Urban Musical Modernism in 'Broken Britain'

Street Culture and the Avant-Garde in the UK, 2005-2015

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Music

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Abstract – Urban Musical Modernism in 'Broken Britain':

Street Culture and the Avant-Garde in the UK, 2005-2015.

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Since the widely acknowledged death of postmodernism, debates about the ongoing importance of musical modernism have raged. But scholars have found it difficult to square this efflorescence of contemporary modernist thought with the ongoing sense that modernism should be more plural, encompassing music from the low side of the great divide. Focusing on Britain, this study looks at the cross-currents between contemporary classical and 'urban' popular musics that seek to make a statement about the cultural diversity of a British national identity, while at the same time securing prestige through institutional support. The thesis balances issues of intention against matters of reception, considered through texts aimed at a broad audience – newspaper and magazine sources, radio and television broadcasts, publicly available musical scores, and websites – which it reads critically alongside primarily historical musicological literature, with the addition of some work on urban geography, and sociological work on artistic consumption. Modernist and urban popular music prove to have found common ground in a strand of vernacular modernism that has often been concerned with popular or folk influences, and anxieties surrounding the machine-age; composers of contemporary modernist music appropriate

rap, dance, and electronic musical styles in an attempt to resist cultural superiority, with a view to achieving the cultural superiority associated with modes of resistance. The thesis charts a broad trajectory over six chapters, from the interaction between urban popular and avant-garde styles at the BBC Proms in Chapter One, to the material effects of bringing an urban modernism to new audiences and urban spaces in Chapter Six. By painting a detailed picture of the complex and often contradictory ways in which these urban popular styles support or undermine the avant-garde, the thesis concludes by supporting ongoing critical work into the nature of innovation through resistance that has been central to definitions of modernism.

A note on sources and referencing

This thesis uses Chicago referencing. I have made the choice to reference all of the primary sources in full.

All of the broad-audience newspaper, magazine, and journal articles in this thesis were sourced from the LexisNexis online database, in which they are presented in text format only, with information provided as to the position of the article within the respective newspaper or magazine. Each entry often includes extra bibliographic information for which the Chicago Manual of Style does not provide referencing instructions, such as the sub-section (e. g., Music section) or attendant supplement (e. g., Culture supplement) of a magazine; I have modified the referencing system to include this information. Where available, I have provided a link to an online version of the article so that it can be accessed more directly. Because this information has been provided by many third parties it is often also inconsistent, but I have tried to present it as consistently as possible within this thesis.

When a primary source has been cited, I have retained the original spelling and formatting of its title.

All other written sources – concert programme notes, and articles from *Gramophone*, *The Wire*, and *The Radio Times* – were seen in full, either in hard copy, scanned, or as PDFs.

Introduction

This thesis is about the appropriation of 'urban' music by composers of contemporary classical music in the United Kingdom since the turn of the millennium. What I am calling 'urban' music is a set of dance, electronic, and hip-hop styles, fraught with social and racial issues; what I am calling contemporary classical music is new music that is described as continuing a modernist or the classical avant-garde style. Both styles find common ground in that they seek to be conceptually difficult, characterized by sonic aggression. The thesis draws much of its material from magazines, newspapers, TV and radio programmes, in what is a study of discussions of recent contemporary music – discussions that are primarily aimed at a broad audience. I am particularly concerned with the way in which this music is often addressed in order to make a political point. My study also draws on biographical information relevant to some of the composers chosen for specific consideration, who themselves inevitably contribute to those discussions. They have been working in a period in which many have proclaimed the death of the high/low divide. Yet the reality is that this divide is merely cast in increasingly complicated and contradictory ways: while 'urban' music may be seen as popular music, creators of grime, hip-hop, and dance music may still argue that it is resistant to commodification and sonically aggressive, giving it a high art status within a popular sphere; while 'modernist' music may be in one sense linked to classical music, it is also an outsider in institutional terms, appearing rarely on concert programmes and remaining unpopular with the general public. The divide lives on, but it is a shapeshifter. So-called 'culture-clash' concerts may seek to erode boundaries but tend to present an image of popular music and youth culture that reinforces, rather than undermines, a pernicious divide between high and low.

Issues in musical modernism

This thesis responds to the resurgence of literature in recent years that views musical modernism as alive and well in our time. But arguing for the continued relevance of musical modernism has necessarily meant addressing a set of complaints levelled against it since, as Gianmario Borio writes, musical modernism has been seen as 'authoritarian, intolerant, chauvinistic and colonialist.'[1] As a result, musical modernism has sought to become increasingly catholic, with three recent texts in particular defining it in very broad terms. In his *Musical Modernism in the Twenty-First Century*, David Metzer views musical modernism as a style necessarily defined by innovation; as a result, modernism must change over time, and Metzer 'view[s] early modernism from afar, not from the realms of popular culture or traditional idioms but rather from a later period, that from the 1980s to the present.'[2] Broadening out the definition a little further, J. P. E. Harper-Scott's *The Quilting Points of Musical Modernism* begins with the 'radical contention … that the definition of modernism must encompass *all music of the twentieth century*, and not just a privileged group of works by a group of nominated composers.'[3] Harper-Scott's basic point is that modernist music articulates a sense of resistance in accordance with an ethical dilemma that is universal; consequently, all other types of music should be held to the same aesthetic standards. And going further still, in their *Transformations of Musical Modernism*, Erling E. Guldbrandsen

[1] Gianmario Borio, 'Musical Communication and the Process of Modernity,' *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 139/1 (2014): 178. For responses to critiques of modernism see Christopher Fox, 'Darmstadt and the Institutionalisation of Modernism,' *Contemporary Music Review* 26/1 (2007): 115-123; Björn Heile, 'Darmstadt as Other: British and American Responses to Musical Modernism,' *Twentieth-Century music* 1/2 (September 2004): 161-178; Susan McClary, 'The Lure of the Sublime: Revisiting the Modernist Project,' in *Transformations of Musical Modernism*, ed. Erling E. Guldbrandsen and Julian Johnson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 21-35.
[2] David Metzer, *Musical Modernism at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 3.
[3] J. P. E. Harper-Scott, *The Quilting Points of Musical Modernism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), xiv.

and Julian Johnson define modernism as 'an attitude of musical practice … that involves an increased awareness of its own historical situation and remains alive and kicking as a vibrant musical force. … it provokes an acute awareness of the condition of historicity that has always been embedded in the present moment of musical experience.'[4] For these authors, musical modernism extends back to Beethoven, as well as forward to the present day.

For all of these texts, however, popular music is still peripheral to modernism: for Metzer, in contrast to authors who have 'aimed to expand the idea of modernism beyond the focus on compositional innovation by staking out modernist ideals in popular culture or in more traditional composers', his study 'holds to the more established notion of modernism.'[5] Likewise, as Christopher Chowrimootoo writes of Harper-Scott's work, even though popular music is ostensibly included in his definition of modernism, it is still an inclusion in which modernism radiates outward from an authentic core: 'The music of Walton, Britten, and others is, for Harper-Scott, always a reaction to Schoenbergian modernism, but the relation is never reciprocal.'[6] As a result, popular music remains implicated in modernism's 'conscious strategy of exclusion, an anxiety of contamination by its other: an increasingly consuming and engulfing mass culture.'[7] And, despite Guldbrandsen and Johnson's wide definition, their collection of essays contains only one chapter by Metzer that spotlights the high/low divide by suggesting ways in which it has been bridged.

It may seem that there is very little reason for clinging to modernism at all, and less

[4] Erling E. Guldbrandsen and Julian Johnson, 'Introduction,' in *Transformations of Musical Modernism*, ed. Guldbrandsen and Johnson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 1-2.
[5] Metzer, *Musical Modernism*, 3.
[6] Christopher Chowrimootoo, 'Britten Minor: Constructing the Modernist Canon,' *Twentieth-Century Music* 13/2 (2016): 287.
[7] Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1986), vii. See also Andreas Huyssen, 'Introduction: Modernism after Postmodernity,' *New German Critique* 99 (Fall, 2006): 1-5.

still for trying to define it. And yet, this is precisely why the term is important: as Christopher Chowrimootoo writes, 'modernism is arguably all about boundaries, in the heightened sense that it is itself a contested category, whose only red thread seems to have been an investment in distinction and hierarchy.'[8] Modernism, as a subset of classical music, denotes prestige; and where prestige is conferred, an uneven power structure comes into play.[9] The issue of the high/low divide is approached obliquely throughout this project, in the acknowledgment that contemporary popular music too lays claims to innovation. As Metzer puts it, 'modernism' is defined through 'capturing advanced material, the most challenging sounds and ideas existing at a particular historical moment.'[10] There are two distinct dimensions to this: the first is a focus on a harsh or challenging musical sound; Daniel Albright suggests that 'where there is technical aggressiveness, there is Modernism.'[11] The second (in some ways an extension of the first) is the fact that modernist or avant-garde status has historically been conferred, as Hubert van den Berg puts it, on the basis that music signals 'political engagement and commitment', and is linked to and fuels 'periods of political instability, change, revolt, and revolution'.[12] Stephen Graham extends this definition to contemporary underground music (of which urban musics are arguably a part), since this music is 'organized around some core sense of aesthetic and political

[8] Christopher Chowrimootoo, 'Modernism and the Middlebrow: Or, Deconstructing Modernism from the Inside,' *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 139/1 (2014): 188.
[9] For the archetypal critique of modernism and prestige, see Susan McClary, 'Terminal Prestige: The Case of Avant-Garde Music Composition,' *Cultural Critique* 12 (April, 1989): 57-81.
[10] David Metzer, 'Sharing a Stage: The Growing Proximity Between Modernism and Popular Music,' in *Transformations of Musical Modernism* ed. Guldbrandsen and Johnson, 99. Here, Metzer is glossing Theodor W. Adorno, *The Philosophy of New Music* (Minneapolis, Minn.; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 31-34.
[11] Daniel Albright, *Modernism and Music: An Anthology of Sources* (Chicago, Ill.; London: University of Chicago Press), 11.
[12] Hubert F. van den Berg, 'Avant-Garde,' in *Sound Commitments: Avant-Garde Music and the Sixties*, ed. Robert Adlington (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 15-29 at 25.

innovation and radicalism.'[13] Neither of these two definitions is, however, restricted merely to art music of the twentieth-century: indeed, the popular 'urban' music I discuss is also marked by a certain antipathy towards mass culture.[14] It is one of the big paradoxes of modernism that if the modernist/popular divide is accepted, it is within the sphere of popular music that modernists find the most challenging sounds they can use. The impact this music has (or is believed to have) comes not only from its sonic features but from the sense that it is making a statement on social and racial inequalities in Britain.[15]

A key problem with bridging the high/low divide in contemporary music is that what constitutes 'popular music' remains too broad for many scholars of modernism.[16] For Metzer, it is not enough to simply discuss stylistic diversity, but rather, 'we need to come to terms with that diversity, to figure out what is going on in the stylistic sprawl.'[17] I am expanding on a number of recent articles that see black musical subcultures – to generalize, hip-hop, dance, and electronic music – as being linked to modernism. Metzer, for example, provides a reading of some Public Enemy tracks that pack together a number of found sounds into extremely dense montages. He links their use of collage and sonic quick-cuts to

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[13] Stephen Graham, *Sounds of the Underground: A Cultural, Political, and Aesthetic Mapping of Underground and Fringe Music* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2016), 5-6.

[14] The issue of authenticity is bound up in many ways with urban music: part of this has to do with the term 'keeping it real', a phrase that refers to the ability of hip-hop to reflect the suffering of marginalized individuals living in poverty in urban areas, and that has underscored hip-hop since its inception. For a recent discussion of this term and its many meanings, see Tricia Rose, *The Hip Hop Wars* (New York: Basic Civitas, 2008), 133-148.

[15] It should also be stressed that this thesis does not *advocate* modernism in the way that certain texts – in particular, the volumes by Harper-Scott, and Guldbrandsen & Johnson – seem to. See also Guldbrandsen and Johnson, 'Introduction,' 6.

[16] David Clarke, for example, uses the 'Elvis/Darmstadt' duality in order to cast the high/low divide in very rigid terms – see David Clarke, 'Elvis and Darmstadt, or: Twentieth-Century Music and the Politics of Cultural Pluralism,' *Twentieth-Century Music* 4/1 (2007): 3–45; In his study of the intersections between British musical modernism and popular music, Rupprecht effectively sees popular music as being a broad range of ostensibly non-classical, electronic, or rock styles – see Philip Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism: The Manchester Group and their Contemporaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 365-442; In his chapter, Metzer discusses three distinct types of popular music – see Metzer, 'Sharing a Stage'.

[17] Metzer, 'Sharing a Stage,' 106.

Pierre Schaeffer's works, which 'capture the hectic clamour of modern life by using and piling on bits of real-world sounds, including voices, trains and sirens.'[18] Linking Public Enemy's tracks back to 1960s and 1970s Civil Rights and Black Power movements, Metzer concludes that such assaults upon the ears 'place samples of those songs in a vibrant, ever-changing mix, in which their messages join and fortify a new attack on racial inequality.'[19] Metzer likewise cites the music of Aphex Twin as one example of the most significant crossovers between electronic and classical music – the 'shadowy divide between electronic and modernist contemporary classical'.[20] Again, these musicians 'created dense textures by overlaying strands separated by metre, tempo or style, among other elements.'[21]

The entry of electronic, dance, and hip-hop styles into modernism is echoed by Christopher Ballantine in a round table discussion on modernism and its others in the *Journal of the Royal Musical Association*. For Ballantine, modernism has already embraced the popular through these styles, but has done so inasmuch as this dance music has shared modernist music's apparent defiance of capitalism and marketization. Like modernist music, these 'popular' styles have sought to undermine capitalist commodification through 'innovations, recollections, renewals, combinations, subversions and transgressions.'[22] Whether or not such music *actually* undermines capitalism in any way is out of the scope of this thesis; the point is that the perceived sense of resistance articulated by this music allows it to establish a link with modernist musical styles. For Ballantine, one of the most suggestive instances of the links between popular music and modernism 'is the dance music that was created by young people in the economically devastated black neighbourhoods of

[18] Ibid, 102.
[19] Ibid, 103.
[20] Kafka Garden, 'Press Quotes'; quoted in Metzer, 104.
[21] Metzer, 104.
[22] Christopher Ballantine, 'Modernism and Popular Music,' *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 139/1 (2014): 201.

Detroit in the 1970s, 1980s and beyond, and that became known as Detroit techno.'[23] This music was created through the appropriation and blending of other different musical styles, which fostered a sense of resistance that undermined the reifications of capitalism and allowed 'new senses of place, space and temporality' to come into being.[24] The quotation of many different styles within one musical idiom is common to hip-hop as well: as David Samuels writes, '[a]lthough much is made of rap as a kind of urban streetgeist, early rap had a more basic function: dance music …: the point wasn't rapping, it was rhythm, DJs cutting records left and right, [mixing] Led Zeppelin with a jazz record and some James Brown.'[25] The historical and cultural relationship of Detroit techno to hip-hop and its inception in the Bronx is complicated,[26] and while they should not be conflated, a similar sense of resistance through innovation has been written into the history of both hip-hop and dance styles.

It should be made clear that this is project does not see the crossover of these styles as happening under an equal power structure. In many cases, when 'urban' music is used by modernist composers, it is a style over which a form of power is exerted.[27] This inequality is echoed by Bernard Gendron, who writes that 'in its friendliest interchanges [modernism] was quarantining itself from the invasive power of popular music by absorbing its dynamism and co-opting its innovations. Popular music was the colonized and the avant-garde the

[23] Ibid, 203.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Quoted in Marina Terkourafi, 'Introduction: A Fresh Look at Some Old Questions,' in *The Languages of Global Hip-Hop*, ed. Marina Terkourafi (New York: Continuum, 2010), 10.
[26] Detroit techno was created as an attempt to distance itself from hip-hop, and was an explicit harnessing of European modernism by black young people who 'grew up accustomed to affluence'. Simon Reynolds, *Energy Flash* (London: Faber & Faber, 2013), 6.
[27] 'Modernist composers often want to take over, to own, to demonstrate their mastery of that which they are quoting, either by placing it in modernist contexts or by distorting it. Postmodernists are more content to let the music they refer to or quote simply be what it is, offered with neither distortion nor musical commentary. Hence postmodern music readily accepts the diversity of music in the world.' Jonathan Kramer, 'The Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism,' in *Postmodern Music/Postmodern Thought*, ed. Judith Lochhead and Joseph Auner (New York; London: Routledge, 2002), 15.

colonizer.'[28] How this should happen is unclear, and is difficult to pin down. Ballantine offers a different, though no less unequal, reading of this musical interchange. His set of examples is of 'modernism in popular music'[29] rather than popular music in modernism; segments of modernist works are used in popular tracks, resulting in a relationship that is (like Gendron's) less symbiotic than it is parasitic. My approach is closer to Gendron's: by looking at the intersections between urban and modernist music, I focus on a strand of institutionally accepted modernism that has always incorporated vernacular musical styles. While there is still a sense in which the history of modernism has been written in terms of abstraction, purity, and a musical language characterised by serialism and atonality,[30] it is also the case that for composers such as Béla Bartók, Paul Hindemith, and Igor Stravinsky, there was, as Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh put it, a 'turn to other musics—urban popular musics, Western and non-Western folk and ethnic musics—as sources of new sounds and rhythms, musical forms and ideas.'[31] It is of course important that the divide between musical modernism and its Others does not become reified, since it is a divide arguably supported more by discourse than historical fact. Kofi Agawu addressed this problem directly in his 1995 article 'The Invention of "African Rhythm"', when he suggested that 'Whether it is appropriate to compare, for example, Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* (with its acknowledged challenges to, and extensions of, conventions of metrical articulation) … with African rhythm … is for our purposes less important than the fact that such comparisons are, in principle, possible.'[32] Here, Agawu foregrounds the politics of entertaining an *a priori*

[28] Bernard Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club* (Chicago, IL; London: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 19.
[29] Ballantine, 'Modernism and Popular Music,' 203.
[30] Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, 'Introduction,' in *Western Music and Its Others*, ed. Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 12-13.
[31] Born and Hesmondhalgh, 'Introduction,' 13.
[32] Kofi V. Agawu, 'The Invention of "African" Rhythm,' *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 48/3 (1995): 380-395 at 386.

divide between Western and non-Western musics, and the issues at stake in comparing the two.

Focusing these issues through the United Kingdom since the turn of the millennium, the thesis tells the story of an increasing number of musical concerts and projects within new classical music that integrate urban styles. The term 'urban' is mobile, and multivalent: it is the chaotic sound of the city, it is the harsh sound of new music, and it is the sound of street music. In each chapter, new classical music is described as 'urban' in different ways by the press and musicians involved – an urban sound in new music is typically fractured, gritty and sonically abrasive. The term 'urban music' in this cultural context is slightly different, though nevertheless related. As I will suggest below, it is a racist term that collapses grime, hip-hop, and also often electronic dance music. Moreover, this music is seen as embracing styles synonymous with black and minority ethnic people living in low-income urban areas. This leads less to a cultural acceptance or support of these social groups and more to a simple or pernicious commodification of street culture. Part of the appeal of urban music to new classical musicians has to do with the fact that 'urban' music is peripheral to the mainstream. A general musical 'difficulty' has been seen as definitive of the avant-garde, but Chris Atton points out that this difficulty has been embraced by popular music too, since the nature of the avant-garde is necessarily mobile.[33] Whether or not these musical styles are *actually* resistant and innovative is less important than the fact that they are described in terms of their resistance and innovation.

What characterizes these concerts discussed within this thesis is often simply that they are reported upon as novelties, transgressions, or 'culture clashes'. But they distinguish themselves from a slew of other classical/popular concerts in many different ways: they are

[33] Chris Atton, 'Listening to "Difficult Albums": Specialist Music Fans and the Popular Avant-Garde,' *Popular Music* 31/3 (2012): 349.

seen as radical or innovative, and common musical ground is found in harsh, complex sound that the different musical styles share, or what Allan F. Moore describes as 'a generalised 'unnecessary "difficulty", [which] … appears to many lay audiences as an obvious criterion of the "modern".'[34] This 'difficulty' is bound up with a sonic harshness. As Ian Pace writes, a specific set of metaphors is used extremely often in discourse on new classical music, which is characterized by 'dry or thin sounds, angularity or "spikiness" of line as the result of the employment of various forms of discontinuity.'[35] These terms are seen as linked inextricably to innovation, since they are somehow challenging through their unpleasantness.[36] As Daniel Albright puts it, 'the most barbaric art tends to be the most up-to-date and sophisticated.'[37] A fractured, harsh, or rhythmic sound is absolutely central to these concerts, since it is this that imparts to the music a radical or innovative quality.[38] The phrase 'Broken Britain' comes into play here (and will be discussed more in chapter 1) – it is a phrase that has been widely used to describe David Cameron's Britain, often linked to the riots of August 2011, in which a variety of social and racial tensions exploded both on the streets and in public discourse.[39] Each composer evokes the urban in its above dual

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[34] Allan F. Moore, 'Jethro Tull and the Case for Modernism in Mass Culture,' in *Analyzing Popular Music*, ed. Allan F. Moore (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 169.
[35] Ian Pace, 'Verbal Discourse as Aesthetic Arbitrator in Contemporary Music,' in *The Modernist Legacy*, ed. Björn Heile (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2009), 91.
[36] For Cross, the same sense of fracture is central to Stravinsky's modernism. He quotes Taruskin, who sees Stravinsky's music as characterised by '"splinteredness"; the quality of being formally disunified.' Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy*, 10.
[37] Albright, *Modernism and Music*, 12.
[38] In a sense, I am discussing music as a tool of sonic violence. See, for example, Susan Fast and Kip Pegley eds., *Music, Politics, and Violence* (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 2012); Bruce Johnson and Martin Cloonan, *The Dark Side of the Tune: Popular Music and Violence* (Burlington, VT; Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).
[39] Lamenting the possible break-up of the United Kingdom after the vote to leave the European Union, Tom Peck wrote that '"Broken Britain" is a term that has forced its way into public parlance and the Cameron years – six of them, now over. Well it will be broken, now. And this will be all that he is remembered for.' Tom Peck, 'Goodbye David Cameron: The Worst Prime Minister in a Hundred Years,' *The Independent*, June 24, 2016, News. http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/goodbye-david-cameron-the-worst-prime-minister-in-a-hundred-years-a7100746.html [accessed November 28, 2016]

manifestations: first, to do with black dance subcultures, viewing hip hop and dance as almost synonymous; and second, as representing the chaos and rhythm of the street, the 'hectic clamour of modern life'.

Urban Rhythms in the Historiography of Modernism

The particular musical aesthetic sketched out above is seen by the commentators discussed in this thesis as somehow fundamentally 'urban', inasmuch as, as Michael Bull puts it, the 'urban sound world confronts the subject as unordered, chaotic and polyrhythmic.'[40] But conception of the city is mediated through discourse, rather than simply reflecting an empirical truth. For the purposes of this discussion, this 'urban' sound should be seen in the context of two specific historiographical strands: one linked to modernism, and one linked to the marketing of contemporary popular music. Both of these strands is extremely problematic, and I would not wish to reify either. The aim of this section is merely to show that the motifs that will arise in the journalistic discourse I consider have broad historical roots.

The sense that rhythmic complexity has become representative of the modern city has been part of the historiography of musical modernism for over a century. Eduardo de la Fuente focuses on the obsession with rhythms as a founding feature of modernity: he quotes Stephen Kern, who writes that 'a mixture of syncopation, irregularity, and new percussive textures … gave an overall impression of the hurry and the unpredictability of contemporary life'.[41] These rhythms were discursively mediated through an obsession with

[40] Michael Bull, *Sound Moves iPod Culture and Everyday Life* (London: Routledge, 2007), 24. See also Michael Bull, *Sounding Out the City: Personal Stereos and the Management of Everyday Life* (Oxford: University of Oxford Press, 2000).
[41] Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 123. Quoted in Eduardo de la Fuente, *Twentieth Century Music and the Question of Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2011), 20.

new technology: according to Joseph Machlis, they tended to 'glorify the drive of modern city life, the pulsebeat of factory and machine.'[42] Similarly, for T. S. Eliot, *The Rite of Spring* evoked 'the scream of the motor-horn, the rattle of machinery, the grind of wheels, the beating of iron and steel the roar of the underground railway, and other barbaric noises of modern life.'[43] De la Fuente echoes Born and Hesmondhalgh's description of western music's Others when he links the obsession with urban rhythms to 'the revolt against the barline and regular beat of Western music',[44] which he argues led composers to, paradoxically, source 'new and more complex rhythms [from] the music of traditional and non-Western cultures',[45] citing styles as diverse as 'primitive and folk traditions' and 'the syncopations of jazz'.[46] This division of Western music from a host of disparate, 'rhythmic' Others has a long history. Theodor W. Adorno found Stravinsky's music abhorrent because *The Rite of Spring* used rhythms to effect the complete dissolution and destruction of the Western subject.[47] In *The Philosophy of Modern Music*, Adorno linked the rhythmic assaults upon the Chosen One explicitly with the destruction of the individual at the hands of industrial mass production. He wrote,

> Such rhythmic patterns alternate in the smallest possible units of beat for the sole purpose of impressing upon the ballerina and the listeners the immutable rigidity of convulsive blows and shocks for which they are not prepared through any anticipation of anxiety. … The social origin of shock can be presumed in the overpoweringly intensified disproportion in modern industrialism between the body of the individual and the things and forces in technical civilization over which shock has power. The sensory capacity – the possibility for experience – present in shock, however, was in no way the equal of the unchained excesses of such disparity so long as the individualistic form of social organization excluded collective relationships – which perhaps might have been a match for the objectively technical forces of

[42] Joseph Machlis, *American Composers of our Time* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1963), 42-43. Quoted in de la Fuente, *Twentieth Century Music*, 20.
[43] Albright, *Modernism and Music*, 12.
[44] De la Fuente, *Twenieth Century Music*, 20.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Theodor W. Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music* (London: Continuum, 2007), 111-114.

> production. Through such shocks the individual becomes conscious of his nothingness in the face of a gigantic machine of the entire system.[48]

But Adorno's critique of a kind of de-humanising rhythm was also central to his critique of jazz, which he saw as linked to the sonic assault of the city, with all of its attendant racial and social tensions:

> The manufacture of jazz is also an urban phenomenon, and the skin of the black man functions as much as a colouristic effect as does the silver of the saxophone . . . there is nothing archaic in jazz but that which is engendered out of modernity through the mechanism of suppression. It is not old and repressed instincts that are freed in the form of standardized rhythms and standardized explosive outbursts; it is new repressed and mutilated instincts that have stiffened into the masks of those in the distant past.[49]

This is where an Adornian conception of modernism – reflected in the divide between Schoenberg and Stravinsky in his *Philosophy of New Music* – becomes important.[50] While it would be, as Max Paddison states, a 'crude simplification' to suggest that Adorno 'simply sanctified Schoenberg and demonised Stravinsky',[51] the *Philosophy of New Music* has nevertheless been instrumental in bifurcating the mainstream of modernism entirely. Attempting to redress the Adornian imbalance, Jonathan Cross argued in *The Stravinsky Legacy* for Stravinsky's influence upon a number of British and American composers throughout the twentieth century.[52] The contested provenance of Stravinsky's rhythms is a crucial factor here, since it is unclear whether or not Stravinsky's fascination for rhythm emerged from an interest in 'folk' music or more generally in the fetishisation of 'primitivism' that fuelled a European interest in the set of musics that were later to become

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[48] Adorno, *Modern music* 113.
[49] Theodor Adorno, 'On Jazz', translated by Owen Daniel, *Discourse* 12 (1989): 53. Quoted in Robert Witkin, 'Why did Adorno "Hate" Jazz?' *Sociological Theory* 18/1 (2000): 156.
[50] Adorno's, *Modern Music* is the paradigmatic text here. See also Andy Fry, *Paris Blues: African American Music and French Popular Culture* (Chicago, Ill.: The University of Chicago Press, 2015), 81-122.
[51] Max Paddison, 'Adorno's Three Critiques,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky*, ed. Jonathan Cross (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 192-203 at 193.
[52] Jonathan Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

jazz. Cross acknowledges that the impact of jazz was important here, since its '"primitive" origins in many ways overlapped with the "primitive" sources of Stravinsky's modernism.'[53] Within musicological historiography more broadly, however, Stravinsky does not only come to represent a Stravinskian modernism; rather, for some reason he has come to suggest a more plural musical modernism that encompasses all of the music of the long twentieth-century. As Richard Taruskin puts it, 'Stravinskian ideas have been so influential that one could almost say that twentieth-century European and Euro-American musical culture has been created in the image of Stravinsky',[54] but 'one could say with equal justice that we have created Stravinsky in our image.'[55] And moreover, this Stravinskian side-stream has in some cases come to be re-read – paradoxically – as a kind of mainstream, something present in Taruskin's attempt to revise the true modernist moment as occuring not with the maximalism of Romanticism but with the neoclassicism of Stravinsky and Hindemith.[56]

Related is Cross's reading of Stravinsky's modernism, and in particular the assertion that 'a history of the rhythmic practices in twentieth-century music *is* a history of the legacy of *The Rite*.'[57] Philip Rupprecht criticises *The Stravinsky Legacy* on the grounds that Cross ascribes to Stravinsky specific stylistic features from later composers' works that may in fact have different sources,[58] or makes the case for a Stravinskian influence by loosening the theoretical framework and terms of his argument to such an extent that the concept of influence itself risks becoming nebulous.[59] But while both Taruskin's and Cross's points may be reductive, they nevertheless touch on a profound and fundamental historiographical

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[53] Ibid, 87.
[54] Richard Taruskin, 'Stravinsky and Us,' in *The Danger of Music and Other Anti-Utopian Essays* (Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press, 2009), 420-443 at 420.
[55] Ibid, 421.
[56] Richard Taruskin, 'Neoclassicism as Ideology,' in *The Danger of Music*, 382-405 at 382-383.
[57] Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy*, 81.
[58] Philip Rupprecht, 'Review: *The Stravinsky Legacy* by Jonathan Cross,' *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 56/2 (Summer, 2003): 498-507 at 502.
[59] Ibid, 504-506.

approach towards Stravinsky: the idea that he is both the archetypal *enfant terrible* of modernism, and the figure most associated with its pluralism. Cross, for example, criticises the fact that 'Adorno was not prepared to allow the Stravinsky line to pursue its own separate course through history and to offer a plural view of modernism.'[60] This position is also encapsulated in one extremely racially problematic passage from Wilfrid Mellers, who described the meeting of Stravinskian modernism and jazz as a kind of love at first sight, since both parties were (apparently) concerned with destabilising the prevailing modes of thought in Europe at the time: 'the improvising Negro jazzman found his primitive vigour in creative tension with the harmonic and tonal prison of the West; Stravinsky tried to throw aside these conventions in being rhythmically reborn.'[61] At worst, the use of dance articulates a problematic historiographical binary between Russian and Teutonic modernism, present in Stravinsky's criticism of Herbert von Karajan, that 'he is continually heard inviting the orchestra to "sing", while he never reminds it to "dance".'[62] None of this should be accepted as truth: but my point is that these issues are alive and well within the context of the press discourse outlined here. The sense that dance and rhythm figure as an underside to modernism is something that fundamentally allows urban dance music to find common ground with some music of the long twentieth century.

The questions of race and class are pressing here. The Stravinskian link with jazz should be seen against the backdrop of a widespread obsession with black cultures (what Gendron describes as 'negrophilia') within the Paris avant-garde in the early twentieth century, which was represented by, as Gendron puts it, an 'infatuation with two quite

[60] Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy*, 228.
[61] Wilfrid Mellers, 'Stravinsky and Jazz,' *Tempo* 81 (1967): 29. See also Theodore A. Gracyk, 'Adorno, Jazz, and the Aesthetics of Popular Music,' *The Musical Quarterly* 76/4 (December, 1992): 526-542; Joseph Lewandowski, 'Adorno on Jazz and Society,' *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 22/5 (September, 1996): 103-121; Witkin, 'Why did Adorno "Hate" Jazz?': 156-157.
[62] Quoted in Nicholas Cook, 'Stravinsky Conducts Stravinsky,' *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky* ed. Jonathan Cross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 183.

distinct objects: popular music, particularly American, and "primitive" cultures, particularly African.'[63] Gendron cites Jean Cocteau's enthralled description of a cakewalk in order to make this point:

> They danced: skinny, crooked, beribboned, glittering with sequins, spangled with gaudy lights, hats raked over their eyes, their ears, knees higher than their thrust-out chins, hands twirling flexible canes, wrenching their gestures from themselves and hammering the artificial floor with taps on their patent leather shoes. They danced, they glided, they reared, they kicked, they broke themselves in two, three, four, then they stood up again, they bowed … And behind them the whole city, the whole of Europe began dancing.[64]

Cocteau's description accentuates the broken, rhythmic, machine-like nature of the dance, evoking the 'city and the machine'.[65] The question of whether or not this infatuation is representative of larger historical processes is constantly at play: Gendron's *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club* looks at this historical moment as part of an extensive attempt to theorise the ways in which high and low culture have interacted throughout the twentieth century. This thesis benefits from a spate of more recent texts on this topic: Andy Fry's *Paris Blues: African American Music and French Popular Culture, 1920-1960*, Jeremy F. Lane's *Jazz and Machine-Age Imperialism: Music, 'Race,' and Intellectuals in Postwar France*, Deborah Mawer's *French Music and Jazz in Conversation: From Debussy to Brubeck*, and Tom Perchard's *After Django: Making Jazz in Postwar France*, all document the way jazz and modernism informed one another in early twentieth-century France.[66] This image of the racialized black body interacting with the rhythms of machines (particularly important in Lane's text) has become pervasive within music: for the first generation of Detroit techno

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[63] Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, 103.
[64] Quoted in Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, 104.
[65] Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, 104.
[66] Andy Fry, *Paris Blues: African American Music and French Popular Culture, 1920-1960* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), esp. ch. 2; Jeremy F. Lane, *Jazz and Machine-Age Imperialism: Music, "Race," and Intellectuals in France, 1918-1945* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013); Deborah Mawer, *French Music and Jazz in Conversation: from Debussy to Brubeck* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Tom Perchard, *After Django: Making Jazz in Postwar France* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015).

musicians, their resistance to hip-hop resulted in an ironic Europhilia.[67] The same European negrophilia was projected in its inverse into Detroit through the techno scene's fascination with the European band Kraftwerk: 'They were so stiff, they were funky', Simon Reynolds quotes one techno pioneer's compliment of the band, a compliment that, he argues, translates to 'they were so white, they were black.'[68] Indeed, to ask how this history of black music might blend with the history of European modernism is to miss the point that, as Lane puts it, the 'diametrically opposed realms of primitivity and machine-age modernity … might be seen as one of the defining characteristics of European modernism as a whole.'[69] The appropriation or stereotyping of an African-American primitivism remains profoundly linked to the spiky, repetitive or chaotic urban sound. It is in these terms that we should conceive of the space opened up within modernism in contemporary Britain for urban music. All of the music discussed here is figured as exciting and innovative because it is aligned with the 'Stravinskian' side of this historiographic binary.

British vernacular modernism

How are these issues particular to Britain? When one talks about 'modernism', one implicitly invokes Europe, since Britain has typically been seen as peripheral to modernist developments.[70] Within Britain, musical modernism is also in many ways abject despite its prestige: there is a sense in which a challenging, harsh European modernist idiom has been repeatedly both Othered and integrated within British music over the twentieth-century, and particularly in the interwar period: this negotiation of the 'dichotomy of modernization and traditional ideals', is what Jenny Doctor describes as the 'parataxis of British musical

[67] Reynolds, *Energy Flash*, 4.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Lane, *Jazz and Machine-Age Imperialism*, 5.
[70] See, for example, Chowrimootoo, 'Britten Minor.'

modernism',[71] where 'parataxis' is defined as '"the juxtaposition of things without providing connectives"', which '"disrupt[s] and fragment[s] conventional sequencing, causality and perspective."'[72] In Vaughan Williams's Fourth Symphony, for example, a modernist sound was presented problematically at best. For Harper-Scott, while the work 'appears to constitute one of [Vaughan Williams's] most obvious claims for membership of the modernist party in twentieth-century British composition', it 'cannot be readily pigeonholed as a modernist, postmodern or conservative work; instead it engages the listener in fascinating semiotic games.'[73] For Harper-Scott, the symphony is ambivalent, characterized by 'shifting signification … which sometimes feints towards a classical procedure (which is then denied), and sometimes towards a modernist one.'[74] Modernism also stood in some ways as a signification of the multiple threats coming from Europe: this association of modernism with an anti-British sentiment was an important way in which the British populace came to terms with the supposed attack on its collective identity during the 1930s and 40s.[75] It is important for this thesis that 'modernism' be understood as a double-edged sword: on the one hand, it is linked to the prestige of art music (usually linked to the affirmation of power); on the other hand, it is associated with threat.[76]

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[71] Jenny Doctor, 'The Parataxis of British Musical Modernism,' *The Musical Quarterly* 91/1-2 (2008): 89.
[72] Quoted in Doctor, 'The Parataxis of British Musical Modernism,' 112.
[73] J P E Harper-Scott, 'Vaughan Williams's Antic Symphony,' in *British Music and Modernism, 1895–1960* ed. Matthew Riley (Burlington, VT; Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2010), 175–95 at 176.
[74] Ibid, 179.
[75] This strand of Britain's historical engagement with modernism has been well-documented in literature over the past decade. See Heather Wiebe, *Britten's Unquiet Pasts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 26: 'In document after document in the early and mid-1940s – journalism, notes, films – a new hunger for the arts (especially music) in the special circumstances of war is invoked'. See also Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism*, 47; J. P. E. Harper-Scott, *Edward Elgar, Modernist* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Matthew Riley ed., *British Music and Modernism, 1895–1960* (Burlington, VT and Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2010). See also Edward Venn, 'Review Article: A Very British Modernism?' *Twentieth-Century Music* 6/2 (September 2009): 237-253.
[76] Constant Lambert, for example, wrote that 'there is a large mass of the public that has only become modern-music conscious since the war, and they are hardly to be blamed if they lump [it all] together as "all this modern music".' Constant Lambert, *Music Ho!: A Study of Music in Decline*

This thesis draws heavily upon Rupprecht's recent work on British musical modernism from the 1950s to the 1970s.[77] This modernism was supported mostly by 'younger commentators [who] took a more direct line of argument in acknowledging an emerging British avant-garde, and in situating British music in its wider international realm.'[78] Rupprecht argues that this post-war modernist idiom was positioned 'between nationalism and the avant-garde',[79] the twin peaks of a British identity signified by an idealised rural in music by Holst and Vaughan Williams,[80] and an urbane, erudite musical modernism associated with Europe and the threat of modernisation. One of Rupprecht's

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(London: Faber & Faber, 1934), 12. For Gerald Abraham, 'there are plenty of works genuinely in modern spirit (for instance, Vaughan Williams' "London Symphony" which cannot present much difficulty … to the ear of any open-minded listener'; he continues, that 'we might justifiably conclude that the ugliness and "difficulty" of modern music has been terribly over-rated and that these three composers [Debussy, Ravel and Sibelius] … are very charming fellows whose music calls for no special effort to understand it.' Gerald Abraham, *This Modern Stuff* (Hoddeston, Hertfordshire: Denis Archer Press, 1933), 14-15. Cecil Gray writes, 'Is it true that the present age is an age of transition, a moment of uneasy suspense between what has been and what will be; or is this sense of crisis illusory…?' *Predicaments, or Music and the Future* (London: Oxford University Press, Humfrey Milford, 1936), 15. He continues: 'The steadily increasing chromaticism of the music of the last fifty years or so has at last completely undermined the integrity and sapped the vitality of the old diatonic scale system … The time has therefore now come, it is held, to take the final logical step of throwing overboard the last remnants and vestiges of the old order … Once this has been accomplished, it is contended, an immense enrichment of resource inevitably follows.' *Predicaments*, 170-171. 'With the advent of the Nazi regime in Germany, which looks like continuing in the near future, if only because there seems to be no alternative, atonalism has lost its only real audience, and its practitioners have been either banished or silenced. Austria was always hostile to the movement to which she had given birth.' *Predicaments*, 194.

[77] Philip Rupprecht, '"Something Slightly Indecent": British Composers, the European Avant-Garde, and National Stereotypes in the 1950s,' *The Musical Quarterly* 91/3-4 (2008): 275-326; and *British Musical Modernism*.

[78] Rupprecht, '"Something Slightly Indecent",' 276.

[79] The name of chapter 1 of Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism*, 33-66.

[80] For Rupprecht, 'The folksong-movement of the late-Victorian period, encompassing the work of scholar-collectors like Sharp, Chambers and Child, and composers like Vaughan Williams and Holst is one part of forthright efforts at collective cultural revival'. Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism*, 61; Alain Frogley writes: 'Mention the name Ralph Vaughan Williams and into most people's minds come immediately three words: English, pastoral, and folksong.' Alain Frogley, 'Constructing Englishness in Music: National Character and the Reception of Ralph Vaughan Williams,' in *Vaughan Williams Studies*, ed. Alain Frogley (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 1-22 at 1. See also Daniel M. Grimley, 'Landscape and distance: Vaughan Williams, modernism, and the symphonic pastoral,' in *British Music and Modernism (1895-1960)*, ed. Matthew Riley (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 147-174; and Martin Graebe, 'Gustav Holst, "Songs of the West", and the English Folk Song Movement,' *Folk Music Journal* 10/1 (2011): 5-41. This theme is explored in more depth in chapter 3.

key aims is to sketch out the development of a vernacular musical modernist style between the developments of the Manchester school in the early 1950s, and the popular/art experiments of David Bedford and Timothy Souster in the 1970s.[81] It is important to avoid stereotyping or reduction here, but the tension between a home-grown British school of composition and the European avant-garde figures in what Rupprecht describes, following Homi K. Bhabha, as a *pedagogical discourse*. For Rupprecht, this discourse involves 'constantly repeated and ever-changing performative assertions of national identity [that] work in tension with a pedagogy that attempts to fix the nation through images that are secure and unchanging.'[82] Crucially, these ever-changing performative assertions mean that the many repeated themes or motifs took on conflicting significations.

It is here that the historiographic problems associated with an Adornian rift in modernism resurface. Rupprecht sees in Sir Peter Maxwell Davies's music, for example, a 'clear juxtaposition of a nationalist art form (based on folk music) and a "generational, international" art grounded in the more progressive developments he finds in Continental European music. A rather too clean binarism is voiced, between ethnic, folkloric nationalism and an *inter*-national avant-garde.'[83] This divide was signalled in conflicting ways by Stravinsky and the musical Others with which he was associated. Davies, for example, was told early on in his career to avoid 'dangerous composers'[84] such as Stravinsky and Bartók; on the other hand, he also complained early on in his career that British music had confined

[81] The book is consistent with current approaches to musical modernism, in that its approach is extremely broad and stylistically diverse. The text centres on a group of young and seemingly progressive composers (the Manchester avant-garde and their contemporaries), who were instrumental in fully introducing a musical avant-garde to Britain the mid-1950s (to the surprise of audiences, who remained on the whole resistant). Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism*, 33.
[82] Rupprecht, '"Something Slightly Indecent",' 280.
[83] Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism*, 133.
[84] Nicholas Jones, 'The Writings of a Young British Composer: Peter Maxwell Davies in the 1950s,' in *Peter Maxwell Davies Studies*, ed. Kenneth Gloag and Nick Jones (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 21-44 at 31.

itself to 'repeating the gestures of nineteenth century composers on the Continent, with a few superficial knobs from Stravinsky, Bartók, or jazz for good measure'.[85] Here, the Stravinsky/jazz/folk motif takes on conflicting significations: it is associated with the threat of danger from the continent, but it is also an overly familiar cliché, a simulacrum of originality and musical progress.

Another key example is Rupprecht's description of the use of 'popular' sources in Malcolm Arnold's Fourth Symphony, which the composer linked to the 1958 race riots in Notting Hill in London, writing, 'I was appalled that such a thing could happen in this country … I have used very obvious West Indian and African percussion instruments and rhythms, in the hope, first, that it sounded well, and second, that it might help to spread the idea of racial integration.'[86] Arnold's symphony is reflective of a history of the use of modernist music in British society as a space in which comments could be made about social change. But it should be noted that Arnold's use of rhythm is an attempt to effect social change only *after* the more important attempt to 'sound well': this is in keeping with the general argument of this thesis, that the use of the rhythms of urban music reflects an *appropriation* of black culture before any attempt to create some kind of social cohesion.

Birtwistle is perhaps the most important composer for the purposes of this thesis. Rupprecht locates a key attempt to negotiate these issues in Harrison Birtwistle's *Down by the Greenwood Side*, a work in which Rupprecht sees an attempt to fuse the folk with the modern as a kind of British example of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. While the work is manifestly modernist, it is also an instance of a British attempt to fuse 'awareness of a

[85] Peter Maxwell Davies, 'Problems of a British Composer Today,' *The Listener*, 62 (October 8, 1959), 563-564 at 563. Quoted in Jones, 'The Writings of a Young British Composer,' in *Peter Maxwell Davies Studies*, ed. Gloag and Johnson, 25.
[86] Quoted in Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism*, 371.

nation's folk music to the vigor of its art-music'[87] in order to restore, in Cecil Sharp's words, '"the Englishman's confidence in the inherent ability of his nation to produce great music."'[88] Rupprecht is not the only scholar to note the Stravinskian influence on Birtwistle: Cross finds it also in Birtwistle's *Earth Dances*, a work that, like *Down by the Greenwood Side*, negotiates the harshly modern with a supposedly conservative Britishness of content, and contributes to Birtwistle's *enfant terrible* image.[89] Here, the parochial vision of Britain suggested in what Elisabeth Lutyens famously derided as a 'modally wodally'[90] cow pat music is reconfigured into something harsher and more serious: critics highlighted the extreme, geological, primeval sound of *Earth Dances*, its 'stuttering, angular dance' and 'massive terraces of sound.'[91] While Rupprecht criticises the overstatement of a Stravinskian influence in Cross's work, he nevertheless sees the synthesis of folk music with art-music in *The Rite of Spring* as a precursor or analogue to the focus on 'revival as recovery', or the turn 'toward a recuperated indigeneity'[92] in post-war British modernism.

While this thesis does not posit a direct influence, and less so a case for a linear history, resonances between post-millennium Britain and the historical moment Rupprecht sketches out are clear. Two of the composers discussed here – Mark-Anthony Turnage and Tansy Davies – draw upon jazz and funk, and are considered by Rupprecht to be the continuers of a British vernacular modernist tradition.[93] In the final chapter of this thesis, *The Rite of Spring* also comes to represent the most plural and marketable form of twentieth-century music available in Britain today. Overall, the research presented here is

[87] Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism*, 61. Rupprecht points out that Vaughan Williams and Cecil Sharp are both agreed on this.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy*, 119.
[90] Quoted in Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism*, 50.
[91] Quoted in Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy*, 119.
[92] Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism*, 61.
[93] Ibid, 367.

consonant with Rupprecht's assertion that that 'In the Seventies, as with the early twentieth-century avant-garde (Picasso, Joyce, Stravinsky), the idiom of the street thrives at the centre of a modernist language that is polyglot. Listen carefully, and with due historical awareness of more local precursors – from Delius and Vaughan Williams to Lambert and Walton – one might catch in this vernacular-rich musical modernism the performance of something characteristic: call it a British accent.'[94]

Urban music and the urban ethos

The term 'urban' here has a second meaning that comes closer to describing the body of popular music from which the composers in this thesis draw inspiration. The phrase 'urban music' has an extremely long history fraught with racial insensitivity. The label 'urban' was coined in the late 1970s and subsequently used by record companies to sell 'black' music to black audiences; but this term attracted others, and was being used by the mid-80s to sell a variety of different styles to white audiences as well.[95] What has been retained to this day, in other words, is the term's market appeal.[96] Gaztambide-Fernández provides the following anecdote, in which he asks his nine-year-old daughter, Mercedes Irene, to provide a definition of 'urban' music for his article:

> She answered with a heavily inflected "Yo, yo, yo, my name is Joe!" as she lifted her arms sideways into an arch and "popped" her elbows, moving her hands in and out with her middle and heart fingers toward her chest. … I wasn't surprised that she connected hip hop and the "yo, yo, yo" expression to the phrase "urban music," but when I asked her, she used the words "rock," "pop," "disco," "rap," and "hip hop" to explain what she meant by urban music. I was surprised by the range of genres my

[94] Ibid, 32.
[95] Rubén A. Gaztambide-Fernández, 'Musicking in the City: Reconceptualizing Urban Music Education as Cultural Practice,' *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 10/1 (2011): 15.
[96] But this risks making the term too nonspecific: for example, Ian Chambers looks at the history of a very broad range of pop music in Britain in his 1985 book *Urban Rhythms*, but he does not address the reasoning for applying the phrase 'urban rhythms' to a cross-section of pop music, nor does he explore the racial implications of the phrase. Iain Chambers, *Urban Rhythms* (London: Macmillan; New York, NY: St Martin's Press, 1985).

> nine-year-old daughter assumed to fit under the label "urban music" and the fact that as a whole, her references were not narrowly racialized, as I had expected.[97]

The evocation of hip hop culture is central to the definition of 'urban music', even if it is then undercut by a variety of styles that are not explicitly racially defined. This is crucial, since the term 'urban' invites a conflation of musical styles that are actually distinct, becoming an umbrella term for 'black' music. As Jonathan Ilan writes, the term 'urban music … [is] usually used as a form of music industry shorthand to refer to rap, R'n'B, dancehall, afropop, etc., all forms of black music, [resulting from] a failure to properly acknowledge [their] cultural context', and reflecting the 'racism of western society.'[98] Nabeel Zuberi agrees, writing that 'urban music' is now 'an entrenched euphemism for a significant segment of "black music" in the UK too'.[99] Zuberi quotes grime MC God's Gift, who has stated that 'the "urban" label is a way of segregating black and Asian musicians from the white mainstream'.[100] I do not want to reify any of the racist or classist connotations of the term 'urban'. But the picture of the discourse sketched out here also needs to accurately reflect the fact that for many consumers of music in Western society, the line between urban and non-urban music seems apparent without critical reflection. As David Brackett puts it, the critical study of genre leads us to 'encounter a situation that reveals the fragile line between common sense and nonsense.'[101] Brackett continues: 'In the specific case of "black popular music," we are not

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[97] Gaztambide-Fernández, 'Musicking in the City,' 15.

[98] Jonathan Ilan, *Understanding Street Culture: Poverty, Crime, Youth and Cool* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 119. He goes on: 'The racism of western society and its imposition of exclusion and control on black populations has served at various points in time to construct their cultural expression as "low" at worst and "exotic" at best.'

[99] Nabeel Zuberi, '"New Throat Fe Chat": The Voices of Media of MC Culture,' in *Black Popular Music in Britain Since 1945*, ed. Jon Stratton (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 185-201 at 186-187.

[100] Ibid, 186-187.

[101] David Brackett, 'Questions of Genre in Black Popular Music,' *Black Music Research Journal* 25/1-2 (2005): 75. For Brackett, 'simply because a musical text may not "belong" to a genre with any stability does not mean that it does not "participate" in one.' Brackett gives the example of Outkast's 'Hey Ya!', in which he argues that the track could be understood as 'rap', 'hip-hop', or even 'alternative rock'. Ibid, 76.

simply talking about another term or label but about another form of symbolic communication imbricated in a lengthy history of power struggles.'[102]

In attempting to read the works in this thesis, the question arises of whether to seek to redress the failed acknowledgement of cultural context that Ilan notes, or whether to take account of the *ways* in which this acknowledgment has failed. On one hand, the use of the term 'urban' as a racist misreading of blackness in popular culture is consistent with an approach to race taken by Stuart Hall, who has argued that 'history ... should now be rewritten as a set of cultural translations rather than as a universal movement which can be located securely within a culture, within a history, within a space, within a chronology and within a set of political and cultural relations.'[103] On the other hand, the point of this thesis is decidedly *not* to provide an account of a supposed translation in which both sides are equal, and less still to write about black popular music in any sense. Rather to focus on ways in which racial and social 'Others' are figured and constructed through new classical music written by a handful of (white and affluent) high-profile British composers of art music.

The main reason that the urban aesthetic is so appealing for the contemporary composers under discussion here is that it projects a challenging and fresh sense of resistance. To quote Jonathan Ilan,

> The symbolic power of street culture ... is often understood as authentic, defiant and vital, in other words, "cool". Thus whilst the urban poor are materially and practically excluded, much of their style is simultaneously admired and emulated by sections of the social mainstream.[104]

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[102] Brackett, 'Questions of Genre,' 89.
[103] Stuart Hall and Sarat Maharaj, *Modernity and Difference* (London: Institute of International Visual Arts, 2001), 5. I must be explicit throughout that I use the term 'urban' in order to foreground its problematic nature. Rather than supporting the use of this term, I use it in order to show that the appeal of street culture runs deep in British discourse on new music, and to show the ways in which a contemporary modernism has been constructed in dialogue with a set of 'urban' attributes.
[104] Ilan, *Understanding Street Culture*, 3.

Here, Ilan is critical of this authenticity, defiance, or vitality: rather than amounting to anything material, it is merely a marketable, 'cool', attribute. Gendron describes a same process at play when he differentiates between art-music appropriations of jazz in Montmartre and rock in New York respectively: 'In Montmartre, the fact that the avant-garde the primary initiators in art/pop engagements was a mark of their overwhelming advantage in cultural capital over the popular. In New York that same fact was more an indicator of cultural weakness on the part of the avant-garde, which turned to the new wave not only to accrue some of its hip cultural capital by association, but also to draw upon its energy, scavenge its devices, and assume its postures.'[105] The earlier prestige accorded to art music being long gone, its advocates must now find ways of appropriating audiences' interest in popular music. Paul Gilroy concurs, that 'the discourse of authenticity has been a notable presence in the mass marketing of successive black folk-cultural forms to a wide audience.'[106] The sense of authenticity and vitality, as will be explained throughout, manifests partly in what journalists describe as a rhythmic, abrasive, and percussive sound. But this is not always consistent with the *actual* sound of the music. The types of 'urban music' used by different composers and within different concerts can sound wildly different; but this should only throw the bias of the pernicious discourse I am outlining into further relief. As Brackett suggests, the ways in which we might hear radically different types of music are conditioned by our pre-existing knowledge of their genres.

The term 'urban' also touches on the geographic dimensions of this thesis. It will become clear that the vast majority of the events I discuss are located in urban areas, and often in London. But the nature of the press discourse suggests an impulse to universalise

[105] Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, 319.
[106] Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 99.

an urban aesthetic. The term 'urban' as it is used here refers less to a specific set of spaces than it does to what Adam Krims defines as the 'urban ethos'. As Krims defines it,

> The urban ethos is … not a particular representation but rather a distribution of possibilities, always having discernable limits as well as common practices. It is not a picture of how life is in any particular city. Instead, it distills publicly disseminated notions of how cities are generally, even though this may be disproportionally shaped by the fate of certain particular cities. … The urban ethos certainly may shape the representations of certain particular cities, but it does so only as a background structure of feeling, usually unnamed.[107]

As Gaztambide-Fernández suggests, the 'urban' is imagined both positively as 'the center of civilization, cultural refinement, and progress', and negatively 'as a place of decay, poverty, and danger.'[108] He quotes Zeus Leonardo and Margaret Hunter (2007), who offer 'the racist metaphor of the "urban jungle" to describe how "people imagine their city centers as teeming with Black, Brown, and Yellow bodies, which are poor, dirty, criminal and dangerous. Gangs, violence, and drugs are closely tied to any image of the urban for most people."'[109] In this sense, the 'urban' fuses together race and class, and my discussion of the themes will flow from one to the other freely throughout the course of this thesis. The discourse is constructed almost entirely by advocates of an affluent, culturally refined urban ethos. There is a sharp divide between a pluralist urban aesthetic aimed at an affluent consumer and a representation of the city as an entity in which certain groups need to be contained through the strict regulation of space.[110] This divide is articulated very clearly in many different ways: primarily through discourse, but often also through the appearance of musical styles in spaces where they should not be, and also in the kitschy and often ludicrous tone of some of the musical concerts and works under discussion. While it might

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[107] Adam Krims, *Music and Urban Geography* (New York; London: Routledge, 2007), 7-8.
[108] Gaztambide-Fernández, 'Musicking in the City,' 19.
[109] Ibid, 20.
[110] For an expansion on this, see Anne Bottomley and Nathan Moore, 'From Walls to Membranes: Fortress Polis and the Governance of Urban Space in 21st Century Britain,' *Law and Critique* 18/2 (2007): 171-206.

at first blush seem as though a stark division between contemporary classical and urban popular is mapped on to a division between a white, affluent subject and a working-class subject of colour, I hope to show throughout that these binaries work in many more complex and contradictory ways.

As I conclude in the last chapter of this thesis, the discourse ultimately supports gentrification, or a construction of what Gaztambide-Fernández describes as 'the sophisticated city', in which 'young, energetic, and mostly white and financially stable subjects enjoy the glamour of the urbane.'[111] There is precedent for this. In their discussion of the key role of an artistic avant-garde in the gentrification of New York's poor and neglected East Village in the 1980s, Anne Bowler and Blaine McBurney describe show that visual artists were attracted to the area because its impoverished urban landscape led them to perceive it as authentic and vital, a kind of Bohemia.[112] They explain: 'That the area still remains garbage-strewn drug-embattled and dangerous not only seems *not* to inhibit upscale colonization practices but, aestheticized in the media as part of a decadent Bohemian landscape, acts to neutralize, counter-balance and even encourage gentrification.'[113] They quote a *New York Times* critic and resident of the area, who defended her decision to live in the area on the grounds that 'I like that it is very mixed and very weird. I like it in the way I like to ride subways: there's a kind of realness about it. I feel like I'm in touch with stuff here'.[114] For Bowler & McBurney, this is actually an artistic 'derrière-garde':[115] the fetishisation of urban decay and material disenfranchisement leaves little space for any critical perspective, and 'The avant-garde and its so-called "spirit of revolt"

[111] Gaztambide-Fernández, 'Musicking in the City,' 19.
[112] Anne Bowler and Blaine McBurney, 'Gentrification and the Avant-Garde in New York's East Village: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly,' *Theory, Culture and Society* 8/4 (1991): 49-77 at 53ff.
[113] Ibid, 58-59.
[114] Ibid, 59.
[115] Ibid, 69. This term is attributed to C. McCormick in Bowler & McBurney's text (but McCormick's text is uncited).

becomes the norm, itself a commodity for consumption'.[116] What we witness, in other words, is less a dissolution of the concept of high and lowbrow, and more a reconfiguring of the relationship between the classical/popular divide and the high/low divide. Gendron reaches a similar conclusion in *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, when he argues that 'there is no reason to believe that the distinction of highbrow, middlebrow, and lowbrow will thereby disappear with the withering away of classical music's hegemony [since] there is no reason for highbrows to be wedded exclusively to classical music or to be irretrievably hostile to pop music'.[117] For Gendron, 'so long as cultural capital is distributed unequally among consumers and putative critics … the hierarchy of highbrow, middlebrow, and lowbrow will remain in place.'[118] As I will argue throughout this thesis (and particularly in the first and final chapters), there is a tension between the artistically highbrow, which is conceived always as resistant, vital, and socially progressive, and the different genres of music with which it is associated. Any conception of 'modernism' or the 'avant-garde' that remains by the end of this thesis should be seen as inextricably linked to the spirit of the derrière-garde, in which composers, performers, and advocates of music attempt to recuperate a commercially viable spirit of artistic innovation and social progress in amongst a postmodern rubble of musical styles.

The 'urban' musical aesthetic under discussion here should be seen in greater perspective. Firstly, although the tensions between the binary between white and black is important, it sets up an antagonism that is itself deflective. In Britain in the second decade of the twenty-first century, rising Islamophobia and fear of immigration from the Middle East has dominated public discourse, and arguably eclipsed the discursive formulations of

[116] Ibid, 68.
[117] Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, 326.
[118] Ibid, 326.

racism traditionally linked to the black Atlantic.[119] There are virtually no comparable Proms or other such high-profile concerts that foreground, for example, Middle Eastern cultures, or Islamic music.[120] This is not to say that the material circumstances faced by either ethnic group is worse or more serious, but rather, that historically there has been a larger place within the white artistic psyche for appropriations of 'black' artistic forms: to put it in Stuart Hall's words, 'the English are racist not because they hate the Blacks but because they don't know who they are without the Blacks.'[121] The self-congratulatory appropriations of 'black' or 'urban' music by white high-art composers seem profoundly outdated and parochial when we consider that there is no analogue for music that represents the other social groups that have more recently been the subject of anxiety. At worst, this set of urban musical appropriations functions as a cheap and fantastical antagonism created by and within the Liberal echo chamber in order to pacify members of the white liberal elite into a critical and political complacency. One main aim of the thesis is to criticise any suggestion of drastic, positive social change linked to this discourse, and show how old-fashioned and hypocritical it actually is.

Secondly, even though it articulates a racist and classist divide between white, affluent composers and performers, and types of music appropriated from Afro diasporic and ethnic minority cultures, this binary functions as one part of a larger binary. In this latter binary, a cosmopolitan, urbane, and Bohemian high-art musical style (marked by appropriations of its Others), draws together both black and white, working-class and affluent urban subjects, in exclusion of a third white, working-class group often living in

[119] See, for example, Arun Kundnani, 'Multiculturalism and its Discontents: Left, Right and Liberal,' *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 15/2 (2012): 155-166.
[120] One exception is a late-night Prom in the 2006 season that celebrated Islamic Music. See 'Bigger and Bolder: The 112th Season of BBC Proms,' *BBC Website*, April 27, 2006, http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/04_april/27/proms.shtml [accessed June 29, 2017].
[121] Stuart Hall, 'Ethnicity: Identity and Difference,' *Radical America* 23 (1989): 16.

areas outside of the southeast of England. As Gillian Evans argues, the focus on the cultural integration of different ethnic groups consequently 'leaves a proportion of white working-class people feeling like the only ethnic group that does not matter.'[122] Evans explains that if this group's 'only option is to learn how to play the multicultural game, that is to learn how to be a viable ethnic group unto themselves to compete against black and Asian people for resources and self-respect, then white working-class people are left having to work out how to have a legitimate cultural identity of their own.'[123] We should ask, for example, whether the exportation of Gabriel Prokofiev's East London-based *Nonclassical* club nights to places such as Teesdale and Exeter, discussed in chapter 5, cements his own status as a liberal, urban celebrity – profoundly hypocritical when considering his apparently inclusive media identity – leads to further resentment from local groups. It is important not only to criticise the success of integration within this urban aesthetic, but also to realise that its terms are exclusive from the very beginning.

Structure and Method

This is a study of music at the point of reception: this thesis is structured around a close reading of primary sources, which are then read critically against secondary literature. It follows that, as Leon Botstein writes, 'our understanding of how musical texts were received remains contingent on our grasp of historical performance practices and conditions.'[124] But Botstein sees a danger in ascribing too much importance to these practices and conditions, lest music be subsumed within or become subservient to historical contingencies,

[122] Gillian Evans, 'The Aboriginal People of England: The Culture of Class Politics in Contemporary Britain,' *Focaal* 62 (2012): 17-29 at 27.
[123] Ibid, 27. Evans also points out that the British National Party turns this discourse of racial identity on its head, and suggests that the disenfranchised white working class identify as the 'aboriginal racial group' of England, thereby using the discourse on race to further the same racist discourses that have historically disadvantaged Afro diasporic cultures. Ibid.
[124] Leon Botstein, 'Music in History: The Perils of Method in Reception History,' *The Musical Quarterly* 89 (2007): 2.

prejudices, or 'nonmusical ideologies:'[125] for Botstein, 'with such a method, music actually disappears.'[126] This distinction between music and non-musical ideologies is a pernicious one, and actually helps music play in to the divisive discourses that I am trying to outline here. For music to reflect higher social class, it must function first as a commodity that reflects cultural capital (i.e., be seen as without purpose or use, as unrelated to the social world). It must be figured in terms of what Pierre Bourdieu described as the 'pure aesthetic,' which is 'rooted in an ethic, or rather, an ethos of elective distance from the necessities of the natural and social world' and 'takes the bourgeois denial of the social world to its limit.'[127] As I will show throughout this thesis, it seems permissible for many writers to make extremely charged comments about music, because musical is still consumed as though it is divorced from the realm of social problems. My focus on primary sources is intended to undermine this position, to show the many subtle ways in which music is profoundly implicated in these social and political tensions, and to suggest that we think more critically about the terms in which we describe, discuss, and listen to music.

The project is naturally shaped by the sources that have been available. Most of the material used here is readily available in the public domain. The main body of primary sources for the thesis has been writings produced for a broad public audience: articles in prominent newspapers and music magazines, some radio and some television broadcasts. In addition, programme notes and CD sleeves have been used; some personal reviews from blogposts are used but in general it is media writings aimed at a broad audience that have been used, since these writings tend to conflate artistic criticism with broad political messages, something that happens less often in specialist music magazines. I have also

[125] Ibid, 3.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (London: Routledge, 1989), 5.

focused rather narrowly for ethical reasons: the study deals with living people (composers, performers, artists etc.), and while it is important to be critical to the fullest extent, it is also undesirable to be critical of people themselves, partly because these people are embroiled in an ongoing set of cultural problems, and partly because they are unable to respond to criticisms here.

More specifically, this is a study of discourse, of writing and speaking about music. As Ian Pace describes it,

> a form of discourse goes on continually, in both verbal and written forms, amongst all those individuals involved in the administrative and promotional side of the music business. These would include concert promoters, radio producers, record company executives, publishers, agents, those involved in marketing public relations, critics, musicologists and of course the composers themselves.[128]

The exact way in which this discourse works upon audiences is outside the scope of the present thesis. It should be made clear, however, that the focus is more on discursive constructions of the urban than it is about documenting the lives of musicians or establishing timelines of events. In other words, I am concerned with looking at a prevalent discourse and the way it manifests through written reviews in the media.[129] Nevertheless, the question of how the discourse discussed here might be linked to more material changes in society is broached in the conclusion, in which I look at the way in which a performance of *The Rite of Spring* contributes to turning a car park in Peckham into a 'wild and funky' cultural space, and this description of the car park in turn contributes to raising land values and gentrification. Throughout this thesis, I take a more directly historical approach: Leo Treitler's assertion that 'the satisfactions of history … have something in common with the

[128] Pace, 'Verbal Discourse as Aesthetic Arbitrator,' 83.
[129] Nor am I suggesting that looking at discourse is the best way of conceiving of music in general – as Georgina Born writes, 'if the linguistic mediation of music is pervasive, it cannot be reduced simply to language. Music has no material essence but a plural and distributed materiality.' Georgina Born, 'Music and the Materialization of Identities,' *Journal of Material Culture* 16/4 (2011): 377.

satisfactions of fiction,'[130] has a great significance here, since I am presenting a description of a fiction created by writers and commentators in the press, on the radio, and on television.[131] Crucially, part of the point of this discourse is to pay lip service to a cultural superiority to which advocates of 'classical' music cling, even in the face of the substantially diminished prestige of this music in Britain. Gendron's point about high-art appropriations of rock holds true for the discourse sketched out in this thesis: the subordination of popular materials to classical forms, figured in either aesthetic or discursive terms, is a compensation for diminishing audience numbers and concert revenues. To take the example central to chapter two: Mark-Anthony Turnage explicitly samples Beyoncé, but we cannot imagine her sampling his orchestral music to the same effect.

Interviews have not been conducted with composers, and by and large social media have not been surveyed either (if personal blogs or websites are occasionally used, they mostly exist to flesh out the discourse I pick up from the press). I am concerned with discourse projected in a public domain. To follow Michael Warner's much-cited definition, a public is 'a space of discourse organised by nothing other than discourse itself. It is autotelic; it exists only as the end for which books are published, shows broadcast, websites posted, speeches delivered, opinions produced. It exists *by virtue of being addressed*.'[132] The latter part of Warner's quotation is particularly important: the BBC and the press have a kind of infrastructure that allows them to be in a position to address a public on a mass level, a

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[130] Leo Treitler, 'What Kind of Story is History?' *Nineteenth-Century Music* 7/3 (1984): 369-370.
[131] I am certainly not suggesting that the media reflects an identity, but rather, constructs it: following Simon Frith, 'identity comes from the outside, not the inside; it is something we put on or try on, not something we reveal or discover.' Simon Frith, *Performing Rites* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 275. For Frith, 'the issue is not how a particular piece of music reflects the people, but how it produces them, how it creates and constructs an experience.' Simon Frith, 'Music and Identity' in *Questions of Cultural Identity* ed. Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (London & Los Angeles, CA: SAGE, 1996), 109-127 at 109.
[132] Michael Warner, 'Publics and Counterpublics (Abbreviated Version),' *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 88/4 (November 2002): 413-425 at 413.

position that is not two-way. I have not undertaken interviews with the composers, performers, or organisers, partly because I wish to avoid the critique here becoming personal; but primarily it is because the discourse itself is not motivated and perpetuated by single humans. I am concerned more with an *image* projected through different media rather than specific actions; writers on social media may often respond to these issues, but they do not have the power of institutions, and they do not have the same ability to reach the same number of people with cultural artefacts such as documentaries or newspapers. It is true, as Megan Boler puts it, that recent 'uses of social Web [challenge the] mainstream media['s] muzzling of dissent.'[133] However, Boler does not suggest that social media always resist the dominant narratives presented in the media, since these supposedly free and democratic spaces are can be co-opted by both Left and Right, and used to either undermine or support pernicious narratives that the media perpetuate.[134] What results is a 'dizzying labyrinth for those interested in how political decisions are made'.[135] My approach has been to concentrate on one side of the story, but of course there is more work here to be done.

The issue of power is latent here. I do not believe there is a specific concerted effort made among the press to perpetuate the discourse outlined in this thesis; nor do I believe that the press is in any straightforward way the mouthpiece for the State.[136] The argument presented here is much more modest: if this discourse has power, it does so by dint of its pervasiveness. Many of the documents cited here are not long or critical articles to be read and reflected upon, but are concert listings or 'what's on' sections whose purpose is to hook

[133] Megan Boler, *Digital Media and Democracy: Tactics in Hard Times* (Cambridge, MA; London: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2009), 13.
[134] Ibid, 13-14.
[135] Ibid, 14.
[136] The BBC has sometimes resisted, and sometimes supported, the dominant narratives of the British state. On the link between the BBC and the British state see Georgina Born, *Uncertain Vision: Birt, Dyke, and the Reinvention of the BBC* (London: Vintage, 2005), 66-68.

and entice readers at a basic level. What I have tried to do is shine a light on the commonplace metaphors and thematic links by which a certain audience is invited to make sense of everyday musical styles, genres, and hierarchies. This often means presenting or recuperating rigid binaries or stereotypes, before holding them up to critical scrutiny. Timothy Taylor puts this problem brilliantly in *Beyond Exoticism*:

> It has become fashionable in some theoretical camps in the last couple of decades to deconstruct binary oppositions, but people still live by them, still construct discourses and practices around them. I would argue that binary oppositions are by far the most salient means by which modern western bourgeois subjects made, and continued to make, conceptions of racial, ethnic, and cultural difference.[137]

Throughout this project I have tried to present these binaries in their reductive, pernicious, and often nonsensical entirety.

I focus on the way that modernist music has always been constructed around a sense of resistance that composers are seen to exhibit, in particular through what Richard Taruskin describes as 'the late-romantic projection of a strong creative personality.'[138] In her *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music*, Sally Macarthur focuses on the way in which contemporary composers must always construct their identities around a sense of exceptionalism or individuality. She reads this as an attempt to create a sense of market appeal through the allure of novelty, while at the same time remaining faithful to modernism's resistance to capitalism. Taking the example of a poster promoting a concert by Karlheinz Stockhausen, Macarthur writes that the use of terms like 'icon' and '*enfant terrible*' denote 'a person whose "pure difference" sets him apart from any other person and name.'[139] Resistance or defiance manifest in the way in which composers are seen to be true to themselves, to be free from the mechanisms of capitalism: Macarthur gives the example

[137] Timothy Taylor, *Beyond Exoticism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 9.
[138] Richard Taruskin, 'A Surrealist Composer Comes to the Rescue of Modernism,' in *The Danger of Music*, 145.
[139] Sally Macarthur, *Towards a Twenty-First Century Feminist Politics of Music* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 68.

of Louis Andriessen[140] whose status as an 'icon' or a 'radical-anarchist'[141] has increased as he has made his music more popular, characterised as it is by '"his own emphatically pulsing, pop-inflected language."'[142] In other words, the use of pop as a visceral, energetic, exciting and resistant musical style is neither new nor specific to British composers, since it has been used by both Stockhausen and Andriessen – it is a readily-accessible trope present in new music that increasingly bridges popular and contemporary styles.

Hettie Malcomson's recent ethnographic reflections on 'composing prestige' in the British New Music network focuses on the way in which prestige 'must be constantly made and remade' through social exchanges and contestations.[143] While Malcomson describes the music that is the focus of her research as 'a subgenre of European-derived classical music mostly created after 1945', she notes that many composers prefer to use the terms 'new music' and 'contemporary music'.[144] This is important, since these terms *seem* to disavow problematic attachments to modernism but instead end up reinscribing what is most important about modernism: that what is created is 'new'. A subversive, or 'outsider' status is a key way in which 'new'ness is achieved, since, as Malcomson writes, many 'composers claimed to inhabit an alternative sphere of prestige that was 'outside' the establishment, a sphere where "interesting" music was created and performed.'[145] With the decline in the status of classical music, new composers find themselves marginalised, but able to use their marginalisation as a claim to authenticity. This is a key way in which the construction of prestige overlaps with urban music, as I will explain below. This sense of a

[140] Interestingly, Andriessen is a composer who has often been linked back to Stravinsky. See Louis Andriessen with Jonathan Cross, 'Composing with Stravinsky,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky* ed. Jonathan Cross (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 248-259.
[141] Macarthur, *Feminist Politics*, 72.
[142] Quoted in Macarthur, *Feminist Politics*, 72.
[143] Hettie Malcomson, 'Composing Individuals: Ethnographic Reflections on Success and Prestige in the British New Music Network,' *Twentieth-Century Music* 10/1 (March, 2013): 115.
[144] Ibid, 116.
[145] Ibid, 126.

fractured modernism has even become reflected in the character of many more recent modernist composers: to be a successful modernist composer is to be an *enfant terrible*, a subversive individual whose anti-mainstream practices add a sense of allure while simultaneously upholding the sense of individualism and resistance that is so important within a modernist aesthetic.[146]

In amongst all of this, four composers – Mark-Anthony Turnage, Tansy Davies, Anna Meredith, and Gabriel Prokofiev – have been chosen because their public identities are founded on the fact that they all have institutional credentials: they are 'serious' composers, and they all draw upon 'modernism' (broadly conceived – they are described in terms such as 'experimental', 'avant-garde' or 'modernist' interchangeably) for their institutional acceptance. But their music also lies at the furthest edge of what might be called modernist without its art music credentials ever being questioned. While they never collaborate as a distinct group, they nevertheless interact in different ways. Davies is part of Prokofiev's musical collective *Nonclassical*, for which the two co-organise concerts and release recordings. The names of these composers also crop up frequently in articles about the crossover between classical and popular music. Turnage and Meredith both feature in the BBC series *Classic Goldie*, as well as having been programmed next to one another, providing 'music with elements of jazz funk and the club-floor'[147] in a concert for the National Youth Orchestra. Writing about the intersection between classical and popular music more broadly, Tom Service cites 'what Tansy Davies has learned from funk, or what Anna Meredith has got from beatboxing';[148] likewise, Alexandra Coghlan sees Davies,

[146] Macarthur, *Feminist Politics*, 68-69.
[147] Barry Millington, 'Classical,' *The Evening Standard*, Features, January 9, 2012, 34.
[148] Tom Service, 'Indie and modern classical music: the quixotic links,' *The Guardian*, March 19, 2010. https://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2010/mar/19/indie-classical-music-links [Accessed July 5, 2016] [Note that this is before the premieres of Turnage's *Hammered Out* and Prokofiev's *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra*]

Meredith, and Prokofiev as key players in the ongoing alliance of contemporary classical and electronic styles.[149] Ultimately, I have chosen these composers because their activities are close enough to articulate the specific aesthetic I want to sketch out, while being far enough from one another to provide a sense of breadth.

What follows, then, is a critical account of the musical activities of several different British, self-professed modernist composers since the turn of the millennium in Britain – an account which draws considerably upon the response of critics and commentators to their works. This is not an historical consideration of the 'crossover' of black popular music into a British musical modernist scene. All of these compositions are instances of 'misreadings' of different musical styles, variously described as 'funky', 'jazzy', 'urban', as 'dance music', as 'street-music'; what they all have in common is a sense of rhythmic fracturedness, a sense of grit or abrasion, and its inverse, an excitement, energy, vitality, a heat. All of these terms suggest a general sense of innovation through radicalism or resistance. I am concerned throughout with rhythm: each of these composers harnesses rhythm in their own specific way, and for each of the composers this rhythm is reflective of a specific sense of subversion within their music. And in their various different ways, these composers also use these musical practices to draw attention to the spaces within which music is performed, establishing the 'urban' as a musical category that occurs within, and changes, a public conception of urban space. These composers draw upon the above social tensions in order to read the 'urban' through their music in all of its different manifestations.

Chapter one makes a case for the similarities between modernist and urban music within Britain. It begins with the 2013 Urban Classic Prom, a concert that drew urban and twentieth century together in a single programme, and then contextualises the concert

[149] Alexandra Coghlan, 'Friend or foe?' *Prospect*, January 25, 2012. http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/arts-and-books/friend-or-foe-classical-music-electronic-gabriel-prokofiev [accessed November 24, 2016]

within related interactions between urban and 'classical' musical styles around this time. The chapter suggests that there is a tension between two specific impulses behind these musical crossovers: on one hand, a subsuming of urban music within institutional classical music, and on the other, a rupture into a new kind of music altogether, which offers the promise of social change.

Chapter two looks at Mark-Anthony Turnage's use of Beyoncé's 'Single Ladies' in his recent orchestral work, *Hammered Out*. Premiered at the Proms, the work divided the audience and was seen by young journalists as a minor media sensation. Older journalists, however, recognised it as a familiar, even hackneyed, musical style, consistent with the way that Turnage's career has been founded on subverting an orthodox modernism by importing the rhythms of jazz – along with attendant themes of crime and social degradation – to suggest a lowbrow African-American musical world.

Chapter three looks at the way in which the 'cool' of urban musical styles is simultaneously appropriated and erased. This chapter looks at Tansy Davies' opera *Between Worlds* in the context of her career as a writer of colourful and rhythmically-jerky dance-like urban music. I show that even in her least representational music, Davies' rhythmic motifs are aesthetically linked with the countryside rave parties that occurred in the early 1990s; and through this, that her 'urban' music is seen as always inscribed upon an implicitly rural landscape. The chapter concludes by suggesting that modernist composers use dance music in order to draw energy and vitality into their music, and then cast it aside later in their careers.

Chapter four discusses the music of Anna Meredith, who openly draws upon different influences from street culture. Her music conveys a synaesthetic experience of urban music that is rooted in metaphors drawn from hip-hop culture; these are used to represent the city in terms of lines and spatial gesture. The chapter discusses her *Concerto*

for Beatboxer and Orchestra, and two of her 'flashmob' works, *HandsFree* and *ConnectIt*, looking firstly at the way that Meredith's interest in visuals and graphic scores music is caught up in contestations over musical notation that are central to modernist conceptions of the musical work; and second, the way her 'flashmob' performances both subvert the conventions of the concert hall and draw attention to urban space.

Chapter five begins by examining a performance of Gabriel Prokofiev's *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra*, a work which contains a staged episode of civil unrest among the performers. The chapter looks at the work in the context of Prokofiev's *Nonclassical* record label and club night, which brings new classical music to urban areas and club nights throughout London, and creates a kind of new experimental avant-garde. I discuss the ways in which Prokofiev positions both his *Nonclassical* project, and his career more generally, in between the technological play of early hip-hop, and developments in the use of electronics in twentieth-century European art music. The chapter concludes by suggesting that the staged unrest in the performance of the *Concerto* should be seen as a violent or disciplining gesture.

The final chapter takes as its starting point a performance of *The Rite of Spring* in a car park in Peckham, which sought to bring social change to the area through classical music. It then positions the work within the press response to both the *Rite*'s centenary, and the *Rest is Noise* festival, and looks at the way in which these events paint a picture of modernist music of the long twentieth century as being linked to social change and revolution. The chapter closes by considering the way in which this concert is linked to gentrification in the urban space in which it was performed.

Chapter 1 – Urban Classic

Introduction

On Saturday August 10, 2013, the Urban Classic Prom took place at the Royal Albert Hall in London. The concert was billed as an 'experimental fusion of styles – high-octane orchestral showpieces, rap, R&B and soul … the BBC Symphony Orchestra locks horns with Jacob Banks, Fazer, Laura Mvula, Wretch 32, Maverick Sabre and Lady Leshurr.'[1] The concert involved reworked versions of urban tracks, with rappers and singers performing over an instrumental backing provided by the BBC Symphony Orchestra. Videos of the concert available on YouTube show that the concert was varied: musician Traktor jokingly rapping that 'I've missed school and I haven't got a job yet',[2] Laura Mvula performing *Sing to the Moon* over a slushy and slow-moving string accompaniment,[3] and Lady Leshurr pointing towards the orchestra in between tracks and telling the audience 'Look at this! This is history, you know?'[4] These urban tracks were interspersed with twentieth-century orchestral works – Alexander Mosolov's *Iron Foundry* and the orchestral interlude from Hans Werner Henze's *The Bassarids* – with apparently 'urban' connotations. Roger Wright,

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[1] Patrick Mulkern, 'The Urban Prom', *Radio Times*, August 10-16, 2013, Pick of Today's TV, 53.
[2] 'Wretch 32: Traktor – Urban Classic Prom 2013,' published August 12, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RTMYLU-pPsA 0.40 [accessed November 26, 2016].
[3] 'Laura Mvula: Sing to the Moon – Urban Classic Prom 2013,' published August 12, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9KyVinvphEA [accessed November 26, 2016]. For Bernadette McNulty, 'It was a night that could have almost been made for new star Laura Mvula, a soul singer who trained in composition at Birmingham Conservatoire. She looked so at home she kicked off her golden stilettos at the piano and brought tears to the eyes with her three songs.' Bernadette McNulty, 'Proms 2013: Urban Classic, Prom 37, Royal Albert Hall, review,' *The Daily Telegraph*, August 11, 2013, Music, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/10236011/Proms-2013-Urban-Classic-Prom-37-Royal-Albert-Hall-review.html [accessed November 26, 2016].
[4] 'Lady Leshurr – Urban Classic Prom 2013,' published August 30, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3i1FYIWZY0 4.55 [accessed November 26, 2016]. For Andre Paine, 'Wretch 32's "Traktor" was rousing hip-hop with the heft of a honking brass section, though it was really only petite newcomer Lady Leshurr's barrage of rhyming that kept the musicians on their toes.' Andre Paine, 'Proms 2013: Urban Classic Prom – music review,' *The Evening Standard*, August 12, 2013, Music, http://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/music/proms-2013-urban-classic-prom-music-review-8756866.html [accessed November 26, 2016].

director of the Proms, explained that 'the Urban Prom would deliver a dynamic meeting of musical cultures, introducing young grime and rap fans to works by the *avant-garde* Russian composer Mosolov and the German composer Henze, who was influenced by Serialism [sic] and atonality.'[5]

Reviewers of the concert suggested that these different works established common ground through their respective use of rhythm and repetition. Mosolov's *The Foundry* and Henze's interlude from *The Bassarids* were seen by some journalists as complementary to the urban music on the programme, since they '[echoed] the sounds of urgency and movement that grime rappers create with tinny computer beats to backdrop their street narratives',[6] and in particular, the 'repetitive clang of Mosolov's *Iron Foundry* could have backed Dizzee Rascal's more dystopian rhymes.'[7] One particularly effusive review of the concert saw the concert as profoundly successful: 'To me, music is music. From one genre to the next … it always involves the same notes, the same beats, the same rhythms.'[8] This chapter takes a critical look at the way in which this shared musical language not only purports to establish a bond between high and low styles, but also articulates a sentiment of social progress.

Grime

[5] Adam Sherwin, 'Marin Alsop to be first woman to conduct Last Night of the Proms after 119 years,' *The Independent*, April 18, 2013, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/classical/news/marin-alsop-to-be-first-woman-to-conduct-last-night-of-the-proms-after-119-years-8578532.html [accessed November 26, 2016].
[6] McNulty, 'Proms 2013.' 'The Urban Classic Prom, featuring grime, hip hop and reggae, offered "a joyous and inspiring collision of musical worlds."'
[7] Chris Mugan, 'Prom 37, Urban Classic Prom/Prom 40: 6 Music Prom,' *The Independent*, August 15, 2013, 46.
[8] Clemency Burton-Hill, 'Grime and hip-hop mash with the Proms; Urban meets classical at the Royal Albert Hall tonight,' *The Independent*, August 9, 2013, Features, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/features/grime-and-hip-hop-mash-with-the-proms-8752812.html [accessed November 26, 2016].

While rap, soul and RnB were mentioned in relation to the above concert, the music that takes centre stage is implicitly grime, since the vast majority of the featured artists were mostly active in this musical style. Lady Leshurr and Wretch 32 are active grime artists, and Maverick Sabre, while not strictly a grime artist himself, has been featured on tracks alongside many other grime musicians.[9] Grime is a musical style that came about in Britain as a backlash to the increased commodification of later American hip hop present in garage music,[10] and maintains an anti-authoritarian sentiment consistent with the 'keepin it real' roots of the earliest hip hop artists.[11] It is a sometimes satirical, sometimes aggressive genre that is seen to reflect the experience of those marginalised individuals living in urban areas throughout the UK, but particularly reflecting 'the inner city music scene of London'.[12] In terms of its stylistic features, Christabel Stirling sees it as 'a musical genre defined by its sub-low frequencies, sparse off-kilter rhythms, 140 BPM tempos, and high-speed rapping, "spitting," and soliloquizing.' Nabeel Zuberi distances grime from its precursors (such as drum 'n' bass, and garage) because of its 'more gritty lyrics … minimal and stark rhythms and … sub-bass frequencies and sharp angular keyboard riffs primarily designed to foreground the MC's aggressive lyrical delivery.'[13] Popular commentators on the *Urban*

[9] Wretch 32 is most unambiguously seen by the press as a grime artist: see Darcy Thomas, 'A Timeline of Grime: From Wiley to Wretch 32 and Skepta to Stormzy,' *BBC Website*, August 12, 2015, http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/33878212/a-timeline-of-grime-from-wiley-to-wretch-32-and-skepta-to-stormzy [accessed June 29, 2017]; On Lady Leshurr's career as a grime and rap artist, see Nilu Haidari, 'Lady Leshurr Isn't Having It Anymore: "We Still Get Classed as 'Female Rappers' - Like You're Only Good for a Girl",' *Noisey*, Features, October 27, 2015, https://noisey.vice.com/en_uk/article/lady-leshurr-2015-interview [accessed June 29, 2017]; or Rob Drummond and Erin Carrie, 'Why grime artists are staying true to their regional roots unlike other pop stars who sound American,' *The Independent*, Music; Features, February 14, 2017, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/features/grime-lady-leshurr-astroid-boys-bugzy-malone-adele-arctic-monkeys-grammys-a7579031.html [accessed June 29, 2017].
[10] See Jon Stratton, *When Music Migrates: Crossing British and European Racial Faultlines, 1945-2010* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 168.
[11] Todd Dedman, 'Agency in UK Hip-Hop and Grime Youth Subcultures – Peripherals and Purists', *Journal of Youth Studies* 14/5 (2011): 507-522.
[12] Olly Thake, 'Grime,' *The Urban Dictionary*, May 9, 2006. http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=grime [accessed November 27, 2016].
[13] Zuberi, '"New Throat Fe Chat",' 190.

Dictionary agree: 'Grime has a very close, dry sound. Grime instrumentals have sparse beats, often sounding slightly off kilter or out of time';[14] This is music characterised by 'raw beats, raw rhymes',[15] by 'gritty wit and rhythm.'[16]

With its stylistic links to hip hop, grime has always been associated with disenfranchised and minority groups, articulating political resistance.[17] While terms 'hip hop' and 'grime' are used interchangeably by some scholars and popular commentators to refer to rap styles within London,[18] others draw sharp distinctions between the two.[19] If there is a link between grime and hip hop it is political rather than aesthetic, since both are concerned with the question that Sujatha Fernandes argues has motivated all scholars of hip hop: 'What is it about hip hop that connects young and marginalized people around the globe?'[20] The issues of race and class are complex here. In his *UK Hip Hop, Grime and the City: the Aesthetics and Ethics of London's Rap Scenes*, the first monograph on British grime scenes, Richard Bramwell makes the point that 'the participation of youths from a variety of ethnic backgrounds in contemporary London's rap scenes is testament to the tenacity of this art form', but he also argues that 'it is necessary to bring to the fore the significance of alternative routes that have contributed to the production of London's black music

[14] Crucial reppin Manchestergrime, 'Grime,' *The Urban Dictionary*, June 14, 2007, http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=grime [accessed June 29, 2017].
[15] winston hall, 'Grime,' *The Urban Dictionary*, May 6, 2006, http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=grime [accessed November 26, 2016].
[16] Will Hodgkinson, 'The Somerset barnstormer: From his countryside HQ, Charles Hazlewood is plotting to take classical music where it's never gone before,' *The Guardian*, May 8, 2008, Guardian Features Pages, 26.
[17] Terkourafi, 'Introduction,' 10-11; Barron, 'The Sound of Street Corner Society'; Dedman, 'Agency in UK Hip-Hop and Grime.'
[18] This is the case in Dedman, 'Agency in UK Hip-Hop and Grime,' for example. The absence of a theoretical distinction between grime and hip hop is most notable in the first extended study on grime, Richard Bramwell's *UK Hip Hop, Grime and the City: The Aesthetics and Ethics of London's Rap Scenes* (New York: Routledge, 2015).
[19] For different popular definitions, see 'Grime,' *The Urban Dictionary*. Olly Thake writes that 'grime is not hip hop', while other commentators acknowledge a link without equating the two. http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=grime [accessed June 29, 2017].
[20] Sujatha Fernandes, *Close to the Edge* (London: Verso, 2011), 22.

cultures.'[21] Bramwell locates the origins of grime in the history of oral cultures in slavery, and sees a rhythmic or percussive flow as central both to the music's sonic profile and to its black roots.[22] Grime has a long history of responding to British national racism at the very highest level. Zuberi gives the infamous example of Dizzee Rascal's line 'I'm a problem for Anthony Blair', heard on his Mercury Award-winning debut album *Boy in da Corner*.[23] And Jon Stratton agrees, that 'The edginess of the early grime tracks, their tendency to disrupt the smooth flow of the listening experience, can be read as an expression of the deracinated lives of those who made them.'[24]

Within the context of this press discourse, the term 'urban' is more than merely grime, however. One commentator, for example, describes grime as 'the very British mix of hip-hop, Jamaican dancehall and street humour more commonly heard blasting out of car windows in Peckham than out of concert halls.'[25] The reference here to Peckham, an inner-city part of London, highlights the fact that this is primarily music heard in urban areas – it is, in other words, the sound of the urban just as much as it is music of the urban. The Urban Classic Prom highlights the way in which the rhythmic characteristics of 'urban' music are generally the same as those of modernist works programmed around the same time: both contemporary classical and urban styles find common ground through their use of rhythmic, repetitive and fractured sounds. The distinct sense of melodrama behind reviews of this concert (in particular the reference to dystopian rhymes) makes it clear that the

[21] Bramwell, *UK Hip Hop, Grime and the City*, 6.
[22] Bramwell links this characteristic sound to Sterling Stuckey's description of musical forms created through slave culture, in which musical lyrics were '"driven by complex percussive rhythms, and often give way to chants, whose repetition can have a hypnotic effect and contribute to the religious purpose of possession".' Bramwell, *UK Hip Hop, Grime and the City*, 7. The religious or trance-like qualities associated with urban music in the British press are explored further in chapter 3. Here, Bramwell closely echoes (but does not cite) Paul Gilroy's discussion of the origins of black popular music in ch. 3 of *The Black Atlantic*.
[23] Zuberi, '"New Throat Fe Chat",' 187.
[24] Stratton, *When Music Migrates*, 186.
[25] Hodgkinson, 'Somerset barnstormer.'

concert touched on anxieties about social mixing that played out in contestations over urban space.

'Broken Britain'

Inner-city urban areas have been associated in the British psyche with civil unrest and rioting for many decades. In particular, the Brixton riots of 1981 and 1982 were discussed in terms of racist attacks on Afro-Caribbean diasporic communities, and these made a deep impression on the British national memory, along with the racial and social tensions associated with those areas.[26] In early 2001, another set of riots reminiscent of the Brixton riots occurred in a number of cities around the UK, and these 'focused attention on the wider challenge of living with diversity and the growing danger of Britain's civic fragmentation along ethnic and cultural lines.'[27] While multiculturalism has been under attack in the UK from the political Right since the 1960s, Arun Kundnani argues that since the millennium there has been a 'crisis of multiculturalism' discourse in which even the Left has begun to see cultural pluralism in the UK as a threat to 'liberal ideas of the open society.'[28] The supposed national culture of Britain saw a shift towards an 'integrationist' position, in which African-Caribbean, Asian, and Muslim 'Others' were encouraged to adopt core British values (whatever those may be).[29] This focus on integration is, in other words, a renewed kind of conservatism under the guise of inclusivity. As Prime Minister Tony Blair was quoted in 2006, 'Our tolerance is part of what makes Britain, Britain. Conform to it; or

[26] See Sheldon Thomas, 'Revisiting Brixton: The War on Babylon 1981,' in *The English Riots of 2011: A Summer of Discontent*, ed. Daniel Briggs (Hook, UK: Waterside Press, 2012), 111-123.
[27] Christina Julios, *Contemporary British Identity: English Language, Migrants, and Public Discourse* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 116.
[28] Kundnani, 'Multiculturalism and its Discontents,' 155-166 at 155-156. Kundnani is discussing Islamophobia here, but his points about renewed conservatism pertain to British 'Others' in general.
[29] Ibid, 156. See also Jon Burnett, 'Britain's "Civilising Project": Community Cohesion and Core Values,' *Policy and Politics* 35/2 (2007): 353-357.

don't come here.'[30] More recently this has also resulted in a disconnect between self-congratulatory public discussions of multiculturalism and the ongoing lived experience of racial difference between groups of the British public. As Gilroy puts it, 'How much those noisy announcements refer to an ideological formation and how much they are aimed, wishfully, at the fact of cultural plurality itself, has always been unclear.'[31] He describe this wishful discourse in the second decade of the twenty-first century as a 'zombie multiculturalism'.[32] While Britain's 'lived multiculture is plainly and irreversibly evident especially in our metropolitan centres', this is nevertheless a multiculture that produces friction rather than the happy togetherness. The city is populated by a 'motley cast of characters … menacing, spectral figures of a torrid, tropical modernity':[33] 'like Britain's stubbornly undead diversity, zombies are terrifying to the power and destabilising of the order that pronounced their death.'[34]

Tensions ran high again after the riots of August 2011, which spread from London into other urban areas around the United Kingdom, and were the subject of intense media discussion about social integration, racism, youth disobedience, and the fragility of British identity.[35] The problems surrounding these riots were projected in different ways; as an urban assault on the suburban,[36] as a working-class backlash against ongoing and

[30] Julios, *Contemporary British Identity*, 139-161.
[31] Paul Gilroy, '"My Britain is Fuck All"[:] Zombie Multiculturalism and the Race Politics of British Citizenship,' *Identities*, 19/4 (2012): 380-397 at 384. For Gilroy, 'Multiculturalism – a blurred term covering a host of different woes – is repeatedly declared counterproductive and then pronounced dead, often as part of anxiety-inducing arguments about security, national identity and the menace of Islamic extremism.' Ibid.
[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid.
[35] 'Reading the Riots: Investigating England's Summer of Disorder' http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/46297/1/Reading%20the%20riots(published).pdf [accessed November 26, 2016].
[36] See Rupa Huq, 'Suburbia Runs Riot: The UK August 2011 Riots, Neo-Moral Panic and the End of the English Suburban Dream?' *Journal for Cultural Research* 17/2 (2013): 105-123.

intensifying socioeconomic inequalities,[37] or as a failure on the part of the parents.[38] The riots were accompanied by media discourse on 'Broken Britain', a phrase which broke down into themes of 'contemporary violence, the savagery of the nation's youth and a culture of permissiveness.'[39] David Cameron drew upon this set of issues in response to the riots, in a speech on August 15, 2011 in his constituency of Witney, Oxfordshire, when he reiterated 'my personal priority: to mend our broken society',[40] a society broken due to absent fathers, disorderly schools, and a general desire for 'reward-without-effort'.[41] While there was a wealth of information that pointed out the inconsistencies in the 'Broken Britain' fantasy, as a 2010 article in the *Economist* made abundantly clear, it nevertheless remained that 'for those (and they are legion, on inner-city council estates as well as in the shires) who think that society in Britain is "broken", the country is stuck in a mire of crime, fractured families and feral youth.'[42]

Heated discussions over music were at the forefront of public debate around this time, since there was a sense that music functioned as a vector for racism: as Geoffrey Pearson put it, the moral panic concerning British young people had been set against a 'hovering background ambience of "gangsta rap" music.'[43] While gang activity was subsequently ruled out as a contributing factor to the riots, the imaginary link between grime (inaccurately read according to this pernicious discourse as a stereotypical image of

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[37] Steven Miles, 'Young People, "Flawed Protestors" and the Commodification of Resistance,' *Critical Arts: South-North Cultural and Media Studies* 28/1 (2014): 76-87.
[38] Fidelma Ashe, 'All About Eve: Mothers, Masculinities and the 2011 UK Riots,' *Political Studies* 62/3 (2014): 656.
[39] Stephen Hirschler, 'Riots in Retrospective,' in *The English Riots of 2011: A Summer of Discontent*, ed. Daniel Briggs (Hook, UK: Waterside Press, 2012), 66.
[40] Cabinet Office, Prime Minister's Office and The Rt Hon David Cameron MP, 'PM's Speech on the Fightback after the Riots,' August 15, 2011, https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-on-the-fightback-after-the-riots [accessed February 6, 2016].
[41] Cabinet Office, 'PM's Speech'; see also Hirschler, 'Riots in Retrospective,' 66-67.
[42] 'How broken is Britain?' *The Economist*, February 6, 2010, 5.
[43] Geoffrey Pearson, 'Everything Changes, Nothing Moves,' in *The English Riots of 2011: A Summer of Discontent*, ed. Daniel Briggs (Hook, UK: Waterside Press, 2012), 46.

hip hop or nebulous 'gangsta rap') and contestations over urban space remained.[44] As Nabeel Zuberi explains, the MC culture so central to rap styles in London is 'embroiled in the history of constructing "black youth" as a problem and policing them', even arguing that David Cameron and other MPs 'tried to generate political capital by making a connection between violence and black youth culture in which the MC was a significant actor.'[45] There is also an historical dimension to this, in that there has been a dialogue between grime and earlier subcultural musical styles in Britain. Jon Stratton gives the example of Lethal Bizzle's sampling of The Clash's 'Police on My Back', a track that went from 'being a genre song about Jamaican rude boys being chased by the police' in the band's original version, to 'an anthem of the experience of the oppression of the colonized Others in the colonial metropolis' in Bizzle's.[46]

Perhaps the most prominent instance in which the racial tensions surrounding urban music manifested was in a now-infamous interview on *Newsnight* on August 13th, 2011. The interview is well-known for an astonishing display of racism from historian David Starkey, who stated that that a substantial amount of the working classes have 'become black – the whites have become black.'[47] For Starkey, the problem wasn't about skin colour, it was cultural, a distinction that nevertheless led him to explain that if one were to listen to black

[44] For an in-depth account of racial issues see 'Reading the Riots,' 19. See also Ilan, *Understanding Street Culture* 61; For Ilan, the 'outdated and politically loaded "gang" terminology … [serves] the cause of populist politics more than in-depth understanding.'

[45] Zuberi, '"New Throat Fe Chat",' 187-188. Zuberi explains this by way of a vignette, in which grime artist Lethal Bizzle 'effectively became embroiled in an MC "beef" with [David] Cameron'. In 2006, Cameron criticised BBC Radio 1 for playing music on Saturday nights 'that encourages people to carry guns and knives', which led Bizzle to write 'a Comment is free piece for *The Guardian* called "David Cameron is a donut" in which he retorted that he had signed teenage rappers to his record company, "taken them off the streets and given them something positive to look forward to", and was "providing them with an opportunity to make a living out of music".' Ibid, 188.

[46] Stratton, *When Music Migrates*, 186-187.

[47] 'England riots: The whites have become black, says historian Daved Starkey,' *BBC News*, August 13, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-14513517 [Accessed January 23rd, 2015]; cited also in Hirschler, 'Everything Changes, Nothing Moves,' 60, 65.

politician David Lammy on the radio, one would think that he were white. The bizarre circularity of this racism certainly problematizes the sense that these riots had nothing to do with race, a claim repeatedly made by David Cameron.[48] And this is where music becomes important, because music becomes a prism through which racism is projected, filtering it into different parts. The issue, it became clear, was a fear of a type of racial Otherness or 'blackness' located within a specific type of grime or hip hop culture that was seen to be contaminating British society – as Starkey put it, it was a specific type of 'violent, nihilistic gangster culture that had become the fashion.'[49] Owen Jones, also on the panel, criticised Starkey's assertion by saying that 'black culture in this country has [made] a huge contribution [to] our music, and [in] a whole range of cultural ways,' to which Starkey quickly replied, 'like rap? You glorify rap?'[50] Reading this by contrast to the 'Urban Classic' Prom, it is clear that the fear of rap can also be seen as the fear of rhythms, but also the fear of breakage in society. Just as Britain is seen to be 'broken' by an infiltration of American black urban music into British culture, so a fear of the percussive and fractured dance beats can seem to be threatening to the very fabric of British society.

These anxieties have been reflected in the way these styles have been represented in the Proms. The 'Urban Classic' Prom was so called because its urban performers had taken part in a project called 'Urban Classic' in 2006, performed at the Hackney Empire on February 16 and broadcast on Radio 4 on the following day. Rather than an attempt on the part of a classical music institution to harness the cool of urban music, this original project had been the opposite, 'the first attempt to try to take grime beyond its parochial sites and into an orchestral setting.'[51] This project was a collaboration by the BBC Orchestra under

[48] Cabinet Office, 'PM's Speech.'
[49] 'The whites have become black.'
[50] Ibid.
[51] Soweto Kinch, 'It's the new cool – and all that jazz,' *The Times*, September 21, 2007, Features; Times2, 14.

conductor Charles Hazlewood, and Jason Yarde, an 'alto-saxophonist and composer'.[52] The press found it very difficult to describe the musical credentials of the fleet of other artists involved in the project: in particular, the co-collaborator Da'VinChe,[53] is referred to as a 'composer and arranger',[54] 'a classically trained pianist',[55] and a 'classically trained grime producer.'[56] In any case, what characterized this project from its beginning was that the collaborators were to evoke a spiky, fractured sound consistent with an urban aesthetic. As one journalist described the music during attendance at a rehearsal, 'the double bass player picks out an ominous bassline, the percussionist strikes up a fractured rhythm and the two violinists join in with a choppy melody'.[57] Another criticized the concert on these grounds:

> If the workshops found any edgy new sounds, they were left well behind in the end product which featured several proficient examples of safe, professional-sounding orchestration … nothing attempted the rhythmic subtlety of [rappers] Pase or Tor. Simplest and boldest worked best: strings only, a four-note clarinet riff, strong figures cutting through.[58]

The movement of classical and urban musics into each other's respective performance spaces is paralleled by exertions of power over urban areas. Anxieties about grime were met with a set of crackdowns on the spaces with which it was associated and in which it was performed: Christabel Stirling has shown how the grime scene's home in East London has been subjected to a series of 'legislative interventions and media smears, many of which were explicitly oriented towards the removal of grime from London's public

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[52] Ibid.
[53] Will Hodgkinson, 'Radio: Saturday 18 February: Soundbites,' *The Guardian*, February 18, 2006, The Guide, 61. Da'VinChe 'was the link between some of the roughest, most spontaneous computer-based music around and the precision and preparation of orchestration.'
[54] Ed Harris and Kiran Randhawa, 'Classical and urban mix is suite man', *The Evening Standard*, February 16, 2006, A Merge, 19.
[55] Dorian Lynskey, 'Jazz, world, folk, etc. Grime and reason: Violins, rap, beatboxers, knitting - Urban Classic brings together some very strange bedfellows', *The Guardian*, February 10, 2006, Guardian Film and Music Pages, 13.
[56] Hodgkinson, 'Soundbites.'
[57] Lynskey, 'Strange bedfellows.'
[58] Robert Maycock, 'Classical,' *The Independent*, February 21, 2006, Features, 47.

spaces.'[59] From the 1990s, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) were introduced in order to ostensibly protect public safety and reduce racist conflict in urban spaces, while at the same time the links between violence, crime, and the figure of the young black man were repeated in the media and through the statements of politicians. Around the same time, massive urban change throughout London made it easier to fragment communities with which grime was associated. Extensive regeneration in East London in preparation for the 2012 Olympics meant that 'grime MCs and DJs lost access to the many physical sites that they had largely come to depend upon for artistic development and exchange.'[60] Stirling sees the culmination of these interventions as the 2003 Licensing Act, which made it easier for the government to exert control over urban spaces that could be used as music venues, subject to the acquiring of a Temporary Events Notice (TEN). The Act required venue owners to state if there would be 'a particular ethnic group attending',[61] and often the admission of large black or Asian ethnic groups would result in a TEN being withdrawn or withheld; as a result, venue organisers went with safer, 'white' musical styles.

Classical music had its part to play in these changes too. In recent years, anxieties about anti-social behaviour among young people in public areas have been linked to fears of 'sodcasting', or what Alexander Weheliye defines as the 'culture of using boomboxes and other portable music devices to occupy public space.'[62] He quotes journalist Wayne Marshall, who describes the experience of hearing 'the public playing of trebly MP3s off mobile phones on British public transport – mostly buses, mostly in London, mostly by

[59] Christabel Stirling, 'Crowds, Cordons and Computers: Rethinking Density through London's Grime Scene,' in *Rethinking Density: Art, Culture and Urban Practice*, ed. Anamarija Batista, Szilvia Kovács, and Carina Lesky, (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2017) (forthcoming) [no page number].
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Alexander Weheliye, 'Rhythms of Relation: Black Popular Music and Mobile Technologies,' in *Oxford Handbook of Mobile Music Studies*, ed. Sumanth S. Gopinath and Jason Stanyek, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 362.

teenagers, often non-white teenagers…'[63] A precursor to this fear of music as noise pollution is the legacy of rave (something that will be explored further in chapter 3). Many scholars cite the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act, which gave police the powers to disperse 'a gathering on land in the open air of 20 or more persons' who were listening to music 'wholly or predominantly characterised by the emission of a succession of repetitive beats.'[64] In particular, the Act gave police commands 'to remove persons attending or preparing for a rave',[65] and was a direct result of the moral panic triggered by the increased number of these dance parties.[66] Channelling the black dance subcultures that emerged throughout the USA in the 1970s and 80s, the result was that rave became a profoundly subversive way of enjoying music. Paraphrasing Barney Hoskyns in the *NME* in 1981, Simon Reynolds writes of the underlying declaration behind rave: 'we must make of joy a crime against the state.'[67] Since around 2005, local authorities have responded to these problems by playing classical music out loud in public spaces in order to deter 'yobs', or people who are likely to commit low level crimes, such as 'swearing, smoking at stations and harassing

[63] Quoted in Weheliye, 'Rhythms of Relation,' 362.
[64] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1994/33/section/63 [accessed November 26, 2016]; See also Chris Brunner, 'The Sound Culture of Dubstep in London' in *Musical Performance and the Changing City*, ed. Fabian Holt and Carsten Wergin (New York: Routledge, 2013), 259. 'As shown in the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 in the UK, the public display of sonic force through sound systems has been deeply challenged by the state apparatus that attempts to erase bass from the public sphere'; See also Reynolds, *Energy Flash*, 180-187.
[65] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1994/33/section/63
[66] For an account of the development of rave in distinction to rock music see Neil Nehring, '"Everyone's Given Up and Just Wants to Go Dancing": From Punk to Rave in the Thatcher Era,' *Popular Music and Society* 30/1 (February, 2007): 1-18.
[67] Reynolds, *Energy Flash*, xxviii. In addition to this, there was a direct (if metaphorical) sense of the urban here: for Reynolds, the Act appealed 'to the most mean spirited, intolerant side of the British mentality, a sort of internal xenophobia to those who look and live differently', but 'underneath the bigotry lurked an undercurrent of resentment felt by many law-abiding, norm-obeying types vis-à-vis those who repudiate suburban slow death and instead choose the open road.' Ibid, 181. Moreover, a sense of (racial) segregation is also present here, since the enjoyment of 'rave' is figured through a fundamental split between rock and dance styles: as Reynolds describes it, rock is music that one can simply listen to, in a detached, contemplative way; dance music, however, has to be danced to in order to be fully appreciated. Ibid, xxiii-xxiv.

passengers.'[68] The rationale is dubious: 'One [reason] is that it doesn't fit with antisocial youths' perception of cool; another that teenagers can hear high-frequency overtones that adults can't detect, which upset them (though music students of a similar age are evidently immune).'[69] Similar to Licensing Act, which made possible the racial profiling at music venues, this use of classical music is a barely-veiled attempt to purge public space of undesirable persons using the cultural capital of classical music. In short, there is a profound association in the British psyche between tinny or percussive beats, groups of resistant moving bodies, and public areas.

The 2013 Urban Classic Prom was followed by two more similar Late Night Proms in 2015, which reflected the ongoing dialogue between grime and hip hop, and dance culture more broadly. The first was an offshoot of the Urban Classic Prom, referred to by most commentators as a 'grime symphony',[70] which put a number of urban artists together with orchestral soloists to create a 'a rare bridge between classical and urban genres';[71] the second was a Prom that focused on electronic dance music, 'billed as a "musical homage to Ibiza", the Balearic island which has been home to hedonistic dance clubs for 25 years or more.'[72] Generally referred to as the 'Pete Tong' Prom after the DJ, this latter Prom was a benign musical retrospective on Ibiza for a generation of aging clubbers, but newspaper

[68] Melissa Jackson, 'Music to deters yobs by,' *BBC News Magazine*, January 10, 2005. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/4154711.stm [accessed November 26, 2016].
[69] Jessica Duchen, 'Mind the Bach; As classical music is piped into 40 Tube stations to reduce antisocial behaviour, Jessica Duchen asks if we really want rush hour symphonies,' *The Independent*, March 26, 2008, Extra, 14.
[70] For the programme see the BBC Proms website https://www.bbc.co.uk/events/erdc8g
[71] Jack Malvern, 'Now it's rave all night at the Proms,' *The Times*, April 24, 2015, Music. http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/arts/music/article4420970.ece [accessed November 26, 2016]. Of the artists featured in this concert, more of them were unambiguously grime artists. In particular, Lethal Bizzle, Stormzy, and Wretch 32 are foregrounded in the Timeline of Grime http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/33878212/a-timeline-of-grime-from-wiley-to-wretch-32-and-skepta-to-stormzy [accessed May 13, 2017].
[72] Anita Singh, 'Only snobs object to a Pete Tong Prom, says BBC presenter; Radio 3's Suzy Klein says criticism of Pete Tong's Ibiza celebration at the BBC Proms is "a load of old cobblers"', *The Telegraph*, July 7, 2015, News. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/proms/11721560/Only-snobs-object-to-a-Pete-Tong-Prom-says-BBC-presenter.html [accessed November 25 2016]

coverage painted a picture of an audience divided: it was 'less concert and more dance party',[73] with those 'classical music listeners who criticise the diverse line-up' scowling and clucking and tutting at the 'rowdy young revellers who brought a Friday-night feel to a midweek booking.'[74] But even those journalists most keen to defend themselves from charges of snobbishness described this culture clash in terms that fanned the flames: the music began and 'within minutes, the audience were on their feet, fists pumping in the air' – this was 'the poshest rave in town'.[75] These two concerts were referred to as being almost equivalent:[76] they were reported upon together, and were part of 'a series of late-night proms',[77] suggesting that this music was to occur somehow 'after hours' or in a liminal space.[78]

Within the context of the discourse I am discussing, these different musical styles (grime or hip hop, and electronic dance music) have ultimately been (mis)read as equivalent. They are both seen to be characterised by beats, and these link to stereotypes of blackness, as well as the sense that dance is resistant. As Gilroy memorably puts it, 'the irrepressible rhythms of the once forbidden drum are often still audible in [African musicians'] work. Its characteristic syncopations still animate the basic desires – to be free and to be oneself – that are revealed in this counterculture's unique conjunction of body and

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[73] Malvern, 'Now it's all rave night at the Proms.'
[74] Rick Pearson, 'BBC Proms 2015: Late Night with BBC Radio 1, review – It All Goes Right for Pete Tong,' *The Evening Standard*, July 30, 2015, Music, http://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/music/bbc-proms-2015-late-night-with-bbc-radio-1-review-it-all-goes-right-for-pete-tong-10426230.html [accessed November 24, 2016].
[75] Bernadette McNulty, 'Prom 16, Late Night with… Pete Tong, review: "crowd-pleasing",' *The Telegraph*, July 30, 2015, Music. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/proms/11765354/Prom-16-Late-Night-with...-BBC-Radio-1-review-crowd-pleasing.html [accessed November 23, 2016].
[76] The Pete Tong Prom was to 'be followed by' the grime symphony. Singh, 'Only snobs object.'
[77] Malvern, 'Now it's rave all night at the Proms.'
[78] These are arguably prefigured by the 1980s 'art after midnight' venues in New York, and artistic cabarets. Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, 318. It is important that the 'classical' and 'urban' binary here still functions even though the Metropole Orkest does not define itself as a classical orchestra. *Metropole Orkest Website*, https://www.mo.nl/en/the-orchestra [accessed November 24, 2016].

music.'[79] The sense that dance is freeing from oppression, and that the mixture of musical styles reflects this freedom to mix disparate parts, is embedded in the contemporary conception of 'urban' music – the terms 'urban' or 'street' music necessarily evoke a crowd of dancing bodies. This owes much to history: the dance cultures that emerged in the black (and often gay) clubs of New York, Chicago and Detroit in the 1970s spawned a worldwide rave culture that has been seen as resistant across the globe.[80] This is a legacy also extended to hip hop. As Marina Terkourafi writes, 'in the early days of hip hop in the US, keepin' it real to the street meant doing "dance music".'[81] Reading these styles together through the prism of 'Broken Britain', it is clear that they articulate an ongoing battle over urban space, where some seek to reclaim it from the repetitive beats that characterise dance and hip hop culture. In response to a government initiative to see classical music piped into underground tube stations in order to pacify commuters, Jessica Duchen provides a tongue-in-cheek list of 'music to travel by', which consists entirely of music in a Western tonal tradition, with the only twentieth-century works being Steve Reich's *Different Trains* (which should play in the event that one has to change lines at a station) and John Adams' *Short Ride in a Fast Machine* (if you're taking the Heathrow Express).[82] The message is clear: 'your average commuter will probably run a mile if assailed by gangsta rap or Stockhausen *en route* to the office. Not that hoodies are particularly likely to take to Stockhausen either.'[83] Here, 'Stockhausen' stands in for all types of difficult or unpopular

[79] Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 76.
[80] For Reynolds, this is a 'tale of three cities' – Detroit, New York, and Chicago, See Reynolds, *Energy Flash*, 3-40. For global rave cultures see, Sarah Thornton, *Club Cultures* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995); Charity Marsh, 'Understand Us Before You End Us: Regulation, Governmentality, and the Confessional Practices of Raving Bodies', *Popular Music* 25/3 (2006): 415-430; Jeremy Gilbert, 'Soundtrack to an Uncivil Society: Rave Culture, The Criminal Justice Act and The Politics of Modernity', *New Formations* 31 (1997): 3-22.
[81] Terkourafi, 'Introduction,' 10.
[82] Duchen, 'Mind the Bach.'
[83] Ibid.

modernist music. For Duchen, both urban music and contemporary classical styles find common ground in their shared status as peripheral or unappealing to a broad audience. Indeed, they are in fact equivalent in the sense that they are outside of a normal concert programming. This profound tension will be addressed below.

Social transformation

David Cameron's solution to the problems of 'Broken Britain' was 'providing a stronger police presence, reducing police bureaucracy, improved parenting …, improving educational standards, increased community and social responsibility, and getting people into employment.'[84] Behind this was the fundamental encouragement to aspire to a higher social class: in November 2013 Cameron was quoted as saying that 'people from poorer households and ethnic minorities need help to "get them to think that they can get all the way to the top."'[85] Some scholars have seen twenty-first century Britain to be characterized by 'middle-classification', a sink-or-swim approach to the working class in which a middle class identity is seen as the only viable option if one wishes to integrate within society.[86] It makes sense that these issues should be written into the fabric of music around this time. In a recent study of artistic consumption in Britain, Tony Bennett et. al. found that out of all the arts, music most intensely reflects class dynamics.[87] Following Pierre Bourdieu's famous

[84] Vicky Heap and Hannah Smithson, 'From Words of Action to the Action of Words,' in *Summer of Discontent*, ed. Briggs, 266.
[85] Peter Dominiczak, 'Young poor have low aspirations says David Cameron,' *The Telegraph*, November 13, 2013, News, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/david-cameron/10448134/Young-poor-have-low-aspirations-says-David-Cameron.html [accessed February 6, 2016].
[86] Jeanette Edwards, Gillian Evans, and Katherine Smith, 'Introduction: The Middle Class-ification of Britain,' *Focaal: Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology* 62 (2012): 5.
[87] Tony Bennett, Mike Savage, Elizabeth Silva, Alan Warde, Modesto Gayo-Cal & David Wright, *Culture, Class, Distinction* (Routledge, 2009), 75. Lots of different types of music are surveyed, and consequently there is no specific distinction between different types of classical music: instead, classical music is divided into 'classical', and 'opera', with 'classical' meaning generally 18th- and 19th-century European instrumental music.

assertion that 'nothing more clearly affirms one's "class", nothing more infallibly classifies, than tastes in music',[88] they write that 'classical music evokes hierarchy and power: the ghostly memories of legitimate cultural capital.'[89] Wright made this clear when he said that 'with the Urban Classic concert, for example, we are introducing those people who came to hear urban artists to classical and orchestral music.'[90] Art critic Brian Sewell made the same point in the 2014 *Radio Times Proms Guide* with regards to the mission of the Proms more generally, when he was quoted as saying that 'dumbing-down just doesn't work … You may end up with a very successful Pet Shop Boys concert, but it doesn't mean the audience is going to come back to listen to Beethoven or Wagner.'[91] In other words, fans of urban popular music were introduced to contemporary classical music, but not the other way round. We can read this in reference to John Holden's rhetorical question: 'we worry about the youth of Peckham not getting Opera, but should we be equally worried about middle-class kids not getting south London street culture?'[92] The process of opening up is almost always implicitly a reaffirmation of prestige: opening up is not always equal, is not always a two-way street.

This is reflected in critics' response to the initial Urban Classic project of 2006. More than anything else, this project was intended to be socially transformative: it was the 'brainchild of Bigga Fish, a non-profit organisation that holds music workshops for schools,

[88] Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 18.
[89] Bennett et. al., *Culture, Class, Distinction*, 76.
[90] Kaya Burgess, 'Baton passes to a woman on the Last Night of the Proms,' *The Times*, April 19, 2013, Music, http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/arts/music/proms/article3742875.ece [accessed November 26, 2016].
[91] Alan Jackson, 'Keeping the Faith,' *The Radio Times*, July 12-18, 2014, BBC Proms: The Essential Pull Out Guide, ii-iv.
[92] John Holden, 'Cultural and Learning: Towards a New Agenda,' February 2008, http://www.demos.co.uk/files/C&LFinal26Feb08.pdf [Accessed October 1, 2016]. Quoted in Kylie Message, 'New directions for civil renewal in Britain', *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 12, (2009): 275.

youth groups and young offenders institutes.'[93] Hazlewood remarked that 'the main difference between the two schools is not musical – it is social: the orchestra is mostly middle-aged and white while most of the urban artists are young and black.'[94] Another critic channeled this sentiment through a heart-warming story:

> At the back of the room, the other MCs practice their parts under their breath, weaving and feinting like shadowboxers. One of the violinists, meanwhile, kills time between parts by knitting. 'She shows her skills, man,' [rapper] Bruza says admiringly. 'Her concentration levels are very good. I couldn't do that.'[95]

Underneath this campy take on the concert, a starker set of power inequalities is at play. One critic of the Hackney Empire concert criticized the use of the label 'urban' altogether, on the grounds that Hazlewood's approach to the concert was rooted in stereotyping: 'That label "Urban" was there again, and when the orchestra's conductor Charles Hazlewood showed up wearing a hood, so was a hint of condescension.'[96] We may wonder: how is interacting with an orchestra going to help anyone who is materially disadvantaged?[97] It is unclear from the press response that there were any practical steps taken to help those that the project existed to help. At best, the practical aims behind these projects are unclear, relying on a general sense that to rub shoulders with classical music will be somehow magically transformative; at worst, these concerts re-inscribe social difference and class hierarchies.[98]

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[93] Lynskey, 'Strange bedfellows.' '"It came out of a conversation," explains general manager Genevieve Dowokpor. "Wouldn't it be great to see urban artists with an orchestra?"'
[94] Ed Harris, Kiran Randhawa, 'Classical and urban mix is suite man,' *The Evening Standard*, February 16, 2006, A Merge, 19.
[95] Lynskey, 'Strange bedfellows.'
[96] Maycock, 'Classical.'
[97] Taruskin has recently made a similar criticism. See Richard Taruskin, 'Preface: Against Utopia,' in *The Danger of Music*, xiii-xv.
[98] This happens in the same way that Chowrimootoo suggests that redefinitions of modernism merely contribute to its existence as a self-sufficient and prestigious musical category. Chowrimootoo, 'Modernism and the Middlebrow,' 188.

The 2013 Urban Classic Prom was turned into an even more overtly political gesture than the 2006 project had been: it was accompanied by a two-part, 60-minute documentary broadcast on the BBC entitled 'Fazer's Urban Takeover' that aimed to challenge preconceptions about classical music in Britain. The documentary saw rapper Fazer putting 'seven unknown urban musicians on a crash course in classical music ahead of a performance in the Urban Classic Prom with the BBC Symphony Orchestra at the Proms.... all the musicians have one thing in common, they think classical music is boring and for old posh people.'[99] As part of the programme, the seven ethnically diverse urban musicians were taken to the affluent leafy London suburb of Richmond to meet the Thames Youth Orchestra. Members of the orchestra gave the urban musicians lessons in playing their orchestral instruments, and bonded while doing so. This documentary is a result of the fact that, as Georgina Born writes, 'the BBC has seen as its task to engage in the projective construction of a national culture':[100] the same national anxieties discussed by Jones and Starkey were projected through this documentary. Moreover, this documentary made explicit what Wright's comments only implied: that the meeting of musical worlds is an exercise of power by classical musicians over urban musicians.[101]

This documentary also underscores the sense in which hip hop culture is not only seen as threatening in a musical sense, but as a phenomenon that occurs literally on the streets. While the argument that 'gang' culture contributed to the riots has been shown to be false,[102] music is nevertheless still associated with the exertion of power over spaces. A

[99] Simon Horsford, 'Digital Choice,' *The Telegraph*, September 14, 2013, Review; Features, 43.
[100] Georgina Born, 'Reflexivity and Ambivalence: Culture, Creativity and Government in the BBC,' *Cultural Values* 6/1 (2002), 67.
[101] This is also not to mention the stark disparity in class associated with musical education. See Georgina Born and Kyle Devine, 'Music Technology, Gender, and Class: Digitization, Educational and Social Change in Britain,' *Twentieth-Century Music* 12/2 (2015): 135-172.
[102] See 'Reading the Riots,' 21-23; see also Simon Harding, 'Street Government: The Role of the Urban Street Gang in the London Riots,' in *The English Riots of 2011*, ed. Briggs, 193-214.

recurrent motif in this project of diversifying public concerts is the bringing of classical music 'out of the concert hall' or to 'new spaces'.[103] Hodgkinson's article about the original Urban Classic project saw Hazlewood trying to 'take classical music where it's never gone before.'[104] Of the Urban Classic Prom, one reviewer wrote that '[Roger] Wright hopes initiatives [such as the Urban Classic Prom] will "get the message out about the Proms". The point was to "take the audience further" and present "concerts you wouldn't get elsewhere".'[105] In other words, the use of urban musical styles within a concert hall makes explicit its status as a concert hall, its wider geographical situation, and suggests the kind of people that may be nearby. The movement into new spaces is not merely a metaphor for bringing new audiences in. It must be read as a literal attempt to bring middle class-ification to urban areas through classical music (this is the subject of the final chapter of the thesis). If this kind of concert is underwritten by an unequal power structure, then this rhetoric can be seen to articulate an impulse to exert power over those spaces.

It is perhaps unsurprising that the Urban Classic Prom provoked some outrage. While most commentators did not react negatively, they nevertheless recognized that the Prom was merely one of many culture-clash events on the concert scene in Britain each year that has had 'certain commentators metaphorically reaching for the blood-pressure tablets.'[106] One particularly angry piece reflective of such cardiovascular problems appeared in advance of the concert, in which Stephen Pollard complained of a 'dumbing down' in Britain, and wrote that

> The idea that "rapper, DJ and producer Fazer", as one of the participants is described, would be worthy of sharing a stage even with a junior school orchestra is an insult. It is an insult to any musician's years of practice and to the skill of real

[103] This will be particularly clear in chapter 5 and in the conclusion of the thesis.
[104] Hodgkinson, 'Somerset barnstormer.'
[105] Charlotte Higgins, 'Get the flags out: woman to conduct Last Night of the Proms for first time,' *The Guardian*, April 19, 2013, Guardian Home Pages, 13.
[106] Jessica Duchen, 'On your feet for the 2013 Proms; Thousands of music lovers will stand to hear the complete Ring cycle at the Royal Albert Hall,' *The Independent*, July 6, 2013, front page.

> musicians. It is an insult to the intelligence of anyone with even a basic concept of genuine music. And it is an insult to those children learning what music-making actually involves. Rap is not music. It is someone standing in front of a microphone mouthing off a few staggered rhymes. It might be popular with some people but so is chess and so is drag car racing. Rap is no more music than they are.[107]

In a clumsy attempt to defend Laura Mvula's performance in the 'Urban Classic' Prom against Pollard's accusations of dumbing down, journalist Clemency Burton-Hill wrote that 'Mvula… contrary to [Pollard's] implication that for "rubbish" artists like these to be invited to the Proms was an insult to "real" musicians, studied composition at the acclaimed Birmingham Conservatoire before embarking on her solo career.'[108] This mark of classical training becomes in some sense reassuring, but if Mvula's presence in the Urban Classic Prom is acceptable only by the fact that she already has accepted academic credentials, does this not negate the very purpose of this crossing of boundaries? What emerges from these contradictory journalists' spats, however, is the focus on 'the future' as a site of prestige.

In response to the two 2015 concerts, BBC Proms Presenter Suzy Klein gave a widely reported-upon set of statements, criticizing those who made complaints about that year's diverse line-up: 'What a load of old cobblers. These self-elected snobs and scaremongers are not there to fight for the universal power that great music unleashes; what they want is to 'protect' classical music, and high culture at large, from the onslaught of mass entertainment.'[109] In another newspaper, she was quoted: 'I love dancing to an addictive club anthem as much as I adore listening, in the stillness of a concert hall, to a Brahms symphony. And though I treasure Mozart's operas, I'll never tire of the pin-sharp rhymes

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[107] Stephen Pollard, 'Rap at the Proms: must everything be dumbed down?' *Scottish Express*, April 20, 2013, Editorial; Opinion; Columns, 14. He continued: 'I've nothing against urban music's fans enjoying whatever gets them excited. Each to their own - although for me the word "urban" should more accurately be replaced with "not".'

[108] Burton-Hill, 'Grime and hip-hop mash.'

[109] Singh, 'Only snobs object.'

and rhythms of great rap.'[110] Virtually every discussion of these concerts in the press revolved around Klein's comments. Moreover, Klein repeatedly invoked the imperative to provide 'new' music, saying that 'the Proms must look to the future by including club music and rappers'.[111] The snobs and scaremongers, by contrast, 'want us to believe that in looking to the future, in trying to engage the audience of tomorrow, the Proms is losing sight of its past.'[112] Invoking the 'future' and the audiences of 'tomorrow', Klein's comments foreground the sense in which the high/low divide is superseded by another altogether: that of old and new.[113]

New music and the BBC

Within the history of the Proms, I want to suggest that avant-garde music and popular music are *both* 'new' in the sense that they are outside the limits of what is institutionally acceptable music, or, music that reflects a certain British identity.[114] Of course, this is directly linked to the pedagogical dimension of music outlined by Rupprecht, discussed in the introduction. But within the context of the Proms, the imperative to draw in new audiences has been present since its inception. As Doctor puts it, 'The primary aim of the Proms from the beginning was educational, to enable general audiences from all kinds of

[110] Ibid.
[111] Sam Creighton, 'Don't like dance music at the Proms? You're snobs, says host: Suzy Klein says criticism is "cobblers" and says institution must look to the future', *The Daily Mail*, July 7, 2015. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3151597/Don-t-like-dance-music-Proms-snobs-says-host-Suzy-Klein-says-criticism-cobblers-says-institution-look-future.html [accessed November 26, 2016].
[112] Ibid.
[113] David Addison, 'Politics, Patronage, and the State in British-Avant-Garde Music, c. 1959-c.1974,' *Twentieth Century British History* 27/2 (2016): 245. The BBC has an extremely long and difficult history with new music: while institutions like the BBC 'remained fundamental to British artistic life, they were neither static nor fundamentally conservative. Institutions like the BBC transformed themselves with the times and often proffered optimistic visions, framed against commercial culture, of the democratic power of public patronage in the arts. The world of patronage opened up a space for music which was radical not only aesthetically, but sometimes politically.'
[114] Born, 'Reflexivity and Ambivalence,' 80; Alison Garnham, *Hans Keller and the BBC: The Musical Conscience of British Broadcasting, 1959-1973* (Aldershot, Ashgate: 2003).

backgrounds and levels of musical experience to become familiar with and be inspired by the sounds of full orchestras and orchestral music.'[115] But this was also part of a wider ethos promoted as part of a national vision for the country, linked to John Reith's aims for the BBC after the First World War: '"to entertain, to interest, to enlighten, in all these ways to bring the very best of everything and spare no effort to do it".'[116] Populism remained a fundamental part of this. As Georgina Born puts it, the BBC felt that it should 'entertain, but it is not for entertainment alone; it must also inform and educate.'[117] Populism was thus less a main aim of the BBC and more part of a trade-off: 'mixed programming was not devised purely instrumentally as a means of tempting the uneducated on to better things. … The realization was that, to achieve its complex ends, the BBC must attract a mass audience and must be truly popular.'[118]

It is important that social transformation on the terms of middle class culture was always part of Reith's vision for the BBC, which was underpinned by 'a heady ideological brew … a combination of nationalism, Victorian ideals of service and social reform, and the vaunted Arnoldian ideal of middle-class culture and education.'[119] Born points out in her ethnography that Reithian principles have remain vital in the BBC into the new millennium, articulated repeatedly by its employees both as the institution's official line and as a counter-discourse to the shifting positions of its vision.[120] And even into the new millennium, 'the corporation's attempts to pluralise and modernise its audience address oscillates uneasily with the sanctimonious nationalism that has always been a formative

[115] Jennifer Doctor, David Wright, and Nicholas Kenyon, *The Proms: A New History* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2006), 102.
[116] Quoted in Doctor et. al., *The Proms*, 102-103.
[117] Born, *Uncertain Vision*, 27. Written into this was a 'distaste for American commercial broadcasting, its profit motive and market-driven entertainment principle.' Ibid.
[118] Ibid, 29.
[119] Ibid, 28.
[120] Ibid, 81-82.

part of its makeup.'[121] As the new millennium progresses, Born has underlined the fact that the BBC has failed to live up to expectations, since its services 'have marginalised the interests and social experience of many of Britain's minority groups … These linked failures undermine public belief in the BBC's commitment to representing Britain's component cultures and peoples and the mature cosmopolitanism of its urban life.'[122] While the BBC focuses on a rhetoric of consumer choice and diversity, which seems to mask the BBC's 'failure [to adequately] respond to the cultural interests of Britain's working class, its youth, its black and Asian populations'.[123] Concerts such as the Urban Classic Prom and its associated events have occurred as part of an impulse that has always been present in the BBC.

From its very beginnings, the BBC Proms encouraged 'the creation of a public for classical and modern music',[124] although this simple proposition does not do justice to the extreme negotiations undertaken between broadcasters and public in order to ensure programming both conformed to the vision behind the BBC and was popular with audiences.[125] This mission to educate the public of 'ultra-modern music', often against its will, continued in the post-war years: William Glock, controller of music at the BBC from 1959-1973, was advocate of what he described as 'contemporary music of challenging difficulty.'[126] As Neil Edmunds puts it, 'The avant-garde music that Glock promoted was an

[121] Ibid, 510.
[122] Ibid, 10.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Quoted in Jennifer Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 100.
[125] Doctor, *Ultra-Modern Music*, 96-125. While the BBC 'promoted contemporary music in an emphatic and pervasive way' during the 1927-28 season, the public's attitude 'gradually shifted from one of curiosity to one ranging from boredom and disapproval to ardent dislike and anger. As the BBC's campaign increased in intensity, and as the music included in the programmes appeared more frequently and included an increasing proportion of difficult, ultra-modern works, public outcry against these programmes blossomed.' Ibid, 118-119.
[126] Quoted in Neil Edmunds, 'William Glock and the British Broadcasting Corporation's Music Policy, 1959-73,' *Contemporary British History* 20/2 (2006): 233-261 at 242.

iconoclastic and experimental document of a revolutionary age.'[127] In this, Glock was supported by Austrian Jewish émigré Hans Keller, whose aggressive Europhilia polarized in an unprecedented way both the general public and factions of the BBC itself.[128] As Edmunds put it, the post-war programming experiments resulted in a segregation of 'avant-garde music from contemporary music composed in a traditional idiom.'[129] Traces of this are palpable in the report of the BBC created by the Pilkington Committee between 1960 and 1962, which underlined the 'BBC's duty to inform, educate and entertain', and encouraged the corporation 'to transcend the dichotomy between base populism, which tended towards the lowest common denominator, and high-art paternalism, which spoke down to people.'[130]

The sense that modernism is an assault on British national identity manifested in 1995 when Birtwistle's *Panic* became the first ever new British work to feature as part of the Last Night of the Proms festivities. The 1995 season marked The Proms's 100th anniversary, for which the Last Night was to be a special celebration: the programming of a work by a British composer was to reflect fundamental values central to a British identity, as well as taking steps to ensure the concerts' ongoing viability by appealing to new audiences.[131] A number of different contributing factors meant that this work went from being a token reminder of the ongoing legacy of British contemporary composition to an assault upon the very core British values that the Proms represented: Birtwistle composed a work of eighteen minutes, almost twice as long as the ten-minute slot that he had been given, and

[127] Edmunds, 'William Glock and the British Broadcasting Corporation's Music Policy, 1959-1973,' 252.
[128] Garnham, *Hans Keller and the BBC*, 3-4.
[129] Edmunds, 'William Glock and the British Broadcasting Corporation's Music Policy, 1959-1973,' 251.
[130] Addison, 'Politics, Patronage, and the State,' 261.
[131] Doctor et. al., *The Proms*, 237-238.

one that required a complicated instrumental set-up.[132] This led to its being given a more prominent central placement in the programme, at the start of the second half, a placement which also meant it occurred at the opening of the BBC television coverage of the evening's festivities.[133] More to the point, *Panic* was a difficult work, which saw Birtwistle's 'music at its most violent, energetic and dissonant.'[134] In short, this meant 'shocking not only a significant percentage of listeners in the hall, but millions of viewers all over the world tempted to tune in to hear *Land of Hope and Glory* rather than a hard-hitting piece of contemporary music.'[135] The BBC received a huge number of complaints, leading them to realise that if you

> mess with the Last Night … you risk scuppering a big part of audiences' sense of what the Last night of the Proms means and, wider still, what it means to be British (or at least English), given the patriotic fervour that many in Britain experienced through the predictable Last Night rituals.[136]

Since then, the Proms director Nicholas Kenyon 'went in a fundamentally different direction: aiming not to shock existing audiences, but to draw new ones in.'[137]

This episode resulted in an ostensibly more easy-to-stomach diversification: the ostensibly 'popular' Proms in the Park, held in Hyde Park, which had its inaugural concert the following year in 1996. The Proms in the Park had a specific type of programming: 'short bursts of music, many soloists, line-ups that bridge the gap between classical repertories and the popular vernacular.'[138] Only now, the opposite complaints were made: in particular, Sir John Drummond (a controller much closer in artistic vision to Glock than Kenyon or Wright) was opposed to 'the essence of mindless populism imposed on an event which is

[132] Ibid, 238.
[133] Ibid, 239.
[134] Ibid, 240.
[135] Ibid, 239.
[136] Ibid, 241.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid, 247.

already dangerously rabble-rousing.'[139] It is clear that the history of the ongoing diversification of the Proms has been one in which new music and popular music are both cast as other to institutional classical music. These pivotal events for the Proms stand as an example of the ways in which the progressive and the reactionary work together in a constant battle for new and different audiences. There is a sense in which these 'urban' musical concerts kill two birds with one stone – they attract fans of 'popular' music, while at the same time having a kind of avant-garde air that likewise draws fans of new classical music.

A 'digital folk music'?

Grime and other forms of urban music have sometimes been invoked the media as contemporary 'folk' styles. As one commentator put it, 'grime, like hip hop, has occasionally been invoked as a kind of digital folk music.'[140] Gabriel Prokofiev, the subject of the penultimate chapter of this thesis, put it succinctly: 'I've been really attracted to some types of hip-hop and electronic dance music because there is a real energy, a real creativity, I see that music as the folk music of my generation, like an urban folk music.'[141] The use of 'urban' music to bridge the high/low divide in twenty-first century Britain should be read only carefully in dialogue with the history of an English 'folk' tradition. Reading these descriptions in terms of the grime and dance Proms, there are some echoes of Ralph Vaughan Williams' musings of 1934: 'Is folk-song not the bond of union where all our musical tastes can meet? … One day, perhaps, we shall find an ideal music which will be

[139] Quoted in Doctor et. al, *The Proms*, 243.
[140] Lewis, 'Life of grime.'
[141] 'Prokoviev's grandson on electro past, classical future,' uploaded September 29, 2011. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaoyR2LMgFQ [Accessed 5 July, 2016]

neither popular nor classical, highbrow or lowbrow, but an art in which all can take part.'[142] Mellers repeated this sentiment when he praised Edmund Rubbra and Michael Tippett for creating a music that was 'both contemporary and traditional, both local and European.'[143] Within the historiography of modernism, the term 'folk' has also become linked to a cluster of Other musical styles. For Peter Franklin, allusions to jazz and other forms of light music parallel the 'incorporation of "folk" material into such different musical worlds as those of the ethnographically punctilious Béla Bartók in Hungary or the nationally cherished Ralph Vaughan Williams.'[144] Descriptions of grime as 'folk' do have a hint of condescension, consistent with the pernicious 'social and cultural separation of middle-class collector and working-class singer'[145] repeatedly underscored in scholarship on the earlier use of folk sources in British music. But they also fuel the misapprehension that composers have done nothing but fetishize this music as an exotic and authentic Other, something recently criticised within earlier uses of folk sources in British music.[146]

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[142] Ralph Vaughan Williams, *National Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), 39. Quoted in Julian Onderdonk, 'The Composer and Society: Family, Politics, Nation,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Vaughan Williams*, ed. Alain Frogley, Aidan J. Thomson, and Heather de Savage (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 13.

[143] Wilfrid Mellers, 'Musical Culture in England and U. S. A.,' *Music and Letters* 24/4 (October 1943): 223. Quoted in Wiebe, *Britten's Unquiet Pasts*, 16; see also Ibid, 7-9.

[144] Peter Franklin, 'Between the Wars: Traditions, Modernisms, and the "Little People from the Suburbs"', *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century Music*, ed. Nicholas Cook (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 193. Folk music has split the legacy of modernism in as fundamental a way as Adorno's Schoenberg/Stravinsky dualism. Bartók's interest in folk music both jostled with and fuelled his status as a modernist through the first half of the twentieth century, culminating in Rene Leibowitz's scathing critique after the composer's death, in which Bartók was described as a 'compromised' composer. René Leibowitz, 'Béla Bartók or The Possibility of Compromise in Contemporary Music,' *Transition* 48/3 (1948), 92-122. This look towards Eastern Europe as a site of the folk was also a key anxiety for Adorno, as he grappled with the idea of modernism and its peripheries: see Björn Heile, 'Erik Bergman, Cosmopolitanism and the Transformation of Musical Geography,' in *Transformations of Musical Modernism*, ed. Julian Johnson and Erling E. Guldbrandsen (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 74-96 at 78.

[145] Julian Onderdonk, 'Vaughan Williams's Folksong Transcriptions: A Case of Idealization?' in *Vaughan Williams Studies*, ed. Alain Frogley, (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 118-138 at 119.

[146] See Julian Onderdonk, 'Folksong Arrangements, Hymn Tunes and Church Music.' In *The Cambridge Companion to Vaughan Williams*, ed. Alain Frogley, Aidan J. Thomson, and Heather Savage (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 136-156. Onderdonk has argued that any

Even scholarship on hip hop has found the obsession with authenticity hard to shake. David Beer, for example, has suggested that urban music is a type of ethnography, reflecting an 'insider' perspective on life in disadvantaged urban communities.[147] For Beer, 'hip-hop … if used sympathetically, provides us with an imaginative insider's ethnographic account of these often lost or hard to see urban lifeworlds.'[148] Countering this, Simon Black criticizes the tendency of some scholars for 'reducing black expressive cultural forms, such as hip-hop, to expressions of pathology, compensatory behavior or creative "coping mechanisms" to deal with oppression, racism and poverty.'[149] He paraphrases Robin Kelly: 'Trapped by an essentialist interpretation of black urban culture, … urban ethnographers continue "to look for that elusive 'authentic' ghetto sensibility, the true, honest, unbridled, pure cultural practices that capture the raw, ruffneck 'reality' of urban life". "Today … that reality is rap."'[150]

Embedded within the contemporary fascination with grime as a 'folk' style is a paradox: that it is both resistant and avant-garde style, and that it is popular and accessible.

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idealization on Vaughan Williams's part of folk sources was not a straightforward appropriation or exoticisation, but has imbedded within it a 'very real interest in and respect for working-class life, one born of an unyielding faith in a firmly democratic future.' Ibid, 138. He sees an 'anti-Romanticism' present in Vaughan Williams's use of folk sources, since Romanticism is at odds with Vaughan Williams's focus on democratic, functional character of music. He writes that Vaughan Williams's use of folk songs for minor, festive, or domestic purposes (often considered "secondary") demonstrates 'the depth of the composer's social realism and that demonstrates with unexpected force the importance of "secondary" compositional work to his nationalist vision'. Ibid, 137.

[147] Lee Barron, 'The Sound of Street Corner Society: UK Grime Music as Ethnography,' *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 16/5 (October, 2013): 531-547; David Beer, 'Hip-Hop as Urban and Regional Research: Encountering an Insider's Ethnography of City Life,' *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 38/2 (March, 2014): 677. See also the critique of this in the same issue: Simon Black, '"Street Music", Urban Ethnography and Ghettoized Communities,' *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 38/2 (March, 2014): 700-705. Contestations over authenticity such as these are rife within modernist music, the paradigmatic example being Richard Taruskin's work on folk melodies in the *Rite of Spring*, in which the author argues that Stravinsky's disavowal of Bartók's ethnographic work and use of folk melodies is an attempt to 'downplay the folklorism of the *Rite of Spring*'. Richard Taruskin, 'Russian Folk Melodies in "The Rite of Spring",' *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 33/3 (1980): 501-543 at 503.

[148] Beer, 'Hip-Hop as Urban and Regional Research,' 677.

[149] Black, '"Street Music",' 703.

[150] Ibid.

Grime is seen by many as part of a musical 'underground', a set of styles that Graham links to the socially progressive pretensions of modernism and the avant-garde.[151] In a review of the grime symphony, Kieran Yates foregrounded this by writing that 'Grime music began its life in the bedrooms of MCs in impoverished parts of east London, and on the airwaves of pirate radio stations…. But [the grime symphony] is testament to both grime's accessibility, and the sing-along power of its most anthemic tracks.'[152] Yates here partly seems to channel Mellers' praise of Rubbra and Tippett: by casting urban music as simultaneously racially and socially Other, *and* the authentic music of a modern British 'folk', it can be local and foreign. But the idealization of grime as folk sources in these contemporary descriptions respond to a very different set of racial and social anxieties than those that preoccupied earlier commentators.[153] The most obvious difference is the uncritical acceptance of this music as somehow 'authentic'. By this logic, if modernist music is typically seen as distinct from popular culture and commodification, so it finds common ground with the 'unfathomably uncommercial dance/rap hybrid of grime.'[154] Ironically, and yet predictably, the same sense of authenticity and social resistance that apparently makes grime a prime candidate for art/popular crossovers has also resulted in a grime's increasing commodification.[155] And more ironically still, it was concerts such as the Urban Classic Prom

[151] Graham, *Sounds of the Underground*, 5-6.
[152] Kieran Yates, 'Proms Late Night with BBC 1Xtra Review: Grime/Classical Clash is a neat fit,' *The Guardian*, August 13, 2015, Music, https://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/aug/13/proms-late-night-with-bbc-1xtra-review-grimeclassical-clash-is-a-neat-fit [accessed December 13, 2016]
[153] To advocate grime and dance as 'folk' styles amenable to high-art treatment comparable to those styles used by previous composers is also to foreground a plural or mixed conception of racial identity as synonymous with a working-class status. To repeat a point made in the introduction, not only is there a latent racism against black and Asian minorities behind reviews of concerts such as the ones outlined here, but there is also a suggestion that the only artistically interesting working-class identity is located within a racially-mixed urban demographic, rather than in predominantly white communities.
[154] Kate Spicer, 'Grime: the sound of the underground,' *The Times*, February 21, 2010, Culture; Music. http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/culture/music/article197821.ece [accessed November 28, 2016]
[155] Graham leaves grime out of his discussion of musical undergrounds because, even though grime is widely seen as an underground musical genre, 'these grime forms don't *sound* sufficiently

that contributed to this commercialization: Jessica Barrett cited the 2015 grime symphony as proof that 'the new generation of grime is finally breaking into the mainstream.'[156] Any interest in grime as an 'authentic' genre that may be behind its integration into classical concert culture also leads to its increasing mainstream status, thereby showing just how nonsensical the fetishization of authenticity can be.

Conclusion: a new canonic regime?

Clearly, there is a condescension behind the support for these styles – manifest in Hazlewood's appropriation of a hoodie, or Prokofiev's immediate stereotyping of this music as authentic and vital – that suggests a persistent and fundamental racial and social stereotyping behind these musical concerts. That this stereotyping may be *performative*, on the part of the rappers and grime artists themselves, and on the part of the creative teams behind the urban and dance concerts, is something that has not entered the minds of any of these critics. Rather, for some critics these popular styles represent a genuine threat to the centrality of classical music. But for others, grime and dance music are seen by as fertile grounds for the creation of new or inclusive musical styles that can be both popular and progressive, and this suggests that the popular and the progressive (however fraught those terms may be) are becoming fused together. To return to Klein's invocation of the audiences of the future, we see that the motif of the 'ultra-modern' no longer merely denotes a high-art avant-garde constituted as the very opposite to a retrogressive

different from more commercially successful examples of the genre to be applicable within my model.' In other words, the sense that there is a rigid distinction between 'commercially successful' and 'commercially unsuccessful' merely stops at the sound of the music – there is no attempt to look at the ways that these apparently shocking musical styles become attractive to their consumers. Graham, *Sounds of the Underground*, 5.

[156] Jessica Barrett, 'The Grime Symphony: why the uniquely British urban sound is in the middle of a renaissance,' *The Independent*, June 19, 2015, Music, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/features/the-grime-symphony-why-the-uniquely-british-urban-sound-is-in-the-middle-of-a-renaissance-10331213.html [accessed December 13, 2016].

populism. Rather, populism and the avant-garde become fused together.

A closer look at sociological studies on class and education can flesh this out. The increasingly conflicting cross-currents between the modernist or avant-garde music of the latter half of the twentieth century and evolving forms of electronic music are compounded by the recent studies of music technology degrees by Georgina Born and Kyle Devine. These degrees stand in stark contrast to 'traditional music' degrees, in which art music still forms the primary focus of the curriculum. While the music produced in a music technology degree is not necessarily one and the same as the urban dance styles outlined here, their racial and social difference is suggestive. Born and Devine find a higher proportion of black and minority ethnic (BME) students taking music technology degrees, and find that those taking music technology degrees are in a lower social class than those taking traditional music degrees.[157] The curricula of music technology degrees feature electronic music in a general sense, without differentiating between art music and popular music, making it 'easier, and arguably necessary, to elide the long-standing boundaries between art and popular musics.'[158] The implications for these developments upon issues of class have yet to be established, but the authors suggest that if there is a convergence between the curricula of music technology and traditional music degrees, then 'what constitutes cultural capital in music is also likely to evolve.'[159] Most importantly, Born and Devine highlight the circular nature of the redistribution of prestige, writing that 'it would be a mistake to see these

[157] Born and Devine, 'Music Technology, Gender, and Class,' 137-139.
[158] Ibid, 160. 'In marked contrast to the orthodox Music A-level curriculum, which focuses predominantly on composition and performance in the notated Western art music tradition of the past 400 years (with relatively less coverage of oral traditions, popular musics, and twentieth- and twenty-first-century art musics), the Music Technology A-level curriculum places less emphasis on literacy in music notation and performance training on an acoustic instrument. Instead, it is oriented to the use of computer-based sequencing and multitrack programs which are brought to the development of a vocabulary and an ear for sonic textures and arrangements primarily in relation to popular musics since 1900.'
[159] Ibid, 161.

moves made by major contemporary music institutions … as non- or anti-canonic. Rather, these bodies are energetically engaged in producing a transition to a new canonic regime.'[160]

Recent sociological studies on class in Britain have found that the nature of the power struggle through cultural superiority is evolving. Part of this is the fact that the distinction between high and low no longer functions in Britain: Annick Prieur and Mike Savage write that 'whereas historically cultural capital was defined explicitly in opposition to popular culture, it now encompasses items from popular repertoires.'[161] The postmodern omnivore has become a kind of artistic 'expert',[162] a highly knowledgeable person who has his or her finger on the pulse of new and innovative types of art.[163] There is a greater emphasis becoming placed on ostensibly 'newer' artistic forms. Interviewees for these studies displayed awareness of the high/low divide in music, but a large number also seemed to simply enjoy whichever music they felt was most cutting edge. The authors conclude that 'none of our oppositions see the embrace of historical, canonical cultural forms as central to cultural superiority. Rather, it is the emergent that conveys the cultural stakes.'[164] Likewise, for Mike Savage and Modesto Gayo, 'the dominant stakes in musical

[160] Ibid, 163.
[161] Annick Prieur and Mike Savage, 'Updating cultural capital theory: A discussion based on studies in Denmark and in Britain,' *Poetics* 39 (2011), 578. See also Mike Savage and Modesto Gayo, 'Unraveling the omnivore,' *Poetics* 39 (2011), 337-357. Savage and Gayo suggest that the knowledge of an expanded field of cultural types reflects an attempt on the part of consumers to cultivate a self-image as 'experts'. For more on this see Tak Wing Chan and John H. Goldthorpe, 'Social Stratification and Cultural Consumption: Music in England,' *European Sociological Review* 23/1 (2007): 1-19; Tak Wing Chan and John H. Goldthorpe, 'Introduction: Social status and cultural consumption,' in *Social Status and Cultural Consumption*, ed. Tak Wing Chan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1-27.
[162] Prieur and Savage, 'Updating cultural capital theory,' 578.
[163] Gendron makes a similar point when he writes that 'as we move up the income, education, and social pedigree scales, we find more tolerance for different musical genres. Exclusiveness is now associated more with lowbrowness. Such eclectivity [sic] is generally accepted as a mark of the postmodern. What is not always appreciated is that this eclectivity [sic] did not simply come out of the blue, but was due in large part to the aggressive struggles on the part of popular culture for cultural empowerment.' Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, 12.
[164] Prieur and Savage, 'Updating cultural capital theory,' 578.

engagement are defined through commitment to contemporary musical forms, not the historical classical canon.'[165] The more one is in touch with emergent, new, or avant-garde musical styles, the higher one's cultural superiority. The sense of innovation through resistance, so often seen as constitutive of modernist music in particular, is in actual fact a genre-nonspecific mode of artistic consumption, an attribute located and valued in many different types of music.

This is why, when, during the Urban Classic Prom, Lady Leshurr pointed towards the orchestra in between tracks and shouted at the audience 'Look at this! This is history, you know?',[166] she was also evoking this cultural superiority, suggesting the power of her own status as a creator of *new* music, at the vanguard of artistic creation, rather than simply as someone taking part in a project of 'dumbing down'. Similarly, of the 2015 concert, rapper Stormzy was quoted as saying that the impulse behind grime was to 'try and take it [music] further than the people who've come before me have taken it.'[167] Even critics of this musical project described it in these terms: Hewett quotes one as describing the concert as 'crowd-pleasing but not ground-breaking.'[168] This innovation was to be achieved through sonic aggression. An article quoted one complaint of the 2015 Prom, that it was 'a group of young men all dressed in black dancing extremely aggressively onstage', to which one rapper replied that it was actually 'angst and oppression. It's people who have had enough, and then create something themselves.'[169] In harnessing grime's challenge of revolutionary

[165] Savage and Gayo, 'Unravelling the omnivore,' 344.
[166] 'Lady Leshurr – BBC Urban Classic Prom 2013,' published August 30, 2013. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e3i1FYIWZY0 at 4.55 [accessed November 26, 2016].
[167] Jessica Barrett, 'The Grime Symphony: Why the uniquely British urban sound is in the middle of a renaissance,' *The Independent*, June 19, 2015, Music; Features, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/features/the-grime-symphony-why-the-uniquely-british-urban-sound-is-in-the-middle-of-a-renaissance-10331213.html [accessed November 26, 2016].
[168] Hewett, 'Are the Proms becoming too safe?'
[169] Barrett, 'The Grime Symphony.'

change – 'a huge groundswell of support that catches fire'[170] – the nature of these classical/urban concerts is contested: the 'classical' aspects are part of an ostensibly older configuration of cultural hierarchy, seen by some commentators as part of a bait-and-switch tactic that apparently tricks fans of urban music into enjoying more canonical Western music, but the fractured rhythms and sonic abrasiveness shared by this new music – whether contemporary classical or urban popular – appeals to the artistic sensibilities of those that value the 'new' in music above all else. Clearly, the meeting of urban and new classical music is ideologically loaded regardless of which cultural project it supports. All of this suggests that if we commit to the study of musical modernism in the twenty-first century, we must accept that popular styles also lay claim to the stylistic innovation that has long been one of its defining features.

[170] Ibid.

Chapter 2 – Mark-Anthony Turnage samples Beyoncé

Introduction

When Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Hammered Out* was premiered at the BBC Proms on August 26, 2010, it contained something that set it apart from his other works: *Hammered Out* extensively sampled Beyoncé's 2008 song 'Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It)', and since this had not been made explicit before the performance, the premiere caused a minor scandal. Tim Rutherford-Johnson described the scene in detail:

> It began with a bang: skirling woodwind and dissonant brass fury. Nothing that unusual for a BBC Proms world premiere. But then audience members at the Royal Albert Hall last Thursday suddenly sat up. Some rooted through their programmes, looking vainly for confirmation; others glanced around in disbelief. Were they hearing this right? Was the esteemed BBC Symphony Orchestra really playing Beyoncé's Single Ladies (Put a Ring On It)?[1]

Beyoncé's song had been a global chart hit in 2008, and the choice to use it in an orchestral work of this kind, performed as part of a prestigious concert series intended to promote classical music, was clearly a provocative gesture. In the ensuing media 'brouhaha',[2] several themes emerged. While Turnage had kept the reference to 'Single Ladies' secret prior to the premiere, merely saying that 'there are a couple of hidden things',[3] the reference had not stayed secret for long. As Jonathan Cross wrote, it was 'recognised instantly by younger members of the audience but … amusingly, was not spotted by the numerous classical music

[1] Tim Rutherford-Johnson, 'An unexpected Prom date with Beyoncé and her Single Ladies,' *The Guardian*, September 2, 2010, Music, http://www.theguardian.com/music/musicblog/2010/sep/02/prom-beyonce-single-ladies [accessed January 16, 2016].
[2] 'Name that tune,' *The Sunday Telegraph*, September 5, 2010, Editorial; Opinion; Leader Pages, 21.
[3] Roya Nikkah, 'The Proms Premiere with a ring of Beyoncé to it,' *The Sunday Telegraph*, September 5, 2010, News, 7. See also Alex Ross, 'Hammered Ring,' *Alex Ross: The Rest is Noise Blog*, August 31, 2010, http://www.therestisnoise.com/2010/08/hammered-rings.html [accessed January 16, 2016].

critics present.'[4] The audience was therefore ostensibly divided between those who knew the reference and those who did not, the former being seen as young and in touch with popular culture, the latter as old and fusty relics of the establishment. There was a general sense of confusion, of transgression – this was music that apparently should not have been present in a concert hall, and yet it was; it played on a number of different anxieties to do with race and class in order to create a sense of shock.

The response from critics was overwhelmingly positive. Journalists were thrilled that an 'avant-garde composer'[5] was bringing dance music to the 'conservative hallows'[6] of the Royal Albert Hall, and a mashup video of *Hammered Out* and 'Single Ladies' appeared on YouTube after the premiere,[7] leading Rutherford-Johnson to celebrate the piece as 'a punchy, subversive and entertaining countercultural meme that travelled easily across blogs and Twitter feeds. Possibly a first for contemporary classical music.'[8] That notwithstanding, Rutherford-Johnson also described the use of the song as 'more than just a quote, indeed, the riffs and rhythms of the pop source infect every aspect of the orchestral work.'[9] While this was an isolated incident with regards to *Hammered Out*, Rutherford-Johnson's reference to infection was prefigured in a 2005 review of Turnage's work, which described the composer's music as being 'predominantly urgent and urban and often infected with jazz.'[10] The idea that rhythms are infectious here has an extremely long and ambivalent history in the Western reception of non-Western music. It reflects what Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh refer to as modernism's 'defensive

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[4] Jonathan Cross, 'Mark-Anthony Turnage,' *Oxford Music Online*, October 4, 2012.
[5] Nikkah, 'The Proms Premiere with a ring of Beyoncé to it.'
[6] Rutherford-Johnson, 'An unexpected Prom date.'
[7] Ross, 'Hammered Ring.'
[8] Rutherford-Johnson, 'An unexpected date.'
[9] Ibid.
[10] David McKie, 'A Shout with the Elegies,' *The Guardian*, September 22, 2005, Guardian Comment and Debate Pages, 32.

maneuver against the vitality of those popular forms, as though out of a fear of aesthetic and social contagion.'[11] More specifically, the notion of 'infection' has been central to the dialogue between black American jazz and British music since the beginning of the twentieth century, since, as Andrew Blake writes, 'black music was dangerous: it would infect the white "race" through its open eroticism and its association with illegal narcotic drugs.'[12] In this chapter, I will read the motif of infection as it manifests in the press response to Turnage's music in various different ways: as a metaphor used to negotiate anxieties about race through 'urban' music, as part of a discourse on social aspiration and criminality, and in terms of the illusion of purity that is fundamental to a modernist aesthetic that defines itself against the popular. The picture of the 'urban' portrayed within *Hammered Out*, and the rest of Turnage's oeuvre, is seen as dangerous and threatening to the moral fabric of British society, associated as it is with the division of the young from figures of authority, it is also seen as necessary, and even alluring. The fear of the urban goes hand in hand with an attempt to grasp or appropriate its symbolic cool.

Urban rhythms and social decay – modernism and jazz

While *Hammered Out* was lauded by younger critics, many of the older ones actually found it to be predictable: 'My eyes gulped [sic] at the title of Mark-Anthony Turnage's new piece, *Hammered Out*,' wrote Geoff Brown. 'Hadn't he composed that already? Or perhaps I was thinking of *Drowned Out*, *Crying Out Loud*, *Blood on the Floor* or the other combative entries in

[11] Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh, 'Introduction,' in *Western Music and its Others*, ed. Georgina Born and David Hesmondhalgh (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), 166.
[12] Andrew Blake, 'Americanisation and Popular Music in Britain,' in *Issues in Americanisation and Culture*, ed. Neil Campbell, Jude Davies, and George McKay (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 151.

his busy work list.'[13] Turnage's music had been associated with black, urban rhythms since the beginning of his career, the composer frequently drawing upon his 'double heritage of 20th-century modernism and jazz.'[14] The following account is typical: 'By the mid-Eighties, Turnage had suddenly found his voice in a string of brilliantly imagined works, filled with a louche urban menace and supplied with risqué titles like *On all Fours*.'[15] The list of these jazz-modernist works is extensive: in addition to the above one could also cite the 'bracingly spiky'[16] *Scorched*, for jazz trio and orchestra,[17] or the orchestral work *Scherzoid*, which David Gutman described as having an 'urban bustle and swagger' in addition to 'the usual Stravinsky-meets-Miles Davis mélange.'[18] These works, in a more overtly rhythmic and often jazz-influenced style, were seen as representative of this earlier period, and *Hammered Out* was seen by many as a retreat to this earlier 'tough urban vein'.[19] Pieces in that vein are not only described as urban, but combative, busy, spiky, and menacing, linking together the black and the urban through rhythm.

Certainly, this type of stylistic fusion, between jazz and modernism, is older even than the 1980s, and maps out a Euro-American aesthetic cross-current. This is the same vocabulary Theodor Adorno used to criticise jazz, a criticism that taps into a specific aesthetic cultivated

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[13] Geoff Brown, 'National Edition BBCSO/Robertson Prom 54,' *The Times*, August 30, 2010, Features; Review, 43.
[14] George Hall, 'Review: Classical: Mr Trombone: Not even his shirt can outshine Christian Lindberg's dazzling playing,' *The Observer*, March 27, 2005, Observer Review Pages, 11.
[15] Ivan Hewett, 'Has Mr Angry mellowed? Mark-Anthony Turnage is no longer music's "bad boy,"' *The Daily Telegraph*, July 20, 2013, Review; Features, 13.
[16] John Bungey and David Hutcheon, 'Jazz/World,' *The Times*, June 26, 2010, Playlist; Features, 13.
[17] Ivan Hewett, 'The strange world where American urban collides with English pastoral,' *The Daily Telegraph*, February 16, 2006, Features; Reviews, 30.
[18] David Gutman, 'Review: Turnage: Volume 1 - *Yet Another Set To*. *Scherzoid*. *Evening Songs*. *When I Woke*.' *Gramophone – Marin Alsop Special Issue* 2013, 23.
[19] David Gutman, 'Turnage ranges far and wide while the Nash provide definitive performances; Review: Turnage: *This Silence*; *True Life Stories*; *Slide Stride*; *Two Baudelaire Songs*; *Eulogy*; *Two Vocalises*; *Cantilena*;' *Gramophone*, January 2006, 60.

around the turn of the century in France, which sparked when the obsession with Rousseauian primitivism met with imported American jazz.[20] But if the European fascination with jazz was supported by a white gaze, early jazz musicians nevertheless managed to create a musical style and practice rooted in black identity. As Guthrie P. Ramsey Jr. puts it, 'Jazz has certainly responded stylistically to other genres but it did so without shedding core elements of its distinctive character. Thus, jazz represented what might be thought of as a different kind of modernism, one reflecting the sensibilities of the black masses – an Afro-modernism, so to speak.'[21] Ramsey's *Race Music* documents the extensive ways in which African-American musicians were instrumental in shaping the history of modernist music in the mid twentieth century.[22] In particular, he notes that the harmonic, melodic and rhythmic complexity of jazz solos had similarities to canonical European modernism: 'for many, these innovations signaled complexity and abstractness, making jazz's emergence as "art" logical.'[23] The metaphor of infectious rhythm was also central to the jazz aesthetic at its inception around the turn of the twentieth century in America.[24] As Ronald Radano describes it, this metaphor was profoundly ambivalent. On one hand, it was positive, since it was used in describing the popularity of white versions of ragtime songs, which themselves stood as a sign of urban progress,[25] and on the other hand it represented the most negative, xenophobic and reactionary aspects of the city, namely, its fear of immigration: 'For some, hot jazz marked the moral decline of civilization, as

[20] Ted Gioia, 'Jazz and the Primitivist Myth,' *The Musical Quarterly* 73 (1989): 131-132.
[21] Guthrie P. Ramsey Jr., 'Secrets, Lies and Transcriptions: Revisions on Race, Black Music and Culture,' in *Western Music and Race*, ed. Julie Brown (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 36.
[22] For an extended discussion of Afro-modernism, see Guthrie P. Ramsey Jr., *Race Music: Black Cultures from Bebop to Hip-Hop* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004), 96-130.
[23] Ibid, 107.
[24] Ronald Radano, 'Hot Fantasies: American Modernism and the Idea of Black Rhythm,' in *Music and the Racial Imagination*, ed. Ronald Radano, Houston A. Baker Jr., and Philip V. Bohlman, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003), 463.
[25] '"The perfect expression of the American city with its restless, bustling motion".' Quoted in Radano, 'Hot Fantasies,' 461.

in the "fall of jazz"; for others, the popular "rhythm" tunes of the era expressed the pulse of the machine age, giving creative voice … to an ethos of speed and "pep" that defined the modern era.'[26] Indeed, even though Adorno never explicitly picked up the rhetoric of infection, it can still be read into his desire to separate Stravinsky's modernism from what he saw as the Schoenbergian mainstream. While it is unclear how far this brand of Stravinskian modernism, and in particular the *Rite*, should be viewed through the lens of race,[27] it is nevertheless the case that Turnage's 'Stravinsky-meets-Miles Davis mélange'[28] taps into a musical fusion that has been potent in Europe and America for over a century. [29]

There are also some important historical precursors in the post-war British avant-garde. As discussed in the introduction, in his *British Musical Modernism* Rupprecht sees a Stravinskian jazz influence as being one of many stylistic streams that made up a 'vernacular turn' in modernism around this time, to which Turnage (among many other composers) is a contemporary successor.[30] In particular, the supposed 'freedom' of jazz improvisation blended with the avant-garde focus on indeterminacy, which aimed to throw off the shackles of the notated score.[31] In his work on the intersections between the experimental jazz and the classical avant-garde in London in the 1960s and 70s, Benjamin Piekut fleshes out this musical language in particular, locating the experimental music that drew on the 'indeterminacy' of jazz in a kind of third artistic space, outside of the high/low divide.[32] But even by then, jazz had become in some ways hackneyed: Timothy Souster, for example, saw this new 'third-stream'

[26] Ibid, 463.
[27] Kofi V. Agawu, 'The Invention of "African" Rhythm,' *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 48/3 (1995): 386; See also Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy*, 87-88.
[28] Gutman, 'Review: Turnage: Volume 1.'
[29] See also Fry, *Paris Blues*, 80-85.
[30] Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism*, 367.
[31] Ibid, 422-425.
[32] Benjamin Piekut, 'Indeterminacy, Free Improvisation, and the Mixed Avant Garde: Experimental Music in London, 1965-1975,' *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 67 (2014): 769-823 at 771.

jazz as the 'most miserable' realm in which attempts to bridge the art/popular divide had been undertaken.[33] Despite the institutional support of Music Now, Piekut concludes that the 'English experimentalists could *not* move out of history – historical patterns were always getting repeated, in funding structures, criticism, labor rules, "expert" judgment, and in the legacies of racial discourse.'[34] Crucially, there was an inequality behind these musical developments, since 'it was easier to keep post-Cage and post-Coleman free musics in the same conversation when this convergence took place on a plane of whiteness.'[35]

Before the Beyoncé quotation had been made explicit, *Hammered Out* had been billed as a comparable 'hybrid' orchestral work, infused with 'the energy of jazz-funk, soul and dance.'[36] *Hammered Out* reflected the composer's 'continuing engagement with aspects of popular music', and in particular, 'black American fusion and soul'.[37] The programme note displayed a large photo of James Brown on stage, mid-leap, perspiring; this referenced the way in which *Hammered Out* is influenced by machine rhythms and is intended to reflect physical exertion.[38] This music, it suggested, hints very subtly at the urban context which such music is taken to evoke, with listeners invited to 'imagine this piece being like an engine or motor. Listen for notes that seem to clash.'[39] Barry Millington likewise touched upon this when he complimented *Hammered Out*'s 'surging, piston-like rhythmic gyrations',[40] bringing to mind an

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[33] Ibid, 772.
[34] Piekut, 'Indeterminacy, Free Improvisation, and the Mixed Avant Garde,' 809. Since I am also looking at a musical style in which popular and avant-garde interact, this thesis is similar to Piekut's *Experimentalism Otherwise: The New York Avant-Garde and its Limits* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011).
[35] Piekut, 'Indeterminacy, Free Improvisation, and the Mixed Avant Garde,' 806.
[36] 'Mark-Anthony Turnage – *Hammered Out* (World Première),' published March 9, 2013, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbXZ-XCnb5w [accessed February 17th 2014].
[37] Anthony Burton. Programme Note for BBC Prom 54, August 26, 2010. 2.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid, 8.
[40] Barry Millington, 'Classical,' *The Evening Standard*, January 9, 2012, Features, 34.

image of the motions of machinery and the pulsing rhythms of the moving body.[41] This is something fundamental to jazz, and manifests in what Nabeel Zuberi describes as 'James Brown's well-established machine aesthetic. His trademark scream was more piercing than a locomotive's brakes. … Throughout his career Brown applied himself with the work ethic of a funky robot.'[42]

The question of genre is important here. Jazz, funk, soul, and dance are four distinctly different genres, and this is complicated further once we take into consideration the use of Beyoncé's pop track.[43] Turnage wanted to evoke a jazzy, big band sound through the use of brass with an extended percussion section; according to him, he is a fan of the big bands of 70s funk groups, and in particular, Tower of Power, who had an 'amazing group of saxes and brass … and a rhythm section, which was probably the tightest playing you've ever heard, by any band ever.'[44] But Turnage also chose to evoke this sound by scoring the 'Single Ladies' quotation in the orchestral brass section. This comes dangerously close to racial essentialism. What makes Beyoncé's music funky, apart from the fact that she is a black singer? As will be discussed in more depth later, 'Single Ladies' was widely seen to be an R&B, or 'rhythm and blues', track, a genre that Alexander Weheliye sees as being characterised by the 'post-human' interaction between organic and robotic.[45] The linking of machinery with the moving body is present in the 'Single Ladies' video too: this is comprised of long shots of Beyoncé and two

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[41] Jonathan Lennie, '"I'm obsessed with Led Zep",' *Time Out*, January 30, 2008, 123.
[42] Nabeel Zuberi, 'James Joseph Brown (1933-2006),' *Popular Music and Society* 30/4 (October, 2007): 551. This also becomes later linked to afrofuturism in dance music, which is discussed further in chapter 6 of this thesis.
[43] For the purposes of this chapter, I use the genres in the way that they are used in the reception of Turnage's work, or, in a way that, as David Brackett puts it in his study of genre in black music, 'reveals the fragile line between common sense and nonsense.' Brackett, 'Questions of Genre,' 75.
[44] 'Turnage – *Hammered Out*', 1.20-135.
[45] Alexander Weheliye, '"Feenin':" Posthuman Voices in Contemporary Black Popular Music,' *Social Text*, 20 (2002): 21-47.

other women dancing against a white background, with the focus entirely on their bodies; however, the lyric 'if you liked it then you should've put a ring on it' is accompanied by shots of Beyoncé pointing to a ring finger on a prosthetic robot hand. In other words, the theme of the dancing mechanical body is taken within the discourse on Turnage's music to imply both jazz and R&B (although the theme is important as far back as Cocteau's fascination with the cakewalk, and as far forward as the Afro-futurist aesthetic, discussed in chapter 5). For Weheliye, R&B and hip hop are distinct, but have a 'symbiotic relationship',[46] since they are both forms of music associated with African American culture. Brackett, however, makes the point that hip hop can sometimes actually come under the umbrella of R&B more generally, along with other genres such as neo-soul.[47] However, the choice to *sample* this track puts Turnage's work in dialogue with the history of the sampling of jazz within hip hop itself, since sampling is a characteristic of hip hop. Hip hop and jazz share many fundamental stylistic attributes, namely, that they had 'their origins as dance music; they were largely the product of African American urban creativity and innovation, and they shared rhythmic similarities.'[48] Tom Perchard traces the use of jazz samples within hip hop back to the mid 1980s, at which time hip hop artists were using these samples in order to display an 'acute historical consciousness' about black musical practices.[49] As Justin Williams describes it, the use of jazz in rap between 1989-1993 was an attempt on the part of hip hop musicians to reclaim jazz from the grips of a white cultural elite. Williams cites the late rapper Guru, as saying 'The so-called jazz hip hop

[46] Ibid, 31.
[47] Brackett, 'Questions of Genre,' 76.
[48] Justin Williams, 'The Construction of Jazz Rap as High Art in Hip-Hop Music,' *The Journal of Musicology* 27/4 (2010): 435-459 at 441.
[49] Tom Perchard, 'Hip Hop Samples Jazz: Dynamics of Cultural Memory and Musical Tradition in the African American 1990s,' *American Music* 29/3 (2011): 286. The distinction between jazz and funk was drawn starkly by many hip hop producers, a distinction blurred or even ignored in the way Turnage's work was received by the press. Ibid, 287.

movement is about bringing jazz back to the streets. It got taken away, made into some elite, sophisticated music. It's bringing jazz back where it belongs.'[50] Paradoxically, however, this return to the street resulted in a different kind of elitism, since 'jazz aesthetics and imagery contributed to highbrow distinctions within the hip-hop music world.'[51] Perchard describes the way that both musical styles – jazz and hip hop – were seen to be harsh and radical, even anti-musical. He quotes one producer: 'A musician will go, "No, those are the wrong keys. The tones are clashing." We don't look at it that way.'[52]

In complimenting and foregrounding the rhythmic tightness of Tower of Power, Turnage was creating a link between Beyoncé's track and funk groups on the grounds of rhythm, and tapping into what Justin Williams sees as 'the most unifying thread within hip-hop … the particular drum timbres that have their origins in 1970s funk.'[53] The 'sparse openness'[54] of these extended percussive timbres gives hip hop a characteristic sound which could also be easily expanded to integrate many different musical styles; the stratified percussion also creates a conflict within the rhythmic structure, always acting as 'a counterpoint to the rapper's delivery.'[55] This multi-levelled syncopation functions to create the flow of the music.[56] While there is no rapping in 'Single Ladies', Beyoncé's vocal line is clipped and highly syncopated in order to beat against the clearly-defined 4/4 pulse. In *Hammered Out*, however, most of these vocal syncopations (transposed into the trumpets) are ironed out, and, as some commentators suggested, some of the rhythmic energy is lost. Edward Seckerson complained that, while 'I'm

[50] Williams, 'Jazz Rap as High Art,' 435.
[51] Ibid. 436.
[52] Quoted in Perchard, 'Hip Hop Samples Jazz,' 287.
[53] Justin A. Williams, *Rhymin' and Stealin'* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013), 2.
[54] Justin A. Williams, 'Theoretical Approaches to Quotation in Hip-Hop Recordings,' *Contemporary Music Review* 33/2 (2014): 190.
[55] Williams, *Rhymin' and Stealin'*, 2.
[56] Ibid, 6-7.

not sure that Mark-Anthony Turnage's *Hammered Out* has a whole lot to do with "Seventies jazz funk", as the composer insists, it famously plunders the hook of Beyoncé's "Single Ladies" and doesn't so much shake as wield its booty like a deadly weapon.'[57] Barry Millington heard it as 'recklessly overscored' and complained that this 'undifferentiated wall of brass-dominated sound allows for little variety and no nuances.'[58] Anna Picard complained of a later performance of *Hammered Out* that the work 'lacked heat and sass',[59] a complaint echoed in a 2014 review of a performance of Turnage's work *Frieze*, which, while 'clean and clear and rhythmically accurate … nonetheless lacked a rhythmic shaping, tautness, and a forward-moving propulsion.'[60] If Beyoncé's pop and Turnage's modernism find common ground in rhythm, it is often through a relative *deficit* of rhythm in the latter. It is here that rhythm becomes potentially racialized, since the complaints made by these commentators imply that the rhythmic element in *Hammered Out* paled in comparison to an idealised rhythm implicitly with jazz, and black music more generally.

Ultimately, Turnage's sampling of 'Single Ladies', just like his sampling of jazz, was done on the terms of the prestigious modernism that was so central to his early career. Looking at the general reception of 'Single Ladies' it becomes apparent that the track lends itself to the kind of high-art complexity and difficulty that has been historically associated (as clarified in

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[57] Edward Seckerson, 'National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain / Daniel [Barenboim], Barbican Hall, London,' *The Independent*, January 7, 2012, Reviews, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/classical/reviews/national-youth-orchestra-of-great-britain-daniel-barbican-hall-london-6286436.html [accessed February 6, 2016].
[58] Barry Millington, 'Classical,' *The Evening Standard*, January 9, 2012, 34.
[59] Anna Picard, 'Park Lane Group, Purcell Room, London National Youth Orchestra, Barbican Hall, London; Emerging musicians get a welcome platform, but please change the record,' *The Independent*, January 15, 2012, Reviews, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/classical/reviews/park-lane-group-purcell-room-london-national-youth-orchestra-barbican-hall-london-6289652.html [accessed February 14, 2016].
[60] John Rodney Lister, 'BBC Proms 2013, Gerald Barry, Peter Eötvös, Nishat Kahn, Frederic Rzewski and Mark Anthony Turnage,' *Tempo* 68/267 (2014): 55.

the introduction and, as I will show later, by Turnage too) with classical modernist music (rather than R&B). In response to the track's release, Alexis Petridis wrote that

> R&B isn't quite as staggeringly strange and futuristic as it seemed at the start of the noughties: in perhaps the decade's solitary example of genuinely odd and innovative music that wasn't by Radiohead finding a mass audience, producers Timbaland, the Neptunes and Rodney "Darkchild" Jerkins competed to see who could make the weirdest-sounding No 1 single. Yet, judging by the sound of Beyoncé's 'Single Ladies (Put a Ring On It)', R&B is still the source of the most thrilling pop music.[61]

So the strangeness, weirdness, and innovation that have usually been the mainstay of musical modernism are here transmitted into R&B, and Beyoncé's track is at the pinnacle. The specific musical features of the track that lead to this kind of reading are not identified in Petridis' article, although Sasha Frere Jones' review in *The New Yorker* is telling: '"Single Ladies" combines a jumble of feelings and sounds that don't resolve but also never become tiring'. He cites as aspects of the jumble 'all that clapping', and 'that ascending whistle in the background', and comments that while 'the lyrics seem to express anger that Beyoncé's man failed to "put a ring on it," the song is generally jubilant, and even the synthesizer swells sound more excited than ominous.'[62] Likewise, Keith Freund writes of these two different entities that the result

> is a striking juxtaposition: a nursery rhyme-esque melody with a powerful, sinister bassline beaneath [sic] it, creating a bitter, almost shocking melancholy which underscores the "strong woman" image for which Beyoncé has become an archetype.[63]

The song, then, is marked by a general surface fragmentation, primarily at the level of the percussive sounds and affective properties of Beyoncé's vocals. In a more general sense, 'Single

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[61] Alexis Petridis, 'Bet you look brainy on the dancefloor: Believe it or not, pop got smarter,' *The Guardian*, December 7, 2009, G2; Arts; Guardian Features Pages; The Naughties; Pop, 21.
[62] Sasha Frere Jones, 'Living on the Radio,' *The New Yorker*, April 20, 2009. This article is no longer available online but was available at: http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/musical/2009/04/20/090420crmu_music_frerejones?currentPage=all ; The full quotation is also available on the 'Single Ladies' Wikipedia entry.
[63] Keith Freund, '"Single Ladies" by Beyoncé: A Compositional Anaylsis,' *Fix Your Mix Blog*, http://blog.fixyourmix.com/2009/single-ladies-by-beyonce-a-compositional-analysis/ [accessed November 27, 2016].

Ladies' is a 'difficult' song that displays many of what Moore and Pace have suggested are hallmarks of modernist music. In this sense, 'Single Ladies' also 'hints at a site wherein contemporary music practices can be conceptualized to accommodate aspects of both modernism and mass culture, enabling them to be viewed … as sibling expressions of modernity.'[64]

And yet, even at their seemingly most distinct, purity and infection are defined against one another. Richard Morrison wrote, prior to the public acknowledgment of the Beyoncé quotation, that 'with *Hammered Out* [Turnage is] much more interested in pursuing a purely musical concept – weaving the entire 15-minute piece, Beethoven-like, from a single cell – than in expressing anything autobiographical, visual or literary.'[65] Viewed from this angle, the mere presence of an external source such as 'Single Ladies' is figured as an entity within another entity, and consequently leads to discussion of purity or infection without race even being part of the equation. As discussed at the start of this chapter, an anxiety of contamination by popular or low Others is central to a modernist aesthetic. [66] For Metzer, 'the concept of purity has long been in the modernist conversation', and it is also one of the main concepts that he sees as being fundamental to musical modernism in the twenty-first century. Metzer quotes Renato Poggioli, who writes that purity aspires 'to abolish the discursive and syntactic element, to liberate art from any connection with psychological and empirical reality',[67] a description consistent with Huyssen's point that modernism insisted on the 'autonomy of the art work, its

[64] Moore, 'Jethro Tull,' 172.
[65] Richard Morrison, '"The Essex boy putting the funk into the Proms": Mark-Anthony Turnage is bringing James Brown to the Proms and Playboy to Covent Garden,' *The Times*, August 21, 2010, Review; Features, 5.
[66] Along with 'silence', 'the fragmentary', and the 'flux of sound'. Metzer, *Musical Modernism* 8.
[67] Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-garde*, trans. Gerald Fitzgerald (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 199. Quoted in Metzer, *Musical Modernism*, 30.

obsessive hostility to mass culture, its radical separation from the culture of everyday life, and its programmatic distance from political, economic, and social concerns.'[68] Metzer does not put this obsession with purity in terms of a fear of anxiety and contamination of mass culture in the same way that Born and Hesmondhalgh, and Huyssen do. But he is nevertheless quick to point out that it has been misappropriated by 'the advertising business, [which has] used it to hawk all sorts of products', and to chastise 'creators and theorists of modernism who … have handled purity like an advertising slogan.'[69] Metzer also acknowledges that purity is impossible to reach, but can only be approached through the ongoing expulsion of impurity. Thus, the attempt to reach purity results in a set of failures, each of which necessitates a further attempt, resulting in ongoing work. This chain of actions becomes an engine for innovation.[70]

The 'hammering out' of the title becomes a working out of all of the implications of a musical idea, consistent with what Metzer describes as the 'effort to refine intrinsic materials.'[71] Nor is this conception of musical purity – as an exploration of an 'idea' – linked only to classical music: as Theodor Gracyk writes, 'at its best, a jazz performance is a distinct, original, individual exploration of a musical idea, whether a popular song or simple riff.'[72] The title of the work, then, simultaneously suggests the pure, and the impure. But it is not merely the *presence* of the Beyoncé quotation that signals moral decay, but rather, the way that it came to be there, namely, through theft.

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[68] Huyssen, *After the Great Divide*, vii.
[69] Metzer, *Musical Modernism*, 30.
[70] Ibid, 30-34. Indeed, Morrison's reference to high classical or early Romantic music touches upon the historical moment at which these racial binaries were beginning to form. Tom Perchard links the emergence of the concept of evolution and primitivism in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to music, writing that 'Darwinian and Spencerian ideas of evolutionary descent and teleology were employed to shore up music-theoretical imaginings and cultural hierarchies.' See Tom Perchard, 'New Riffs on the Old Mind-Body Blues: "Black Rhythm," "White Logic," and Music Theory in the Twenty-First Century,' *Journal of the Society for American Music* 9/3 (2015): 326.
[71] Metzer, *Musical Modernism*, 31.
[72] Gracyk, 'Adorno, Jazz, and the Aesthetics of Popular Music,' 537.

Sampling, theft, and Turnage's early career as an Essex bad boy

'Single Ladies' was of course still in copyright when Turnage used it in *Hammered Out*, and this had consequences. Roya Nikkah pointedly noted that 'the mimicry of the pop song in *Hammered Out* appears to have taken both Turnage's music publishers, Boosey & Hawkes, and the BBC by surprise,'[73] and a more serious although ultimately still playful piece in the *Sunday Telegraph* invoked disciplinary action of the law, remarking that 'classical composers have a long and glorious tradition of echoing themes first heard in more informal settings than the concert hall, from the alehouse to the dancefloor[, but they] have never been in a position to engage sharp-suited and sharper-witted lawyers.'[74] In fact, it emerged in 2014 that Turnage had been forced to pay royalties to Beyoncé after the similarities between 'Single Ladies' and *Hammered Out* had been deemed to be too great. He told a reporter sheepishly, '"I paid 50 per cent to Beyoncé. I'd handled it really badly … I should have come clean about it from the start."'[75] In short, this was more than a quotation, it was a publicly acknowledged theft. In this sense, Turnage played on fears of petty thievery that, while latent in 2010, were to fully flourish the following summer amidst the riots, which were characterised by a widespread looting of shops. *Hammered Out* seemed to respond to the view that all of these issues were somehow

[73] Nikkah, 'The Proms premiere with a ring of Beyoncé to it.'
[74] 'Name that tune.'
[75] Jessica Duchen, 'Opera goes for bust again,' *The Independent*, August 29, 2014, Features, 33.

underpinned by black culture, which, through its popular music, had 'somehow contaminated a white, probably underclass population.'[76]

Theft again touches on the link between jazz and hip-hop. On one hand, the presence of 'Single Ladies' seemed immediately to balance uneasily between a mere musical reference of the kind that would be seen as unremarkable in the context of modernist (and postmodernist) quotation, and a stolen sample in the context of hip-hop. In some ways, the two are the same. Justin Williams writes, 'the fundamental element of hip-hop culture and aesthetics is the overt use of pre-existing material to new ends';[77] likewise, classical composers have always been, according to Susan McClary, 'reveling in the rubble' of previous musical cultures and styles.[78] Indeed, for Williams 'the fact is that artists have "stolen" since time immemorial.'[79] But in others they are radically different, something that becomes apparent if we imagine the situation to be reversed. Quoting Mina Yang, Joanna Demers sees 'the sampling of Western classical music in hip-hop as an appeal to intelligence, morality and upward mobility.'[80] Turnage's sampling is not exempt from this power dynamic either. Things are further complicated by the fact that Beyoncé's track is R&B, not hip-hop, since it does not involve rapping over the looped samples that are characteristic of that musical style. Racial essentialism again threatens here. We should be wary of the fact that Turnage's 'theft' seems to align 'Single Ladies' with hip-hop proper, which the track is not. But a distinction should be made. If Turnage has often engaged stylistically with a general jazz fusion, then this does not

[76] Anita Biressi and Heather Nunn, *Class and Contemporary British Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 48.
[77] Williams, *Rhymin' and Stealin'*, 1.
[78] Susan McClary, *Conventional Wisdom* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), 169.
[79] Williams, *Rhymin' and Stealin'*, 7.
[80] Joanna Demers, *Listening Through the Noise* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 54.

necessarily count as theft; but the sampling of one *specific* track does.[81] We could even say that Beyoncé's track comes closer to being hip-hop when it is sampled or 'stolen' by Turnage for an orchestral work, since the charged politics of theft are foregrounded more clearly in hip-hop quotation than they are in modernist appropriation. In any case, as David Metzer writes, copyright is 'necessary to stop … bald thievery', and yet, when applied 'blindly, copyright becomes an obstacle to creative expression.'[82] What is intriguing is that Turnage manages to turn theft itself into a commentary on this debate, since theft becomes a signifier of both Essexness and hip-hop culture.

When it was announced that Turnage would be premiering another jazzy orchestral work, one headline described him as 'The Essex boy putting the funk into the Proms.'[83] This was a reference to Turnage's early life as a resident of 'urban Essex',[84] a county that includes London's northeast suburbs. According to the composer, his early life was

> seriously overdone in the press in the early stages of my career, to the point of making my parents furious. I'm not entirely blaming the journalists because I did play on it a bit, but ultimately it seemed to come down to the fact that I like football and came from Essex. In fact I grew up with lots of books and music in the house. My dad sang and my mum played the piano and while my upbringing might be different to, say, Tom Adés or George Benjamin, if you go back a generation, to the likes of Harrison Birtwistle and Peter Maxwell Davies, they came from very ordinary backgrounds.[85]

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[81] To put this in James O. Young's words, 'artistic commons is composed of those artistic elements (styles, motifs, general plots, and so on) that anyone is free to appropriate. If we are dealing with tangible property such as individual works of art, the situation is different.' James O. Young, *Cultural Appropriation and the Arts* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 66-67.
[82] David Metzer, *Quotation and Cultural Meaning in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 170.
[83] Morrison, 'Essex boy.'
[84] Fiona Maddocks, 'Review: Critics: Classical: What's cor blimey in Greek?' *The Observer*, September 11, 2011, Observer Review Arts Pages, 32.
[85] Nicholas Wroe, 'A Life in Music: Mark-Anthony Turnage: A 19th-century courtesan is grist to the mill of opera composers. But because Anna Nicole died in 2007 it makes people uncomfortable,' *The Guardian*, January 22, 2011, Guardian Review Pages, 12.

This 'Essex'ness was also manifested through Turnage's status as partly inside and partly outside the musical establishment: as he told Andrew Clements in 2000,

> I was leading a schizophrenic life. Though I was a serious composition student at the RCM … at home I was discovering another type of music, which actually was pretty much peculiar to Essex, where there was an incredible following for fusion. It's very much black American fusion – Herbie Hancock, Freddie Hubbard, Donald Byrd. At the other extreme, there was soul as well – Funkadelic, George Clinton.[86]

On the one hand, then, there is the serious formality of academic composition, on the other there is the black American fusion Turnage discovered in his home environment in Essex. How do issues of race manifest here? There are two generally recognized, distinct phases of the development of jazz, 'the first, a period of developing common practice, driven by African American musicians and audiences, and lasting until the 1960s; the second, a "delta of many streams" … a global and stylistic spread during which jazz became much less specifically identified with the African American experience.'[87] While Turnage's work is in contact with the latter phase, it is nevertheless the case that the racism is filtered through British anxieties about social class. This music's status as 'black American fusion' only comes into play inasmuch as that fusion becomes reflective of an association with Essex and its connoted social problems.

Clements writes, 'when Turnage was making his choices and his personal synthesis, rock itself lacked the harmonic sophistication and melodic variety that his music needed, and that was precisely what jazz and blues could provide.'[88] So, as a student of composition and in his early career (in the 1980s and before), Turnage 'could signal his lack of conformity by immersing himself in jazz, blues and funk.'[89] But while Turnage focused on jazz he did so on

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[86] Andrew Clements, *Mark-Anthony Turnage* (London: Faber & Faber, 2000), 6.
[49] Ibid, 46.
[87] Perchard, 'Hip Hop Samples Jazz,' 285.
[88] Clements, *Turnage*, 46.
[89] Ibid.

account of its harmonic sophistication, or in other words, the way in which it could support modernist innovation based on harmonic complexity. Turnage made this point himself to Clements in 2000:

> It's all very well some people going on about pop music and trying to get intellectual about it, but most of it is actually in four, with accents on the second and fourth beats, and until it gets away from that, there will always be that extreme limitation. You could say the same about jazz, but it's much more sophisticated… [pop music] just doesn't interest me. I'm not being elitist, but I've got a much more sophisticated audience – it's a fact – so what?[90]

So if funk is integrated, it is integrated strictly on terms that are applicable to prestigious modernist music. Indeed, as Andrew Blake writes, thanks to repeated reinventions from the 1960s up until the early 1990s jazz 'remained culturally available as dance or background music despite the continuing tendency also to value it as "art" (concert) music.'[91] If by that point jazz, blues and funk had already been assimilated within the academy their lack of any desire for conformity becomes, as Clements points out, a *signal*, or a simulacrum, of nonconformity, already *within* the system but not threatening to it.[92] Thus while *Hammered Out* reflected (as the programme note suggested) Turnage's ongoing engagement with popular music, it is a type of popular music that had become welcoming to a high-art modernist aesthetic through its ostensible complexity. It is at this point that the theft of the Beyoncé quotation becomes important.

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[90] Ibid, 40-41.

[91] Blake, 'Americanisation and Popular Music in Britain,' 152. Where Gendron, throughout *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Clubb*, poses the question of whether or not the highbrow fascination with rock music in the late 1960s was just a replay of highbrow fascination with jazz in the 1920s, this suggests that the present fascination with urban music in Britain certainly is a replay of the highbrow fascination with jazz in the 1920s.

[92] Indeed, as Kesha M. Morant notes, 'Although much evidence suggests that funk music as a discourse of social protest was able to sustain itself, the question of what exactly it is sustaining arises.' Kesha M. Morant, 'Language in Action: Funk Music as the Critical Voice of a Post-Civil Rights Movement Counterculture,' *The Journal of Black Studies* 20/10 (2010): 10.

This slippage between the working-class and the middle-class is an important feature of 'Essex'ness. As Anita Biressi and Heather Nunn write, 'from the mid to late 1980s onwards, as Thatcherism increasingly "took hold" of working-class votes and of the political imaginary, the citizens of Essex in particular were often rhetorically linked to both new right political values and new kinds of social aspiration.'[93] This was a kind of aspiration that embraced tasteless consumerism: Biressi and Nunn refer to the trope of 'Essex Man', a popular stereotype that embodied working-class aspiration, and quite obviously the figure drawn upon in descriptions of Turnage as an 'Essex boy putting the funk into the Proms'. It is striking that the way he does this is through *theft*: the character of Essex man retains his working-class or street credentials even in his increased affluence, and is consequently 'figured as an almost *criminally* tasteless "bad boy".'[94] Turnage's theft of the 'Single Ladies' quotation seems to touch on these issues in a more pressing way than his use of jazz might have done. Not only this, but the inclusion of the Beyoncé quotation in a musical work that aligns jazz with a kind of difficult, tough, modernist sound is a profoundly complicated reflection upon the problems behind the riots. For Cameron, 'reward without effort' was a major contributing factor to the problems with young people and the brokenness of British society more generally.[95] Although the première occurred before the riots, Turnage's theft draws upon pre-existing fears about reward without effort by stealing Beyoncé's track and featuring it alongside a modernist aesthetic that (however problematically) suggests higher social class. Sampling 'Single Ladies' without clearing it first with Beyoncé's management thus becomes a kind of low-art inversion of the criminal 'Essex' aspiration stereotype.

[93] Biressi and Nunn, *Class and Contemporary British Culture*, 23.
[94] Ibid, 35-36. Emphasis in original.
[95] Cabinet Office, 'PM's Speech.'

This is linked to an even more subtle threat that funk poses. Because of the links between inspiration and motion, between the joy of movement and its physical rewards, 'funk fuses leisure and labor.'[96] Bolden points out that the term has come to refer to 'foul body odor':[97]

> But insofar as this odor is produced from perspiration that is induced by vigorous exertion, "funk(y)" also signifies honest expression and integrity, because the artistic and/or material products that accrue from such exertion reflect a high level of commitment to one's work.[98]

And indeed, this was an explicit dimension of *Hammered Out* according to the programme note: to 'hammer something out' means 'to work away at something, to explore every aspect of a problem until you've solved it.'[99] The split between leisure and labour was a fundamental part of the Conservative discourse on youth unrest around this time. In the context of Turnage's music, funk's ability to signal the fusion of leisure and labour can also link to the 'Essex man' trope of acquisition of rewards through 'alternative' routes such as theft. In general, funk has indeed 'been experienced as a popular genre of the city', [100] establishing contact with a primarily urban audience, and this links it to fears of crime and social unrest. This is an important dimension of the 'Single Ladies' quote in *Hammered Out*: Turnage *stole* it, and was subject to legal action as a result. But the specific role of the theft changes in light of the Essex stereotype. It is not merely a reflection of hip-hop culture but a reflection of a specifically white British 'criminal' attitude. The orchestration of the quote in the jazzy 'big band' sounding brass section of the orchestra does not *only* conflate specific black identities and cultures but also

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[96] Tony Bolden, 'Theorizing the Funk: An Introduction,' *The Funk Era and Beyond*, ed. Tony Bolden (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 15.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Burton, Programme Note, 8.
[100] Matthew P. Brown, 'Funk Music as Genre: Black Aesthetics, Apocalyptic Thinking and Urban Protest in Post-1965 African-American Pop,' *Cultural Studies* 8/3 (1994): 485.

collapses all of these into a signal of 'Essex'ness, of working-class Conservative capitalism. This distinction between the simplicity of leisure and the complexity of labour is important in understanding the assimilation of jazz, since it also touches on the modernist idea of complexity as being an essential character of good music: 'Single Ladies' is not only stolen but also turned into institutionally accepted, complex modernist music.

It is in this light that Turnage's work becomes reflective of much darker social tensions around the time of its performance. But this is also a salient dimension of the identity of the aspirational, entrepreneurial working-class 'cityboy', closely linked in spirit to the character of Essex man.[101] This becomes updated in the context of a 2010 urban youth culture, but in many ways remains ultimately the same. Fidelma Ashe writes of contemporary Britain: 'because young men lack the economic and cultural capital to achieve the dominant markers of masculinities through conventional avenues such as the workplace, they try to achieve these markers through alternative routes.'[102] So musically, *Hammered Out* can perhaps most productively be interpreted as part of an ongoing *conquest* of a metaphorical 'urban', which happens in two different ways: first, by being captured in the appearance of 'urban' music, in contrast to a pastoral musical style; second, in that this is 'urban' music that is associated directly with (Essex) home life, and is consequently a commodity itself, a sign of broad cultural tastes, a marker of increased affluence.

Turnage's 1996 work *Blood on the Floor* was mentioned repeatedly in the reception of *Hammered Out*, as it has been throughout his entire career. While it was not Turnage's first use of a jazz/classical hybrid at the time of its premiere, *Blood on the Floor* was certainly his most extensive, and even in the 2010s was described by many commentators on classical music as

[101] Nunn and Biressi, *Class and Contemporary British Culture*, 35-36.
[102] Ashe, 'All About Eve,' 656.

his most successful to date. This 70-minute work pitted a small classical ensemble against a set of jazz musicians, including John Scofield and Peter Erskine, and was comprised mostly of written-out sections for the former and improvised or free sections for the latter. At its premiere in 1996, Andrew Clements wrote that 'Turnage's use of rock and jazz elements has been integrated much more thoroughly into the melting pot of his style ... in his latest project, *Blood On The Floor*, it emerges as one of the foreground elements for the first time.'[103] And it was implicitly *Blood on the Floor* that led Ivan Hewett several years later to praise the way that 'Turnage prefers to work with the jazz musicians whom he reveres to create truly collaborative pieces.'[104] So for some, the question was whether or not these historically black and white musical styles met on equal terms. Other reviewers were more ambivalent:

> If the integration of jazz and modern was the idea, I'm not sure it succeeded. If it is meant as some kind of battle, on the other hand, with the jazz contingent knocking the conservatoire boys off their feet, it is a triumph.[105]

And others were unconvinced. In a later article about the cross-currents between classical and popular music, one commentator wrote that 'young gun Mark-Anthony Turnage has failed to live up to his billing as an *enfant terrible*. Turnage's trumpeted piece *Blood on the Floor* was a clumsy attempt to mingle jazz and classical players.'[106] But the rhetorical questions of Nick Coleman's review were the most damning:

> Is it possible to lose the funk in the bleak architectonics of [Turnage's] formal composition? Or do we have to take it on trust, because Turnage is interested in "'urban alienation' and wrote for American jazzers John Scofield and Peter Erskine in his Francis Bacon-inspired *Blood on the Floor* suite, that some kind of cold fusion has taken place

[103] Andrew Clements, 'Music: Ligeti *Bitter Suite*; Composer Mark Anthony Turnage's new work, *Blood on the Floor*, is inspired by urban alienation, drugs and personal tragedy,' *The Guardian*, May 24, 1996, Guardian Features Pages, 16.
[104] Ivan Hewett, 'Classical choice,' *The Times*, January 18, 2003, Features; Play, 10.
[105] Dermot Clinch, 'A Salome driven up the wall by lust,' *The Independent*, June 2, 1996, Real Life, 11.
[106] Richard Wolfson, 'Pop has learnt from classical. Can classical learn from pop?' *The Daily Telegraph*, January 6, 2001, 7.

between the tradition of Miles and Marvin and that of European art music?[107]

What is interesting about these responses is that they seem to fail doubly. To suggest that no fusion is created is also to uphold an ongoing distinction between these styles, even when the jazz musicians are seen as more viscerally exciting than the classical ensemble. In this way, the cliché that black music is somehow destructive and defiant through its rhythmic superiority is perpetuated – 'the dancing body is romanticized as what is left over when the burdens of reason and civilization have been flung away.'[108] But to claim that there has been some kind of meeting of the two styles risks collapsing into sameness, and the problems of race can be too easily overlooked or bypassed.[109] In fact, discussions of artistic success or value in general often have the effect of inadvertently affirming this problematic rhetoric. A recurrent motif in the positive response to this music is that the work was nasty, or debased. Turnage was quoted as saying that the first movement of *Blood on the Floor* was 'the nastiest thing I've ever written.'[110] Elsewhere Turnage praises the 'angular voicings to [Scofield's] chords, especially in the earlier stuff he did with Miles Davis. It's not slurpy, it's quite nasty.'[111] Another commentator wrote that the movement 'Needles' is 'a nastily funky dance number, its rhythms bopping along.'[112] And this language was extended to a later work, *Yet another Set To*, which was an extended and revised version of one of the movements of *Blood on the Floor*: 'the music

[107] Nick Coleman, 'Going back to his roots; Mark-Anthony Turnage likes funk? Can't be true…' *The Independent*, March 27, 1998, Features, 16-17.
[108] See Susan McClary and Robert Walser, 'Theorizing the Body in African-American Music,' *Black Music Research Journal* 14/1 (1994): 76.
[109] Ronald Radano and Philip V. Bohlman, 'Introduction,' in *Music and the Racial Imagination*, ed. Radano, Baker, and Bohlman, 34-38.
[110] Terry Grimley, '"Bad Boy" Done Good: The image may still be hard-living, but Mark-Anthony Turnage tells Terry Grimley why he has given up clubbing,' *Birmingham Post*, March 30, 1998, 13.
[111] Andrew Clements, 'Music: Ligeti *Bitter Suite*; Composer Mark Anthony Turnage's new work, *Blood on the Floor*, is inspired by urban alienation, drugs and personal tragedy. Andrew Clements spoke to him', *The Guardian*, May 24, 1996, Guardian Features Pages, 16.
[112] 'Exhilarating trans-fusion.'

has such sleazy immediacy, partly because Lindberg's performance, some of it downright dirty, is so charismatically thrilling.'[113] Of course, in all of these instances the terms are intended to; but this does not change the fact that a stereotype is being created here.[114]

Regardless of whether or not the fusion was successful, writers still took it for granted that jazz and contemporary classical music are distinctly different entities. The basic starting point of this kind of language is that Turnage writes in a classical idiom that is fundamentally distinct from jazz. At the *Blood on the Floor* premiere, Andrew Clements wrote that jazz 'has always been used subcutaneously, flavouring the kinds of ensemble he writes for, colouring his melodies and inflecting his rhythms.'[115] Another writer commented on 'the love of jazz that permeates so much of Turnage's work.'[116] And Tom Service echoed this when he praised the way that *Blood on the Floor* 'skilfully meshes the languages of the jazz players into its own structures.'[117] It is a short step from here, however, to the more stark evocation of invasive organic and bodily metaphors – 'nastiness' played a central part in these. Turnage is quoted in the programme note to *Hammered Out* as saying that after finding his way to Miles Davis he 'stopped listening to Radio 3 and just listened to jazz programmes and jazz funk' – consequently, jazz became 'part of [his] musical DNA'.[118] Likewise, another commentator viewed the whole of Turnage's oeuvre in terms of a disease, writing that 'anxiety is on the

[113] Tim Ashley, 'Review: Classical: Turnage plunders the archives: LPO/Alsop: Royal Festival Hall, London 4/5,' *The Guardian*, March 23, 2005, Guardian Leader Pages, 30.
[114] Philip Bohlman sees jazz as lying somewhere between 'African-American' music and 'global' music, or 'at the edge of empire'. See Philip V. Bohlman, 'Jazz at the Edge of Empire,' in *Jazz Worlds/World Jazz*, ed. Philip V. Bohlman and Goffredo Plastino (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016), 153-180.
[115] Clements, 'Ligeti *Bitter Suite.*'
[116] 'Music in motion,' *Time Out*, January 15, 2003, 115.
[117] Tom Service, 'Review: Classical: Turnage weekend: Barbican, London,' *The Guardian*, January 20, 2003, Guardian Leader Pages, 16.
[118] Burton, Programme Note, 2.

surface of Turnage's music like a rash.'[119] Perhaps the most astonishing instance of this kind of language was found in response to *Blood on the Floor*, in which one commentator linked disease directly with crime, writing,

> The contrast in Turnage's *Blood on the Floor* is between three jazz soloists and a large classical ensemble. There is a trend for this sort of thing and the jazzmen always come off best. They are loudly amplified and obey no conductor. Turnage gives them a whole movement to groove away, which only serves to make the dicky-bow gentlemen of the orchestra look foolish and uncool as they obligingly toe the line while those who kick against the discipline of classical study receive all the applause. Given that encouraging the young to take up classical music is one way of keeping them on the straight and narrow, this is like admitting that crime does pay. Keep jazz in the dive bars. It is classical music's cancer.[120]

Looking past the melodramatic conflation of jazz with crime and disease, the racial dimension of the above quotation is nebulous, lurking behind rather than coming to the fore. For other commentators, it was not the presence of jazz that led to this music's debasement, but rather, this music was a *response* to social issues, and these social issues were somehow signalled by jazz. There is a very fine line between these two positions. For one commentator, *Blood on the Floor* was 'a general snarl at an ugly world.'[121] Another saw it as reflecting 'Turnage's musical world of urban alienation, drug abuse and social violence,'[122] and another as an explicit depiction of urban decay and degradation.'[123] The work was inspired by the death of Turnage's brother as the result of a heroin overdose, and the work was discussed very openly in these terms. *Blood on the Floor* was workshopped by the Berlin Philharmonic with teenage players, since it was seen as representing the kind of problems that young people were likely to encounter: Franz Xaver Ohnesorg, administrator of the project, was explicit that '"the *Blood on*

[119] Coleman, 'Going back to his roots,' 16-17.
[120] Rick Jones, 'Groovers and losers,' *The Evening Standard*, March 9, 2000, 53.
[121] Richard Morrison, '*Blood on the Floor*,' *The Times*, January 20, 2003, Features, 17.
[122] Paul Driver, 'Making his Mark,' *The Sunday Times*, April 12, 1998, Section; Features [no page number.]
[123] Andrew Clements, 'Reviews: Classical: Turnage takes to jazz: Turnage premiere: Concertgebouw, Amsterdam,' *The Guardian*, May 18, 2001, Guardian Leader Pages, 23.

the Floor project is a chance to open up a dialogue with young people about drugs."'[124]

But the element of condescension, even obsession, manifested very quickly, and we are confronted again by the ongoing commodification of street culture:

> [Turnage] finds continuing inspiration from the urban environment, investing his music with the strange, raw kind of beauty that gives it much of its appeal. Sophisticated in design and content though it is, it confronts brutal realities.[125]

Richard Morrison mused:

> The urban badlands – those soulless estates that crush the spirit and extinguish hope – have long been a preoccupation of writers, poets and dramatists. But until Mark-Anthony Turnage's music hit the startled ears of British music lovers in the early 1980s I don't think any 'classical' composer had captured the sour, raw sounds of the ghetto, or the voices of those who, trapped in this squalor, struggle to be tender, to be human, to love.[126]

Whatever these brutal realities might be, none of them are fully documented by these writers. Richard Morrison's heart may have been in the right place, but Clive Davis wrote that 'when critics begin whooping about an artist's bleak vision of social disintegration, you can be forgiven for the ungenerous thought that the closest some of them have come to urban alienation is being turned away by the *maitre d*' of the *Pont de la Tour*.'[127] But this was only one voice among many, and in general the frequent references to urban reality mostly reflect a romanticisation of street culture through a strange process whereby the more the urban purports to reflect some kind of unhappy reality, the more it paradoxically becomes a fantasy. This issue is also present in the frequently evocative and dream-like metaphorical language that journalists use to describe Turnage's music. For one, it is characterised by a 'keening, urban desolation and the

[124] Richard Morrison, 'Rattled but not shaken,' *The Times*, October 1, 2002, T2; Features, 18.
[125] Stephen Pettitt, 'The Observer Profile: Mark-Anthony Turnage,' *The Observer*, February 20, 2000, Observer News Pages, 27.
[126] Morrison, '*Blood on the Floor*.'
[127] Clive Davis, 'Sizzling Bacon on legs,' *The Times*, April 8, 1998, Features, [no page number].

whine of solo saxophones on empty streets.'[128] For another, 'long, liquid lines hover over an often urban musical landscape that gives them a sharp profile, with punchy rhythmic interjections and the odd explosion.'[129] And for another, there is a 'very distinct Turnage tone, dark and lurid in an urban nightscape sort of way.'[130] These pictures are always reflective of an ultimate dislocation at the heart of the obsession with the urban: that its excitement comes from the realities it represents, but only as long as those realities remain at a safe distance from the consumer.[131]

While the discussion may seem to revolve entirely around metaphors or abstractions, there is also a disturbing sense of literality elsewhere.[132] In particular, in the context of the 2011 riots, the working-class urban discourse on masculinity was caught up in a violent and criminal self-assertion in public spaces, often through the (likewise spurious and fantastical) discourse on gang culture that was invoked to characterise the riots. While the threat of 'gang culture' in Britain has been generally discredited as a major component of anti-social behaviour on the streets, and in the contexts of the riots in particular,[133] it is still the case, as Liz Kelly and Aisha K. Gill write, that for many, the 'conquest of public space is often an important route to

[128] Michael White, 'Anna Nicole opera gets lost in its own froth,' *The Telegraph*, February 18, 2011, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion/ [accessed November 28, 2016].
[129] George Hall, 'Review: Classical: London Sinfonietta/Asbury Queen Elizabeth Hall, London,' *The Guardian*, June 20, 2007, Guardian Review Pages, 38.
[130] Ivan Hewett, 'Leather pants and a phallic trombone,' *The Daily Telegraph*, March 23, 2005, Features; The Arts, 20.
[131] Anna Picard, 'Opera: Don Giovanni: Now A Stadium Rock Dandy; Classical: Don Giovanni, Glyndebourne Festival Opera BBC Symphony Orchestra Proms, Royal Albert Hall, London,' *The Independent*, July 23, 2000, Features, 9. [Of Turnage's *Fractured Lines*]: 'The hook, as with much of Turnage's work, is the fusion of popular culture and high art that the duelling drum sets of jazz (Peter Erskine) and classical (Evelyn Glennie) combustively create – an edgily urban soundscape as far removed from the cow-pat school of the English Pastoral as Bradford-on-Avon is from Brixton Market.'
[132] For example, Radano writes that the discussion of infectious rhythm in early jazz was also linked to literal fear of contamination by the body. Radano, 'Hot Fantasies,' 474.
[133] See Harding, 'Street Government,' 193-213.

constructing oneself as a man.'[134] It is crucial too, that Cameron invoked the metaphor of infection directly as part of his speech in response to the riots, when he described the accompanied looting and widespread theft as 'a major criminal disease that has infected our streets.'[135] Turnage's music engages in these issues too, in the way that it is often referred to as moving through urban space. As one journalist wrote, 'with the movement "Elegy for Andy" marking the composer's brother's death from an overdose, [*Blood on the Floor*] pushes Turnage's familiar hybrid style further into jazz territory.'[136] Another commentator wrote that '*Blood on the Floor* takes Turnage's famous music of the streets down an alley of degradation, where urban decay is rife, innocence is corrupted and the false gods of drugs hold sway.'[137] It is typical of the reception of this work, and of Turnage's music in general, that the sense of decay or degradation is at once inherent to and entirely separate from the work. Turnage's music can be led down an alley of degradation, since it in the street to begin with. In this sense, when *Blood on the Floor* is discussed as a kind of 'extreme' instance of a foray into the urban, it should be stressed that the use of a metaphorical 'urban' sound is also an exercise of power in a literal sense, and this is reflected in many reviews. Looking at *Hammered Out* from this perspective, the theft of the pop track can be read as an analogous attempt at a conquest of the musical urban: it is a demonstration of power and an articulation of limits, both institutional and geographic.

This 'urban' style has been seen in Turnage's career in contrast to an authentically 'British' pastoral mode associated most strongly with works such as his opera *The Silver Tassie*,

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[134] Liz Kelly and Aisha K. Gill, 'Reading the Riots Through Dender,' *The English Riots of 2011*, ed. Briggs, 228.
[135] Cabinet Office, 'PM's Speech.'
[136] Terry Grimley, 'CD Reviews,' *Birmingham Post*, April 11, 1998 [no page number].
[137] 'Exhilarating trans-fusion lays it on the lino; *Blood on the Floor* Symphony Hall,' *Birmingham Post*, April 10, 1998, 12.

composed or premiered at a point around the turn of the millennium. This style is seen as lyrical and mellow, the exact inverse of the rhythms and spikiness of jazz. But it was also less exciting, less fresh. One commentator wrote in 2000, this musical style 'implied membership of some latter-day cowpat school.'[138] In 2001, at the peak of this period, an interview ran in *Gramophone*, in which Turnage reflected on the fact that he had recently moved to Kent:

> Everybody said I'd write a cowpat! I'm not sure, I think I've written in this vein all along. … if you added up the minutes of lyrical music [in all of my output] it's probably longer than the harder stuff, but all the hard-edged stuff is much more controversial – so I think that's where I got my reputation.[139]

In any case, the pastoral and the urban are frequently invoked alongside one another: indeed, we could even say that the 'urban' style characteristic of Turnage's work is always implicitly in *dialogue* with something else. As Ivan Hewett wrote in 2006, 'Turnage has become adept at conjuring a particular emotional world, poised between American urban and English pastoral.'[140] In an article in *Time Out* in 2008, Jonathan Lennie wrote that jazz 'is an element that pervades [Turnage's] music and points to an urban sensibility', before quoting Turnage: '"I don't mind visiting the countryside," he explains, "but I think it would drive me mad if I had to live there all the time. I've always been interested in music from cities."'[141] In many instances, the urban and the rural are conflated. In an interview in a 2013 issue of *Gramophone*, Turnage reflects on the grandeur of Chicago:

> When I was around nine or 10, I began listening to recordings of the Chicago Symphony, particularly those conducted by Fritz Reiner and Georg Solti from the orchestra's heyday. I responded particularly to the vividness of the sound and the incredible brass section. Chicago, to me then, was just an orchestra. But later, as my interest in jazz and blues flowered, and I became aware of the city's jazz connections, I realised that Chicago was an incredible melting pot: I became more interested in it as a real location.

[138] Ibid.
[139] Daniel Jaffé, 'Interview,' *Gramophone*, August 2001, 15.
[140] Hewett, 'The strange world.'
[141] Lennie, '"I'm obsessed with Led Zep".'

…. [Chicago] has a natural beauty and grandeur similar to the countryside.[142]

Turnage's music has often been programmed against more typically 'pastoral' British composers. One commentator wrote, for example, that 'as the evil urban twin to John Taverner's melancholy mystic, Mark-Anthony Turnage enjoys incredible popularity.'[143] But, perhaps predictably, it is with Ralph Vaughan Williams that the contrast is most pronounced. Turnage titled his concerto for jazz saxophone and orchestra *A Man Descending*, and the work was billed in the press as a 'dark twin'[144] to Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending*. He described the structures of the works as almost mirror opposites, and was quoted in the *Glasgow Herald* as saying that 'just as the soloist reaches up for the sky at the end of The Lark Ascending, so my piece starts in the highest register then circles lower and lower.'[145] The metaphor of descent rather than ascent amplifies the oppositional nature of Turnage's work, since a descent can also be read as a decay or a degradation. Turnage himself envisioned the work being programmed alongside – and specifically played *after* – Vaughan Williams' work, suggesting a contamination rather than a salvation or apotheosis that would have been suggested by the reversal of the works' order.[146] It is in contrast to this kind of implicit nationalism that we return to a particularly British engagement with modernism. Fundamentally, this is a deadlock, representing Jenny Doctor's 'parataxis', or Jonathan Ilan's description of the simultaneous allure and repudiation of street culture. If the countryside reflects what is traditional, it also

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[142] Mark-Anthony Turnage, 'Music in the melting pot: Composer Mark-Anthony Turnage finds he's loving life in Chicago and that it's having a big impact on his writing,' *Gramophone*, October 2008, 32.
[143] Anna Picard, 'Discs: Classical: Turnage *Scherzoid* etc London Philharmonic Orchestra', *Independent on Sunday*, October 30, 2005, Features, 16.
[144] Neil Fisher, 'SCO/Mendoza,' *The Times*, October 19, 2004, Features; Times2, 18.
[145] Michael Tumelty and Rob Adams, 'Blowing down the barriers; Two new collaborators are opening up worlds of possibilities for the SCO,' *The Herald*, October 13, 2004, 13.
[146] Hewett, 'Leather pants and a phallic trombone.' [Of the *Trombone Concerto*] 'There were several delicious moments of English pastoralism mixed with jazz, as if Quincy Jones had suddenly been cross-fertilised by Peter Warlock.'

represents what is boring; if black music represents what is degraded, it is also exciting. These tensions can be explored as they manifest within the most racially fraught realm of music: tonality.

Tonality and chromaticism

Hammered Out had been billed as an 'orchestral study' for Turnage's forthcoming opera *Anna Nicole*, since Turnage engaged with vaguely popular or jazzy idioms in both works. But most commentary on it failed to explain the link much further than this. According to one, *Hammered Out* 'originates in Turnage's forthcoming opera about Anna Nicole Smith';[147] for another, 'the score of *Hammered Out* links to a key moment in the opera,'[148] and another, 'the opening bars of his new orchestral piece, *Hammered Out*, would reflect that opera's climax.'[149] According to Turnage, 'Only about three minutes out of the 15 that *Hammered Out* lasts [are in *Anna Nicole*]. But yes, the opening and closing sections relate to the opera.'[150] Since much of the music from *Hammered Out* was omitted in the final performance of the opera, once the links between the two works are considered, they become less and less specific, and more superficial. Rather than being traceable to moments in the opera, the black, the urban, and the American, all collapse into one. There are glimpses of the dirt and bustle of the street in references to *Anna Nicole* as 'spankingly naughty, riotously melodic and brilliantly

[147] 'Proms 2010: Mark Anthony Turnage – *Hammered Out* (World Première),' *5:4 Blog*, August 28, 2010, http://5-against-4.blogspot.co.uk/2010/08/proms-2010-mark-anthony-turnage.html [accessed November 28, 2016].
[148] Fiona Maddocks, 'Review: Critics: Classical: You heard it here first: Mark-Anthony Turnage takes a hammer to his latest work, which hints at the opera to come,' *The Observer*, August 29, 2010, Observer Review Arts Pages, 29.
[149] Michael Church, 'Classical; BBC Proms: BBCSO Robertson/Heritage Orchestra, Cullum Royal Albert Hall, London,' *Independent Extra*, August 31, 2010, Viewspaper, 16.
[150] Morrison, 'Essex boy.'

performed,'[151] or to 'Turnage's gritty, jazzy, sometimes heartbreakingly beautiful score.'[152] And, to revisit Barry Millington's quotation, it was *Hammered Out*'s 'surging, piston-like rhythmic gyrations' that were recalled in *Anna Nicole*.[153]

It is the invasiveness of American, black, urban music that is recorded in media discourse on the way that black culture 'invaded' England from America. Adrian Horn suggests that 'there was certainly a tradition of British prudity [sic] in the twentieth century that saw mass culture as a threat to artistic values and originality. The arguments were generally anti-American, and the word America became a metaphor for mass culture.'[154] The tone of the opera, while not directly 'urban', was linked in reviews to the physical reality of civil unrest on the streets, or at least, was seen as symptomatic of a degradation of propriety that might lead to such unrest. And this is also why the opera was not only seen as threatening to the British idea of cultural propriety, but was also, as one reviewer wrote, 'insidiously anti-American.'[155] It was seen as just as much a comment about the negative impact of American celebrity culture as a comment on what should and should not be embraced within British society. While race is not explicitly approached in the opera, its subject matter nevertheless engages with an array of different types of social degradation, and since all of these were signaled through the use of a fundamentally 'jazzy' sound, race is drawn back into the picture.

The link between *Hammered Out* and *Anna Nicole* manifests most strongly in the use of a kind of fractured or skewed tonality that implies a musical degradation or decay. Few

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[151] Fiona Maddocks, 'The biggest show in town? *Anna Nicole* is brilliantly performed, but not as revolutionary as the hype would suggest,' *The Observer*, February 20, 2011, Observer Arts Pages, 29.
[152] Jessica Duchen, 'Opera goes for bust again.'
[153] Millington, 'Classical.'
[154] Adrian Michael Horn, *Juke Box Britain: Americanisation and Youth Culture 1945-1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), 3. See also Russell White, 'Sign of a Black Planet: Hip-Hop and Globalisation,' in *Issues in Americanisation and Culture*, ed. Campbell, Davies, and McKay, 163-180.
[155] Fiona Maddocks, 'The biggest show in town?'

descriptions of the actual musical language of *Anna Nicole* are to be found in newspapers; however, one stands out. Turnage was explicit that it 'is more tonal than anything else I've written. When you're writing about Texans in the '90s, you couldn't really write atonally, it would seem stupid.'[156] One commentator wrote that the music of *Anna Nicole*, 'uncommonly tonal and tuneful for Turnage, is parodistic – of jazz, of Broadway, of all things transatlantic.'[157] This explicitly tonal langue was characteristic of another 'orchestral take-out' from the opera, a choral work *Texan Tenebrae*, in which 'chords, quite tonal by Turnage's standards, derive their notes from a musical spelling-out of the Texan model's name, and when the music gets under way the first melody to be heard is the opera's "Anna Nicole" theme.'[158] In other words, his cluster of jazz-influenced works from the early 2010s builds upon Turnage's earlier jazzy style by bringing tonality into the mix. Turning to *Anna Nicole*, in particular, tonality here is linked with a specific place and time, consequently becoming an allusion or a quotation. Lloyd Whitesell outlines a major paradox relating to the persistent use of tonality in new music, founded on the binary between tonality on one hand as exhausted, decaying, artistically bankrupt, a slave to imperialist market forces, reflecting the 'theory of cultural decline as a specifically modern pathology';[159] and conversely as linked to certain clichés about American popular culture, and in particular with 'the fertile roots of folk art.'[160] In this context, the association of tonality with Texans takes on a new meaning: Whitesell quotes Charles Seeger, who writes that the 'art of music, the folk music of America, had embodied for well over a

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[156] Jonathan Lennie, 'Tits and arias,' *Time Out*, February 3, 2011, 12.
[157] White, 'Anna Nicole opera gets lost in its own froth.'
[158] John Allison, 'Texan timbre sets the tone; The LPO's adventurous, action-packed programme shines,' *The Sunday Telegraph*, January 31, 2010, Seven; Features, 24.
[159] Lloyd Whitesell, 'Twentieth-Century Tonality, or Breaking Up Is Hard to Do,' in *The Pleasure of Modernist Music*, ed. Arved Ashby (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press; Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell and Brewer, 2004), 111-113.
[160] Ibid.

hundred years the tonal and rhythmic expression of untold millions of rural and even urban Americans.'[161] The invocation of the 'folk' here suggests a condescension of the working class. The tonality in *Anna Nicole*, and by implication, *Hammered Out* and *Texan Tenebrae*, consequently touches on Turnage's Essex roots, along with the contestations over race and class that accompany them.

Musical modernism's most familiar definition is in terms of an antagonism towards tonality. For Andrew Timms, if musical modernism has been described in terms of a breakdown of tonality, it is only because tonality articulates something fundamental to the process of modernization, namely, a 'moment of plenitude':[162] 'Modernism-as-atonality has been used to signify modernism as nasty, unlikeably and historically insignificant music.'[163] This moment of plenitude never existed: it is a retroactively constructed point of perfection that occurred around the time of the French Revolution. The history of modernism has been written in terms of a simultaneous development and breakdown of tonality, musical language more generally, and society more generally still, in the centuries since that moment. J. P. E. Harper-Scott makes a similar point in *The Quilting Points of Musical Modernism*, although he goes further. For Harper-Scott, '*tonality is an ideology of music*, which functions in a comparable fashion to a state ideology',[164] since the tension between consonance and dissonance is an antagonism between two poles that results in a lack of (social and musical) change. Tonality obscures 'the real antagonism identified by modernism', which is that ultimately, 'in music of the tonal kind

[161] Quoted in Whitesell, 'Twentieth-Century Tonality,' 113.
[162] Andrew Timms, 'Modernism's Moment of Plenitude,' in *The Modernist Legacy*, ed. Björn Heile (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 13-24.
[163] Ibid, 23.
[164] Harper-Scott, *Quilting Points*, 173.

only one hegemonic order is deemed thinkable.'[165] Whether or not we accept these readings, it is nevertheless the case that creating 'wrong notes' within a broadly diatonic setting is an extremely easy way to signal an (ambivalent) modernist language, evoking both a longing for a return to tonality, and an embracing of the assaults of modernity.

This issue can be seen through the prism of race too. If rhythm is seen as infectious within this music, then music *without* infection is diatonic harmony: where rhythm is black, harmony and tonality are white. There is a long history of the theorization of race through music as a degradation of tonality at the hands of rhythmic musical styles such as jazz.[166] Even at American jazz's most popular, its rhythms were constructed negatively against tonality, which represented 'the high point of Euro-Western civilization … the ultimate musical sign of colonial superiority.'[167] Bryan Hyer argues that tonality was conceived of from its inception as reflecting a white superiority or Eurocentricism.[168] Tom Perchard agrees, writing that throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries '"Primitive" rhythmicality was imagined out of an organizationally, harmonically complex Western tradition and practice.'[169] For Kofi Agawu, to buy into the discourse on the centrality of rhythm to African music is also 'to embrace the kind of mythology that allows some Europeans to claim harmony and deny it to the Africans.'[170] The opposition of rhythm to harmony has a permutation, in which chromatic tones, or any tones outside of the tonic set, come to be just as threatening as rhythm. More recently, Agawu has shown how tonality came to be a colonizing force within Africa,

[165] Ibid, 173.
[166] Perchard, 'New Riffs on the Old Mind-Body Blues,' 327.
[167] Ronald Radano, 'Hot Fantasies,' 473
[168] Brian Hyer, 'Tonality,' in *The Cambridge History of Western Music Theory*, ed. Thomas Christensen, (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 748-749.
[169] Perchard, 'New Riffs on the Old Mind-Body Blues,' 326.
[170] Agawu, 'The Invention of "African" Rhythm,' 385.

introduced as it was through hymns and religious song to the continent as part of a 'civilising mission' in the middle part of the nineteenth century.[171] As Agawu writes, 'in domesticating hymns whose texts were originally in German or English for local consumption, melodies often disregarded the natural declamation of indigenous singing, imposed a regime of regular and symmetrical periodicity, and rode roughshod over the intonational contours prescribed by speech tones.'[172] So the subordination of rhythm to harmony is paralleled by the subordination of non-tonal musical styles to tonal ones.

In this light, the racially and socially fraught rhetoric of infectionism linked to the tonality of *Hammered Out* in contradictory ways. First, if critical responses that viewed *Hammered Out* as infected by the Beyoncé track also imply that there is a 'pure' version of the work, the associations of infectionism with tonality suggest that it is through the addition of chromatic tones that the work's infection is symbolised. Paradoxically, however, this also suggests that the implied 'pure' tonality in *Hammered Out* is the musical language of 'Single Ladies'. It is here that the discourse outlined by Whitesell comes back into play. If we read the tonal language of Beyoncé's track as merely standing in for popular culture at large, then Turnage's addition of chromatic tones imply an enhancing of degradation or decay, a kind of modernist 'critique' of the tonal musical language of Beyoncé's track; by this reading, Turnage's music itself is critical of the 'infectious' popular culture signified by Beyoncé's track. However, to view tonality as being in touch with the 'fertile roots of folk art' in Whitesell's definition again draws in the appeal of authenticity of this music: in so doing, Turnage seems to appropriate this appeal, repudiating a straightforwardly dissonant modernist language in favour of a more tonal

[171] Kofi Agawu, 'Tonality as a Colonising Force in Africa', in *Audible Empire: Music, Global Politics, Critique*, ed. Ronald Radano and Tejumola Olaniyan (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2016), 334-355.
[172] Ibid, 334.

idiom, thereby implying that *Hammered Out* work is somehow regenerative, vital, and exciting in its dialogue with urban popular culture.

This fractured diatonicism is also consistent with earlier twentieth-century British harmonic practice which projected a modernist aesthetic through a modally inflected tonality that became a kind of expanded chromaticism. This pervades the music of Edward Elgar mainly in the form of his characteristic use of the sharpened fourth and sixth,[173] and has its paradigmatic instance in William Walton's First Symphony.[174] It is striking, in this sense, that the symphony was programmed for the National Youth Orchestra alongside *Hammered Out* in 2012.[175] But it is also a stylistic trope within rap and hip-hop, one that Adam Krims defines as the 'hip-hop sublime': the distinct harmonic layers of a hip hop track 'comprise a sharply dissonant combination … the layers tend not even to be "in tune" so to speak: they are separated by intervals that can only be measured in terms of fractions of well-tempered semitones.'[176] While Beyoncé's track is slightly different, blending E major and minor, the point remains that it also creates a tonal and timbral tension around this blend: the bright E major diatonicism of the vocal line, almost always ascending or descending from B to E or outlining the triad, is coloured entirely by the flattened sixths in the bass synthesizer swells. The song largely has no bassline apart from these occasional synthesiser interjections, in which the

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[173] Patrick McCreless, 'Elgar and Theories of Chromaticism,' in *Elgar Studies*, ed. J. P. E. Harper-Scott and Julian Rushton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 1-49.

[174] J. P. E. Harper-Scott, '"Our True North": Walton's First Symphony, Sibelianism, and the Nationalization of Modernism in England,' *Music and Letters* 89/4 (2008): 562-589. Here, Harper-Scott discusses the way a harmonic tension is built around the use of a chromatic G natural within an overall tonal context of B flat minor.

[175] Anna Picard, 'Park Lane Group.'

[176] Adam Krims, 'Marxist Music Analysis Without Adorno: Popular Music and Urban Geography,' in *Analyzing Popular Music*, ed. Allan F. Moore (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 142-143. He goes on: 'The hip-hop sublime frames for the listeners fears and pleasures of the black, inner-city ghetto that both fascinates and horrifies rap fans and our popular culture generally. In other words, this particular musical strategy has served, in rap music culture, as a figure for the view of inner-city menace and despair from the point of view of a trapped underclass.' Ibid, 146.

bassline pivots around the fifth degree in the bass, up to the flattened sixth and then down to the fourth, supporting a harmonic drop into the tonic minor; these interjections are ominous because of their darker colour, and exciting because they foster a sense of dominant tension that begs for a tonic resolution (see ex. 1). Whether or not we easily accept a traditional harmonic reading of the song, we can still say that Turnage seems to capitalize upon the song's tendencies, rendering it stilted and fractured (in both harmony and melody) by further chromatically altering its intervals in *Hammered Out* (see ex. 2). The result in Turnage's work was therefore a musical language that projected a memory of the original song, and by extension a pure, unproblematic tonality, as a kind of ideal. So it is partly through its chromatic harmonic language that *Hammered Out* suggests the rhetoric of infectionism that has been so central to the reception of Turnage's music.

At the base of all of this, there remains a fundamental contradiction. On one hand, all of this music can be viewed as reflecting a criminally unworthy lifestyle through the way that fractured rhythms and harmonies infect an implied diatonic purity. On the other hand, this music is only high art because these rhythms and harmonies make the listener work. We could trace this issue back to Adorno, for whom modernism itself is driven by the acknowledgment of a sense of difficulty, of individual suffering, which jazz and popular music in general fail to acknowledge or even conspire to conceal.[177] This is a point echoed by Harper-Scott in his description of tonality as an ideology of music, and of the ways that, in not using dissonance, not-modernist musics avoid confronting the problems of modern society head on.[178] Through

[177] Joseph Lewandowski, 'Adorno on Jazz and Society,' *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 22/5 (1 September, 1996): 105. See also: Gracyk, 'Adorno, Jazz,' 527-528; M. J. Thompson, 'Th. W. Adorno Defended Against his Critics, and Admirers: A Defense of the Critique of Jazz,' *IRASM* 41 (2010): 44; Witkin, 'Why Did Adorno "Hate" Zazz?' 160-166.
[178] Harper-Scott, *Quilting Points*, 173ff.

its difficulty, modernist music apparently makes one work: this group of people willing to work is the 'sophisticated audience' that Turnage praises, and for whom he writes jazz influenced musical works. If we accept this, then the modernist sound in Turnage's works is no more than a simulacrum – as M. J. Thompson writes, they are 'false to the extent that they create the illusion of arhythmicality and forms of atonality when in fact they do just the

Ex. 1: My own transcription of Beyoncé, 'Single Ladies', chorus.



Ex. 2: Turnage, *Hammered Out*, rehearsal mark E, brass section.



opposite: they mask an inherent banality.'[179] Within a British context, however, 'work' here has many dimensions, whether it is the hammering out of a piece of metal, the perspiration from physical exertion, or the attaining of cultural capital. Behind this is an injunction towards acknowledging difficulty, that suffering is somehow the route to all good. Like funk aesthetics, the apparent 'reward without effort' of the working class finds its musical manifestation in an easy or explicit tonality. Turnage seems to have it both ways: bringing the energy of tonal popular music into the concert hall in order to appear liberal and appropriate its 'cool', while at the same time evoking a wrong-note tonality that seems to also suggest and support a host of more conservative anxieties pertaining to racial and social disorder.

Conclusion

It almost goes without saying that works like these are not so much reflective of a change in institutional boundaries and prejudices as they are a reminder of what is and has always been abject. As such, works like *Hammered Out* are designed to shock. This act of shock re-inscribes the distinctions – between high and low, white and black – that it purports to undermine. The use of the Beyoncé track may have divided the audience at its premiere, but this act is more a reconfiguring of the existing state of affairs than it is a solution. For Richard Morrison, the work was an example of instances in which 'serious artists sometimes play the reverse-snobbery game, dropping in an allusion to popular culture that highbrows find baffling.'[180] In other words, there is still a snobbery at play here, regardless of the angle from which it is viewed. Admissions of this fact are behind self-congratulatory proclamations of change such as those

[179] M. J. Thompson, 'Th. W. Adorno Defended against his Critics, and Admirers,' 44.
[180] Richard Morrison, 'Perhaps Tom Stoppard should cut the clever allusions altogether,' *The Times*, February 13, 2015, Features, 44.

by one commentator who described Turnage's music as 'a genuinely high art, with a genuine, if still only potential, mass appeal.'[181] Mass appeal, apparently, does not have to be reflected by any actual change in audience numbers or institutional practices (or, indeed, a dissolution of the distinction between high art and mass appeal). Any idea that Turnage is 'Britain's hippest composer'[182] simply continues the commodification of street culture, along with its attendant racial and cultural baggage. It is instructive to return to Andreas Huyssen's description of the way 'modernism constituted itself through a conscious strategy of exclusion, an anxiety of contamination by its other: an increasingly consuming and engulfing mass culture.'[183] There are two processes at play here, since exclusion and contamination are two sides of the same coin. Contamination is just as much, if not more, an affirmation of difference as it is a suggestion of change.

And yet, *Hammered Out* does not succeed in *only* reaffirming prejudices and boundaries. It is, or at least can be read as, a profoundly conflicted work. For example, it could be argued that Turnage's music is consistent with an anti-essentialist black aesthetic of jazz fusion, synonymous with the musical legacy of Miles Davis, who, as Paul Gilroy writes, 'insisted upon prioritizing the restless creative energies that could keep the corrosive processes of reification and commodification at bay.'[184] We could go even further, and suggest that Turnage is not merely appropriating 'black' music, but that *Hammered Out* marks a point at which the association of jazz, funk, and R&B with a kind of essentialised black aesthetic or identity becomes dislodged. Paul Gilroy suggests that 'the issue of identity and non-identity of black cultures has acquired a special historical and political significance in Britain', associated more

[181] Pettitt, 'Mark-Anthony Turnage.'
[182] Mike Bradley, 'He's so modern,' *The Times*, April 11, 1998, [no page number].
[183] Huyssen, *After the Great Divide*, vii.
[184] Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 97.

with the 'experience of migration than [...] the memory of slavery'[185] – musical heritage became 'an important factor in facilitating the transition of diverse settlers to a distinct mode of lived blackness [and was] instrumental in producing a constellation of subject positions.'[186] Nor should the focus on rhythmic complexity in *Hammered Out* be entirely written off as racist: the infectious riffs and rhythms that Rutherford-Johnson praised are one and the same as those that Ingrid Monson has seen as a metaphor for the interrelated global flows of different musical styles in the contemporary world. By examining the links between these riffs and repetitions, and African diasporic musical cultures, Monson's aim is 'not simply to refute Eurocentric criticism with a perspective more cognizant of African diasporic aesthetics, but to look also at the way repetitive musical devices contribute to an understanding of global musical circulation.'[187] Following this, my suggestion is that we read the fear of infectionism within *Hammered Out* as linked to discourse on 'Essex'ness, and broader associated issues of social class and aspiration, in addition to the appropriation of black musical styles that are always already 'foreign' with regards to a British national identity. In so doing, we can understand the ways in which the musical style of Turnage's work is part of an ongoing global musical circulation, and we can begin to tease apart the issues of both racist and social essentialism that it raises. Works like Turnage's that seem to cross musical styles should be viewed less in terms of a shock at their difference and more in terms of what they have in common, the ways in which they interact, and fundamentally the strategies by which they produce ongoing and potentially positive misreadings (to follow Hall's point in the introduction) of different musical cultures.

[185] Ibid, 81.
[186] Ibid, 82.
[187] Ingrid Monson, 'Riffs, Repetition, and Theories of Globalization,' *Ethnomusicology*, 43 (1999), 31-65 at 32.

Chapter 3 – Rave, the pastoral, and urban erasure

Introduction

The opera *Between Worlds*, composed by Tansy Davies, performed by English National Opera and premiered at the Barbican in March 2015, had been hotly anticipated for a number of reasons. One of these was that it dealt with the collapse of the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001, and most discussions in the media focused on whether or not the subject matter would be handled appropriately. But *Between Worlds* presented another set of problems. Up until its premiere, Davies's music had come to be defined, like the other composers in this thesis, in terms of a clash between the urban-popular and modernism. But both in the lead-up to and the aftermath of the premiere, the media responded with no mention at all of the urban, and while Davies's had typically been described as colourful and energetic, *Between Worlds* had, for one critic, a surprisingly 'grey, dissonant score.'[1] Almost overnight media discourse was entirely cleansed of all of any mention of the urban, and was replaced with an abstract and neutral set of metaphors about humanism, nature and energy. In an interview, the opera's librettist Nick Drake was quoted as saying that within the opera is 'a human drama that's absolutely elemental,' in response to which Davies agreed: 'The words and the music go to some very dark places, but if you go deep enough, it's universal, and there is life there. And the music is full of that.'[2] Describing the opera in its

[1] Richard Morrison, 'Trapped in the twin towers; Tansy Davies's 9/11 opera is emotional voyeurism,' *The Times*, April 13, 2015, T2; Features, 11.
[2] Tom Service, 'How can you make an opera about 9/11?' *The Guardian*, April 8, 2015, Music, http://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/apr/08/between-worlds-9-11-opera-tansy-davies-barbican [accessed November 29, 2016].

entirety, Davies was quoted as saying, 'what I'm trying to do is turn something very very complex and difficult into something healing and beautiful.'[3]

Between Worlds was Davies's most extensive work to date, a 'high-risk'[4] new opera that announced her as 'the most original new voice in the game.'[5] There was an absence of the very urban sound that had led one commentator to describe her as an *enfant terrible*, a 'live-wire impossible to pigeon-hole':[6] Davies here had apparently foregone the urban entirely, and yet had managed to maintain her subversive nature. But the difference between the use of the urban and the absence of the urban is not that great, as I will show. Many scholars have relevantly argued that more specifically racial signifiers in music have a long history of being simultaneously co-opted and neutralized through a process that some scholars describe as 'erasure'. In the context of the particular discourse outlined here, this happens through dance music. At a rave or in a club, a transgressive group of dancing bodies come together in order to allow the social or cultural particulars of each dancer to be transcended. In her previous music, Davies used the rave as a metaphor in a number of different ways, suggesting the symbolic power of urban dance music which is at the same time consistent with the dimension of musical modernism that has always been focused on achieving purity.[7] It is this simultaneous maneouvre of erasure – the harnessing and erasing of the urban – that is the focus of the chapter.

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[3] 'ENO Between Worlds – with Tansy Davies and Deborah Warner,' published April 1, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLkxwkiOdMg [accessed November 29, 2016].
[4] Rupert Christiansen, 'Why have ENO cancelled L'Orfeo?' *The Telegraph*, November 13, 2014, Culture, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/opera/11227343/Is-it-too-late-for-English-National-Opera-to-be-saved.html [accessed November 29, 2016].
[5] Michael Church, '*Between Worlds*, Barbican Theatre, review: An operatic debut into the horrors of 9/11,' *The Independent*, April 12, 2015, Culture, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/reviews/between-worlds-barbican-theatre-review-an-operatic-debut-into-the-horrors-of-911-10171451.html [accessed November 29, 2016].
[6] 'Tansy Davies,' *Faber Music Website*, http://www.fabermusic.com/composers/tansy-davies [accessed November 29, 2016].
[7] Metzer, *Musical Modernism*, 30-34.

Erasure in the metaphorical rave

In Davies's music, the urban manifests in ways that inspire the use of the same handful of metaphors that link fracture, percussiveness and abrasion. The following, from 2015, is typical:

> Over the last 10 years, Tansy Davies has made her mark among the younger generations of British composers with music that quirkily blends elements of pop and rock with the techniques of the post-1945 art-music avant garde. In Davies's pieces, funky basslines underpin atonal harmonies with structures that behave in entirely unpredictable ways.[8]

A set of orchestral works encapsulate the urban aesthetic: her 'urban, scary'[9] *Neon* (a work for small ensemble), *Salt Box* (which has a 'restive atmosphere' of 'ominous aggression'[10]) and *Inside Out 2* ('a brittle bricolage of pizzicato and percussion sounds'[11]). The street functions as a site of motion, of the release of tension: as Geoff Brown writes, 'with Davies, contemporary music never lives in an airtight box. It's out on the street, friendly-aggressive, mingling with rock without ever losing the poise that stems from the right number of notes in the right place.'[12] There is occasionally the suggestion that these terms are imbued with anxiety (that could reflect cultural or racial concerns), as, for example, in Ivan Hewett's

[8] Jennifer Lucy Allan, Andrew Clements, John Fordham & John Robinson, 'Marc Almond, Sinkane, Godspeed You! Black Emperor: this week's new live music,' *The Guardian*, April 11, 2015, Music, http://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/apr/11/this-weeks-new-live-music [accessed November 29, 2016].
[9] Tim Ashley, 'Reviews: Classical: Currie/Asko Schonberg/Rundell: Queen Elizabeth Hall, London,' *The Guardian*, October 8, 2014, Guardian Review Pages, 36.
[10] Richard Whitehouse, 'Review: T. Davies. *Neon*. *Grind Show (electric)*. *Inside Out 2*. *Greenhouses*. *Troubairitz*. *Salt Box*. *What I Write Now*. Remixes by Gabriel Prokofiev, Rolf Wallin and others. Anna Snow *voc*; Azalea Ensemble Christopher Austin. *Nonclassical*.' *Gramophone*, July 2011, 67.
[11] Andy Gill, 'Album: Tansy Davies, *Troubairitz*', *The Independent*, May 20, 2011, Arts & Entertainment, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/classical/reviews/album-tansy-davies-troubairitz-nonclassical-2286412.html [accessed November 29, 2016].
[12] Geoff Brown, 'City of London Sinfonia/Boyd,' *The Times*, April 26, 2007, Features; Times2, 22.

suggestion that a 'high-energy, dark-toned urban edginess'[13] pervades Davies's music. But the urban generally crystallises around the sense that Davies's music is dance-like. Commentators praise her 'gritty dances',[14] characterized by 'insidious, catchy dance rhythms'[15] and 'misaligned rhythmic patterns',[16] that seem to conjure up 'a dance by someone with two left feet.'[17] In this way, Davies draws upon the coolness of street culture in order to create music that is seemingly radical or defiant, while fundamentally supporting the prestige of high art.

Why, then, should *Between Worlds*, Davies's most large-scale work, not evoke the urban? This has much to do with its sensitive subject matter: in an effort to make the opera as unsentimental as possible, it was decided early on that *Between Worlds* it would be an apolitical take on 9/11, that it would deal mainly with issues of humanity, love, loss, and the attempt to come to terms with death. The result was a set of claustrophobic, character-focused vignettes that took place within the North Tower just above the impact zone of the second plane; the focus of the opera was partly on the response of their families and loved ones who received their texts and phone calls, watched the event take place on the news, and reflected upon the horror from their homes; and partly on the response of people at ground level near the Twin Towers after they were hit. The action took place on three different levels: events at street level occurred on the stage, the protagonists in the tower

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[13] Ivan Hewett, 'Bristol New Music Festival; review,' *The Telegraph*, February 24, 2014, Music, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/classicalconcertreviews/10657878/Bristol-New-Music-Festival-review.html [accessed November 29, 2016].
[14] Sophie Hern, 'Classical; BCMG,' *Metro*, June 5, 2008, 25.
[15] 'Rave Reviews for Tansy Davies's CD "Troubairitz" (May 25, 2011),' *Faber Music Website*, http://www.fabermusic.com/news/rave-reviews-for-tansy-davies-cd-troubairitz-268 [accessed November 29, 2016].
[16] Erica Jeal, 'Review: Prom 72: BBCSO/Belohlavek Royal Albert Hall, London,' *The Guardian*, September 10, 2010, Guardian Review Pages, 40.
[17] Tansy Davies, quoted in Tom Service, 'It ain't over 'til the fat monkey sings: This summer's biggest opera premieres are composed by a Britpop star, a jazz virtuoso and an electro-experimentalist,' *The Guardian*, June 1, 2007, Guardian Film and Music Pages, 5.

were seen mostly in a mezzanine level suspended in the centre of the space several feet above the stage, and standing on a ledge suspended at the very top of the space was a 'shaman', who occupied 'a cosmic space beyond life and death',[18] and spent most of the opera commenting on the action in a strange rhythmic gibberish (see ex. 1). In many ways the shaman stood at the crux of the opera, literally between two worlds.

While neither Davies nor Drake mention this, shamanism in general is a central part of rave, an urban dance culture that proliferated in the UK in the late 1980s and early 1990s. As Scott Hutson writes, at raves

> the DJ acts much like a shaman who … guides the ravers on an ecstatic journey to paradise – a presocial state of nondifferentiation and communitas. It is this return

Ex. 1: Davies, *Between Worlds*, b. 1-3. Shaman's rhythmic gibberish.



[18] Service, 'How can you make an opera about 9/11?'

> to paradise through altered states of consciousness which brings spiritual ease to ravers facing an anxious and uncertain society.[19]

The shaman reflected a cosmic dimension that was at the crux of *Between Worlds*: he was a 'walker between worlds, god of messages and transmissions.'[20] Of course, shamanism is not directly racialized, at least not in terms of blackness; rather, it opens up a neo-pagan, East-Asian or 'Zen' dimension.[21] But race is not absent simply because it is not explicit: while there are no direct references to club music or the rave scene made by Davies herself, references to a 'shaman' also crop up in writing on her earlier work *Iris*, which 'casts a soprano saxophone in the role of a shaman who commutes between levels of the subconscious';[22] or, as another commentator wrote, sees the 'saxophone as shaman on a mysteriously and wittily constructed rainbow bridge between higher and lower worlds.'[23] The subtle references to jazz in this work seem to facilitate a misreading that elides shamanism within Davies's with a black musical history.

It is in this sense that the urban resurfaces in this ostensibly un-urban opera, in the reference this music makes to the black dance cultures that originated in the USA. But the links are cloudy. As discussed in the introduction, Reynolds traces the origins of rave back to the three cities of Detroit, Chicago, and New York in the late 1970s, at which time dance music was an explicitly 'black' music.[24] For Beatrice Aaronson, the link goes back even

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[19] Scott R. Hutson, 'Technoshamanism: Spiritual Healing in the Rave Subculture,' *Popular Music and Society* 23/3 (1999): 54.
[20] Fiona Maddocks, 'Between Worlds; *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* – review; Barbican, London Tansy Davies and Nick Drake's 9/11 opera is daunting, difficult and simply told,' *The Guardian*, April 19, 2015, Music, http://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/apr/19/between-worlds-review-des-knaben-wunderhorn-tansy-davies [accessed November 29, 2016].
[21] See Reynolds, *Energy Flash*, 100-110.
[22] David Fanning, 'A flurry of firsts,' *The Daily Telegraph*, July 7, 2004, Features; The Arts, 18.
[23] Hilary Finch, 'London Sinfonietta/Masson,' *The Times*, December 10, 2008, T2; Features, 16. See also Ivan Hewett, 'Make music with cake and laughter,' *The Daily Telegraph*, May 30, 2012 Wednesday Features; Review, 31. Discussing her piano concerto, *Nature*, with Hewett, 'Davies spoke of "shamanistic rituals" as an influence, and one could hear them loud and clear'.
[24] Reynolds, *Energy Flash*, 4-40. This is still contested.

further, and she views rave and techno as 'children' of funk.[25] Fifteen years passed between the inception of this American dance scene, and the emergence of a British rave scene in England, and under altogether different political circumstances. Sarah Thornton draws a distinction between British dance scenes in *Club Cultures* on the grounds of race, writing that 'despite the fact that black and white youth cultures share many of the same attitudes and some of the same musics, race is a conspicuous divider.'[26] The different types of music **also** share a sense of resistance: like hip-hop, rave is now seen around the world as an activity that resists or reclaims cultural capital, and gives voice to the oppressed.[27] According to most writers, early UK rave was racially diverse and it attracted mostly the working class.[28] What is and has always been celebrated in rave is its 'ability to transcend normal social barriers of race, class, ethnicity, education, and even religion.'[29] As Henry R. L. John writes, 'the racial harmony witnessed at raves' served to 'promote ethnic acceptance and to dissolve the boundaries erected by racial difference.'[30] Sylvan quotes one veteran British raver:

> In Britain, I think it's so much about who you are in terms of what class you come from and how you talk and what clothes you wear. I think this was the first time in our contemporary history that this was broken away and it really gave this opportunity for people from all different classes and races just to be together.[31]

The problem with this, however, is that the racial divide is deeper than skin colour. Freedom through dance has long been associated with black music, regardless of the colour of the dancers' skin. For Aaronson, rave is a way of dancing ourselves out of class, since

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[25] Beatrice Aaronson, 'Dancing Our Way Out of Class Through Funk, Techno or Rave,' *Peace Review* 11/2 (1999): 231.
[26] Sarah Thornton, *Club Cultures* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995), 7.
[27] Marsh, 'Understand Us Before You End Us;' Thornton, *Club Cultures*, 21. This is also the basic premise of Reynolds, *Energy Flash*.
[28] Hutson, 'Technoshamanism,' 56; Thornton, *Club Cultures*, 15.
[29] Sylvan, *Trance Formation*, 131.
[30] Henry R. L. John, 'UK Rave Culture and the Thatcherite Hegemony, 1988-1994,' *Cultural History*, 4/2 (2015): 162-186 at 168.
[31] Sylvan, *Trance Formation*, 132.

'movement opens our body and mind to a different kind of consciousness, where all concepts of class are abolished.'[32] Through 'involuntary muscular contractions',[33] 'rhythm becomes the stuff of intuition and the eraser of differences. Dance gives shape to intuition and the matter of rhythm.'[34] But, Aaronson asks, 'what kind of sound links rhythm and dance the most naturally? It is undeniably the drum, the heartbeat of Africa.'[35] It is here that the problem becomes acute. As Susan McClary and Robert Walser write, many have 'often embraced African and African-American musics as sites where the body may still be experienced as primordial, untouched by the restrictions of culture.'[36] Fundamentally, this is part of what Gilroy describes as a 'pernicious metaphysical dualism that identifies blacks with the body and whites with the mind.'[37] There is not enough space here to resolve the contradictions in scholarship on rave – suffice it to say that, in *Between Worlds*, allusions to rave don't truly create a post-racial space, but rather focuses on one part of a racial discourse, namely, that dance is somehow freeing and transcendental, and in this sense, enables a perpetuation of a racialized binary.

In its referencing of rave, *Between Worlds* falls into a long history of Western art music's appropriation of 'Other' musical styles, with the former both essentializing and neutralizing the latter through a process of erasure. This process has been described by many scholars. It is the central theme of Ronald Radano and Philip V. Bohlman's introduction to *Music and the Racial Imagination*: for Radano and Bohlman, race is a 'specter' in the house of music and musicology, which persists in the 'commonsense opinion that what distinguishes the musically racial from the not-racial is as simple as telling the

[32] Ibid, 231-232.
[33] Ibid, 233.
[34] Aaronson, 234.
[35] Ibid, 234-235.
[36] McClary and Walser, 'Theorizing the Body,' 76.
[37] Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 97.

difference between black and white.'[38] In other words, the authors trace the ways that race has been broken down into different metaphors and traced through discursive networks, fundamentally saturating the discipline of musicology. Elsewhere, Bohlman has written that 'historically erasure has occurred when the West appropriates a music of an "Other" and transforms it to serve as a music of the "Self". We witness precisely this discourse of erasure in the literature of musical and colonial encounter.'[39] These definitions are extremely pithy. For the purposes of this chapter, this latter definition of erasure certainly functions within a 'Broken British' conception of identity in which a normatively white British musical culture is somehow infected by a black popular music culture. The process of erasure thus has a dual function: it supports the integration of exciting 'Other' musical materials into a modernist musical style, while at the same time suggesting the existence of a British musical world that is entirely free from the popular urban, in which that other is more nearly itself. In this sense it is not coincidental that the only one of the ensemble of characters in *Between Worlds* who can seemingly communicate with the shaman is the black janitor: instinctually following the shaman, he seems to invite the victims to follow the inevitable rhythms of the shaman's gibberish, to embrace their fate, and is

Ex. 2: Davies, *Between Worlds*, Rehearsal Mark 128, b. 5-6. Janitor and Shaman share message.



[38] Radano and Bohlman, 'Introduction,' 1.
[39] Philip Bohlman, 'Erasure: displacing and misplacing race in twentieth-century music historiography,' in *Western Music and Race*, ed. Julie Brown (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 7.

consequently seen as 'a sentient soul who acts as a spiritual guide to his fellow victims',[40] a 'stoic hero'[41] (see ex. 2).

The producers of *Between Worlds* had been explicit that while the opera dealt with politically charged events, it itself was not a political take on these events. John Berry, the artistic director of English National Opera was quoted as saying of *Between Worlds* that '"it is not a political view of terrorism, it is just a story about these people … It is a big moment for us, a big moment for that subject matter and it will be a big challenge to treat it in a sensitive way but try to do something extraordinary musically. It is a major thing for us."[42] The focus on individuals in *Between Worlds* was a way of neutralizing the explicit message of the opera and causing it to appear apolitical. But this distinction between political and individual went hand in hand with a distinction between political and humanistic, and consequently the 'individual' became merely a lens through which a universal type of humanity was projected. Barry Millington made the same point but in an even more obviously contradictory way, writing that

> *Between Worlds* does not investigate the causes of the atrocity. Rather it is a meditation on how four people, representative of humanity at large, come to terms with imminent mortality, with the tragedy of sundered relationships and opportunities lost for ever.[43]

How, we might wonder, can four specific people possibly come to represent humanity at large? Moreover, these people are clearly *not* representative of humanity at large, since

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[40] Barry Millington, '*Between Worlds* ENO review: 9/11 opera at Barbican "a resonant, multi-layered work"; This opera, about 9/11, contains a fabulously inventive aural fabric and avoids being sentimental,' *The Evening Standard*, April 13, 2015, http://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/theatre/between-worldsenglish-national-opera-911-opera-at-barbican-a-resonant-multi-layered-work-10172444.html [accessed December 9, 2016].
[41] Morrison, 'Trapped in the twin towers.'
[42] Mark Brown, 'Topsy-turvy times as Leigh turns his talents to opera: Film director to make debut with Gilbert and Sullivan's Pirates of Penzance at ENO,' *The Guardian*, April 29, 2014, Guardian Home Pages, 5.
[43] Millington, '"A resonant, multi-layered work".'

they belong to a specific demographic affluent enough to be employed in the World Trade Centre (with the obvious exception being the janitor, whose job actually sets him apart from the other protagonists in terms of dramatic function). To cast these people, along with the urban catastrophe of 9/11, as an assault on humanity at large, also reinforces the idea that urban cosmopolitanism is the only legitimate common culture.

For Gayatry Chakravorty Spivak, 9/11 stands as the paradigmatic attack on the white West, reflective of the fact that 'the entire globe is now in a common culture fix, and its signature is urbanism.'[44] It is not at all surprising, then, that Davies's most major work should be an opera about the collapse of the Twin Towers, an event seemed to be profoundly linked to both globalisation and urbanism. As Isaac Vayo writes, 'in the aftermath of 9/11, rubble abounded, be it that of the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon, or of the shattered myth of US invulnerability. That rubble was swiftly cleared and its fragments forcibly coalesced into a pseudo-unity in the face of purported threat.'[45] Worldwide reactions to the disaster seemed to solidify the status of America as the largest global superpower, a country that stands as a reference point for citizens every other country in the world to live their lives by.[46] So while it may seem strange that a British opera company should focus on an American event, this is also a testament both to the global repercussions of 9/11 and an ongoing British anxiety about the Americanisation of British culture. Rather than seeing this opera as an explicit engagement with or fear of Americanisation, however, we can view the use of an American incident as a vector for a sense of Britishness. *Between Worlds* still fitted in to a more overarching attempt on the

[44] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Globalicities: Terror and Its Consequences,' *CR: The New Centennial Review*, 4/1 (2004): 73.
[45] Isaac Vayo, 'On Maddening Loop: Post 9-11 Rubble Music,' in *Politics of Post-9/11 Music: Sound, Trauma and the Music Industry in the Time of Terror*, ed. Joseph P. Fisher and Brian Flota (Ashgate, 2011), 69.
[46] See Neil Campbell, Jude Davies and George McKay, 'Introduction: Issues in Americanisation and Culture,' in *Issues of Americanisation in Culture*, ed. Campbell, Davies and McKay, 1.

part of English National Opera to highlight Britishness through their 2015 season, whatever that term may mean; the artistic director of ENO, John Berry is quoted, 'of the emphasis on British work and British directors [in this season], … "Eighty-five per cent of our artists are British or British-trained. This has to be a home for British talent."'[47] So in order to deal with seemingly universal, 'human' subject matter, *Between Worlds* goes via America to create a British take on its catastrophe. This is certainly a problematic approach towards integration. Ashley Dawson sees Britain's role in the American 'war on terror' as reflecting the innate and complicated racism of 'Britain's enduringly imperial stance in the world.'[48] It is in this sense that the opera plays back into anxieties about what kinds of cultural artefacts are allowed to fall within the remit of a British national identity. While Americanisation is often figured as a threat to European or British cultural superiority, it is also the case that a British imperialist impulse manifests through this American political issue.

Lloyd Whitesell uses the term 'erasure' to argue that the musical avant-garde has long been marked by a duality: on the one hand there is the now-familiar idea that 'white culture seeks vitality and even definition through the foregrounding of nonwhite cultural characteristics.'[49] This proves to be related to the fact that the avant-garde has been 'marked by a rhetoric of negation.'[50] This act of negation functions in different ways, but Whitesell is explicit that it is always coded as white, by contrast to the non-white characteristics that are the focus of the negation, which nevertheless 'inspires exhilarating dreams of transcendence and universality.'[51] Whitesell quotes Richard Dyer, who suggests that while non-white people are 'particular, marked, raced, … the white man has attained

[47] David Lister, 'A revolution at the opera,' *The Independent*, April 29, 2014, 38.
[48] Ashley Dawson, *Mongrel Nation* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010), 7.
[49] Lloyd Whitesell, 'White Noise: Race and Erasure in the Cultural Avant-Garde,' *American Music* 19/2 (2001): 169.
[50] Ibid, 170.
[51] Ibid, 174.

the position of being without properties, unmarked, universal, just human.'[52] But the percussive rhythms of the shaman's gibberish seems attempt to translate a racialized rhythmic impulse into a sign of universality. This suggests that the universal is not merely defined against a 'marked' urban Other here, but that the former only exists inasmuch as the latter does. Indeed, this is in fact consistent with Stuart Hall's point that 'the English are racist not because they hate the Blacks but because they don't know who they are without the Blacks.'[53]

But again there is more here than racial tensions. Modernism has long been associated with mastery, inasmuch as mastery leads to a sense of purity.[54] As Jonathan Kramer puts it, 'modernist composers often want to take over, to own, to demonstrate their mastery of that which they are quoting, either by placing it in modernist contexts or by distorting it.'[55] In 2007, Davies was quoted as echoing this sentiment:

> when the modernists came along they made fantastic advances but they left a lot out. Certainly things are changing and it's more of a pluralistic environment now. But the roots of what I love about music come from modernism, and I'm very much writing in that tradition.[56]

Davies's statement is not explicitly about mastery, but there is a definite sense that pluralism had formerly been curtailed by modernism. Press responses to Davies's work nevertheless elide a broad range of influences that shifts the focus onto modernism, experimentalism and the avant-garde. Rather than focusing on the synthesized urban credentials of her musical language, the quotation pits pluralism against modernism. Ivan Hewett tells the story of Davies's childhood, quoting her: 'I was into really weird

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[52] Quoted in Whitesell, 183.
[53] Stuart Hall, 'Ethnicity: Identity and Difference,' *Radical America* 23 (1989): 16.
[54] See Metzer, *Musical Modernism*, 30-34.
[55] Jonathan Kramer, 'The Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism,' in *Postmodern Music/Postmodern Thought*, ed. Judith Lochhead and Joseph Auner (New York; London: Routledge, 2002), 15.
[56] Terry Grimley, 'Tansy Davies funks up her compositions,' *Birmingham Post*, February 1, 2007, Features, 15.

experimental pop. My best band had a double bass, with me on guitar and a drummer who was also a rapper. I wrote these great long 20-minute pieces, which we played at parties.'[57] Hewett's article describes Davies's musical upbringing as one in which popular styles were studied, and yet 'the epiphanic moment [came] in her late teens when she discovered post-war classical composers such as Boulez and Ligeti.' He quotes her again: '"It was great because I realised straightaway that this was my real home. Here were all these people doing the same kind of experiments I was doing, but it was more interesting, more subtle – well, just better really."'[58] There is a sense that pop was a kind of early childhood phase that was shrugged off as Davies reached musical maturity. And yet, at the same time, the assertion of a modernist style *must* apparently happen at the expense of a popular one. The 'popular' styles here become erased in a manner consistent with the rhetoric of negation that Whitesell describes.

One important way in which this erasure happens has to do with the role of the composer in discourse on the work, and specifically where technical descriptions are involved. The tension between programmatic elements and 'technical' or note-based aspects of the music has often been a point of discussion with regards to modernist music. The sense that this music is non-representational, or at least in some way rooted in 'the notes' still haunts critical approaches towards it. Closely linked to this is the ongoing obsession with the modernist composer as an 'author-God':[59] modernist music is 'generally felt to require "professional" explanation', something that only the composer can provide.[60]

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[57] Ivan Hewett, 'I love to work out after a hard day composing: Tansy Davies is one of a new generation of composers who are redefining classical music,' *The Daily Telegraph*, February 1, 2007, Features, 33.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Arved Ashby, 'Intention and Meaning in Modernist Music,' in *The Pleasure of Modernist Music: Listening, Meaning, Intention, Ideology*, ed. Arved Ashby (Rochester: University of Rochester Press; Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2004), 27.
[60] Ibid, 31.

The implication is, finally, that the composer as author is privy to a huge amount of knowledge, something that the reader is implicitly asked to respect. It makes sense, from this perspective, that since *Between Worlds* was more traditionally 'modernist', and less explicitly influenced by urban popular music, it should be accompanied by technical discussion or note-based analysis. For example, of *Between Worlds*, Tom Service wrote that Davies has

> found a new kind of harmonic universe for this piece, and each of the 11 scenes of the opera is based on a series of 11 chords, which stand both metaphorically and musically for the twin towers: the visual shape of the number '11', but also, in the score, the way the chords [quoting Davies] 'stand there, pretty solid, and yet there are these waves of energy that just keep breaking against them, so there's kind of a subversive element even within a structure that's quite rigid.'[61]

The referential material of the Twin Towers, representing an urban atrocity, becomes abstracted and used as a framework for technical description of the work in extremely general and ambiguous terms. It is also important that this language is quoted in a newspaper with a broad readership, so it is likely that the reader will lack the analytic skills to understand what the description means. Scholars are constantly critical of this deliberately unclear language – Greg Sandow sums up the problem eloquently with his rhetorical question: 'How many New York Philharmonic subscribers know what a "dyad" is?'[62] There is an important demonstration of power here: the technical analysis of music establishes the composer's intention and artistic vision, but its lack of specificity could alienate the reader. This is part of what Taruskin describes as the 'poietic fallacy', or the privileging of the modernist composer's intention within the historiography of music, which

[61] Service, 'How can you make an opera about 9/11?'
[62] Greg Sandow, 'A Fine Analysis,' in *The Pleasure of Modernist Music*, ed. Ashby, 61.

relies on establishing high art as 'a realm of occult or forbidden knowledge, from which the uninitiated may need protection.'[63]

Yet there are also ways in which modernism overlaps with urban dance music. For Simon Cummings, Davies's work is 'accessible, eschewing both the trappings & the vernacular associated with the avant-garde.'[64] Cummings writes that 'immediacy & clarity seem to be important & significant aspects of her music,' and he links these back to the popular influences Davies's experienced in her youth.[65] However, clarity (particularly through timbre) is a characteristic that Geoff Brown associates with Davies's avant-garde side, since there is something about the clarity and timbres that links with rave music: as Brown writes, Davies is 'a composer who shapes her notes with the adventurous timbres and clarity of contemporary music's *avant-garde*.'[66] This has in part to do with the synaesthetic quality of ecstasy, the music-enhancing drug most associated with rave: as Simon Reynolds explains, experiencing rave music under its influence is 'like tremulous fingertips tantalizing the back of your neck, or like the simultaneously aural/tactile equivalent of a shimmer.'[67] In particular, Davies's *Neon* has been described in these terms, as having a 'brashly colourful soundworld.'[68] A comparison here is useful in fleshing out this tension. In 2011, Geoff Brown compared Davies along these lines to Thomas Adès, writing,

> You can easily imagine [Davies] going clubbing; not the case, say with Thomas Adès, though at 40 he's only three years her senior. … Adès visited club music like a tourist in part of his score *Asyla*. But Davies, you feel, is completely at home underground

[63] Richard Taruskin, 'The Poietic Fallacy,' in *The Danger of Music* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009), 304-305.
[64] Quoted in 'Davies's new CD displays "emotional depth & unrestrained exuberance",' *Faber Music Website*, November 21, 2012, http://www.fabermusic.com/news/davies-new-cd-displays-emotional-depth-unrestrained-exuberance-677#sthash.iF2fqcYN.dpuf [accessed December 8, 2016].
[65] Ibid.
[66] Geoff Brown, 'Tansy Davies; *Troubairitz*; Classical', *The Times*, April 1, 2011, T2; Features, 9.
[67] Reynolds, *Energy Flash*, xxxviii.
[68] Matthew Rye, 'Music,' *The Daily Telegraph*, April 1, 2006, Art, 12.

with hallucinogenic lights and hard-driven rhythms.[69]

This is also a motif that cropped up in a review of a concert in which Davies's and Adès music were programmed next to one another in February 2007, under Adès' baton: Davies's piece, a work for harpsichord entitled *Falling Angel*, contained much 'colourful activity', and Adès' own early Chamber Symphony was underwritten by 'a subtext of night-clubbish tango.'[70] What a night-clubbish tango might be is unclear – but what is clear is that a night club and a tango are generic labels of the dance-like activity also evident in both composers' music, something reflected also in Morley's comment that in the Chamber Symphony 'Ades' tremendous ear for colour and timbre was evident.'[71] By this reasoning, then if *Neon* is 'colourful', it is not only funky, but club-like, too. Again, we see that a binary is set up, not in order to allow modernism to stand out from its popular Other, but rather to foster a set of complementary (if nonsensical) misreadings. *Between Worlds* was apparently a long way from a colourful sound world, however, having, to quote Richard Morrison again, a 'grey, dissonant score.'[72] There was no colourful activity in the shaman's rave-like vocal percussion. But rave remains somehow central to both *Beween Worlds*' modernist credentials and its ability to produce an atmosphere transcendent of difference.

Davies and Drake were clear that this music was not to be taken politically, and consequently, the music was not ostensibly referential. But as Peter Tregear points out, erasure has historically happened through the assertion of a national identity: 'nationalist

[69] Brown, 'Tansy Davies; *Troubairitz*; Classical'. 'British composers don't get very far these days if they live in an ivory tower. Any music ensemble seeking public funding needs an outreach programme, needs to connect. The same is true of the commissioned composers.'
[70] Christopher Morley, 'Reviews: Lifted on wings of Falling Angel,' *Birmingham Post*, February 5, 2007. https://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-158821757.html [accessed December 8, 2016].
[71] Morley, 'Reviews: Lifted on wings of Falling Angel.'
[72] Morrison, 'Emotional voyeurism.'

music … does not need to have specific nationalist signifiers.'[73] Indeed, the rejection of explicit signifiers was characteristic of the way in which nineteenth-century German music sought to cast itself as universal: 'simply put, it is the idea that such music can represent at the same time both an exemplary cultural expression of the German people *and* a universal style.'[74] This is characteristic of music associated with 9/11 in general: much classical music used in commemorative concerts for 9/11, including John Adams' *On the Transmigration of Souls* and Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings* were seen as appropriate because of their stylistic conservatism, something that **reflected** a German, or at least European, aesthetic; in other words, they were seen as appropriate 'precisely because they are held to reinforce what is universally good about Western culture.'[75]

It is perhaps paradoxical, from this perspective, that the shaman's attempts to heal manifest as a commenting upon and speaking over the action in a rhythmic gibberish, a 'convulsive vocal percussion.'[76] In other words, the same 'invasive' rhythms that have been so central to British discourse on urban music were inextricably caught up in the shaman's attempts to heal. Just like a group of raving bodies, the protagonists of *Between Worlds* find themselves moving to a series of repetitive beats in an attempt to surrender earthly realities and reach a cosmic plane. But again the *disruptive* nature of this rhythmic gibberish seems to cast the opera's musical space as a rural entity upon which the shaman's repetitive beats appear as a rave-like music. Most critics found the shaman perplexing: Alexandra Coghlan wrote that in amongst the attempt to negotiate the story's various different levels the shaman 'confuses matters further, spreading the balm of mysticism on a social wound that

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[73] Peter Tregear, 'For *Alle Menschen*?' in *Music in the Post-9/11 World*, ed. Jonathan Ritter and J. Martin Daughtry (New York & London: Routledge, 2007), 157.
[74] Ibid, 158.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Alexandra Coghlan, 'ENO's *Between Worlds* at the Barbican reviewed: too respectful,' *The Spectator*, April 18, 2015, http://www.spectator.co.uk/2015/04/so-respectful-as-to-say-nothing-at-all-enos-between-worlds-at-the-barbican-reviewed/ [accessed December 8, 2016].

simply cannot be staunched.'[77] As Barry Millington wrote, 'he serves, we are told, to "relay messages across time and space", but often disrupts the numinous tenor of the proceedings, even appearing callous or malignant.'[78] This profound dissonance between the harsh and repetitive rhythms of the shaman's vocalisations, and the attempt to heal or bring calm suggests that it is the rhythms themselves that need to be dispensed with. In order to understand this more fully, we need to look at the way that a sense of landscape is cultivated around an urban/rural binary.

Landscape: urban and rural

Rather than looking further at this problem in explicitly racial terms, I want to turn back to the issue of the urban, since this has been central to rave, and to Davies's image. This problem underscores the way in which the urban is conceived of in twenty-first century Britain as an assault not just upon modernist transcendence, but also its other inverse: the rural. But to understand this, again we need to go back to the 90s, and specifically, to the youth subculture known as Acid House that flourished in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and later became known as rave.[79] In the early 1990s, Acid House parties were held in rural areas, and were essentially large gatherings of young people, who danced to repetitive music and took illegal narcotics. Acid House parties occurred frequently in the Home Counties, the crowds of dancing young people and thumping repetitive beats disturbing the sleep of nearby rural residents.[80] The increasing scale of these parties (some reached sizes

[77] Ibid.
[78] Millington, '"A resonant, multi-layered work".'
[79] See Reynolds, *Energy Flash*, 41-82, and 180.
[80] Andrew Hill, 'Acid House and Thatcherism: Contesting Spaces in Late 1980s Britain,' *Space and Polity* 7/3 (2003): 219-232 at 225.

of twenty thousand[81]) resulted in what Hill describes as a 'moral panic' and the passing of a set of laws that aimed to prevent them. So it was the legacy of Acid House, and later rave, that led to the implementation of the Criminal Justice Act, which sought to crack down on groups of young people in public places playing or listening to music characterized by a succession of repetitive beats. While the backlash against this rave scene was ostensibly to do with the levels of noise pollution caused throughout the night, and their negative impact on rural residents, as well as the use of illegal drugs and the appropriation of industrial spaces (such as film studios and aircraft hangars), an underlying problem was the sense of attack posed by the urban upon the rural. The new Acid House/rave scene expanded from London clubs into rural areas in order for the parties to increase in scale.[82] Moreover, there was the sense that this growing cluster of unruly young people was escaping its urban quarantine and overflowing into the pure expanse of the countryside where it posed a threat to the fabric of British society. As Hill writes, 'across the 20th century, [the countryside] continued to stand as a symbolic home for values that have been fundamental to the Conservatives, including conservatism, tradition, respectability and order.'[83] As an urban assault upon the rural, Acid House undermined 'the Conservatives' attempt to maintain stability in the countryside.'[84] The result was that rave became a profoundly antagonistic way of enjoying music: paraphrasing Barney Hoskyns in the *NME* in 1981, Simon Reynolds writes of the underlying declaration behind rave: 'we must make of joy a crime against the state.'[85] Through its attack on the countryside, rave seemed to attack British identity itself, postulating the urban as a more desirable alternative.

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[81] Andrew Hill, 'Acid House and Thatcherism: Noise, the Mob, and the English Countryside,' *The British Journal of Sociology* 53/1 (2002): 89-105 at 89.
[82] Hill, 'Noise, the Mob, and the English Countryside,' 89. See also John, 'UK Rave Culture,' 162.
[83] Hill, 'Contesting Spaces,' 225.
[84] John, 'UK Rave Culture,' 178.
[85] Reynolds, *Energy Flash*, xxviii.

A point often made in relation to Davies's music is that, through being both rural and urban, there is a sense that, here too, the urban infects the rural. This results in landscape change, since 'landscape is not "Nature" but is overwritten with human actions.'[86] The actions wrought upon this metaphorical landscape become like marks upon a blank canvas. It becomes shaped by a force that is seen as lamentably urban. These issues play out especially strongly in the short opera *Elephant and Castle*, co-created by Davies and DJ and electronica artist Mira Calix, as a response to the demolishing of a 'disastrous … 1960s [council] estate' in Elephant and Castle in London, which they 'inexplicably believe to be "not all bad" (as someone sings at the end).'[87] This work was to be a commentary or even protest upon the destruction of an urban landmark: *Elephant and Castle* was described as being a piece about '"architecture and aspiration, urban legends and primal myths, past and future, work and play, children and parents,"'[88] for which writer Morrison produced

> an updated Hansel and Gretel fable … Two kids, alienated from their frazzled mum … wander off to sample the Elephant's delights while the distraught dad … wails in anguish over a Hammond organ and a sleazy bingo caller … evokes the tacky pleasures of Sixties leisure activities.[89]

The story is, in other words, one of a failure of working class parents and subsequent fear that the children are somehow going to be lost to the urban. The musical score reflected this, being 'as brutal and uningratiating as the story, fusing aggressively amplified instruments with a harsh soundtrack of urban alienation.'[90] Part of this clash between the urban and rural was manifested in the marriage between Davies's and Calix's work: 'Obviously,' Calix is quoted, 'they thought that because I write with electronics, my music

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[86] Bennett Hogg, 'Healing the Cut: Music, Landscape, Nature, Culture,' *Contemporary Music Review* 34/4 (2015): 282.
[87] Richard Morrison, 'Elephant and Castle,' *The Times*, June 22, 2007, Section; Features; Times2, 21.
[88] Andrew Clements, 'The Guide: music: Elephant and Castle Snape,' *The Guardian*, June 16, 2007, The Guide, 27.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Barry Millington, 'Brutal requiem for London's architectural blunder,' *The Evening Standard*, June 22, 2007, A, 34.

would have some kind of relationship with the urban environment, but ironically, my inspirations are from nature. In fact, to me, Tansy's music sounds really techno, and mine sounds pastoral.'[91] The way that the two composers found common ground was through the apparent neutrality of rhythm. 'We both use rhythm in a similar way; irregular patterns and weird quirky things,' Davies is quoted. Calix agrees: 'When I first heard Tansy's music, I thought, wow, we use totally different instruments but rhythmically we both have this funny little jerk.'[92] Again what is astonishing is that the sense of physical and rhythmic jerks, so tightly tied up both with racialized musical discourse and the aesthetic of the urban, again becomes a way of neutralizing difference. And yet, the point remains that *Elephant and Castle* was premiered at Aldeburgh, and was consequently set in the green landscape of Snape Maltings. In other words, the council estate being portrayed was just an urban abstraction projected onto a rural landscape: rather than making the audience experience the urban monstrosity for themselves, the work 'makes its audience promenade through environments in Snape from a concert hall to a dilapidated dovecote and a muddy reed-bed.'[93] Ultimately, this fear of the urban played out in a rural performance space.

As discussed in the introduction, in early twentieth-century Britain, the contrast between an idealized rural and a dangerous or threatening urban became a metaphor by which, as Jenny Doctor writes, British musicians made sense of a 'dichotomy of modernism and traditional ideals.'[94] This idea is still present as a reductive trope in contemporary popular discourse on British national identity, repeated as recently as 2011 in a book by Em Marshall entitled *Music in the Landscape*: 'Britain is a nation whose literature, art and music are drawn from her landscape, reflecting the soil from which the author was born and the

[91] Service, 'It ain't over 'til the fat monkey sings.'
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Doctor, 'Parataxis of British Musical Modernism,' 89.

views he [sic] drank in.'[95] The sense that Davies is a manifestly 'British' composer is reflected in numerous ways, perhaps the most important of which is her presence in the *NMC Songbook*, an ambitious attempt to revitalize the art-song in Britain, which contained 96 commissions and sought to reflect the 'the varied landscape of British (and Irish) music.'[96] For Marshall, the British landscape is not untouched, but rather, it 'is one that has been created by the British people – man has shaped the countryside in his own way … The countryside is a peopled countryside.'[97] The issue of shaping, touching or marking the countryside is important to understanding the popular reception of Davies's music, since it involves conceiving of the rural landscape as a neutral body that has been repeatedly subject to a set of traumas.

Many journalists and critics play up these issues. When Davies's work *Hinterland* was performed, it was programmed alongside Ralph Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending*. As one reviewer wrote,

> The world premiere of *Hinterland* by Tansy Davies was a combination of disparate parts which ably illustrated energy, loneliness then decay of an urban landscape. Its hard rhythmic edge was arguably a necessary corrective to … the idealised landscape evoked in Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending*.[98]

It is easy to read *Hinterland* as a corrective or foil to Vaughan Williams' work, traditionally viewed as reflecting a parochial, 'cow pat' aesthetic.[99] In this sense, Davies's urban music is a kind of lament that strengthens the promise of this idealised landscape. But this dialogue

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[95] Em Marshall, *Music in the Landscape: How the British Countryside Inspired Some of our Greatest Composers* (London: Robert Hale, 2011), 15.
[96] Tom Service, 'From the terraces to the treetops: You wait ages for a British composer to write a song - then 96 come along at once,' *The Guardian*, March 31, 2009, G2; Arts; Classical; Features, 24.
[97] Marshall, *Music in the Landscape*, 16.
[98] 'Appropriate nod to previous directors,' *The Gloucester Citizen*, July 25, 2008, 10.
[99] Quoted in Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism*, 50; see also Alain Frogley, 'Constructing Englishness in Music: National Character and the Reception of Vaughan Williams,' in *Vaughan Williams Studies*, ed. Alain Frogley (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 4. As Frogley writes, this is of course representative of a British nationalism, reflecting a 'crucial position in the ideological fault-lines of an imperial power *par excellence*.'

can also be viewed as an ongoing attempt in the British music scene to recuperate the urban cool of British music. One reviewer wrote that 'Classical music has always had a bias towards rural sounds and feelings. But a new generation of composers is changing all that. There's an exciting urban heat and energy in the music of Tansy Davies.'[100] Davies's music was also used in a 2009 music festival that sought to quash the 'narrow view' that British identity is inextricably linked to the countryside, reported upon in an article entitled 'You'll see we're not bumpkins.'[101] There is a constant tension here: Davies's dialogue with nature likewise seems to undercut, or at least soften, her urban credentials; her music is less 'urban' in and of itself than it is 'urban' against an always rural British backdrop that underscores her fundamental insider status within the modernist British scene. In fact, this critic's reference to Vaughan Williams is part of a large tradition in which the works of contemporary British composers are compared to those of older composers.[102] For example, David Fanning writes of Davies's instrumental work *Iris* that its 'musical poles are a Purcell-derived chorale and a scrubby Birtwistlian modernism',[103] a description that could be applied to her work more generally: the 'Purcell-derived chorale' taps into the 'modally wodally'[104] nostalgic British pastoral aesthetic, while the 'scrubby' modernism of Birtwistle is a reference to spiky or difficult modernism in general.

A similar set of issues were raised by Davies's next major premiere after *Between*

[100] Ivan Hewett, 'Classical & Jazz,' *The Daily Telegraph*, December 4, 2010, Review; Features, 17.
[101] 'You'll see we're not bumpkins; Festival sets out to quash "narrow view" of English music,' *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, August 21, 2009, 69. Davies's music can even help to revise the way older British music is associated with the countryside: an article by Richard Morrison in late 2015 reminds us that Vaughan Williams' *A London Symphony* speaks 'of the poverty and loneliness inherent in a great city' and 'The *Pastoral*, despite its name, mulls over the horror, waste and despair of the First World War.' Richard Morrison, 'Not a composer of "cowpat" music,' *The Times*, December 26, 2015, Saturday Review; Features, 14.
[102] See Wiebe, *Britten's Unquiet Pasts*, chs. 3 & 4, esp. 116; and Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism*, ch. 1.
[103] Fanning, 'A flurry of firsts.'
[104] Quoted in Rupprecht, *British Musical Modernism*, 50.

Worlds, an orchestral work entitled *Re-greening*, premiered at the Proms on August 8th, 2015 as a prelude to Mahler's Ninth Symphony. The work extended the linked themes of the rural and the bodily: by contrast to Mahler's 'premonitions of death', *Re-greening* brought 'hope and new life in the form of springtime shoots', with its woodwinds' 'tendril textures suggesting time-lapse photography of a burgeoning forest.'[105] It was 'based on mythological lifecycles,'[106] extending the sense that the rural or the natural is also a site of history, of legacy, and of national identity. In addition to this, the orchestra was required to sing sections of *Sumer is icumen in*,[107] and a canon by Thomas Tallis, both works being, according to Davies, '"parallel lines of ancient growth"' – one critic described them as 'age-old English melodies that the orchestra's players sing very quietly and purely near the beginning and end of the piece. It's enchanting.'[108] Geoff Brown applauded these 'ancient survivals cunningly wrapped into this seven-minute whirlwind, a gorgeous celebration of youth and rebirth.'[109] This use of Elizabethan music is part of an older tradition of British quotation, one that composers like Vaughan Williams and Benjamin Britten drew upon in order to make points about the **post-war rejuvenation** of British musical culture through metaphors of natural or seasonal renewal.[110] And yet at the heart of the work was a sense of subversion – the work was performed without a conductor and sections were played from memory: 'Uninhibited by music stands,' wrote Wayne Savage, '[the National Youth

[105] Geoff Brown, 'Proms 30 and 31: Late Night Sinatra; NYOGB/Elder at Albert Hall,' *The Times*, August 10, 2015, http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/arts/music/proms/article4521920.ece [accessed December 9, 2016].
[106] '*Regreening*,' *Birmingham Post*, August 13, 2015, Life; Features, 7.
[107] Hogg also mentions this work with reference to music and landscape. See Hogg, 'Healing the Cut,' 282.
[108] Andrew Clements, 'NYO/Elder review – remarkable, electrifying Mahler and enchanting Tansy Davies; Snape Maltings Concert HallThe life-affirming National Youth Orchestra was exceptional in the death-obsessed Ninth Symphony under Mark Elder's subtlety-seeking baton', *The Guardian*, August 7, 2015. https://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/aug/07/national-youth-orchestra-mark-elder-maltings-concert-hall-snape
[109] Brown, 'Proms 30 and 31.'
[110] Onderdonk, 'The Composer and Society,' 15. See also Wiebe, *Britten's Unquiet Pasts*, ch. 4.

Orchestra] will move, dance, sing, play and push themselves.'[111] So again the rural atmosphere on stage was underscored by the sense of a lack of discipline – the NYO, rather than being an orchestra, were now a group of youngsters in a 'state of play actively encouraged' for the work,[112] something that touches on the anxiety about groups of young people in rural areas surrendering all self-restraint when taking part in raves. A graphic score of *Re-greening* supports this, appearing to show, among other things, a 'shaman' at the very centre.[113]

But this is not the only, or even best, way of approaching the urban/rural binary as revealed in Davies's work. In his discussion of the music of Vaughan Williams, Eric Saylor argues that the 'pastoral' has three distinct different meanings, the second and third of which are most important for the present discussion.[114] The second is a nostalgic, 'soft pastoralism', which 'describes the country with an implicit or explicit contrast to the urban;' the third is a reaction against the second, a 'hard pastoralism' that is critical of 'essentially dishonest expressive modes that attempt to deny the effects (or even the existence) of modernity and all of its benefits.'[115] For Daniel Grimley, the rural vision of Britishness present in Vaughan Williams' music has always engaged with the landscape in this latter sense, since landscape is 'predicated on a sense of loss and abstraction.'[116] Abstraction is important in getting around the urban/rural binary.

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[111] Wayne Savage, 'National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain among Snape Proms Highlights,' *East Anglian Daily Times*, August 3, 2015, http://www.eadt.co.uk/what-s on/national_youth_orchestra_of_great_britain_among_snape_proms_highlights_1_4178660 [accessed December 9, 2016].
[112] Brown, 'NYOGB/Elder at Albert Hall.'
[113] 'Tansy Davies: *Re-greening* for large orchestra (NYO, third performance),' published August 10, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=37sOYYvDo_c [accessed December 9, 2016].
[114] Eric Saylor, '"It's Not Lambkins Frisking at All": British Pastoral Music and the Great War,' *The Musical Quarterly* 91/1-2 (2008): 41-42. The first is a kind of 'neoclassical' pastoralism encapsulated in the utopian phrase 'Et in Arcadia ego.' See also in the same issue, Anthony Barone, 'Modernist Rifts in a Pastoral Landscape: Observations on the Manuscripts of Vaughan Williams's Fourth Symphony,' *The Musical Quarterly* 91/1-2 (2008): 60-88.
[115] Ibid, 42-43.
[116] Grimley, 'Landscape and Distance,' in *British Music and Modernism (1895-1960)*, ed. Riley, 149.

For example, when Davies's *Hinterland* was premiered in Cheltenham, one writer viewed it as 'a combination of disparate parts which ably illustrated [the] energy, loneliness then decay of an urban landscape.'[117] Likewise, in addition to being generically urban, her work *Salt Box* was described by Alexandra Coghlan as 'an evocative and melancholic musical landscape for chamber ensemble and electronics.'[118] The sense of landscape in Davies's work is not always conceived, then, in terms of such an explicit binary between urban and rural. Likewise, in a review of a CD collection of Tansy Davies's works, Geoff Brown refers to both of her most paradigmatic works, *Neon* and *Grind Show (electric)*, as 'faintly disturbing landscape pieces', writing that

> *Neon*, the first track, establishes several characteristics. Lopsided rhythms careen and crash. The sound world is dirty, the music 'distressed'. We visit the same world at a slower pace in *inside out 2*, a piece with the erratic progress and fascination of a wonky machine.[119]

Even in this review, where the obviously more urban characteristics of the former two contrast with the less explicitly urban-sounding latter work, all three are nevertheless described as 'landscape' pieces, unified by the sense of a bodily or rhythmic disturbance. In particular, the meaning of 'landscape' here is fluid, and can refer to both urban or rural spaces. For many writers, 'landscape' and 'cityscape' become closely linked, almost interchangeable. One critic thought that through its 'hard rhythmic edge' *Hinterland* 'conveyed the soundworld of an imaginary, decaying cityscape.'[120] Another wrote of a performance of *Grind Show (Electric*) that the work 'rattles and jerks like a clunky train

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[117] 'Appropriate nod to previous directors,' *The Gloucester Citizen* July 25th, 2008, [no page].
[118] Alexandra Coghlan, 'Friend or foe?' *Prospect*, January 26, 2012. http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/arts-and-books/friend-or-foe-classical-music-electronic-gabriel-prokofiev [accessed December 9, 2016].
[119] Brown, '*Troubairitz*'. 'Another piece, *Grind Show (electric)*, conjures up [Francisco] Goya. Defying its pretty name, the Azalea Ensemble, conducted by Christopher Austin, recreates these faintly disturbing landscape pieces with lurid precision and grit.'
[120] Rian Evans, 'Reviews: Classical: Festival Academy/Brabbins Pittville Pump Room, Cheltenham,' *The Guardian*, July 22, 2008, Guardian Review Pages, 34.

through cityscapes.'[121] Both writers conceive of the urban as somehow defective or lying in ruin. The urban becomes even more fluid in Christopher Morley's description of 'Tansy Davies's deliciously sleazy *Grind Show (Electric)*, its live foreground and electronic background conveying an almost visual panorama.'[122] Here, the same sense of landscape is evoked, but it is neither urban nor rural.

There is a profound tension here, between rural and urban, between landscape and cityscape. The urban assault upon the rural enacted by rave in the early 1990s becomes something much more complicated when seen through the discourse on Davies's music. Reading this back onto *Between Worlds* suggests that, even if there is a dimension of utopianism present in the opera, any attempt at erasure begins from the acknowledgment of a modern atrocity. In the final section, I want to focus more on the sense of erasure around a specific term, 'energy', which is used by Davies to refer to many different aspects of her music. As I will show, the term 'energy' supports the eradication of difference – between different people, the motions of the body, of the machine, and of nature; all of these collapse into one another.

The energy of funk

From the very beginning of her career, Davies's music has been described in terms of natural energy. The earliest instance of this discourse on Davies's music appeared, in a 2001 *Guardian* article by Tom Service, who wrote that 'the conflict between the human and the natural, the bodily and the geological – between Prince and Xenakis – is at the heart of her

[121] Sophie Hern, 'Classical,' *Metro*, June 5, 2008, 25.
[122] Christopher Morley, 'Graphic and gripping night which kept audience riveted,' *Birmingham Post*, June 9, 2008, Features, 12. 'Tansy Davies's deliciously sleazy *Grind Show (Electric)*, its live foreground and electronic background conveying an almost visual panorama.'

music.'[123] This was perhaps merely a way of hooking readers with an intriguing binary: in 2013 Norman Stinchcombe criticised Service in a review of a CD of Davies's music, complaining that 'a risible publicity blurb invokes Xenakis and Prince but none of the nine works on this disc resemble either the Greek's rebarbative doodling or the yearning eroticism of Minneapolis's pop poseur.'[124] But the pieces of the metaphor are all set out here: the clash between a popular musician and an avant-garde composer is paired with two other binaries (the human and the natural, the bodily and the geological), each of which shares a preoccupation with energy. In particular, Prince becomes a reference point here, since he 'blurs the binary distinctions that are central to the social organization of concepts of race and sexual orientation,'[125] something that also happens in discourse on Davies's music. All of these themes have at their root a nebulous preoccupation with the neutral term 'energy' that is used repeatedly and has the effect of giving the discourse an abstract, nonspecific nature.[126]

This becomes most apparent when we look more closely at the term 'funk', which has, like this natural energy, followed Davies from the earliest stages of her career. It is here that race resurfaces, since if, as Tony Bolden writes, we conceive of race in terms of a mathematical graph, 'it's readily apparent that "funk(y)" has come to signify almost "everything on the *y* axis of blackness".'[127] But unlike Turnage's work, there is much less explicit engagement with any specific jazz or funk musicians. While Turnage mingles

[123] Tom Service, 'She's got the funk: Tansy Davies started out in a prog rock band and gets her kicks dancing to Prince. How did she end up writing classical music?' *The Guardian*, Guardian Features Pages, June 18, 2001, 11.
[124] Norman Stinchcombe, 'Classical; Spine; Tansy Davies; CD Releases,' *Birmingham Post*, January 31, 2013, Life; Features, 9.
[125] Robert Walser, 'Prince as Queer Poststructuralist,' *Popular Music and Society* 18/2 (1996): 84.
[126] The abstractness manifests in the tenuous way in which these reference points are linked. Even if we accept that funk has its roots as a music of urban protest, Prince's songs are a long way from the rap that was seen as being so threatening to the fabric of British society in the second decade of the twenty-first century.
[127] Bolden, 'Theorizing the Funk,' 15.

specifically 'black' musical genres (regardless of how problematically), Davies seems to use this word in a much more abstracted sense. 'Funk' first appeared in Service's article of 2001 and has appeared consistently up until the present. He quotes Davies:

> I love funky music … I often start my pieces by writing funky bass lines. I was dancing to Prince and listening to the different layers in his music – the voice, the brass and the bass – and I could hear bits of my piece, *Small Black Stone* (a work for viola and piano, recently performed at the South Bank's *State of the Nation* weekend). It's like my version of Prince.[128]

Immediately, the use of funk is linked to a set of technical descriptions of her music that are both evocative and baffling. The references to bass lines and layers immediately evoke the stratified textures of rhythmic play associated with funk and hip hop. Indeed, just like the stratified percussive layers of funk that Justin Williams describes as characterizing much hip-hop music,[129] Davies writes that 'like a lot of my music, it's built up layer by layer, a bit like funk.'[130] In general, the piece that comes closest to any pointed kind of funk influence is Davies's *Neon*, originally premiered in 2004 (see ex. 3), but which became a staple of media discourse and was consequently referenced with increasing frequency, as well as being more frequently performed in subsequent years.[131] In 2014 Neil Fisher complemented 'Davies's DayGlo *Neon*,with its funked-up synthesizer bouncing the piece from climax to climax';[132] one reviewer described *Neon*, *inside out 2* and *Grind Show Electric* as 'twisted funk hybrids';[133] and most recently, Adam Harper wrote that

> Tansy Davies's highly syncopated and frequently funky *Neon* saw atonal runs and barking single reeds woven between outspread drum hits and a jabbering synthesizer affecting a slap bass. The piece drove its tonality and syncopations to

[128] Service, 'She's got the funk.'
[129] Williams, *Rhymin' and Stealin'*, 2.
[130] Hewett, 'I love to work out.'
[131] 'Performances,' *Faber Music Website*, http://www.fabermusic.com/composers/tansy-davies/performances [accessed December 9, 2016].
[132] Neil Fisher, 'Asko/Schönberg Concert,' *The Times*, October 7, 2014, T2; Features, 11.
[133] Ashley, 'Currie/Asko Schonberg/Rundell.'

the brink of chaos.[134]

For Ted Gioia, it is specifically the energetic frenzy of jazz that leads to a 'trance' like state that one could see as being aesthetically linked to rave music.[135] But there are other, more specific themes to do with the enjoyment of work and physical exertion touched upon by Bolden's definition of funk.[136] For Andy Gill, the issue of work was touched on in a praise of the way that *Neon*'s 'industrious staccato strings, woodwind, keyboard and percussion dart hyperactively hither and thither, like winking city lights.'[137] Likewise, when Richard Whitehouse describes *Neon* and *Inside Out 2* as 'compact studies in pungent counterpoint and incisive rhythms – with the former as evocative in its trade-off between human and mechanistic motion as the latter seems unremittingly abstract,'[138] we can read this pungency as a reference to the odour of funk.

It is here that 'funk' begins to function as part of an overriding and reductive binary, or as what Ricky Vincent describes as 'a deliberate reaction to – and rejection of – the traditional Western world's predilection for formality, pretense, and self-repression.'[139] Through funk, Davies is seen in many cases as generically exotic, something that also leads to an interest from commentators in her own physique. For example, a trend running through the media response to her work has been a fascination with her enjoyment of

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[134] Adam Harper, 'First Performances; Metal Wood Skin: The Colin Currie Percussion Festival, Southbank Centre, London, 'The Percussion Universe of Axel Borup-Jørgensen': Solo; Music for percussion+viola; *La Primavera*; *Periphrasis*; *Winter Music*. Gert Mortensen (perc.), Percurama Percussion Ensemble, Tim Frederiksen (vla), Duo Crossfire, Michala Petri (rec.), DNSO Brass Quintet. OUR Recordings,' *Tempo* 69/272 (2015): 1. 'The latter performed works by Louis Andriessen alongside some by younger composers in the festival's second concert, given in the afternoon of Sunday, 5 October. It had as its prevailing theme the synthesis of concert and popular music, of which Andriessen was counted as a forerunner.' … '[*neon*'s] the jazz-fusion palette faintly conjured the music of an early 1970s action film.'

[135] Gioia, 'Jazz and the Primitivist Myth,' 138-139.

[136] Bolden, 'Theorizing the Funk,' 15.

[137] Andy Gill, 'Review: Tansy Davies, *Troubairitz* (Nonclassical),' *Arts & Book Review*, May 20, 2011, Reviews section, (no page number).

[138] Whitehouse, 'Review.'

[139] Quoted in Amy Nathan Wright, 'A Philosophy of Funk: The Politics and Pleasure of a Parliafunkadelicment Thang!' in *The Funk Era and Beyond*, ed. Bolden, 37.

physical exercise and her consequent musculature. As Davies told Hewett, working out is 'how I unwind after a really hard day's composing. I'm into big muscles.' '[She] doesn't at all mind when I check out her right bicep,' wrote Hewett, 'It's rock-hard.'[140] Here, the obsession with black cultural forms also translates into a pernicious sexual dynamic, in which the male writer feels compelled to scrutinise and even touch a female composer's body. For Hewett, the perspiration from the bodily motion of exercise was reflected in Davies's physical appearance as much as through her music, leading him to describe *Neon* as 'a bit like a really sweaty work-out.'[141] This was so remarkable that Hewett read Davies's entire physical appearance as subversive of traditional new music:

Ex. 3. *Neon*, opening measures

[140] Hewett, 'I love to work out.'
[141] Ibid.



Classical composers are a mild and bookish lot on the whole. They like to wrap up warm, are into organic food, and rarely break into a run. Their music reflects the fact

> that they live in their heads, rather than their bodies. Tansy Davies is one of a handful of younger composers who break that mould. She may look elfin, and wear softly feminine cashmere pullovers, but her music is tough. It leaps about wildly, with lots of sudden stops and starts, and the sound has an abrasive edge.[142]

A comparison with a later interview is instructive in further teasing out the sexism of Hewett's reading. These themes came up again in Davies's 2015 interview with Fiona Maddocks, but here the gender binary was more fluid. Maddocks asked Davies about her thoughts on being a woman composer, and Davies responded that

> Of course women need to have a wider public role, but I'm not sure it's just about women. We all have masculine and feminine in us. We've lost our balance globally, as a species. We're all responsible and we all need to work to adjust that balance. It's not only a problem for women; we all need both kinds of energy if we're to function at our best.

Maddocks then states that 'I've heard you have big muscles – which is to say, you work out a lot?', but she does not draw a link between physical exercise and male gender, and nor does she focus any further on Davies's physical appearance. Hewett's reading of Davies's appearance refers to the mind/body dualism that has been so crucial to configurations of race, but also uses it in relation to gender stereotypes. In her discussion with Fiona Maddocks, however, Davies uses the theme of energy to suggest a dissolution of gender that is consistent with a rave aesthetic of harmonious togetherness.

These issues also play out especially strongly around Davies's fascination with pulse. Davies is quoted:

> One of the things I've been particularly fascinated by is funk music, particularly in the way the counterpoint builds up to create a spiky rhythmic texture. I'm interested in the subtleties of rhythmic feel which you can't write down. … There's one record by Miles Davis, *On the Corner*, that's always fascinated me. You think of funk as a taut, shiny thing, but he takes the tension out of it so everything relaxes. It becomes more elastic and the pulses get pulled around.[143]

[142] Ibid.
[143] Grimley, 'Tansy Davies funks up her compositions.'

Then again, elsewhere, 'I like to keep people guessing by suggesting a pulse, and then showing that actually the true pulse is somewhere else.'[144] Always, then, funk is somehow subversive, or surprising. This should be read with reference to Davies's description of the number '11' in *Between Worlds*, which the 'waves of energy … just keep breaking against', adding a 'kind of a subversive element even within a structure that's quite rigid.'[145] As she explains, 'I like pulse-related music … I think it can give structural energy: it's not something I'm afraid to use.'[146] This quotation should also be compared directly with quotations from Turnage about funk. Davies's reference to Miles Davis here is unique among her discussions of funk work, something that adds to the lack of specificity. This energy is bodily – the use of the term 'pulse' rather than 'beat' suggests a specifically bodily type of rhythm. And again, this reference to bodily movement seems to refer to the urban: as Brown writes, 'with Tansy Davies, contemporary street life pulses through particularly strongly.'[147] There is a profound contradiction here, between **energy** and restraint: as Larry Scanlon writes, '"pulse" is not some pure source of vitality, but an entity which is already semiotic, which is regulatory as well as life-giving – life giving *because* regulatory.'[148] The sense that Davies is always resistant to tradition and transgressive of institutional norms, is both signalled and explained away by references to funk.

In other instances, this metaphor of the frenzied activity draws together the urban and the rural. As part of the City of London Festival's 50th Anniversary, a festival with a

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[144] Hewett, 'I love to work out.'
[145] Service, 'How can you make an opera about 9/11?'
[146] Grimley, 'Tansy Davies funks up her compositions.' Davies expands: Grimley then links this to the *Rite of Spring*, arguing that with modernism 'composers abandoned pulse along with tonality.'
[147] Geoff Brown, 'Tansy Davies; Troubairitz; Classical,' *The Times*, April 1, 2011, T2; Features, 9. 'British composers don't get very far these days if they live in an ivory tower. Any music ensemble seeking public funding needs an outreach programme, needs to connect. The same is true of the commissioned composers.'
[148] Larry Scanlon, '"Death is a Drum": Rhythm, Modernity, and the Negro Poet Laureate,' in *Music and the Racial Imagination*, ed. Radano and Bohlman, 510-553.

'continuing emphasis on biodiversity',[149] Davies (whose first name was described by reviewers as 'distinctly floral'[150]) offered a work entitled *Delphic Bee*. Here, the 'sharp rhythmic angles and staccato dancing of the music's almost Stravinskian ritual [of] life suggested the pattern-making activities of bees and their frenzied buzzing',[151] a description that draws together the polarised themes of nature and the city through the themes of motion and work. This was a 'very orderly sort of frenzy: dry, cleanly elegant, Stavinskyan and witty.'[152] If Davies's music 'dart[s] hyperactively hither and thither',[153] it can do so just as easily like winking city lights as it can like buzzing countryside bees. Likewise, *Leaf Springs* **(a title similarly evocative of nature)** contained 'concentrated interlocking rhythmic patterns',[154] a wording that seems to evoke the order and speed of industrial production and activity, as well as the intricate web of a plant's veins. Again, the issue of funk returns, with one reviewer writing that '[The Sirocco Saxophone Quartet] sounded like a cool reed section in a jazz orchestra when they gave the world premiere of Tansy Davies's jaunty *Leaf Springs*.'[155] As Bolden writes,

> Characterised by an aesthetic that foregrounds speed, self-reflexivity, asymmetry, dissonance, and repetition, funkativity bespeaks a kinetic epistemology comprised of dynamic principles stored in a virtual archive of cultural memory, replete with (pre)configuring riffs and rhymes, twists and turns, shakes and breaks that are perpetually (re)sampled and (re)mixed in a manner comparable to electricity.[156]

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[149] Barry Millington, 'Classical,' *The Evening Standard*, June 29, 2012, Features, 49. 'The environmentalist theme of flowers, which is also that of Bees, was touched on in a concert by the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment under Edward Gardner, in the Mansion House (on its roof, an improbable festival beehive).'
[150] Paul Driver, 'Flowers, bees, suicide bombers,' *The Sunday Times*, June 26, 2005, 26.
[151] Hilary Finch, 'Counterpoise; Concert,' *The Times*, July 3, 2012, T2; Features; Review, 13.
[152] Driver, 'Flowers, bees,' 26.
[153] Gill, 'Review.'
[154] Hilary Finch, 'PLG Young Artists,' *The Times*, January 12, 2009, T2; Features; 20.
[155] Stephen Pritchard, 'Complex, clever, ear-splitting at times – but always excellent,' *The Observer*, January 11, 2009, Observer Review Arts Pages, 16.
[156] Bolden, 'Theorizing the Funk,' 15.

It is at this point that a final link with rave can be made. The idea of energetic or spiritual connection in rave is typically figured as 'a vertical connection that begins in the earth and touches the divine realm as it reaches upward, … an image that goes all the way back to shamanism and the axis mundi, or the world tree that stands at the center of the universe.'[157] It is this kind of metaphor that can explain the shaman's high central position in the staging of *Between Worlds*. But it can also explain the links to nature, and more broadly to the greenery of an imaginary rural landscape that is so important in Davies's work. Sylvan quotes one raver, who describes himself as 'a leaf; the leaf is just one little element on this tree but it's part of a little branch, which is part of a big branch, which is part of the trunk' and so on, until the raver is connected to the roots of the whole tree of the universe.[158] This sense of utopian plenitude is very close to the healing that *Between Worlds* aimed to achieve, and yet there is a more aggressive underside that funk provides. In a similar way, funk's spirit of urban protest is ultimately a spirit of revolution – and yet funk registers 'protest through its apocalyptic imagination … [which] envisions a future that can be both cataclysmic and utopian, a vision that witnesses the imminent destruction of this world and the salvation of a chosen community for the kingdom of the next.'[159] While the suggestion of transcendence through nature may attempt to offer consolation, the catastrophic utopianism of funk suggests something more tangible, perhaps even more violently revolutionary.

Conclusion

When the protagonists of *Between Worlds* fall to their deaths, the tragedy is followed by a slow and quiet musical interlude in which two dancers seem to act out the characters'

[157] Sylvan, *Trance Formation*, 87.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Brown, 'Funk Music,' 487. See also Morant, 'Language in Action.'

ascent to the next world: one dancer embraces the other, supports him, pushes him repeatedly upward, eventually seeming to throw him towards heaven. This was a high-point of the opera for many writers. For Barry Millington, 'a poignant acrobatic tableau, depicting the final release of a soul, lingers in the memory.'[160] Similarly, Richard Morrison praised the way these 'gently swooping movements bring the opera to an end.'[161] What is finally achieved here is the release of the soul through dance. Like the attainment of ecstasy on the dancefloor, this final dance seems to achieve a 'kind of *bodily* mysticism, in which mystical union is experienced on physical, somatic and kinesthetic levels,'[162] something touched upon in Ivan Hewett's praising of the way in which the 'spirit realm is brilliantly suggested by Davies in a glassy musical texture uncannily flecked with rhythmic tics.'[163] But some reviewers decided that this conclusion was a false promise: For Richard Morrison, 'you come out feeling not cleansed cathartically but just glad to escape.'[164] And to revisit Coghlan's criticism, this was music responding to a 'a social wound that simply cannot be staunched.'[165] We should view its erasure – of race, of the urban – as part of the opera's failure in this respect. Davies's music is couched in a set of metaphors fraught with racial and social issues, central to which is a fundamental collection of musical appropriations. These appropriations become little more than exercises in mastery.[166] If we view 9/11 as an attack on the Anglo-American West, then it is profoundly ironic (if unsurprising) that the music of subjugated racial and social groups should be invoked in an opera about this event. Davies seems to have it both ways: appropriating 'the symbolic power of street culture',

[160] Millington, '"A resonant, multi-layered work".'
[161] Morrison, 'Emotional voyeurism.'
[162] Sylvan, *Trance Formation*, 78.
[163] Ivan Hewett, 'A new opera about 9/11 tears the heart,' *The Daily Telegraph*, April 13, 2015, News, 23.
[164] Morrison, 'Emotional voyeurism.'
[165] Coghlan, 'ENO's *Between Worlds* at the Barbican reviewed.'
[166] The integration of the ever-problematic urban is a display of power akin to the colonisation that Borio describes. See Borio, 'Musical Communication,' 178.

which is seen as 'authentic, defiant and vital, in other words, "cool"',[167] while at the same time couching this music in metaphors that evoke the musical purity that has long been an irresistible attribute of musical modernism.

[167] Ilan, *Understanding Street Culture*, 3.

Chapter 4 – Musical graffiti

Introduction

Early on in her career, Anna Meredith appeared in the 2009 BBC series *Classic Goldie,* which documented British drum 'n' bass artist Goldie on his journey to write a work for that year's BBC Proms, and which was shown in the run-up to the Proms season.[1] The series rested on one fundamental gimmick, the humour arising from the clashing of two different cultures: classical music on the one hand, and drum 'n' bass, a precursor to grime, on the other.[2] This was reflected in the press: 'He is most famous for his drum & bass music, graffiti and the gold caps on his teeth,' ran an article in *London Lite*, 'Now Goldie has become a classical composer.'[3] 'There's more to him than just urban music and creative dentistry,' wrote another, '… you'll never write off a rapper again.'[4] Goldie's progress was rocky, and he and his mentor, conductor Ivor Setterfield, frequently found themselves at odds with one another. Meredith's role in the series was crucial: her status as both an institutionally-accepted classical composer, and someone in touch with street culture, allowed her to act as a mediator between Goldie and Setterfield. Among other things, Goldie struggled with notating the music he tried to compose. And yet, while Goldie did not know how to create traditional classical notation, being repeatedly described as 'unable' to write music, he nevertheless produced intensely detailed and visually beautiful graphic scores that

[1] *Classic Goldie*, *BBC2*, DVD, directed by Toby Macdonald, United Kingdom, July 31-August 7, 2009.
[2] Zuberi, '"New Throat Fe Chat",' 186. See also White, 'Sign of a Black Planet,' 176. For White, 'It is in UK garage and its musical cousin drum 'n' bass that hip-hop's influence is most apparent and most keenly felt. These groups utilise culturally and locally specific references in their efforts to articulate their experiences of what it is to be young, working class and British.'
[3] 'Goldie bars to spice up 2009 Proms concert,' *London Lite*, April 8, 2009, Features, 5.
[4] 'Best of this week's TV; *Classic Goldie*,' *Daily Record*, July 25, 2009, Features, 18-19.

stylistically resembled graffiti. Meredith, like Goldie, 'love[s] working with visuals',[5] and the two bonded over their shared abilities at creating graphic scores.[6]

But the power structure was fundamentally unequal. Meredith's presence in the series was part of an attempt to get Goldie to abandon graphic scores since they are an implicitly underdeveloped method of notation (something clearly untrue, as the later discussion of graphic scores in this chapter will show). In the early sections of the first episode Goldie is shown in his art studio painting on a huge canvas and reflecting upon his career in the 1990s. He remarks that he has 'tamed the beast': he has since learned to curb his desire to mark public space, and now he produces art in his home studio and it is exhibited lawfully in formal spaces. This sense that graffiti reflects a rejection of social discipline is in fact behind all of Meredith's works. In an interview with Fiona Maddocks, Meredith is quoted as saying 'I draw big graphic shapes to conjure the kind of piece I'm aiming at, with a timeline of what happens where, and arrows and signs for the loud bits. Then I pace around, making cuts and stabs on the score, and stomp and whack the piano and yell. It's all quite tribal.' Maddocks remarks, 'Her neighbours must love her.'[7] In other words, the use of graphic scores (and by extension, the contact with street culture) is a reflection of Meredith's playful irreverence. There is a clear double standard here. While Goldie is encouraged to learn to use notation, Meredith's use of graphic scores is never described by Setterfield as a problem.

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[5] Quoted in Nigel Powlson, 'Night-time city inspires music premiere,' *Derby Evening Telegraph*, January 28, 2011, Features, 25.

[6] But unlike Goldie, this is never described as being a failing: thus the 'inability' to write music is a double standard: he is unable to write music *at all* since he cannot read notes, whereas Meredith's ability to write music is not questioned, even though she prefers not to write notes.

[7] Fiona Maddocks, 'Prom Queen; Anna Meredith's music is "nasty, gutsy, and raucous" by her own admission. So how will her wild new composition for 800 performers be received by the Last Night audience?' *The Evening Standard*, August 8, 2008, 41.

Of course, Meredith's flirtations with street culture in this BBC series are a gimmick. Nevertheless, they are consistent with a poly-modality of experience that has been present in urban and hip hop culture from its inception in the USA. Tricia Rose writes that in the USA in the 1970s, 'stylistic continuities were sustained by internal cross-fertilization between rapping, breakdancing and graffiti writing',[8] these art forms centering around three concepts: '*flow*, *layering* and *ruptures in line*.'[9] Indeed, one could go further and suggest that these different types of urban art forms have always been an expression of the same underlying impulse. As Jeff Chang quotes Jorge 'Popmaster Fabel' Pabon, the 'common pulse that gave life to all these elements [of hip-hop] is rhythm, clearly demonstrated by the beats the DJ selected, the dancers' movements, the MCs' rhyme patterns, and the writer's name or message painted in a flowing, stylized fashion.'[10] It is this that leads Pabon to describe hip-hop dance as a 'physical graffiti', since dance is a creation of flowing, stylized lines in the same way that graffiti art is. Jonathan Ilan agrees with this when he describes street culture in the UK, writing that 'for most urban dwellers the swirls, bubbles, patterns and lines of hip-hop graffiti fade into the background of their consciousness: a ubiquitous presence, perhaps perceived as chaotic and ugly, perhaps as vibrant and beautiful.'[11] Within the context of British hip-hop and grime, Bramwell has likened the sodcasting of tracks on public transport, and the resulting disruption of dominant social relations, as a 'spraying [of] sonic graffiti'.[12] This chapter focuses on the ways in which this multisensory experience of hip-hop art becomes transmuted within an urban British context.

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[8] Tricia Rose, *Black Noise: Rap Music and Black Culture in Contemporary America* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1996), 35.
[9] Ibid, 38.
[10] Jorge 'Popmaster Fabel' Pabon, 'Physical Graffiti,' in *Total Chaos: The Art and Aesthetics of Hip-Hop*, ed. Jeff Chang (New York, NY: Basic Civitas, 2006), 19.
[11] Ilan, *Understanding Street Culture*, 116.
[12] Bramwell, *UK Hip Hop, Grime and the City*, 51-54.

Anna Meredith's music provides a good case study because this almost synaesthetic quality is at the centre of her music: in a *Guardian* radio show, she recently stated that 'thinking about the shapes of a piece of music [is] the very first thing I do when I'm writing a piece of music … I get a blank bit of paper and I literally draw graphic shapes – triangles, big rectangles, lines – to kind of map out the shape, the drama of the piece.'[13] In particular, Meredith exploits this visual aspect of music in two distinct senses: the use of notation, and the use of the performative dimension of concert performances, and I will discuss these broad senses in that order. Urban music or street culture functions as a fundamental background influence for Meredith, often becoming so diffuse as to become almost intangible or meaningless; nevertheless, her work uses shapes as a way of creating visual art and mapping out a sense of flow that links with the linear metaphors that Rose suggests have been central to urban culture.

'Keeping it real': The urban in Anna Meredith's public identity

In commentary and discussion on Meredith's music, the 'urban' manifests in specific markers to do with rhythm, abrasion, and the grit of the street. This is often signalled in very general terms – for example, like Davies' and Turnage's music, it is considered 'deeply funky'.[14] More specifically, her 'rhythmically complex, riff-based,'[15] 2015 orchestral work *Smatter Hauler* was described as 'bright-toned and rhythmically punchy'.[16] Of her work

[13] 'The Guardian Radio Hour with Anna Meredith,' *The Guardian*, March 18, 2016, Music, http://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/mar/18/the-guardian-radio-hour-show-anna-meredith-proms 8.50-9.09 [accessed December 10, 2016].
[14] Andrew Clark, 'A Concerto for Beatbox,' *The Financial Times*, February 5, 2010, Life & Arts, https://www.ft.com/content/69aeab9c-11e4-11df-b6e3-00144feab49a [accessed December 10, 2016].
[15] Jonathan McAloon, 'Proms 2015: Prom 22, Aurora Orchestra, review: "refreshing",' *The Telegraph*, August 3, 2015, Culture http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/proms/11775818/Proms-2015-Prom-22-Aurora-Orchestra-review-refreshing.html [accessed December 10, 2016].
[16] George Hall, 'Aurora Orchestra/Collon review - memorable for all the right reasons,' *The Guardian*,

Beltane one reviewer wrote that 'Meredith's spiky offering had bite.'[17] Her music is frequently lush and tonal, and yet critics are quick to distance her from minimalist or post-minimalist composers: one wrote that her music comes closer to 'Andriessen's spirited punchiness rather than Glass or Riley.'[18] This is a discourse that Meredith contributes to: she told an interviewer that that in general in her works, 'I'll stumble across a rhythm and obsess and burrow into it.'[19] And in turn it reflects a kind of general coolness: Meredith is lauded as 'sparky, streetwise'[20] and 'feisty,'[21] as someone who 'smashes every preconception of a classical composer.'[22] Behind all of this is the authenticity, defiance, and vitality that Ilan describes as a set of irresistible attributes that lead to the appropriation of street culture. Meredith has cultivated an image in which she appears fundamentally approachable, exciting, and exceptional. She linked this directly to hip hop in a 2016 issue of *The Wire*, when she was quoted as saying 'I'll be, like, 60, and keeping it real.'[23] The phrase 'keeping it real' is lifted directly from hip hop, and describes the way in which art reflects realities of urban life that are too uncomfortable to be made widely known.[24] This direct, if superficial, reference to hip hop culture is in one sense an attempt to play up an *enfant terrible* image for classical critics. Meredith rarely if ever cites any traditional modernist composers as influences, making it clear that 'at home I listen to more hip-hoppy stuff than I do

August 3, 2015, Music. http://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/aug/03/aurora-orchestra-collon-prom-22-review [accessed December 10, 2016].
[17] Neil Fisher, 'PLG Young Artists,' *The Times*, January 11, 2007, Features; Times2, 22.
[18] Abi Bliss, 'Only Connect,' *The Wire*, March 2016, 14.
[19] Maddocks, 'Prom Queen'.
[20] Richard Morrison, 'Classical,' *The Times*, October 6, 2012, Saturday Review; Features, 17.
[21] Kenneth Walton, 'Overhaul for a Brighter Future,' *The Scotsman*, July 25, 2005, 30.
[22] Richard Morrison, 'Final two: vote for our Breakthrough nominees; Anna Meredith,' *The Times*, January 9, 2009, T2; Features, 15.
[23] Bliss, 'Only Connect.'
[24] See, for example, Tricia Rose, *The Hip Hop Wars* (New York, NY: Basic Civitas, 2008), 133-148.

contemporary classical music.'[25] Early on in her career she cited the US rapper Eminem as an influence, praising his 'raw, aggressive style' and telling an interviewer that 'I like going out clubbing with my friends … and I don't see why that should change just because I have this career.'[26]

Many of Meredith's musical projects reflect attempts to 'keep it real' explicitly,[27] often through the musical depiction of urban spaces or subject matter.[28] For example, in her *Songs for the M8*,[29] Meredith depicted the motorway in a work whose 'harsh strident tones seemed to embody the worst aspects of a motorway journey.'[30] In *Four Tributes to 4am,*[31]

[25] Pascal Wyse, 'Shlomo and the Beatbox Concerto: What happens when beatboxing's free spirit meets the studied formality of classical music?' *The Guardian*, February 11, 2010, Music, http://www.theguardian.com/music/2010/feb/11/shlomo-anna-meredith-beatbox [accessed December 10, 2016].

[26] Sarah Robertson, 'Composer respects rap; Eminem's music's classic,' *Daily Star*, June 28, 2004, News, 28.

[27] Her *Tarantula in Petrol Blue*, an important example – unfortunately, after its premiere at Aldeburgh it was not covered at all in the British press. See 'Dance,' *The Times*, February 21, 2009, Play List; Features, 34-35. Here it is described as a 'contemporary urban opera of street gangs, love and violence.'

[28] As Clements writes, recently Meredith has taken part in Streetwise Opera, a company which holds 'weekly events in shelters throughout the country,' and aims to help homeless people get people back into work. Andrew Clements, 'Streetwise Opera: The Answer to Everything London,' *The Guardian*, April 20, 2013, The Guide, 28; Jonathan Lennie described 2013's event, which took place at the BFI Southbank, as 'an interactive, live opera and film experience in which 50 Streetwise performers invite the audience to arrive in business suits and join them as conference delegates, collecting lanyards and information packs and singing the company anthem. Meanwhile, a hapless compere will attempt to keep order, offering a PowerPoint presentation extolling the wonders of a new brick and leading the collective delegates in composer Anna Meredith's corporate exercise routine, "The Ten Principles of Good Business".' Jonathan Lennie, 'Classical – The bigger issues,' *Time Out*, April 23, 2013, 47.

[29] Geoff Brown described these as 'five strongly characterised miniatures – lurching, scuttling, soaring, pounding, hovering'. Geoff Brown, 'PLG Young Artists; Concert,' *The Times*, January 18, 2010, T2; Features, 12; Neil Fisher described this as a work which sees its performers 'on a lazy trip through snatched melody and hazily beguiling textures.' Neil Fisher, 'Huddersfield Festival,' *The Times*, November 30, 2005, Features; Times2, 22.

[30] Trevor Ekins, 'Orchestra blends old and new for festival finale,' *Grimsby Telegraph*, September 27, 2011, Features, 17.

[31] A work composed as part of Meredith's two-year residency with the Derby orchestra Sinfonia Viva. The work is initially described in terms of its existence as an entry for the Performing Rights Society Foundation's New Music Award, a scheme promoted by the Royal Philharmonic Society which 'enables composers and performers alike to have space to create new work, and seeks to involve audiences more actively with new music through long-term involvement with a composer.'

the sense of keeping it real manifests through a direct and on-the-ground interaction with audiences. In order to create the work, Meredith and her sister, Eleanor, a visual artist, 'took a nocturnal journey through different parts of the city [Derby],' with Meredith capturing the walk on tape and her sister creating sketches.[32] *Four Tributes to 4am*, Meredith says, 'moves through four Derby postcodes - a suburban street, late night city night life, deserted retail parks and then the inroads that lead towards dawn',[33] and took inspiration from 'darkest corners of Derby in the dead of night.'[34] She was explicit that the work reflected 'places in Derby and make snapshots of them as we found them':[35] For Meredith, 'pieces don't have to be inspired by big or grandiose place … everyday and commonplace locations and objects can be just as inspirational.'[36] Another explicit example of this is her work *Casting*, 'a 20-minute soundscape inspired by Glasgow's industrial heritage',[37] written for 25 members of the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and 250 local Glaswegian school children. According to the BBC Press Office, the work invited the school children to play on 'recycled materials such as bin lids and car parts' in order to conjure a 'noise machine' that would reflect the

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Mike Wheeler, 'Schumann, Beethoven and world first on programme,' *Derby Evening Telegraph*, February 11, 2011, Features, 25.

[32] Ed Hill, 'Classical fans enjoy "fantastic" 4am journey through our city,' *Derby Evening Telegraph* News, February 17, 2011, 13.

[33] Wheeler, 'Schumann, Beethoven and world first on programme.'

[34] Powlson, 'Night-time city inspires music premiere.' Meredith is quoted: 'So we went to suburban housing areas which are quite intimate and peaceful at night. Then went into town, which for a Wednesday night, seemed absolutely heaving, especially down Sadler Gate where you have all these bars and pubs competing with each other and all the cacophony and chaos of that. Then there was Pride Park, which had an eerie atmosphere, like any place designed for huge numbers of people when there is nobody there, and finally there were stretches of dual carriageway to get the transport-y angle. … Eleanor made some sketches and took some video and I took some sound samples. … We didn't set out to look for anything unusual, it was more about capturing places that are part of people's everyday lives. The only other times I have stayed up all night I guess has been for more fun reasons so it was a bit surprising.'

[35] Ibid.

[36] Ibid.

[37] Rowena Smith, 'Reviews: Classical: BBCSSO/Bronnimann: City Halls, Glasgow,' *The Guardian*, January 14, 2006, Guardian Review Pages, 34.

city's industrial heritage.[38] Since the work reflected the city, it was unsurprising that 'rhythm emerged as a primary element, with the industrial history of the area as its narrative, industrial noise as its orchestration and the themes of metal, water, construction and deconstruction as its structure.'[39] This interest in directly shaping activities and sounds that occur on the streets is an important part of Meredith's work, and yet there is an inherent tension between these 'on-the-ground' urban influences and their use within classical concert works. For example, *Four Tributes to 4am* contained no actual sounds of Derby, and was instead a short concert work set to a video of artistic visual interpretations of Derby at night.[40] This led one reviewer to complain that the work 'fails dismally as a piece of concert music'.[41] Likewise, of *Casting,* one reviewer wrote that it

> didn't make much of the rich, muddled human present [of Glasgow] … Indeed, the more one considered our current social problems (e.g., traffic jams, racial tension, anxieties of single parents, Britain's fuel requirements over the next 20 years) and how they might be expressed in music, the more one suspected Meredith wouldn't be interested in such things, that she isn't really a 'community' composer at all.[42]

[38] 'BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra rings in the changes at Glasgow City Halls,' *BBC Press Office*, January 12, 2006, http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/01_january/12/sso.shtml [accessed December 10, 2016]; The work thus seemed to evoke the spirit of industry rather than being a recording of the city's actual sound: as Kenny Mathieson described it, the 'intricate music began quietly, then built to a cleverly sustained crescendo which finally burst into a vivid evocation of the industrial process in full flow. The finale evoked the decay of that industry in poignant fashion.' Kenny Mathieson, 'Musicians Give New Life to Halls of Fame', *The Times Educational Supplement*, January 20, 2006, Arts; No 2042, 4.

[39] Michael Tumelty, 'Giving it large,' *The Herald*, January 10, 2006, Features, 13.

[40] 'Anna Meredith, Four Tributes to 4am,' published December 7, 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KL-UwF-jYE4 [accessed December 10, 2016].

[41] 'Anna Meredith - Four Tributes to 4am (World Première),' *5:4 Blog*, February 22, 2011. http://5-against-4.blogspot.co.uk/2011/02/anna-meredith-four-tributes-to-4am.html [accessed December 10, 2016].

[42] David Johnson, 'Glasgow: Anna Meredith's "Casting",' *Tempo* 60/237 (2006): 80. 'Such full blown Modernism was unexpected. *casting* was in some ways old-hat – its vision of "the city" as simultaneously energizing and threatening dates back to the 1930s, or even earlier – but its freshness and sensitivity made one almost believe Meredith had reinvented the style from scratch.' Ibid, 79.

But more broadly, this could also be read as a divergence from the attempt to 'keep it real', since the work filters both the visual and sonic realities of the city at night time into a type of more palatable high art.

Meredith's most ostentatious use of hip hop culture is in the *Concerto for Beatboxer and Orchestra*. This work was a collaboration with professional beatboxer Shlomo, who, after managing to '[fulfil] his ambition to perform with a beatbox choir on London's South Bank [Centre] in 2007, … is now a resident artist there.'[43] This stint put an orchestra at his disposal and gave him a series of 'blind dates' with composers, which led to his meeting Meredith, and the two collaborated to produce the work. The concerto positions an orchestra alongside beatboxing, an art form associated with hip-hop.[44] 'By lore,' wrote Pascal Wyse in his review of the work, 'beatboxing began among hip-hoppers on street corners in the US, a thrifty, portable stand-in for expensive music technology of the early 1980s.'[45] Sometimes considered to be the fifth element of hip-hop (along with breakdancing, MCing, graffiting and DJing),[46] the concerto's use of beatboxing was described in the press variously as 'the art of making rap-style percussion sounds'[47] with one's mouth, or 'a technique sometimes used in hip-hop music, involving the art of producing drum beats and rhythm using a person's mouth, tongue, lips and voice techniques'[48] that 'showcases the human voice in all its versatility.'[49] That the work is a

[43] Wyse, 'Shlomo and the Beatbox Concerto.'
[44] This work is mentioned by Tom Service alongside Tansy Davies' use of funk. Service, 'Indie and modern classical music'; It is also mentioned in Coghlan, 'Friend or foe?'
[45] Wyse, 'Shlomo and the Beatbox Concerto.'
[46] Lena Corner, 'Beauty of the beats; It is simplicity itself: a microphone and the human voice,' *The New Review*, June 14, 2009, Feature, 8.
[47] Richard Morrison, 'Lost in music,' *The Times*, April 19, 2008, Features; The Knowledge, 5.
[48] Martin Chilton, 'A concert without musical instruments,' *The Telegraph*, January 5, 2012, Music, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/music-news/8994621/A-concert-without-musical-instruments.html [accessed December 10, 2016].
[49] 'Book it now,' *The Sunday Times*, January 10, 2010, Culture; Features, 25.

specific meeting of two different worlds, hip-hop and contemporary classical, is implied by the way that this collaboration is documented in the media: indeed, the *Concerto for Beatboxer* is described as the only truly 'cross-genre'[50] work that Meredith has produced to date. (Even the sense that Shlomo's career was fuelled by 'ambition' seems a veiled reference to the kind of aspiration that would fuel a young person attempting to forge a career and take themselves off the street.) But we encounter difficulties when attempting to draw the line between different parts of the work: '"What's that awful word? Fusion! It's not that," Meredith says, and Shlomo agrees. "We didn't want an orchestra with a beat plonked over it. We wanted a hybrid."'[51]

But there is also a sense that ignoring the performative, provocative dimension of street culture (the bubbles and swirls rendered visually in graffiti) is the route to musical credibility – more than anything, both musicians are keen to make explicit the fact that the concerto is real, 'serious' music. As Shlomo is quoted, 'for a long time I saw beatboxing as a way of showing off, ... then I realised it isn't a party trick or a gimmick, it's a way of making real music.'[52] Likewise, he is quoted in a promotional video for the concerto as saying that 'a lot of people will hear [beatboxing] and think that it's just some kind of ... light entertainment but ... that's not where we're heading with it at all, I wanna make music.'[53] Meredith was on Shlomo's side here: she told Lena Corner that the concerto has 'a real theatricality, but what I've tried to do is make a proper piece, using the beatbox as a solo instrument, like a violin concerto, rather than as a weird thing.'[54] The frequent references simply to 'music' are appeals to authenticity and, ultimately, high art, or music as *art* rather

[50] Richard Morrison, 'Drumming,' *The Times*, February 13, 2010, Playlist; Features, 17.
[51] Wyse, 'Shlomo and the Beatbox Concerto.'
[52] Corner, 'Beauty of the beats.'
[53] 'Anna Meredith and Shlomo – "Concerto for Beatboxer and Orchestra",' published 7 January 2010. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mbZKNj6T4AM [accessed December 10, 2016].
[54] Ibid.

than *entertainment*, a distinction fiercely protected by some advocates of classical music.[55] Any sense that this would be an equal meeting of musical worlds dissipates quite quickly. Shlomo's own remarks on the work reflect an attempt to distance himself from hip-hop culture entirely.

> I didn't really know much about any current scene of contemporary music when I put in the proposal [to create the *Concerto*] … All I knew was that I wanted to do something with an orchestra. Beatboxing always conjures up a specific image in people's minds – normally with baggy trousers. But I've always thought of it as being genre-less. In my stuff, yeah there is hip-hop. But there's also opera.[56]

The work was not truly genre-less: more than anything, it was to be avant-garde, something reflected in the funding attached to it. Commissioned by the Performing Rights Society's New Music Award, an '*avant garde* composing prize' whose intention was to 'ignite the imagination of the creative community and dramatically raise the profile and level of debate around contemporary British music',[57] the *Concerto* had Richard Morrisson joking, 'Yes, but is it music? If someone out there isn't muttering this by the end of this page, my name's Karlheinz Stockhausen.'[58] The competition's judges were equally straightforward: 'It's about being brave and taking the music genre forward,' one was quoted. 'We hope that, like the Turner prize, it will get people talking and build an interest in modern music forms, or at the very least get those grey cells rattling.'[59]

The best way to show that the concerto was music as art rather than entertainment was the frequent evocation of a modernist identity on Meredith's part. During a recorded interview that formed part of a promotional video for the *Concerto* she is quoted as saying

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[55] Richard Taruskin, 'The Musical Mystique: Defending Classical Music Against its Devotees,' in *The Danger of Music*, 340-341.
[56] Quoted in Wyse, 'Shlomo and the Beatbox Concerto.'
[57] Morrison, 'Lost in music.'
[58] Ibid.
[59] Francesca Martin, 'Bat chorus eyes £50,000 prize,' *The Guardian*, January 30, 2008, Guardian Features Pages, 27.

that that 'I'm really proud of my compositional voice and the kind of integrity I've tried to keep in my pieces, and tried to keep something that's very much me and how I write through these pieces.'[60] So there was a tension between Meredith's attempts to keep it real, and self-serving attempts to create avant-garde music for a cultural elite through the modernist 'projection of a strong creative personality.'[61] If the work was to take the genre forward and turn beatboxing into 'music', then Meredith and Shlomo would need to exert the power of a strong creative personality over the music. In particular, beatboxing presents a listener with a fundamental problem: what distinguishes beatboxing from other types of extended vocal techniques is that its primary aim is 'to create *convincing impersonations* of drum tracks.'[62] Tok Thompson goes as far as to use beatboxing as a locus for study of cyborg music, since beatboxing articulates a 'strong aesthetic of combined human and computer: in this case, the human is attempting to sound like computer-produced music.'[63] This sense that beatboxing decenters agency – both of the performer and of the composer – was a fertile point of tension. For Shlomo, this manifested in an anxiety about whether or not audiences know he is the creator of the music, and he is quoted as saying

> I've always been obsessed and uptight with this idea that people have to know it is me making these sounds. If I do shows with electronics, I spend ages explaining to the audience what's going on in case they think it's fake. I've been forced to let go of all that. It's no longer about, 'Ooh, wow! He can make all those sounds.' It's about close your eyes and listen to the music, it doesn't matter who is making it. It's hard,

[60] 'Anna Meredith and Shlomo.'
[61] Richard Taruskin, 'A Surrealist Composer Comes to the Rescue of Modernism,' in *The Danger of Music*, 145.
[62] Dan Stowell and Mark D. Plumley, 'Characteristics of the beatboxing vocal style,' Centre for Digital Music, Department of Electronic Engineering, Queen Mary, University of London, February 19 2008, 1. https://www.eecs.qmul.ac.uk/~markp/2008/StowellPlumbley08-tro801.pdf [accessed December 10, 2016].
[63] Tok Thompson, 'Beatboxing, Mashups and Cyborg Identity: Folk Music for the Twenty-First Century,' *Western Folklore* 70/2 (2011): 177. This is also an articulation of an Afrofuturist aesthetic that links back to a multi-sensory urban experience, since breakdancers 'used their bodies to mimic "transformers" and other futuristic robots in symbolic street battles.' Rose, *Black Noise*, 34.

but it's also the leap I've wanted to make for ages.[64]

It appears that Meredith sympathized with Shlomo's anxieties. By the time the *Concerto* had begun to be developed, Meredith had already gained a lot of exposure as a performer of live electronic music,[65] which had resulted in a fully-fledged set of anxieties that mostly had to do with issues of liveness. '[Live performance] is something I really wrestle with,' Meredith is quoted, 'you can be sweating behind your laptop doing incredibly difficult and spontaneous things and to the audience it can look as though you're just playing Solitaire.'[66] This issue was not only on Meredith's own mind, however: Will Hodgkinson complained in 2011 that 'Meredith's music is very beautiful, but its live impact was dampened because she didn't appear to be doing much beyond hitting the play icon on a laptop.'[67] One example of this was her 'dance-music influenced *Flak'*,[68] a work premiered at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, and which was accompanied in concert with disco lights that threw all of the audience members (some against their will) into an imaginary club. Neil Fisher was positive, praising the 'short, sharp, and thrilling *Flak*: ... the place finally throbbed to her fascinating manipulations of instrumental textures, fizzing with a real pulse that put Meredith's elders (and her backers) to shame.'[69] Anthony Holden was less pleased, dismissing the work as 'garish monotony',[70] and writing 'the hall was packed with excited young people, all there, apparently, for the gaudy electronic confections of Anna Meredith, whose *Flak* was rendered no more interesting by the smoke filtered into the coloured

[64] Wyse, 'Shlomo and the Beatbox Concerto.'
[65] In many ways, the use of electronics is necessarily a dialogue with the grit and grime of industrial urban spaces. Meredith states that 'I love using live electronics, often grimy and industrial and glitchy sounding.' Maddocks 'Prom Queen'.
[66] Coghlan, 'Friend or foe?'
[67] Will Hodgkinson, 'Pop,' *The Times*, April 12, 2011, T2; Features, 16.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Neil Fisher, 'London Sinf/Masson,' *The Times*, May 2, 2007, Features; Times2, 17.
[70] Anthony Holden, 'Review: Critics: Classical: Here's another fine Masson,' *The Observer*, May 6, 2007, Observer Review Arts Pages, 21.

spotlights as the QEH turned into the disco from hell.'[71] Overall there was a sense that the work was somehow superficial or cheap – the addition of smoke and lights can be read as a pre-emptive reaction against this, a way of extending the composer's power into the listening experience, reiterating the idea that it is important to see the composer as a creator, and the music as high art. Referring to a number of her live electronic pieces, *Flak* included, Keith Bruce wrote that 'Meredith says she has consciously composed the pieces, rather than simply layered electronic tracks on top of one another, even if the music is not always written down.'[72] In a general sense, then, both the performative in-concert aspect and the sense of composer as creator are knotted together here.

This is a problem widely written about within scholarship on electronic music: Nicolas Collins describes the irony that advances in technology, previously considered positive, are now often regarded as having less artistic merit because they are seen to detract from the creation of music; at its best, the idea of live electronic music performance still 'strikes many a music fan as oxymoronic.'[73] Likewise, Daniel Schachter comments on the strange fact that while technological advances have allowed music to be played back in any space or setting, musical composing is still 'done mostly with the aim of presentation in a concert'. [74] Simon Emmerson reflects upon the same problem when he writes that there is no 'guarantee that the listener will *perceive* that a real human being has initiated or influenced a musical event … however, the composer as magician can create *imaginary* relationships.'[75] The sense that Meredith acts as a composer-magician here, in other words,

[71] Ibid.
[72] Keith Bruce, 'Composer tunes into her laptop,' *The Herald*, September 2, 2010, HS – Features, 21.
[73] Nicolas Collins, 'Live Electronic Music,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Electronic Music*, ed. Nick Collins and Julio d'Escrivan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 38.
[74] Daniel Schachter, 'Towards New Models for the Construction of Interactive Electroacoustic Music Discourse,' *Organised Sound* 12/1 (April, 2007): 68.
[75] Simon Emmerson, *Living Electronic Music* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 93.

a distinct authorial voice, is central to the way that her music is written about. The sense of being a conscious composer, through the authorship of notation, remains paramount for Meredith. She is quoted: 'my solution has been to take elements that could be electronic and make them happen live instead. I would much rather have something slightly flawed that allowed the audience to see how it is being made.'[76]

As a response to this, the major development in the *Concerto for Beatboxer and Orchestra* was that Meredith decided to notate the work fully. Meredith's approach to this is profoundly contradictory. For Meredith, notation itself has always been a problematic issue, and she is quoted in the *Financial Times* as saying that 'the fun thing [about composing] is coming up with ideas. The frustrating thing is breaking them down into every single note. My strengths are not the craftsmanship but the instinct and impulse.'[77] Very early on in her career Meredith defined her interest in electronic sounds against her status as a classical composer, telling Fiona Maddocks that 'I do use big, building, mechanic-y sounds. I like aggressive industrial-sounding music. I don't really fit the image of a composer with the quill and ink, scribbling on sheets of music.'[78] And yet, by the time of the *Concerto for Beatboxer*, Meredith had apparently changed her mind, and her choice to go for full notation was both unexplained and intense. 'It has been as much about controlling the sounds as inventing them,' Meredith is quoted. 'If it is written down you can control the rhythmic changes in a way that you probably couldn't do if you were improvising.'[79] It should be stressed that by

[76] Coghlan, 'Friend or foe?'
[77] Clark, 'A Concerto for Beatbox.' Clark remarks, 'Imagine, then, the scale of her frustration when she tried to notate her new Concerto for Beatboxer and Orchestra.'
[78] Jim McBeth, 'Proms Queen: Fresh from her triumph at the bastion of musical tradition, Scots composer Anna Meredith talks to Jim McBeth about her taste for rap, Sibelius & and Guns 'n' Roses,' *The Daily Mail*, September 20, 2008, 30.
[79] Pascal Wyse, 'Shlomo and the Beatbox Concerto: What happens when beatboxing's free spirit meets the studied formality of classical music?' *The Guardian*, February 11, 2010, Music, http://www.theguardian.com/music/2010/feb/11/shlomo-anna-meredith-beatbox [accessed December 10, 2016].

2010 a form of beatbox notation had already existed for eight years, with a Standard Beatbox Notation system being invented in 2002 by beatboxers Mark Splinter and Revd Gavin Tyte.[80] However, this system was created only as 'a simple aid to learning, remembering and discussing beatbox sounds and beat patterns',[81] and the authors stress that classical notation will be needed to write a melody or a bassline.[82]

The use of notation in the case of the *Concerto*, then, reflected a specifically 'classical' attempt to create a musical work, and the question of notation necessarily meant a set of questions about the disciplining power of classical music. The idea of notation as a form of discipline stems back very far.[83] In her *Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, Lydia Goehr wrote that 'the relation specified by the correlation between score and performance is that of *compliance*. It is a one-directional semantic relation binding compliants to character-inscriptions, binding performances to scores.'[84] This sentiment was renewed, with some hand-wringing, in a 2014 article by Karol Berger about the future of composers in our contemporary 'supermarket of culture.'[85] According to Berger,

> the indispensable tool that enabled craftsmen to produce works was musical notation. … *If the work is the characteristic product of art music, its characteristic maker is the composer; the performer, whose role is to transform the work into an event, is the mediator between the composer and the user of music*. … To date

[80] 'Standard Beatbox Notation,' *Human Beatbox*, September 18, 2014, http://www.humanbeatbox.com/article/standard-beatbox-notation-sbn/ [accessed December 10, 2016].
[81] Ibid.
[82] Schachter, 'Towards New Models,' 68. While electronic music has also challenged 'the nature and even necessity of the musical score'… the sense of authorship itself still evidently persists here, guaranteeing 'that a composition may survive the composer, and that it could be performed without the composer's presence.' Ibid.
[83] John Evarts, 'The New Musical Notation – a Graphic Art?' *Leonardo* 1/4 (October, 1968): 405-406. 'Perhaps within a few years these picturesque squiggles, graphs and fantasies will be considerably more admired for their visual appeal and content than for what they were intended to communicate: the music itself.'
[84] Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works: An Essay in the Philosophy of Music* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 22.
[85] Karol Berger, 'The Ends of Music History, or: The Masters in the Supermarket of Cultures,' *The Journal of Musicology* 31/2 (Spring, 2014), 186-198.

notation has retained its position as the main tool of the makers of works.[86]

The loss of control through musical notation has much to do with avant-garde music, as well as the increasing prominence of non-classical music in scholarship.[87] The question of authorship sits uneasily here. For Douglas C. Wadle, Western classical notation should not be 'construed simply as a means of describing a sound structure or delimiting performance techniques.'[88] Rather, it should result in 'a dynamic interaction between the ambiguities of the notation and the fixing of those ambiguities into particulars to guide performance.'[89]

But this is not merely about the ongoing significance of the divide between high and low art in a postmodern society. The issue of discipline, and particularly discipline through the act of writing, is profoundly racialized. Guthrie P. Ramsey Jr. discusses the notation of the (originally orally transmitted) Negro spiritual throughout the nineteenth century, writing that 'with one gesture of the pen, untutored orality became lettered culture, space becomes disciplined identity.'[90] As a result, the divide between white, literature-based music and 'orally transmitted racial music'[91] was profoundly influential, and continues to be in contemporary Britain. Bridgitte Fielder even locates a transcription of a waltz from the nineteenth century, written with worries about inter-racial dancing in mind, in which each note was given arms and legs, stylized to appear like a black body. As Fielder writes, 'Juxtapositions of the movement of racialized bodies and the movement of music thematise

[86] Ibid, 188. For a discussion of the interpretation of musical scores see Theodor Adorno, 'On the Problem of Music Analysis,' *Music Analysis* 1/2 (July 1982): 172.
[87] 'Many performances of music involve improvisation … especially of a non-classical kind.' Goehr, *Imaginary Museum*, 31. 'Many avant-gardists have tried to move away from the idea that two performances of a work should "sound the same"'; For Goehr, different performances are 'isomorphic'. Ibid, 33.
[88] Douglas C. Wadle, 'Meaningful Scribbles: An Approach to Textual Analysis of Unconventional Musical Notations,' *The Journal of Music and Meaning* 9 (Winter, 2010): 39.
[89] Ibid, 40.
[90] Ramsey, 'Secrets, Lies and Transcriptions,' 29.
[91] Quoted in Ramsey, 'Secrets, Lies and Transcriptions,' 27.

relations of race within musical form, marking race as always in motion, unfixed, and progressing through a specific, readable generic narrative.'[92] It was this constant motion, this transience, or inter-mixture, that writers sought to capture or render in musical notation. Echoes of these racial tensions were rife within the press response to the *Concerto for Beatboxer*. 'What happens when beatboxing's free spirit meets the studied formality of classical music?' asked Wyse.[93] This was also a question on Neil Fisher's mind: 'How much his own [Shlomo's] spirit has also been tamed is hard to tell. In the reverse of the usual concerto idea, Meredith has less stretched her muse then reined him in; Shlomo's traditional role as a one-man synthesizer transmuted into something perhaps less charismatic.'[94] **But** Meredith **also** fought against the impulse to tame, attempting instead to imbue her music with some of the coolness of the undisciplined: 'That spontaneity [of beatboxing] is attractive,' she is quoted. 'I had a connection there straight away.'[95]

A paramount feature of Meredith's whole musical language that bridges her classical and popular sounds are what she describes as 'builds' in the style of electronic dance music. Broadly defined, a build is a drawn out intensification that leads to a moment of climax at which a new beat enters; this can be read as an extension of the linear metaphors that Rose sees as central to hip-hop culture. Meredith is quoted as saying that

> that's what I'm best at: writing a big build. I love not being too tricksy about it. Like, 'yeah, we're building – get on board! Let's go! Jump in!' ... There's something unifying about that transparency of process. When you watch people dancing and a big beat comes in? I love that. It's so basic, and it can work just as well in a piece for

[92] Brigitte Fielder, 'Visualizing Racial Mixture and Movement,' *Journal of Nineteenth-Century American Studies* 13/1 (2014), 148.
[93] Wyse, 'Shlomo and the Beatbox Concerto.'
[94] Neil Fisher, 'Beatbox Concerto Queen Elizabeth; arts first night,' *The Times*, February 22, 2010, T2; Features, 12. Viewing a rehearsal of the work, Fisher attempted to follow Meredith's lead in transcribing the sounds that the beatboxers made, and wrote that 'as Shlomo tripped his way across Meredith's light fantastic, I was scribbling down the words "pfft", "zsshh", and something that looks a bit like "djop": the result of trying accurately to describe the sounds that come out of this artist's throat.'
[95] Wyse, 'Shlomo and the Beatbox Concerto.'

solo violin. If you don't feel music somewhere in your body, what's the point?[96]

Likewise, an article in the *Financial Times* read:

> Dance and rhythm are an essential part of Meredith's imaginative armoury … She says she enjoys 'doing builds' in the style of electronic dance music – [quoting Meredith] 'where everyone knows the beat is going to kick in. I don't have a problem with being explicit or obvious like that, because I enjoy starting with a simple idea, maybe a two-note phrase, and treating it like a virus that infects the instruments, so that everyone is moving with it and it becomes something humungous.'[97]

The idea of 'doing builds', then, is a way of controlling the flow of energy within the music, projecting it from one point with increasing intensity to another, and can be linked through hip-hop back to funk music.[98] It is this preoccupation with energy, strokes and flow that puts the album in direct dialogue with the synaesthetic urban aesthetic described by Rose, in which hip-hop culture is underscored by metaphors about rupture, flow and line.

Analysis of the score of the *Concerto* shows all of these issues. The collaborative creation of a beatboxing notation resulted in such a tension between what is performed and what is written as to render the score almost useless outside of what can be caught using traditional notes and dynamic markings. Much is lost when looking at the score and looking at the music, since the consonants in the score do not accurately reflect what the beatboxers sound like. But Meredith was also clear that the broader shape of the work takes precedence. According to her, 'I compose in broad strokes and write very fast. If I polish too much or get picky and pretentious, I produce rotten music.'[99] Stepping back and looking at the overall structure of the work yields clearer results. What we see is that the *Concerto for*

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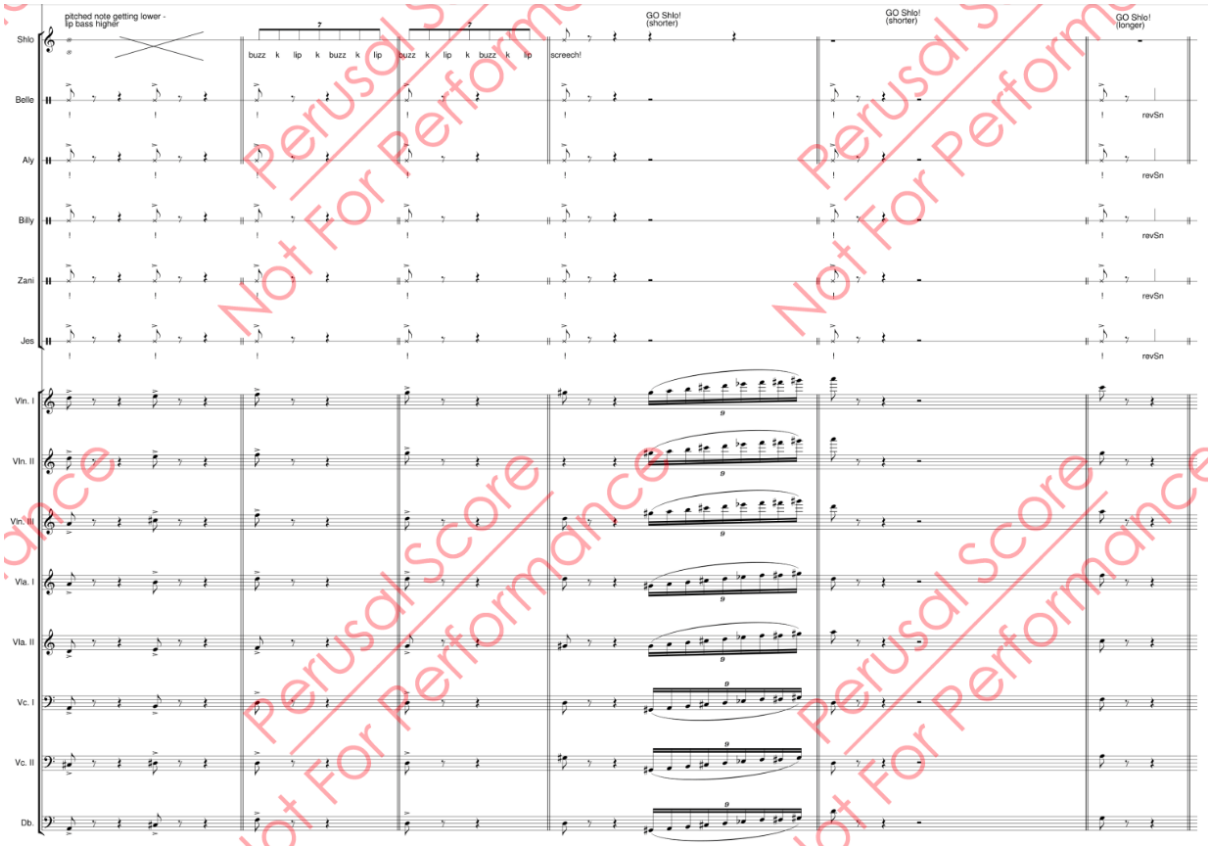
[96] Caroline Woollard, 'Making classical music in primary colours,' *The Herald*, May 6, 2015, 19.
[97] Clark, 'A Concerto for Beatbox.'
[98] This can be linked directly back to funk music. For Mark Katz, to understand the 'very origins of hip hop … you must understand the break'. As Katz describes it, the break is a brief percussion solo in a funk song, which 'lays bare a short stretch of unadulterated rhythm as the singer and the other instrumentalists abruptly drop out, and the effect … is electrifying.' 'The power of the break is in the way it moves people, literally, compelling them to "get on the good foot", as James Brown commands us in his song of the same name.' Mark Katz, *Groove Music: The Art and Culture of the Hip-Hop DJ* (New York, NY; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 23.
[99] McBeth, 'Proms Queen.'

Beatboxer and Orchestra falls into a number of texturally and harmonically distinct sections, each of which involves an increase in tension from the beginning to the end, the end leading into the next section. In other words, each section is a 'build'. Whether or not we read these sections as explicit attempts to 'tame' the beatboxer soloist, it is nevertheless clear that each section involves subtle and carefully-controlled stratified musical textures, often at an extremely soft dynamic marking, that increase in intensity towards the end of the section. While there is no trace of the graphic score that Meredith used to create the piece, the shape of each distinct section is nevertheless clear. Moments at which sections meet become points of articulation that seem to regulate the flow of the music: the shape of the whole work is marked out by these points, which occur with increased frequency until a stand-off in the final measures of the work, at which point the orchestral punctuations become like stabs that seem to invade the otherwise free beatboxing of the soloist's cadenza (see ex. 1).

Most telling is the fact that the orchestra itself joins in beatboxing in the final *tutti* measures of the work: Fisher was intrigued by this, writing that 'Meredith saves her wittiest touch for the end, as Shlomo – finally allowed his own cadenza – incites a mini-round of beatboxing from the players that he has finally tamed.'[100] This final gesture is ambivalent. It reverses the power structure of the concerto, with the soloist-as-underdog coming out victorious, and yet it is strangely lacklustre – not enough to redress or even critique the

[100] Fisher, 'Beatbox concerto.'

Ex. 1: Meredith, *Concerto for Beatboxer and Orchestra*, Rehearsal Mark M, b. 5-10 (only lower orchestra).



divide in instrumentation (and power) between the beatboxers and the orchestra that has been maintained throughout the work. Questions abound: have these players been taught to beatbox in any kind of sustained way? Conversely, why have the beatboxers not been taught to play orchestral instruments? When the orchestral players try their hand at beatboxing, it seems to suggest that the whole idea of merging beatboxing and orchestral writing – at its heart a disparity in education and cultural status between its groups of performers – could have been more successfully resolved had it not been undertaken within an ensemble with such a rigid structure.

Froms, *HandsFree*, *Connect It*

Meredith's poking fun at concert etiquette goes back to her first high-profile work premiered at the BBC Proms, and entitled *froms* (a way of saying 'from the Proms'). The

premiere happened shortly before her appearance in *Classic Goldie*, and it was over shots of *froms* that she first appears in the series, apparently being introduced to the public with an affirmation of her classical credentials. *froms* tapped into a different side of the fear of street culture, the fear of repetitive beats in open spaces. It involved 'five different groups of musicians, each with its own conductor, each performing in a different corner of the UK,'[101] and was characterised by a rhythmic complexity: Richard Morrison praised the 'hundreds of other BBC musicians across Britain, who stomped with wild, not-quite-synchronised abandon for an action packed five minutes. Short, sharp and sassy, *froms* presented minimalist riffs with maximalist forces.'[102] There was a duality behind the work: it required five different orchestras in different nations of the UK (in the Royal Albert Hall, Hyde Park, Belfast, Glasgow, and Swansea) to play and broadcast simultaneously, and project their playing back onto a screen in the Royal Albert Hall.[103] The work thus projected an explicit message of British unity on a grand scale. As Edward Seckerson wrote,

> this year it wasn't just the Henry Wood Fanfares that linked up the four nations of the union from parks across the land. Anna Meredith's new piece *froms* brought us together in what might best be described as a communal shout. Not as loud as Bryn's multi-national get-up for 'Rule, Britannia!' but less restrained than Sir Roger's low-key speech.[104]

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[101] Ivan Hewett, 'Daring, challenging – and a recipe for chaos,' *The Daily Telegraph*, September 11, 2008, Features, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/3560242/Anna-Meredith-daring-challenging-and-a-recipe-for-chaos.html [accessed December 10, 2016].
[102] Richard Morrison, 'Terfel in his pomp brings swagger to finale,' *The Times*, September 15, 2008, Features, 30.
[103] Hewett, 'Daring, challenging.' 'It's written for five different groups of musicians, each with its own conductor, each performing in a different corner of the UK. In the Albert Hall, there'll be the BBC Symphony Orchestra and chorus, as always. Joining them for this four-minute extravaganza will be the brass of the Ulster Orchestra at the Ulster Hall, the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra in Glasgow, the chorus of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in Swansea, and the percussion of the BBC Concert Orchestra in Hyde Park. Each group's performance will be beamed instantaneously to all the rest via satellite, and we the viewers will witness the combined result.'
[104] Edward Seckerson, 'Classical; The Last Night of the Proms, Royal Albert Hall, London,' *Independent Extra*, September 16, 2008, 20.

But there was the general sense that the work could all go wrong, that the collective action would plunge the formal atmosphere of the Proms into chaos. Paradoxically, the way to get around this was to use the energetic frenzy of rhythm to give a bit of leeway in the performance, so that the different orchestras did not have to be entirely synchronised: 'they will be playing in the right place, even if they aren't exactly in the right time – if you see what I mean,' Meredith was quoted. 'I've tried to write rhythms that sound good whether they are in the correct part of the bar or not.'[105] The humorous threat of chaos latent in *froms* suggests an anticipation of social, as well as technical, disorder. Indeed, while the performance aimed to link up orchestras around Great Britain in a 'communal shout', the seat of the action was still the Royal Albert Hall. This stylised act of national unity took place on the terms of a prestigious urban culture linked to the Southwest of England, and risked further alienating the social groups that this culture already excludes. Ultimately, *froms* was consistent with a Reithian sentiment of social transformation through middle-class culture, something that puts the hypocrisy of Meredith's 'keepin' it real' identity in perspective. *froms* was also tied up directly with the subversive legacy of modernism, since Meredith was the second composer ever (the only one after Birtwistle) to have a new piece premiered at the Last Night of the Proms. When *froms* was lined up, naturally the *Panic* debacle was the first port of call for many reviewers: 'Brace yourselves;' wrote Ivan Hewett, 'we could be in for another *Panic* at the Last Night.'[106] Meredith herself played up to this in interviews leading up to the premiere: 'Don't worry,' she is quoted, 'it's dead short - only five minutes. Over before you know it … like a punch in the face.'[107] Ultimately, *froms* brought an

[105] Richard Morrison, 'From city to city, bar by bar', *The Times*, September 10, 2008, Features; Times2, 18.
[106] Hewett, 'Daring, challenging.'
[107] Morrison, 'City to city.'

extremely light sense of subversion to the table, and its premiere cemented her place in British classical music.[108]

The link to the urban becomes more potent when *froms* is viewed in contrast to two of Meredith's later works, *HandsFree* and *ConnectIt*. These two are works characterised by physical motion that take place in open spaces and are performed by groups of children, evoking the fear of groups of roving teenagers in public spaces.[109] *HandsFree*, the earlier work, was included on a list of the 20x12 commissions, twelve new works created as part of a Cultural Olympiad to celebrate the 2012 Olympics. *HandsFree* is a second instance of Meredith creating a subversive work for the Proms, but this time specifically focusing on the National Youth Orchestra as a set of performers. The work called for the orchestra to set aside their instruments, stand up and perform using only their bodies and voices. As one commentator put it, 'instruments are abandoned and the body – clapping, stomping, hissing, clicking – becomes music, ending with nearly 200 teenagers thrusting their arms in the air in perfect unison.'[110] The NYO are used as a kind of anarchic crowd of bodies, with the work being frequently described as 'body-popping',[111] a term lifted directly from hip-hop dance.[112] But whether we were in a club or on the street, critics couldn't quite decide:

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[108] And yet, perhaps paradoxically, in the lead-up to this event she was quoted as saying, 'There's something fantastic but naughty about the Last Night of the Proms. A bit like spending the last day of Lent in a bath full of *piña colada*. Let's roll with the recklessness, I say!' 'A lot less pomp, a bit more circumstance,' *The Guardian*, September 8, 2006, Guardian Film and Music Pages, 5.

[109] These types of work are central to her oeuvre, so central in fact that they already risk becoming clichés. Meredith told Woollard, 'I don't want to become just the novelty movement girl.' Woollard, 'Primary colours.'

[110] Fiona Maddocks, 'Review: Critics: Classical: What we did in the holidays: The NYO created beautifully organised chaos in a great week for young musicians,' *The Observer*, August 5, 2012, Observer Arts Review Pages, 33.

[111] Anna Picard, 'Review of 2012: Classical; Northern Ireland Opera toured with the unsettling adaptation of the Henry James ghost story, and Simon Rattle thrilled us again,' *The Independent*, December 30, 2012. http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/classical/reviews/review-of-2012-classical-8433141.html [accessed December 10, 2016]; 'Classical; Arts agenda; The cultural highlights you have to see,' *The Independent*, August 1, 2012, News, 32.

[112] White, 'Sign of a Black Planet,' 176, note 1.

the two seemed equivalent. For Peter Stanford, this was 'an earthier sort of street music seldom associated with the classical canon,'[113] but Edward Seckerson wrote that *HandsFree* 'took us all the way to the club floor and back again.'[114] More importantly, there was the sense that this link to urban culture made *HandsFree* a 'cool' work. But even here there were many ironies. For Stanford, it made sense that *HandsFree* was performed by a group of children who, due to their age, were 'endowed by nature with a sense of rhythm.'[115] And yet an anxiety about a lack of rhythmic cool was palpable throughout the NYO: 'Even my friends think being part of the National Youth Orchestra makes me a geek,' one member of the orchestra is quoted. 'But I'm not and we're not, and *HandsFree* gives us a chance to prove it. Yes, I listen to Elgar, but *HandsFree* is also the sort of music we have on our iPods.'[116]

The rhythmic nature of the work was again discussed in terms of discipline, particularly in early 2012, when *HandsFree* was performed alongside Turnage's *Hammered Out* and Walton's First Symphony.[117] Consistent with the idea that British culture was on the decline due to lack of discipline, Barry Millington was nostalgic about a performance of the work, writing that

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[113] Peter Stanford, 'I can show you the bruises from my time with the National Youth Orchestra,' *The Telegraph*, January 11, 2012, Culture, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/cultural-olympiad/9005042/I-can-show-you-the-bruises-from-my-time-with-the-National-Youth-Orchestra.html [accessed December 10, 2016].

[114] Edward Seckerson, 'National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain / Daniel, Barbican Hall, London,' *Independent*, January 7, 2012, Reviews, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/classical/reviews/national-youth-orchestra-of-great-britain-daniel-barbican-hall-london-6286436.html [accessed December 10, 2016].

[115] Stanford, 'I can show you the bruises.'

[116] Ibid. See also Harmony Bench, 'Gestural Choreographies: Embodied Disciplines and Digital Media,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Mobile Music Studies*, ed. Sumanth Gopinath and Jason Stanyek, vol. 2 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 238-254.

[117] Tim Ashley compared Walton's First Symphony to *HandsFree* on the grounds that 'the piece is rooted in rhythmic complexity, and the performance generated a comparable sense of edge-of-your-seat excitement.' Tim Ashley, 'Review: Classical: NYO/Daniel; Philharmonic Hall, Liverpool,' *The Guardian*, January 7, 2012, Guardian Review Pages, 42.

> old hands recall the days when the National Youth Orchestra, run like a military academy, used to play Haydn and Mozart. This winter's programme featured music with elements of jazz funk and the club-floor by Mark-Anthony Turnage and Anna Meredith. It's certainly different but is it progress?[118]

Richard Morrison, on the other hand, found *HandsFree* to be 'as good a demonstration of the NYO's teamwork and virtuosity as the feisty if rather hard-driven performance of Walton's First Symphony that preceded it',[119] dismissing worries that 'such "gimmicks" are distracting the NYO from its core purpose of training Britain's best young musicians to play orchestral repertoire at the highest possible level.'[120] Anna Picard was perhaps the most critical of the work:

> Anna Meredith's beat-boxing, body-popping workout *HandsFree* ... Part Mexican wave, part Maori haka, it must be fun to perform. But where the rest of the NYO's work celebrates high-level musicianship, *HandsFree* lauds general aptitude: an ear for rhythm rather than attainment born of years of dedication to an instrument. The NYO deserves better.[121]

Indeed, behind all of these reviews, even the positive ones, is the sense that this was actually not a piece of music at all, but rather an opener, an encore, or even merely a warm-up. This was foregrounded at the same year's BBC Proms, when *HandsFree* was programmed as the final work in a concert that began with Edgard Varese's 1947 work *Tuning Up*, a 'tongue-in-cheek riff on orchestra rituals'[122] that is 'based on the sounds heard from the orchestra before the conductor arrives on stage.'[123] If *HandsFree* was a performance of teenage chaos, it can also be seen as the inverse: a reminder that the

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[118] Barry Millington, 'Classical,' *The Evening Standard*, January 9, 2012, Features, 34.
[119] Morrison, 'NYO/Daniel; Concert'.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Anna Picard, 'Park Lane Group, Purcell Room, London National Youth Orchestra, Barbican Hall, London,' *The Independent*, January 15, 2012, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/classical/reviews/park-lane-group-purcell-room-london-national-youth-orchestra-barbican-hall-london-6289652.html [accessed December 10, 2016].
[122] Andrew Clements, 'Review: Proms 29 and 28: NYOGB/Petrenko; Ulster O/Faletta Royal Albert Hall, London,' *The Guardian*, August 6, 2012, Guardian Review Pages, 19.
[123] Jonathan Wright, 'The Guide: Digital Television: Thursday 23: pick of the day: BBC Proms 2012 7.30pm, BBC4,' *The Guardian*, August 18, 2012, The Guide, 81.

training of the NYO is as rigorous as ever, despite the supposed decline in childhood discipline. This tension fueled discussion of the work: for Neil Fisher, *HandsFree* was 'incredibly disciplined and gloriously riotous at the same time',[124] and Richard Morrison described it as 'a bizarre but exhilarating ten-minute exercise that's a bit like synchronised swimming without water, or a North Korean gymnastic displays without the totalitarian ideology.'[125] If the *Concerto for Beatboxer and Orchestra* had attempted to harness the spontaneity of beatboxing while tempering it with classical notation, *HandsFree* upped the ante dramatically, using a meticulously choreographed work to amplify conservative fears that children would run riot. Underscoring all of this was the link between dancing crowds, and violent physical assault, made explicitly (if half-seriously) in the title of Peter Stanford's review, 'I can show you the bruises from my time with the National Youth Orchestra.'[126]

Perhaps paradoxically, Meredith's *HandsFree* also became a way of making a public statement about British youth. The work was performed as a flashmob, which can be defined as

> a semi-spontaneous temporary community that forms in a public space for the purpose of performance … [which] can be any number of things from a choreographed dance routine to a spontaneous sing-a-long or even a group of individuals staring at a blank wall.[127]

In other words, flash mobs are ways of articulating public space using the spontaneous creation of groups. Meredith herself quite literally 'took NYO musicians into the streets of Birmingham last summer following the Cultural Olympiad commission and the group showed the public how clapping, body percussion and beatboxing … could be used

[124] Fisher, 'Proms 28 and 29.'
[125] Richard Morrison, 'NYO/Daniel; Concert,' *The Times*, January 9, 2012, T2; Features; Review, 13.
[126] Stanford, 'I can show you the bruises.'
[127] Philip Stanley Grant, Anjali Bal and Michael Parent, 'Operatic flashmob: Consumer arousal, connectedness and emotion,' *Journal of Consumer Behaviour* 11 (2012): 241.

creatively to make interesting music.'[128] *HandsFree* was referred to as 'flash mob'[129] piece, both within the press and on Meredith's personal website, which describes how the work was 'premiered by the national youth orchestra throughout 2012 at the BBC Proms, Southbank Centre, Barbican Centre and flash mob performances on the M6 services'.[130] While flashmobs are typically innocuous and performative, obeying a code that rules out physical violence or any transgressions that could lead to animosity,[131] they nevertheless remain conceptually related to violent crowds on the street. This is largely due to an increased number of 'roving youth flash mobs', crowds of unruly or violent teens that that masquerade as innocuous.[132] In any case, 'regardless of whether they act with whimsy or aggression, flash mobbers disrupt the tightly laced social and spatial conventions of the contemporary city.'[133] The divide between flashmobs and dancing groups is blurry. As Sumanth Gopinath and Jason Stanyek write, there is a natural similarity between flashmobs and 'silent raves',[134] in which a group of people congregate and dance together to music that they each listen to through earphones connected to iPods or mobile digital devices, creating a spatial disruption but avoiding the noise pollution that many find so objectionable. For Gopinath and Stanyek, they both reflect 'an aesthetic – perhaps drawn

[128] Peter Stanford, 'Peter Stanford has a go at concert without instruments,' *The Telegraph*, January 10, 2012, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/culturevideo/musicvideo/9004467/Peter-Stanford-has-a-go-at-concert-without-instruments.html [accessed December 11, 2016].
[129] John Allison, 'Eloquent and elegiac; Classical,' *The Sunday Telegraph*, January 15, 2012, Section Seven; Features; Reviews, 22.
[130] '*HandsFree*,' *Anna Meredith Website*, http://www.annameredith.com/handsfree/ [accessed December 13, 2016].
[131] Christian DuComb and Jessica Benmen, 'Flashmobs, Violence and the Turbulent Crowd,' *Performance Research* 19/5 (2014): 35.
[132] See J. Brian Houston et al, 'Urban Youth's Perspectives on Flash Mobs,' *Journal of Applied Communication Research* 41/3 (August, 2013): 236-252.
[133] DuComb and Benmen, 'Flashmobs,' 34. See also Rebecca A. Walker, 'Flash/Fill/Memory: A History of Flash Mobs,' *Text and Performance Quarterly* 33/2 (April 2013): 115-132.
[134] See Sumanth Gopinath and Jason Stanyek, 'The mobilization of Performance: An introduction to the aesthetics of mobile music,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Mobile Music Studies*, ed. Gopinath and Stanyek, 17-23.

from the standard practices of dance clubs – that privilege synchronized, collective movement.'[135] Since both are acts of communal resistance, Georgiana Gore links flash mobs to 1980s raves directly, but writes that unlike these, 'which occurred in spaces hidden from the public gaze, [the flash mob] has a strong spectacular dimension and explicitly aims to capture public attention.'[136] The reception of *HandsFree* showed that the work played upon many urban anxieties, in contradictory ways: it is also strongly implied from this that *HandsFree* is a work that raises awareness about the NYO's musical activities, as well as classical music more broadly.[137] So, *HandsFree* expands upon the taking of classical music to new spaces and audiences, in the sense that these 'urban sounds' within a concert hall setting are taken *out* of the concert hall and into urban space. Because of this, *HandsFree* is simultaneously central to and critical of the concert hall: it represents classical music to a broad audience, and yet within the concert hall it is at best, subversive, at worst, sidelined.

HandsFree later had an offshoot in a similar work called *Connect It*, which was also 'written for 70 teenagers, all playing rhythms by slapping their arms, legs, stomachs etc.'[138] This work, however, kept it more explicitly real than *HandsFree*. It was written as part of a government initiative called the Ten Pieces Project, the aim of which was to help inspire 'children and the wider public with their passion for classical music':[139] 150 arts

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[135] Ibid, 22.
[136] Georgiana Gore, 'Flash Mob Dance and the Territorialisation of Urban Movement,' *Anthropological Notebooks* 16/3 (2010): 125-126.
[137] This plays in to the ways in which, 'of late, the popularity of flash mobs as a marketing tool has grown exponentially.' Grant et. al., 'Operatic Flash Mob,' 249. Grant et. al. suggest that more research should be carried out on the 'impact of flash mobs on consumer purchasing behaviour, willingness to pay, and flash mobs as a marketing tool in terms of raising brand awareness and loyalty.' Ibid, 250.
[138] Ivan Hewett, 'BBC's Ten Pieces project: is it the right choice?' *The Telegraph*, June 16, 2014, Music, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/music-news/10903936/BBCs-Ten-Pieces-project-is-it-the-right-choice.html [accessed December 11, 2016]
[139] Adam Sherwin, 'The young person's guide to essential orchestra,' *The Independent*, June 17, 2014, News, 13.

organisations took part in the scheme by going into primary schools and running interactive workshops about a set of ten classical pieces, *Connect It* being the only one of these written by a living composer.[140] Naturally, rhythm was paramount: as Ivan Hewett wrote, 'above all, the ten pieces have a visceral bodily rhythm, and many of them have short repeating patterns too, insistently repeated. This will help to soften the impact of an off-putting antique sound world.'[141] So again the sense that rhythm unites children with classical music and urban culture is present here. Meredith's personal website states that *Connect It* reached 'half of the UK's primary school children in 2015', and offers the opportunity for the visitor to the website to learn the moves themselves through a video tutorial.[142] The implication here is that children are disadvantaged through their being cut off from classical music, and Meredith is quoted as saying 'I'm so excited that there's contemporary music, music that's being written right now, that's part of these 10 pieces because contemporary music is as vital to the future as standard repertoire.'[143]

Connect It, like *HandsFree*, was performed in cities around the UK, and both are implicated in the changing of the British landscape through musical performance. Throughout 2015 and the beginning of 2016, an increasing number of articles mention performances of *Connect It* across the UK, one reporting that 'hundreds of children learned and performed a "body percussion" piece in Middlesbrough yesterday',[144] another praising

[140] Ryan Kisiel, 'Music to their ears! Primary pupils to study ten classical pieces by composers including Beethoven and Handel to counter fears they are missing out on the arts,' *The Daily Mail*, September 30, 2014, News, http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2774315/Primary-pupils-study-classical-pieces-composers-including-Beethoven-Handel.html [accessed December 11, 2016]
[141] Hewett, 'Ten Pieces Project.'
[142] 'Connect It,' *Anna Meredith Website*, http://www.annameredith.com/projects/#connectit [accessed December 11, 2016].
[143] Imogen Tilden, 'New push to inspire children with classical music,' *The Guardian*, June 17, 2014, Guardian Home Pages, 4.
[144] Julia Breen, 'Hundreds of children perform "body percussion" in Middlesbrough Centre Square,' *The Northern Echo*, July 1, 2015. http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/13362170.display/ [accessed December 11, 2016].

the fact that, during a concert in Lynn with the BBC symphony orchestra, 'pupils will get the opportunity to join in with a performance of Handel's "Zadok the Priest", and Anna Meredith's *Connect It*.'[145] One article even begins by stating that Meredith is 'fresh off a flight from the US, where she was teaching Utah's Mormon Youth Orchestra her piece *HandsFree*, a body percussion composition that resembles a giant, noisy Mexican wave.'[146] Even Meredith's website invites the viewer to learn the moves so that they can take part and become a member of the crowd. The flashmob consequently becomes one of a long history of 'ritualized interaction[s] among strangers in public, which might lead to collective political action,'[147] something that has a precedent: flashmobs are becoming an increasingly global phenomenon co-ordinated and carried out often at the same time internationally.[148] The sense of public participation and an increased net of influence, crossing over the British border and reaching the USA, suggests both a sense of 'keeping it real' and an attempt to mobilise people in an ongoing reformulation of public space.

Conclusion: Musical graffiti?

What is clear from all of this is that both the street and the club become musical tropes that are evoked by physical motion. How does this square with the polymodality of urban experience that Tricia Rose reminds us is central to urban culture? What are the power

[145] Vince Yallop, 'Classical concerts to inspire pupils,' *The Peterborough Telegraph*, June 4, 2015. http://www.peterboroughtoday.co.uk/news/classical-concerts-to-inspire-pupils-1-6779248 [accessed December 11, 2016].
[146] Laura Snapes, 'Anna Meredith: the proms composer ditching classical music for club bangers; She's a respected composer of classical music. So how did that lead to an album of pop and techno stompers?' *The Guardian*, 23 February 2016. http://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/feb/23/anna-meredith-on-classical-music-art-and-pop
[147] Scott McQuire, *Media, Architecture and Urban Space* (London: SAGE, 2008), 135.
[148] See DuComb and BenMen, 'Turbulent Crowd.'

dynamics at play here? Is this a real cross-over of different musical styles? In early 2016 Meredith released her first apparently fully 'pop' album, *Varmints*.[149] In general, the album was again described in terms of visuals. One review in *Pitchfork* of the track 'Taken' played up the sense of a culture clash by displaying a sense of surprise that Meredith was a classical composer, since her music 'feels like an overtired toddler careening off a series of bright, rounded surfaces: It is itchy, giggly, restless, and basically the opposite of "composed" in any emotional sense.'[150] Meredith's music, then, is seen as anti-classical because it is colourful, rhythmic, energetic.[151] But again this has generally been an attribute of all her work, both classical and popular: an article of 2015 praised Meredith as a composer who 'writes unfussy music in primary colours, music that is upbeat and upfront: "I don't think I'm a brilliant craftsman," she says cheerfully. "I don't get bogged down in masses of detail. I love big brushstrokes."'[152] In her review, Abi Bliss likewise praised Meredith's use of 'broad brush strokes', and quoted Meredith as saying that 'I work best when I'm working with the really raw materials: the flow and the energy and … just controlling the momentum of

[149] The inverted commas around 'pop' are heavy here, since this is by no means chart-topping music, but rather a kind of experimental or underground electronic pop music: a review in the *Wire* described *Varmints* as a successful work in the history of 'musicians moving between the classical/contemporary and popular/electronic realms', but viewed its songs as 'delight[ing] in genre confusion and pulling the rug out.' Bliss, 'Only Connect.' Likewise, while Laura Snapes' interview with Anna Meredith in the *Guardian* ran with an attention-grabbing headline that described Meredith as a 'Proms composer ditching classical music for club bangers', the interview itself took a more ambiguous approach to the record, which Snapes saw as being made up of 'avant-synthpop and peak-time howlers', and 'sometimes evokes techno.' Laura Snapes, 'Anna Meredith;' 'I am not someone who is trying to write in different styles,' Meredith is quoted in Julie-Anne Barnes' review. 'I don't see it as pop. I just see it as a different set of instruments and it's a bit louder.' Julie-Anne Barnes, 'Tune up, plug in, pop out: Classical composer hits the dance floor with electronic pop album,' *The Daily Record*, February 28, 2016. http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/tune-up-plug-in-pop-7456094 [accessed December 11, 2016].

[150] Jayson Greene, 'Anna Meredith – Taken,' *Pitchfork*, March 3, 2016, http://pitchfork.com/reviews/tracks/18066-anna-meredith-taken/ [accessed December 11, 2016].

[151] Part of this is implicitly reflected in the music video for 'Nautilus', composed as it is almost entirely of moving shapes in bright and clashing colours. 'Nautilus,' Published September 14, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vajhs2wBeCU [accessed December 11, 2016].

[152] Woollard, 'Primary Colours.'

material and the dramatic trajectory of an idea.'[153] This set of visual metaphors is used, in other words, partly by some reviewers in order to discriminate between classical and popular, and yet by others it is used to blend the two. But the main point is that this set of metaphors to do with colours, strokes, and lines, seems to move through different musical genres. What is clear from Meredith's work is that the urban manifests in a very immediate way – the street and the club are evoked often out of nowhere, and without qualification. Since this vocabulary becomes very nonspecific, we risk losing the imperative behind it: the power dynamics at play in the appropriation of street culture, which, despite the nonspecificity of Meredith's language, are always latent in the way references to the street and to hip-hop follow her music around. This set of metaphors is, in some sense, a manifestation of the polymodality of urban experience central to hip hop culture.

Meredith exploits these anxieties related to graffiti in two distinct senses. First, the use of graffiti in *Classic Goldie* – that Goldie somehow foregoes his natural tendency towards graffiti in an attempt to learn 'proper' musical notation – is representative in a broader sense of the fear that musical artworks will somehow cease to exist thanks to popular culture. These issues are already present within avant-garde music. Christoph Cox writes that many composers, 'Morton Feldman, John Cage, Cornelius Cardew, Anthony Braxton and others dedicated their works to painters and started to conceive the visual aspects of musical composition—the writing of a score—no longer merely as a means to an end but as an end in itself.'[154] He quotes Braxton, who wrote that 'a given performance … should reveal its actual visual material … which is to say, one should be able to actually see as well as hear [the piece].'[155] The aesthetics of this kind of mediation are often already

[153] Bliss, 'Only Connect.'
[154] Christoph Cox, 'Visual Sounds: On Graphic Scores,' in *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*, ed. Christoph Cox (New York, NY; London: Continuum, 2004): 187-188.
[155] Ibid, 187-188.

rooted in those of the urban.[156] As Galia Hanoch-Roe writes, 'each conventional score has a graphic dimension, which may indicate … aspects such as regularity of pulse, relative tempo, acceleration and deceleration of the pace, density of texture or instrumentation, and formal organisation', terms that 'also relate to architectural plans, which incorporate ideas of spatial pulsation, density of textures and inner pace', concluding that the 'conventional score may be translated from linear musical process into fluid architectural or urban design.'[157] She uses an example of composer Peter Cook's work *Bloch City*, in which the composer

> translated the notational details directly into parts of a fluid urban design: The role played by the stave in music was seen as analogous to that of the street in a city, the highway was divided into the four spaces and the bar divisions used as bridges.[158]

And, in a recent article that continues her project of dismantling the 'musical work'[159] of the western canon, Lydia Goehr uses the term *ekphrasis*, an ancient Greek term which is something akin to (although at the same time very much more than) the mediation of one artwork through another. As Goehr puts it, 'one way in which music and *ekphrasis* join hands is when a piece of descriptive speech or writing brings an image or scene of music before the imagination (the "mind's eye").'[160] Through this heavily synaesthetic impulse, Goehr shows how, if one artwork is mediated through another, then the concept of the work as a self-sufficient entity is threatened.

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[156] Elo Masing has recently described the act of musical notation in terms of mapping or choreographing, terms that both foreground the physical nature of musical performance and link to the conceptualization of the city outlined above Elo Masing, 'Mapping or Choreographing?: Redefining Musical Notation,' *Opticon1826* 16/21 (2014): 1-8.
[157] Galia Hanoch-Roe, 'Musical Space and Architectural Time,' *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 34/2 (2003): 157.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Lydia Goehr, 'How to Do More with Words. Two Views of (Musical) Ekphrasis,' *British Journal of Aesthetics* 50/4 (October 2010): 407, note 34.
[160] Ibid, 389.

Second, the use of stylised gesture and dance – physical graffiti – in her above concert works, touches on the same issues, viewing the symphony concert as a ritual characterised by certain gestures that threatens its legitimacy. Christopher Small probes these issues in *Musicking*.[161] Small's focus is on the ritualistic nature of the classical concert, which relies on the audience and performers adhering to a strict set of disciplinary procedures in order – paradoxically – to cement the idea that a musical work is in some way abstract and disconnected from the exigencies of performance. Small goes back to the Cartesian dualism – between matter and mind, or 'the concept of an immortal soul that is distinct from the body and survives its death' – to recuperate the dimension of the body within the world of musical performance.[162] **If *HandsFree* flaunts its physicality in order to be critical of concert culture in the same way, we must also ask whether or not this focus on the body is linked to Meredith's flirtations with street culture, and whether or not it evokes Gilroy's pernicious metaphysical dualism.**

I focus on the term 'graffiti' here since I want to underscore the force that urban culture has: resonances of the street are present in many ways that extend beyond superficial references to hip-hop and urban music. In other words, this approach plays into a call that some scholars have made for a 'poetic urbanism'[163] – a conception of the city that recognises the metaphorical ways in which it becomes part of the human imagination. For example, in a recent ethnographic study of the urban musical life of Liverpool, Sara Cohen asked participants to draw upon memories of their musical activities within the city and draw imaginary maps that functioned more as artistic accounts of the city's musical life.

[161] Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Hanover; London: Wesleyan/University Press of New England, 1998), 50-63.
[162] Ibid, 51.
[163] Daryl Martin, 'A Poetic Urbanism: Recreating Places, remade to Measure, but from the Inside Out,' *City* 14/5 (October, 2010): 586-591.

These 'helped musicians to express musical experience and knowledge in spatial terms, and provided them with a means of connecting music to memories of material urban environments and associated identities, emotions and relationships.'[164] This is important for understanding graffiti. For Emily Pugh,

> graffiti should be understood as a composite practice, consisting of an image as well as an act and a specific space. The action that creates a graffito is as important as its visual component, and its spatial context is also crucial to its analysis, since graffiti is a response to the restructuring and regulation of urban space which simultaneously remakes this space.[165]

My point in this chapter is dual: it is partly to show the ways in which Meredith's 'urban' style often makes a point of drawing attention to the spaces in which it is performed, thereby contributing to a discursive link between urban musical aesthetics and contestations over public space; but more importantly, it is to show that the way this happens is through a shared descriptive vocabulary. Graffiti is used as a metaphor in an article by Pirkka Åman and Lassi A. Liikkanen, in which the authors present their 'SoundAbout platform', an app that can be used on mobile devices, in which users 'drop' certain tracks onto an electronic map of a city, which can then be accessed by other users of the same app. Different parts of the city become associated with different music, and consequently the city becomes mapped through music. In their article the authors describe this as 'painting the city with music', and they open with a quote from Banksy:

> Imagine a city where graffiti wasn't [sic] illegal, a city where everybody could draw whatever they liked. Where every street was awash with a million colours and little phrases. Where standing at a bus stop was never boring. A city that felt like a party where everyone was invited, not just the estate agents and barons of big business. Imagine a city like that and stop leaning against the wall – it's wet.[166]

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[164] Sara Cohen, 'Bubbles, Tracks, Borders and Lines: Mapping Music and Urban Landscape,' *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 137/1 (May 2012): 138.
[165] Emily Pugh, 'Graffiti and the Critical Power of Urban Space: Gordon Matta-Clark's *Made in America* and Keith Haring's Berlin Wall Mural,' *Space and Culture* 18/4 (2015): 421-422.
[166] Quoted in Pirkka Åman and Lassi A. Liikkanen, 'Painting the City with Music: Context-Aware Mobile Services for The Urban Environment,' *Continuum*, 27/4 (August 2013): 543.

Åman and Liikkanen suggest we can approximate the aesthetic they want to create by taking 'the Banksy quote above and replac[ing] "colours" with "songs" and "phrases" with "sounds"'.[167] But they distinguish their SoundAbout platform from graffiti ultimately by writing that 'graffiti is essentially illegitimate, and that is the main difference between graffiti practices and the SoundAbout framework. We aim to provide music lovers discreet, invisible and legal ways to take over places and spaces.'[168] Thus the idea of *graffiti* rather than mere visual art is used here in order to introduce some tension between the aural and the visual. It also highlights the fact that contestations over 'the urban' take place both in the realms of sight and sound, and consequently the urban itself can be recast entirely as a sonic phenomenon. Attempts to map urban space, I want to suggest, are *always necessarily* acts of graffiti, because they are always transgressive and never entirely 'legitimate' – the metaphorical 'urban' is always subject to repeated, even forceful, reconfigurations.

Within British culture since the millennium, anxieties about street culture are projected almost exclusively in relation to graffiti. An article in *The Economist* of 2003 shows clearly:

> The nice thing about the newly declared war on anti-social behaviour is that it is easy to tell who is winning: just look at a nearby wall. If it is covered in graffiti — and, in an urban area, it probably is — then the baddies are on top.[169]

The author is also explicit that 'graffiti arrived from America in the 1980s, along with break-dancing and wide-legged trousers; sadly it has proved the most enduring part of the package.'[170] In any case, the method of combating graffiti has long been to develop 'a database of tags and put it on the internet', supplemented by 'a photographic archive' and

[167] Ibid.
[168] Ibid, 548.
[169] 'Britain, Wild style, and how to tame it; Graffiti,' *The Economist*, October 25, 2003, 35.
[170] Ibid.

'a mapping system.'[171] In other words, tracking graffiti artists is apparently one of the main ways in which subversive anti-social behaviour (with all of its racial and social connotations) is measured. And yet this also taps into another paradox to do with graffiti: the idea of creating a mapping system based on different tags (a 'national database of scrawls'[172]) may seem like an ingenious solution to tackling graffiti and crime more specifically, and yet graffiti is in many cases *necessarily* a method of mapping. The artists themselves map space using their specific tags. As Ferrell and Weide put it, 'the urban ecology of graffiti writing is such that each instance of graffiti writing comes to life at a particular location – and within a network of locations that, taken as a whole, chart contours of status and meaning within the world of urban graffiti.'[173] Discussion of graffiti in the British press has raged since the millennium. The sanitization of graffiti is part of an ongoing appropriation of the coolness of street culture, 'painstakingly crafted in studios and hung in fashionable galleries',[174] 'harnessed by local authorities and property owners as a method of cultural branding, to create … "poor but sexy" neighbourhoods.'[175] This has led to it becoming a scapegoat, as a more recent article in the *Guardian* describes it, 'for all manner of urban ills, from burglary on one extreme to gentrification on the other.'[176] What should be clear, however, is that 'graffiti' is a profoundly multivalent concept, and a musical dimension is often latent within it. For one graffiti artist, 'the whole world is covered in graffiti. No one cares. It's just part of urban noise.'[177]

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[171] Ibid.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Jeff Ferrell and Robert D. Weide, 'Spot Theory,' *City* 14/1-2 (February 2010): 50
[174] Mick Hume, 'The urban scrawl,' *The Times*, August 31, 2005, Features; Times2, 16.
[175] Athlyn Cathcart-Keays, 'Is urban graffiti a force for good or evil?' *The Guardian*, January 7, 2015. http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/jan/07/urban-graffiti-force-good-evil [accessed December 11, 2016].
[176] Ibid.
[177] Ibid.

Meredith's musical projects may not realise any true utopian project: indeed, her appropriations of street culture are often scattershot or unconvincing. And yet, there is a sense in which they pave the way for, or at least hint at, a less antagonistic relationship between urban and contemporary modernist music. As part of a BBC Radio 4 series entitled *Playing the Skyline*, broadcast on 14th of July 2014, Meredith and jazz musician Courtney Pine were taken by presenter Tim Marlow to Millennium Bridge in London, told to look at the skyline, 'north to St Paul's then sweeping east and down to the Shard … and asked to translate what they saw into music.'[178] In other words, both Pine and Meredith were asked to write pieces of music directly reflecting the urban in some way. The idea for the radio programme came from Marlow's encounter with an old watercolour nautical map: '[Marlow] shows them a chart of the Thames Estuary from 1588. They say it looks like a musical score.'[179] This was a rather bold and confusing premise for a programme broadcast on national radio, described by the curator of the nautical map as 'bonkers',[180] and Gillian Reynolds wrote in the *Telegraph* that while 'I'm not sure what this skyline-into-score thing is', '[I] loved BBC Radio 4's *Playing the Skyline*, but [I'm] not sure why.'[181] Despite the confusion, this was a compelling premise. Pine's immediate reaction to the skyline was to highlight Britain's history of racial tensions: 'When you think of the story of immigration… and how they contributed to this that we see. My dad's a carpenter and he helped contribute to some of these buildings you see here.'[182] Reflecting the sense of urban

[178] Gillian Reynolds, 'When music makes London's landscape sing,' *The Daily Telegraph*, July 16, 2014, Culture, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/tv-and-radio-reviews/10969347/When-music-makes-Londons-skyline-sing.html [accessed December 11, 2016].
[179] Ibid.
[180] *Playing the Skyline*, *BBC Radio 4*, July 14, 2014, http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b04966rw [accessed December 11, 2016].
[181] Reynolds, 'Landscape sing.' Square brackets added because latter part of quotation comes from a subtitle written in the third person.
[182] *Playing the Skyline.*

rhythms, Marlow describes the way 'music in some ways has a journey, a rhythm, a skyline of its own … The cranes and the high-rise buildings … they're a kind of rhythm that punctuates the landscape.'[183] Rhythm was again present in Meredith's work, which was 'elegiac, a cello against electronic background, a tap, tap, tap sound at the side of its melody as the pulse of the river.'[184] The issue of rhythm again underscores this conceptualisation of the urban, with the issues of social tensions in the background. The city becomes metaphorically mapped through the rhythm of Meredith's piece, and that rhythm is potentially coded with racial tensions. The reason I end with this vignette is that it shows the ways in which attempts to represent the urban result in a messy overlapping of the visual and the aural. It is both fitting and paradoxical that rhythm is a unifying feature of *Playing the Skyline*, since it allows the aural and the visual to meet while still being a term that signifies instability, unpredictability and chaos. *Playing the Skyline* is a fitting example of the way in which the rhythms of urban music, and the social anxieties that they signify, are translated in a number of different ways into a direct experience or depiction of an urban landscape.

[183] Ibid.
[184] Reynolds, 'Landscape sing.'

Chapter 5 – High-minded hedonism

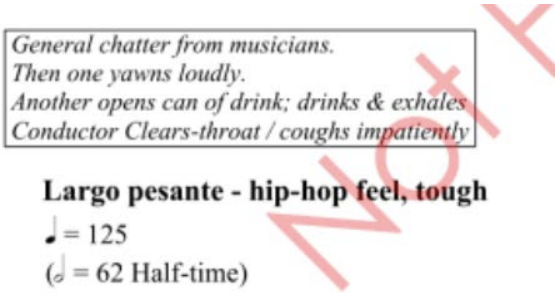
Introduction

Gabriel Prokofiev's *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra* featured at the Royal Albert Hall as part of the BBC Proms on Saturday, August 6, 2011. The whole concert was framed as a kind of run-through, a relaxed rehearsal, as was visible from a broadcast of the concert: 'And there is tonight's soloist DJ Switch,' remarked the presenter in a voice-over, over shots of the orchestra, 'already on stage with the National Youth Orchestra, warming up for tonight's performance, chatting with the musicians there and also chatting with the conductor tonight, Vladimir Jurowski, who is just putting those young musicians at ease.'[1] Perhaps the most relaxed was the soloist, this being 'the swift-fingered DJ Switch, sporting his very smartest T-shirt.'[2] But the orchestra was apparently put *too much* at ease: as soon as the first movement finished, the members of the orchestra began chatting amongst themselves. Two girls (desk partners) stood up and switched places; one boy yawned and stretched his arms; another reclined, opened a can of Coke Zero, took a sip and sighed. For a moment, it seemed as though urban civil unrest had erupted within the Royal Albert Hall. But it was easy to restore order: the conductor tapped the edge of his stand with his baton and cried 'ahem!', and the orchestra immediately launched into the second movement. The whole episode had been planned, and scored (see ex. 1). Most intriguingly, the noises generated in these few seconds are recorded by the DJ, and they are subsequently chopped

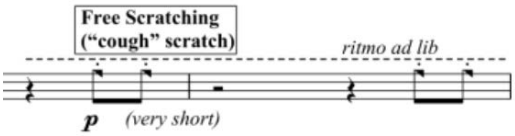
[1] 'BBC Proms 2011 concerto for turntables and orchestra performed by DJ switch (full version),' published August 19, 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJzVjN_KLZQ 0.01 – 0.17 [accessed December 11, 2016].
[2] Alexandra Coghlan, 'BBC Proms, National Youth Orchestra, Jurowski/Nigel Kennedy,' *The Arts Desk*, August 7, 2011, http://www.theartsdesk.com/classical-music/bbc-proms-national-youth-orchestra-jurowski-nigel-kennedy [accessed December 11, 2016].

up and worked into the material of the following movement (see ex.

Ex. 1: performance marking at top of mvt iii



Ex. 2: DJ's use of 'cough' sample



2).[3] This work, in other words, drew together and integrated different parts of an urban sound – the DJ and the rabble of the club, and the experience of civil unrest in a public space.

That this work was 'urban' in a musical sense was a point made explicitly or implicitly by most commentators. Michael Hogan, for example, applauded the 'witty, four-movement urban symphony that incorporates samples from clubland' by 'genre-bending talent Gabriel Prokofiev'.[4] This assessment accepts the *Concerto* as playing into a more general discourse about the bringing of classical music to different places and new audiences: Nick Shave commented that Prokofiev was concerned with 'introducing urban sounds into the concert hall',[5] but what is really foregrounded in this specific instance, and throughout media response to Prokofiev's music in general, is the sense that the 'urban' is linked inextricably

[3] These sounds even occur in the recording of the concerto, made in 2009 by the Heritage Orchestra. 'Gabriel Prokofiev, *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra* [+ Remixes],' Audio CD, Heritage Orchestra/Jules Buckley (Nonclassical, November 9, 2009).
[4] Michael Hogan, 'What to watch,' *The Daily Telegraph*, August 13, 2011, Review; Features, 33.
[5] Nick Shave, 'Get into the groove: Next week, the Proms hosts its first ever turntablist,' *The Guardian*, July 29, 2011, Guardian Film and Music Pages, 12.

with a club atmosphere. The focus of this chapter, the oxymoron 'high-minded hedonism', is lifted from an article that places Prokofiev's musical activities within a more general trend in club culture away from mindless dancing to a simplistic repetitive beat and towards a sophisticated dance music that demands attentive listening.[6] This touches on the way in which a supposedly hedonistic, violent and feral youth culture is in some way tamed by the forces of classical music. In general, there is a sense that conceptual sophistication underpins both Prokofiev's music and his media profile.

The above concert also begs to be viewed in reference to contestations over public space, thanks to a remarkable coincidence: the riots of the summer of 2011 began while the concert was happening. An initially peaceful protest in Tottenham descended into violence after two empty police vehicles were torched at around 8:20pm,[7] or around half way into the last work on the programme (a selection of movements from Sergei Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*).[8] The overlapping of these two events gave the concert reviews an eerily euphemistic tone, given the association in the British psyche between street violence and youth culture: 'It was an evening celebrating the scope of the teenage experience',[9] wrote Alexandra Coghlan; for Hogan, this was 'age-appropriate repertoire';[10] 'in case you hadn't got the message that youth was the keynote,' wrote Edward Seckerson, 'there was a DJ on hand'.[11] Charlotte Higgins commented that it was 'the first time a DJ will have appeared at

[6] Kate Spicer, 'Culture clubbing; A new breed of party animal is turning away from mindless hedonism and seeking to combine the cerebral with the carnival. Meet the brain ravers,' *The Times*, July 5, 2009, Style; Features, 14-15.
[7] 'England Riots: Map and Timeline,' *BBC News*, August 15, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-14436499 [accessed December 11, 2016].
[8] Programme Note for BBC Prom 30, August 6, 2011, opening page [no page number]. Timings of works in the programme are listed here.
[9] Coghlan, 'BBC Proms.'
[10] Hogan, 'What to Watch.'
[11] Edward Seckerson, 'BBC Proms: National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain/Jurowski/Nigel Kennedy Royal Albert Hall, London,' *Independent Extra*, August 10, 2011, Viewspaper, 16.

the Proms,'[12] and Anita Singh described this as 'perhaps the most unconventional evening' of the Proms season.[13] None of the writers mentioned the riots explicitly, and while there is no sense that the events are causally linked, the two events speak to one another. In both cases, a large group of young people either performed or actually erupted in a public show of resistance.

Urban rhythm is projected here through a tension between, on the one hand, conceptual sophistication and, on the other, feral thoughtlessness – the phrase 'high-minded hedonism' invites us to negotiate this binary in different ways. This chapter falls into four broad sections. The first describes the way in which the East London sound-world of Prokofiev's home and site of his many musical activities in underground clubs becomes translated into his music through a sense of rhythm, abrasion and bodily tension; the second pursues the theme of 'high-minded hedonism' more directly by discussing the ways in which a club culture previously considered mindless has begun to engage with more conceptually sophisticated modes of listening and enjoyment, and discusses the ways in which Prokofiev's *Nonclassical* club nights play into this; the third section looks at contestations over electronic music, looking at the ways in which classical composers and musicians position their use of electronics antagonistically against hip hop, and traces the ways in which Prokofiev and the *Nonclassical* team align their aesthetic project with regards to these contestations; the fourth section looks at the theme of discipline more directly, through Prokofiev's engagement with the underground genre of grime music and his relationship with rapper Lady Sovereign, and compares this with his status as Sergei Prokofiev's grandson.

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[12] Charlotte Higgins, 'Summer festival lineups: The Proms: The good, the bad and the motley,' *The Guardian*, April 15, 2011, The Guardian Home Pages, 11.
[13] Anita Singh, 'And now at the Proms: any requests?' *The Daily Telegraph*, April 15, 2011, News, 8.

Urban rhythms, club culture

The response to the *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra* should first be read with reference to the more general urban backdrop that Prokofiev's work is seen to reflect. One repeated theme in press discourse is that of the urban cityscape; journalists often set the scene for interviews in such a way that suggests that the city provides an environmental key to Prokofiev's work, perhaps even to disrupt the rhythm of his life. For example, Nick Shave begins an article with the following:

> Dressed in baggy black jeans and trainers, and sat among the club-night chaos of his office in a semi-derelict warehouse in east London, Prokofiev doesn't look like the obvious candidate to continue the great classical tradition. But as a DJ, producer and composer in his mid-30s he is absolutely focused on bringing classical music to younger, more diverse audiences through his *Nonclassical* record label and club nights.[14]

Ivan Hewett's interview with Gabriel Prokofiev begins almost like a novel, setting out and reveling in the chaos of urban life:

> What comes through [Prokofiev's] grimy window is the honking of traffic and the slamming of a lift door. We're in a cut-price rental building in Bethnal Green, the nerve centre of Prokofiev's *Nonclassical* label. Down one scruffy corridor is the label's home-made recording studio, with what looks like bits of mattress stuck to the walls to dampen the sound. Down another is the office, where piles of cardboard boxes containing consignments of CDs line every wall. Prokofiev runs a hand through his tousled fair hair and surveys the mess ruefully.[15]

Prokofiev's home, just like the part of London in which he lives, seems in permanent disarray, or chaos, with urban sounds – honking traffic and slamming lift door – constantly permeating its walls. Russ Coffey's vignette does a similar thing, but brings in the theme of the body much more explicitly:

> Outside the window, through the fog, you can make out a gas tower. Sitting at the desk of the tiny Bethnal Green recording studio is a man once described as London's

[14] Shave, 'Get into the groove.'
[15] Ivan Hewett, 'BBC Proms 2011: Gabriel Prokofiev interview for *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra*,' *The Telegraph*, August 3, 2010, Music, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/proms/8679983/BBC-Proms-2011-Gabriel-Prokofiev-interview-for-Concerto-for-Turntables-and-Orchestra.html [Accessed December 19, 2016].

> hottest new producer of garage music. Packed like sardines in the room are the Elysian String Quartet and myself. … The man at the desk is Gabriel Prokofiev, grandson of Sergei. The quartet is recording the third movement of his first string quartet. The Soviet feel of the music seems apt for the half-derelict former factory we are in. With only an hour left of studio time, there is conspicuous tension in the room.[16]

All of the above themes are set up in this quotation and linked to the urban cityscape: the Elysian Quartet are quite literally squeezed, their bodies tensed, implicitly in preparation for a release through the music they are about to create.

There is a sense that the sound of the urban is inseparable from Prokofiev's work and music, that they meld together. For example, the work about to be played by the Elysian String Quartet, Prokofiev's First String Quartet, has also been described in terms of urban dance rhythms. Ivan Hewett, reviewing a performance of the work at a club, wrote that its 'dance-music inspired rhythms … certainly seized everyone's attention;'[17] even a less favourable review described its opening movement as 'pretty ordinary, [but] the second was at least rhythmically engaging.'[18] The sense of bodily tension in this room, of energy about to erupt, seems to prefigure the eruption of disobedience in the *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra*. In fact, the general response to Prokofiev's music is that it blends together the 'urban' with rhythms, bodily tics, and metaphors that evoke roughness or disorder.[19] Rhythm is again generally associated with the urban, as visible from a typical review in which Claudia Pritchard praised Prokofiev's

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[16] Russ Coffey, 'Prokofiev goes clubbing; The grandson of composer Sergei Prokofiev is already one of Britain's hottest producers of garage music. Now he's written a string quartet to be premiered in a nightclub,' *The Daily Telegraph*, March 2, 2004, 19.
[17] Ivan Hewett, 'Trendy Hoxton hubbub silenced by huge clarinet,' *The Daily Telegraph*, November 4, 2011, Music; Features; Review, 35.
[18] Steve Crowther, 'Review: The Elysian Quartet, Sir Jack Lyons Concert Hall, University of York,' *York Press*, May 14, 2010, Music News and Reviews, [no page number].
[19] Ivan Hewett, 'Music without Borders,' *The Daily Telegraph,* November 18, 2014, Features, 36. This is apparent when Prokofiev's work is compared to that of other composers, for example: 'First up were the Tempest Flute Trio, which played five pieces. Some were charming, like Gary Carpenter's

> abrasive *Concerto for Turntable and Orchestra*, … Prokofiev's distinguished Russian heritage is seasoned by the urban grit of his east London home and studio, so that brooding elegies are shot through with unexpected rhythms or bracing dissonances.[20]

A review of a set of collected works by Prokofiev makes this link explicitly:

> The sleeve and booklet photos of *Selected Classical Works 2003-2012* emphasise the gritty East End surroundings of Gabriel Prokofiev's studio, and his music is likewise firmly rooted in 'real life' aspects, notably the area's strong dance subculture. The jittery, staccato rhythms of String Quartet No 2 reflect the influence of techno, and the "Concerto for Turntables & Orchestra" makes explicit his intended bridges between high and low cultures, DJ Yoda's whip-like scratches and mutated vocal snatches finding space between the galumphing, urban horns and tiptoeing strings.[21]

In short, rhythm and abrasiveness, facets of the urban experience, are considered characteristic of his music: urban space, its rhythm and its aesthetic, seems to blend seamlessly in these descriptions with the music. Moreover, by representing this experience – characterized by boxes and packaging, of industrial buildings like water towers and abandoned factories – through music, what results is a romanticisation of this urban space.

That Prokofiev's music evokes the 'urban grit of his east London home and studio' by referencing the area's 'strong dance subculture' is an important thread running through the response to his work. It is here that 'high-minded hedonism' comes in. The sense that the urban is somehow projected through this music has a great deal to do with Prokofiev's work with *Nonclassical*, both as club night and record label. Started in 2006, *Nonclassical* brought classical music to clubs and underground music venues, and this should be foregrounded before explaining the exact nature of the *Nonclassical* project. *Nonclassical* is generally associated with specific geographical locations in East London, Prokofiev's home, and has

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Niderau, which could have been the soundtrack to a Sixties social comedy. Some, like … Gabriel Prokofiev's *Trio*, were louchely rhythmic.'

[20] Claudia Pritchard, 'Gabriel Prokofiev; Classical select works; Elysian String Quartet Nonclassical,' *The Independent*, August 10, 2014, Features, 10.

[21] Andy Gill, 'Gabriel Prokofiev; New Releases; Album reviews; Classical; *Selected Classical Works 2003-2012* (Nonclassical),' *Arts & Book Review*, August 2, 2014, Music, 18.

been neatly described by one journalist as 'Gabriel Prokofiev's London-based club night where contemporary classical music meets underground east London club culture.'[22] The term 'underground' is an extremely vague concept within musicology: neither classical nor popular, it is in many ways the 'cool' music *par excellence*, inasmuch as 'undergrounds define themselves most clearly by what they're not – that is, "mainstream".'[23] Writers in the press also distinguish between underground and classical music, and *Nonclassical* is often advertised in the 'underground music' rather than the 'classical' sections of magazines, and is consequently a descriptor that is entertained for present purposes here.[24] Having said that, underground music and contemporary classical music are both, as Graham puts it, 'organized around some core sense of aesthetic and political innovation and radicalism.'[25] Likewise, *Nonclassical*'s relationship with classical music is really *not* antagonistic, and in fact, the name is misleading: according to Prokofiev, 'the "Non" is not saying we're anti-classical it's just saying its done in a non-traditional way.'[26] This focus on undermining tradition is central to *Nonclassical*.[27]

How it does so is more difficult to explain. The website suggests that 'the success of the night partly stems from the fact that it presents Classical as if it were Rock or Electronic music',[28] but this leaves many questions unanswered. For Kate Molleson, the club nights

[22] 'Prokofiev's grandson's Welsh premiere,' *The Western Mail*, February 20, 2014, Features, 43.
[23] Sarah Thornton, 'Moral Panic, The Media and British Rave Culture,' in *Microphone Fiends: youth music & youth culture*, ed. Tricia Rose & Andrew Ross (Abingdon & New York: Routledge, 1994), 178.
[24] See Emma Pomfret, 'The Bristol Proms: ripping up the concert rule book and entering the 21st century,' *The Times*, 15 July 2013, Classical Music. http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/arts/music/classical/article3814300.ece [Accessed February 16, 2016].
[25] Graham, *Sounds of the Underground*, 5-6.
[26] Peter Meanwell, 'The Incorrect Path: Gabriel Prokofiev Interviewed,' *The Quietus*, April 9, 2014 http://thequietus.com/articles/14935-gabriel-prokofiev-interview [accessed December 11, 2016].
[27] While the link is not drawn in the press or by Prokofiev, the term *Nonclassical* is also arguably a reference to the term 'neoclassical', and a nod to his grandfather, Sergei.
[28] *Nonclassical Website*, http://www.nonclassical.co.uk/about-us/ [accessed December 11, 2016].

'blend live instrumentals with laptop and turntable DJs,'[29] while for Kate Spicer, it is 'a rare mix of dance music, vintage electronica and contemporary classical music.'[30] To quote Nick Shave again, *Nonclassical* club nights are

> informal classical music get-togethers that mix live performances from instrumentalists and singers, with sets from electronica DJs, in the happening quarters of east London. [Prokofiev] also works hip-hop and dance music into the material he writes, introducing urban sounds into the concert hall.[31]

So Prokofiev works in two directions: he produces classical music for a club, and club music for classical venues. In general, a sense that classical and electronic music is blended at each event is fundamental to *Nonclassical*. But these concerts are often commented upon in charged language that touches on the racial and class tensions of urban life: for Eddy Lawrence, the *Nonclassical* label 'has an avowed agenda to rehabilitate classical music among the feral pop-obsessed demographic',[32] not only directly invoking musical styles but also suggesting the audience that those styles may have. It is here that *Nonclassical* links the political positions of underground and avant-garde music, in the sense that artists of both types of music 'insist on the social rooting of their practice.'[33] Prokofiev himself is more explicit, however, since a club night at which the *Concerto* was played prior to its Proms performance was entitled 'Classical Music for the Hoodie Generation',[34] here the 'hoodies' being the very children likely to behave antisocially in public spaces. The issue of the feral is also made explicit by some commentators. The *Concerto* was described as appropriate for

[29] Kate Molleson, 'Gabriel Prokofiev and Peter Gregson, Queen's Hall, Edinburgh,' *The Herald*, March 25, 2013, Features, 18.
[30] Spicer, 'Culture clubbing.'
[31] Shave, 'Get into the groove.'
[32] Eddy Lawrence, 'Neuron antics,' *Time Out*, July 17, 2008, 100.
[33] Stephen Graham, '(Un)Popular Avant Gardes: Underground Popular Music and the Avant-Garde,' *Perspectives of New Music* 48/2 (2010): 11.
[34] Katharine Barney, 'Prokofiev grandson mixes it with Yoda,' *The Evening Standard*, July 26, 2007, 22.

an audience 'weaned on club culture',[35] just as Prokofiev had in his early life 'been weaned on a diet of jazz and classical'.[36] The *Concerto*, then, is in many ways paradigmatic of *Nonclassical*'s mission, and reflects in a profound way the anxieties about youth culture at the time.

Another central tenet of *Nonclassical*'s vision is the attempt to foster progress or innovation. While this is, and always has been, central to modernism, Prokofiev is often quoted advocating innovation less as an explicit link to the European avant-garde and more as a kind of neutral force that can bind different types of music together: 'It's good to put these genres side-by-side and say "Look, let's forget all this stuff about 'high art' and 'low art' - this is just really good, inventive music."'[37] In addition to this, *Nonclassical* is committed to working with and showcasing 'other up-and-coming innovators', [38] as well as 'continu[ing] to go where other alternative labels fear to tread'[39] – a statement that, if read literally, means that *Nonclassical* is not only distinguished against more mainstream record but against other alternative labels. In other words, *Nonclassical* is concerned first and foremost with staying at the conceptual forefront of music, both classical and popular. Innovation is also directly linked to the lack of discipline associated with civil unrest. The blurb on the *Nonclassical* website suggests that the club night is fuelled by 'the next generation of classical performers, composers and promoters who are redefining the rules, and breaking out of the constraints of the traditional concert hall.'[40] The theme of wild and

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[35] Laura Barnett, 'Orchestral manoeuvres after dark; Classical music is being dragged out of the concert hall and into clubs, pubs and bars,' *Daily Telegraph*, August 31, 2006, 29.
[36] Rachel Devine, 'Prokofiev's Peculiar Mix,' *The Times*, June 15, 2008, 15.
[37] Tristan Parker, 'Nightlife – Clubbing + Classical = Minimalism,' *Time Out*, November 10, 2015, 78.
[38] Richard Whitehouse, 'Talking Microtonal Blues; Review; Goves, *Sinew*. *Writing* 21. *Viviana & the Vermilion Border*. *Poppy*. *Deaf John's Dark House*. *Talking Microtonal Blues*. *Skein(2)*; House of Bedlam. Nonclassical,' *Gramophone*, January 2014, 48.
[39] Ibid.
[40] *Nonclassical Website*, About, http://www.nonclassical.co.uk/index.php/about/ [accessed June 16, 2014.]

untamed youth is immediately obvious here, but it is married with a more subtle evocation of a quasi-scientific discourse that suggests both innovation and conceptual sophistication:

> The audience represents a young generation of music lovers who are searching for the latest exciting developments in music. At each event, innovative and virtuosic classical musicians blow away audiences with their incredible musicianship and new compositions.[41]

The reference here to innovation, to 'searching for the latest exciting developments', is a momentary slip into the rhetoric of scientific progress that was so central to late twentieth-century experimental modernism.[42] This is the same kind of 'conceptual foraging'[43] that Georgina Born has argued was fostered in Pierre Boulez's IRCAM.

In fact, it should also be made clear that while the turntables feature as the 'popular' side of this culture-clash, DJing contains its own snobbery, one that chimes well with Prokofiev's. In his *Groove Music*, Mark Katz begins with an anecdote about Theodore, a young man whom he sees to be a paradigmatic DJ, and who is characterized by a kind of meek integrity and knowledge of technology:

> Unlike those swaggering, jewel-encrusted rappers who capture the attention of the media, Theodore, like most DJs, is unassuming and quiet. Like most hip-hop DJs he is technologically savvy, having honed the necessary skills to assemble, disassemble, and repair turntables, quickly and under pressure.[44]

Thus even within the history of hip hop, an emphasis on technological knowledge and the honing of skills is important, allowing it to blend with the focus on conceptual sophistication, hard work and skilled listening, that Prokofiev's work attempts to cultivate. This also manifests in the way that, since the work calls for scratching, it calls for a set of vinyl turntables. Vinyl had in some ways been rendered obsolete since around 1990 due to the huge proliferation of digital technologies. Since the release of the iPad, in particular,

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[41] Ibid.
[42] Simon Emmerson, *Living Electronic Music*, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 35-36.
[43] Georgina Born, *Rationalizing Culture: IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde* (Berkeley & Los Angeles, CA; London: University of California Press, 1995), 166.
[44] Katz, *Groove Music*, 3.

specialist apps have made DJing an easier activity for amateurs to pick up. As a result, there has been some resistance from professional DJs, who view the use of actual turntables as a marker of skill: 'vinyl symbolizes the "grain" of authenticity … as well as the physical manifestation of subcultural capital.'[45] In other words, while the concerto is ostensibly forward-looking, its focus on a set of hard-earned technical abilities enshrines a fascination with arcane knowledge.[46]

Linking these things together is also the trope of protest, or of a specifically subcultural perspective. Quoting one member of the audience at one of the *Nonclassical* events, Kate Spicer writes that the blending of classical and electronic makes sense: 'clubs are "experimental havens for the avant-garde" [and so] this avant-garde streak is entirely compatible with "the sleaze, the drugs, the sex, the underbelly of society you normally find in clubs. Art and sleaze melt together at night".'[47] The 'underbelly' as a group of social undesirables is united here with the 'underground', since it is through the term 'under' that these marginal activities define themselves. More importantly, the value judgments ascribed to the underground are precarious. For example, Prokofiev praises 'a club called XOYO near Old Street … [that] was an underground car park, and holds 500 people. We will do events there that start completely classical, then get progressively more clubby, ending with a DJ.'[48] But we have to ask whether or not the trajectory of this evening, from classical to clubby, does more than highlight the distinction between the classical and the club by

[45] Christina Zanfagna and Kate Levitt Brandin, 'Turning the Tables: Digital Technologies and the Remixing of DJ Culture,' *Oxford Handbook of Mobile Music Studies*, ed. Gopinath and Stanyek, vol. 2, 296.
[46] See also Tobias C. van Veen, 'Off the Record: Turntablism and Controllerism in the 21st Century,' *Dancecult* 3/1 (June 2011), . https://dj.dancecult.net/index.php/dancecult/article/view/319/313 [accessed December 11, 2016].
[47] Spicer, 'Culture clubbing.'
[48] Richard Morrison, 'Gabriel Prokofiev takes on family business,' *The Times*, January 9, 2012, Classical Music, http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/arts/music/classical/article3278958.ece [accessed December 11, 2016].

painting it in terms of a descent from formality into chaos.

Rave, protest, and 'high-minded hedonism'

The above descriptions of *Nonclassical* and the *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra* are relevant to a discourse more generally concerned with what Kate Spicer views as 'a greater thirst for the challenging and contemplative' in 'traditional arenas' in the UK.[49] Spicer refers to consumers of this kind of mix as the 'brain ravers', a new type of clubber who combines 'the cerebral with the carnival', who wants 'a bit of highbrow in their low life.'[50] It is here that the tension between the base and the contemplative, manifest in Spicer's **phrase** 'high-minded hedonism',[51] fully flourishes. In many ways Prokofiev agrees, and he is quoted elsewhere saying that 'dancing to a mechanical beat is thrilling, but so is a really sensitive classical performance. Plus, so many clubs and radio stations play the same stuff, but the general public can handle complicated music.'[52] The association of a mechanical beat with a mindless or animalistic visceral intensity, is widely, but problematically, defined *against* an ability to think properly, to listen attentively.

The *Nonclassical* nights are a way of doing the above, but again, different commentators describe the power dynamic in different ways. The following is a typical description:

> Prokofiev runs *Nonclassical* club nights at the Macbeth pub in East London. … he has fervent doubts about new music existing only to satisfy an academic elite, and through his club – and *Nonclassical* recordings, the CD wing of his operation – is interested in snaring an audience who come to serious listening via other roots.[53]

[49] Spicer, 'Culture clubbing'.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Tony Naylor, 'The Guide: music: Prokofiev junior will make you care about classical music,' *The Guardian*, July 28, 2007, 25.
[53] Philip Clark, 'Keeping it in the family,' *Gramophone*, January 2009, 27.

The fact remains that it is serious *listening* being advocated here, not merely serious music; and in fact, when Prokofiev puts the *Nonclassical* agenda into his own words the results prove profoundly contradictory. Part of one classical club night was broadcast on the BBC radio programme *Who Killed Classical Music?*, with Prokofiev telling listeners that

> It's a classical concert but there's a kind of mist, there's some smoke in the air, there's some quite bright lights everybody's having a drink, if they want to have a chat they can, it's very relaxed. But generally once the music starts, you get a really focused response from the public, which is really nice.[54]

He makes the same point elsewhere. 'On the first Chamber Music night,' Spicer quotes Prokofiev, 'we had classical stuff and left-field dance music, a string quartet in the main room and a harpist in the bar … It was such an amazing experience. There were hundreds of twentysomethings in the bar listening to the harp with their beers, totally silent.'[55] The twentysomethings listen seriously to the harpist at the bar rather than in a concert hall. The question then becomes, are these listeners in silent reverence or respectful restraint? Prokofiev is explicit about this:

> 'When you say the words "contemporary classical", people think, dry, chin-rubbing and painful on the ear,' says Prokofiev. 'That's not the truth of it. The thing with our club is that once people come, they don't leave; they're mesmerised.' He describes a smart and open-minded person unbothered by genre or, indeed, getting home for an early night: 'Many people are used to clubbing and going out late; they've had crazy drug- or trance-induced experiences, they have woken a part of their brain that can tune into deep, longer pieces of music, and they're looking for something more intense than a good four-minute melody.'[56]

There is a tension here between the release or hedonism of drugs and the sense that it is *through* drugs that listeners are able to focus more directly or think more sophisticatedly. Prokofiev's ideal listener *is*, perhaps, a chin-rubber, or at least a chin-tapper, something to which the experience of drugs has directly contributed. Here the 'high-minded' of 'high-

[54] *Who Killed Classical Music?*, *BBC Radio 4*, January 21, 2014.
[55] Barnett, 'Orchestral manoeuvres after dark.'
[56] Spicer, 'Culture Clubbing.'

minded hedonism' has two meanings: one that suggests the 'highbrow' and one that suggests the 'high'ness of being on drugs.

Tied up with this kind of discussion is the suspicion that Prokofiev's music might be 'Strings of Life for the post rave generation'[57] – the reference here being to Derrick May's 'Strings of Life', a seminal Detroit techno track of the 1980s.[58] While there is no sense that Prokofiev's music is truly 'rave' music, the motif of rave is recurrent in discourse on *Nonclassical*. For example, Richard Morrison praises a recording of Prokofiev's *Cello Multitracks*, a four-movement cello suite that 'draws inspiration from electronica, sampling and raves; it is by turns brash, angular, grungy, weird, frenetic, hypnotic, irritating and exhilarating. And when it's over, Prokofiev hands it to Shoreditch confederates to produce dance remixes'[59] (the CD itself contains dance remixes after the original work). These references to rave require further exploration. In the first instance, Prokofiev's work is rave-like because it is in touch with musical dance subcultures that, as explained in the introduction and in chapter 3, articulate a subversive sentiment. If rave articulated protest (in particular by moving away from the explicitly politicised messages of rock) it did so by apparently disavowing the political altogether and instead embracing the meaningless pleasures of drugs and trance, fusing the bodily with the irrational. But this was found to articulate its own form of protest, since 'the pleasure of the raving body, as a resistance to the dominant moral order, contributes to a different form of power relations.'[60] Jeremy Gilbert makes this point when he writes that 'the "crowd" has always been a fearful sight for

[57] 'NightLife: Club Listings – Wednesday 17,' *Time Out*, March 17, 2004, 126.
[58] See Reynolds, *Energy Flash*, 43.
[59] Richard Morrison, 'Gregson/Prokofiev: Cello Multitracks,' *The Times*, July 7, 2012, Reviews, http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/arts/music/albumreviews/article3467266.ece [accessed December 11, 2016].
[60] Marsh, 'Understand Us Before You End Us,' 421.

those who have sought to govern,'[61] since 'what disturbs metaphysicians about the dancing crowd is that it refuses to settle down into a stable and meaningful object.'[62] The links between the *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra* and protest were certainly made, with varying degrees of directness, by different commentators. 'Stravinsky's influence looms large,' read Erica Jeal's review in the *Guardian*, 'and the second movement sounds like the *Rite of Spring* squeezed into a slow hip-hop beat – in a good way.'[63] The reference to the *Rite* here seems to be the *Rite* of legend, which incited a riot at its premiere: the *Rite*, then, stands in as a marker of the transgressive nature of movement and dance and of civil unrest within a public space. The orchestra was also, according to Alexandra Coghlan, 'constrained by Prokofiev's fragmented patterns', and had to find release in the ensuing music on the programme.[64] Again there is an ambivalent description of these rhythmic patterns: is the orchestra, as a mass of bodies, truly constrained? Does this make Prokofiev's work a successful mode of discipline, and thus a failed attempt at true rave release?

The association of the body with the irrational happens in contradistinction to the association of the voice with the rational. According to Gilbert, 'there is a powerful sense in which Western culture itself could be described as a culture of the voice.'[65] For Martin Daughtry, this happens in the sense that the voice is associated with 'having one's voice heard' in democracy, becoming a 'ubiquitous and transparent metaphor for agency' in

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[61] Jeremy Gilbert, 'Soundtrack to an Uncivil Society: Rave Culture, the Criminal Justice Act and the Politics of Modernity,' *New Formations* 31 (1997): 5-6.
[62] Ibid, 10. For Ramzy Alwakeel, the scholarly study of rave risks what some scholars would consider a misguided attempt to 'narrativise or functionally explain' rave, this mode of scholarly study being fuelled by the same intellectual 'fear of the irrational' that rave sought to criticize or undermine. Ramzy Alwakeel, 'The Aesthetics of Protest in UK Rave,' *Dancecult* 1/2 (July 2010): 53.
[63] Erica Jeal, 'Prom 30: NYO/Jurowski?DJ Switch/Grosvenor – review,' *The Guardian*, August 7, 2011, Culture, https://www.theguardian.com/music/2011/aug/07/prom-30-jurowski-switch-review [accessed December 11, 2016].
[64] Coghlan, 'BBC Proms.'
[65] Gilbert, 'Soundtrack to an Uncivil Society,' 13.

politics.[66] Suggesting the inverse of this, Christina Goulding locates a 'neo-tribal' element in rave, because the identity of ravers is cemented by their lack of speech while dancing.[67] In other words, rave is both apolitical and yet aesthetically political because it disavows the attempt to give voice to a conventional political message. But it is also in the voice that Martin Daughtry identifies an overlap between music and violence. Just like the motion of bodies, so can the voice 'inspire and intimidate, tickle and infuriate. [Vocal] vibrations set other bodies in motion, provoking an immediate physical reaction.'[68] So, in retrospect, how do we hear the vocalisations that happen in between the second and third movements? To be more specific, there are no words exactly heard, either in the performance or the recording: all we hear is a babbling, an exhalation from a young man opening and taking a sip of a canned drink, and the conductor clearing his throat. These are all vibrations, settings-in-motion. Links with politics in Britain around the 2011 riots are in this sense palpable, since a main way of dismissing any political message in the riots was for politicians to suggest that they had been meaningless, 'nihilistic and hedonistic',[69] 'criminality, pure and simple'.[70] Within the *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra* the electronic manipulation of these vocalisations has a double effect. In some ways the manipulations attempt to explain or fully articulate the sentiment underlying these vocalisations, implying that they are irrational or meaningless; and yet in a similar way it can attempt to narrativise them or read them too closely, stripping them of their sentiment of protest.

[66] Martin Daughtry, 'Afterword,' in *Music, Politics and Violence*, ed. Susan Fast and Kip Pegley (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2012), 250.
[67] Christina Goulding, Avi Shankar, and Richard Elliott, 'Working Weeks, Rave Weekends: Identity Fragmentation and the Emergence of New Communities,' *Consumption Markets and Culture* 5/4 (December 2002): 274.
[68] Daughtry, 'Afterword,' 247.
[69] Lee Bridges, 'Four Days in August: the UK Riots,' *Race & Class* 54/1 (2012): 4.
[70] David Cameron, 'PM's Speech.'

Around the same time that the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act was launched, a new type of 'intelligent' dance music had begun to be produced, as a (specifically ambivalent) response to the idea that repetitive beats within dance music were in some way dangerous.[71] This was music that 'you weren't *supposed* to dance to',[72] that was marketed as 'electronic music for the mind.'[73] Much intelligent dance music was constructed in response to the idea that electronic music had no soul. This absence manifested in textures that contained exaggeratedly robotic or synthesized voices,[74] something that questions the status of the voice as a vector for true or authentic political messages. However, this was also counterbalanced by a reinstatement of rhythm *into* intelligent dance music. As Reynolds puts it, the rhythmically 'anaemic' intelligent techno was given a 'sorely needed kick up the arse' by 'jungle's polyrhythmic exuberance',[75] through the music of artists such as Aphex Twin. This kind of music is still seen by Ramzy Alwakeel as intelligent dance music, but simultaneously interpreted as a kind of comment *on* rhythmically anaemic dance music. While Prokofiev may not create rave music *per se*, his musical developments are associated with the music of Aphex Twin directly. According to one writer, Prokofiev

> launched his *Nonclassical* label in order to ensure it was heard, but began signing other artists after discovering its potential for bridging the gap between the kind of experimental techno, such as Aphex Twin and Autechre, that would appear on Warp Records, and his own experiments in the concert hall.[76]

The blending of the cerebral with the carnival goes back much further than the second decade of the twenty-first century, but we should be wary of attributing a narrative of historical progress to the contemporary moment in rave/classical crossover. The defining

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[71] Alwakeel, 'The Aesthetics of Protest,' 51.
[72] Reynolds, *Energy Flash,* 193.
[73] Ramzy Alwakeel, 'IDM as a "Minor" Literature: The Treatment of Cultural and Musical Norms by "Intelligent Dance Music",' *Dancecult* 1/1 (September 2009): 2
[74] Ibid, 6.
[75] Reynolds, *Energy Flash*, 474.
[76] Shave, 'Get into the groove.'

problem behind the concerto, which brings urban music into a classical space, resides in a subtler set of issues surrounding the difference between the live and the electronic, a binary which has as its cognate the body and the mind, the black and the white. It is here that the links between dance music and European modernism need to be made more explicit.

'Post-African repetitions': Contestations over liveness in electronic music

When Aphex Twin and similar artists began their developments in intelligent dance music, the links with European modernist electronic music were palpable. In 1995, the editors of *The Wire* magazine sent Karlheinz Stockhausen some tapes containing dance music by Aphex Twin (among others) and asked him for a statement. In a subsequent interview Stockhausen suggested that the producers of the tracks should

> not allow themselves any repetitions, and [should] go faster in developing their ideas or their findings, because I don't appreciate at all this permanent repetitive language … [Referring to Aphex Twin] I think it would be very useful if he listens to my work *The Song of Youth* [*Gesang der Jünglinge*] … Because he would then immediately stop with these post-African repetitions.[77]

He also suggested that

> using music like a drug is stupid. One shouldn't do that: music is the product of the highest human intelligence, and of the best senses, the listening senses, and of imagination and intuition. And as soon as it becomes just a means for ambience, as we say, environment, or for being used for certain purposes, then music becomes a whore.[78]

We should be reminded here of Gilroy's 'pernicious metaphysical dualism that identifies blacks with the body and whites with the mind.'[79] These repetitions are described as 'post-African' not really in reference to their actual sounds but as a generic derogatory term that conflates rhythm and simplicity, and distinguishes them negatively against deep thought.[80]

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[77] Dick Witts, 'Advice to clever children…,' *The Wire*, November, 1995, 34.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 97.
[80] Witts, 'Advice to clever children…,' 34.

Stockhausen's second complaint also aligns drugs with rhythm (rather than with conceptual sophistication), something problematized in Prokofiev's work.[81] But we could also read Stockhausen's description of this rhythmic musical language as 'post-African' less as a direct racial essentialism and more as a critique of what he saw as an essentialism on the part of Aphex Twin and other producers of intelligent techno. In any case, this episode has become notorious in the history of the intersections between European art music and electronic music.[82]

Taking into consideration Stockhausen's invocation of race in criticizing the overlapping of these two different types of music, the question of where Prokofiev's own allegiances lie becomes pressing. This is especially the case when we take into account the fact that one journalist explicitly asserts that in the *Nonclassical* club nights 'DJ Gabriel Prokofiev pay[s] homage to Stockhausen.'[83] It is generally clear that Prokofiev's and *Nonclassical*'s allegiances are to the history of classical music rather than to the history of hip-hop – something reflected in *Nonclassical*'s series of concerts entitled the 'Pioneers of Electronic Music programme [which] aims to highlight the connections between contemporary electronic producers and mavericks of the 1950s and 1960s.'[84] It is here that Prokofiev's work intersects with a more general reassessment of modernism occurring within musicology.[85] There are two main issues that need to be unpacked: one is to do with

[81] Prokofiev is quoted: 'This is one reason why people who don't know contemporary classical music need to hear it – it's exciting because it's *not* in a clear, repetitive format and because it *doesn't* follow a particular chain of events.' Andrew Palmer, *Encounters with British Composers* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2015), 399.
[82] It is discussed in Demers, *Listening Through the Noise*, 147; and in Emmerson, *Living Electronic Music*, 62.
[83] 'Music - Classical & Opera - Critics' choice,' *Time Out*, March 5, 2008, 131.
[84] Sharon O'Connell, 'Earnest Endeavours + Nonclassical + Propaganda + The Upfront Project; Clubs,' *Metro*, March 14, 2013, Features, 56.
[85] Paul Attinello, 'Postmodern or Modern: A Different Approach to Darmstadt,' *Contemporary Music Review* 26/1 (February, 2007): 25-37. Attinello has recently proposed a revision of the centrality of serialism to Darmstadt, writing that 'some of the corporeal, theatrical styles of music written by

rhythm, the other is to do with electronics.

It is intriguing, in light of this episode, to look at an instance in which Prokofiev's work was programmed alongside Stockhausen's, and in the Roundhouse, a semi-formal music venue in Central London, rather than a club. The programme for the concert included Stockhausen's *Studie I*, Iannis Xenakis' *Metastaseis* with Prokofiev's *Concerto for Bass Drum and Orchestra* – a work composed after the success of the *Concerto for Turntables* – at its 'heart'.[86] Prior to its performance, Prokofiev was asked by a journalist, 'Isn't the bass drum the very antithesis of music?'

> 'Yes,' Prokofiev laughs ruefully. 'It was a perverse idea to do this. But I thought: "I've had success with turntables; what can I do next that's just as unusual?" And I was intrigued that the bass drum is everywhere these days, particularly in electronica, hip-hop and dance music. I decided that such a ubiquitous sound deserves a concerto of its own.'[87]

For Prokofiev, the tension between European art music, and hip hop and dance music was still fertile. And, perhaps echoing the *Concerto for Turntables*, this performance incited some disobedience (this time unscripted), since after the *Concerto for Bass Drum* an audience member yelled 'Rubbish!'[88] Having initially thought the person was joking, journalist Lucy Jones subsequently spoke to him and his friends, only to find out that they were entirely serious: 'They thought it was a "bastardisation" of contemporary classical music,' she wrote in her review, 'and that it was ridiculous and unfair that the composer had been given such

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Darmstadt participants in the 1960s are distinct from and even opposed to the serialism with which they are often associated.' Ibid, 31; Attinello also reminds us that in 1980, after music critic Friedrich Hommel became director, he 'retooled the Ferienkurse to create a more educational and open context for musical discussion, importing jazz musicians and English and American composers.' Ibid, 28.

[86] Lucy Jones, 'Is it ever OK to yell "rubbish!" at the end of a concert?' *The Telegraph*, March 6, 2012, Blog, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion/ [accessed through online archive; available through *Telegraph* website only after subscription]. *Doghouse* by Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood, and Vivier's *Orion*, were also on the programme.

[87] Morrison, 'Gabriel Prokofiev takes on family business.'

[88] Jones, 'Is it ever OK.'

an arena.'[89] We must ask whether or not this exclamation was representative of the audience. Is the kind of crowd drawn by Stockhausen and Xenakis the kind of audience who would be against a 'bastardization'? For Geoff Brown, the exclamation of 'rubbish' was

> hardly deserved, I thought, for a compact work of hiccupping rhythms, rumbling atmospherics and varied colours, athletically despatched by Joby Burgess and Brunt's spirited troops. Some ritual twinges recalled Stravinsky, the chief rival of Gabriel Prokofiev's grandfather.[90]

In any case, the complaints of 'bastardisation' echo the fear of contamination often articulated in the face of black music and popular culture, and the fact that Prokofiev hit a nerve here suggests that this discourse is still extremely potent.

In this discourse, the racialised issue of rhythm manifests in some writers' attempts to separate the history of electronic music into two camps: the European avant-garde on one hand, and hip-hop and dance music on the other hand.[91] Many journalists were critical of the idea of a classical/electronic collision, because of the legacy of classical composers incorporating electronic music. 'Marrying experimental electronica and modern classical composition isn't exactly a new idea,'[92] point out the authors of a piece in *Time Out*, since, as another pointed out, 'serious music has a long history of playing with recorded sound, from Edgar [sic] Varèse to Karl-Heinz [sic] Stockhausen'.[93] Femke Colborne has observed that 'it's not the first time that classical music has migrated to a club[:] in 2001 there was the

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[89] Ibid.
[90] Geoff Brown, 'LCO/Brunt Roundhouse, NW1,' *The Times*, March 5, 2012, Classical Music, http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/arts/music/classical/article3339592.ece [accessed December 12, 2016].
[91] Indeed, this split is reinforced within hip hop culture through the inverse kind of purism: for producers of hip hop, since the use of sampling is the norm, it is 'the *lack* of samples – the use of live instrumentation – that must be justified.' Joseph Glenn Schloss and Jeff Chang, *Making Beats: The Art of Sample-Based Hip-Hop* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2014), 67.
[92] Eddy Lawrence, Chris Parkin, and Jonathan Lennie, 'Hey! What's that noise? Across the music world, boundaries are blurring,' *Time Out*, April 24, 2008, 28.
[93] Robert Dawson Scott, 'Orchestra plays pop as it reaches out to generation raised on hip-hop,' *The Times*, March 26, 2008, Home News, 32.

launch of the *Siren Suite*, mixing dance music with Satie, Stockhausen or Cage.'[94] The split between classical and electronic music is the subject of a long 2012 article in *Prospect* by Alexandra Coghlan entitled 'Friend or foe?', in which the author sees DJ Switch's appearance at the Proms as reflective of classical music's catching up with popular culture at long last: 'decades after electronic music first conquered dance-floors, it has infiltrated the heart of the classical establishment.'[95] Coghlan quotes pianist and DJ Francesco Tristiano, who remarks that '"it's strange that we separate electronica from classical electro-acoustic music so completely, because their root is the same. Electronic music was invented by classical composers."' Coghlan is sceptical about this 'oft-rehearsed argument',[96] not least because it is both profoundly unbalanced and nonsensical. If we conclude that electronic music was 'invented' by classical composers, this does not solve the 'strange' separation of electronica, with its connotations of urban threat, from classical music; rather, it not only upholds a separation, but concludes that any coming together should happen on the terms of classical music. This is a sentiment echoed by Prokofiev, when he was quoted as saying, in 2007 that

> from Edgard Varèse's experiments with reel-to-reel and 'organised sound', to the proto-sampling of *musique concrète*, led by Pierre Schaeffer in the Fifties, classical composers have a rich history of manipulating recorded sounds that stretches back long before Kool Herc or Grandmaster Flash scratched their first records.[97]

Here Prokofiev disagrees with Coghlan: electronic music has not recently infiltrated the heart of the classical establishment; it was in it from the beginning. Regardless of his intention, there is more than a suggestion of the claiming of authorship here, or even of a territorialising over who claimed the aesthetic first. This approach contrasts starkly with many British turntablists' view that if someone uses turntables to create music they are

[94] Femke Colborne, 'Two pints of Elgar, mate,' *The Times*, June 13, 2008, 17.
[95] Coghlan, 'Friend or foe?'
[96] Ibid.
[97] Barney, 'Prokofiev Grandson mixes it with Yoda.'

always engaging with an African-American tradition and creating African-American music, regardless of the music created, and regardless of the performer's race.[98] In this sense, it is not enough merely to claim 'electronic' music for the classical side, since the turntables stand out as distinct from other technologies of musical production.

This distinction becomes harder to maintain when we consider it in terms of evem broader definitions of electronic music. For Demers, there is a basic tripartite distinction within electronic music, between institutional electroacoustic music, electronica, and sound art. The term 'electronica' crops up frequently in journalists' writing on Gabriel Prokofiev: according to one writer, he is engaged with 'marrying experimental electronica and modern classical;'[99] according to another, he is an 'occasional grime, electronica and post-punk luminary.'[100] As Joanna Demers describes it, electronica is specifically engaged with the use of 'sounds of the outside world, sounds of other works, sounds newly created', which are used in order to portray sound itself as a 'malleable material, the product of construction, reproduction, or destruction.'[101] The *Nonclassical* club nights remix classical music, using it in effect as malleable material. Electronica also overlaps here with hip-hop in its focus both on the sampling of musical sounds and on the referentiality of the used material.[102] But the division into these different categories goes only so far. When Demers writes that electronica is distinct from institutional electroacoustic music, since it 'concentrates on

[98] Sophy Smith, 'The Process of "Collective Creation" in the Composition of UK Hip-Hop Turntable Team Routines,' *Organised Sound* 12/1 (2007): 80-81.
[99] Eddy Lawrence, 'Hey! What's that noise?'; Lawrence writes, 'Most recent attempts to combine classical theory with electronica have concentrated on dance music.'
[100] John Lewis, 'Odd ones out: Mix Bartok, lush strings and jazz riffs, and what do you get?' *The Guardian*, August 31, 2007, Guardian Film and Music Pages, 18.
[101] Demers, *Listening Through the Noise*, 43.
[102] Williams is also keen to foreground the electronic dimension, and he distinguishes between the literal (electronic) reference or sample, and quotation in performance. See Williams, 'Theoretical Approaches to Quotation in Hip-Hop,' 189-190.

sound *material* rather than the acts of composing or listening',[103] this definition diverges from Prokofiev's work, in which electronic music is blended with live music, and attempts are made to create an attentive listener. In the *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra* there is a comparable process at play – the work not only used stifled vocalisations as malleable material, but also drew the listener in by playing with the distinction between live and electronic.

Prokofiev's above reference to Schaeffer is important, and the resonances with the vocalisations in the *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra* are clear, since 'Schaeffer's aim was to use his techniques in order to free his material from its native associations, so that an event could become not just an evocative symbol but a pure "sound object" amenable to compositional treatment.'[104] This is a legacy that continues within electronic music, with Demers stating that 'in all cases, post-Schaefferians treat sound as a sign, a relationship between sound and a concept external to it.'[105] There is a clash here between *Nonclassical*'s focus on blending the live and the electronic, and the use of sampled sound; but these issues become clearer when compared with the political, as well as technical, aspects of Schaeffer's musical project. According to Jane F. Fulcher, Schaeffer perceived

> that new communal networks could be established through new technologies, creating an 'aural France' of French youth, one that could combat moral decay, attributed by many to the effects of contemporary visual media, particularly newspapers and the movies. … Schaeffer thus sought an innovative sound culture … in order to diffuse an ideological message in which at first he thought he believed, for it promised both a moral regeneration and a space for a bold technological experimentation.[106]

[103] Demers, *Listening Through the Noise*, 43.
[104] Paul Griffiths, *Modern Music and After* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 18.
[105] Demers, *Listening Through the Noise*, 21.
[106] Jane F. Fulcher, 'From "the Voice of the Maréchal" to the Musique Concrète: Pierre Schaeffer and the Case for Cultural History,' *The Oxford Handbook of the New Cultural History of Music*, ed. Jane F. Fulcher (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 385.

Both Prokofiev and Schaeffer share a focus on a moral regeneration of the nation's youth through technological experimentation and innovation, a project that Paul Griffiths describes as 'utopian'[107] – but the divergence foregrounds the difference between sampling and the attempt to affect specifically live music through electronics.[108] Having said that, there appears to be a profound split within the members of the *Nonclassical* group itself. In an interview from 2014, an interviewer asked one of *Nonclassical*'s other members about the roots of their interest in electronic music, and the response was intriguing:

> Interviewer: Where does German avant-garde composer Stockhausen fit in?
> Sam Mackay: He was really keen on exploring how electronic music could be used in performance alongside live acoustic music, rather than creating purely electronic or acoustic pieces.
> Interviewer: Does *musique concrète* feature?
> Mackay: Not for us. That is all about sampling – taking real-life sounds, chopping them up and collaging them.[109]

It is unclear exactly why live music should not be 'real-life' sound: clearly, the sounds of the orchestra's motion in the live performance of Prokofiev's *Concerto for Turntables* becomes 'real-life' sound when it is looped and distorted by the DJ. In any case, this underscores the focus on *blending* electronic and live classical music; on the other hand, the rift between a European tradition and an African-American hip-hop tradition is complicated by this. The blending of electronic and live music, implicit in this definition, is still in a sense 'live' music; if we accept this, then there *is* a distinction to be made, since a turntablist is, to quote DJ Babu of the Beat Junkies crew, someone who uses the turntables 'not to play music, but to manipulate sound and create music.'[110] In other words, for McKay, hip-hop is closer to *musique concrète* than to Stockhausen's use of electronics in live musical performances.

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[107] Griffiths, *Modern Music and After*, 18.
[108] Emmerson discusses this at length in *Living Electronic Music*, chs. 1 and 3.
[109] Jonathan Lennie, 'Classical – Our friends electric,' *Time Out*, February 26, 2013, 41.
[110] Quoted in Smith, 'The Process of "Collective Creation",' 80.

The question of the human and the live has been central to electronic music scholarship. Simon Emmerson describes this divide as more than a mere binary between the human and the electronic, and he moves from 'human presence' within electronic music to 'living presence', highlighting the sense that there is an attempt to capture life itself within this music.[111] Emmerson points out the basic ways in which the human body 'generates many rhythms and sensations with cyclic periodicities',[112] but also points out the irony in the fact that the minimalist revolt against the modernist mainstream focused on the fact that composers like Stockhausen ironically viewed repetition as '*antagonistic* to the body – a machine rhythm, a prison rather than a liberation.'[113] This theme, linked explicitly to Stockhausen's 'post-African rhythms' also informs a dance music aesthetic known as Afrofuturism, which makes explicit the racialization of the machine and its link to blackness: these are 'tropes that gravitate around the android and the alien as allegories, or metaphors, for the dehumanization wrought upon Afrodiasporic peoples by Atlantic slavery and colonialism.'[114] For Tricia Rose, proto hip-hop artists recognised 'an understanding of themselves as already having been robots . . . Adopting "the robot" reflected a response to an existing condition: namely, that they were labour for capitalism, that they had very little value as people in this society',[115] which leads Ken McLeod to describe hip-hop as 'the social emancipation of the robot slave.'[116] Thus the issues of rhythm, liveness, and humanness become fused together in a profoundly ambivalent way.

Gabriel Prokofiev and the *Nonclassical* club night are also proactively experimental.

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[111] Emmerson, *Living Electronic Music*, 1.
[112] Ibid, 64.
[113] Ibid, 68.
[114] Tobias C. van Veen, '"Music is a Plane of Wisdom": Transmissions from the Offworlds of Afrofuturism,' *Dancecult* 5/2 (November 2013): 4.
[115] Quoted in Ken Mcleod, 'Space Oddities: Aliens, Futurism and Meaning in Popular Music,' *Popular Music* 22/3 (2003): 342.
[116] Ibid.

'A long-time pioneer of experimentation between music genres, [Prokofiev] believes the future of classical music lies in its ability to change and adapt.'[117] the *Nonclassical* club night offers 'experimental pub-based listening',[118] and is concerned with 'marrying experimental electronica and modern classical.'[119] For Tom Service, 'nights such as *Nonclassical*, are neither the single answer to classical music's future, nor a doomed experiment.'[120] The term 'experimental' is fluid: it refers to different modes of listening in the sense that it draws classical music into new spaces, although the question of whether or not this music becomes 'experimental' in the high-modernist sense (it is still defined as 'serious' in many articles) remains unanswered. To quote Demers again, experimentalism is 'a repudiation … first and foremost, of mass culture, even though the definition of mass culture is far from clear.'[121] For Demers, 'experimentalist discourse rides on two assumptions: that experimental music is distinct from and superior to a mainstream-culture industry and that culture and history determine aesthetic experience.'[122] In this sense, 'experimental' and 'electronic' are virtually the same – Demers puts it bluntly:

> First-time electronic music listeners are rightly fascinated by what they hear and frequently conclude that some works are 'edgier,' 'more sophisticated,' or 'more demanding' than whatever they might define as the mainstream … I do want to expose the shared tendencies on all sides of the high/popular divide, because they point to something unmistakable and crucial: a growing sense that listening to electronic music constitutes an act that is fundamentally different to how listeners have been used to hearing Western art music for the previous five centuries.[123]

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[117] Alison Chiesa, 'Classical and pop hit a note of unity,' *The Herald*, June 5, 2008, 11.
[118] Eddy Lawrence, 'Music – Nonclassical shop returns Macbeth, Wednesday,' *Time Out*, June 25, 2008, 106.
[119] Eddy Lawrence, 'Hey! What's that noise?'
[120] Tom Service, 'Classical music in a rock 'n' roll setting? It worked for me,' *The Guardian*, October 14, 2011 https://www.theguardian.com/music/tomserviceblog/2011/oct/14/classical-music-club-night [accessed December 12, 2016].
[121] Demers, *Listening Through the Noise*, 141
[122] Ibid, 139.
[123] Ibid, 15.

This seems accurate, since Prokofiev is explicit that 'his artistic creed is to "keep developing things but they have to come naturally, not commercially",'[124] and the *Concerto for Turntables*, he explains, is 'most definitely not a contrivance to get pert young bottoms on seats.'[125] The 'experimental' blending of contemporary classical and electronic music can perhaps happen on the basis that two share a rejection of commercialism or mainstream culture.

This blanket aversion to mass culture manifests especially strongly around the sense that this music should be 'organic.' While one commentator described the *Concerto* as a 'classical-hip-hop collision',[126] Prokofiev did not want to position the two musical styles in diametric opposition. 'The idea of an actual DJ concerto seemed too gimmicky for me,' Prokofiev is quoted in a programme note for the concert; he suggests that it would be 'too kitsch – it would bring the two worlds together in head-on collision rather than in a musical way.'[127] In an effort to avoid this, 'the decision was made only to use sounds made by the orchestra': Prokofiev was intrigued by the musical possibilities of 'playing sonically and philosophically with the dichotomy between the "live" and the "recorded".'[128] In an interview of around the same time, he went even further along this line:

> The important point is that all his [the DJ's] sounds come from the orchestra so everything that he uses on the turntables at some point is played by the orchestra, so that there's a kind of organic nature to the piece.[129]

This was echoed in a review of the concerto, in which one commentator wrote that 'the DJ is an organic part of the ensemble, whether supporting it or subverting it.'[130] Another

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[124] Barney, 'Prokofiev Grandson mixes it with Yoda.'
[125] Devine, 'Prokofiev's Peculiar Mix.'
[126] Shave, 'Get into the groove.'
[127] Programme Note for BBC Prom 30, 4.
[128] Ibid.
[129] 'DJ-Switch-Interview-Proms.avi,' published August 23, 2011, 1.46-2.06 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lP10LyMsaF8 [accessed December 12, 2016].
[130] Jeal, 'Prom 30.'

described the work as 'a series of itchy hip-hop beatbox manipulations', played out in a 'funky interplay' between the musical content of DJ Switch's discs and what was being heard live.[131] This is reflected in sections of the *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra*. The beginning of the second movement, 'Irreguluv', is a dialogue between the DJ and the violins (see ex. 3); while the material is split throughout the strings, it seems to outline a single, almost-diatonic B minor melody, whose semitone clashes imply a kind of corruption that echoes or emulates the DJ's (mis)handling of material with unpitched scratches. And yet, organicism is not merely about integration, since there is a proliferation of material in the *Concerto*. Praising the 'groundbreaking' and 'mind-blowing' work, one journalist wrote that the listeners were 'smiling and trying to get a grip on what they were hearing: a DJ sampling, mixing, distorting electronically with sounds from heavy stomping to eerie oriental. Our youngsters took this all in their stride.'[132] How can this stylistic multiplicity be 'organic'? Prokofiev even uses the term to criticise popular music in general:

> The big problem with popular music is it's very fashion-conscious. Some new sound or approach will emerge in a natural, organic way but then, quite quickly, it becomes a commercialised trend. It's a contradictory situation, really: on one hand there's a kind of musical playfulness and freedom, but as soon as the magic happens people start to cash in on it.[133]

Ex. 3: Prokofiev, *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra*, ii 'Irreguluv', opening measures

[131] Seckerson, 'BBC Proms.'
[132] 'Classical,' *The Birmingham Post*, August 11, 2011, Features, 7.
[133] Palmer, *Encounters*, 399.



The term 'organic' here seems to mean little more than 'untouched by capitalism'. It is also ironic that the term, so laden with the kind of ideological baggage that supports a very narrow view of the Western canon,[134] should be used by Prokofiev in order to support a bridging of genres, but without any clarification, nor any awareness of its roots.

The politics of the integration of sounds within the *Concerto* sit uneasy: on the one hand, the fact that all of the DJ's sounds come from the orchestra is consistent with DJ Babu's quotation, that turntables are used 'not to play music, but to manipulate sound and create music';[135] on the other hand, if protest is voiced *by* the orchestra, then the DJ's manipulation of those sounds is (at least at second hand) reliant on the composer's controlling strategy – somewhere between an attempt to strip the vocalisations of their native associations and an attempt to use their liveness to animate the electronic. On the

[134] Joseph Kerman, 'How We Got into Analysis and How to Get Out,' *Critical Inquiry* 7/2 (December 1980): 311-331.
[135] Quoted in Smith, 'The Process of "Collective Creation",' 80.

other hand, while there is an attempt to integrate hip hop and contemporary modernist, a move from one musical style to another *is* present in the work. 'It does become clearer as the piece progresses,' Prokofiev states, 'I think, because it moves from a very, sort of more traditional classical element, into more, a hip-hop groove.'[136] This echoes the above description of the club night at XOYO, in which the night begins with more classical music and becomes progressively more clubby. Attempts to avoid a classical/hip hop collision are met by equally strong attempts to show that one bleeds into the other. The problem, however, (as mentioned in the introduction) is that the incorporation of urban musics into a contemporary classical style typically reinscribes the unequal power-relations between them. Even positive descriptions of meetings between the electronic and the live are put in terms that perpetuate clichés about race and class: for example, in a review in *Gramophone* Philip Clark drew upon this set of issues to make a criticism of the *Concerto*:

> Prokofiev is tailor-making his concerto for fidget-house pioneer Dj [sic] Switch, whose pulsating pitch-wobble bass-lines and pile-driver 4/4 beats are in themselves a potent force of nature. … Why drop a DJ into a concerto? And, assuming that can be answered, how do you pre-notate sounds that do more than frame and formalise, and potentially trip over and compromise, Switch's badass rhythmic vitality?[137]

The use of street language ('badass') here sits awkwardly, reflecting a problematic link between nature, bodily movement and rhythmic energy that is profoundly linked to street culture. The familiar idea is that African-American music is characterized by rhythm, natural rather than the rational. Is there an element of the inhumane, then, in DJ Switch's 'badass rhythmic vitality'? As Paul Gilroy puts it memorably, 'the irrepressible rhythms of the once forbidden drum are often still audible in [African musicians'] work. Its characteristic syncopations still animate the basic desires – to be free and to be oneself – that are revealed

[136] 'DJ-Switch-Interview-Proms.avi,' 3.30-3.42.
[137] Philip Clark, 'Concerto for DJ? What's so odd about that?' *Gramophone*, July 2011, 35.

in this counterculture's unique conjunction of body and music.'[138] In other words, the issue of the 'live' is one and the same as the issue of 'animation', of the general invocation of a rhythmic 'black' music. To be free and to be oneself results in a dimension of supposed authenticity within this music.

It is this attempt to incorporate liveness, as a sense of rhythmic vitality, with an unacknowledged tendency to curb or restrain the energy of resistance, that performatively invokes previously discussed anxieties about youth culture. In particular, this is relevant to grime music. We should be reminded, as discussed in chapter one, that Prokofiev was drawn to forms of hip hop and electronic dance music because he associates them with 'a real energy, a real creativity' which leads him to describe them as 'the folk music of my generation, like an urban folk music.'[139] But again, this 'urban folk' music could just as equally be the sound of the city more generally. As he was quoted recently,

> Folk music – music of the people – has evolved a lot, especially in London, which has become so cosmopolitan and so mixed; and because it has absorbed all kinds of influences its evolution isn't clearly linear. But I'm interested in reconnecting with 'folk music' of our time, which is what I hear in the street or on the radio or coming from a bar or a car.[140]

The nonspecificity draws us into a different territory, one that retroactively, and reductively, constructs an early twentieth-century modernist fascination with folk music as a primarily 'authentic' source of rhythmic and energetic inspiration. All of the familiar themes are at play here: the mixing of urban with hip hop and electronic dance music, and the aligning of all three with 'energy' and implicitly, bodily motion and rhythm. As discussed in chapter one, none of these associations should be taken at face value. Indeed, Prokofiev's condescension is profoundly hypocritical given his criticism of popular music according to its

[138] Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 76.
[139] 'Prokofiev's grandson on electro past, classical future,' published September 29, 2011, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaoyR2LMgFQ [accessed December 12, 2016].
[140] Palmer, *Encounters*, 400.

lack of 'organicism': this is simply a racist and classist fetishisation of social Others. Moreover, the fascination with a mode of musical evolution that 'isn't clearly linear' evokes a pseudoscientific developmental rhetoric associated with the mid-century avant-garde, and the promise of 'reconnection' also implies an implicit, already-existing separation of art and popular. Both of these implicitly reaffirm Prokofiev's power and status as a highbrow. His direct engagement with grime is the subject of the next section.

Lady Sovereign, grime, and discipline

Prokofiev's own influence in the spheres of urban popular music is actually extensive. While it was not mentioned during the BBC Proms and is not discussed by commentators on classical music, he was for a long time 'co-writer (as 'Medasyn' [Prokofiev's pseudonym]) with grime heroine Lady Sovereign.'[141] Hyped in the naughties as a 'chav rap princess',[142] young female rapper Louise Harman (a.k.a. Lady Sovereign) was one of the most overt and stylised examples of a white working class caricature in British urban music since the turn of the millennium: an article at the beginning of her career described her as a 'self-professed "angry Chihuahua"', who has 'been the victim of old-fashioned class machinations [and is] a regular topic of ridicule on internet forum chavscum.co.uk … Growing up on Wembley's crumbling Chalkhill estate, Sov started MCing seriously after dropping out of school aged 15.'[143] Sovereign's image was based on a playing-up to all the relevant clichés, mixing the trope of the feral and uneducated child with the fear of contamination by black culture: she is a 'self-proclaimed "white midget"',[144] whose 'acid wit and guttural delivery nevertheless

[141] Chris Salmon, [no article name], *Time Out*, April 5, 2006, 94.
[142] John Lewis, 'Here's proof grime pays,' *The Evening Standard*, February 7, 2007, 17.
[143] Sarah Boden, 'America's Most Wanted: talk to the hand,' *The Observer*, February 18, 2007, Observer Music Magazine, 39.
[144] Ben Thompson, 'A far cry from north-west London,' *The Sunday Telegraph*, January 30, 2005, Review, 6.

suggest a terrifying denizen of the Jamaican dancehalls.'[145] As another journalist wrote in 2004, 'Sovereign is 18 but looks years younger: Kylie-tiny with a pristine white-and-gold Adidas tracksuit and hair scraped back into a shiny ponytail.'[146] Irreverent, cheeky, child-like, and flaunting an overt and parodic commodity-obsessed hip hop image, she was, in other words, exactly the kind of stereotype at the centre of the discourse on 'Broken Britain'.

Lady Sovereign was seen as a key player in grime music, which, as explained in the introduction, 'predominantly hails from the major conurbations of Britain, and starkly expresses inner-city urban experience'.[147] In an article on Sovereign and other female grime rappers in 2010, Kate Spicer wrote that grime expresses 'the real reality – the mean streets of urban Britain.'[148] The term 'grime' likewise follows Prokofiev very closely, and it is always to do with rhythm: 'I've been producing hip hop and grime, and if I hear an idea or a rhythm that interests me, it carries over into my classical work.'[149] Similarly, the *Concerto* was accurately described by Toby Young as a 'grime-influenced crossover'.[150] More importantly, Prokofiev and Sovereign's grime is described, in the arena of popular music criticism, in exactly the same terms of rhythmic fracture that feature in classical music criticism of urban music: one commentator, for example, praises 'Lady Sovereign, firing out squeaky patois over Gabriel Olegavich's remarkable, fractured beats.'[151] Her relationship with Prokofiev is

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[145] Ibid.
[146] Dorian Lynskey, 'I'm a white midget. So what?' *The Guardian* , March 25, 2004, Music, https://www.theguardian.com/music/2004/mar/25/popandrock2 [accessed December 12, 2016].
[147] Barron, 'The Sound of Street Corner Society,' 532. In a worrying act of essentialism, Barron also states that 'grime songs articulate urban worlds as they are seen through the eyes of those who live within these social environments.'
[148] Kate Spicer, 'The Sound of the Underground,' *The Sunday Times*, February 21, 2010, Style; Features, 14-15, 17.
[149] Richard Bratby, 'Five Questions for… Gabriel Prokofiev,' *Metro*, June 19, 2008, 28.
[150] Toby Young, 'BBC Proms 2014: Gabriel Prokofiev and Brett Dean', *Tempo* 69/271 (January, 2015): 74.
[151] Lewis, 'Life of grime.'

often mentioned in articles about her: '"He's a genius,"' she is quoted as saying of Prokofiev, '"He'll play some mad bassline or keyboard sound and I'll start spitting rhymes and together we knock the songs into shape."'[152] And while Prokofiev was for a long time 'her main producer, conjuring the multi-faceted tracks over which she lays down her rhymes',[153] one occasionally sees a familiar criticism cropping up:

> [Prokofiev's] beats do not always match her intensity (Medasyn is terrific at his best, but perhaps a greater variety of producers would have served the album better), and there is the occasional loss of focus, but to hear the emergence of such a clear, uncompromising voice is a thrill.[154]

Again there is the sense that Sovereign's energy exceeds Prokofiev's, that the producer's status as a classical composer allows him to somehow tame his urban musician collaborator. Prokofiev is not identified *as* a classical composer in this article, and yet his role as a disciplinarian is stark. This is a subtle but palpable thread that runs through the discussions of Prokofiev's and Lady Sovereign's creative collaboration. While in the context of journalism on classical music Prokofiev's musical diversity is highlighted, in the context of writing on Lady Sovereign, he is generally seen as a 'classically trained' producer.[155] For a classical audience he is cosmopolitan and relaxed, for a popular audience he is a trained member of the classical establishment.

Intriguingly, the exact opposite process was to blame for Prokofiev's and Sovereign's unamicable split: it was Sovereign who turned out to be the one unable to match Prokofiev's intense desire for work. Sovereign was signed to American record label Def Jam in 2005 in an attempt to break into the American market, but eventually the pressure got to her and she stopped working: '"I lost the plot a few times. I was cutting myself and stupid

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[152] Lewis, 'Here's proof grime pays.'
[153] Leon McDermott, 'Meet Lady Sovereign: A one-woman grime wave,' *The Sunday Herald*, October 30, 2005, Seven Days, 12.
[154] Alex Macpherson, 'Envy Set Yourself on Fire,' *The Guardian*, April 9, 2010, Guardian Film and Music Pages, 9.
[155] Lewis, 'Here's proof grime pays'.

things like that. I was tired. … I felt like it was just push, push, push."'[156] Prokofiev's side of the story was different, and, in an article about how the 'upper crust have seized pop's crown', Prokofiev is quoted as saying that '"Def Jam are used to artists imbued with the American work ethic, and Sov is lazy … She took the whole 'keeping it real' thing so far that she screwed up her career."'[157] Bridgewater, astonishingly, followed this with a discussion of the positive benefit of public schools: '"Say what you like about public schools, but they work you pretty hard." He continued: "That serves you well when it comes to breaking America. And public schools give you confidence, which you're going to need to get up there on stage and strut your stuff."' Sovereign is, effectively, used as an example of the lack of work ethic prevalent among British youth, and as an example of the benefit of public schools and their ability to impart a good work ethic. Ultimately, this is a suggestion that classical music can provide similar disciplinary benefits.

Comparing this with Gabriel Prokofiev's own status as the grandson of Sergei Prokofiev reveals the same discourse at play, even if Prokofiev's own part is as the disobedient child rather than the disciplinarian. The programme note for the Prom was explicit about how the concert 'kept it in the family',[158] by programming Gabriel Prokofiev's *Concerto* alongside Sergei Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* suite.[159] Writers in the press scarcely mention Gabriel without a reference to his attitude towards his grandfather: 'I'd started a pop band with some friends [at age 13],' he is quoted, 'and was extremely proud of the songs I'd written. The local paper heard about it and wrote a piece, the gist being "classical

[156] Hattie Collins, '"I lost the plot a few times",' *The Guardian*, April 8, 2009, Guardian Features Pages, G2; Arts; Music, 24.
[157] Will Hodgkinson, 'Wanted: teenage singer, cheekbones essential, must have own fag. Move over you scruffy oiks. The upper crust have seized pop's crown,' *The Times*, August 13, 2010, Features, 44-45.
[158] Programme Note for BBC Prom 30, opening pages.
[159] Ibid.

grandson goes pop".'[160] 'During his growing years,' wrote Jeffery Taylor, 'Gabriel concentrated on the pop music styles of dance, grime, electro and hip hop, starting his own label in 2003 called *Nonclassical*. Well, it is hard to think of a more radical rebellion to his revered ancestor than that.'[161] All of this is entirely at odds with Gabriel's own description of his relationship to his grandfather and his music. While journalists tend to cast Gabriel as a subversive youngster, his subversive approach towards the strictures of classical music practice are not extended towards the memory of his grandfather, whom he never met,[162] but towards whom his general attitude is positive.[163] In general, Gabriel is not at all disparaging or rejecting of his grandfather; he displays a certain amount of admiration, describing him as 'one of my favourite composers without a doubt … His music makes so much sense to me, I can really relate to it.'[164] And while he occasionally draws parallels between himself and Sergei,[165] these remain superficial, and there is no definite sense of him trying to carry on any kind of tradition.

Some commentators are more critical. Jeffery Taylor saw through the association with urban youth culture, suggesting 'that a hugely popular forebear brings silver spoons as a matter of course,'[166] and writing that Prokofiev's 'cool intensity and floppy public school hairdo suggests more 007 jet-setting than a passenger on the Clapham omnibus.'[167] The evocation of public schooling seeming to echo the discussion about Sovereign's lack of work

[160] Coffey, 'Prokofiev goes clubbing.'
[161] Jeffery Taylor, 'Children of the Proms; with the world's greatest classical music festival in full swing, Jeffery Taylor discovers Prokofiev and Stravinsky alive and well in London and making new music…' *Scottish Express*, July 27, 2014, 42-43.
[162] Programme Note for BBC Prom 30, opening pages.
[163] Taylor, 'Children of the proms.'
[164] Devine, 'Prokofiev's Peculiar Mix.'
[165] Taylor, 'Children of the Proms.' Prokofiev is quoted, 'My composing process is not that different from my grandfather's… I hum into my smartphone while I am out on my bike then put it on to the computer. It is much the same as Sergei transferring stuff from his pocket notebook to sheets of manuscript.'
[166] Taylor, 'Children of the Proms.'
[167] Taylor, 'Children of the proms.'

ethic, and foregrounding the fact that anxieties about discipline and education are never far behind discussions of urban music in the British press. Philip Clark questioned whether the composer is '"nonclassical" because the surname "Prokofiev" is too much responsibility',[168] and Rachel Devine wrote that 'he has had more reason than most to flirt with changing his name … He might even have contemplated a career away from the creative spotlight, and the shadow cast by the formidable talents of his grandfather, were it not for the fact that music is in his blood.'[169] At the very least, then, the association with his grandfather is an extremely ambiguous one, and while any suggestion of antagonism is usually made on the part of journalists, Prokofiev's readiness to discuss his grandfather's work makes any comparison unavoidable. Sergei Prokofiev functions as a kind of strict patriarchal figure against which Gabriel Prokofiev's own musical activities stand in contrast, as though the latter is a child rebelling against the older figurehead of a tradition:

> The urban flavour of [Gabriel Prokofiev's] music remains powerful: a mix of driving rhythms, gritty timbres and jagged outlines, yet with a lyrical thread lurking under the surface that occasionally recalls the flavour of his grandfather's [Sergei Prokofiev's] works. His *Violin Concerto 1914*, premiered at last year's Proms, includes a [Sergei] Prokofiev-like March, full of sardonic bite.[170]

But usually it is journalists rather than Prokofiev himself who associate his music with a specifically aggressive relationship to tradition, drawing together the urban and the question of discipline directly.

Looking at scholarly work, it becomes clear how much the discourse on parenting has conditioned this conception of the elder Prokofiev. The grandfather in fact made a name for himself as an *enfant terrible* in many of the same ways as his grandson later would, startling audiences with aggressively modernist music characterized by 'the use of shock tactics and attention-grabbing gestures, thematic conflict and collision, pulsating and

[168] Philip Clark, 'Keeping it in the family,' *Gramophone*, January 2009, 27.
[169] Devine, 'Prokofiev's Peculiar Mix.'
[170] Jessica Duchen, 'A lone wolf with plenty of bite,' *The Independent*, June 24, 2015, 38.

motoric rhythms, disruptive musical gestures [and] abrupt changes of direction.'[171] In 1918, he was labelled a 'bold and bad young man' by the *New York Times*,[172] and audiences found 'mockery and challenges and grotesques in his early comic opera *The Love for Three Oranges*.'[173] And almost a decade later Leonid Sabaneyeff would describe his music as 'vandalism and a return to barbarism': for Sabaneyeff, this was a '"youthful conqueror"', whose 'playful and satirical' music was 'primitively simple, primevally dissonant', characterized by 'vigorous, clear-cut rhythmics', the '"mischievous rhythms of a street urchin'.[174] In this sense, Gabriel is truthful when he describes the way his grandfather would have supported his musical projects in contemporary Britain: the younger composer's generally positive approach to the grandfather is reflective of the (ironically) normative or even hegemonic status of the trope of the subversive and radical young man.

Conclusion

Around the time of the 2011 riots, discipline in the metaphorical city was linked both at the Proms and in wider society with the theme of family. It was the failures of parents and the breakdown of families, according to many, that had led to the riots. 'Where are the parents?' asked the *Telegraph*, of the riots in August 2011, 'Why aren't they keeping the rioting kids indoors?'[175] When Cameron gave his speech after the riots in Witney, Oxfordshire, he attributed the riots to mere 'behaviour', to 'people showing indifference to

[171] Christina K. Guillaumier, 'Ambiguous Modernism: The Early Orchestral Works of Sergei Prokofiev,' *Tempo* 65/256 (2011): 27.
[172] Ibid, 28.
[173] Quoted in Richard Taruskin, *Music in the Early Twentieth-Century* (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 833.
[174] Leonid Sabaneyeff, *Modern Russian Composers* (London: M. Lawrence, 1929), 89-90. For Sabaneyeff it is, of course, Stravinsky who is 'the true owner of the secrets of barbarism'. Ibid, 98-99.
[175] Quoted in Ian Butler, 'New Families, New Governance and Old Habits,' *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law* 36/4 (2014): 416.

right and wrong', 'people with a complete absence of self-restraint.' But this meant a renewed focus on fatherhood. 'Children without fathers'[176] is seen as a main way in which the family fails, a line that has been central to Conservative party politics. Lines such as these sat next to other short-lists made up of pithy phrases, like 'stronger families, stronger communities, a stronger society,'[177] reflecting a familiar conflation of fatherhood with discipline and centrality of the family. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra* was being performed just before the outbreak of the summer riots of 2011. While there is no suggestion that the performance in the Royal Albert Hall was in any way causally related to the outbreak of the riots, it should also be clear by now that the synchronicity cannot be overlooked.

The episode of performative disciplining within the *Concerto* is no doubt intended to be humorous. But when seen in the context of political events, its ideological underpinnings are exposed: it clearly supports the use of classical music, and high culture more generally, as a tool that can enforce order upon those marginalised within society. Prokofiev's flirtations with street culture are little more than exercises in modernist mastery.[178] They also reflect a disingenuous, self-congratulatory postulation of integrationist multiculturalism, in which a disparate and unruly group comes together under the orders of one paternalistic status quo (represented here by the conductor, and ultimately by Prokofiev himself as composer). This is consistent with Cameron's position within speeches around the same time. As Gilroy argues, Cameron repeatedly made the point that 'troublesome non-whites who dwell among us are incorrigible and that condition must be urgently transformed by a robust "muscular" liberalism that supercedes [sic] the passive

[176] Cameron, 'PM's Speech.'
[177] Ibid.
[178] Kramer, 'The Nature and Origins of Musical Postmodernism,' 15.

varieties of tolerance associated with traditional conservatism.'[179] In the context of the *Concerto*, the immediate submission of the orchestra to the will of the conductor enacts the imaginary disciplining of a group of young people, while Cameron's speech after the riots had subsided of their own accord reflects a less effective call to order. Nevertheless, both episodes reflect the will to discipline. And in this light, the idea that Prokofiev is 'introducing urban sounds into the concert hall'[180] takes on a new meaning, since it invokes the rhetoric of infectionism that has been latent in much of this music. It anxiously posits the concert hall as a safe, suburban enclave within the city, constantly under threat from the chaos of urban noise and disorder.

It may seem that the binaries within this chapter have not been – and perhaps cannot be – resolved. However, they can be drawn to paradoxical conclusions that are threatening to the binaries themselves. For example, in her article about the cross-over between electronic and classical music entitled 'Friend or Foe?' Alexandra Coghlan concludes that the present state of music

> seems to take us full circle, restoring electronic music to its classical origins. Rather than a rivalry, or even a dialogue, the relationship between acoustic music and electronica seems to be one of cyclical growth and influence. We have travelled via technology to arrive once again at gut and wood. We have jettisoned the classical constraints of sonata form only to achieve the rigid structural patterning of a techno track.[181]

So while the clash between the human and the nonhuman is still a focal point for this music, works such as Prokofiev's *Concerto* riff on the increasing meeting between the two (and Coghlan concludes her article with a mention of Prokofiev's musical developments). In addition to this, another commentator writes that 'Classical promoters and record label bosses have long claimed that they want to "take this music to the masses", to "break out of

[179] Gilroy, '"My Britain is Fuck All",' 388.
[180] Nick Shave, 'Get into the groove: Next week, the Proms hosts its first ever turntablist,' *The Guardian*, July 29, 2011, Guardian Film and Music Pages, 12.
[181] Coghlan, 'Friend or foe?'

the classical ghettos", or to "find a new audience for this music".'[182] The term 'classical ghetto' is an inversion of the idea that the 'ghetto' is the home of grime and other types of subcultural music, but it also suggests that classical music might itself be both in a slum and in a slump, and that its contact with 'ghetto'ised music will be a source of invigorating rhythmic energy. These binaries do not cease to exist, but they can be approached in different ways and in the light of changing relations of power.

Moreover, to return to the point made at the start of this chapter, I want to underscore the fact that the intense and contradictory web of divisions between the different types of music discussed here are played out materially in space during the performance of the *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra*. The episode of disobedience that erupts in it displays a kind of recursive nesting of musical space within musical space: a small space of disobedience within a larger musical space of the concerto itself, and that within the space of the Royal Albert Hall, itself situated grandly within a larger urban space. Thus the drawing out of the parallels between the protest staged within the concerto and an almost identical protest being staged around the same time mere miles away in London is to underscore the fact that music and urban space are subject to the same shifting and contested boundaries. If urban space is delineated, then this delineation must happen through enforcement of restraint. So, inasmuch as 'high-minded hedonism' is an attempt to mix restraint with a lack of restraint, then it is also linked implicitly with the ongoing problems of delineating urban space, and the kinds of people that enter certain areas.

Recently, the *Nonclassical* project has begun to have its own offshoots, and musicians around the UK have begun to start their own classical-urban club nights. For

[182] John Lewis, 'Bristol Proms; Sounding a new note for classical music?' *The Guardian*, August 1, 2013, Music, https://www.theguardian.com/music/musicblog/2013/aug/01/bristol-old-vic-proms-john-lewis [accessed December 12, 2016].

example, in 2013 the *Western Morning News* in Plymouth reported that a local musician, Michael, had begun to DJ 'classical club nights' in Exeter, which are

> inspired by avant garde composer and music producer Gabriel Prokofiev's (grandson of Russian composer Sergei) 'Nonclassical' movement, playing music which blends acoustic and electronic sounds in a club-style ambiance. 'You don't sit in rows having to be quiet, there's a bar and it is a bit more laid back and fun," explains Michael. 'We follow the same format as the ones in London.'[183]

Intriguing here is the reference to *Nonclassical* as a 'movement', since the club night and record label is never referred to as such in other publications prior to this date. Similarly, in 2014, *The Northern Echo* reported that 'a Teesdale community centre will be turned into a nightclub for one night only this month', citing the

> London-based record label *Nonclassical* [that] combines classical music with conventional club nights around the UK. Gabriel Prokofiev, *Nonclassical* founder, said: 'Ten years ago, I put on my first classical gig in a Nightclub in London. Now there are many young artists and composers putting on their own gigs everywhere from warehouses to pubs to abandoned underground stations, essentially creating a new music movement.' The event has been organised by Hub co-ordinator Andy Yeadon, who knows Mr Prokofiev from working the Birmingham University music scene in the 90s.[184]

Again, the term 'movement' is used in the (undated) quotation by Prokofiev as an effort to describe the new *Nonclassical* offshoots as a radical reconfiguration of British urban space through musical events and performances. A dimension of resistance or protest is also palpable in the term 'movement', as though these musical developments aim to transform the British landscape through art. As I have shown throughout this chapter, the boundaries between these different artistic areas are discursively constructed before and after the fact in terms that touch on anxieties about British youth, urban music and the increasingly nebulous status of race. Prokofiev uses grime, an underground music, within the *Concerto* in

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[183] 'When it comes to contemporary music, Michael knows the score,' *Western Morning News*, December 9, 2013, News, 20-21.

[184] 'Barnard Castle hub will become nightclub for one night only,' *The Northern Echo*, October 2, 2014, http://www.thenorthernecho.co.uk/news/local/southdurham/11511486.Barnard_Castle_hub_will_become_nightclub_for_one_night_only/ [accessed December 12, 2016].

order to musically signify a liminal space populated by society's supposed undesirables.[185] So while there is no direct link between the eruption of violence in Prokofiev's *Concerto* with the eruption of violence occurring in Tottenham at the same time, the two moments are different manifestations of a specific impulse to re-delineate parts of 'the urban', whether musical or spatial.

[185] This mirrors the assertion that these or similar 'undesirables' – rioters whom Cameron described as 'thugs [that do] not represent us, nor do they represent our young people - and they will not drag us down' – were out on the streets in Tottenham at the same time. Cameron, 'PM's Speech.'

Chapter 6 – A wild and funky cultural space

Introduction

This thesis has engaged with the problem of dealing with the classical/popular divide in music in contemporary Britain. In the first chapter I made a case for the use of 'Broken Britain' as a critical metaphor, and focused on the 'urban' as a rich discursive site in which such metaphors proliferate and yet where value judgments remain ambivalent. 'Broken Britain' was a phrase that stood for a set of social and political anxieties to do with a lack of discipline and restraint, and with racial and social Otherness, all associated in the British psyche with urban dance music, or music characterized by a succession of repetitive beats. The result has been the locating of a further set of vernacular metaphors to do with repetition, percussion, fracture and bodily motion that are used by composers and critics of classical music to describe a set of other types of music (hip hop, grime, funk, and jazz) associated varyingly with blackness, Americanisation, and the disruptive beats of dance music. Davies, Meredith, and Prokofiev also draw upon strategies of performative disruption – within the concert hall, and in public space – that draw upon audiences' anxieties over urban music. Even Turnage's work, which does not utilize space in exactly the same way, nevertheless results in a sense of transgression: this urban dance or pop music appears in the concert hall even though it should implicitly not be there. This final chapter more fully explores the way this music affects urban space in particular, and suggests a move towards a conception of urban musical modernism that takes into consideration the adverse effects that cultural superiority can have upon residents in poor inner-city areas.

What I have tried to show throughout is that the terms used to describe the urban are already present *within* classical music discourse, and if a cross-over happens on already-present terms then this consequently reflects (at the very least) an ambivalent, if not unequal power structure. All of the terms used by critics of classical music to describe an

urban aesthetic in general, urban music more specifically, and their incorporation within classical music, are part of an already-existing set of terms that are used within classical music discourse to describe music of the long twentieth century that relate to a machine-age modernism, the 'hectic clamour of modern life.' This will occupy me in the conclusion. The music of the long twentieth century is a corpus of music that rests only tentatively within the bourgeois classical establishment. It is a corpus of music that has also embraced and engaged with a possibility of social change: the avant-garde is defined not only as cerebral, sophisticated and taxing, but also as a type of art whose musicians 'insist on the social rooting of their practice'.[1] In 2013, two major things happened in British musical culture, and both were intertwined. First, *The Rite of Spring* had its centenary, and second, a year-long festival called *The Rest is Noise*, after Alex Ross's book of the same name, was held at the South Bank Centre in London; many commentators praised the musical climate of the time, with Jessica Duchen writing that 'the classical-music climate is currently buzzing with innovative presentation'.[2] This chapter builds upon the sense of revolutionary social change through artistic innovation that is behind all of this music, focusing on the ways in which the modern classical and urban are caught up in very broad discussions of the future of classical music.

The Rite of Spring in a Peckham car park

In July 2011, 21-year-old Cambridge music alumna and composer Kate Whitley staged a performance of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* in a municipal car park in Peckham. The

[1] Graham, '(Un)Popular Avant-Gardes,' 11.
[2] Jessica Duchen, 'An ear to the future,' *The Independent*, July 24, 2013, Features, 36. Full quotation: 'The classical-music climate is currently buzzing with innovative presentation: take the cross-genre commissions of the Manchester International Festival, the Southbank Centre's hugely successful 20th-century celebration The Rest is Noise, the craze for cinema relays of live performances, or the growing trend for classical club nights and concerts in concrete car parks.'

orchestra was made up of students, 'summoned from Cambridge, Oxford and the London music colleges by e-mail, texts, tweets and Facebook … united by a desire to take classical music out of stuffy concert halls and into clubs, pubs, warehouses and anywhere else where it has never been heard before.'[3] The press gushed about this 'unique … spectacular' concert,[4] 'the most exciting development in classical music for decades, if not centuries',[5] an event that would truly herald the beginning of the future for classical music: 'Where is classical music's next generation of listeners?' ran a rhetorical question in the *Arts Desk*, 'There they were, before us, a thousand of them.'[6] Richard Morrison in the *Times* saw this as being reflective of 'a generation that's repelled by the fusty etiquette of concert halls and opera houses yet thrilled by the virtuosity and power of old music when it's presented in much less formal spaces.' Whitley, he notes, evoking the rhetoric of feral youth, is 'typical of this bold new breed.'[7] Certainly, there was a kind of epic revolutionary sentiment behind the performance of the *Rite*: '"If one person who has never heard *The Rite of Spring* hears it for the first time,"' Whitley was quoted, '"it will be worth it."'[8]

Resonances here between Whitley's concert and the 'Urban Classic' Prom are obvious: performances for new audiences and in new spaces, a clash of urban and modernist. *The Rite* was implicitly chosen since it is the archetypal subversive rhythmic work. As Sarah Bakewell put it: '[The *Rite*] is founded on jagged, pounding rhythms rather

[3] Richard Morrison, 'Found in a disused car park: the future of music,' *The Times*, July 22, 2011, Music, http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/arts/music/classical/article3101223.ece [accessed December 13, 2016].
[4] [no title], *Time Out*, July 21, 2011, Arts & Entertainment, [no page number].
[5] Morrison, 'Found in a disused car park.'
[6] Igor Toronyilalic, 'The *Rite of Spring*, Peckham Car Park/Yellow Lounge, London Bridge Arches,' *The Arts Desk*, July 30, 2011, http://www.theartsdesk.com/classical-music/rite-spring-peckham-car-park-yellow-lounge-london-bridge-arches [accessed December 13, 2016].
[7] Morrison, 'Found in a disused car park.'
[8] Ibid.

than the orderly harmonic progressions to which European ears were accustomed.'[9] Substitute 'urban music' for '*The Rite*' and 'British' for 'European' and this could have been a review of the Urban Classic Prom. Peckham, we should also remember, is associated with grime, an urban music 'more commonly heard blasting out of car windows in Peckham than out of concert halls.'[10] In many ways, this was the *inverse* of the Urban Classic Prom, since a classical work was being brought to an urban space. More commentators responded positively to this kind of concert than had done so for the Urban Classic Prom: those who opposed the bringing of urban music into a classical space were heard quite loudly, their arguments either relayed first-hand (as with Pollard) or as the straw men of other critics. On the other hand, the bringing of classical music into an urban space found no opposition at all, and certainly was accompanied by a surge in revolutionary, utopian language that the Urban Prom did not see: 'I would consider it a giant leap for civilisation', wrote Richard Morrison, with no discernible irony, 'if classical music – for so many centuries largely confined to the *cognoscenti* in churches, concert halls, courts and opera houses – suddenly bloomed like a thousand flowers in the gritty urban spaces all around us.'[11]

These developments should be seen against the broader backdrop of an atmosphere of booming innovation in the scene of contemporary classical music around this time. When Duchen wrote that 'the classical-music climate is currently buzzing with innovative presentation', she cited as examples 'the Southbank Centre's hugely successful 20th-century celebration *The Rest is Noise*,' and 'the growing trend for classical club nights and

[9] Sarah Bakewell, 'Comment & Debate: The sound of 2013 that still has the power to stir: 100 years ago two new kinds of music caused mayhem at concerts,' *The Guardian*, January 3, 2013, Guardian Leader Pages, 32.
[10] Hodgkinson, 'The Somerset barnstormer.' The geographic association of grime with different London boroughs is unclear at best here. As Stirling clarifies, grime originated 'from East London in the early 2000s [and] initially shared much in common with its South London cousin, dubstep.' Stirling, Crowds, Cordons and Computers.
[11] Morrison, 'Found in a disused car park.'

concerts in concrete car parks.'[12] While her examples are mostly those of classical music in 'new spaces', the same can be said for the Proms: 'It's inevitable, perhaps,' read an article in the following year's *Radio Times Proms Guide*, 'that more … mutterings and murmurings have been generated by 2014's richer line-up than at any other time.'[13] And yet references to richness and innovation are curbed by open criticism of the same project of diversification: referring to classical music's 'populist periphery', Ivan Hewett wrote that while 'the Proms has a duty to educate in classical music, it has no such duty in pop'.[14] So we must ask whether *all* of these classical/urban concerts are in aid of a true and equal genre-crossing, or if they are merely a set of small concessions made by a group of self-identifying 'classical' musicians in order to ultimately increase the status of classical music and attract widespread financial and social support.

The revolutionary sentiment behind the 'classical music in a car park' project was partly linked to the fact that the concert was organized and carried out by young people, and yet this was still classical music played by young people with a specific institutional training, and while Richard Morrison saw the performance as an attempt to 'forget fusty concert halls', a video shows an audience sitting down on the concrete floor of the car-park, facing the orchestra, and silently reserving their applause for the end of the performance.[15] Clearly you can take classical music out of the concert hall but you can't take the concert hall out of classical music.[16] Whitley initially wanted to stage *The Rite* in a car park in

[12] Duchen, 'An ear to the future.'
[13] Jackson, 'Keeping the Faith,' ii.
[14] Hewett, 'Are the Proms becoming too safe?'
[15] 'The *Rite of Spring* – Multi-Story', https://vimeo.com/44765167 [accessed December 13, 2016].
[16] We see a simultaneous upholding of and criticising of these institutional constraints similar to that witnessed in chapter 5. As support for the project, there was 'a DJ set from Frank's Café regular Gabriel Prokofiev' as part of the concert that evening. See 'Nonclassical's "The Rite of Spring Project" brings Stravinsky to Peckham multi-storey car park,' *Time Out*, July 21, 2011, http://now-here-this.timeout.com/2011/07/21/the-rite-of-spring-project/ [accessed December 13, 2016].

Cambridge, but 'Cambridge City Council, oddly, has a specific ban on performances in car parks.'[17] Clearly the question of staging an *illegal* performance of *The Rite* was out of the question, and viewing this ban as odd obfuscates the latent link between musical performance, urban space and civil disorder cemented in the 1994 Criminal Justice and Public Order act. In fact, the sense of transgression is even further undermined when we realise that the car park in question had been an artistic venue for many years before the rhythms of *The Rite* shook its concrete walls. Long abandoned, it had for almost a decade housed an annual art exhibition run by the Hannah Barry Gallery[18] and a rooftop café named Frank's,[19] this latter being 'one of many projects springing up in which talented young architects … are creating socially useful "pop-up" structures in disused spaces.'[20] In short, the phrase 'classical music in a car park' crops up repeatedly in press discourse on classical music, largely due to its immediate shock appeal, and yet its relevance diminishes substantially the more one looks at the circumstances of the actual performances.

In any case, *The Rite* concert was to be the beginning of a regular set of concerts at the Peckham car park and the establishment of the Multi-Story Orchestra (its name naturally a play on words), which now features each year as part of an arts festival run by Bold Tendencies (the new name for the Hannah Barry gallery). The Multi-Story orchestra had a specific revolutionary mission: 'the aim was to tempt a new audience to classical music, among people who wouldn't normally go near the Barbican or South Bank – and it worked.'[21] Which kind of people wouldn't normally go near the Barbican or South Bank, and

[17] Morrison, 'Found in a disused car park.'
[18] Ibid.
[19] Rhiannon Edwards, 'Classical music in a car park,' *The Telegraph*, June 11, 2014, News, http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/uk/london/10891478/Classical-music-in-a-car-park.html [accessed December 13, 2016].
[20] Morrison, 'Found in a disused car park.'
[21] Ibid.

how do we know it worked? While the question of race is rarely approached head-on, a gallery available online features photographs of many smiling faces of ethnically diverse children, and Fiona Maddocks regrets having to miss the '"immersive"' closing event of its 'daring' 2015 season because she was 'at the Southbank for the debut performance by *Chineke!*, Britain's first black and minority ethnic (BME) orchestra'.[22] This kind of revolutionary sentiment reached its zenith in Sarah Crompton's review of a 2014 concert in the same car park:

> many of the children settle down as comfortably as you can in a concrete car park and listen to the second part of the programme – Sibelius's Fifth Symphony. A girl in pink trousers half-dances as the rich chords resonate through the space. A man with his dog on his knee listens intently from a chair. Halfway through the performance, conducted by Multi-Story's other artistic director, Christopher Stark, a kind of intent stillness embraces the crowd. It all feels very stirring and significant; exactly the kind of venture that will ensure that the creations of the past survive their encounter with a century in which listening to the classics is becoming an increasingly specialised habit. Multi-Story's mission is only achieved, however, because of the extraordinary levels of determination and commitment shown by all concerned.[23]

There is a sense of happy togetherness here, and Sibelius's Fifth Symphony is far removed from the sonically abrasive and rhythmically fractured urban sound initially associated with this kind of space. But underneath this the issue of dance is still present – there is a distinct undertone sense that the revolutionary sentiment behind this orchestral series is inextricably linked with the sense that this group may be spurred into collective action through the infectious rhythms of dance. This is implicitly the reason that *The Rite* was used as the inaugural project, and this concert series is still referenced as having been begun by this concert. This music embodied a sense of revolutionary change, something reflected in the fact that it is still mostly twentieth-century music that is programmed at the car park. If

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[22] Fiona Maddocks, '*Orphée et Eurydice*; *I Puritani*; *Chineke!* review – breathtaking, tireless,' *The Guardian*, September 20, 2015, Music, https://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/sep/20/orphee-eurydice-i-puritani-chineke-review [accessed December 13, 2016].
[23] Sarah Crompton, 'Concertos set in concrete,' *The Daily Telegraph*, July 19, 2014, Review; Features, 11.

there was a revolutionary spirit behind this concert, then it should be understood in wider terms, looking both at the centenary of the *Rite of Spring* and what it meant for British musical culture in general.

The Rite of Spring Centenary and *The Rest is Noise* Festival

The centenary of *The Rite*'s premiere occurred in May 2013, eighteen months after Whitley's concert, and British musical life was full of celebratory events, performances and media chatter in the months leading up to it. While Whitley's concert was never explicitly labeled as one of these events, viewing it in conjunction with press response to the centenary is illuminating. In an article about the favourite twentieth-century works of prominent musicians, conductor Marin Alsop praised *The Rite*, saying, 'there's a brutality, an edginess, a primal quality that instinctually appeal[s] to us, while tapping into a measure of fear. … Its theme of humanity shows us that no matter how advanced we become, we can't deny our basic human nature – we remain fundamentally tribal animals.'[24] Below, in the same article, Vladimir Jurowski, the conductor behind Prokofiev's *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra*, is quoted: '*The Rite of Spring* is at the heart of the revolutionary process that was going on throughout Europe at the time. … the main issue with the piece is the never-ceasing power of its rhythmic inventions.'[25] What stands out is the thrill of the legendary riot at *The Rite*'s premiere and its ability to be simultaneously high-art and subversive: *The Rite* is celebrated for being revolutionary and high-art, and yet in order to be revolutionary and high-art it needs to incite a riot through its pounding rhythms.

The Rite of Spring represents a number of different issues. As explained in the introduction, for T. S. Eliot, it evoked the hectic clamour of modern life through its

[24] Imogen Tilden, '100 years in the making: What's your favourite piece of 20th-century classical music?' *The Guardian*, November 30, 2012, G2; Arts; Guardian Film and Music Pages, 12.
[25] Ibid.

primitivism. Originally set in rural pagan Russia, the work suggested a mashing together of the pastoral and the machine-age. For Claude Debussy, *The Rite* was 'primitive music … with all modern conveniences.'[26] While Kofi Agawu stops short of suggesting a link between Stravinsky's rhythmic barbarism and a profound European racism,[27] these racial anxieties are palpable in the Peckham concert, projected as they often are through the safer dimension of class. As Daniel Chua writes, 'tonal noise is a modernist critique of official culture … Stravinsky has turned the agent of musical civility into a barbaric thud.'[28] And, more profoundly, the work supports the sense that Whitley's *Rite* plays into a broader project of creating a British national culture through artistic and social integration. As Richard Taruskin writes, 'what is chiefly maximalized in *The Rite*, then, is the neonationalist ideal, the project of wringing stylistic innovation and renewed technical resources from archaic folkloristic models.'[29] This again suggests the problematic associations between folk and grime styles seen in chapters 1 and 5. Staging *The Rite* in a Peckham car park links it discursively to the symbolic power of street culture, which is simultaneously alluring and frightening to a middle-class audience, and both popular and innovative. As I will discuss below, since it is both linked to riot and revolution, and commonly accepted as a modernist masterwork *The Rite* is understood within the context of this press discourse simultaneously as a critique of official culture, and a reinforcement of official culture.

The 'viscerally powerful'[30] *Rite* was billed as one of the headline works of *The Rest Is*

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[26] Quoted in Daniel K. L. Chua, 'Rioting with Stravinsky: A Particular Analysis of the *Rite of Spring*,' *Music Analysis* 26/1-2 (2007): 77.
[27] 'Whether it is appropriate to compare, for example, Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring* (with its acknowledged challenges to, and extensions of, conventions of metrical articulation) … with African music … is for our purposes less important than the fact that such comparisons are, in principle, possible.' Agawu, 'The Invention of "African rhythm",' 386.
[28] Chua, 'Rioting with Stravinsky,' 77.
[29] Taruskin, *Music in the Early Twentieth-Century*, 318.
[30] Warwick Thompson, 'Get out of your comfort zone; A year-long festival aims to make classical popular,' *Metro*, January 17, 2013, News, 37.

Noise festival season: 'if you believe all the stories about what happened that celebrated evening,' wrote Tom Service, 'not least the one about the riot that ensued, it's as if the 20th century only really got going when the audience in that gilded art-nouveau auditorium started kicking off.'[31] In other words, *The Rite* was being described as both revolutionary *and* central to the long twentieth century. Or, more accurately, the destructive, revolutionary impulse behind *The Rite* was one and the same as the impulse behind *all* of the music of the twentieth century: 'There will always be something smouldering at the heart of this repertoire [the music of the twentieth century],' Alex Ross was quoted, 'something dangerous and untamed.'[32] Following on from this, a large amount of the appeal was seen to be a result of a kind of *innate* boundary-crossing, between high and low, associated with this music. Part of this had to do with Ross' own musical tastes ('In my late twenties I discovered the Beatles and Bob Dylan. Something you weren't paying attention to or flatly rejected suddenly starts speaking to you'[33]) and his research for the book. After seeing the ways in which twentieth-century classical music influenced alternative rock, he realised that his 'idealised distinction' of classical music was 'redundant'[34]. Others evidently agreed:

> The release of the South Bank Centre's programme for *The Rest Is Noise* is cause for celebration: here is a national institution committing a year of events to the idea that the culture of the 20th century cannot be neatly divided into high- and lowbrow, difficult and popular.[35]

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[31] Tom Service, '"The work of a madman",' *The Guardian*, February 13, 2013, G2; Arts; Guardian Features Pages, 16.
[32] Nick Clark, 'Southbank Centre to host largest festival of 20th century music in 2013; The 250 events are inspired by Alex Ross' book *The Rest is Noise*,' *The Independent*, 28 November 2012, News, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/news/southbank-centre-to-host-largest-festival-of-20th-century-music-in-2013-8363711.html [accessed December 13, 2016].
[33] Tim Teeman, 'The man who taught me to listen; Could Alex Ross, *New Yorker* critic and author of *The Rest is Noise*, get Tim Teeman to appreciate modern classical music?' *The Times*, November 28, 2012, T2; Features, 11-12.
[34] Ibid.
[35] 'In praise of… *The Rest Is Noise*,' *The Guardian*, November 29, 2012, Guardian Leader Pages, 36.

This, again, is a sentiment that was linked specifically to *The Rite of Spring*: 'There is no "perfect point of entry [to twentieth-century repertoire]",' Ross is quoted, '"[but] it's pretty essential" to listen to Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*. "Every strand of 20th-century music, from pop to jazz, takes cues from it."'[36] Another critic quoted Ross as saying that 'twentieth-century classical music is an extraordinary creative achievement that has shaped so many aspects of what we hear now, classical or not.'[37]

This latter quotation is interesting, because it seems to imply that not only does *The Rite* affect our hearing of popular music, but it also affects aspects of what and how we hear now, including broader social issues affecting the music. And in fact, *The Rite* was linked to much broader revolutionary issues in Europe at the time of its premiere. For example, choreographer Debra Craine is quoted:

> I think about Stravinsky's image of the ice breaking in Russia as spring descends and the violence of that. And then I think of the violence of the ballet's first night in Paris, when this vision was shared with a well-to-do audience who responded with a riot.[38]

In an effort to show the continuing historical relevance of *The Rite* a number of commentators also linked the premiere with the beginning of the First World War whose centenary (naturally) also loomed. 'Some cultural historians suggest Stravinsky unwittingly tapped into the destructive forces that would shortly rip Europe apart and surrender its youth to the Great War',[39] wrote one commentator. Sarah Bakewell mentioned that 'the following year a whole generation of young men emulated the Rite's maiden by making futile sacrifice of their lives at the command of their elders.'[40] But Bakewell also invoked an

[36] Teeman, 'The man who taught me to listen.'
[37] Clark, 'Southbank Centre to host.'
[38] Debra Craine, 'Shock and awe: 100 years of the Rite stuff,' *The Times*, March 28, 2013, T2; Features, 8-9.
[39] David Jays, 'So wrong, it's got to be *Rite*,' *The Sunday Times*, April 14, 2013, Culture; Features; Opinion; Column, 4-5.
[40] Bakewell, 'The sound of 2013 that still has the power to stir.'

innocent vignette of British childhood when she wrote that *Rite's* 'thumping impact of "crash, clash, bing, bang" has become too familiar: many of us grew up dancing to something not unlike the *Rite* in our village discos.'[41] It is perhaps ironic, then, that while *The Rite* was taken to be reflective of European tensions at its premiere, no commentators cast their glances back a mere eighteen months to the riots of August 2011.[42]

And yet, the riot associated with *The Rite* was extremely attractive to a lot of commentators that discussed it in terms of contemporary attitudes towards classical music. 'The riots that famously greeted the Paris premiere of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* a century ago have long since fallen silent,' lamented Alexandra Coghlan, 'giving way to a bewildered apathy that has seen modern classical music increasingly sidelined.'[43] Will Self went even further in a facetious article in the *New Statesman*, viewing *The Rite* as reflective of a lost golden age in which classical music was in touch with its audience, and suggesting that fans of classical music *should*, in fact, begin riots more often at classical performances.

> The opening night of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* at the *Théâtre des Champs-Elysées* on 29 May 1913 has gone down in the aesthetic annals as one of the most exciting art riots of all time … I go to the opera quite a lot, almost always equipped with the makings of a Molotov cocktail in the hope that Bryn Terfel will spark it off and the scores of suits slumbering on corporate freebies will get torched but somehow it's always a bit of a damp squib.[44]

More seriously, he described the first performance of *The Rite* as 'the premier example of an aesthetically challenged mob baying for the blood of the innovators.'[45] Jenny Gilbert hit the nail on the head when she wrote that 'the fabled riot that broke out at its first performance

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[41] Ibid.
[42] Jeal's 2011 review of Prokofiev's *Concerto for Turntables and Orchestra* invoked the *Rite* in order to link it to youth and rioting, but she did not link it to the summer riots of that year.
[43] Alexandra Coghlan, 'Does anyone like modern classical music?' *The Independent*, October 2, 2012, 38.
[44] Will Self, 'More operas should end in riots, or at least the torching of suits,' *New Statesman*, December 3, 2012, [no page number].
[45] Ibid.

100 years ago has become a byword for all battles waged by the *avant-garde* against bourgeois taste.'[46] We are thus left with an intriguing and complex set of issues that surround *The Rite* and the music of the long twentieth century more broadly. This work is popular and avant-garde, low-art and high-art, reflective of just enough disorder and unrest for it to induce a productive level of anxiety and yet not enough disorder and chaos for it to be linked to similar events happening around the UK at this time. In any case, this web of contradictions seems to be the message behind attempts to 'make classical music popular'[47] around this time, something that also played out in a fascination with these same urban spaces that are the sites of this disorder.

The Rite's rhythmic, chaotic nature made it perfect for an urban performance, easily 'settling into the dark acoustics of the space and the violent beauty of the skyline.'[48] 'Some will have been driven mad by the lack of silence and the overhead rattle of trains,' read a review in *The Arts Desk*. 'For me, these Cagean interventions from the real world were movingly appropriate, though I can't fully explain why.'[49] It is clear that *The Rite*, and all the ostensibly revolutionary or harsh music of the long twentieth century that it stands for, was seen as being in some ways synonymous with the urban sound of Peckham – implicitly grime, but also more generally its clamour of modern life. The idea of bringing classical music out of the concert hall to *urban* spaces rather than simply clubs (like Gabriel Prokofiev's *Nonclassical* club nights) caught on. Indeed, 'Roger Wright, the [Aldeburgh]

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[46] Jenny Gilbert, 'Shock of the new: Centenary landmark ballet,' *The Independent*, April 7, 2013, Arts, 53.
[47] Thompson, 'A year-long festival aims to make classical popular.'
[48] Anna Picard, 'Rigoletto, Opera Holland Park, London; *The Rite of Spring*, Peckham multi-storey car park, London; Albert Herring, Shadwell Opera, London; BBC Proms 14 & 15, Royal Albert Hall, London; The folly of young longing and the baiting of a father are perpetually alarming,' *The Independent*, July 31, 2011, Reviews, http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/classical/reviews/rigoletto-opera-holland-park-londonthe-rite-of-spring-peckham-multi-storey-car-park-londonalbert-2328994.html [accessed December 12, 2016].
[49] Toronyilalic, 'The *Rite of Spring*.'

Festival's director, [became] aware that the antiseptic purity of the concert hall doesn't set the heart racing, and is keen to take some of the Festival's music making into unusual spaces.'[50] One critic even praised the concerts in a car park because they create a 'wild and funky cultural space'[51] for the capital: this is an issue that has roots not only in the sonic impact of a modernist work like *The Rite*, but also of its links to an urban soundworld more generally.

It is here that gentrification becomes an important issue. As already suggested, Whitley's car park was a hub of gentrification just as much as it was a site of urban reality, something palpable in the descriptions of the concert. The view 'from the car park, taking in the Shard, Gherkin and Canary Wharf, makes an apposite backdrop'[52] for this performance, presumably because the work's rhythms invoked the urban soundworld. '100 student instrumentalists traced the Fauvist curves of Stravinsky's 98-year-old score', wrote Anna Picard, 'with the shriek of trains to their right and a Campari sunset to their left.'[53] One commentator even wrote that 'in the beauty stakes Peckham outplayed the Proms by offering a gobstopper of a view.'[54] This mixing of the unusual and the beautiful results in a romanticisation of the urban: on the one hand, the cold concrete and shrieking metal, on the other, the sun setting over the city in the distance. Events like Whitley's *Rite* compound the commodity status of inner city areas. It should come as no surprise, then, that there

[50] Ivan Hewett, 'Classical delights – in a car park,' *The Daily Telegraph*, June 16, 2015, Features, 23. Note here the fact that bringing classical music to urban spaces becomes simply 'unusual' spaces, again linking to the importance of shock and the unusual but more importantly conflating the urban and the unusual.
[51] Geoff Brown, 'Multi-Story Orchestra at Peckham Car Park, SE15,' *The Times*, August 13, 2015, Classical Music, http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/arts/music/classical/article4525214.ece [accessed December 12, 2016].
[52] 'La Plus Forte/Roma, Peckham Multi-Storey Car Park - opera review,' *The Evening Standard*, August 2, 2013, Arts, http://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/music/la-plus-forteroma-peckham-multi-storey-car-park-opera-review-8743477.html [accessed December 13, 2016].
[53] Anna Picard, 'The folly of young longing.'
[54] Toronyilalic, 'The *Rite of Spring*.'

were also plans in November 2015 to transform the car-park entirely into 800 artists' studios. Journalists ascribed the increased value of the area directly to concerts like Whitley's *Rite*: as one wrote, 'since it began putting on art and music events at the multistorey car park nine years ago, Bold Tendencies have been credited as central to the cultural regeneration of the area in the past few years.'[55] And, it should again be no surprise, then, that Southwark Council opted instead for a proposal from a Mayfair-based property developer that would 'include only 50 artists' spaces … worrying given the decline in spaces for artists in the capital.'[56] This is not even to mention whether or not local residents will be able to make use of the space.

> Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin Wyly define gentrification as an
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> urban strategy [in the Global North, that] involves an innovative race to create attractive, novel and interesting – but also safe and sanitized – playgrounds for the wealthy residents and visitors who work for (or receive interest and dividends from) the institutions of global capital. In the process, the poor and disinvested territory of the as-yet ungentrified inner city becomes a battleground for a wider political struggle over neoliberal urbanism.[57]

If a concert like *The Rite* in a car park is hailed as an innovative, broadening gesture, *despite* Whitley's accepting 'that the audience is likely to include more art and music students than local residents',[58] then the concert is complicit in gentrification to a huge degree. Clearly, the musical activities that occurred in the car park, of which *The Rite* concert stands at the pinnacle, were instrumental in increasing the cultural capital associated with the area – this is typical of gentrification, which 'has a distinct role as a hegemonic project as it supports

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[55] Hannah Ellis-Petersen, 'Council rejects plans to turn London car park into 800 artists' studios,' *The Guardian*, November 10, 2015, Art and Design, http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2015/nov/10/council-rejects-plans-london-car-park-800-artists-studios-southwark-peckham [accessed December 13, 2016].
[56] Ibid.
[57] Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin Wyly, *Gentrification* (New York, NY; London: Routledge, 2008), 166.
[58] Morrison, 'Found in a disused car park.'

flexible accumulation by switching capital to the built environment.'[59] It is extremely common, writes Krims, that 'central-city districts with a high concentration of artistic industries and public spaces lend municipalities a coveted image of being "lively" and "creative."'[60] Thus the symbolic power of street culture that Ilan pinpoints is transmitted from the urban atmosphere of Peckham, through *The Rite*, only to become actual, hard capital, that will have an alienating effect on a large number of people.[61] The same unequal power dynamics are at play in gentrification as they are in the music I have described: 'creating social mix … invariably involves the movement of the middle class into working-class areas, not vice versa.'[62] Krims takes up Neil Smith's term 'revanchist city' (from the French *revanche*, literally meaning 'revenge'), to indicate 'the processes by which [the middle- and upper-classes] have forcibly reconquered urban terrain previously threatened by the presence of more economically marginal residents.'[63] This is encapsulated in the description of the car park as a 'wild and funky cultural space': the same sense of racial and social Otherness associated with the feral underclass has gained a cultural cachet that leads to an appropriation of these 'wild and funky' spaces.

A large number of critics advocated attending *The Rest is Noise* festival, in the same

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[59] Kirsteen Paton, *Gentrification: A Working-Class Perspective* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), 6. Gentrification is associated with 'neoliberal experimentation with the devolution of power to local states and their subsequent entrepreneurial activity.' Ibid, 4. In fact, *The Arts Desk* praised Whitley's *Rite* concert because they took it to mean that 'the entrepreneurial spirit that seized and transformed British art in the 1980s is finally animating and unshackling this most stubborn of art forms.' Toronyilalic, 'The *Rite of Spring*.'

[60] Krims, *Music and Urban Geography*, xxvii.

[61] The parallels between gentrification and musical prestige are important but go only so far. A study on gentrification found that there was 'no social mixing between new-build residents along the Thames and those lower-income groups living in the adjacent communities. As such, there was no transference of social capital from high- to low-income groups.' *Gentrification,* 202.

[62] Lees et. al., *Gentrification*, 207.

[63] Adam Krims, 'Marxist Music Analysis without Adorno: Popular Music and Urban Geography,' in *Analyzing Popular Music*, ed. Allan F. Moore (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003): 152. For the original text, see Neil Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (London: Routledge, 1996).

way that many advocated *The Rite of Spring*, because it would help them continue to be shocked: 'I want people to fall in love with this music and be amazed by it,' wrote one critic. 'Anyone who's reading this article and is thinking it'll all be difficult and outside their comfort zone, I urge them to be adventurous. Please give it a go.'[64] 'What is most shocking is that we are no longer so shocked at ourselves,' wrote another, 'and thus that there is nothing remotely shocking about the Rite. But we can still be knocked sideways by other kinds of modernism.'[65] The sonic experience promoted and fetishized by these two developments – *The Rest is Noise* festival and *The Rite* centenary – owes much to the Stravinskian vernacular modernism sketched at the outset of this thesis: the excitement in being among the 'hectic clamour of modern life', being in the midst of (but not part of) the racial and social Others that share this urban space. This suggests that the Stravinskian thread of modernism, much maligned from an Adornian perspective, has, by virtue of its underdog status, become an unlikely indicator of cultural superiority within contemporary Britain. For these commentators, Stravinsky stands for resistance against power, and for a dissolution of artistic divisions, something that is part of an ongoing obsession with sites of resistance, or what Krims describes as 'the cultural-studies mode of "resistance" validation [that is] part and parcel of the problematic inherited from Adorno.'[66] It is perhaps paradoxical that Adorno initially used *The Rite* as an example of a false, rather than a genuine, site of resistance. Its rhythmic and tonal innovations were 'shocks [through which] the individual becomes conscious of his nothingness in the face of the gigantic machine of

[64] Thompson, 'Get out of your comfort zone.'
[65] Bakewell, 'The sound of 2013 that still has the power to stir.'
[66] Krims, 'Marxist Music Analysis,' 155. The term 'commodification of resistance' was also used by Steven Miles to describe the impulse that led to the riots of 2011: see Steven Miles, 'Young People, "Flawed Protestors" and the Commodification of Resistance,' *Critical Arts* 28/1 (January, 2014): 76-87.

the entire system.'[67] For Adorno, musical modernism is driven by the acknowledgment of a sense of difficulty, of individual suffering, which jazz and popular music (like *The Rite*) in general fail to acknowledge or even conspire to conceal.[68] To quote Thompson again, these works are 'false to the extent that they create the illusion of arhythmicality and forms of atonality when in fact they do just the opposite: they mask an inherent banality.'[69] Adorno's position has supported the basic assumption, made by many scholars, that the main point of scholarship is to locate authentic modes of resistance.[70]

This ongoing battle over sites of resistance has been central to modernism, and continues to be one of its defining characteristics. Of course, the prestige of shock has come under fire within musicology: for Lawrence Kramer, 'new works of avant-garde music fail to shock; we know their tricks too well. Worse yet, many older avant-garde works have become endearing – even, in the digital age, quaint.'[71] Harper-Scott echoes Krims's critique of resistance validation, when he writes that

> It is clear that the most rebarbatively 'modernist' forms of today … are in fact the most conventional and ideologically collusive form of art of all, each of their 'perversions' sucked greedily into the system of postmodern capitalist consumption.[72]

For Harper-Scott, 'the "shock" element is really an index of the buyer's or the viewer's cultural and economic superiority over the mass.'[73] And yet, Harper-Scott is unwilling to

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[67] Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, 113. Later, Adorno wrote, 'Subjectivity, I assert in *The Philosophy of Modern Music*, assumes the character of the victim in Stravinsky.' Theodor W. Adorno, 'Stravinsky: A Dialectical Portrait,' in *Quasi Una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music* (London: Verso, 2011), 149.
[68] See Lewandowski, 'Adorno on Jazz,' 105; Gracyk, 'Adorno, Jazz,' 527-528; Witkin, 'Why did Adorno "Hate" Jazz?' 160-166.
[69] M. J. Thompson, 'Th. W. Adorno Defended against his Critics, and Admirers,' 44.
[70] Harper-Scott and Graham, in particular, as I will discuss later.
[71] Lawrence Kramer, '"Au-delà d'une Musique Informelle": Nostalgia, Obsolescence, and the Avant-Garde,' *Muzikologija* 6 (2006): 43.
[72] Harper-Scott, *Quilting Points*, 184.
[73] Ibid, 185.

throw out the baby with the bathwater – despite this manifest commodification of resistance, Harper-Scott still concludes that 'modernism continues to offer the best scholarly locus for an emancipatory musicology to develop'.[74] In other words, as a form of cultural capital, resistance is irresistible.[75]

Graham's *Sounds of the Underground* takes up similar issues, although is slightly different, since he does not appear to distinguish between baby and bathwater to begin with. For Graham, 'the underground can be understood as a distinct zone of cultural activity existing "below" or "between," but permeated by and permeating, the high and low mainstreams.'[76] He links avant-garde musical practices in the 1920s to contemporary underground music on the grounds that the musicians all 'insist on the social rooting of their practice'.[77] Underground music is 'organized around some core sense of aesthetic and political innovation and radicalism', and on these grounds he 'tentatively link[s] this aspect of the underground and its fringes with some notion of the avant-garde and of modernism, without, however, collapsing the underground into a simple continuation of those traditions or sets of ambitions.'[78] But this happens through sonic shock – for Graham, underground music

> positions itself resolutely outside the academy, all the while its harsh sonics gnaw and upbraid the ears … [it] represents a sort of popular avant-gardism where mass culture is mined for material and inspiration, but where an avant-garde sensibility adopted from Dadaists – egalitarian, yet destructive and challenging – places much of the work beyond the ken of the general public.[79]

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[74] Ibid, 252.
[75] Krims writes that 'post-Fordist urban development has taken forms that undermine precisely those qualities that scholars value in place, its presumably "resistant" characteristics and humane appeal.' Krims, *Music and Urban Geography*, xxxviii.
[76] Graham, *Sounds of the Underground*, 8.
[77] Graham, '(Un)Popular Avant-Gardes,' 11.
[78] Graham, *Sounds of the Underground*, 5-6.
[79] This music 'positions itself resolutely outside the academy, all the while its harsh sonics gnaw and upbraid the ears as forcefully as Wolfgang Mitterer or Mark Andre do from inside those hallowed walls. Popular culture is used and rejected … [it] represents a sort of popular avant-gardism where

So again the 'destructive and challenging' nature of this music is central to the way it is defined. Even if the musical underground occurs in between (or underneath) the categories of high and low art, this shock element, so definitive of modernism, is absolutely central, even advocated – Graham begins his book by recounting an experience of his revelling in it as a consumer:

> I've become used to bizarre sights and sounds. Men playing guitars with their teeth against a backdrop of murderous imagery. People bumping into each other in confused but cheerful huddles, trying to follow vague instructions written on cards. A woman covered in synthetic blood screaming into a microphone like a loosed warrior. A piece of amplified soft glass being eaten, spectacularly. These kinds of experiences are now routine to me. And similar things can be found in obscure or veiled places across the world, from basement rooms in rented accommodations in Detroit, to repurposed bars and clubs in Dublin or Berlin, to meetinghouses in Tokyo, to scrungy [sic] warehouses in London and Glasgow. At venues such as these concerts and festivals are held where sheets of paper are played with handheld fans and cymbals with violin bows, where contact microphones exposed the hidden sounds of the most basic acts of friction, where turntables are mined for sound without the use of records, and where abrasive sonic tinkering and wild and sometimes rickety experiment is the order of the day.[80]

There is a fundamental contradiction here between the excessively detailed and in-depth description of these apparently 'bizarre' activities, and the acknowledgment that they have become routine. Where Graham almost wearily attaches the sense of resistance to a kind of assault on the ears, Sarah Thornton seems to recognise the fact that resistance is always relative to a norm when she writes that 'undergrounds define themselves most clearly by what they're not – that is, "mainstream".'[81] Resistance, and consequently the avant-garde, is always necessarily mobile: as Chris Atton writes, 'the circular track of the avant-garde binds it to a continual shifting of position: it may be part of a mass culture, separate from it, antagonistic towards it or a necessary part of its development. It may be integral to it or

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mass culture is mined for material and inspiration, but where an avant-garde sensibility adopted from Dadaists – egalitarian, yet destructive and challenging – places much of the work beyond the ken of the general public.' Graham, '(Un)Popular Avant-Gardes,' 13.

[80] Graham, *Sounds of the Underground*, 3.

[81] Thornton, 'Moral Panic, The Media and British Rave Culture,' 178.

marginal to it, creatively embraced or despised.'[82] This flags up the profoundly relative, even tautological, nature of resistance – it cannot be reduced to the sound of the music alone.

The term 'underground' is useful since it suggests resistance in many different ways. In addition to its attempt to establish a middle ground between high and low styles, the most striking one is the way that this music is 'anchored in local urban centers'[83] – in other words, underground music is often also defined by its occurring in specific urban spaces.[84] In a chapter about the 'Digital Underground', David Grazian describes the way a series of underground musical micro-scenes proliferate in repurposed urban spaces in postindustrial cities as a counterbalance to 'branded pop entertainment and elite cultural attractions':[85] musical style itself is less important than the way in which the musical practice relates to the class of the consumer. In other words, 'underground' music is underground not merely because it is sonically resistant, but because it also occurs in spaces of resistance. Stirling argues that there has been an 'unprecedented incursion of commercialism, bureaucratization, and large-scale corporate sponsorship into underground music'[86] in contemporary Britain, which itself should be seen against the backdrop of a set of 'intensifying assaults to [sic] public space and public life.'[87] Underground music occurs

[82] Atton, 'Listening to Difficult Albums,' 349.
[83] Graham, *Sounds of the Underground*, 28.
[84] See Falu Bakrania, *Bhangra and Asian Underground: South Asian Music and the Politics of Belonging in Britain* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013). Bakrania defines the term by describing the feeling of entering a club and going through its descending levels (1-3) as well as a general sense of constructing one's identity through resistance (8).
[85] David Grazian, 'Digital Underground: Musical Spaces and Microscenes in the Post-Industrial City,' in *Musical Performance and the Changing City*, ed. Fabian Holt and Carsten Wergin (New York: Routledge, 2013): 128.
[86] Christabel Stirling, 'Sound Art / Street Life: Tracing the Social and Political Effects of Sound Installations in London,' *Journal of Sonic Studies* 11 (2014), https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/234018/234019 [accessed December 13, 2016].
[87] Ibid.

primarily in liminal urban spaces, in seeming pockets of freedom, populated by an audience of those seen as somehow 'outside' of mainstream society. In short, the term 'underground' fuses together the difficult or radical pretentions of modernist or avant-garde music with contestations over urban space.

The research presented here can be used to explore the links between the appeal of urban music, and changes in urban space.[88] Krims's *Music and Urban Geography* has already broken this ground – his fundamental proposition was that 'music's participation in urban geography extends far beyond the confines of representation, as musical structures and characteristics interact with other realms of human activity.'[89] For Krims, 'the transformation of the metropolis, in the advanced world over the past few decades, interacts powerfully with musical structure, both the changing sounds and the way the sounds are processed commercially and culturally.'[90] This holistic conception of the city owes much to Henri Levebvre's *Rhythmanalysis*, in which the author sought to view contemporary society through the lens of rhythm.[91] Lefebvre's work has been used recently

[88] An extensive recent development in this area is Georgina Born ed., *Music, Sound and Space: Transformations of Public and Private Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). Born writes that 'the geography of music recognizes both that music and sound can be enrolled as means of social regulation and control – through the production of subjectivities, the enactment of power, the organization of spatial boundaries and the affirmation of identities – and that they may also be used to contest and evade such regulation.' Georgina Born, 'Introduction – Music, Sound and Space: Transformations of Public and Private Experience,' in *Music, Sound and Space*, ed. Born, 22. Gopinath and Stanyek's *Oxford Handbook of Mobile Music Studies* shares this focus on the construction of space, and looks at the way in which the musical performance has been mobilized and conditioned by technology, often in urban areas. They write that 'at the core of the essays on mobile music that follow is an attentiveness to what the plastic-penetrated ear hears, to the listening public that is generated when a boombox is brought to circulate through the streets, or what happens as the sound truck vibrates and resonates, buzzing with bootylicious bass lines.' Gopinath and Stanyek, 'Introduction,' *Oxford Handbook of Mobile Music Studies*, ed. Gopinath and Stanyek, vol. 2, 2. New research has also been carried out in the realm of music and landscape. See Jonathan Hicks, Michael Uy, and Carina Venter, 'Introduction: Music and Landscape,' *The Journal of Musicology* 13/1 (2016): 1-10.

[89] Krims, *Music and Urban Geography*, xxxv.

[90] Ibid, xxxvi.

[91] Henri Lefebvre, *Rhythmanalysis: Space, Time, and Everyday life* (London: Continuum, 2004).

as part of a 'broader project – which leaves behind notions of the city as either background or container to urban social life – in proposing a revalidation of rhythm as the critical lens on urban life.'[92] But if the city is rhythmic, then it is so only inasmuch as the overlapping of different urban spaces creates this rhythm. Stavrides continues: 'an emerging model of urban governance understands the city as an archipelago of urban enclaves, each one secluded and defined by a recognizable spatial perimeter.'[93] But these clearly delineated urban spaces are always contested. As a result, the sense of the 'rhythmic' in the music discussed here is also a sense of its ability to delineate (metaphorical) urban social spaces. As Stavrides writes,

> the modernist imaginary, epitomized in the image of a man-creator who orchestrates urban symphonies by managing to tame and control natural and mechanical rhythms alike, has completely lost its power. What has replaced it is perhaps a modernist (or anti-modernist) imaginary which celebrates the post-industrial city's alleged polyrhythmicality and presents it as a source of individualized pleasure and freedom.[94]

Phrases such as 'introducing urban sounds into the concert hall'[95] get their power, since they touch on a discourse of fluidity, suggesting that the once rigid boundaries between classical and popular are now becoming porous. More to the point, we should not uncritically accept the idea that the urban is characterized by 'unconstrained spaces of difference and fluidity, for this simultaneously eclipses those who do not experience the city as fluid.'[96] In other words, it may seem remarkable that this metaphor of rhythm is used

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[92] Robin James Smith and Kevin Hetherington, 'Urban Rhythms: Mobilities, Space and Interaction in the Contemporary City,' *The Sociological Review* 61/S1 (2013): 4-16 at 11.
[93] Stavros Stavrides, 'Contested Urban Rhythms: From the Industrial City to the Post-Industrial Urban Archipelago,' *The Sociological Review* 61/S1 (2013): 34-50 at 40.
[94] Ibid, 42.
[95] Shave, 'Get into the groove.'
[96] Stirling, 'Sound Art / Street Life.' If the city is conceived of in terms of enclaves, then these are still modes of division. See Bottomley and Moore, 'From Walls to Membranes.' Bottomley and Moore describe part of the security of the private and enclosed public space as offering a 'sense of pleasure and safety [which] requires intensive monitoring of the environment and the exclusion of others (the undesirable, the disruptive) who are deemed a "nuisance."' Ibid, 187.

both within scholarship on urban geography as a way of describing tension between overlapping urban spaces, *and* as a way to describe the 'urban music' created within these contested urban spaces; and yet it makes sense if we conceive of 'rhythm' as a term that has been profoundly conditioned by the same racially and socially pernicious discourses that flourish in anxieties surrounding the contemporary city. The work presented in this thesis could be used in further research into this area – indeed, discussions of musical culture clashes that champion the popular underdog are likely to seem cheap if they ignore the material effects of gentrification that these concerts support.

To conclude: it bears repeating that the work presented here supports the ongoing reconfiguration of the conception of resistance that has been so central to scholarship on modernist music. This, in particular, is one of Krims's main points. He suggests that we should become more critical of modes of resistance against capitalism, since post-Fordist capitalism has integrated these very modes of resistance into its systems – in other words, we should abandon the 'monolithic and inflexible models of capitalism that we have inherited from Adorno.'[97] This attempt to inflect these modes of modernist resistance is not even new: I have stuck with 'modernism', and concluded with a performance of *The Rite of Spring* and a celebration of the new music of the long twentieth century in order to further suggest that contemporary British vernacular musical modernism is not merely one of many anomalous offshoots. Historical work has shown that the boundaries between high and low art have long been porous.[98] It is clear from this thesis that there is an ongoing sense of shock created in contemporary Britain through these musical culture clashes. While these

[97] Krims, 'Marxist Music Analysis,' 157.
[98] See for example, Peter Franklin, *Reclaiming Late-Romantic Music* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014), and 'Modernism, Deception, and Musical Others: Los Angeles Circa 1940,' *Western Music and Its Others*, ed. Born and Hesmondhalgh, 143-162. Laura Tunbridge, 'Frieda Hempel and the Historical imagination,' *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 66/2 (2013): 437-474; Chris Chowrimootoo, 'Bourgeois Opera: *Death in Venice* and the Aesthetics of Sublimation,' *Cambridge Opera Journal* 22/2 (2010): 175-216.

musical styles seem at first blush distinct, I have tried to show that the urban popular has deep roots within even the most general idea of what new music might sound like – harsh, fractured, and rhythmically difficult.

The idea that the avant-garde is somehow resistant to capitalism is clearly not the case – the resistance against cultural superiority is now itself a marker of superiority. Emergent, innovative, and sonically aggressive musical styles not only condition and are conditioned by attempts to gain cultural superiority. When combined with a fascination with the 'urban', attempts to cultivate such musical styles are implicated in the perpetuation of racially and socially pernicious discourses. They can engage with our conception of what an 'urban' aesthetic is, supporting a fascination with and appropriation of street culture, and leading to potentially materially damaging consequences for those individuals less advantaged in society. The appeal of these works is ultimately their shock value, both in the sense that the shock of transgression is thrilling, and in the sense that shock diverts attention away from the recycling of similar racial and social issues. This project is an attempt to show that these ostensibly new, boundary-breaking or genre-crossing musical projects and styles are in fact part of already-existing and ongoing reconfigurations of the problem of modernism.

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