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ABSTRACTS

Working small, acting big: Sources of, and strategies for, business innovation among South African jazz musicians

Gwen Ansell & Helena Barnard

This paper investigates an under-researched dimension of musicology, and specifically jazz scholarship: jazz as a component of a music industry with economic impact and organisational requirements, and how jazz musicians, in the words of the US Future of Music Coalition, “do more with less”. By gathering data from a diverse range of role-players in the industry—from the actual players of musical instruments to the organisations that supply sound engineering services, venues or equipment, to policy-makers, including government—we provide evidence that the industry achieves its creative and economic impact through strong, historically-rooted relational networks. We discuss how stereotyped perceptions of the industry as ‘disorganised’ misconstrue a mode of operation of the creative and cultural industries. In this context, policy interventions focused on investment in fixed infrastructure may produce returns far smaller than their cost. The uniquely deformed spatial and relational legacies of apartheid, plus a new international music industry value-chain context whose forces are centrifugal, we argue, demand more varied and flexible policy responses: including the focused resourcing of digital readiness, and a range of interventions to assist live performance. In so doing, we contribute to an emerging body of scholarship on the economics of jazz.

Chris McGregor: Introduction and interview

Christopher Ballantine

This extensive interview with the late, great South African jazz pianist, composer and bandleader Chris McGregor—recorded in 1986 but not previously published—seeks to probe new terrain. Appearing here in redacted form, it explores, for the first time, a number of crucial aspects of McGregor’s musical thought and reveals its socio-political grounding. A contextualizing introduction points to the tragic ironies of McGregor’s early death, and argues that his work is a socially relevant aesthetic exemplar whose importance to the ‘new’ South Africa has not yet been understood.

Thula Mabota: South African jazz and popular music since 1994

David B. Coplan

Thula Mabota is Zulu for ‘knock down the walls’, an appropriate title for this essay on the transformations in South African jazz and popular music since the democratic transition of 1994. The article discusses how South African musicians have adapted not only to new professional opportunities and artistic currents, but also to the simultaneous, dramatic globalisation of the local music industry, and the impact of new technologies on production, distribution, and consumption world-wide. Examples and cases of new trends since the early 1990s are drawn from a wide variety of genres, including kwaito, maskanda, Afro-pop, and jazz. Using such cases, the articulation or dialogue between musical currents and the social and political context and issues of the era are analysed. The author argues importantly that political expression and engagement in music takes many forms, and is not confined to overtly topical song texts. Tribute is paid to women composers and performers who have taken the lead in employing the broader opportunities now available in the industry. Finally, the article addresses the possibilities and often severe problems that have characterised the field of jazz over the past two decades, both in

its creative transformation and audience production.

‘Om ’n gifsak te versteek’: ‘King Kong’, the apartheid state and the politics of movement, 1959-1961

Lindelwa Dalamba

King Kong: An African Jazz Opera is commonly viewed as an antiapartheid statement that voiced its discontent through African jazz and other urban black musics, and as a musical statement of 1950s liberalism that presaged that ideology’s ousting in the era of Grand Apartheid. These analyses mostly rely on the musical’s story, on the relationship between the white producers and the black cast, and on the musical’s reception for their argument. This paper focuses on a neglected moment in *King Kong*’s career, when it was absent from the country’s segregated theatres. It hones in on the attempts made by the King Kong Company to travel beyond the Union’s borders and the state’s responses to these requests. I argue that viewing *King Kong* from the perspective of the apartheid state and using material other than its content or records of its reception, affords insight into the state’s restriction of black (jazz) musicians’ movement, its ambivalent position in the cultural politics of the Cold War, and jazz’s position in both.

‘Reminiscing in tempo’: The Rainbow and resistance in 1980s South Africa

Marc Duby

The Rainbow club in Pinetown, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa has been in existence for thirty years. In this article I recount some experiences of playing jazz in that venue in the 1980s from a broadly auto-ethnographic perspective. Drawing on personal experience and interviews with the former owner Ben Pretorius and the photojournalist Rafs Mayet, I sketch an account of how the Rainbow served as a rallying point for resistance to apartheid’s status quo of legislated separation. Through the shared experience of a wide variety of musical encounters, I argue that this venue enacted a sense of temporary community in a time of great political upheaval and repression by the apartheid state. The testimonies of Pretorius and Mayet provide a wealth of material in support of the Rainbow’s part in bringing musicians and the public together, borne out by my personal experience as a fairly regular participant in concerts at the venue in the 1980s.

Review Article: *Musical Echoes: South African women thinking in jazz*

Paula Fourie

Musical Echoes: South African Women Thinking in Jazz tells the life story of jazz singer Sathima Bea Benjamin, a narrative that is interspersed with ethnomusicologist Carol Ann Muller’s academic reflections. In these reflections, Benjamin’s life story becomes a case study for the exploration of a number of themes such as African diaspora, exile, coloured identity and gendered performance. Featuring the names of both women on its cover, *Musical Echoes* is presented as a collaboration in which both Muller and Benjamin have ‘had a hand in contributing to its content’ (7), even though Muller admits to being the author of the written text. This review article discusses the contents of this monograph and examines its core concerns with specific focus on the notion of ‘collaboration’ in biographical writing. With reference to Lindelwa Dalamba’s (2008) study of the assisted autobiographies of Miriam Makeba, Joe Mogotsi and Hugh Masekela, this article explores *Musical Echoes* as an attempt to synthesize biography and autobiography, something that is regarded here as problematic.

Abdullah Ibrahim and the validation of the local: ‘Is this what Rashid Vally wanted?’

Jostine Loubser

The piece ‘Mannenberg’ by pianist-composer Abdullah Ibrahim is considered by many as South Africa's most iconic jazz tune. Recorded in 1974, it became an instant hit, a ‘Friday night’ tune to put on the record player, kick your shoes off and dance to. Through an unusual journey, however, the composition became synonymous with the anti-apartheid movement, so much so that it is viewed by many as the second (unofficial) national anthem.

Naturally, calling a jazz tune a ‘National Anthem’ is an assertive statement to make, yet the *klang idéal* suggested in ‘Mannenberg’ reiterates this: stately in character, it draws its compositional elements from a diverse group of musics. The use of these musical materials, it has been suggested, had been chosen by Ibrahim specifically to create a sound that will become ‘the voice of the voiceless’.

This article explores both the historical and compositional constructs of the piece, exploring identity, history and the musical makings of the tune in a bid to answer the question: “Is this what Rashid Vally wanted?”

On jazz, sociability and symbolic mobility in South Africa: Thinking across some post-apartheid fault lines

Brett Pyper

In South Africa, one of the most striking features of jazz culture lies, beyond the extension of global musical commodity and performance culture in the formal market and public sphere, in the rich social life of the music in many grassroots township settings, where jazz has been appropriated and reframed according to local cultural values through various social processes and performative practices. Among the latter, this article foregrounds modes of jazz sociability and demonstrates how they can assume decidedly local forms and resonances, among which the South African jazz *stokvel*, or jazz appreciation society, merits considered attention. The latter scene is juxtaposed with a public performance by the legendary jazz pianist, Randy Weston, presented as part of the ‘Jazz Africa Heritage’ project in South Africa in 2007. Highlighting fractures within and between South Africa’s post-apartheid jazz scenes, and reviewing the role that jazz is deemed to have played during and after apartheid, I argue that it has become problematic to characterise contemporary South African jazz culture in unitary terms as various, partially contradictory public manifestations of jazz attempt to enlist the music and its associated representations and relations in the crafting of a post-apartheid nation, economy and culture.