

Music, Creativity and the Cultural Economy Research Group

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Welcome to the December 2024 newsletter of the Music, Creativity and the Cultural Economy research group.

As we head to the end of the calendar year, we take time in this newsletter to celebrate the ongoing work of our research group members, whether in conferences, presentations, publications or creative practice.

What is the Music, Creativity and Cultural Economy research group?

- An inclusive and interdisciplinary group with a broad understanding of research (traditional, practice, knowledge exchange, public engagement).
- Open to all, no matter your pre-existing experience of research.
- Celebrates and promotes the work of our members.
- Fosters collaborations, peer support and capacity building.

To join the Research Group, promote your research and knowledge exchange activities or get involved in any other way, please email Dr. Chris Anderton (Research Group lead) at chris.anderton@solent.ac.uk

Researcher updates

Patrick Ainsworth (Course Leader BA Hons Popular Music Performance and Production) successfully defended his PhD thesis earlier this year and now officialy Dr Ainsworth. Our congratulations to him for this fantastic achievement.



Thesis abstract:

Close examination of musical performances often reveals micro-deviations from a superimposed isochronous grid; this so-called microtiming is a common element of funk.

This thesis forms a multi-disciplined investigation of microtiming in funk and its effect on the quality of groove through qualitative, quantitative and experimental research. Much of the literature to date either extolls the virtues of microtiming, or proposes that it does not enhance groove; this juxtaposition is replaced by a middle way hypothesis between these two extremes. New light is shed on how notes are perceived in relation to their physical onsets. Original findings show that microtiming patterns exist, are not random, and are often based on the arrangements from which they are derived. Micro-levels of swing are shown to be an almost universal feature of funk and enhance listeners' groove experience. Links are made between the perception of microtiming and its interaction with other musical elements.

An up to date and comprehensive literature review is included that draws together the established theories of microtiming in jazz and popular music beginning with the ground-breaking work of Keil in the 1960s; this review concludes with a rationale for further research in the area. This is followed by a detailed study of the perception of the beginnings of notes in relation to their physical onsets, which is essential to validate the relevance of the effects of microtiming on the listener.

The core of the thesis is an in depth study of microtiming deviations and patterns in fifteen influential funk grooves, which builds on existing theories and contains novel findings regarding microtiming and musical features/arrangements.

Previous listening experiments focusing on microtiming are reviewed and analysed in order to derive improved methodologies for experiments designed to investigate the effects of microtiming on listeners. Five experiments are implemented; findings show that listeners can perceive sounds very closely to their physical onsets, and provide evidence that imperceptible, or barely perceptible degrees of swing can enhance groove. Finally evidence is gathered that provides support for the middle way hypothesis.

Researcher updates

Paul Stevens (Lecturer in Media Production) reviews his year in research.

In June I joined a Solent "awayday" to Ravensbourne University in London. The architecturally-striking university is right next to the O2, where it was hugely busy that day not because we "rock-star academics" were in town, but because Girls Aloud were playing that evening!

We were in Greenwich to attend the MeCCSA Practice Network Symposium 2024: Exploring the Intersection of Creative Practice and Intelligent Technologies, hosted by noted "podacademic", Dr Dario Llinares.



At the event, I presented the second in a series of academic-journal-articles-under-construction (i.e. I haven't finished them yet!). The title of the presentation was:

"Technologically-enabled immersivity in the post-iPod age: exploring the creative and experiential potential of geo-located audio-driven narratives."

The idea for this presentation paper emerged from a module I teach with colleagues Maja Hill and Steve Middleton, in which our students are required to create a spatial audio narrative, to be experienced in a real-world location, via a mobile phone app.

My current 'article-under-construction' is based on a case study of Darkfield, who bill themselves as "creators of innovative immersive 360-degree audio experiences at the forefront of technology and theatre" (<https://www.darkfield.org/>).

Darkfield began hosting in-person audio experiences with audiences sitting in the pitch black in converted shipping containers. The pandemic saw a pivot to online "broadcasts" of their immersive audio "programmes" via mobile phones.

But the audio trailblazers have since returned to what passes for the real world in their view, and have been touring their shows in the UK and worldwide.

The experiences they present exploit binaural sound and sensory effects to situate participants at the centre of intense evolving narratives.

Researcher updates

Dr Paul Goodge (postgraduate alumni)

In September, Paul gave a presentation on an aspect of his successful PhD thesis at the 6th Biennial International Conference for the Study of Progressive Rock, held at the Krzysztof Penderecki Academy of Music in Krakow, Poland. The presentation was titled "An Acquired Taste: The Enduring Legacy of Progressive Rock." He was also asked to chair one of the conference panels, and is looking forward to the next biennial conference which will be held at the University of Strasbourg in France in 2026.

In addition, Paul co-authored an academic article with Dr Chris Anderton (Associate Lecturer in Cultural Economy), which was published this year in one of the leading popular music journals, *Rock Music Studies* (issue 11.1).



Abstract:

In this article, we focus on music fandom related to the band Yes, one of progressive rock's most enduring legacy acts. Drawing on primary research interviews and focus groups, we argue that progressive rock fandom should be characterized as a largely private pursuit where the relationship between fans and their music is paramount. This relationship, and its associated listening practices, are viewed as an ongoing resource and life-long attachment of significant importance for personal identity, something which we characterize as a form of *mea cultura*. This term is used to signify individual rather than wider societal approaches to understanding music appreciation and the valorization of music artifacts and history.

A second journal article has already been accepted for publication in another leading journal called *Popular Music*. Co-authored with Dr Chris Anderton, this article extends on Paul's PhD thesis to explore the reception and validation of live music audiences in relation to progressive rock music. This article is due for publication in 2025.

Dr Chris Anderton also attended the conference in Krakow, where he presented his ongoing work on the issues raised when heritage acts continue to write, release and perform new music under their well-regarded and historic band (brand) names, yet no longer feature any of the musicians who performed on their most iconic album releases of the past. An extended version of both Chris' and Paul's presentations will be submitted for a publication linked to the conference, and Chris' work on heritage bands will continue in 2025, when he will be attending the 23rd biennial international conference of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music, which will be held at Sorbonne Nouvelle University, Paris, France.

Researcher updates

Dr Chris Anderton (Associate Professor in Cultural Economy) reviews his year in research.

Presentations:

In September 2024, I was invited by Professor Serge Lacasse to give a keynote speech as part of the inaugural FONO Music Festival held on the grounds of Université Laval. The talk was titled: "Mainstreaming the Music Festival Experience: From Long-haired Capitalism to Private Equity," which drew on my ongoing music festival research.



I gave two further conference presentations this year. The first was an invited talk at the *Social Inclusion, Community, and Belonging at International Music Festivals symposium*, held at University of Sheffield in June 2024, where I spoke about the importance of place and belonging at music festivals in a talk titled: "Outdoor Music Festivals as Cyclic Places. Assessing Authenticity, Attachment and Belonging." The other was a presentation at the biennial Project Conference reported on the previous page of this newsletter.

Publications this year:

"Going for the one: progressive rock fandom as 'mea cultura'" (with Paul Goodge), *Rock Music Studies* (*Rock Music Studies* 11.1). A journal article examining music fandom.

"Reconfiguring Genre, Style, and Idiolect: Investigating progressive rock's meta-genre and affordances," *Popular Music and Society* 47.3). A journal article examining music genre and the potential for using fan-based classifications in relation to notions of musical idiolect.

"Pressing reset: reimagining performer and songwriter revenues in the contemporary music industry" (with James Hannam). In *The Palgrave Handbook of Critical Music Industry Studies*, edited by David Arditi and Ryan Nolan. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Publications currently in press:

The Routledge Handbook of Progressive Rock, Metal and the Literary Imagination (co-edited with Prof. Lori Burns of University of Ottawa, Canada). Routledge (due to be published in February 2025).

"Alone in the Crowd? Live Music Audiences and Individual Experience" (with Paul Goodge), *Popular Music* (due for publication in 2025).

News in brief

Kamran Qureshi's (Lecturer in Film Production) groundbreaking feature film, *Only Love Matters*, is now streaming on Apple TV and available on iTunes, Amazon Prime and, in the US, Vudu (Fandango at Home).

Apple TV:

<https://tv.apple.com/gb/movie/only-love-matters/umc.cmc.6ws9y5j67f6nve1qwwyv3ive6>

Amazon Prime:

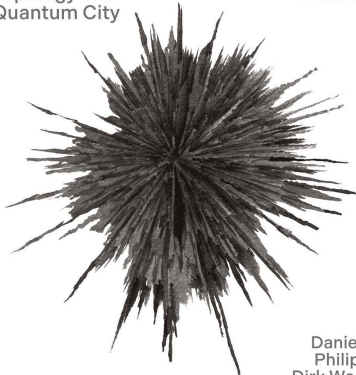
https://www.amazon.co.uk/placeholder_title/dp/B0DFVYV1F/

Movie website: <https://onlylovemattersmovie.com/news/>

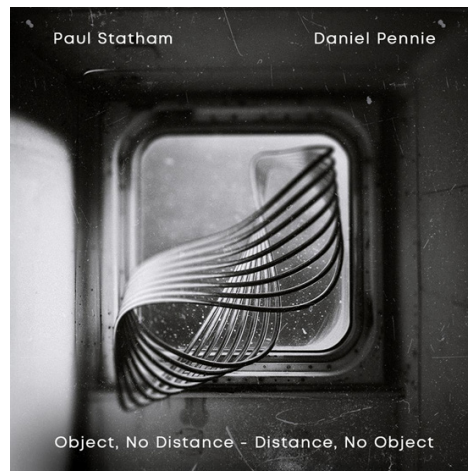


Topology of a Quantum City

Paul Schütze



Daniel Pennie
Philip Brophy
Dirk Wachtelaer
Bill McDonald

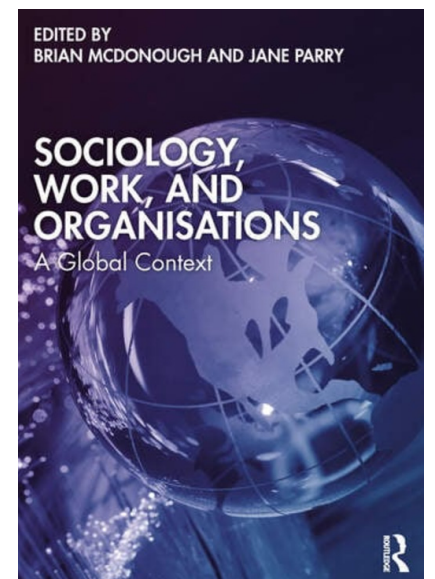


Dan Pennie (Senior Lecturer in Music) was a key performer in Paul Schütze's recent album *Topology of a Quantum City*, and is set to release a duo album with Solent colleague Paul Statham before the end of year: *Object, No Distance - Distance, No Object*.

Brian McDonough (Course Leader, Sociology) has two new publications this year:

"Tactile transformation in flying airplanes: From hands-on to fingers-on aviation," *New Media and Society*, doi/10.1177/14614448241237764.

Sociology, Work, and Organisations: A Global Context (co-edited with Jane Parry). Routledge.



Jennifer Skellington (Lecturer in Music) has had an article abstract included in a proposal for a special edition of the journal *New Formations*, to be edited by Dr Emma Casey (University of York). The abstract discusses how the British quality newspaper press covered the arrival of 'world music' as a genre category in the UK. This opportunity developed from her attendance at a conference earlier in the year, showing the importance of 'getting out there.'