## Identity, Contemporary Music and Community: Some Illustrations of this area of Personal Research with Special Reference to Confluent Jazz Music in the Nordic Countries

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ABSTRACT: This reflective paper considers the congruence in Scandinavia between today's improvised music and jazz, and the older discipline of folklore /folklife in both their purposes and functions. Further, there is here a retrospective preservation of cultural identity through the media of story, song, and dance. And this folklore re-defines the contemporary society, assists the understanding of identity, and much enriches an already expressive culture. Thus it intersects with the contemporary, reasserts the defiance of the outlaw, and deftly creates an interplay between heritage, memory and Identity.

## A Theory and a Thesis

It is the central argument in my research for my almost completed doctoral thesis—on the establishment of frameworks for considering late twentieth century Nordic jazz music and its varying sociological contexts—that certain forms of improvised music may find congruity of function—and so of understanding—with [like understanding of] the discipline of folklore /folkloristics and with the general more developed scholarship of folklife. Depending on one's definition of 'folklore', it may, in fact, be possible to understand these particular types of music as forms of evolving folklore in themselves. At first glance, it could easily seem that to examine a contemporary and forward-looking art form, such as improvised music—in terms of its positioning in the field of folklore—might be a rather strange and far fetched leap. However, there is to be found much commonality of societal function between this music and the current scholarly perceptions of the functions and general purpose of folklore. In ongoing research,<sup>1</sup> I am developing the case that a primarily musically orientated perspective is best expressed when it is attempting to find a folkloric conception that may be manipulated to encompass this 'confluent jazz', rather than attempting to find patterns of folkloric motif embedded structurally within this mostly autotelic music. It is my general contention that much of the current discourse surrounding the 'Nordic Sound' of jazz suffers from attempting the latter.

#### Towards a Folklore for Much Contemporary Improvised Nordic Music

Most commonly, and simplistically folklore is understood to be a form of culture that is concerned with a retrospective preservation of cultural identity through the mediums of story, of song and of dance; yet there are distinguished scholars within the field of folklore who now embrace a more encompassing definition.

There has been an enormous expansion in the past fifteen years in the scope of theoretical viewpoints that have come to be regarded as legitimate perspectives in the (America)n study of folklore. Besides the emergence of new interests within the foundation disciplines of anthropology and English literature, major perspectives of the disciplines of linguistics, sociology, psychology, history, and communications have been incorporated into the study of folklore.<sup>2</sup>

This increasingly accepted expansion of the field has also included an expansion in the discipline's temporal range. Today, folklorists are increasingly equipped with frameworks that are capable of considering much more immediate conditions.

Nevertheless, in order to apply certain frameworks from orthodox folkloristics to a contemporary form, such as in my research, my argument suggests that taking liberties with traditional terminology and reconsideration of the nature of definition are both perfectly appropriate. The path that folklore has trodden in order to arrive at a point comfortable with integrating contemporary thought and issues is largely one of a like re-definition.

All definitional exercises are situated, even dictionary definitions, and they have economic, institutional, political, and legal consequences (see Shiach, 1989, pp. 19-34 on the entry for 'popular' in the Oxford English Dictionary). As rhetorical statements, definitions make claims, command resources, and define their appropriate allocation. We have sustained ourselves as a discipline by consistently loosening the definition of

I refer to my earlier thesis for the University of Sydney, and my fieldwork and research in 1 the Nordic countries (in Iceland and in Norway and Finland) from c. 2008. Thomas A. Burns, 'Folkloristics: A Conception of Theory', *Western Folklore*, 36.2

<sup>2</sup> (1977), p. 110.

folklore, while preventing new material from destabilizing the working assumptions of the discipline. We find folklore in the media and study the impact of the media on folklore. We fully attenuate our most fundamental categories—'The modern definition of folk as any group whatsoever that shares at least one common factor—language, occupation, religion, ethnicity—makes it possible to consider the folklore of various urban groups'—without shifting the disciplinary paradigm.<sup>3</sup>

The process of creating a case for the positioning of contemporary jazz music—or indeed any autotelic form of the art—is, therefore, something of an exercise in negotiating multiple and sometimes conflicting current/traditional definitions.

## Meaning and Identity

As my thesis is concerned with constructing a primarily personal groundwork for future research on the interactions of Nordic confluent music and its social context, I find it necessary to give due consideration to the manner and limitations to which established definitions can serve this interest. Surely even the most formative delimitations—let alone arcane works—in the ever-accumulating folkloric scholarship can enlighten aspects of identity. Yet, with the danger of (further) provoking controversy, it must be acknowledged that there is a problem with 'folklore' as an interpretive framework for the consideration of identity. It is precisely that we, as interpreters of meaning, become an influential component in the understanding of that same meaning:

To interpret folklore in terms of identity means to take the meaning of folklore and project it into the interpreter's vision of the social world. While this idea may seem relatively intuitive, our brief discussion has shown that society can be imagined in an extraordinarily wide variety of ways. Furthermore, different scholars and participants may interpret the same performance or item of folklore with respect to different images of the social world.<sup>4</sup>

Surely this is a problem for all research when considering the arts in a sociological context, and yet, I believe, it must be acknowledged. In the contemplation of jazz music, or really of any such abstracted form of cultural action, the sheer number of different images of the social world is multiplied considerably by the lack of programmatic material qualifying the intentions of their creator.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Dundes and Pagter as cited in Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 'Folklore's Crisis', *The Journal of American Folklore*, 111, no. 441 (1998), p. 307, 308.

Harris M. Berger and Giovanna P. Del Negro, *Identity and Everyday Life: Essays in the Study of Folklore, Music and Popular Culture* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press 2004), p. 134.

## And so to Jazz as the Expression of (a Particular) Culture

Jazz is an expressive culture and contains within its 'texts' multiple visions of the world, sometimes several of these even occurring within a single work. There is very little to be found in terms of conclusive black and white definitions, and at this point it might well seem that the whole exercise of engaging scholarship in terms of such acts is in itself a *non sequitur*. In the forward to Berger and Del Negro's *Identity and Everyday Life*, they state their position, which is relative to this:

We feel strongly that the notions of folklore, high art, and popular art do not correspond to any natural or trans-historical typology of expressive culture and that these ideas are often a hindrance to human research.<sup>5</sup>

It is my belief that, in order to embark upon such an interpretation of jazz music, one must embrace and, indeed, revel in dichotomy, while searching simultaneously for appropriate congruities.

It is vitally important that the interpretive act be understood as part of the cultural practice itself, rather than as a search for universalisms. Yet, while this is important, it is 'definition' that allows us to construct new/developing interpretive systems:

Though our ethnographic background makes us cautious about the universalizing tendency found in some forms of phenomenology, we rely heavily on that tradition to unearth patterns of organization in the interpretive processes by which expressive culture and other types of social conduct are made meaningful. Viewing interpretation as practice, we see a thread that connects all the elements of expressive culture-expressive culture is created in practices of production, received and made meaningful in interpreting practices, and tied to the rest of social life as one of the many domains of practice through which society is constituted.<sup>6</sup>

We are, then, as interpreters, a part of the expressive culture. This concept should remain with us as we attempt to integrate with more definitive scholarship.

It is a dichotomy; we are part of the act, yet must attempt to consider it objectively. It is my sense that it is the act of shaping definition in itself that empowers scholarship, and especially contemporary scholarship, with the means to engage with such a dualism. By creating a basis for the discussion of jazz music and folklore, one can then surely find value and interpretive utility in even the most definitive and compartmentalised of the established folklorific codas. It is such an act that I am attempting through my incorporating of the scholarly thought of figures like William Bascom and Stith Thompson in the following pages.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. x.

Berger and Del Negro, Identity and Everyday Life, p. xi.

## The Traditional v. the Actual Scope of Folklore

Embarking upon any investigation of the nature and scope of folklore it is significant to note that, conceptually, the idea is a rather recent invention. The term itself came into the English language approximately 100 years ago, from the German through William John Thoms, who originally defined it as 'the manners, customs, observances, superstitions, ballads, proverbs, &c., of the olden time.'<sup>7</sup> However, since its inception, there has been a strident and expansive evolution of this elusive term, with many of those who are involved with folkloristics applying the epithet to aspects of culture that, due to their remoteness to the original definitions of folklore, continue to provoke debate among scholars today. It seems that a tangible part of the problem of folkloristics' attempts to create a consensual, universal theory of folklore, lies with the congruencies between an anthropological definition of the term culture and the field of folkloristics' own early attempts at self-definition.<sup>8</sup> The equally emotive related term 'culture' came into existence around 150 years ago through the writings of anthropologist Edward Taylor,<sup>9</sup> and it served to further obscure an already tenebrous region of thought.

These similarities have in large part been the root of the argument about the scope of folklore, which still plagues us. Although historically the word folklore is nearly twenty years older in English than the word 'culture', culture has become accepted in the social sciences in the sense that the anthropologists use it, while the argument over 'folklore' continues, even among folklorists.<sup>10</sup>

It very important to this research to address folkloristics as potentially much wider a field than simply the historic examination of folkloric cultural practices such as myths, legends, ballad songs and similar survivals. Folklore remains a relevant aspect of living culture which, despite changes in the expressive realization of particular practice—will continue to fulfil the same or at least related functions, as did its historical incarnations. Terry Gunnell, senior lecturer in folkloristics at the University of Iceland, explains in a recent interview what he sees as the significance of his own scholarly position in relation to today's [Icelandic and general Nordic] society:

When I came to work in this department one of my central ambitions was to try to demonstrate the importance of folklore study, to challenge the idea that folklore is little more than the superstitions, stories and songs of old Icelandic farmers. The reality is that folklore is constantly

William R. Bascom, 'Folklore and Anthropology', *The Journal of American Folklore*, 66, no. 262 (Oct.–Dec., 1953), p. 285.
Ibid

 $<sup>\</sup>frac{8}{9}$  Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. 10 Labor

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>0</sup> John Boyce, 'Terry Gunnell: Legends and Landscape', *Iceland Review*, (Autumn, 2009), p. 24.

evolving and above all remains very relevant. In my time here so far, I hope I and my fellow teachers have at least helped to change perceptions of this whole subject area. Not least as to its role in helping to achieve an understanding of our past, and indeed our present, as modern society has its own form of folklore, stories, traditions and beliefs.1

Folkloric practice continues in contemporary society<sup>12</sup>, yet the forms through which it is realized will-and rightly-be the subject of much future research and debate.

## To New Folkloric Forms

It is in regard to contemporary society's own folkloric forms enlightening us as to our condition in the present, that I put forward the study of contemporary improvised music as a form of folkloric narrative in the abstract. In today's society many of our cultural forms have evolved and metamorphosed to the point they are, at least superficially, scarcely recognizable when juxtaposed with traditional practices. The Hollywood plot to a 'blockbuster', for instance, is superficially a far cry from the campfire tales of our ancestors, and yet it is easily understandable as working similarly due to its function within the sociocultural context.

Jazz, and improvised music generally, have clearly struggled in their relationship to even purely musicological research, due to the fact that, via stylistic musical analysis, anthropological perspectives, semiology or other means, the bulk of the research on this subject has primarily occupied itself with providing definitions and analysis of the formal substance of this art. Despite this, most highly respected improvising musicians tend to see it as something much deeper than the constituent elements of the art object itself.<sup>13</sup> It seems that scholarship of folklore has, in many ways, been provoking similar polemical discussions. While there are those who seek a broader definitions, and increasing inclusivity for their folkloric endeavours, there are still many more who argue against this inclusiveness. 'Folklore' is now, quite simply, a term loaded with abundant and divergent definitions.

During the ninety years in which this word has been spreading over the world, it has extended its meaning until no man today can take all folklore for his province. It may be of interest to see how many things people mean when they say 'folklore'. The folklorist has little hesitancy in meddling with the anthropologist's business, though, on another day,

<sup>11</sup> Ihid 12

See also the very recent essay, J.S. Ryan's, 'Traditions in Exile: Canada, Australia and their Own Countries' Folklore Disciplines', e-*Tradition Today*, 1 (2011), 35-48. Pat Metheny, *The Toronto Globe and Mail*, 4 October 1997. 13

he may be dealing with problems so far in another direction that he must take out license as a practitioner of literary history.<sup>14</sup>

It is in support of a more lateral conceptualizing of folklore, that I suggest the possibility of a harmonious positioning for improvised music within this discipline.

#### Bascom's Categories

Going back to the defining theories of folkloristics, William Bascom's contributions are significant to the discussion of 'folklore' as a process of culture rather than any categorical or prescribed aspect of culture. Bascom's work, while now fifty years old, was an important milestone in the attempt to define a more valid scope for the folklore field. He had then outlined four functions that help to categorize interactions between folkloric forms and their social environments. Firstly, Bascom points out that an undeniable aspect is that folklore entertains, and so it allows people to escape from certain limitations and repressions imposed upon them by dominant social forces. Secondly, folklore validates culture, justifying its rituals and institutions to those who perform and observe them. Thirdly, Bascom stated that folklore educates: 'it is a pedagogic device that instructs and reinforces morals and the norms of social conduct. Finally, folklore is 'a means of applying social pressure and exercising social control.'<sup>15</sup> Bascom specifically described this final function as a process of maintaining some 'conformity' amongst the community's members.

While this thesis, in many ways, is challenging some of the preconditions of Boscom's functions, these four points provide a clear platform for the conceiving of 'folklore' as a social process; a plethora of forms that construct a narrative and a dialogue that interact with society in communal terms. However, Bascom has not exactly arrived at, defined for us, the skeletal functions of folklore; instead, these are to be read more closely to what might be defined as 'activities' of folklore:

Function is to be distinguished from activity, however. The activity of the stomach is to secrete gastric juices. The function of that activity is to change food so that it can be absorbed into the blood and distributed to the tissues. If the stomach ceases in this function, the life process will cease and the continuation of the structure as a living structure will come to an end. Function is thus the contribution which a partial activity makes to the total activity of which it is a part. The function of a particular social usage, therefore, is the contribution it makes to the continuity of

Stith Thompson, 'Folklore and Literature', *Publications of the Modern Language* Association. 55.3 (Sep., 1940), p. 869.
William R. Bascom, 'Four Functions of Folklore', *The Journal of American Folklore*, 67,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> William R. Bascom, 'Four Functions of Folklore', *The Journal of American Folklore*, 67, no. 266 (1954), p. 346.

the social structure, that is, the maintenance of the life process of the society.<sup>16</sup>

In terms of the rather broad inclusive understanding of folkloric forms utilized by me in my larger thesis, a certain deconstruction of these four functions is required, in order to apply them appropriately to forms such as improvised music, or any form that operates primarily in an abstracted textual relationship to its reader or audienceship.

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## The Four Functions

Let us begin this deconstruction by taking Bascom's first function. Bascom described entertainment as a process of escaping from the limitations and repressions of society. Here already, even when dealing with entertainment, the explanation must turn quickly to the nature of our social organization. Might this imply that our need for entertainment is somewhat in itself a commentary on the state of our society; at least, in so far as there exists something that we require escape from? Boscom's intended point, though, is about creating diversion away from these external pressures. Entertainment may be commenting upon our society, but it is doing so in a non-confrontational manner to divert the audience's awareness away from their own personal position in that society, and therefore the responsibilities and biases that come by way of that position, be it high or low, powerful or powerless.

I wish to consider this not so much as diversion but as recontextualization; that, by considering society while displaced from our position as participants in that social mechanism, folkloric forms find an unfettered bed for the validation, reinforcement and advocating of the subject matter which they are negotiating. Improvised music, apart from being entertaining by its pure, sensual nature, is most certainly fulfilling such goals. The abstract nature of the art allows for a high degree of displacement from the object that the art may be addressing, and the often-confluent nature of improvised music provides an apt base for abstracted, recontextualized debate and advocacy. The confluent jazz music addressed here might usefully be understood as a form considering cultural change, exploring purity versus plurality, and identity and the control of cultural narratives within a stratified social context, then expressed in a re-contextualised, abstracted form.

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Elliott Oring, 'The Three Functions of Folklore: Traditional Functionalism as Explanation in Folkloristics', *The Journal of American Folklore*, 89, no. 351 (1976), p. 68.

## And Social Reforming?

Bascom's second and third functions come closest to discovery of the most socially reforming functions of folklore. Bascom's second function is that of ensuring approval, and so continuity:

A second function of folklore is that which it plays in validating culture, in justifying its rituals and institutions to those who perform and observe them. When dissatisfaction with or skepticism of an accepted pattern is expressed or doubts about it arise, whether it be sacred or secular, there is usually a myth or legend to validate it; or a so-called 'explanatory tale', a moral animal tale, or a proverb, [told] to fulfill the same function.<sup>17</sup>

In applying this function to the abstract musical form considered here, I feel I must take certain liberties with Bascom's structures. To apply these academic schemas from folklore scholarship to this music, without a relatively high degree of adaption, will not make a framework that reflects the somewhat esoteric nature of the art with which we are concerning ourselves. For my own research, the future application of the four functions should, therefore, be directed into the substrata of these discussions, and to a position that will inform a variety of perspectives, rather than merely dictate definitions.

Operating from this perspective, synonymous or otherwise related meaning is sought in order to incorporate Bascom, and the great mass of academic thought regarding folklore in general, into a discussion about contemporary, abstract music. So, it is with great respect for the discourse of folkloristics that I attempt an appropriative position, in truth an attempt at co-option of this second function. Therefore, rather than ensuring approval, I would like to consider 'mediation' as the primary function in this second class of activity. 'Mediation', I feel, more aptly implies multiplicitous understanding of cultures as fluid entities that influence and collide with other cultural bodies—holding within them various interlacing sub-branches,—often in competition for increased 'real estate' on the map of communal identity.

It is this form of cultural confluence that I now assert may be reflected congruently upon the improvised music under discussion. Not merely a functioning of approval is present, but mediation between existing social bodies. My larger thesis has already addressed a number of such acts, 'The Source of Christmas', [the concert series bringing together Norwegian musicians of a number of disciplines with Egyptian musicians and musicians of other Middle Eastern nations who now reside in Norway] providing perhaps the most blatant and easily visible example of an act of cultural mediation. This act is certainly one of approval, if not as imbedded in the music itself then as understood by

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> William R. Bascom, 'Four Functions of Folklore', pp. 344,ff.

smaller communities within the greater society. But it is also more than approval, and provides an illustration to highlight why I have co-opted the second function with a degree of licence. This music is a form of discussion with a view to resolution and unification. It is a coming together that is both negotiation, adjudication and, in addition, simple celebration.

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## And The Third Function?

The third function is the least problematic for co-opting to the purposes of this thesis. To educate, or to serve as some form of pedagogic device, is something that is very closely associated with the kinds of sociological narratives that are under examination in this research. If music is with meaning, and even if this meaning is only observable on the reader's side of the reader/text or audience/musical work relationship, then certainly there might well be a didactic component. The difficulty we have with considering this music through the framework of the third function is the problem of specific representations of such meaning. Much of this music is not representational by its structural nature, although it may work within a given socio-cultural context to provoke a sense of meaning. It is a communicates meaning certainly, medium that but meaning communicated through figurative abstraction. Bascom's third definition is, at least by contrast, rather literal.

The importance of the many forms of folklore as pedagogic devices has been documented in many parts of the world, although perhaps most comprehensively in Raum's study of education among the Chaga of East Africa. Here ogre tales, like our bogey-man stories, are used in the discipline of very young children, and lullabies are sung to put them in a good humor. Somewhat later, fables or folktales incorporating morals are introduced 'to inculcate general attitudes and principles such as diligence and filial piety, and to ridicule laziness, rebelliousness and snobbishness'. (Raum, 214) Riddles are used to express a threat which the speaker may not later wish to carry out, to direct another's action where a blunt command might offend, or to incite a person to action through irony.<sup>18</sup>

In the third function, rather than consider this aspect of folklore as a tool to teach a specific social lesson, as proposed by Bascom, let us, instead, deem the goal of this function to 'impart'. These definitions are of course very similar, but, it is more appropriate for this thesis to suggest the notion of 'imparting' as the frame for this function, for it is

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Bascom, 'Four Functions of Folklore', p. 345.

less construed with dictated instruction, and rather more with bringing a given object into public awareness.

In this way folklore,—and so the improvised music we talk of here as an element of folklore,-will bring new or more obscured aspects of culture to recognition within the community's collective identity. It will impart a clearer identity for given communities and also certain subdivisions of these communities who have specific shared ideologies, and to which the music is construed to relate. Tangibly, Nordic jazz music has come to represent a tangible portion of the wider Nordic cultural sense. This is a consideration more strongly connected to Bascom's didactic conception of tolerance. Jazz music as a plurality, dialectic music certainly teaches, in its own way, tolerance for difference generally, as well as tolerance for different thinking and different ideas more specifically. It is a multi-racial music, with the ability to allow two voices of a highly contrasting, or even perhaps polemic nature within a single piece. In this way, while it continues this practice, it will always remain connected to the Creole origins of its history, and for this reason we should look upon rhetoric which ties the music to geography instead of shared ideal and shared identity with a great deal of suspicion.

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## Jazz Frees Up Our Perceptions

Furthermore, it is my belief that this dialectic sense in jazz, and its associated ability to present two contradictory ideas from a single perspective, is something that 'imparts' freedom of thought and acceptance of a multiplicity of viewpoints, therefore allowing the cultivation of non-conformist perspectives. It is, in fact, an antidote to social conformity, an outlaw music designed to provoke subsequent outlawism in those who can read its texts, i.e. the 'hip' in the jazz designation. Here it must be acknowledged that this reconstruction is somewhat removed from Bascom's more conventional representations of folklore. Bascom, in his consideration of the instructive nature of certain folk tales, -such as troll myths about rocky and dangerous places to be avoided- was again considering the activity of folklore in a given instance rather than identifying universal principles of communion existing between a society and its folklore.

# Subgroups and 'Outlaw' Individualists can also 'Author' Community Identity

While Bascom saw a didactic narrative of conformity to established social precepts in his fourth function, I would like rather to propose a didactic narrative of non-conformity that nevertheless imparts social unity in unison with the championing for the freedoms of the individual.

In reconstructing the fourth function I am turning here to 'advocating'-instead of Bascom's exercising of social pressure and control, and in my research I wish to consider folklore a medium through which various sub-groups of society participate in the re-authoring of communal identity. Therefore, I cannot concede to any understanding of folklore as [universally] a tool for dictating behaviour by the collective over the individual, as might be construed from the fourth function; that of certain activities of myth/legend directing individual behaviour within social etiquette and custom. In addition, I consider this function difficult to apply to the 'authorship' by sub-cultural groups. My thesis considers jazz music,-which, as will be discussed further,-is perhaps best viewed as a narrative written by the outlaws themselves. The idea of social pressure created by one singular individual is difficult to accept. Where, for instance, are we to position outlaw mythologies in relation to Bascom's fourth function? Bascom's definition of this function has identified an activity but not the true underlying function; that which could underwrite social pressure and control certainly, but also serve a number of other functions. For the purposes of this thesis, and my appropriation of this schema, 'advocating' provides a much more suitable platform when appropriating elements of folkloristics for use in the assessment of improvised music.

It seems that many others have found a necessity for some unravelling of Bascom's definitions. Stanley Edgar Hyman, in his very critical response to debate about Bascom's Hero, said:

He (Bascom) must grant Harrison, Raglan, and others the right to attempt to create some sort of order out of his chaos by more scrupulous definition. In practice, Bascom's own definitions are rather conventional.<sup>19</sup>

While the rewriting of Bascom's definitions has not been uncommon among folklorists, it is not commentary upon the writings of folklorists or anthropologists that I seek to achieve, but, rather, an attempt to build upon established understandings of the realm of folklore, in order to create a framework that may be applied to this new improvised music. It is not that I necessarily wish to advocate any specific understanding or positioning of improvised music within folklore, although I deem such a stance possible and relevant, so much as to create from folklore a device for musicological assessment of the interaction between improvised music and the more customary context of societal narratives.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Stanley Edgar Hyman, 'Reply to Bascom', *The Journal of American Folklore*, 71, no. 280 (1958), p. 152.

## Toward New (Musical) Perspectives

Of course, Bascom likely would never have envisaged applying his own functions to an often-absolute, contemporary art form like jazz music. It is, and intentionally, a liberty that I take by utilizing his scholarship thus. In an attempt to create a greater sense of the bounds of folklore scholarship, it is helpful to examine some of the more modern thinking in folkloristics, this being more sympathetic to intersection with contemporary musical thought. In an article entitled 'Folklore's Crisis' written by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett for The Journal of American Folklore, she examined the fragmentation of the discipline in the mid to late twentieth century-a time when many influential scholars, whose work would otherwise be understood as 'folklore', chose to align themselves with other academic disciplines such as anthropology or literature.

Among them a figure highly influential in folkloristics, Stith Thompson, had 'identified himself first and foremost as an 'English teacher', [i.e. teacher of mainstream literature and its place in its societies], commenting that folklore was a 'side issue', an 'avocation'.<sup>20</sup> Kirshenblatt-Gimblett later points to Américo Paredes and Richard Bauman's work, entitled *Toward New Perspectives in Folklore*<sup>21</sup>, as a formative provocation to a new form of folkloristics, occurring at a time when folklorists such as Thompson were distancing themselves from the field.

When Toward New Perspectives in Folklore appeared in 1972, it did not represent the engineered interdisciplinary of the interwar years, in which fields that had broken away from an omnibus discipline were encouraged to find new points of intersection. When disciplinary lines later crossed, they did not reconstitute the older arrangements. There is news at the nexus, which is a place of articulation not necessarily seen before. Less an exercise in disciplinary diplomacy than an attempt at theoretical synthesis, New Perspectives in Folklore was relatively unconcerned about provenance-about 'borrowing' ideas from, or being 'influenced' about loyalty to, folklore's disciplinary autonomy.<sup>22</sup>

## A Way Ahead for Departments of English/ Comparative Literature?

While Kirshenblatt-Gimblett bemoaned the decline of establishment advocacy for the discipline—which went so far as to reach a point where

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Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 'Folklore's Crisis', p. 293. Américo Paredes and Richard Bauman, *Toward New Perspectives in Folklore*, reviewed in *The Journal of American Folklore*, 86, no. 341 (Jul.–Sep., 1973), pp. 312-313. 21 22

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 'Folklore's Crisis', loc. cit., p. 283.

Bauman and Paredes' new perspectives were necessary to re-invigorate the declining field of folkloristics—she also acknowledged the ensuing potential for the discipline, and new niches for folklorists. As disciplinary birds of (ritual) passage who have historically nested in anthropology and/or literature departments, we could well play a pivotal role in re-orienting both national literature departments and area studies programs in a cultural direction, while making common cause with cultural studies.<sup>23</sup> With a vested interest in what this new folklore scholarship may do to enlighten the social function of confluent jazz music in the Nordic countries, this larger thesis seeks a new pathway for the discipline; one that draws on established scholarship to discuss the extra musical activities of this art, therefore allowing the pure musical analysis to exist independently. What this music may, in turn, give to the discipline of folkloristics is something still uncertain, but I would be surprised if there is not a point of convergence to benefit both fields of scholarship.

## Not Forgetting the Stith Thompson/Antti Aarne Index

The manipulation of folkloric conceptions such as Bascom's functions or the Stith Thompson index, for example<sup>24</sup> certainly can provide new structures for the discussion of the sort of music I have investigated, In truth, there is much more potential in the intersection of these two disciplines than the scope of this thesis could ever highlight. For my own research, this is an act of laying foundations for further investigation, as much as ultimately defining any of these structures. At a stage when the foundational work of folkloristics has been established, and the field has been opened in such an expansive way, as described by Kirshenblatt-Gimblett above, there should be no need that we rely on the obtusely simplistic narratives too often surrounding confluent Nordic jazz music. We, in fact, have an abundance of intellectual resources at our disposal with which to frame our discourse and determine the intersection between Nordic jazz and the [past and present] folklife of the Nordic people. The Stith Thompson/Antti Aarne Index is one such recourse that warrants further investigation for such a purpose.

## Folklife as a Part of Folklore

Responding to the fragmentation of folklore, and the assimilation of much folkloric study into other related fields, such as anthropology,

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 295.
<sup>24</sup> There is a convenient version of this, in simplified form and with reference to the larger patterns of the Australian materials, both Aboriginal and settler, in *The Oxford Companion to Australian Folklore*, ed. by G.B. Davey and G. Seal (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1993), in the long article, 'Folk Tales', pp. 177, ff. esp. on pp. 179-180, this having been written by J.S. Ryan and G. Seal.

literature and ethnomusicology, folklorist Richard M. Dorson published his work, an edited collection, entitled *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*. Appearing in 1972, the same year that Bauman and Paredes published *Toward New Perspectives in Folklore*, both had sought to reestablish folklore's independence. At the same time, these works each acknowledged the necessity for a re-defining of the discipline. Dorson problematized the condition of folkloristics thus:

What then are the skills, perspectives, and methods that set the folklorist apart from the anthropologist, the historian, the literary critic, the sociologist, the psychologist, and the political scientist?<sup>25</sup>

In beginning to address this question, Dorson himself outlined several methodological practices. Notable among them is the use of indexes such as Stith Thompson's *Motif-Index of Folk Literature*, which has outlined thematic motifs of folklore in a compartmentalised numerical table. It is clear from Dorson's presentation of these skills and methods that he views the practice of folklore as a rigorous investigation, not only of the expressive idioms in a given culture, but also the mass of idiomatic, motific expressions embedded in the everyday life of communities. Herein we find the folk 'life', which differentiated this branch of scholarship from the larger body of folkloristics.

This approach to the examination of everyday life, as an expressive cultural medium, did in fact serve to encourage multiplicity in the field of folkloristics.

Many folklife scholars were primarily students of material culture, and, expanding their theoretical vision, they urged folklorists to take a synthetic, cross generic approach and explore the interplay of 'everyday practices, artefacts, and expressions' in a given social world.<sup>26</sup>

## The Role of the Jazz Festival

Beyond the scope of a people's everyday practices, folklife scholarship can, however, make a significant contribution to the examination of cultural acts that themselves reference or respond reflexively to the condition of everyday life. Of significant interest to the discourse regarding jazz as a diaspora music is the notion of the jazz festival, which can be regarded beneficially through the lens of folklife scholarship. It is worth reiterating at this point the significance of the jazz festival in Europe generally and particularly for the development of the art form in the Nordic countries. The scholarship of folklife gives unique insight into the reciprocal meaning that occurs between these sort

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Richard M. Dorson, *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1972), p. 6.
<sup>26</sup> Barrar and Del Narra. *Lifeting and Evenuence Life*, p. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Berger and Del Negro, *Identity and Everyday Life*, p. 5.

of 'enactment' events such as festivals and the everyday cultural life to which they connect:

Enactments and the typical situations of everyday life are premised upon similar structuring principles (social roles, norms of behaviour, and so forth). As a result, there is both a 'continuity and a dialectic between everyday activities and these heightened events' (Abrahams 1977, 200).<sup>27</sup>

It must be said that there has been no single cultural act that has driven the formation of a specifically Nordic vision of musical identity within jazz more than the lively and frequent string of summer jazz festivals in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland.

Further research concerning the influence of these jazz festivals on the cultural imagination of the Nordic people is something highly warranted and it surely will come with time. That this future research should intersect with the folklife scholarship, and with the folkloric consideration of the everyday life of communities is something completely congruent with these events.

#### Folklore/Folklife and Jazz

If we are looking use an understanding of folklore or folklife in a more appropriative manner to examine a contemporary subject such as jazz, then it necessary to understand how these two intrinsically linked ideas differ in their approach to their content:

Generally the traditional arts folklorists define 'traditional' in terms of some process or basis of artistic expression (oral transmission, face-to-face communication) and not in terms of a particular culture level. Consequently, they are free to explore this art among all cultural levels and groups. The second group of folklorists (folklife scholars) delimits the domain of traditional ideas, behaviour, and/or consequences in terms of culture level and not in terms of whether these traditional ideas etc. are necessarily expressive in nature. Folklife scholars study traditional or folk culture where traditional tends to mean some combination of the following traits: rural, pre-industrial, non-mainstream, non-elite, preservationistic (past-oriented, old time), regional or ethnic.<sup>28</sup>

If one has accepted Burns' definition, then it is possible that both procedures help for assessing the music with which we are concerned. 'Folklore' fits our music rather well—in fact, precisely because of the nature of its transmission. Jazz is very close to an oral tradition, albeit in the abstract. Although a great deal of the music is now learnt and taught through written notation, the history of the music is one of a dominantly

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Thomas A. Burns, 'Folkloristics', p. 109.

oral [and aural] transmission, and much emphasis on the oral and aural engagement with the music will always endure.

Folklife, on the other hand, allows us to explore this music and how it exists in relation to various cultural and sub-cultural groups. Addressing the music via the scholarship of 'folklife' provides a pathway into discussion of the sociological contexts of the art form. Any such discussion regarding a sociological context that imbeds jazz music, must inevitably concede that the complexity and subjective relations of the music alike make definitive acts, or at least universal definitions, highly problematic. Jazz music is an art of multiplicities, and its texts are highly reader-dependant. For this reason it requires multiple frameworks, coinciding at the point of analysis.

## Folk Music

In developing this research we have repeatedly discussed folk music, and how that folk music has affected our particular subjects. Let us for a moment then, consider what 'folk music' in fact is. Certainly, from an academic perspective, folk music is one element of the discipline of 'folklore studies'. We have already delved rather laterally, into the scope of folklore, considering contemporary acts as a potential subject for the discipline. Yet, at this point in our reworking of this material, the notion of folk music still seems to present a picture of relics of a rural, perhaps pre-industrial and certainly a regionally specific, culture. While I hesitate on the boundary of that generality—wherein all definitions become grossly encompassing—there has already been much discourse as to what constitutes a contemporary incarnation of folk music that my exposition would not be complete without some overview of the domain.

Chapter seventeen of Dorson's collection, *Folklore and Folklife*, written by ethnomusicologist George List, considers folk music closely. List's work provides a lengthy treatise on the definitions of folk music, which is of particular interest to this thesis. He outlines his view that, despite the interchangeability in the French language of the terms musique populaire and musique folklorique, popular music and folk music are, in List's opinion, tangibly divergent:

The term folk music is often loosely applied to cover all traditional or aurally transmitted music, . . . passed on by ear and performed by memory rather than by the written or printed musical score. In a specific sense, the term refers to aurally transmitted music found within a society that also has art or cultivated music that is transmitted through the musical score. It is thus differentiated from the music of nonliterate people where music writing is non existent.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> George List, as cited in Richard M. Dorson, *Folklore and Folklife*, p. 363.

And he continues:

Folk music and popular music are not synonymous terms although as forms they share common traits. Popular music may or may not be transmitted by the musical score. It is often varied in performance and at times improvisatory in nature. Popular music, however is generally an ephemeral commercial product intended for mass consumption rather than a tradition known and practiced in a restricted area or by a subculture.<sup>30</sup>

From the perspective of a jazz musician, this form of defining 'popular music'—which, as I judge, would almost certainly encompass jazz from List's viewpoint—tends toward a less than nuanced understanding of the diversity of the music. I feel similar sentiments when reading Adorno, whose critique of jazz<sup>31</sup> often betrays a rather brusque understanding of the art form. In Adorno's case, this does not negate the fact that his arguments are of immense value to the examination of that music, and those particular forms within his limited experience of jazz, to which one can suitably apply his principles. Objectively too, there is much that some would consider 'jazz music' that would likely be better understood, and analysed, if it had surrendered more openly to the world of the popular.

Nicholas Payton, the American trumpeter, recently stated that 'Jazz separated itself from American popular music'.<sup>32</sup> His observation is a statement of record, of historic significance to the art of jazz music and the cultural life in which it was imbedded. It was a conscious strategy of jazz artists to separate from popular music and create an African American art music that, in turn, elevated the position of that community's artists and intellectuals. At this point of history, jazz played but one part in the emancipation of a community and the revivification of the culture of an oppressed people. What followed was some of the most motivated intellectual and creative activity of the twentieth century, and jazz music was certainly at the forefront of this wave in the United States. The art form was no longer popular music at this point, and by doing such cultural work, certainly become closer to folk music [albeit a folk music positioned in the Avant-garde of American art music] and to folklore, than to popular music. This, at least, holds true within the delimited schema that the dualism of popular and folk describes.

The difficulty in applying List's categorisations to jazz lies both in the fundamental plurality of the music, and in its inherent diversity. What is lost in the categorisation of jazz as popular music is the essence of jazz

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 364.

Theodor Adorno, 'On Jazz' (1936) in *Essays on Music: Theodor Adorno*, ed. by Richard Leppart (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), p. 470.
Nicholas Payton, 'On Why Jazz Isn't Cool Anymore' <a href="http://nicholaspayton.wordpress">http://nicholaspayton.wordpress</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Nicholas Payton, 'On Why Jazz Isn't Cool Anymore' <a href="http://nicholaspayton.wordpress.com/2011/11/27/on-why-jazz-isnt-cool-anymore/">http://nicholaspayton.wordpress.com/2011/11/27/on-why-jazz-isnt-cool-anymore/</a>> [accessed 6 December 2011].

music, not as a style or a genre, but as a way of working with music in an ecstatic, plural and improvisatory manner. Jazz music, and even the Nordic confluent jazz that concerns this thesis, is not popular music, nor is it folk music. It is my view that such divisions really have little to contribute beyond surface values in the consideration of postmodern music, but they can prove to be instructive in other, more sub-textual ways. For example, if we consider the gulf between commercially created publicity imagery, absolute musical intensions, and responsive cultural narratives that I have already discussed in various contexts in my research, it should readily become apparent that different branches of the discourse surrounding the music will fall on different sides of List's polemic appraisal of the popular and folk idioms.

## For Music to be 'Folk'/in the Oral Tradition

One criterion frequently applied is that the origin of the melody must be unknown to its performer. Music that originally appeared in published form can be considered folk music if it has been passed on by ear and memory until the performer is no longer aware of its origin. Such music is said to have entered the 'oral tradition'.<sup>33</sup>

A second requirement applied is that the melody exists in variant forms. As it is transmitted from one individual to another and diffused from one locality to another, as performance succeeds performance, both unconscious and conscious modifications of the melody will occur.<sup>34</sup>

This is a useful principle in itself, but, primarily, it serves to differentiate non-literate traditional music from conceptual music. Such differentiation is difficult to apply to truly 'postmodern art music' with its fundamentally plural approach. Simply, both conditions are able to exist simultaneously in much of the music discussed here. Furthermore, it is frequently the case in today's globalised world that even the most isolated communities are connected via technology, and that very little purely oral music making still occurs in human society.

## Changes with the Digital Age?

With the advent of the digital age, the sorts of conditions imposed by List are rendered fundamentally obsolete. With access to the Internet and digital media becoming widespread even in developing nations, the discussion of folk music, and folklore in general, has had to enter the median zone between any possible polemic definitions of folk and popular, or equally oral and literate:

George List, as cited in Richard M. Dorson, *Folklore and Folklife*, p. 364.
*Ibid*.

It is virtually impossible in the twentieth century to discover folk music traditions that are purely oral or exclusively literate. And still another lesson has accompanied the twentieth century: the spread of various forms of literacy throughout the world has not been the death knell of folk music that some scholars have alleged. It becomes increasingly necessary, in fact, to expand our understanding of the range spanned by such concepts as orality and literacy, especially when electronic and other media of transmission exert a growing influence on folk music.35

#### Dualistic Understandings of Folk Musics

It is my assertion that the enduring life of definitive discourse in many respects represents a dualistic understanding of humanity and culture in conflict with an increasingly heterogeneous and often plural human condition. We certainly speak here from within a transitional period in the development of human culture. Juxtaposing of polemics, such as in List's scholarship, must in this age inevitably give way to a more creatively based interpretive practice. In the construction of a musicology for jazz, this definitional history has been problematic at best.

Let us for a moment move from jazz-which I believe is a fundamentally different enterprise to anything that might be understood in music as a 'genre'—and consider some of the discourse surrounding contemporary electronic music. The way electronic music has spread, in sub-cultural diasporic manner, without the necessity of conventional notational scoring, has led some to consider it as the folk music of the digital age.<sup>36</sup> 'House music or techno music is all you'll hear in a club in India. What's becoming international folk music is techno.'<sup>37</sup> Certainly, the accessibility of high quality digital music making tools, for little or no cost, has helped the proliferation of electronic music enormously.

## A Confluence Between the Traditional and the Electronic

A perhaps surprising confluence between electronic instrumentation and traditional music is occurring in many parts of the globe. It is a development that, at the very least, stretches the above definitions of the idiom.

<sup>35</sup> Philip Vilas Bohlman, The Study of Folk Music in the Modern World (Bloomington and 36

Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988), p. 30. Qubais Reed Ghazala, 'The Folk Music of Chance Electronics: Circuit-Bending the Modern Coconut', *Leonardo Music Journal*, 14 (2004), p. 104. 37

Shrikanth Sriram as cited in Michelle Goldberg, 'Electronic Music's New Globalism', Metro Active Music <a href="http://www.metroactive.com/papers/sfmetro/05.24.99/electronic-">http://www.metroactive.com/papers/sfmetro/05.24.99/electronic-</a> 9919.html> [accessed 3 December 2011].

The spread and development of electronic music has also encouraged musicians to create 'new folk music', which is a fascinating blend of folk music, electronic music and pop music.<sup>38</sup>

This is not merely an attempt to popularise folk music. It is, in essence, a way of maintaining particular cultural identity in the face of an ever more homogenous, globalised cultural paradigm. It is about staking out authorship of identity narratives within the shrinking world provoked by digital media. Interestingly, this is something that was employed in the Nordic countries for a number of decades.

Nordic folk music, interestingly enough, was often incorporated in electronic music outside of the romanticist environment-as early as 1960-in the tape part for Ingvar Lidholm's ballet rites. Also Swedish and Nordic non-peasant music, such as the music of the Sami people, has attracted attention. A particularly interesting example is Rolf Enström's (1951) electronic composition Tjidtjag and Tjidtjaggaise which uses authentic recordings of Sami Yoik.39

It is nothing new to note what a large percentage of the Nordic musical landscape is comprised of the prolific work of electronic musicians, operating in a variety of stylistic contexts.

The Sami people, whose history has been largely one of cultural domination with an emphasis on assimilation into the Germanic cultural systems of the south, have been especially active in terms of electronics and technology in their music making. The singer Mari Boine is perhaps the most well known Sami musician of her generation, and her music combines jazz, Rock and electronic music with traditional drumming and Yoik. In addition, there are a number of more obscure artists, notably Torgeir Vassvik whose 2006 album Sáivu, produced by Arve Henriksen, featured traditional instrumentation, Yoik and overtone singing with improvisation and electronics. There is a tangible sense that these artists bring electronics, jazz and improvisation to a unified position within the lineage of their folk music, rather than merely applying a folk music expression, such as Yoik, upon an external form:

Vassvik and Henriksen manage to marry the past and the present on Sáivu. And though this release introduces a distant musical tradition, it represents this tradition in a contemporary manner that charges it with imaginative vitality.40

This marriage in Vassvik's music is not a 'fusion' in the jazz sense of the term, instead it is an example of Sami confluent improvised music

<sup>38</sup> Jin Jie, Chinese Music (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 120.

*New Music of the Nordic Countries*, ed. by John David White and Jean Christensen ([Hillsdale, NY]: Pendragon Press, 2002), p. 503. Eyal Hareuveni, 'Torgeir Vassvik: Saivu', *All About Jazz* <a href="http://www.allaboutjazz.com/">http://www.allaboutjazz.com/</a> php/article.php?id=24798> [accessed 11 November 2011]. 39 40

including electronic instrumentation. It is contemporary improvised folk music expressing a culturally based view of multiplicity through a unified musical vision.

## Improvised Music

Improvised music, by its very nature, has a different temporal relationship to its cultural context than purely composed music or preservationistic folk music. Improvisation, true improvisation, exists in immediacy. 'Immediacy' is its fundamental nature, yet it is also able to reference the past and discuss potential futures. Surely this puts it in a very powerful position in terms of cultural work? If we relinquish the necessity to define folk music as a purely retrospective act—and rather define it by the cultural work that it is doing—then jazz and improvised music are as much a part of folk music as any, perhaps more emphatic, expression. Simply, to rely on retrospectivity as an intrinsic element of the practice of folklore divorces us from the contemporary subject and the opportunity to discuss the cultural life of today, and potentially tomorrow, in the context of the great scholarly foundations of the folkloristic discipline.

I have frequently used the term 'absolute music' in my writings as the antithesis to programme music. This is, of course, a common conception, and indeed a useful one. Yet there must exist an underlying conflict between the search for meaning the notion of 'absolute music'. The question is: how absolute is absolute music? Possibly, the answer is that it is not as absolute as we are often given to assuming. I have tried however, to differentiate 'absolute music' as music that may provoke meaning, but does not inherently contain representations of meaning. Still, it is worth considering the notion that absolute music is not, as a condition, absolutely real.

Among the most infamous for her questioning of absolute music is musicologist Susan McClary. Her work has been outspoken and highly influential, particularly in the realm of considering music from a feminist perspective. For McClary, art music has a clear social significance.

Rather than protecting music as a sublimely meaningless activity that has managed to escape social signification, I insist on treating it as a medium that participates in social formation by influencing the ways we perceive our feelings, our bodies, our desires, our very subjectivities— even if it does so surreptitiously, without most of us knowing how. It is too important a cultural force to be shrouded by mystified notions of Romantic transcendence.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup> Susan McClary, 'Constructions of Subjectivity in Schubert's Music', in *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology*, ed. by Philip Brett, Elizabeth Wood and Gary Thomas (New York: Routledge, 1994), 205-235. And see also her *Feminine* 

It is difficult not to be somewhat intrigued at, if not enamoured of McClary's strident style. Her understanding of musical meaning is one that avoids overly flamboyant association with theoretical elements of musical analyses, rather is it that her notion of meaning positions music among the social discourses, in effect raising its status in terms of cultural significance.

To remain with 'purely musical' accounts even of 'absolute' music minimises our appreciation of why and how these pieces have exerted so much influence, how they negotiated the tensions of their times, why they still matter. And it continues to overlook the ways those underlying structures we often receive as bedrock do cultural work, even when they purport to speak to us from the refuge of counter convention.<sup>42</sup>

Without doubt her words apply to the subjects of my research. Perhaps there is no autotelic music form that lays more claim to this refuge of 'counter convention' than jazz can. Nordic jazz in itself is often interpreted as a counter convention in relation to, not only the oftenexpounded stylistic elements of jazz music [to which the art form in general mostly refuses to consistently adhere], but also to the narratives of 'traditional' and 'American' jazz music.

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In truth, my thesis aligns itself more with McClary's perspective than it disagrees with it. Like McClary's own analyses, the perspective of all my research is that it is specifically the cultural achievement of Nordic confluent music that has allowed it to exert such influence. Beyond the ingenious and original constructions of sound, this 'cultural work' is why this music matters. Where I would diverge from McClary is simply that I don't see the necessity to dispense with the widely understood metaphor [and certainly it is a metaphor] of absolute music. Very likely, for many of the musicians discussed in this thesis<sup>43</sup> this sort of cultural work is beyond their necessary sphere of consideration. Their perspective of the art may well be absolute. This is why I say that the music 'provokes meaning' rather than represents it. Simply, within the structures I have designed for my investigations, the music ceases to be 'absolute' when there is conscious acknowledgement of meaning on both the disseminative and assimilative sides of the relationship. Thus, my research is also grounded on the idea that meaning as interpreted solely on the assimilative side of this transmission is both valid and tangible.

Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality, 2nd edn (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007 [1st 1991]).

 <sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup>Susan McClary, *Conventional Wisdom: The Content Of Musical Form* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), p. 138.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>43</sup> For example; Edward Vesala, Iro Haarla, Jan Garbarek, Trygve Seim or Christian Wallumrød, to name just those most frequently discussed.

## The Outlaw and the Monster

One further aspect of folkloric origin that I would like to bring to bear on the consideration of this jazz music is that idea of the outlaw in our society, and specifically, as operating in our art. The 'outlaw' in European folklore makes no secret of his or her allegiances to a given community, and a community-based sense of identity, in the face of repressive control by governing social bodies. While many of our most well known folkloric outlaws are given to establishing greater economic equality for their communities by the unlawful acquisition of wealth, the greater message is one of transcendence of imposed limitation:

As a symbolic figure who appears in folklore and popular literature, the Irish outlaw-like Jesse James in America and Robin Hood in England-embodies 'a sense of justice based upon kinship and community rather than one based upon impersonal, bureaucratic procedures established by the state'.<sup>44</sup> The socio-political implications of his lawlessness identifies the outlaw among his admirers as a hero rather than as a mere criminal, a hero through whom to imagine their dignity in the midst of perceived political subjugation and social injustice. In outlaw lore we see the Irish representing themselves to themselves, reflecting on their greatest strengths and weaknesses, and commenting on their place in the world.<sup>45</sup>

In this respect there is an amount of congruity with the folkloric monster, a word related by common linguistic root to our English term demonstrate, whose cultural function it is to 'bring to light' that which is hidden by social norms. The outlaw's function is equally to illuminate, and so to actively represent communities, community freedoms, and the many significant communal issues that are in serious moral and cultural danger under dominating/limiting ideologies or social systems.

In the shorter second section of this essay, I will focus more sharply on the stylistic aesthetics and social achievements of particularly significant jazz musicians active and influential in the Nordic countries at the end of the second millennium and beginning of the third.

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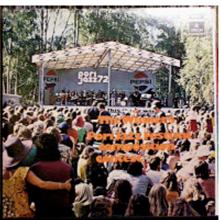
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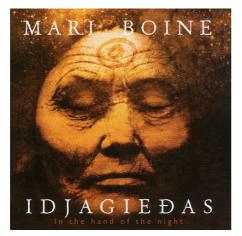
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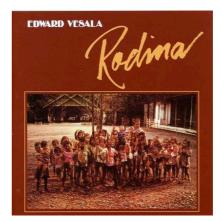
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