

# International Journal of Music Business Research

Volume 2, Number 2, October 2013

Special issue on the Australian Music Economy

Editors:

**Patrik Wikström (guest editor)**

Queensland University of Technology, Australia

**Peter Tschmuck**

University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, Austria

**Dennis Collopy**

University of Hertfordshire, UK

**Carsten Winter**

University of Music, Drama and Media Hanover, Germany

## AIMS AND SCOPE

The International Journal of Music Business Research (IJMBR) as a double-blind reviewed academic journal provides a new platform to present articles of merit and to shed light on the current state of the art of music business research. Music business research is a scientific approach at the intersection of economic, artistic, especially musical, cultural, social, legal, technological developments that aims at a better understanding of the creation/production, dissemination/distribution and reception/consumption of the cultural good music. Thus, the IJMBR targets all academics, from students to professors, from around the world and from all disciplines with an interest in research on the music economy.

---

## EDITORIAL BOARD

**Dagmar Abfalter**, University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, Austria

**David Bahanovich**, University of Hertfordshire, UK

**Marc Bourreau**, Université Telecom ParisTech, France

**Ryan Daniel**, James Cook University Townsville, Australia

**Beate Flath**, Karl-Franzens University Graz, Austria

**Simon Frith**, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, UK

**Victor Ginsburgh**, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium

**Philip Graham**, Queensland University of Technology, Australia

**Christian Handke**, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands

**Susanne Janssen**, Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands

**Martin Kretschmer**, Bournemouth University, UK

**Frank Linde**, Cologne University of Applied Sciences, Germany

**Martin Lücke**, Macromedia University for Media and Communication, Campus Berlin, Germany

**Jordi McKenzie**, University of Sydney, Australia

**Juan D. Montoro Pons**, University Valencia, Spain

**François Moreau**, Université Bretagne Occidentale, France

**Guy Morrow**, Macquarie University Sydney, Australia

**Daniel Nordgård**, University of Agder, Norway

**Felix Oberholzer-Gee**, Harvard Business School, US

**Lucie Šilerová**, Janáček Academy of Music, Czech Republic

**Alfred Smudits**, University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, Austria

**Eva Stöckler**, Danube-University Krems, Austria

**Michael Theede**, Macromedia University for Media and Communication, Campus Hamburg, Germany

**Aleksandra Wagner**, Jagiellonian University Krakow, Poland

**Patrik Wikström**, Queensland University of Technology, Australia

---

# International Journal of Music Business Research

Volume 2, Number 2, October 2013

Special issue on the Australian Music Economy

## CONTENTS

Editorial 4

### Articles

Regulating artist managers: An insider's perspective  
*Guy Morrow* 8

The Newcastle music industry: An ethnographic study of a regional  
creative system in action  
*Phillip McIntyre and Gaye Sheather* 36

What constitutes artist success in the Australian music industries?  
*Diane Hughes, Sarah Keith, Guy Morrow, Mark Evans and Denis  
Crowdy* 61

Notes for contributors 81

## Editorial

*Patrik Wikström<sup>1</sup> and Peter Tschmuck<sup>2</sup>*

The music business is one of the most international of all the cultural industries. Music, industry practices, and people travel easily across country borders and the major music companies are dominating national music markets across the globe. However, at the same time the music industries in different countries are very idiosyncratic. Music is an ingrained part of a country's history, its culture and heritage. One aspect of this idiosyncrasy is related to how creatives, audiences and music organizations are affected by and is able to take advantage of the ongoing digitization of society.

This special issue takes its starting point in this observation and turns its focus on the music economy in Australia. Some of the peculiarities of the Australian music economy are influenced by its colonial history and its cultural proximity with nations such as the US and the UK. Australia is a much smaller market than these two music industry giants and experiences similar challenges as other countries that share cultural traits with a bigger neighbor. Other examples of such countries are Canada, Austria and Belgium. Since the cultural barriers between for instance Australia and the UK are very low, the music scene in the smaller country is often dominated by an influx of music from the bigger. Another side of this dynamics is the fact that musical talent tends to abandon the smaller country to seek their fortunes in the bigger one. Australia has certainly had its share of these difficulties and has been heavily influenced by the US and British music industry after World War II.

---

<sup>1</sup> Patrik Wikström is Associate Professor and Principal Research Fellow at the ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation of the Queensland University of Technology, Australia. He is the author of "The Music Industry. Music in the Cloud" (revised and updated 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Polity, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Peter Tschmuck is Professor for Culture Institutions Studies at the Institute for Cultural Management and Cultural Studies at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, Austria with a focus on music business and industry research. He is the author of the book "Creativity and Innovation in the Music Industry" (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Springer, 2012) and co-edited "Music Business and the Experience Economy. The Australasian Case, Springer, 2013).

Australia nevertheless has been a pool for talents such as the Bee Gees, Olivia Newton-John, AC/DC, INXS, Kylie Minogue, who started their careers down-under but gained international success via the US and the UK. However, times change and we experience that Australian acts like Gotye break internationally directly from Australia circumventing the US- and UK music industry.

At the same time though, Australia is far away from these major markets, which makes it historically difficult for major artists to travel to Australia for promotion and touring. As a consequence a vivid local tradition of music production, distribution and consumption has emerged including a number of specific Australian music genres, such as local version of folk and country music, but also a unique classical music scene. The relative "isolation" of the past decades enabled the emergence of important regional music festivals, but also fuelled a vivid independent label scene. In the last few years, indigenous musicians such as Yothu Yindi, Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu and Jessica Mauboy were fully recognized not only in an artistic but also in an economic sense, if we consider their chart successes.

Whereas regional and local broadcasting stations, e.g. the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), played a significant role in promoting local repertory in the past, digital technologies change the rules of the game. For instance, success in the past was measured by the amount of airplay a song was able to get in these radio stations, and the ultimate measure of success was the ability to build an international career. In this special issue, Hughes et al. argue that success in the Australian music industries are determined by other measures than an artist's ability to expand to overseas markets. For instance, DIY artists in the digital age measure their success in their ability to raise funds from crowdfunding campaigns and raising fans via social media.

Australia is a large country that is not only far away from most other advanced music markets in other countries, but the distances within the country are also substantial. This is an aspect that is investigated in the second paper in this special issue. Phillip McIntyre and Gay Sheather turn our attention to the local music market of Newcastle in New South

Wales. The paper is an ethnographic study that shows how Newcastle has been shaped, not primarily by its position in relation to other national markets, but its geographic and mental relationship with the larger local music industry in Sydney and Melbourne. This study has many parallels to studies of other music cities that have similar dependencies to a larger and stronger city, such as Liverpool to London. McIntyre and Sheather highlight that the need for international recording artists to go on tour – due to the decline of the recorded music market – and the loss of performance venues in the city *"... has meant the opportunities for the local music industry continue to shrink. This has resulted in musicians in Newcastle having to diversify the array of services they offer while also coping with a loss of income from their traditional sources."*

In the digital age, hence, the artists' managers are challenged to find different, innovative approaches to channel money from several sources to their clients. The management role has, thus, become more important than ever and therefore the manager-artist-relationship is crucial for success. Guy Morrow, who by himself is a very successful manager of the ARIA-awarded and platinum selling Australian band Boy & Bear, conducted a study on the need for a regulatory framework that governs the role of the manager and his/her relationship with the artist. As a starting point he analyses the Entertainment Industry Act 1989 of New South Wales, which provides regulations to protect artists from unfair business practices. In analyzing 18 interviews with internationally renown artist managers, he comes to the conclusion that artist management practices cannot be consistently regulated by legislation. Instead, Morrow, advocates for self-regulation that should be based on binding guidelines and educational measures.

The articles in this special issue on the Australian music economy make a solid contribution to our understanding of the music industries in a nation where physical geography still matters, even though digitization is throwing its disruptive forces at the creatives, the audiences and those that make a living connecting the two. This special issue of the International Journal of Music Business Research (IJMBR) perfectly complements the recently published volume ["Music Business and the Experi-](#)

---

[ence Economy. The Australasian Case](#)", edited by Peter Tschmuck, Philip L. Pearce and Steven Campbell, which is the first book on the Australian music business from an academic perspective.

The IJMBR is aimed at all academics, from students to professors, from around the world and from all disciplines with an interest in music business research. Interdisciplinary papers are especially welcomed if they address economic and business related topics in the field of music. Thus, we look forward to receiving as many interesting papers as possible and request that you send papers for consideration to:

[music.business.research@gmail.com](mailto:music.business.research@gmail.com).

## Regulating artist managers: An insider's perspective

Guy Morrow<sup>3</sup>

### *Abstract*

*It is problematic that artist managers in the international popular music industry are not currently subject to consistent regulatory frameworks, particularly given the increasing centralisation of responsibility with this role. This article examines the following research question: Can artist management practices be consistently regulated? In addition, it will address the following sub-research questions: What are the pitfalls that belie attempts to regulate for the betterment of musicians and the music industry? Is self-regulation a viable alternative?*

**Keywords:** Artist management, regulation, code of conduct

### *Acknowledgement*

*Many individuals have assisted and encouraged me throughout my research and work in artist management. I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of my co-manager, Rowan Brand, as well as the Boy & Bear band members: Killian Gavin, Jacob Tarasenko, David Hosking, Jon Hart and Tim Hart; without their support completion of this article would not have been possible. Dr. Catherine Moore at New York University and Michael McMartin of Melody Management also provided valuable advice and feed back. Furthermore, I received a Macquarie University New Staff Grant in 2009 that enabled me to travel and conduct research interviews and New York University graciously hosted me as a visiting scholar in 2010.*

---

<sup>3</sup> Guy Morrow was a visiting scholar at New York University where he studied artist management practices in the global economy with the International Music Managers' Forum and he currently has a Macquarie University Research Development Grant to research career development strategies within the new music industries. He also manages several Australian bands and won 5 Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) awards with 'Boy & Bears' in November 2011. ([guy.morrow@mq.edu.au](mailto:guy.morrow@mq.edu.au)).



## 1 Introduction

It is problematic that artist managers in the international popular music industry are not currently subject to consistent regulatory frameworks, particularly given the increasing centralisation of responsibility with this role. This article examines the following research question: Can artist management practices be consistently regulated? In addition, it will address the following sub-research questions: What are the pitfalls that belie attempts to regulate for the betterment of musicians and the music industry? Is self-regulation a viable alternative? This article has four parts. The first addresses these research questions through the use of a participant observer methodology that will feature a case study of the Australian band Boy & Bear. Boy & Bear have been chosen as the case study band here because a) I co-managed Boy & Bear with Rowan Brand from September 2008 until December 2011 and therefore I have first hand knowledge of the regulatory frameworks that impacted (or did not impact) on the development of this project, and b) because this band won 5 Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) awards in November 2011 including: 'Album of the Year', 'Best Group', 'Breakthrough Artist (Album)', 'Breakthrough Artist (Single)' and 'Best Adult Alternative Album' and therefore this band was granted a position at the centre of the Australian music business. The second part makes use of qualitative research interviews with other managers in a comparative study, while the third and fourth sections offer some solutions to the issue of a lack of artist management regulation.

This study concerning whether artist managers can be consistently regulated is significant because the amount of artist management related entrepreneurship and innovation in the new music industries has increased dramatically due to the abundance of distribution outlets for music (Peltz 2011: 6). The scope for artist entrepreneurship/self management has also increased as the management role becomes even more central (ibid.: 7). Due to the impact that new technologies have had on the music business, without artist management (self manage-

ment included) the music industry could not function; however, it could function without record companies due to the substantial number of alternative revenue streams and distribution outlets for content. Furthermore, the artist manager is the only other individual, besides the artist, who gets to see and touch all the jigsaw puzzle pieces that fit together to create the artist's career, and therefore they have immense influence over every aspect of an artist's career. It is therefore important that research into the regulation of artist managers be conducted while also considering the following question: What are the pitfalls that belie attempts to regulate for the betterment of musicians and the music industry?

This article will therefore provide an overview of the regulatory frameworks to which artist management practices in the new music industries are subject, and it will offer a sustained focus on 'understanding' the processes that have driven, and continue to drive, the development of regulation for artist managers in the music industries.

## 2 Background

As Sydney-based artist managers, Brand and I were subject to the Entertainment Industry Act 1989 (the Act), which is legislation that exists in the Australian state of New South Wales (NSW).<sup>4</sup> This regulation is a useful starting point here and it forms the background for this study. This form of governmental regulation of the entertainment industry is unique in that it does not exist in the other Australian states, nor is there an equivalent in the UK, Canada or the US to the same extent (Hertz, 1988). The Act provides a suite of laws aimed at protecting performers in their dealings with agents, managers and venue consultants (commonly known as booking agents) and it therefore locates artist managers within a broader industrial context. The Better Regulation Office (BRO) in NSW argues that the Act was introduced because performers are often in a poor bargaining position with regard to their commercial

---

<sup>4</sup> The Entertainment Industry Act 1989 is accessible via the following URL: <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/fullhtml/inforce/act+230+1989+FIRST+0+N/>

relationships with agents, managers and venue consultants and therefore they should be protected from unfair practices.

A key feature of the Act is that agents, managers and venue consultants must obtain a license from the Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) to work in the state of NSW. This license requires compliance with a set of laws governing operations, including the maximum fees that can be charged and how money held on behalf of performers must be handled. If an artist manager has money in trust on behalf of an artist then they have to pay a \$2000 bond for a period of one year to the Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) for a provisional license and then have the trust account audited by an accountant at the end of this period.

NSW is the only state of Australia to specifically license entertainment industry representatives, although Western Australia (Perth) and the Australian Capital Territory (Canberra) require employment agents, which includes those operating in the entertainment industry, to be licensed, and South Australia (Adelaide) requires such representatives to be registered. The BRO in NSW completed a review of a range of occupational licensing, including entertainment industry licenses, in April 2009.<sup>5</sup> In response to the final report that this review produced, the NSW Government conceded that the licensing scheme is not protecting performers effectively and should be removed. However at this stage this is just a recommendation that needs to be enacted in legislation; the licensing requirements for artist managers operating in NSW still apply.

In October 2010 the Better Regulation Office, which is part of the Office of Industrial Relations in NSW, produced a final report outlining their review of the Entertainment Industry Act 1989.<sup>6</sup> This article specifically concerns Recommendation 14 "Code of Conduct" which states that:

---

<sup>5</sup> The Entertainment Industry Act Review is located at the following URL:

[http://www.betterregulation.nsw.gov.au/targeted\\_reviews/entertainment\\_industry\\_act\\_review](http://www.betterregulation.nsw.gov.au/targeted_reviews/entertainment_industry_act_review)

<sup>6</sup> The Entertainment Industry Act Review is located at the following URL:

[http://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/104807/Final\\_Report\\_Review\\_of\\_the\\_Entertainment\\_Industry\\_Act\\_1989.pdf](http://www.dpc.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/104807/Final_Report_Review_of_the_Entertainment_Industry_Act_1989.pdf)

*"A code of conduct should be developed which covers ethical behaviour and minimum competency requirements. Any person operating as a performer representative should be required to comply with the code and there should be penalties for misconduct. The code should be easy to understand, targeted at particular risks and consistent with the existing common law obligations."*

The results of the comparative study concerning this issue are provided below in part two.

### **3 Literature review and methodology**

Watson (2002) offers this definition of artist management: *"A manager is a person who earns a living from helping artists build and maximise their musical careers"* (2), while Woodruff (2002: 1) states: *"A manager's job is to create the perception that the band is successful"*. It is also evident that there is no such thing as a manager and this complicates attempts to regulate the profession (Watson 2002; Rogan 1988). In order to illustrate this point, Watson notes that managers wear many different 'hats' in order to build and maximise the careers of their artists. Managers can be organisers, negotiators, motivators, counsellors, editors, designers, manipulators, strategists and much more. Watson's argument is that every manager combines these different 'hats' in different combinations, thus creating their own unique and complex style (Watson 2002: 2).

Rogan (1988) argues that since management is more a question of personality than policy (or anything else), what defines a perfect management candidate inevitably remains elusive and ambivalent. The ideal candidate must be cautious yet innovative, intuitive yet empirical, forceful but sensitive to artists' feelings, aggressive in battle and reflective in victory, and wise but not intellectually intimidating. They must also be a sympathetic listener.

Rogan claims that the mythical 'perfect' artist manager lies somewhere between the hard businessperson, the medical doctor and the dedicated schoolteacher (ibid.: 382). The notion that one could develop

a framework of best practice for artist management is challenging because the various ways in which managers operate are not only dependent on the individual manager's personality. The methodologies artist managers employ need to be analysed within specific contexts. The distinct sections of the music industry in which individual managers operate constitute these contexts.

Every artist is different and therefore individual managers differ from one another. Watson (2002) notes that to understand a manager you have to first understand the artist they are managing. Therefore an artist manager's behaviour is somewhat dictated by the decision making process of the artist they manage. The dynamics between the artist and the manager should form the basis of any study of artist management; the managerial role is intricately connected to the artist and their work. No manager can be fully understood out of the context in which he/she and their artist(s) operate.

In contrast to the common argument that a strong artist-manager relationship is analogous to a good marriage, or that the personal manager is the alter ego of the artist (ibid.: 34), it is evident that the dynamic is in fact quite different to a stereotypical 'good marriage'. A strong artist-manager relationship is unbalanced as each personal manager is necessarily a function of their artist's unique combination of needs (and not necessarily vice versa) – therefore if the manager is the 'alter-ego', this alter ego is necessarily subservient and because the power balance shifts with success, this relationship can become an abusive one. If a mandatory code of conduct were to be established artist managers face the risk that their clients could use the code against them once the power balance has shifted in their favour. As Peter Jenner (2002: 1) notes: *"Nothing is forever, it's just a business relationship and not a marriage, and you should see losing an act as part of your development as a manager."*

Although it is just another business relationship the artist may form, Frascogna and Hetherington (1997: 34) note that more than any other person, the full-service personal manager is the most influential force behind an artist's career. His or her efforts are often critical to the

artist's ultimate level of success or failure. They assert that given the critical role the manager plays in planning, execution, and day-to-day career control, it is essential that the artist and manager be on the same wavelength both personally and professionally. Therefore there is a need to consider artist managers' interests when examining regulatory options rather than just focusing on the needs of the artist. An analytical approach is needed here.

In addition to this body of literature that concerns artist management, a number of researchers have examined artist management regulation specifically. These researchers include Gilenson (1990), Hertz (1988), O'Brien (1992) and Frith (1988). Gilenson (1990) examined artist and personal manager conflicts of interest in the music industry, Hertz (1988) examined the regulation of artist representation in the entertainment industry and O'Brien (1992) specifically examined the regulation of attorneys under California's Talent Agencies Act and presented a tautological approach for protecting artists. The work of these authors has informed this study. Frith (1988) provides a broader analysis of popular music and the entertainment industry and his work concerning the industrial process provides the theoretical framework for this article.

Frith (2001) argues that the music industry operates in the reverse direction to that articulated by the 'colonisation' argument. He (1988: 12) notes that the argument concerning music making being an essential human activity that has been colonised by commerce is flawed as it involves *"the suggestion that music is the starting point of the industrial process – the raw material over which everyone fights – when it is, in fact, the final product."* Popular music is often located at the end of the industrial process and attempts to regulate do affect musicians' artistic processes and output. Therefore regulation can have both a negative and positive impact on artists' career development for this reason.

This study into a Code of Conduct for artist managers in the international popular music industry will involve a case study of Australian band Boy & Bear, in addition to ethnographic interviews that were conducted with artist managers who were approached via the International Music Managers' Forum (IMMF). Between September 2009 and November

2010, a total of 18 artist managers were interviewed for this study. However, due to the scope of this article, not all of this material will be utilised here. I co-managed Boy & Bear with Rowan Brand from September 2008 until December 2011 and therefore this article uses a participant-observer method of research, a tradition that is well established in qualitative research practices. Boy & Bear were chosen because they are an award winning band that was allocated a position at the centre of the Australian music business and because as their co-manager I have a unique perspective on their career development. As the artist manager is "*the only other individual, besides the artist, who gets to see and touch all the jigsaw puzzle pieces that fit together to create the artist's career*" (Frasco and Hetherington, 1997: 6), in terms of participant observation, the artist manager is therefore in a useful position for acquiring in-depth knowledge of the dynamics and texture of artists' career development.

Case studies provide the ability to deal with a wide variety of evidence within a real-life, contemporary context and an opportunity to gain access to an explanation of causal links that are too complex for a survey (Eisenhardt, 1989; Mitchell, 1983; Walton, 1972; Yin, 1984). Therefore in this case study, as an artist manager, I observed the broader interactions between regulatory bodies to which artist managers are subject, in addition to interviewing 18 other artists managers from Australia, Canada, the UK and the US who are members of the IMMF. It must be noted that in terms of the discussion of the broader regulatory frameworks to which I was subject as manager of Boy & Bear, I am biased toward the manager's point of view.

#### 4 Case Study: Managing Boy & Bear

Boy & Bear's<sup>7</sup> album *Moonfire* was released in Australia via Universal Music Australia's Island Records imprint on August 5, 2011 and it

---

<sup>7</sup> Boy & Bear consists of 5 band members: David Hosking (lead vocals, guitar), Tim Hart (drums, banjo, guitars, backing vocals), Jacob Tarasenko (bass guitar and backing vocals), Killian Gavin (lead guitar and backing vocals) and Jonathan Hart (keys and backing vocals).

reached Gold sales status (35,000) within 3 weeks. It achieved Platinum sales status (70,000) in December 2011. It was released in the UK via Co-op/V2 on January 16, 2012. The album was released digitally in the US via Universal Republic on August 9, 2011 but it is yet to be released physically there. Boy & Bear won 5 Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) awards in November 2011 including: 'Album of the Year', 'Best Group', 'Breakthrough Artist (Album)', 'Breakthrough Artist (Single)' and 'Best Adult Alternative Album'. There were a number of regulatory frameworks that Brand and I, as the band's managers, had to navigate before we could help the band achieve these results.

As stated previously, if an artist manager has money in trust on behalf of an artist then they have to pay a \$2000 bond for a period of one year to the Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) for a provisional license and then have the trust account audited by an accountant at the end of this period. If the audit is positive, the bond is returned, and the manager is issued with a license. I went through this process and was issued with a license prior to the commencement of my relationship with Boy & Bear. I then set up a co-management agreement with Brand. Because Brand was 20 years old at the time, he could not afford to put forth a \$2000 bond and because I was doing the band's accounting as a signatory to the band's partnership account, he did not have money in trust on behalf of the band.

During the start-up phase of an Australian artist's business it is common for the artist manager to also be their business manager. If the band becomes established and can afford business management services, the artist manager will often relinquish the business management responsibilities to a professional music business manager. The artist manager then focuses on the core areas of touring, marketing and the production of recordings. This was the case with Boy & Bear. One issue with the requirement of paying a \$2000 bond for a provisional license is that if I had not done a co-management agreement with Brand, he would not technically have been able to work as an artist manager because he could not afford to pay the bond.



However, many Australian artist managers do practice without a license, particularly if they are based in a state other than NSW where this form of licensing is not a requirement. This may be because artist managers are not aware of the licensing requirement in NSW, or because they have the perception that the requirement is not enforceable in any meaningful way. While I do have a license, it is my perception that the Entertainment Industry Act 1989 does not have much influence on how artist managers operate. While Brand and I are both members of the Association of Artist Managers (AAM) in Australia, which is a member organization of the IMMF, our membership of this organization does not currently require adherence to a code of conduct.<sup>8</sup>

## 5 Comparative study: Research interviews

In order to examine the question of how artist management practices can, or should, be regulated, my work with Boy & Bear will now be located in a broader context that includes the perspectives of other artist managers who operate internationally. All quotations from the research participants are taken from interview transcripts.

There has been much debate amongst the members of the IMMF concerning the establishment of a code of conduct for artist managers. While some interviewees argued that it is necessary and that membership of the IMMF should be tied to it, others argued that a looser set of guidelines would be more suitable/appropriate. One Canadian artist manager, Brian Hetherman<sup>9</sup>, commented:

---

<sup>8</sup> The other association for artist managers in Australia is MMF Australia which is also a member organization of the IMMF. Membership of the MMF in Australia does require adherence to a code of conduct.

<sup>9</sup> In 1995, after a number of years at Canadian indie label Duke Street Records and MCA Records, Brian Hetherman became the youngest Director of A&R (Artist and Repertoire) for MCA Records and head of MCA Music Publishing. In 2001 Brian was offered the inaugural position as Executive Director of the Radio Starmaker Fund. After helming Radio Starmaker through its first couple of years, an opportunity presented itself for Brian to make his planned move into Artist Management and Indie label owner. Shortly thereafter Brian started Cerberus Artist Management and affiliated label Curve Music, representing such artists over the years as Garth Hudson (The Band), Holly McNarland, Suzie McNeil, Wide Mouth Mason, Andy Stochansky, Derek Miller and Peter Katz. Brian is also the President of the Music Managers Forum in Canada, and Vice Chair on the IMMF Board as

*"When I came on board as heading up the MMF in Canada, we had a code of conduct and we would make people sign a very short form agreement stating that as members they would operate under this particular guise. I think that the problem with this is that you are sticking people with a certain position, or a particular way to do their business and I think that in particular cases it's not necessarily fair."*

The general consensus was that there definitely needs to be an attempt made by artist managers to increase the level of professionalism and the level of accountability and responsibility, but quite how you word this, and would enforce it, is challenging. In my experience of managing Boy & Bear, it became evident that lawyers often make reference to industry standards when negotiating on behalf of clients though it became clear through this study that such standards do not exist. A number of the artist managers interviewed said that they felt threatened by the idea of establishing standards because they believed lawyers would use these against them in an unwarranted way.

Another point that was made by multiple interviewees was that there is more fiscal responsibility in being a manager now than there was before and that this is occurring during a time of industry transformation. This increases the need for a solution regarding a regulatory framework, and it also has ramifications for the way in which the industry is theorized. Frith (1983) argues that artist managers are largely subordinate to the demands of record companies though this is now changing. Frith traces some changes to the managerial role but argues that record companies are the central ingredient within the mix of entities needed for a popular music act to be successful. He states that:

*"The show-biz recipe for rock success is sufficient talent, efficient management and an enterprising record company, and the central ingredient in this recipe is indeed the company." (Frith 1983: 109)*

Frith asserts that because record companies are the legal owners of the master copyright within the finished recorded product, they expect

to exercise the rights of their ownership and this is why artists and artist managers are subordinate to their demands. However this is changing with organizations such as the Featured Artists' Coalition (FAC) encouraging artists to only license the master copyright in their recordings to record labels, rather than assigning the master copyright to them.

In addition, the notion of 'collapsed copyright' challenges definitions of copyright, asserting that the different copyrights no longer make sense when music is consumed online. This is because when a song is streamed online or is downloaded, a copy of the song is generated and the performance copyright in the song and the mechanical copyright are one and the same (Morrow 2011). Such online use also involves the copyright in the actual recording as well. Collapsed copyright therefore includes the performance copyright, the mechanical copyright and the copyright in the actual recording merging into the one 'creator right' (ibid.). This centralisation of copyrights (if it is realised) has important ramifications for the structure of the music industry. It would involve the royalty collecting societies, song publishing companies and record companies merging into one.

However an issue arising from this concerns the increased workload that surrounds the 'creator right' if all functions of the aforementioned entities were rolled into one, and how the manager of this 'creator right' would be regulated. This is one of the reasons why theorists such as Williamson, Cloonan and Frith (2011) have reconceptualised the music industry, shifting the emphasis away from record companies toward a more holistic view of the industry that considers all five key income stream groups (live performance, song publishing, record sales, merchandise, and sponsorship). One British artist manager, Tim Prior<sup>10</sup>, noted that:

---

<sup>10</sup> Tim Prior has been in the entertainment industry for more than 30 years, a former Director of Arista Records, a Bertelsmann Group Company and an Artist and Rights manager. He has worked alongside many major artists and their managers, helping to redefine and develop the international entertainment industry's constantly evolving business models. Tim is also Chairman of UK ticket comparison site, Tixdaq.com, music consultant to Peter Gabriel's digital streaming service, We7.com, European "quarterback" for US based RedLight Management and is a board member of the MMF, Music Managers Forum. ([www.qmusic.com.au/bigsound2009/](http://www.qmusic.com.au/bigsound2009/), accessed August 21, 2012).

*"All of the rules of engagement have changed and continue to change very dramatically and very quickly. So the need for a code I think is central to a community of people who are fast becoming the gatekeepers of the relationship that I would call a creator, or a creative client, will have."*

Prior noted that in the UK artist managers were often discouraged from forming agreements with clients that were deeper than a straight service provision/commission generating relationship, but that this has now changed. Artist management involves building the systems, contexts and environments from which artistic creativity emerges and the music business is experiencing such fundamental change that an analytical reconceptualization of the possibilities for artist management agreements needs to take place:

*"For example, if a manager, who will have invested heavily with cash as well as time, put a proposal together to put to his client to become his publisher or his record label, there was a lot of mistrust. Frankly I think it was stirred up inappropriately by professional advisors – meaning lawyers."*

According to Prior, this mistrust is subsiding as the need for innovative management solutions increases. By allowing artist managers maximum possibilities for deal making by questioning the divisions that traditionally exist between record labels, song publishers and artist managers, more innovative artist management solutions can be achieved. The commerce versus creativity dichotomy that has informed a number of music industry studies needs to be reconceptualized in this context.

Frith (2001) and Negus (1996) have both commented on the 'colonisation' argument, Frith noting that music is located at the end point of the industrial process, and Negus positing that while the creativity versus commerce dichotomy may be clichéd, it is still one of the ways in which musicians make sense of what is happening to them. These arguments form part of an established debate in the popular music studies canon concerning the rock genre's struggle for authenticity in relation to the commodity form (see Frith 1996, and Adorno 1989). Popular music is

often considered to be unique in the extent to which the makers of this form of art struggle with their role as commodity producers. However, Radiohead, being the epitome of the (post)modern art rock band, is important here because with the release of their 2007 album *In Rainbows* they brought their own artistic sensibility to the organization of their own commodification (Morrow, 2009). Assuming other artists follow their lead, there will arguably be less perceived tension between creativity and commerce as artists (and their managers) increasingly organise their own commodification.

During the research interviews, statements outlining the need for a code of conduct that would enable the IMMF to become a self-regulating body often accompanied arguments such as this one, concerning the centralisation of responsibilities with the artist and the artist manager. Though these statements were often qualified with the managers saying that a mandatory code would be impossible to enforce. Some general comments supporting the establishment of a mandatory code of conduct were as follows. British artist manager, Dan Medland<sup>11</sup>, noted:

*"Yes definitely for me, I mean I've been in the industry for six or so years, and I guess I've seen many different incarnations of managers and horror stories that have occurred. I actually think that it is probably becoming less so the more professional the business becomes."*

While Canadian artist manager, Rob Lanni<sup>12</sup>, stated:

*"I think that it is necessary. I'm hoping that you would never have to refer to it, but just so that people know from the outset that these are things that we like to see our peers adhere to as a profession ... because historically there haven't been any rules for managers. Until the IMMF or*

---

<sup>11</sup> Dan Medland works for global artist management firm ie:music and recently moved to Australia from the UK to manage Ladyhawke and Passenger. Medland is also overseeing a new full service artist management venture between leading Australian music sales and marketing company, Inertia, and ie:music. In addition to his role with ie:inertia, Dan continues to work with the existing ie:music roster. ([www.inertia-music.com](http://www.inertia-music.com), accessed August 21, 2012).

<sup>12</sup> Rob Lanni is co-founder of Toronto based full service artist management company Coalition Music. Coalition Music manages artists such as Our Lady Peace, Finger Eleven and Simple Plan.

*the MMF came into existence, managers came in all forms and did things in their own way. I'm not as familiar with the rest of the world, but in the US in particular, there have been some shady individuals over the years."*

A diversity of opinions regarding artist management practices can lead to more novel solutions (Sawyer, 2007) and therefore while the interviewees commonly agreed that there should be a code of conduct, another commonality between respondents was that it would be problematic to enforce a mandatory code of conduct. Because artist management services encompass an increasingly diverse range of economic activities, it is difficult, if not impossible, to develop a uniform method of regulation, within the territories concerned, that could lead to the establishment of one consistent international code (Johnson and Turner, 2010: 174).

The MMF in the UK has attempted to establish a mandatory code of conduct in the past and according to one British interviewee, Keith Harris<sup>13</sup>:

---

<sup>13</sup> Keith Harris began work in the record industry in 1974. The first record company for which he worked was a small independent UK label called Transatlantic Records. The label represented mainly British folk musicians but also distributed the Blue Note and Milestone Jazz labels. In 1976 he joined EMI Records where he initially worked for several in-house EMI labels in the promotions department. These labels included Rocket where he worked on the Elton John album 'Blue Moves', Fantasy, Ariola and EMI International. He then joined Motown which was an EMI licensed label. He worked for Motown for two years ending up as General Manager for the label. During this period at the label he worked with artists such as Marvin Gaye, Diana Ross, Smokey Robinson, The Commodores, Rick James, The Supremes, Thelma Houston and Stevie Wonder. He left Motown in 1978 and moved to Los Angeles to work with Stevie Wonder and became operations manager for Stevie's companies. On his return to the UK in 1982 he formed his own management company and has been involved in the management of various UK based artists since. He has managed Junior Giscombe, Junior Tucker, Paul Johnson, & Omar. Keith managed Lynden David Hall until his recent death, and still represents Stevie Wonder. He is a Senior Fellow of the University of Westminster School of Music Film and Fashion. He is a former Chairman of the MMF, the Chairman of Musictank and he is also the chairman of the African and Caribbean Music Circuit, a music touring organisation funded by the Arts Council of England. He is also a Fellow of the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts (FRSA). Keith is now Director of Performer Affairs at PPL. (Source: <https://www.musictank.co.uk/resources/speaker-biographies/keith-harris-keith-harris-music-ltd-musictank-chairman-ppl-director>)

*"One of the things that came the closest to splitting the general consensus between managers was the different ways in which managers operate ... in the coming marketplace it is very difficult to develop a mandatory code of conduct because all managers are looking at different business models."*

Brand and I managed Boy & Bear in a traditional way. As managers we had a service provision agreement with the band and we organised for the band to license their master recordings to Universal Music Australia for Australia and New Zealand, and then for them to assign the copyright in their master recordings to Universal Republic in New York for the rest of the world. We signed the song writing members' song publishing to SonyATV for the world and we then engaged separate booking agents in Australia, the UK and in the US. While a conflict of interest clause in a code of conduct could arguably be applied to this way of working because the different roles (and copyrights) were treated separately and therefore the interests were not conflicted, it would be very difficult to have a code of conduct that is going to specifically cover all of the different business models that are now available to artist managers. Harris noted:

*"There are still some people who are using the traditional management model and there are others who are effectively going out to business angels to get the money in to effectively act as the record label. There are other people who are assuming the role of the record company on behalf of the artist without going out to a third party investor, they are instead just growing the business that way and so they are performing the record company functions but without the private investor, or without the private equity stake holder."*

Given these three different scenarios it is difficult for there to be a mandatory regulation because, according to Harris, people will say: *"what I'm doing differs so much from what he's doing."* Therefore if the code of conduct compartmentalizes the profession too much it may discourage innovation and may undermine attempts to unify artist managers. As Canadian artist manager Brian Hetherman put it:

*"In any situation the more stipulations you put on something the harder it is for a group to be in unison. Less a code of conduct and more a common sense outline of how to do business and how to operate and how to treat your artists."*

In response to a question concerning how such a broad code could be enforceable, Hetherman noted:

*"I think that it is socially enforceable for sure. And to be honest in some respects that has more of a bite to it than a legal one. You know I mean even though there are laws that need to be followed and laws of business, and while there's less now over the years there have been all kinds of shady managers out there. If you're more open and share stories about your experiences as a manager with other managers ... then people advise each other that 'you may want to avoid that person' or 'don't sign an agreement that looks like that', or 'don't fall into this trap'. I think what that really does is that it empowers the artist and it empowers the good managers."*

My experience of managing Boy & Bear however led me to conclude that such perceptions of 'good' or 'bad' managers are often subjective. Some managers commission on net profits, others have adjusted gross structures. While obviously artists will often argue that managers should commission on net profits, the agreement has to be sustainable for the manager(s) otherwise they won't be able to provide their service and the artist's career will suffer.

## **6 Solutions: Guidelines**

In addition to a socially enforceable and broad code of conduct, a common suggestion made by interview respondents concerned the establishment of a set of guidelines. The artist management handbooks that have been produced in both the UK and Australia have provided extracts from management contracts as examples of best practice, and this could be expanded upon. British artist manager Keith Harris noted that while:



*"You couldn't say: 'well there is a standard management contract' because a lot of very senior managers had never done a contract with their artists. They did it on verbal agreement ... So for the IMMF to set out a range of guidelines and key pointers of 'Dos and Don'ts' for the artist and so they basically understand what the various options are and what the options mean to them, so for instance ... if they are talking about 50/50 splits then make sure that they understand 'is it 50/50 of gross, or is it 50/50 of profits' and what is commissionable, and what expenses management is going to pay and all that kind of stuff ... And what I like about doing it that way is that it allows flexibility in order to have addendums as the new business models come on stream."*

A common point made by interview respondents was that a mandatory code of conduct would be impossible to enforce but that a solution to the issue involves education.

## **7 Solutions: Education**

The proposed solution put forth by Harris involves publishing very clearly exactly what the guidelines mean and then allowing the artist to make decisions as to what they want to enter into. The artists would also be encouraged to be guided by the advice of lawyers and other consultants. As previously discussed, rock music is often considered to be unique in the extent to which the makers of this form of art struggle with their role as commodity producers. It is different to other industries because the product (artists) sometimes actively resist their own commercialisation and, in the case of Boy & Bear for example, they do not want to think about the business side of music until there is money flowing through their business and this can lead to rifts between such artists and the service providers who helped them to achieve success later on. Frith (1988: 12) notes that in terms of the 'colonisation' argument:

*"Songs and singers are fetishized, made magical, and we can only reclaim them through possession, via a cash transaction in the market place. In the language of rock criticism, what is at stake here is the truth*

*of music ... the flaw in this argument is the suggestion that music is the starting point of the industrial process – the raw material over which everyone fights – when it is, in fact, the final product. The industrialisation of music cannot be understood as something which happens to music, since it describes a process in which music itself is made."*

Therefore education is needed throughout this process in order to counteract the effect that the commerce versus creativity dichotomy (or the 'colonisation' argument) has on the psyche of some artists. This set of guidelines could also be used to educate artist managers as well. Artists are often managed by a friend or relative and it is difficult to ask a new manager to comply with a code of conduct, or a set of guidelines, when the manager themselves may not understand them. As British artist manager Dan Medland put it:

*"I turned up into the industry and said 'right, well I've sort of booked a few tours before, but what really is management?' and no one could really tell me. It's largely a case of learning on your feet and I think that this would be massively helped if there were certain guidelines to take a young manager, he or she, through the process a little bit, because it all depends on what acts you've got, be it an R&B act or a rock act, it completely depends."*

The artist and artist manager relationship is commonly a very personal one and often artist managers do not come through a program of education first and then get into management. Some artist managers are resistant to the notion of a 'code of conduct' that would force them to operate in a certain way because they have not been subject to any qualifying process and therefore there is an issue of 'buy-in' from managers within the field of artist management. Medland noted:

*"I'd certainly be happy to go with a code of conduct and to sign up to something because I've been in the industry and that wouldn't scare me because I know the general areas of responsibility whereas for new managers this may not be the case. Unless it is embedded in the curriculum that they have studied ... But coming from a non-educational background that might be quite difficult to take. Maybe it's two things, may-*

*be you call it a code of conduct for your educational purposes and then it's a set of guidelines for people outside of educational institutions potentially."*

Rather than letting the clichés and stereotypes inform how the industrial process should operate, a number of British artist managers noted that a solution would be for a set of guidelines produced by the IMMF for artist managers to be linked to the Featured Artistes' Coalition (FAC).<sup>14</sup> With regard to the FAC, Harris noted that:

*"It's basically a good idea, to actually have an artist's voice, but there was always a problem with the IMMF, and I speak as a former chairman here, inasmuch as 90% of the time, artists' rights and managers' rights co-align, but then there is 10% of the time when they don't. And it's that 10% that does need to be addressed and the Featured Artistes' Coalition can kind of address that."*

Therefore Harris argued that while a solution would be for the IMMF or another similar body to put guidelines as to what the agreements mean up on a website, it actually might be more appropriate for the Featured Artistes' Coalition to be interpreting what these guidelines mean to the artist:

---

<sup>14</sup> The Featured Artists' Coalition is an organization formed in the UK constituted by artists who produce original music and therefore have copyrights that they can license or assign. Their manifesto for 'fair play' in the digital age states that all music artists *"should control their destiny because ultimately it is their art and endeavours that create the pleasure and emotion enjoyed by so many."* They believe that:

- artists should always retain ultimate ownership of their music
- all agreements should be conducted in a fair and transparent manner
- rights' holders should have a fiduciary duty of care to the originator of those rights and should consult and accurately report to creators on all agreements that affect how their work is exploited.

The FAC is attempting to achieve this by:

- changing artistes' approach to agreements
- changing the music and technology companies' treatment of artistes
- changing the law and its administration.

Therefore the FAC is campaigning for laws, regulations, business practices and policies that protect artistes' rights. They note that: *"Together, we will stand up for all artistes by engaging with government, music and technology companies, and collection societies, arguing for fair play and, where necessary, exposing unfair practices."*

*"It is incumbent on the artists to go to the FAC to get the artists' point of view, and the managers to go to the IMMF to get the managers' viewpoint and then their independent advisors can actually negotiate and pick a suitable model. It's got an important role to play. And the good thing about the FAC is that it encourages artists to feel that they need to know, in the new environment, exactly what the business side means. There is no longer that attitude of 'OK, I'll leave that to my manager.'"*

Therefore rather than becoming a regulatory body, the IMMF could work with the FAC to fulfil an educational role.

## **8 Stereotype of the artist manager**

Although Rogan (1988) and Morrow (2006) have attempted to deconstruct the most prevalent stereotype of an artist manager – the familiar caricature of a cigar-smoking hustler who takes advantage of star-struck adolescents – this stereotype is still in existence. Furthermore, it strongly affects governmental policy and discussions concerning the establishment of a code of conduct and/or a set of guidelines for artist managers. There is a need to critically and analytically engage with this stereotype here. Negus (1996: 46) couches such an analysis in the following terms:

*"The idea of a conflict between creativity and commerce has also been used to illustrate the power of the music industry and has informed numerous everyday claims about how musicians 'sell out' to the system. On one side are the heroes – the musicians, producers and performers (the creative artists); opposing them are the villains – record companies and entertainment corporations (the commercial corrupters and manipulators)."*

Negus argues that this opposition is implicit in many music industry studies and it is a problem when such studies inform legislation that is then based on erroneous stereotypes. British artist manager Keith Harris noted that:

*"One of the things that has always bothered me is that there is always an assumption that the manager rips off the artist. It happens equally well the other way around. It is not unusual for the artist to rip off the manager. So you're going to enter into a working relationship whereby you have agreed that things will be split 50/50 after profits and all of that kind of stuff, and then the artist suddenly realises that 'well actually if I claim conflicts of interest here then I can get the manager back to 20% and I can get 80%' and it wasn't necessarily the original agreement."*

Harris argued that artists are smart people, that "they're not generally dummies, especially when it comes to getting their share of the money." While some artists do have problems because they do not understand the business at the outset, there are also a very large number of artists who are at the opposite end of this spectrum. These artists are now quite successful, well financed, well resourced in terms of legal advice, and so if rigid rules are put in place such artists can actually use these rules against the manager in an unwarranted way.

However, the relationship is more complex than this. The balance of power in the relationship between artist and manager is unique as the artist manager works for the artist while at the same time the artist follows the manager's lead. Throughout an artist's career trajectory, this balance of power tends to shift as success – both creative and commercial – accumulates. A rise in the level of success will see the power balance shift in the artist's favour. However, in the period before and after peaks of success the power balance will be in the artist manager's favour (Morrow 2006: 4). This power balance is constantly evolving, and differs across genres; it must therefore be considered on a case-by-case basis (ibid.).

The irony of the artist manager's position in the business is that the better they are at fulfilling their role in increasing the artist's commercial success, the worse bargaining position they themselves end up being in. This is certainly what Brand and I experienced in our relationship with Boy & Bear. This means that there is a built in disincentive for artist managers who are service providers. This in part explains artist manag-

ers' common desire to own and control artists' assets/copyrights. Regarding the NSW government's engagement with the aforementioned stereotype, Keith Harris argued:

*"First of all you say that they are in a weak bargaining position, but I would argue that this is not necessarily the case. Because usually artists get management that is on a commensurate level to their standing, so if they are starting out and they are offered a deal by a very big management company, then yes you can say that they have got lower bargaining power. However, the influence that the management company can exert on their career is also disproportionate to their current achievements if you like, so yes they have lower bargaining power but the effects of the management are going to be disproportionately great."*

Furthermore the management contract is actually a management 'service' agreement. This means that artists are always able to fire the manager, despite the term of the agreement, and all that will happen is that the courts will decree the level of compensation that they, the management, get if they are fired. This means that the artist and manager effectively end up with an adjudication process anyway. Artist management service agreements commonly feature sunset clauses that outline the post term commission. These clauses are built into management agreements to protect the manager.

The artist management agreement is different to the agreement between an artist and their record company because the agreement between the artist and the record company is a commercial agreement, as opposed to a service agreement. Harris noted:

*"A commercial agreement is enforceable by law and you can't walk away from it as an artist. Whereas you can effectively walk away from a service agreement and all that will happen is that the courts will determine what compensation the artist has to pay. And when it comes to a situation where the artist is highly successful then the bargaining power is completely reversed and you end up with management companies working for virtually nothing."*

When external regulators become involved there is a need to be careful with regard to problematic preconceptions. Harris argued:

*"This is driven by television and movies where the manager is always the bad guy. But it's not necessarily always the case. Particularly at the starting out level, where a young manager will get the artist as far as a record deal and then the record company encourages the artist to take on a more experienced manager and the young manager has done all the hard graft and is then left with nothing."*

This is one of the reasons why, according to Harris, there is a shortage of entry-level managers in the industry. Furthermore, government attempts to regulate the industry can also gravitate against entry-level managers. As noted above, in the state of NSW in Australia there is legislation that requires artist managers to be licensed, and as an artist manager who had money in trust on behalf of an artist I paid a \$2000 bond to the Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) and then had the trust account audited by an accountant, after which the bond was returned. However, Brand, as an entry-level co-manager, could not afford to adhere to these requirements and our co-management agreement provided a solution to this issue. Some Australian artist managers get around this by setting up an account in the artist's name. They then become signatories to such accounts so that they are not technically trust accounts. With regard to this legislation, Harris argued:

*"That's fine, but it does tend to gravitate against the entry-level manager, who can't afford to put up a \$2000 bond to start out. And this is something that you see in other countries as well, because France has a similar kind of system, which is that if you are managing two artists then you can commission 20% but as soon as you sign a third then you're not allowed to commission any of them more than 10%."*

While such regulation is obviously put in place in an attempt to protect the artist, a shortage of good entry-level managers is a problem for the industry. The Harris continued:

*"You end up with a situation where you have half a dozen very powerful, very senior managers and that to some extent tends to gravitate against the artists. I'm not saying that the managers aren't going to work in the artists' best interests, but what I am saying is that it is much harder for artists to get managers who will give them the attention, because the bigger the management company the bigger their clients will be and if you're a new artist then you are always going to be down the bottom of the pecking order. Whereas a new manager with a new artist tends to work that much harder in order to get them to that first base."*

While from a theoretical perspective legislation may be valid, it can have more of a detrimental effect on artists than a positive one: "The theory's great and I understand that they are trying to protect the artist from people stealing their money and so on and so forth but you just have to be careful that you're not putting the entry level too high for new managers."

## **9 Conclusions**

While it is problematic that artist managers in the international popular music industry are not currently subject to consistent regulatory frameworks, particularly given the increasing centralisation of responsibility with this role, governmental regulation would potentially restrict innovation and at times it would do more harm than good. This article examined the following research question: Can artist management practices be consistently regulated? The answer to this question is 'no', artist management cannot be regulated in a uniform way. In addition, this article addressed the following sub-research questions: What are the pitfalls that belie attempts to regulate for the betterment of musicians and the music industry? Is self-regulation a viable alternative? There are a number of pitfalls that belie attempts to regulate for the betterment of musicians and the industry and these have been outlined. Self-regulation is a viable alternative. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the interviews revealed that regulation can have both a positive and negative impact on artist's career development. This is because music is located at the



end point of the industrial process and therefore attempts to regulate do affect musicians' artistic processes and output. The task therefore is to find the balance between the artists' position and the managers' position. Education and guidelines would help to establish this middle ground and are therefore a major part of the solution here by forming the core of an attempt to self-regulate. Regulatory attempts that are informed by the assumption that artist's are always in a poor bargaining position are one dimensional and do not consider the fact that managers are often put in a poor bargaining position. Clichés and stereotypes of artist managers have too often informed how the music industry should operate and this can have a negative effect on the industry, particularly in the extent to which it decreases the amount of artist management service provision available. Popular music is not raw material that is then colonized by stereotypical villains, rather it is a form of art that is more often than not nurtured through an industrial process by passionate practitioners who deserve to be treated fairly.

## 10 References

- Adorno, T. (1989) [1936] "On Jazz", *Discourse* vol. 12(1).
- Eisenhardt, K. (1989) "Building Theories from Case Study Research", *The Academy of Management Review*, vol. 14, no. 4, pp. 532-550.
- Frascogna, X & Hetherington, L. (1997) *This Business of Artist Management: A Practical Guide to Successful Strategies for Career Development in the Music Business for Musicians, Managers, Music Publishers and Record Companies*, 3rd edition. New York: Billboard Books.
- Frith, S. (1983) *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure and the Politics of Rock 'n' Roll*, London: Constable.
- Frith, S. (1988) *Music for Pleasure*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Frith, S. (1996) *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Frith, S. (2001) "The Popular Music Industry", in *The Cambridge Guide To Rock and Pop*, eds S. Frith, W. Straw & P. Street. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 26-52.

- Gilenson, H. I. (1990) "Badlands: Artist-Personal Manager Conflicts of Interest in the Music Industry", *Cardozo Arts & Entertainment Law Journal*, vol. 9, p. 501.
- Hertz, B. W. (1988) "Regulation of Artist Representation in the Entertainment Industry", *The Loyola Entertainment Law Journal*, vol. 8, p. 55.
- Jenner, P (2002) "What is an Artist Manager?" in *The Music Manager's Manual*, eds M. McMartin, C. Eliezer & S. Quintrell. The Music Manager's Forum, Sydney (Australia).
- Johnson, D and Turner, C. (2010) *International Business: Themes and Issues in the Modern Global Economy*, 2nd edition. Routledge, New York.
- Mitchell, J. (1983) "Case and Situation Analysis", *Sociological Review*, vol. 31, no., pp. 187-211.
- Morrow, G. (2006) *Managerial Creativity: A study of Artist Management Practices in the Australian Popular Music Industry*. Macquarie University, Sydney: PhD thesis (awarded).
- Morrow, G. (2009) "Radiohead's Managerial Creativity", *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, vol. 15, no. 2, pp. 161-176.
- Morrow, G. (2011) "Sync Agents and Artist Managers: A Scarcity of Attention and an Abundance of Onscreen Distribution", *Screen Sound Journal*, no. 2, pp. 104-117.
- Negus, K. (1996) *Popular Music in Theory*, Polity Press/Blackwell Publishers, Cambridge.
- New South Wales Entertainment Industry Act 1989, no. 230.
- O'Brien, J. M. (1992) "Regulation of Attorneys Under California's Talent Agencies Act: A Tautological Approach to Protecting Artists", *California Law Review*, vol. 80, no. 2, pp. 471-511.
- Peltz, P. (2011) "'The Scope of Artist Entrepreneurship', Instruments of Change", *IASPM Australia-New Zealand Conference Proceedings*, November 24-26, 2010, Monash University, Melbourne.
- Rogan, J. (1988) *Starmakers and Svengalis*, Futura, London and Sydney.
- Sawyer, K. (2007) *Group Genius: The Creative Power of Collaboration*, Basic Books, New York.
- Walton, R. (1972) "Advantages and Attributes of the Case Study", *Journal of Applied Behavioural Science*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 73-78.
- Watson, J. (2002) "What is a Manager?" in *The Music Manager's Manual*, eds M. McMartin, S. Eliezer & S. Quintrell, The Music Manager's Forum, Sydney (Australia).

Williamson, J., Cloonan, M. & Frith S. (2011) "Having an impact? Academics, the music industries and the problem of knowledge", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 17 no. 5, pp. 459-474.

Woodruff, J. (2002) Unpublished and untitled paper concerning music management presented at the Australian branch of the Music Manager's Forum's annual conference. Sydney, Novotel Hotel.

Yin, R. K. (1984) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Sage, Beverly Hills, CA.

## The Newcastle music industry: An ethnographic study of a regional creative system in action

Phillip McIntyre and Gaye Sheather<sup>15</sup>

### Abstract

*This paper presents detailed preliminary findings from an ethnographic study of the Newcastle NSW music industry. It argues that in the midst of seemingly continuous change primarily wrought by the advent of new global trade regimes and associated digital technologies there are also fundamental continuities at work for local music industries. These continuities are evident in the idea that these industries are part of a dynamic system of choice-making agents constituted by musicians, promoters, media operatives, venue owners, educators, policy makers and many others. They compete and collaborate within the structures of a gift and financial economy which exists in a regional and global framework with a dynamic history that has helped shape this creative system in action.*

**Keywords:** Creative system, creativity, music industry, field, ethnography

## 1 Introduction

Prior to the turn of the millenium "*fundamental ideological changes in the global political arena led to the creation of pro-market international trade regimes*" (Thussu 2000: 82). As the processes of deregulation, privatization and the opening of borders to rapid flows of capital "*combined with new digital information and communication technologies*" (ibid.) the impacts these produced have been felt across all economies internationally, from advanced to less well developed ones. This certainly happened in Europe and America but other regions, countries and localities have been living through the continuities and changes these developments continue to bring. As studies into regional creative and

---

<sup>15</sup> Phillip McIntyre is Head of Discipline, Communication and Media, in the School of Design Communication and IT at the University of Newcastle, Australia ([phillip.mcintyre@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:phillip.mcintyre@newcastle.edu.au)). Gaye Sheather is a doctoral researcher in the Discipline of Communication and Media at the University of Newcastle, Australia ([gaye.sheather@uon.edu.au](mailto:gaye.sheather@uon.edu.au)).

music industries indicate (e.g. Gibson 2002) there have been unforeseen transformations to the livelihoods of a variety of music industry players. This must also include those in places such as Chile, Greece, South Africa, India and China.

In Australia, a mid-level economy located geographically in the Southern Hemisphere on the edge of South East Asia and ostensibly removed from the mainstream of Eurocentric hegemony, these effects are being felt not just at the national level but they are occurring in a lived way for musicians working at the regional and local level. The ongoing changes were highlighted by the NSW State Treasurer Mike Baird who recently stated that *"in the 30-year period of the opening up of the Australian economy to international competition, perhaps no other city has been asked to make more painful adjustments than Newcastle"* (Parker 2013).

In order to help cities such as Newcastle, similar in many ways to Apeldoorn in the Netherlands and Odense in Denmark, cope with the global and local forces at play the NSW State Government in Australia appointed an industry-led taskforce to develop *"a 10-year Industry Action Plan to deliver economic growth and support a sustainable creative industries sector"* (NSWDTII 2012). This creative industries taskforce is chaired by Dan Rosen, CEO of the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA), who has experience in digital media, law, policy, and music. While *"the increasing influence of digital technologies"* (NSWDSRD 2009: 7) is implicated in the profound changes occurring in the recording, publishing, live performance, retail and media arms of the music industry locally and globally, in terms of the continuities involved this industry still depends on *"creativity, skill, and talent to create wealth and jobs"* (ibid.); in which case the phenomenon of creativity is important to understand in order to gain an insight into how these creative industries function and, in particular, how it works within the music industry. To shed light on these changes and continuities this paper is structured to present detailed preliminary empirical findings from an ongoing ethnographic study of the Newcastle music industry.

## **2 Structure of the paper**

This paper presents, in sequence, a methodological approach, a literature review, a lengthy discussion section and then a conclusion which links the material presented back to the original introduction. In detail it, firstly, introduces the topic under discussion by giving a broad overview which places the empirical detail the reader is about to encounter against a significant macro perspective. The theme this paper is based on is an examination of the relationship between the structural continuities of creative systems and the concomitant changes that enable and constrain agents in their pursuit of musical activity. Secondly, the paper presents the methodological approach taken which in this case is ethnography. Thirdly, the paper briefly summarises the extant literature on creativity and music industries. In concluding this literature review section the paper looks at the specific regional studies done to this point on the Newcastle music industry. The fourth section, the discussion section, deals specifically with the empirical material uncovered by the ethnographic data collection methods. This discussion section has been broken down into a number of subsections. These cover: educational structures and their ongoing relationship to the industry; recording studios and record labels in Newcastle and the lack of publishing houses in the city; the necessary connection between the industry and the media in Newcastle; how local musicians are organising themselves in the face of the opportunities and threats that both enable and constrain their activities as choice making entities in this particular system of music production; the importance of the field of live performance in Newcastle and the effects of state and local council regulation on it; the competition the industry faces from the development of festivals and the tourism industry; and the advent of new entrepreneurial systems. Finally the paper concludes by summarising the changes and continuities revealed in the presentation of this initial empirical material and points to the implications this may have for further research. Firstly, we will turn our attention to the methodological approach.

### 3 Methodological approach

From a methodological point of view ethnography is a research tool grounded in a constructivist ontological and epistemological position. In line with these methodological foundations (Crotty 1998; Grix 2004) and the focal theory being employed for this project, that is, the systems model of creativity (Csikszentmihalyi 1988), it is recognised that social organisations such as the music industry *"must be understood as whole systems, not isolated parts"* (Priest 1996: 25). As a music industry ethnographer herself Sara Cohen, the Director of the Institute of Popular Music at the University of Liverpool, argues that *"only in the light of such detailed knowledge are we justified in making more general statements about lived culture"* (Cohen 1993: 127).

Ethnography is *"framed within the assumptions and characteristics of the flexible design approach"* (Robson 2011: 132) which allows the researcher to become immersed in the industry's activities over a period of time collecting a variety of data *"to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research"* (Hammersley & Atkinson 1995: 1). The design of this ethnographic process involved the implementation of a number of practical research methods or techniques (Bryman 2001: 291). These methods encompassed:

- the systematic documentation of artefacts pertinent to venues, studios, media sites, posters and archive material relevant to the industry, and
- the observation in the field of multiple activities occurring within the industry which were recorded in field journals.
- In-depth recorded and transcribed interviews with key informants are at their preliminary stage.

This triangulated approach follows the key methods and principles of ethnography in its research design (Bryman 2001). As such it reveals a wealth of descriptive and meaning filled data. However, before data can be collected in the field an ethnographer must answer the question 'what do we already know about this topic?' which necessitates a literature review.

#### **4 Literature review: Creativity and the music industry**

Peter Tschmuck in his book *Creativity and Innovation in the Music Industry* (2006: 193) declares that *"the various approaches of (economic) innovation theory begin their explanations of the process of innovation at the phase of invention without, however, accounting for the causes of invention"*. In this case economic literature *"has dealt with the phenomenon of creativity only superficially"* (ibid.). After surveying the literature on creativity, primarily from psychology and sociology, Tschmuck (2006: 195) concludes that *"creativity is not merely a mental but also a social process"*. In surveying similar literature Phillip McIntyre (2008, 2010, 2012) also asserts that creativity is crucial to the music industry and the way it is enacted and understood has significant effects on the way it has been practiced and theorised. For him creativity and cultural production can best be theorised using Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's (1988) systems model of creativity. This model proposes that three major factors, that is, a structure of knowledge manifest in a particular symbol system (domain), a structured social organisation that understands and acts on that body of knowledge (field), and a choice making entity (an agent) who makes changes to the stored information that pre-exists them, are necessary for creativity to occur. McIntyre (2008) argues that the systems model is comparable to the empirical sociological approach to cultural production undertaken by Pierre Bourdieu (1993, 1996). Tschmuck has taken a similar position on creativity to Csikszentmihalyi in relation to the music industry. He asserts that creativity is therefore *"not only attributable to individual thinking and action but is embedded in collective processes and in a wider sense in a social context. Thus the social context is not just contingent but constitutive for the emergence of newness"* (Tschmuck 2012: 269). Furthermore, Tschmuck has argued, in line with the notion of 'possibles' proposed by Bourdieu (1996: 236) and reinforced by Jason Toynbee in his book *Making Popular Music: Musicians, Creativity and Institutions* (2000), *"that the music industry provides the framework for their actors' thought and behavioural processes. It separates the thinkable from the unthinkable and makes actions possible or impossible"* (Tschmuck 2006: 216).



Patrik Wikström (2009: 48-50) has delineated a number of ways the music industry has been conceived. Two appear important. Firstly, Leyshon's model of the music economy is made up of a set of overlapping networks consisting of, at their core, a network of creativity. The other overlapping networks outlined by Leyshon are those of reproduction, distribution and consumption (ibid.: 50). Secondly, Burnett and Weber's model is "*structured as two loosely connected systems of production and consumption*" (Wikström 2009: 51). Wikström asserts that the connection between the production and consumption of music in this model takes place "*through the media, concerts and an economic act: the purchase of music*" (ibid.). Both of these models point at aspects of the industry which are shared by the three interlocking and interdependent subsectors of the music industry, that is, the recording industry, the live performance industry and the publishing industry (Wikström 2009, Hesmondhalgh 2007). This tripartite arrangement can be augmented by retail, manufacturing and increasingly media in the form of nontraditional online operators (McIntyre 2011: 85-86). Furthermore, while the recorded music industry, as defined by Negus (1992), still represents approximately 70 per cent of the broader music industry as identified by Williamson & Cloonan (2007: 314-315) it is clear that there are now dynamic shifts occurring that have begun to alter this figure.

One of the first texts to look solely at the industry in Australia, *Music Business and the Experience Economy: The Australasian Case* (Tschmuck et al. 2013) deals with the production, distribution and consumption of popular music in Australia and explores the interrelationships between legal, aesthetic and economic factors that contribute to the emergence of new business models, as well as the transformations occurring for the live music sector in regard to management practices. While Tschmuck et al. (2013) place these activities within a global framework their work succinctly illustrates Homan's (2003) argument that the local and the global are interrelated. Homan (2003: 10) suggests, in reference to the mainly inner-city musical cultures of the capital cities in Australia, that "*the interplay of internal (radio stations, record stores, venues, music press, record collecting) and external influences*

*complicate portrayals of 'closed' metropolitan cultures". Further to this Chris Gibson argued that "it is clear that corporate activity in music tends to position a small number of sites as production centres (Sydney and Melbourne in Australia) [and] the cultural milieu surrounding music industry activities and subcultures has tended to grant critical cultural capital to bands and scenes in the inner-city" (Homans 2002: 343).*

However, Gibson (2002: 343) goes on to argue that:

*"... the advent of new technologies suggest that regional areas ... are well positioned to become the new 'breeding grounds' for bands and artists for the national and international market (see, for example, McCormack, 1991; Hesmondhalgh, 1998). While most successful Australian acts are still 'discovered' in Sydney and Melbourne, there is some recent evidence to support the idea of a decentralisation of cultural production: Silverchair, one of Australia's most successful music exports, and The Screaming Jets, are both from Newcastle (New South Wales)."*

In this case, it would be difficult to argue that regional creative industries are also 'closed' cultures isolated from both metropolitan and international influence. These ideas were confirmed historically by Gaye Sheather (2013) in her study of the specific history of the Newcastle music industry, 1973-1988.

## **5 Literature review: Specific studies of the music industry in Newcastle**

Gaye Sheather's extensive study of popular music in Newcastle investigated the development of 'mainstream' popular music in Newcastle between 1973 and 1988. At the start of this period, known in Australia more generally as the Oz/Pub Rock era (Zumeris 2003: 495-496), there were approximately 17 local bands that could be identified as performing mainstream music styles in licensed music venues in Newcastle. By 1987, the total number had increased to approximately 148. Across the period there were 151 licensed venues operating. Sheather's history reveals that demographically there was a large population of young pe-

ople who attended these venues, and the unique way in which Newcastle suburbs originally emerged historically in Newcastle and its proximity to Sydney, played a significant role in patterns of participation in these live music venues. A few of the many bands playing at this time managed to move beyond renown in the local scene. For example The Heroes secured a recording contract with Alberts Music in Sydney being the last band to perform on the night of the Star Hotel riot, where, "*[b]ottles and bricks flew, blood flowed and vehicles burned when 2000 to 3000 drinkers clashed with police and pelted firemen*" (The Newcastle Sun, 20 September 1979: 1; Homan 2003) (Sheather 2013: 156). The Heroes went on to some national success facilitated in part by their ongoing appearances on the national television program Countdown. "*Once you were on that you had a national profile and you could actually tour nationally*" (Tinson quoted in Clott 1997: 8). Others, such as DV8, continued to draw very large crowds to their compelling live performances.

As Sheather (2013) suggests, what was largely common to all these musicians, and the many who were content to work locally and draw big crowds in their home town, was the depth of social and cultural capital demonstrated in a willingness to support each other, share knowledge and equipment and mentor others in what was in large part a gift economy (Bell 1991: 155-167). Peter Anderson, after establishing a touring circuit on the north coast of NSW and recording with his band Atlantis, then saw an opportunity to professionalise the local scene at the grass roots level starting a promotional agency for select local bands and setting up a recording studio and equipment retail outlet. Michael Porteus writing for The Newcastle Sun and The Post and, most importantly, Leo Della Grotta writing for The Newcastle Sun, The Newcastle Herald and The Post, were crucial media supporters who were influential in the success of the local industry at this time.

Sheather's study concludes, in line with Bourdieu's understanding of cultural production, itself an effort to reconcile agency and structure (Swartz 1997: 9), that the structural conditions that were peculiar to Newcastle during this period and the way the various actors performed

their roles within those conditions, contributed to the way popular music developed in local spaces in Newcastle from 1973 through to 1987.

After a lengthy period of growth, consolidation and internationalisation (McIntyre 2004: 169) the music industry, both nationally and locally, went through a period of contraction. An ethnographic study of published songwriters working in Newcastle at this time (McIntyre 1994) confirmed Sara Cohen's assertion that *"contemporary popular music is characterised by increased globalisation on one hand and an increased localisation on the other, as developments in communication and technology allow local populations greater access to music production and consumption"* (Cohen 1991: 346). This dialectical position allowed Newcastle songwriters to participate at a local level in an increasingly globalised industry (McIntyre 1994: 78).

McIntyre's study determined, in part, that the socio-economic context Newcastle's songwriters worked in leant a complex web of mediations to their song's creation and these were now subject to a whole range of social, political and economic pressures. In 1994 these included contractual imperatives, technological possibilities, audience dynamics and the changing market for live performance, booking agents' need for certain styles to match venue requirements, costs of live production, low budgets to self-finance recordings, little to no local and effective distribution systems and limited radio play.

In 1998, Jane Groeneveld (1998: 28) asserted that many regional musicians *"travel to the capital cities for much of their 'big business' dealings in sound recording and publishing, because the largest recording studios and all of the main multinational record companies are located in Sydney or Melbourne"*, but she, like Sheather (2013), also noted that regional music industries like Newcastle's *"have been almost entirely based around live performance"* (Groeneveld 1998: 28). However, as Deborah Stephenson's 1994 draft report to the Cultural Review process for Newcastle City Council indicated, musicians depended on local venues for income but increased noise restrictions had led to a contraction in the number of venues in the city. For her there was also *"a dearth of alcohol-free music venues, given that not only is the potential underage*

*audience considerable, but more and more musicians are themselves underage*" (Stephenson 1994: 48). Stephenson cites the case of the Innocent Criminals who, despite the problems faced by underage musicians in the city at that time, went on to become Silverchair, "one of Australia's most successful music exports" (Gibson 2002: 343). Stephenson outlined further structural problems indicating that "increasingly the local popular music industry is under threat from an expansion in the number of national and international acts coming to the city. Also of concern is the preference of club and hotel owners to employ cover bands rather than musicians playing original music" (Stephenson 1994: 49).

This art versus commerce divide assumed that "the process of routinising production and standardising the product, only describes what large companies do—as if small capitalist enterprises were somehow non-capitalist" (Frith 2000: 390). These developments prompted a number of organisations to form, such as the Hunter Music Industry Development Board, to promote, support and stimulate the Newcastle music industry as it attempted to navigate its way through significant structural changes.

These structural changes are still having an effect and the next major section examines the way the current industry continues to navigate these continuities and changes. The discussion is based on six broad themes revealed through the data collection and analysis process. These six themes are focused on the links between educational structures and the industry, the place of recording studios and record labels in Newcastle, the connection between the industry and the media, the case of local musicians as choice making entities operating within structures that constrain and enable their activity, the importance of the live performance industry and the continuing threats it faces, and the competition from new entrepreneurial practices and systems. We will start this discussion by looking at the educational institutions in Newcastle and their relationship to the local music industry.

## **6 The Newcastle music industry**

### **6.1 Educational structures**

All creative action takes place within social structures (Wolff 1993). Wolff suggests these same structures not only constrain but they also, at one and the same time, actually enable creative activity. This is just as true of educational structures as it is of legal and economic ones (Peterson 1982). At the national level the peak industry body AUSMUSIC negotiated a training process that was then delivered at state level by the Tertiary and Further Education (TAFE) institution in Newcastle. The Basic Music Industry Skills courses run at TAFE, initiated and run by Jane Groeneveld, operated for a number of years and they continue to be taught by local industry experts. The TAFE songwriting and sound production courses included, as students, the members of the internationally successful band Silverchair, signed at the time to Sony Music through their Murmur subsidiary. These industry based courses are now run in the Newcastle School of Music, part of the Creative Industries Faculty at TAFE, with Les Hall from the nationally successful Ted Mulry Gang, Mark Tinson from The Heroes and Grant Walmsley from the Screaming Jets contributing their extensive cultural capital to the teaching of these programs. The operation of cultural capital occurs not only through the actions of institutionalised education settings but is also accumulated over a long period of inculcation through the informal pedagogical action of the social formation (Johnson in Bourdieu 1993: 9).

The cultural capital acquired and passed on by the teachers at TAFE is now used by TAFE to attract and maintain student numbers. For example, the Screaming Jets toured Europe and the United States a number of times, where they were released on Atlantic Records. They continued to tour nationally until 2012 and their guitarist and main songwriter Grant Walmsley draws on this accumulated professional knowledge to mentor his students who in turn take this knowledge back into the local industry. Mark Tinson also continues to produce and record and Les Hall still finds extra time from his teaching functions at TAFE

to write songs for, and produce, young dance artists for the European market.

Not only is the TAFE institution involved in mentoring younger performers in the city, although under threat from the State Government funding cuts as of 2013, there are other educational forums linked to the industry. These include Rosie's School of Rock, run by former Screaming Jets' drummer Craig Rosevear, and the University of Newcastle's (UON) Conservatorium. Each provides an adjunct to the local industry. In 2012 the Newcastle Improvised Music Association (NIMA) began its life through the foundational work of Capree Gaul under the auspices of the UON Conservatorium. NIMA *"... was established in March 2009 to address the lack of performance opportunities for contemporary jazz and improvised music artists in Newcastle. The NIMA management group continues to develop links with the community, local businesses, 1233 ABC, Dungeon Jazz, UON, TAFE and Newcastle City Council"* (NIMA 2013).

These educational institutions provide spaces for mentors and mentoring to occur having an effect on the larger live performance sector of the industry and, importantly, the relatively small recording sector and its studios in Newcastle. We will now turn our attention to these.

## **6.2 Recording studios and labels in Newcastle**

Impromptu Studios is owned by Terry Latham who diversifies his income through his involvement in the educational structures the city provides. He mentors students in guitar at the Conservatorium and sound production in the Bachelor of Communication program at UON, a program many local musicians have benefitted from. Latham's studio client base is diverse and includes classical ensembles, jazz and rock bands and his services also include file archiving, music tuition and at one time a record label.

In the absence of a successful publishing house in the city Latham, along with Grant Walmsley from the Screaming Jets, formed One Henry Records and signed the popular Hauntingly Beautiful Mousemoon to their label. This label is one of the few to have operated in Newcastle,

including Bloody Fist Records formerly run by Mark Newlands from an office in the city. Bloody Fist sold material for hardcore techno groups like Syndicate, Xylocaine and Memetic but is perhaps best known for Nasenbluten's recordings which sold well in Germany.

Robbie Long is now a musician/producer of note along with Mark Tinson and Gareth Hudson. Tinson no longer creates music solely in dedicated commercial studio premises but has located his recording equipment in his home as has Gareth Hudson. As Moorefield (2010: xvii) notes "*the creative involvement of the producer in the shaping of a record's sound also reflects how technology and artistic creation are increasingly interdependent*". While they still occasionally use the technology housed in local studios to track, overdub or mix, these producers generally hire Don Bartley from Benchmark Mastering in Sydney to add a professional sheen to their recordings. Mastering is also offered as a service by Tommirock, ostensibly a recording studio but run by producer Joel Black to offer a diversity of services in music production, studio recording, video production, mixing, mastering, professional photography, website design and artwork, CD and DVD manufacturing, songwriting, voice-overs and social network marketing.

However, few of the recorded works from these studios gain national exposure and the artists who work in them continue to be reliant on social media and, in particular, a strong relationship with the intermediaries of local traditional media.

### **6.3 The Newcastle industry and the media**

The cultural intermediaries from the traditional media "*play an active part in the production, distribution and social consumption of popular music*" (Negus 1996: 67). They have been generally supportive to musical activity in the city. Apart from occasional news stories broadcast on NBN television, a local affiliate of the national Nine Network, and Prime TV, national commercial radio networks broadcasting into the city play few local recordings but there are a number of other outlets, such as the stories written by Jade Lazaravic in The Herald, that provide promotional space. That's Entertainment (TE), now largely written by Stephen Bissett,



is a lift-out section in the free newspaper The Post which has continually highlighted local acts.

Further media support for local musicians has come from other unlikely sources. Ison Live Radio (ILR) has been one of the unheralded success stories in local media. Sean Ison set up a small radio studio in Bolton St in the CBS Building and since 1999 has syndicated his programs to various radio stations around the world. Each week his programs have a cumulative audience of over three million and cover most major western markets. In 2004 Newcastle band Texas Radio and the Big Beat's recording of their song Paris Island went to number one on the ILR Chart based on requests from the Australian Real Underground Music Show syndicated by ILR. Since 2004 ILR have also engaged in producing video segments and real time video products for the expanding international IPTV audience.

The University run community radio station 2NURFM has maintained a local music program for some years highlighting tunes such as Weld's For Rosie's Sake, while the 1233 ABC Music Awards run in conjunction with the TAFE supported Newcastle Music Week, organised by Christina Sykiotis's committee, recognised the successes of Newcastle musicians. One of the beneficiaries of these forms of symbolic capital was the group Supersonic.

#### **6.4 Local musicians at work**

Supersonic achieved its initial distinction through the accretion of symbolic capital from a number of prestigious local and national competition wins. According to Johnson symbolic capital "*refers to the degree of accumulated prestige, celebrity, consecration or honour and is founded on a dialectic of knowledge and recognition*" (in Bourdieu 1993: 7). As well as these competition successes symbolising their position in the music industry three of their videos were broadcast on national television program RAGE on ABC TV and national broadcaster Triple J put their single When You Fall on regular rotation. Supersonic's demographic ranged across 13-40 year olds but with a centralised bell curve bounded by 16-28 year olds skewed toward females. These figures remained reasonably

consistent and translated into sales for the band. George Davias, from the now defunct family-owned Sound World record retail group operating in the Newcastle market, stated that:

Supersonic are definitely one of our biggest selling local acts. They are always playing and promoting so they are selling a lot more than other local acts and when they do instores for us their sales are often more than current singles (Supersonic 2003: 25).

Peter de Jong, former singer with The Heroes and now Creative Director with Peach Advertising, a company that manages national advertising accounts, stated that *"Newcastle has a broad demographic make-up of socioeconomic factors that represents Australia generally ... This makes it ideal as a test market to launch new products"* (Supersonic 2003: 25). Supersonic maintained its activities in this test market through live performance income. However, in an early form of crowd funding they sourced finance from a large group of small local investors to enable the recording of the band's last album, the production of a video, the hire of Australian Music Biz (AMB) from Brisbane to promote an east-coast tour and CD release through MGM Distribution in Sydney. They garnered the attention of a record company in Indonesia but were advised through DFAT of the difficulties of repatriating royalties.

Supersonic disbanded in 2005 realising that without significant financial input, in Bourdieu's terms economic capital, from the venture capitalists that are the major record companies (Haynes 2013) located in Sydney, it would be difficult to expand their operations in the face of the wealth disparities created by an international 'winner takes all' market. In this regard the International Federation of Phonographic Industries (IFPI) claims success for it in terms of worldwide sales *"is primarily as an investor in human creativity. Record producers worldwide, independent and multinational, invest billions of dollars in local cultures. They underpin the livelihoods of a diverse array of artists across the world"* (IFPI 2003). However, there is a caveat. The IFPI states that *"only a tiny minority of these [artists] will ever prove commercially successful"* (ibid.). In addition, live performance income at the local level, adjusted for inflation, appears to have dropped steadily across the decades. According to

the Arts Council Don't Give up Your Day Job survey "in 2000-01, artists earned an average of just over AUD 24,000 from creative and other arts-related work" (Australia Council 2013). These figures are pre-tax with most earning "below the income earned by others in the workforce" (ibid.). Recognising this Matt Plummer moved into graphic design, Xanders went to the UK to perform as a solo artist and then took up professional photography when he returned to Australia, while Mark Wells is now well established in the country field.

After winning the Songwriter's Prize at the Tamworth Country Music Festival in 2008 Wells was funded to travel and write with Nashville based best songwriters and US music industry experts. The Mark Wells band now consists of performers who are sourced from a small coterie of notable journeymen musicians and as such they act as agents, or choice making entities, in the system of popular music in the city. Musicians like these have to make a series of decisions as to whether to buy this instrument, hire this FOH person, write a set list to suit a certain audience, decide on which note to play and so on. Simon Frith (1996: 52) asserts "*such decisions are both individual, a reflection of one's own talent (musical talent describes, among other things, the ability to make the right decisions about what's good), and social – only other people, other musicians, can legitimate your decisions*". This "*complex network of experts with varying expertise, status, and power*" (Sawyer 2006: 124), otherwise known as a field (Csikszentmihalyi 1988: 330-332; McIntyre 2001), not only influences the knowledge system, the specific cultural domain, but they also affect creative work practices through the decisions they make about what is good musicianship and what is not.

Each of these professional musicians, and many others listed on the Newcastle Music Directory website, have also supported long term instrument retailers Musos Corner and Jacks Music and contribute significantly to the recording and live performance sectors of the industry in Newcastle. The live sector of the field of popular music continues to be important for local musicians but its current form of operation is under threat.

### 6.5 The live performance sector in Newcastle

The live performance sector of the industry is a crucial driver in the arena of social contestation and creative collaboration that is the field of popular music and *"remains a primal popular music experience, which intensifies global debates about stagecraft, individual virtuosity, favourite live performers and sites"* (Homan 2003: 9). According to the AUSMUSIC Staying Alive Report, this sector fulfils a number of key roles in the music industry including; acting as a major employer for the industry in regional centres, providing a training ground, being a promotional tool for recording artists, and as a source of income to allow sole traders and partnerships typical of the regional industry to develop their performance, songwriting and business skills (Groeneveld 1998: 21).

While the number of performance sites in Newcastle has decreased since the seventies and eighties a number of venues still cater to the local music industry. However, a large number of the venues that serviced live performances in the recent past in Newcastle are being demolished or re-purposed. A number of derelict nightclubs were included by the Lord Mayor in a list of places *"we weren't so proud to drive friends past"* (McCloy 2013: 11). He stated that:

*"All cities go through periods of rebirth. And for Newcastle, it's now our turn for change! I am thrilled to see progress at all of these sites. A development application has been lodged for the former Star Hotel for adaptive reuse of the existing buildings. The plan is for a series of low level apartments and terraces – development sorely needed in that part of the city. Just up the road, demolition work is due to start this week at the former Jolly Roger/Hunter Village site. The Joint Regional Planning Panel has approved 17 levels of residential apartment but just clearing the site will be a marked improvement. The benefit of a clear site can be seen where the former Empire Hotel stood. This derelict site was purchased and cleared by the NSW Government"*.

The iconic Newcastle Workers Club, which hosted Crowded House on the night before the 1989 earthquake caused it to collapse, leading to a number of deaths, failed to regain its level of popularity and was bou-

ght up by the Panthers group of clubs from Sydney. It now hosts concerts from national touring bands as well as international artists from the UK and USA. The King St Hotel, once a late night home for rock bands, now promotes EDM artists making this venue extremely popular with the student and tradesperson demographics. It hosts appearances by out of town EDM proponents such as Propaganda, Our House and Sampology. On the night of 7 June there were queues of attendees lined up around the corner and down the next block waiting to gain entrance into the venue. Like all other Newcastle nightclubs, the King Street Hotel is subject to a 1.30am curfew and a 3.30am closing time.

One security guard asserted that *"people pulling guns, knives, stabbing – all these things are out there and they do happen and you can't sweep them under. In my twenty years I have probably seen all of it. Every year it evolves into something more sinister now with needles, bloody syringes"* (Tomsen et al. 2003: 95). Tomsen et al. (2003: 2) suggest that *"serious conflict and violence at licensed venues is not yet uncommon in the local region"*. These circumstances resulted in a curfew and lockout being instituted from March 2008 which

*"were instituted by the former Liquor Administration Board after a public disturbance complaint was lodged by NSW police against hotels with high levels of assaults. They were bitterly opposed by hoteliers, who now say the measures have caused insolvencies and harmed Newcastle's night life. "No one thought the measures would be so devastating to business," says Newcastle publican Rolly de With, who is president of the local chapter of the Australian Hotels Association" (Dusevic 2010).*

It was claimed that the curfew approach was *"unique internationally"* (ibid.) which provided the possibility for policy implementation around the world. *"The trend internationally has been to longer trading hours. This study presents a bold challenge to that trend"* (Dusevic 2010).

## 7 Ongoing developments for the music industry

Having outlined the problems besetting live music, as the venues cope with urban renewal and struggle with necessary innovations in security, we can now mention the ongoing proliferation of other avenues of seeking economic benefit. For example, intermittent day time festivals have become increasingly popular. As one example the Fat As Butter festival "*has attracted international and Australian acts to Newcastle each spring since it began in 2008*" (Tarala 2013: 3) and audiences of 11,000 plus to each performance, leading the promoters to

*"create a temporary camping precinct for 1500 festival-goers at Stockton's Ballast Ground from October 18 to 20 ... Ms Ross said the application for the 750-site camping area was under review, including reports on security, transport, police surveillance, first aid, noise management and environmental impact and safety. She said the Fat As Butter camp was expected to bring between \$120,000 and \$145,000 in business to the Stockton community and could provide low cost camping-style accommodation close to the city for future events"* (Tarala 2013: 3).

For the established music industry in Newcastle these one-off events tend to contribute little income to the local industry itself since local acts, if they are added to the bill, are paid little in comparison to the out-of-town headline acts and production is often sourced from Sydney suppliers rather than local firms. What these festivals do contribute for local musicians are opportunities to study how professionals in other areas conduct their business and they thus present possibilities of action to them, as has occurred throughout the industry's history.

Watching these developments one of the city's long term promoters, Peter Anderson of Rock City Event Marketing (REM), now a diversified event organiser, rarely deals directly with local musicians due to the loss of crucial business drivers typified by the Australian radio quota system. However, after 30 years, REM continues to bring international artists to Newcastle venues but increasingly competes with concerts staged in the Hunter Valley wine region, part of the city's hinterland. Hope Estate, having just completed their purpose built 19,000 capacity

outdoor amphitheatre bought Fleetwood Mac to their venue in November 2013 and Bruce Springsteen appears in February 2014. These shows draw capacity crowds, and their discretionary entertainment income, from within the city and elsewhere.

With the demise in the sale of CDs the main local retail outlet Sound World has closed, as has Beaumont St Beat and now the Sanity chain store in downtown Market Square, leaving the JB Hifi chain in the suburban malls the only outlet for hardcopy recordings. Second-hand vinyl and CDs can be purchased at Snafu Records, Rices Bookstore and the Odditorium. Many music producers have turned to social media to promote themselves while most consumers of music in the city are familiar with downloads from itunes but also download material, for example, by accessing youtube clips and converting these to mp3 files via converters such as Video2MP3. As a recent insertion in a discussion paper for the Australian Law Reform Commission noted *"worthy individuals and citizens...are knowingly, ignorantly or indifferently finding themselves in breach of international and national copyright law. And they intend to keep on doing exactly as before"* (ALRC 2013: 46) necessitating a rethink of all related business models.

## 8 Conclusions

The changes wrought by the use of digital technologies have had an effect at the local and global level. The diminishing of income for international recording artists as a result of downloads, both legal and illegal, has meant these acts are chasing a more lucrative return from the live sector and are increasingly capitalising on markets traditionally serviced by local industries. Given the small recording fraternity and the limited set of studios operating in Newcastle, and overall income derived from recording diminishing globally, most local musicians income is tied to the regional live circuit. However, the loss of performance venues in the city as a result of urban redevelopment and the security issues which resulted in a night time curfew in the city, coupled with the rise of the festival touring circuit, has meant the opportunities for the local music industry

continue to shrink. This has resulted in musicians in Newcastle having to diversify the array of services they offer while also coping with a loss of income from their traditional sources. Promoters and agents have also had to diversify their business activities since the lucrative period of the eighties when structural features such as the national radio quota and appearances on nationally broadcast television programs provided central business drivers. Many of the key musicians from that period have found careers in education and now provide mentoring frameworks for younger performers that complement the ongoing gift economy of this regional centre.

In terms of continuities, the field of contestation and cooperation revealed in the Newcastle music industry can be best understood as a scalable interactive system not a collection of isolated parts. This field continues to be a dynamic network of interlocking choice-making agents who produce and circulate musical goods, ideas and knowledges across a wide variety of genres and styles. These domains of knowledge still present possibilities of action to each agent in the field be they musician, producer, DJ, venue proprietor, booking agent, promoter, media operative, policymaker or educator, and each brings something unique to this shared environment. They collaborate, compete, mentor and support each other through both a gift and financial economy trading various levels of the social, cultural, symbolic and financial capital necessary to operate inside this field. This basic framework has not changed.

The implications for further research into these continuities and changes are seen in the need to examine more fully the relationship between the structural imperatives for economic competition and a musician's professional disposition toward cooperation. The question of whether a *laissez-faire* neoliberal international market with its emphasis on a winner-takes-all approach (Thussu 2000) is the best environment to operate in for local musicians who premise their creative interaction both on and off stage on collaboration is a necessary one to ask.



## 9 References

- ALRC (2013) "Copyright and the Digital Economy", Discussion Paper 79, Australian Law Reform Commission, ARLC, Sydney, pp. 1-388.
- Australia Council (2013) "Artist Income", Australia Council, available at: [http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/resources/reports\\_and\\_publications/subjects/artists\\_income](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/resources/reports_and_publications/subjects/artists_income) (accessed June 15 /2013).
- Bell, D. (1991) "Modes of Exchange: Gift and Commodity", *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, vol. 29, no. 2, pp. 155–167.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993) *Field of Cultural Production*, ed R. Johnson, Columbia University Press, New York.
- Bourdieu, P. (1996) *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- Bryman, A. (2001) *Social Research Methods*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Clott, J. (1997) "The Heroes". Concrete Press, December 2, p. 8.
- Cohen, S. (1991) "Popular Music and Urban Regeneration: The Music Industries on Merseyside", *Cultural Studies*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 332-346.
- Cohen, S. (1993) "Ethnography and Popular Music Studies", *Popular Music*, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 123-138.
- Crotty, M. (1998) *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process*, Sage, Los Angeles.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1988) "Society, Culture and Person: A Systems View of Creativity", in *The Nature of Creativity: Contemporary Psychological Perspectives*, ed R. Sternberg, Cambridge University Press, New York, pp. 325-329.
- Dusevic, T. (2010). "Curbs on Drinking Results in Fall in Assault Rate in Newcastle", *The Australian*, September 16, available at: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/curbs-on-drinking-results-in-fall-in-assault-rate-in-newcastle/story-e6frg6nf-1225924283176> (accessed June 12, 2013).
- Frith, S. (1996) *Performing Rites: Evaluating Popular Music*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Frith, S. (2000) "Music Industry Research: Where Now? Where Next? Notes from Britain", *Popular Music*, vol. 19, no. 3, pp. 387-393.

- Gibson, C. (2002) "Rural Transformation and Cultural Industries: Popular Music on the New South Wales Far North Coast", *Australian Geographical Studies*, vol. 40, no. 3, pp. 337–356.
- Grix, J. (2004) *The Foundations of Research*, Palgrave MacMillan, London.
- Groeneveld, J. (1998) *Growing the Hunter Contemporary/Popular Music Industry Feasibility Study*, HAC & DEWRSB, Newcastle.
- Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (1995) *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*, 2nd edition, Routledge, London.
- Haynes, B. (2013) "What Are the Odds of Succeeding Without a Record Deal?", *Music Think Tank: Where the Music Industry Thinks out Loud*, available at: <http://www.musicthinktank.com/blog/what-are-the-odds-of-succeeding-without-a-record-deal.htm> (accessed May 25, 2013).
- Hesmondhalgh, D. (2007) *Cultural Industries*, 2nd edition, Sage, London.
- Homan, S. (2003) *The Mayor's a Square: Live Music and Law and Order in Sydney*, Local Consumption Publications, Sydney.
- IFPI (2003). "Music: One of the Great Global Industries", International Federation of Phonographic Industries (IFPI), available at: <http://www.ifpi.org/> (accessed May 29, 2013).
- McCloy, J. (2013) "Action in the City Centre", *Newcastle Matters: The Newcastle Post*, June 12, p. 11.
- McIntyre, P. (1994) *Making Popular Music: A Study of Published Songwriters in Newcastle, N.S.W.*, unpublished Hons Thesis, University of Newcastle.
- McIntyre, P. (2001) "The Contemporary Popular Music Industry as Field" in *Musical In-Between-ness: Proceedings of 8th Conference of the Australia-NZ Branch of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music*, eds D. Crowdy, S. Homan & T. Mitchell, University of Technology, Sydney.
- McIntyre, P. (2004) *Creativity and Cultural Production: A Study of Contemporary Western Popular Music Songwriting*, unpublished PhD thesis, Macquarie University.
- McIntyre, P. (2008) "The Systems Model of Creativity: Analyzing the Distribution of Power in the Studio", 4th Art of Record Production International Conference, University of Massachusetts, Lowell, November, published in *Journal of the Art of Record Production*, no. 4
- McIntyre, P. (2010) "Songwriting, Creativity and the Music Industry" in vol. 2: *The Business of Entertainment – The Music Industry*, ed R. Sickels, Praeger Publishers International, Westport Connecticut, pp. 1-20.

- McIntyre, P. (2011) "Rethinking the Creative Process: The Systems Model of Creativity Applied to Popular Music Songwriting", *Journal of Music Technology and Education*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 77- 90.
- McIntyre, P. (2012) "Rethinking Creativity: Record Production and the Systems Model", *The Art of Record Production*, eds S. Frith & S. Zargorski Thomas, Ashgate, London, pp. 149-162.
- Moorefield, V. (2010) *The Producer as Composer: Shaping the Sounds of Popular Music*, MIT Press, Cambridge Mass.
- Negus, K. (1992) *Producing Pop: Culture and Conflict in the Popular Music Industry*, Arnold, London.
- Negus, K. (1996) *Popular Music in Theory: An Introduction*, Polity Press, Cambridge.
- NIMA (2013) "About", Newcastle Improvised Music Association, available at: <http://www.nima.org.au/about-nima> (accessed June 15, 2013).
- NSWDTII (2012) "Creative Industries", NSW Department of Trade and Industry, available at: <http://www.business.nsw.gov.au/doing-business-in-nsw/industry-action-plans/creative-industries> (accessed October 9, 2012).
- NSWDSRD (2009) *NSW Creative Industry Economic Fundamentals – Report to the Department of State and Regional Development*, NSWSD, Sydney, February.
- Parker, J. (2013) "NSW Budget: Government to Sell Port of Newcastle", ABC News , available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2013-06-18/nsw-budget3a-government-to-sell-port-of-newcastle/4762476> (accessed June 18, 2013).
- Peterson, R. (1982) "Five Constraints on the Production of Culture: Law, Technology, Market, Organizational Structure and Occupational Careers", *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 143-53.
- Priest, S. (1996) *Doing Media Research: An Introduction*, Sage, Thousand Oaks Calif.
- Robson, C. (2011) *Real World Research*, 3rd edition, Wiley-Blackwell, Chichester.
- Sawyer, K. (2006) *Explaining Creativity: The Science of Human Innovation*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Sheather, G. (2013) *Rock, This City: A Thematic History of Live Popular Music in Licensed Venues in Newcastle, Australia, During the Oz Rock/Pub Era (1970s and 80s)*, unpublished PhD Thesis, The University of Newcastle.
- Stephenson, D. (1994) *A Review for the Future: The City of Newcastle Cultural Review – Draft Report to the Newcastle City Council*, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, pp. 1-62.
- Supersonic (2003). *Supersonic Business Plan*, unpublished: McIntyre archive, pp. 1-33.

- Swartz, D. (1997) *Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
- Tarala, K. (2013) "Rock, Unroll a Swag", *Newcastle Herald*, June 8, p. 3.
- Thusu, D. (2000) *International Communication: Continuity and Change*, Arnold, London.
- Tomsen, S., Homan, S. & Russo, D. (2003) *Masculinity and Public Drinking Violence in Newcastle and the Hunter ('Boozers and Bouncers')*: Interim Report for the School of Social Sciences, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, pp. 1-97.
- Toynbee, J. (2000) *Making Popular Music: Musicians, Creativity and Institutions*, Arnold, London.
- Tschmuck, P. (2006) *Creativity and Innovation in the Music Industry*, Springer, Dordrecht.
- Tschmuck, P. (2012) "How Creative are the Creative Industries: A Case of the Music Industry" in *Creative Industries: Critical Readings – Concepts*, eds B. Moeran & A. Alacovska, Berg, London, pp. 268-281.
- Tschmuck, P., Pearce, P. & Campbell, S. (2013) *Music Business and the Experience Economy: The Australasian Case*, Springer, New York.
- Wikström, P. (2009) *The Music Industry: Music in the Cloud*, Polity, Cambridge.
- Williamson, J. & Cloonan, M. (2007) "Rethinking the Music Industry", *Popular Music*, vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 305-322.
- Wolff, J. (1993) *The Social Production of Art*, 2nd edition, MacMillan, London.
- Zumeris, B. (2003) "Oz Rock" in *Currency Companion to Music and Dance*, eds J. Whiteoak & A. Scott-Maxwell, Currency House Inc, Sydney, pp. 495-496.

## What constitutes artist success in the Australian music industries?

Diane Hughes, Sarah Keith, Guy Morrow, Mark Evans, Denis Crowdy<sup>16</sup>

### Abstract

Contemporary artists embarking on a musical career enter into a highly competitive and complex environment. Whereas the pre-digital music industries consisted of definable streams of income and markers of achievement, such as live performance opportunities, record deals, royalties, and radio play, today's music industries involve multiple platforms and strategies that artists need to engage with. Defining "success" in this new environment goes beyond standard definitions of financial independence or peer respect (Letts 2013). Success is contingent on planning for and leveraging numerous smaller successes in areas including developing "Do It Yourself" (DIY) and management skills and engaging in funding opportunities such as government grants. Artists may also employ crowdfunding or alternate means for raising capital, engaging with fans via social media, managing their online identities and personas, utilising online music video, and expanding into overseas markets in order to maintain financial viability. This research draws on a series of focus groups with artists and industry practitioners within the Australian music industries, and considers the diverse contemporary approaches that artists take in order to achieve success in their careers.

**Keywords:** Music industry, DIY, artist success, Australia

---

<sup>16</sup> **Diane Hughes** is Senior Lecturer in Vocal Studies. She has an extensive background in contemporary singing and pedagogy. Her work within the industry has involved artist development and recording. Research interests include vocal artistry, vocal processing, expressive techniques and performance, and career development in the music industries ([diane.hughes@mq.edu.au](mailto:diane.hughes@mq.edu.au)). **Sarah Keith** is Lecturer in Music Production. Her research includes: contemporary music production, particularly of the voice; East Asian pop music performance and music video; Australian popular music culture and media; developing musical industries; and documentary film and sound ([sarah.keith@mq.edu.au](mailto:sarah.keith@mq.edu.au)). **Guy Morrow** is Lecturer in Arts Practice and Management. His research includes: music, design and innovation in the music industry; managing creativity; entrepreneurship, start up management and collaborative creativity; and music video production ([guy.morrow@mq.edu.au](mailto:guy.morrow@mq.edu.au)). **Mark Evans** is Associate Professor. He is series editor for Genre, Music and Sound series (Equinox Publishing), considering the role of sound in various genres of feature films, and has research interests in film and television sound, religious music, spatiality and popular music ([mark.evans@mq.edu.au](mailto:mark.evans@mq.edu.au)). **Denis Crowdy** is Senior Lecturer in Music. His research interests encompass popular and commercial music in Melanesia, particularly Papua New Guinea; music production aesthetics; virtual home studio practices; critical eco-musicology; cross-cultural and hybrid musics; and copyright and musical ownership ([denis.crowdy@mq.edu.au](mailto:denis.crowdy@mq.edu.au)). All authors are affiliated with the Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies at Macquarie University in Sydney, which is headed by Mark Evans.

## 1 Introduction

The concept of 'career success' in contemporary music has been complicated in recent times by the diversification and digitisation of the music industry and music consumption. Whereas the pre-digital career model for the contemporary musician revolved around known industry components such as regular performance opportunities, labels, charts, awards, sales of recorded works, and airplay, these sectors have been affected by recent changes in the contemporary music industries. Furthermore, the changing nature of the contemporary music industry means that a variety of factors outside of instrumental and musical ability impact on the potential career development of musicians. These factors include age, appearance, identity, stylistic choices, and current musical fashions, and therefore complicate a progression from amateur to professional. Additionally, a significant number of contemporary musicians do not pursue tertiary-level music training (Letts 2013); meaning tertiary training is not necessarily a prerequisite for career success. A study by Throsby & Zednik (2010) also shows that those employed in the music industries are often also employed in other sectors, underlining the problematic assumption of a guaranteed full-time career as a musician in a climate that is highly competitive. Finally, there are a range of potential career opportunities in contemporary music which do not necessarily involve performance, including management, publishing, media, production, and so on.

Given this plurality of career possibilities and the variability of the music industries, how is 'career success' defined among contemporary musicians? This paper starts out by examining the 'traditional' markers of career success for artists (solo and band) in contemporary music, largely based on previous research. The paper then moves on to explore more recent examples of such markers and draws on focus group research conducted between 2012 and 2013 in some of the eastern states of Australia (New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria). Finally the paper makes conclusions based on the findings and indicates implications for artists active in the Australian music industries.

## 2 Traditional success in the Australian industry

The difficulty in defining success in a contemporary musical context is identified by Letts (2013: 1), who discusses industry success in the context of recruiting 'successful' participants for a study investigating "the music education of people who have made successful careers as contemporary musicians". Letts (2013: 2) reports:

*"It was decided that in the circumstances a musician whose primary income is from music is successful in the Australian context. It may be, also, that some fine musicians practise in less viable genres ... but have high artistic respect from their peers. They also are successful."*

As research participants were seconded by invitations to participate through assistance from artist managers and the Australian Performing Right Association (APRA: 2), traditional notions of success were reinforced in the study's design and are clearly aligned to revenue and/or to peer appreciation of musical ability. In addition to the number of recordings distributed for retail, Collins and Young (2014: 9) also cite the revenue generated through retail sales of recordings as a historical marker of success.

The traditional commercial aspect of musical success is also evident in the Australian Government's promotion of the international success of Australian artists. Linked to "About Australia" (Commonwealth of Australia), Australian pop music (Wells 2007) is aligned to commercial success with its description as being "... one of our most successful Australian musical exports" and is further highlighted as a cultural export:

*"Contemporary music reflects, expresses and shapes our national identity, and helps Australians find their creative voices. Millions of Australians enjoy listening to music by local artists, and the international success of many local acts has made music one of our greatest cultural exports (Commonwealth of Australia n.d.)"*.

While success is linked to internationalism and commodity, in reality, statistics reveal that royalties for imported music far outweigh royal-

ties earned by Australian musicians (Australia Council for the Arts 2013b). The Contemporary Music Working Group (CMWG) reported:

*"Australia is building from a very small global export base, but such internationally successful bands [e.g. Savage Garden] highlight the potential of export earnings growth where necessary support is given. In 2005-06, overseas countries paid \$41m in music royalties to Australia, while Australia paid almost 5 times this amount to overseas countries (CMWG 2008: 1)".*

Much of the traditional success of contemporary music within Australia has been determined by its ability to be 'picked up' and subsequently heard on radio. The Codes of Practice & Guidelines (Commercial Radio Australia (CRA) 2011: 2) were *"developed in accordance with the requirements of section 123 of the Broadcasting Services Act 1992 [Commonwealth, Australia]"* to ensure that a minimum proportion of Australian content is included (ibid.: 10). This has resulted in a quota of *"not less than 25%"* (ibid.: 11) of Australian music and, according to Homan (2013: 389), the content quotas *"have been invaluable in ensuring that domestic musicians and composers are heard on broadcasting formats that privilege international artists"*. A Convergence Review Committee, established in 2011, examined and assessed the effectiveness of *"the operation of media and communications regulation in Australia"* (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012: vii). In relation to content quotas, the Review determined that they were *"generally effective"* (ibid.: xii) for radio but were guarded against their relevance for online services given the *"evolving state"* of online technologies (ibid.: 20), and concluded (ibid.: 78):

*"... the diversity of audio formats and music delivery mechanisms on the internet would make it difficult—if not impossible—to consistently regulate non-simulcast internet-based services through a quota system. There are also different transactions on internet-based services (for example, purchasing music as opposed to listening to advertising-supported or subscription services, the user-directed nature of some services, and subscriber and purchase models). In light of these issues, there*



*is no compelling reason to institute music quotas on internet-based services.*

In a traditional context, emerging Australian talent has been supported by Australian content requirements and resultant airplay. This is typically demonstrated through 'rotation' — the number of spins (plays) — that tracks receive each week. This common industry term stems from records or discs revolving during playback. Since the early 1980s, triple j has been an avenue for artist support and exposure; however, there has been a marked decrease in the typical number of spins talent now receives. Ten years ago, triple j's high rotation equated to 35-40 spins each week (Brandle 2013); triple j's current high rotation is 17-18 spins (Brandle 2013). In terms of relative airplay, radio is evidently a less viable medium for artist promotion and copyright collection than it has been in the past. This may be due to an increased number of artists vying for airplay in a competitive market, or a trend towards a shorter 'shelf-life' for new releases. However, despite the proliferation of competing music formats such as streaming services, radio is still seen as a core element of promotion; Rogers (2013: 159) cites various industry figures who describe radio play as a 'fundamental', 'crucial' aspect of an artist's success.

Another traditional mark of success has been inclusion of a music release on 'the charts', which correlate primarily to airplay or to record sales. Kent (2010) documents that charting "*began in Australia in March 1958, when Radio Station 2UE, Sydney, published its first giveaway chart distributed via record stores ... the 'Top 40' format was adapted from (or copied from) American radio where it had long been established successfully*". Earlier, and dating from the 1940s, success was heard through 'Hit Parades' and lists were comprised of songs — sheet music and records — and other factors including "*public requests and (perhaps) the opinions of radio stations' personnel*" (Kent 2010). Contemporary music charts are now compiled through the Australian Music Report (Top #1s and 100s) and the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA). The Australian Music Report is compiled weekly of songs which have received airplay during the previous seven days (Australian Music Report

2013). ARIA is a national industry association that supports the industry by charting record sales and hosting annual awards. The diversification away from radio as the primary means of airplay has been recognised, with ARIA providing separate charts for 'Streaming Tracks' and 'Digital Tracks'; however a significant portion of music consumption may occur outside these means, including YouTube views/listens and illegal downloading/filesharing.

The Phonographic Performance Company of Australia's (PPCA) 'most played' lists are a further traditional measure of success. PPCA lists are "measured by collating titles that appear in the PPCA radio/TV broadcast logs" during the period July to June each year (PPCA 2012: 15). However, an analysis of the PPCA charts from 2009 to 2012 show a decline in the number of Australian recordings listed in the top 25 from 5 Australian recordings (2009; 2011), 7 Australian recordings (2010) to just 2 Australian recordings being listed in 2012 (ibid.: 15-16). The PPCA lists also reveal that international artists are consistently 'favoured' in the Australian marketplace (Australia Council for the Arts 2013b). Given that Australia is ranked sixth in the top ten music markets and represents 3 per cent of the global marketplace (Australia Council for the Arts 2013a), the traditional success trajectory of label deal (Williamson and Cloonan 2007) and airplay seems almost insurmountable for Australian artists. Additionally, radio play has historically been closely linked with the record industry. Liebowitz (2004) discusses the widely believed 'symbiotic' relationship between these industries, where radio broadcast functions as a low-cost means of advertising a music product. This reinforces the central role of established music industry bodies, namely radio and labels, as gatekeepers and tastemakers who determine an artist's potential listenership and, consequently, their career success in the pre-digital model.

### **3 Contemporary success in the Australian context**

Contemporary definitions of success challenge many of the traditional definitions. Although Letts' (2013) definition of success as involving rev-

enue and/or to peer appreciation of musical ability is still relevant, the means by which an artist's revenue is earned, and how appreciation of musical ability is measured, have changed. In particular, the advent of the Internet and digital music has been linked to a fall in record sales (Rogers 2013: 26). This significant shift that has forced artists and other industry bodies to reconsider how they can create sustainable careers, has altered the pre-digital definition of a music career, and has transformed conceptions of career success.

Firstly, the digitisation of music, including production, consumption, sales, and promotion, has theoretically allowed for artists to self-manage and to undertake many of the duties previously performed by more specialised industry personnel including labels, managers, promoters, studio engineers, booking agents, and so on. Scott (2012) refers to these 'do-it-yourself' (DIY) artists as "*cultural entrepreneurs*", and defines them as "*those who create and perform music, as well as self-manage the construction of a music industry career*" (Scott, 2012: 238). For contemporary DIY artists, more career benchmarks including being discovered by label Artist and Repertoire personnel (A&R), signed, managed, and having a network of industry figures are therefore not necessarily features of a successful music career. Although the ability of digital technology to empower artists has been termed a 'myth' by some researchers (McLean et al., 2010), many aspects of artists' careers, including recording, management, and social media are increasingly within the artist's own reach. Prominent independent artists such as Mia Dyson are self-managed (Dyson 2012), and workshops such as Melbourne-based artist Jen Cloher's *I Manage My Music* (Cloher 2013) cater to the growing number of musicians who aim to self-manage.

Secondly, social media has become a crucial tool for many aspects of success in contemporary music careers. Successfully building a fan base via social media involves providing diverse and well-timed content to fans, and by building connections with other artists and organisations online in order to expand awareness. A proven fan base in specific locations can allow artists to plan tours with less risk, and an active fan community can assist the artist by producing and sharing content, such

as photographs, 'likes', discussions, and live performance videos (Lingel & Naaman 2012). This positions fans as "*promoters and co-creators*" (Vellar 2012) instead of consumers; and Rogers (2013: 157) notes that the music industry itself also relies on this critical body of enthusiasts to effectively promote artists on social media. Through platforms such as Facebook, the artist can directly contact fans, and may also choose to explore paid methods for expanding their fan base such as sponsoring links. An accompanying concern for artists when using social media is determining how to manage their identity, or their brand. Baym (2012: 308) discusses artists' approaches to constructing their online identity or identities, noting that artists necessarily navigate between "*celebrity and friend, openness and distance, equality and difference*". Baym suggests that artists must define the fan/artist relationship by selecting which medium to interact through, and how often and intensively to interact, and build an online community.

Contemporary musicians are also able to access a variety of funding sources for artistic projects, including government grants and prizes. In 2013, the Australia Council alone offers 36 grants that may be awarded for music, ranging from grants for music managers to promote their artists at international events such as SXSW (International Markets — Music Managers grant and the Live on Stage grant), for contemporary musicians to tour within Australia (Contemporary Music Touring Program grant), and to support organisations to record, produce, and market Australian music (Recording Initiative grant). Another government grant is the Australian Trade Commission's Export Market Development Grant (EMDG), which is "*a key Australian Government financial assistance program for aspiring and current exporters*" (Australian Trade Commission n.d.), although this grant is designed to reimburse many different loss-leading Australian exporting initiatives, it includes the export of contemporary music via touring. The grant currently reimburses 50 per cent of the incurred costs of promotion. Australian artists can also explore crowdfunding as an alternative means of raising capital, as a means to "*confront, bypass, or even sever ties to their labels*" (Potts 2012: 362) while simultaneously allowing fans to become "*active parti-*

*participants in the careers of these artists, helping to cultivate, curate, and produce content".*

The distribution of music and video online, and subsequent metrics of views, downloads, and streams, can be viewed as another means of measuring success. Online video, for example, can simultaneously serve as a revenue stream (via YouTube advertising), a way to raise the artist's profile (through creating 'viral' videos or by, for example, covering other musicians' works), a platform for distribution of music videos and other moving image content to existing fans (both 'official' videos and candid material), and for measuring fan engagement (through views). Download and streaming services, though in their relative infancy in Australia, similarly serve as a revenue stream, delivery platform, promotional tool, and feedback mechanism for artists. The relatively small size of the Australian music market is still an issue that artists need to deal with, however two recent developments have aided the potential reach of Australian artists.

Firstly, as mentioned previously, social media allows for fans to be reached beyond national borders, allowing artists to build overseas followings, potentially leading to touring.

This may have an impact on the perceptions of 'deal making' success within the Australian industries as it may force Australian artist managers and lawyers to move beyond the argument that the best case scenario for Australian artists is to sign directly to larger labels in larger territories by doing split territories deals. Signing directly to a US or UK independent or major label may require geographical relocation and can be considered by those representing artists as the most likely option to lead to mainstream success (Morrow 2008). However, articulating into larger markets is not without challenges:

*"Signing with a multinational record company for the world from a smaller territory and licensing the right to exploit the copyright in a pre-existing record can be challenging routes for the release of recorded products from smaller markets in larger ones" (Morrow 2008: 5).*

The perception of 'deal making success' is also increasingly at odds with the way in which social media allows for fans to be reached beyond national borders, and in the process, potentially undermines the perceived 'success' of split territories deal making. The potential for international reach online is well demonstrated by Australian artist Gotye's international success in 2012, following his single and video for "Somebody I Used To Know":

Within three weeks of "Somebody I Used To Know's" striking, stop-frame, body-painting video being posted on YouTube, the song had received more than two million hits and made it to No.1 on the Hype Machine Twitter chart (Goyte 2013).

Secondly, sync (synchronisation) represents more opportunities and potential revenue streams for artists, where music is used for television, film, or advertising. For example, Melbourne artist Chet Faker's cover of Blackstreet's "No Diggity" was recently synced with a commercial during the US Superbowl, resulting in national airplay to millions of viewers (Mann, 2013). Rogers (2013: 104) describes sync as increasingly important as a source of income, particularly its potential internationally; he cites a 15 per cent growth in sync royalties in 2010 alone, and refers to the increasing presence of music supervisors at events such as South by Southwest (SXSW) (Rogers 2013: 105).

#### **4 The findings from the study**

Seven focus groups were conducted during with a range of participants including artists, artist managers, digital/online strategists, music publishers and representatives of Government agencies. In keeping with ethics requirements, participants were able to request to be de-identified in the reporting of findings. For the purposes of this article, and as some participants elected to be de-identified, participants are represented by a category (A=Artist; I=Industry) and a corresponding participant number. This participant distinction, made for coding purposes, is in relation to the primary roles of participants and is not meant to infer that artists are not also industry personnel. Focus group tran-

scripts have been analysed and coded; the concept of 'success' was a prominent theme. The following sections report on the findings in relation to the traditional and contemporary concepts of artist success in the Australian music industry.

#### 4.1 The DIY model

The difficulties in establishing a DIY career model were identified in relation to time management and/or financial issues. With little or no financial gain proffered in career establishment and facing the real prospect that initial investment *"far outweighs what you get back"* (A1), early career artists typically need to also work a *"day job"* (I1). In many instances, the DIY model requires artists to create their own work, foster networks and *"word of mouth"* (A3). While participants were agreed that there was no one formula for success, for artists choosing the DIY route additional career skills were identified:

*"It's been a big learning curve, there is a lot to learn and do and I kind of like that about managing yourself, you have a lot to learn, there are so many skills involved. There's a lot of admin involved, there's hardly any music" (A3).*

In relation to the success of the DIY model, the distinction was made between early career artist strategies and actual or *"long term career"* (I6) strategies. Formulating teams to underpin artists was seen to benefit more established artists, rather than those at the beginning of their careers. Replicating or replacing *"the old traditional label model which is publishing ... APRA ... producer ... A&R"* (I1) with a DIY model was identified as being the responsibility of artists and that being independent meant that artists *"have all of the control to find that group"* (I1). The concept of establishing credibility and potential viability before being assisted by a team, adds weight to the notion of success breeding success.

This notion is also evident in the value added stakes of being discovered or 'unearthed' through a medium such as triple j, which adds an immediate level of success in the competitive market space:

*"It's very difficult for singer-songwriters to compete, you don't generally hear singer-songwriters on the air apart from triple j or community radio [...] It still comes back to those traditional outlets, digital is really important but the traditional outlets are really important in building your profile and working out where your audience is" (I3).*

*"... DIY and that's why radio doesn't play as many songs, because there is a lot more out there" (I12).*

Commercial radio was viewed as requiring emerging artists to show markers of success, such as having a public profile or fanbase, before allocating them airplay:

*"... apart from triple j and community radio, there's very few outlets that will actually take a punt on something that is brand new without having seen, you know, 10 other boxes ticked first" (I13).*

In contrast to DIY early career and career success more generally, the reality faced by many musicians and their subsequent need to diversify into other industry roles was identified. This reality is possibly a reflection of the music industry being a youth marketplace and/or of insufficient financial returns to meet personal responsibilities and obligations. In some contexts, diversification was viewed as compromising musical intent and integrity:

*"That's why the producing, engineering, sound, managing, tour managing, it does really become a natural progression because you have lived and breathed this world for so long that's the natural next career that you take. It's unfortunate – we're all selling our souls at some point to sustain this music world" (I1).*

In other contexts, such as music management, the prospect of broadening musical involvement and contributing to the industry was viewed positively.



## 4.2 Grant funding

In relation to successful government grant recipients, participants further reinforced the notion of success breeding success. The general perception was that to receive a grant, artists needed to have already attained a level of exposure and success:

*"... the bands that do get those grants are the ones that do have some sort of radio airplay success and manage to get overseas, they're the bands that you see a lot more" (I5).*

State and federal government funding to assist in marketing and touring was viewed as beneficial in creating exposure (I1) and particular grants, such as the Australian Trade Commission's EMDG, were identified as aiding career sustainability (I6). While government funding is available, the general consensus of participants was that grants are highly competitive with *"a lot more people going for them"* (I5) and that there are not enough funding opportunities:

*"... there's never going to be enough money to give everyone a grant who is deserving of one, so it's only for a very small group at the top and it's sporadic and it's not sustainable, it doesn't actually help someone through the cost of their career" (I2).*

For one participant, success requires a solid work ethic and the ability to secure funding did not replace the need for artists to do the *"hard yards"* (I7). There is also a danger that an over-dependence on grant funding may suggest that particular industry involvement is simply not sustainable.

## 4.3 Crowdfunding

Participants were generally positive on the subject of crowdfunding as a successful avenue for artist funding, although some negativity also surrounded it in that it is perhaps no longer innovative because *"everyone is doing it"* (I6). The concept of success breeding success was also identified in the view that crowdfunding was best suited to bands with already-established careers, and for those artists who had possibly previ-

ously had label support (18). Two participants (15, 19) noted that crowdfunding may potentially become a recognised and increasingly popular means for institutions, such as the Australia Council, to award grants that match crowdfunded capital. For this to occur, funding bodies would need to navigate the risks, such as 'exploitation', that such an approach generate before proceeding. Another participant (A3) emphasised the importance of successfully strategising a crowdfunded project, in terms of organising prize tiers, the timing of the project, and approaching fans from a constructive (rather than demanding) perspective. This participant was successful in crowdfunding an album; crowdfunding had been utilised because they had been unable *"to get a grant"* (A3).

#### **4.4 Social media, online strategies and audience reach**

Regarding the role of social media in artists' success, participants unanimously agreed that social media engagement is crucial, however some expressed concern about its demands on an artist's time. Social media was viewed as a way to nurture and create a fanbase (13), although another participant noted that social media popularity and eventual success are strongly correlated but not necessarily linked, stating:

*"Creating a buzz online, getting fans to buy tickets to a bunch of shows, that doesn't mean that you're any good at putting on a live show, because social media and building fanbases online is a skill in itself [...] it doesn't necessarily reflect the quality of the band [...] or the long-term financial success of the band" (16).*

Strategising social media engagement and communication was also viewed as an important skill. One participant was more ambivalent about Facebook's usefulness, stating:

*"If you have 10,000 fans you can probably only contact 2,000 fans because of all the different algorithms they have going and you have to sponsor a link to get more [...] I would get rid of our Facebook, I think it is a waste of time" (A1).*

However, the same participant however also noted *"I think you still need Facebook, that's the number one stop, so if you have got a new single, you do a video, put it on YouTube, then on Facebook"*. He further emphasised the demands on an artist's time:

*"It's funny you have to put so much effort into your online presence as oppose to writing songs ... trying to maintain relevance and look interesting and post these stupid little videos on YouTube and stuff for people to interact with" (A1).*

Another participant estimated that she spends:

*"40 hours a week on music, maybe 9 hours is performing time and it's probably about 15 hours of driving and then the rest is just behind a computer — designing posters, designing a banner for Facebook or updating, stuff like that" (A3).*

Of particular note was the importance of the number of likes or followers for subsequent industry successes. One participant suggested that *"a lot of bands are buying fans so they can get a booking agent"* (I1), while another noted that social media and the Internet have allowed labels and other industry entities to:

*"... divest themselves of the need to find something new [...] commercial radio in particular, the first thing they will do is look at how many Facebook likes they've got, where the YouTube video is and how many people have viewed it" (I13).*

Participants also emphasised the importance of music video, particularly via YouTube, as *"an important part of being successful"* (I3). Stressing that artists need to understand how to optimise their presence on sites such as YouTube and the Internet in general, a participant stated:

*"Be aware of what people are Googling ... if you can put your band website or an iTunes link directly there. I am so impatient with the Internet, if I cannot find something then I am on to something else. If I can't see it in the top half of the page then I am gone" (I1).*

Further noting that artists need to understand the logistics of copyright on YouTube, the participant remarked:

*"How can [artists] get those 20,000 views that someone has ripped [their] music off for? They just don't know where to start. There's a fundamental lack of understanding and education on ...]the steps you need to take in order to take control of your work, to take ownership and actually claim that content" (I1).*

Participants also emphasised the importance of immediately releasing music and video material. Recounting an incident where an artist had been told to hang on to a recorded EP until someone finds it, one participant suggested *"manufactur[ing] that [the EP] immediately, so that you can go and sell it at all of your shows, because that is revenue ... your music is your business card" (I3)*. Regarding releasing material online, another participant suggested:

*"... if you release an album everyone gets excited and then forgets about it, and I think that is a part of the Gen Y mentality, the Internet, that if you want it right now you can YouTube it [...] they want it quick and now" (I6).*

Indicating that increasing availability of production technology has allowed self-produced material to be produced quickly, and at reasonable quality, a participant also commented that demos can now sound like a *"produced product" (I1)*.

The importance of the overseas and mainstream markets for Australian artists was also emphasised. Noting the small size of the domestic market, a participant suggested that *"to actually make money and be successful, you've got to connect with that mainstream at some point" (I3)*. Overseas markets were identified as having the facility to *"break a career as an artist or songwriter" (I6)*. Similarly, it was noted that:

*"If you have a minor hit in another territory, Europe or America, [it] can mean financial success and financial independence. Here unfortunately in Australia, we've got a small populace and a large country" (I12).*

In order to transition into overseas markets, the role of the Internet was highlighted in *"enabling bands to build a fanbase overseas before they go [touring]"* (I6); international collaborations in songwriting were viewed as having potential and mutual benefits (I2). Commenting on the '360 model' for artists, where sync (particularly advertising on television) represents *"the bulk of the publishing business in Australia"* (I2), the increasing viability of sync as an avenue for financial success was identified.

A critical part of successful online engagement is identity management, in terms of maintaining a consistent visual image and brand. Successful branding was viewed as being crucial to artistic identity. Strategies for branding included profile pictures, cover artwork, merchandising, typeface and logo, with one participant stating that *"... understanding what you look like visually, along with the audio, is a big part of who you are"* (I1). From an artist's perspective, image and brand was also seen to involve active engagement in social media:

*"... a lot of it has become very visual as well, the attention span is becoming shorter and shorter ... Instagram is the number one social at the moment, putting photos up on Tumblr, I try and engage myself in these"* (A2).

Several participants underlined the importance of recognising both professional and personal presence online: *"There's very little disconnect between [an artist's] personal Facebook page and their band Facebook page"* (I11). *"A lot of people don't realise that, particularly with the new Facebook privacy setting ... they own everything you said for the last four years now"* (I3).

## 5 Conclusion

Achieving 'success' within the Australian music industries is contingent on a variety of factors. In particular, contemporary markers of success are not only built on musical ability, but also more explicitly on business acumen and strategic planning. Effective building of online presence in

order to secure a dedicated fanbase, successfully achieving short-term projects through crowdfunding, and successfully being 'unearthed' through limited airplay can all be viewed as contemporary markers of artist success. Although the more traditional benchmarks of financial success and peer recognition are undoubtedly still applicable, there are many intermediary stages of contemporary success that are needed in order to achieve end goals. However, intermediary successes can also be considered 'successes' in their own right. Certainly, the research findings identify that attaining success often leads to further success, and that post-intermediary successes may be more weighted to the traditional notions of success in terms of revenue and recognition. Ultimately though, success can be viewed as "*whatever you want it to be*" (I14); for many contemporary artists, success may simply be 'satisfaction' in musical achievements.

## 6 References

- Australia Council for the Arts (2013a) Competitiveness of Australian musicians, Artfacts: Music; Visual Arts, available at <http://artfacts.australiacouncil.gov.au/tag/value-and-impact> (accessed August 12, 2013).
- Australia Council for the Arts (2013b) Australia's global ranking, Artfacts: Music, available at <http://artfacts.australiacouncil.gov.au/global#post-160> (accessed August 12, 2013).
- Australian Music Report (2013) Australian Music Report Weekly Hot 100: August 2-8, 2013, available at <http://www.aumreport.com/amr100.html> (accessed August 6, 2013).
- Australian Trade Commission (n.d.) Export Market Development Grants (EMDG): What is EMDG? available at <http://www.austrade.gov.au/Export/Export-Grants/What-is-EMDG> (accessed August 24, 2013).
- Baym, N. K. (2012) "Fans or friends?: Seeing social media audiences as musicians do", *Participations*, vol. 9, no.2 , pp. 286-316.
- Brandle, L. (2013) "The Hook: Is Triple J holding back the Australian music scene?" available at <http://www.themusicnetwork.com/music-features/industry/2013/03/14/the-hook-is-triple-j-holding-back-the-australian-music-scene/> (accessed August 6, 2013).
- Broadcasting Services Act 1992 (Commonwealth) (Australia), available at <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/Details/C2013C00358> (accessed August 12, 2013).

- Cloher, J. (2013), "I Manage My Music", available at <http://imanagemymusic.com/jencloher/> (accessed August 23, 2013).
- Collins, S. & Young, S. (forthcoming 2014) Never Mind the Bollocks: Music 2.0 and the Future(s) of Music, Equinox.
- Commercial Radio Australia (CRA) 2011, Codes of Practice & Guidelines, Commercial Radio Australia Limited.
- Commonwealth of Australia (2012) Convergence Review: Final Report, Canberra: Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, available at [http://www.dbcde.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/147733/Convergence\\_Review\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://www.dbcde.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/147733/Convergence_Review_Final_Report.pdf) (accessed August 6, 2013).
- Commonwealth of Australia (n.d.) Music: Australian contemporary music, available at <http://arts.gov.au/music> (accessed August 6, 2013).
- Contemporary Music Working Group (CMWG) (2008) Submission to the Mortimer Review for Export: Increased Exports Maximise the industry's export potential and income, Australian Contemporary Music Industry (ACMI), available at [www.dfat.gov.au/.../export\\_review/submissions.../ContemporaryMusicWorkingGroup](http://www.dfat.gov.au/.../export_review/submissions.../ContemporaryMusicWorkingGroup) (August 12, 2013).
- Dyson, M. (2012) Mia Dyson: About, Facebook, available at <https://www.facebook.com/miadyson/info> (accessed August 23, 2013).
- Goyte (2013) Goyte: About, Facebook, available at <https://www.facebook.com/gotye/info> (accessed August 23, 2013).
- Homan, S. (2013) "From Coombs to Crean: popular music and cultural policy in Australia", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 19, no. 3, pp.382-398.
- Hughes, D., Keith, S., Morrow, G., Evans, M. & Crowdy, D. (forthcoming 2013) "Music education and the contemporary, multi-industry landscape, Redefining the musical landscape: inspired learning and innovation in music education", Proceedings of the XIX Australian Society for Music Education (ASME) Conference, September 29 - October 1, 2013, Barton, Canberra.
- Kent, D. (2010) History: Why are there Charts? available at <http://www.austchartbook.com.au/> (accessed August 12, 2013).
- Letts, R. (2013) Survey of Successful Contemporary Musicians, Music in Australia Knowledge Base, available at [http://musicinaustralia.org.au/index.php/Survey\\_of\\_Successful\\_Contemporary\\_Musicians](http://musicinaustralia.org.au/index.php/Survey_of_Successful_Contemporary_Musicians) (accessed August 8, 2013).

Liebowitz, S. J., (2004) "The Elusive Symbiosis: The Impact of Radio on the Record Industry", SSRN, March 2004, available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.520022> (accessed August 28, 2013).

Lingel, J. & Naaman, M. (2012) "You should have been there, man: Live music, DIY content and online communities", *New Media Society*, vol. 14, pp. 332-349.

Mann, T. (2013) "Chet Faker to be thrust 'in front of millions' at Super Bowl, FasterLouder Pty Ltd.", available at <http://www.fasterlouder.com.au/news/34789/Chet-Faker-to-be-thrust-in-front-of-millions-at-Super-Bowl> (accessed August 23, 2013).

McLean, R., Oliver, P. G., & Wainwright, D. W. (2010) "The myths of empowerment through information communication technologies: An exploration of the music industries and fan bases", *Management Decision*, vol. 48, no. 9, pp. 1365-1377.

Morrow, G. (2008) "Manager's Voice: Creative Process as Strategic Alliance", *International Journal of Arts Management*, vol. 11, no 1, Fall 2008.

Potts, L. (2012) "Amanda Palmer and the #LOFNOTC: How online fan participation is rewriting music labels", *Participations*, vol. 9, no 2, pp. 360-382.

Phonographic Performance Company of Australia (PPCA) (2012) Annual Report 2012, Phonographic Performance Company of Australia Limited, available at <http://www.pcca.com.au/IgnitionSuite/uploads/docs/Media%20Release%20-%20Most%20Played%20Artists%20%20Recordings%202010.pdf> (accessed August 12, 2013).

Rogers, J. (2013) *The Death & Life of the Music Industry in the Digital Age*, Bloomsbury Publishing, New York.

Scott, M. (2012) "Cultural entrepreneurs, cultural entrepreneurship: Music producers mobilising and converting Bourdieu's alternative capitals", *Poetics*, vol. 40, pp. 237-255.

Throsby, D. & Zednik, A. (2010) *Do you really expect to get paid? An economic study of professional artists in Australia*, The Australia Council for the Arts, available at [http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/79108/Do\\_you\\_really\\_expect\\_to\\_get\\_paid.pdf](http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/79108/Do_you_really_expect_to_get_paid.pdf) (accessed August 12, 2013).

Vellar, A. (2012) "The recording industry and grassroots marketing: from street teams to flash mobs", *Participations*, vol. 9, vol. 1, pp. 95-118.

Wells, K. (2007) "Australian Pop Music, Big Black Dog Communications Pty Ltd.", available at <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/austn-pop-music> (accessed August 6, 2013).

Williamson, J. and Cloonan, M. (2007) "Rethinking the music industry", *Popular Music*, vol. 26, no. 2, pp.305-322.



## Notes for contributors

### Submission of papers

All submissions should be made by e-mail to [music.business.research@gmail.com](mailto:music.business.research@gmail.com).

Authors should prepare and send an anonymous version of her/his paper for double-blind-reviewing. A brief biographical note about each author should be supplied in a separate file. Details should be given of authors full postal and e-mail addresses as well as telephone and fax numbers.

Submission should be in English, typed in double spacing (including all notes as footnotes, references, tables, figures and plates). English or American spelling is acceptable provided usage is consistent.

Submission of a paper to the journal will be taken to imply that it presents original, unpublished, work not under consideration for publication elsewhere.

An abstract of the paper, of up to 500 characters (including spacing), should accompany the article. In addition, a list of between three and six key words, suitable for indexing and abstracting services, should be supplied.

Articles should not normally exceed 7,000 words (without references) in length. If your word-processor is capable of doing a word count please use it to print this at the end of the text, together with the date of the manuscript.

Notes should be kept to a minimum and placed as footnotes at the end of the page.

### References

The Harvard reference system is used in this journal: the name of the author, the date of publication and, following quoted material, the page reference, as a key to the full bibliographic details set out in the list of references, e.g. "... citation ..." (Peterson 1990: 56); several authors have noted this trend (Smith 1970; Jones & Cook 1968; Dobbs et al. 1973). [N.B. et al. to be used when there are three or more authors.] The date of publication cited must be the date of the source referred to; when using a republished book, a translation or a modern version of an older edition, however, the date of the original publication may also be given. Where there are two or more works by one author in the same year, these should be distinguished by using 2012a, 2012b, etc. The reference list

should include every work cited in the text. Please ensure that dates, spelling and titles used in the text are consistent with those listed in the References. The content and form of the reference list should conform to the following examples. Please note that page numbers are required for articles, both place of publication and name of publisher should be given for books and, where relevant, translator and date of first publication should be noted. Do not use et al. in the reference list; use surname and initials for each author.

Book volume:

Allen, P., Macy, A. & Hutchinson, T. (2010) *Record Label Marketing*, Focal Press, Amsterdam and Oxford.

Article in edited volume:

Burnett, R. (1996) "The Popular Music Industry in Transition", in *Mass Media & Society*, eds A. Wells & E. Hakanen, JAI Press, London, pp. 120-140.

Article in journal:

Oberholzer-Gee, F. & Strumpf, K. (2007) "The Effect of File Sharing on Record Sales: An Empirical Analysis", *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 115, no. 1, pp. 1-42.

Edited text:

Smith, A. (1976) [1776] *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, eds R. H. Campbell, A. S. Skinner & W. B. Todd, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Translated text:

Tschmuck, P. (2006) *Creativity and Innovation in the Music Industry*, trans. M. Abel, Springer Netherlands, Dordrecht.

Article in newspaper:

Barber, L. (1993) "The towering bureaucracy", *Financial Times*, 21 June, p. 00.

Unpublished:

Holland Mortimer, J., Nosko, C. & Sorensen, A. (2010) *Supply Responses to Digital Distribution: Recorded Music and Live Performances*, NBER Working Papers 16507, Harvard Business School.

Internet references

If your source of information is a book, a journal, a journal article which is published and just reproduced on the Internet then follow the guidelines above, also adding the type of medium (e.g. on-line), how it is available (e.g. HTTP, Gopher, e-mail) and then the actual electronic address with the dates of access in brackets.

Internet source:

As for print reference, plus: Available at: <http://musicbusinessresearch.wordpress.com> (4 June 2011). Journal article etc.: Not published elsewhere other than on the Internet, then as above but leaving out the place name and publisher.

### Notes on style

Justification of text. When producing your word processed document, use the unjustified mode. Leave the right margin ragged and avoid word divisions and hyphens at the end of lines. Only insert hard returns at the end of paragraphs or headings.

Punctuation. Use a single (not a double) space after a full point, and after commas, colons, semicolons, etc. Do not put a space in front of a question mark, or in front of any other closing quotation mark.

Spelling. We prefer spellings to conform to the new edition of the Concise Oxford English Dictionary and to follow the Oxford Dictionary for Writers and Editors.

Initial capitalization. Please keep capitalization to a minimum. When possible use lower case for government, church, state, party, volume, etc.; north, south, etc. are only capitalised if used as part of a recognised place name e.g. Western Australia, South Africa; use lower case for general terms e.g. eastern France, south-west of Berlin.

Full points. Use full points after abbreviations (p.m., e.g., i.e., etc.) and contractions where the end of the word is cut (p., ed., ch.). Omit full points in acronyms (HMSO, USA, BBC, NATO, plc), after contractions which end in the last letter of the word (Dr, Mr, St, edn, eds, Ltd) and after metric units (cm, m, km, kg). Note especially ed. eds; vol. vols; no. nos; ch. chs, etc.

Italics. Extensive use of italic for emphasis should be avoided and only be used for citations in the text.

Quotations. Use double quotation marks and italics for quoted material within the text; single quotation marks should only be used for quotes within quotes. Use leader dots at the beginning or end of a quotation.

Numerals. In general spell out numbers under 100; but use numerals for measurements (e.g. 12 km) and ages (e.g. 10 years old). Insert a comma for both thousands and tens of thousands (e.g. 1,000 and 20,000). Always use the minimum number of figures for ranged numbers and dates, e.g. 22-4, 105-6, 1966-7; but use 112-13, 1914-18, etc. for teen numbers. Use the percentage sign only in figures and tables; spell out percent in the text using a numeral for the number (e.g. 84 percent).

Dates. Set out as follows: 8 July 1990 (no comma), on 8 July, or on the 8th; 1990s (not spelt out, no apostrophes).

En rules. Since there is no en rule on a standard keyboard, use a double hyphen for en rules, use these to link number spans (e.g. 24-8); to connect two items linked in a political context (e.g. Labour-Liberal alliance, Rome-Berlin axis) and to link the names of joint authors (e.g. Temple-Hardcastle project).

#### Proofs

Authors are expected to correct proofs quickly and any alteration to the original text is strongly discouraged. Authors should correct typesetters errors in red; minimal alterations of their own should be in black.

### Copyrights

There is now need to assign copyright or license the publication rights in the articles the International Journal of Music Business Research. Please feel free to use the text for e.g. online publication in blogs, private/academic webpages, academic databases, wikis. If you want to publish the article in a fully copyrighted (online) publication, please let us know.

However, all authors are required to secure permission to reproduce any copyrighted text, illustration, table, or other material and any supplementary material you propose to submit. This applies to direct reproduction as well as "derivative reproduction" (where you have created a new figure or table which derives substantially from a copyrighted source). The reproduction of short extracts of texts, excluding poetry and song lyrics, for the purposes of criticism may be possible without formal permission on the basis that the quotation is reproduced accurately and full attribution is given.

For further questions please contact the journal editors:

[music.business.research@gmail.com](mailto:music.business.research@gmail.com)