers will use it.

“Fluidity, rather than integrity, is the defining characteristic of digital technology” (McCourt, 2005: 251). This statement is very potentially true but I argue that it should be taken a step further and rewritten as; fluidity and availability, rather than integrity, is the defining characteristic of digital technology. With usage of streaming and internet radio sites, audiences and fans have validated the “music like water” model that Kusek and Leonhard (2005) have argued so adamantly to prove. We are seeing a change in the way in which audiences are interacting and consuming music. I am not the first academic to say that music has become a commodity, as it has; however I don’t feel comfortable choosing an ontological preference between the two. Digital technology has made the traditional methods of becoming a musician and performer obsolete. It is no longer needed for an artist to hone and craft their skill night after night onstage. It can all happen with the upload of a single video to the internet. This is another example of digital authenticity. The rise to fame that performers find themselves in with entertainment shows like *Pop Idol*, *Britain’s Got Talent* and *X Factor* are not what would normally be considered authentic. However under the umbrella of digital authenticity it gives these shows and performance a different context in which to be judged. Audiences want to interact with their favourite performers and musicians and now they can. The internet has changed the marketplace in which music

has traded. The importance of availability has rendered brick and mortar record stores almost extinct. Audiences want their music at the earliest possibility and the internet and purchase stores like iTunes facilitate that. There is less concern for practises and consumer practises of the past

There are two further defining conclusions of this research which are that of choice and taste. The music industry and academics alike must not underestimate the power of choice and taste. The U2 *Songs of Innocence* iTunes giveaway is a clear example of this. Audiences have a choice and tastes, and U2, regardless of their success, are not to everybody's taste. iTunes users had the opportunity to get free music and a lot of users skipped that option. People want free music which is obvious from the amount of illegal downloading and streaming of music taking place; but people want to choose their free music. They do not want to be told what to listen to otherwise the internet and digital medium becomes like every other listening alternative.

Auslander puts forward 'The question of whether "mediatized performance" will come to be valued over live performance in culture will be answered in generations to come' (Auslander, 1999: 59). The music industry and the way in which it operates constantly changes, these questions (and others like it) that Auslander speaks of become less and less concerning. As time has progressed we have the ability of hindsight and we can see the way in which things have changed. The questions need answering now and not in generations to come.

After all the evidence put forward in this thesis there is a quote from Bob Geldof paraphrased by Camille Paglia, quoted by Gracyk. Geldof reduces why people get involved with music, performance and touring to "three very simple rock and roll reasons: to get laid, to get fame, and to get rich" (Gracyk, 1996: 177). Could it really be that simple?

Notes

¹ Strachan (2007) offers an interesting question regarding the perceptions of indie and micro labels regarding success and rewards.

² Grohl later posted a message on the Foo Fighters' website regarding the incident in which he also apologises for having to cancel the Foo Fighters' upcoming shows including headlining Glastonbury Festival.

<http://foofighters.com/operation>. Accessed June 2015.

³ It is important to also detail that this brand does not just involve music. As an example Nicki Minaj has a perfume, drinks range and other products related to her that rely on her ability as an artist.

⁴ As earlier discussed, Auslander offers an extensive case study on simulation in performance by looking at the example of Milli Vanilli.

⁵ Auslander (1999), Moore (2001), Fonarow (2006).

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Appendix A

This is a report written reflecting on a short tour that I completed with The River Card in July 2013. The tour was a total of six dates with Alpha & Omega, a band from the USA. Alpha & Omega had already been on tour with Terror, another band from the states for around 3 weeks in central Europe before we joined them in the UK for the last leg of their Euro tour. This was not the first time that Alpha & Omega had been to the UK before and were already a “well-established” band in the global hardcore scene. They had just recorded a new record titled ‘No Rest, No Peace’, set to be released on the independent label Bridge Nine Records; a label which Alpha & Omega had recently signed to. There was a lot of hype around Alpha & Omega for these reasons. For us as a band we considered this a huge tour. We are a small band with a do-it-yourself work ethic. We have completed extensive tours of Europe, South East Asia and America. We have also written and recorded multiple records on our own without any financial backing from any label or outside party.¹ This allows us to have a choice over what we do and gives us control over the decisions we make as a band.

The tour its self was only six days, but the preparation for the tour begins much earlier than the first show. There is the booking of the shows for the tour and the rehearsals to get stage ready that go on long before the first show. Our merchandise supplies were also a little low so we needed to gather fresh designs and ideas and get them printed for sale. The tour was booked by an international booking company by the name of Artery Global, who have booked a number of tours for bands and artists from across the world. As a band, The River Card had previously booked their own tours through our guitarist, who has built up a contact list of promoters across the UK and Europe. We were asked to join the tour by the booking agent who offered a basic support package with a small guarantee without the added cost of the van, which was shared with and the costs covered by Alpha & Omega. This was a condition of the agreement, so that there would be no extra cost for a driver of the van for Alpha & Omega which meant that driving responsibilities were split by our guitarist and myself.

This tour was slightly different to previous tours we had done, in the sense that not every member of the tour was in the van. Both bands had five members and the van only had nine seats including the driver. Due to the fact that the tour was in the UK, members of The River Card also still had to fulfil work commitments. This resulted in some members returning home every night after playing the show. The additional cost of an extra car was

not passed onto the tour as we were able to secure lifts or alternative transport with friends. It's vitally important to try and keep expenses like this on a tour at a minimum. As we are without any form of label backing or sponsorship, all costs and expenses come out of each member's pockets. I personally don't mind losing a bit of money on a tour as I'm in full time employment, but some other members aren't as keen so it was really vital that this cost and costs like this are avoided.

When you are in a part time band like The River Card, members of the band have other commitments such as work and family. This doesn't always fit well with the bands plans and touring needs. As a band it is important to not let these things stop or affect the opportunities available to the band. We have put a lot of time and effort in to this band and the music we've made for us to pass up on good opportunities for the band. As an example for this tour our guitarist was traveling in New York during the six dates of the tour, which resulted in us having to use a stand in to ensure we could do this tour as a five piece and not a four piece. We have done other tours as a four piece previously, again to make sure we don't miss out on a good opportunity; but we much prefer to tour and perform as a five piece rather than as a four. We were also due to use a stand in for drums as our regular drummer had run out of annual leave from his job. The stand in drummer who was due to fill in for us on drums injured himself playing football meaning he was unable to be a part of the tour. This is a reason why our regular drummer had to return home after every show as this was one of those tours we couldn't pass up on and we needed to make it work. These are the lengths that bands like The River Card and Alpha & Omega need to go through to ensure we can do these tours.



Figure 5 – Official tour poster/flyer detailing dates and venues – Unknown creator flyer provided by Artery Global.

On the above tour poster there was a last minute change to the show in Canterbury. The venue was changed from The Beer Cart Arms in Canterbury to Platform 5 Bar in Ashford which is roughly half an hour away from the original venue. The show was set up on an outside stage in the beer garden of the venue. This is slightly different to what we were expecting as this is more often the setting of an outdoor festival. Two bands into the show, a decision was made between the promoter and manager of the venue to move the show in to

a room at the back of the venue. This involved moving the entire backline for the show in to this new room and setting all the gear up again in another room. This decision was made due to the “excessive” volume and the issues it was causing among the local residents and neighbouring businesses. The manager insisted that the local police would shut the show down and this was the only way it could continue. For the sake of the show we agreed to move everything across to the new room. This took around thirty minutes to do which can be quite crucial at shows like these, any lapse or delay in a show can have quite a negative effect on the show. Delays can often lead to the show over running resulting in bands going on late or sometimes not at all. The crowd at most hardcore shows we play is relatively young so a lot of people at the show rely on public transport or lifts from parents or friends to get home, so it’s imperative that these shows run as scheduled to minimise inconvenience to the people paying to watch the show. Delays can also lead to crowds becoming disinterested or bored at the show which as a group of performers is almost unthinkable. Members of the audience may also choose to leave the show temporarily in these delays to get food or to have a cigarette which could see them miss a band or some of the show, which again is not something we would want to happen. However, the rest of this show ran fine with no issues with the show finishing on time.

After the show we stayed in Canterbury with a friend of Alpha & Omega’s. We stayed with Dan the singer of a band called Cold World from America. Dan now lives in the UK with his English wife and three children. Seven members of the tour slept on Dan’s living room and dining room floor. This can be a regular occurrence as there is very little budget to pay for accommodation so you take what you can get. We didn’t sleep till gone 2am and were awoken by Dan’s daughters at around 8am. They were very excited to have people in the house and were playing with us like they had known us for years; I even read a book of nursery rhymes to one of Dan’s daughters who insisted I did every one. This was a tour first for myself in the sense that most people that I’ve stayed with on tour have been with someone who lived on their own, a couple or people with roommates. This was the first time I’d stayed with somebody with a family. Dan organised us some breakfast and drinks in the morning before he left for work leaving us in his house. He told us to close the door as we left. It always astounds me when people do this as there has to be a huge level of trust. A point I’d like to make here is that there is a clear sense of community here. This happens all over the world for many different bands and musicians. If it wasn’t for these people who

allow hardcore bands to sleep and crash on their floors, hardcore bands would struggle to make ends meet on tour. This is an arguable instance of hardcore bands breaking down the barriers of performer and fan. I have slept on the floors of people who I don't know and I wouldn't even be able to tell you the name of some of the people I've stayed with through my years of touring, but I'm grateful nonetheless. As I say we stayed with Alpha & Omega's friend Dan, the more I've toured the more people I've met. Whenever we go back through the same towns or countries, it's always cool to see people or friends that you've met before. This is something that touring also facilitates, without touring I wouldn't have met some of these people. It allows you to make connections and network with people around the world.

The second show of tour was at the Rainbow Rooms in Digbeth, Birmingham. There was another touring package that the promoter combined with our show. It was another band from the US called Foundation and a UK band, who we've played with numerous times called Survival. There were also a few local bands on the bill which made it quite a lengthy show. We were the fourth band on which can be an awkward slot on the bill as it is right in the middle of the show. The room wasn't as busy for us as we'd hoped but I was quite happy with how we performed as a band. The room began to fill after we'd played for Survival, Alpha & Omega and Foundation. The show played through with no issues and we went back to the house of our guitarist in Stoke-on-Trent and stayed there.

Before we left for our show in Leeds the next day, I took Alpha & Omega to watch a film at a local cinema in Stoke-on-Trent. I work for the chain of cinema that cinema belonged to, so there was no cost to any members of the tour. It was good to relax and hang out and take advantage of the short drive to Leeds. We played a function room in Leeds at a pub called the Packhorse. There were another three bands on the bill, one of which was a band we had toured with twice before called Broken Teeth. Broken Teeth are one of the biggest UK hardcore bands at the moment. Whenever they perform they always get a good reaction across Europe. I've known the members of Broken Teeth for a long time and have seen them grow as a band so it's always great to play with them and share these experiences with great friends.

Leeds has one of the best scenes in UK hardcore at the moment. The shows are always wild and the crowds are often energetic. This is what transpired that night. Every band got a good reaction and there were a large number of people at the show. We stayed in Leeds that night with a few friends who all shared a house together. We played computer

games and socialised late into the night. A particular point I remember from that night is sleeping on a laminate floor which was quite an uncomfortable experience. Sleeping on floors like this really affects my enjoyment when on tour, I often find myself hoping for a carpet or rug and not wood or tiles.

The next show of the tour was at a venue called The Cathouse just off Jamaica Street in the centre of Glasgow, Scotland. This was the second time I'd played Glasgow with the previous time not being particularly great or successful. The crowd at the show that evening were quite young, which is something that many members of the tour remarked on. It's not that this was a problem but more just an observation of how this show differed from the others. The show itself was ok but not the greatest; again I was happy we played well. After the show we were left with a dilemma of what to do about accommodation. We had an offer of staying with one of the promoters' friends not too far away from where we played. The issue we had was that some members of the tour wanted to go out and party at a pub or club but the person we were had the opportunity to stay with wasn't keen on this as he had work early the next day so we would have had to leave early. The other option we had was to go to Manchester and have some members of the tour stay at my house and some at our drummer's house. The other plus to this option was that people could still have a night out in Manchester if they wanted as the drive could be done in around two hours. Before we left Glasgow, I took some of the guys from Alpha & Omega to a chip shop and introduced them to some Scottish "delicacies". They tried a battered Mars bar, battered black pudding, battered pizza and a glass bottle of Irn Bru. They weren't very keen on the black pudding but they quite enjoyed everything else. One of the things I've previously enjoyed when being on tour is trying different foods from different cultures. I'm not saying that it was their favourite moment of tour or that they particularly this experience themselves but it was something cool to do and I myself personally enjoyed it.

The next show was at NQ Live in Manchester. This for me was a hometown show so I was really looking forward to playing this show. I knew quite a few people that were coming to the show so I had really high hopes for it. Before the show a few of us went and watched another film at Intu Trafford Centre. We also stopped off at the Salford Lads Club in Salford. When I'm touring places or countries I've never been before I try and go see some places of interest and culture where possible. This is always one of my favourite things about touring. I always think about the things I've done and the places I've been and how grateful I am to

touring. It allows you to go to places and see things that you may never have gotten the chance to if it were not for the outlet of touring. Quite often this is for no or very little personal cost; it is touring that facilitates this.

We were due to meet other members of the tour at the venue at 15:00. On the way to the venue we got a call from our guitarist asking if we were at the venue or nearby as there was a problem. He didn't say what the issue was but that we should get there as soon as possible. We got within five minutes of the venue when the roads became congested; the closer we got the worse the traffic got. A lot of the roads near the venue had been closed off by police cars which suggested that something quite serious had happened. You can see on the map below the venue on with its original name Moho Live; we were driving down Dale Street towards Church Street where we were crossing Oldham Street which runs parallel to Tib Street which is the road that the venue was on, we could see a fire engine in action and a lot of smoke. I knew it was roughly behind the location of the venue so I was almost certain it was going to affect the show in some way. We could not drive down Tib Street as it was closed off so I parked up nearby and we met up with the other members of the tour.

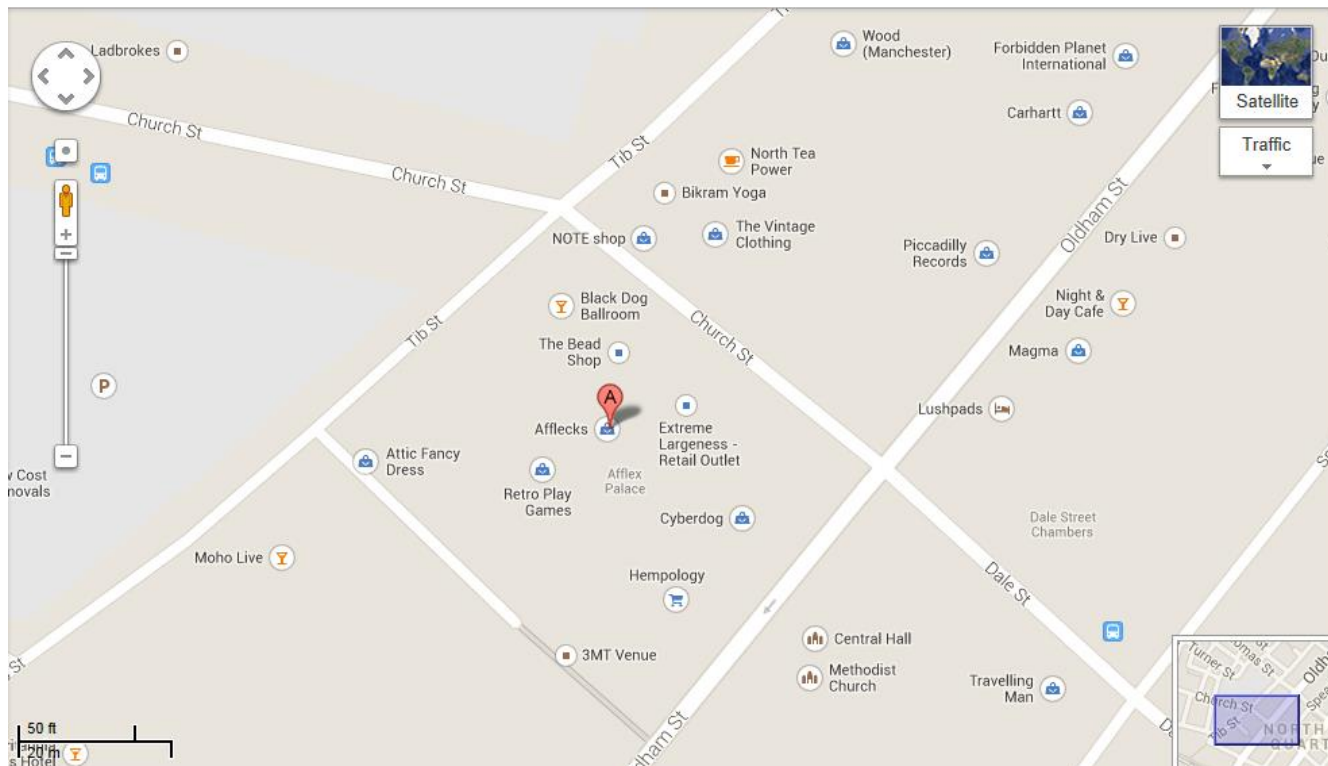


Figure 6 - Map image taken from Google Maps.

Once we met up with the rest of the tour, it came to light that there had been a fire in a hair and beauty accessories shop Paul's Hair World, which was directly behind the venue. That fire quickly spread to the venue we were due to play that night. The promoter from the show had another show that evening in Liverpool with a band called Trash Talk from Sacramento, California. He offered Alpha & Omega the opportunity to jump on that show and still get their guarantee. For them as a touring band a long way from home, it was imperative they still got paid for the show and didn't lose the money. At the time the promoter didn't offer for us to play the show as there wasn't room in the line-up to fit us in as well. Our vocalist decided not to come to Liverpool for the show as he had arranged to meet friends in Manchester that night. When we arrived in Liverpool it became apparent that one of the bands in the original line-up had pulled out meaning there was now space for us to play the show. As our vocalist had decided not to travel to Liverpool with us, we were unable to play the show. The show was very busy as Trash Talk are a much bigger and more known band than ourselves and Alpha & Omega. Both Alpha & Omega and Trash Talk played well and it was a good show. It was a shame we couldn't play the show as we could have gained a bit more exposure as it was busy. It also would have given us the opportunity to play to people we had never played to before as Trash Talk have a slightly different fan base in comparison to the usual hardcore shows we play.

We went back to Manchester that night and went to a rock club called Satan's Hollow with Trash Talk. The promoter from the show also worked as a DJ at Satan's Hollow so we got guest list which again incurred no extra cost for the tour. I didn't particularly enjoy the night as I was quite tired and I knew we had quite a long drive to London ahead of us the next day, which I would have to drive.

The next day we woke to some pretty sad news in that one of the firemen who were fighting the blaze that prevented the show from occurring had died during the night whilst tackling the blaze. It was only then that it really dawned on some of us how serious this incident actually was. If this had happened even just an hour later we would have been inside the venue setting up and getting ready for the show. The actions of the individuals could have had some serious repercussions for us. This was quite a harrowing and saddening thought really. I remember thinking how we'd had quite a lucky escape.²

We had to be up early to drive down to London for the final show of tour. Often the problem with driving to London is the traffic and congestion that regularly surrounds the capital. I dislike driving in London at the best of times, so driving a big van that I'm not familiar with isn't something I look forward to. This aside, I'm never very optimistic about playing a show London as I've never really played a good show there in four or five attempts. London is a difficult scene to play in. The size of London can also contribute to this as it's so big there can often be a few shows going on at the same time; so if you're playing a show the same night as say a slightly bigger band, more of the crowd may be at the other show. At the same time fans of hardcore from London are passionate towards their own bands from that region coined by the title of being an "LBU" band. I've found it's very tough for bands that aren't part of this "LBU" scene or if they don't have the "LBU" sound. Bigger bands from outside the UK don't usually struggle as there is enough interest across the city to make people attend. This was giving me some high hopes for a good show in the hope that Alpha & Omega would have the pull to bring in an audience.

We were playing a venue called Our Black Heart in Camden, just around the corner from the famous Underworld venue. We arrived in plenty of time to the show giving us plenty of time to load in and set up. We also had enough time to go get some food from the local food market. Each member of the tour was given a £7 food buyout from the show. A big difference to UK tours when comparing them to tours I've been on in Europe and the USA is the hospitality at shows. In Europe the promoters often provide bands food and accommodation, whereas in the UK promoters rarely organise accommodation or food for bands, so to receive a £7 buyout is something quite different.

There was one other local band on the bill with us that night with The River Card playing second and Alpha & Omega headlining. The venue was a room in the upstairs of a bar. The bar downstairs was quite busy so the expectation was that the show was going to be quite busy. This wasn't to be the case. The turnout for the show was poor with no more than twenty people paying in to watch the show. This was disappointing as the rest of the shows were busy. It's also quite frustrating as we had travelled so far to get to London for a show which didn't appear to have been promoted to the standard we would have expected it to have been. Our guitarist spoke to some friends of his from London who attended the show and they confirmed that not many of their friends knew about the show. What is often the case with small DIY hardcore shows these days with promoters is that they create a

Facebook event which is considered as “promoting” a show. This isn’t enough to produce a good show.

After the show we loaded out, said our goodbyes to Alpha & Omega and headed home. We needed to leave almost straightaway after the show as I myself needed to be in work at 08:00 the next day back in Manchester. This is often the case for our band that someone needs to be back in work the next day as we all often tour within the confines of personal jobs and annual leave cycles which doesn’t give you a lot of flexibility as a band. Any extra time off could come at a personal cost to an individual member of the band which again we try and avoid.

The first few days after tour are sometimes the hardest for me. Even though this tour wasn’t as long as some other tours I have done, it’s still difficult to adjust. I enjoy being a musician and playing shows. I see my time up on stage as a spectacle, that what I’m doing is worthwhile. I’m not saying that what I do for a personal job isn’t worthwhile but it doesn’t have the same level of satisfaction as touring or playing shows. Times on tour can be hard but the good times far outweigh the bad.

Notes

¹ It would be worth mentioning that our most recent 2014 record *Forced Hand* was released by German label Farewell Records. Any records before that were released without any backing. The fact that this record was released by a label doesn’t alter the fact that we can be still make decisions about when we tour rather than a label telling us when to tour.

² For information relating to the incident please read the following links: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-23302304>
<http://www.itv.com/news/granada/story/2013-07-13/northern-quarter-fire/>. Both accessed June 2015.