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## Introduction

The association between market success and artistic authenticity, *however defined*, is a problematic one which, in music production and consumption, so often returns hollowed out art lacking real identity (see Arsel and Thompson, 2011). Moreover, artists wanting commercial gain commonly 'sell out' the artistic authenticity that springboards those returns. In jazz, Bradshaw and Holbrook (2007) tell us that in an attempt to escape the polar demands of authenticity and commodification many artists employ tactics of 'scuffling' to maintain artistic integrity, which most often means taking on second jobs to make ends meet. Such positioning in the arts/market dualism is accompanied by many other positionings and emergences that vie for precious resources and artistic recognition. One easily recognisable by-product is the proliferation of many different styles of jazz – for example, repertoire jazz, be-bop, swing, free jazz, fusion, jazz funk, and jazz rock and so on. Such dynamism means that Jazz, like so many other art forms, is a genre constituting a constellation *which, in our terms, is an ecology* of relations between the panoply of producers and consumers of jazz that span, contest and/or mesh varied artistic, social and market forces at varied levels of intensity and scope. However, the sprawling diversity and stratification of jazz is, arguably, a factor in limiting market returns for jazz musicians themselves, which is a significant issue worthy of academic attention (see, for example, Bradshaw and Holbrook, 2007; Pinheiro and Dowd, 2009).

In this article we explore the arts/market dualism from a new methodological, empirical and theoretical perspective in respect to other jazz-related studies. The empirical focus is on the *practices* of jazz making via an analytic autoethnographical account of *being* and *becoming* a jazz musician in the UK. Theoretically, it draws upon three strands of poststructuralist thought on performativity, relational space, and actor-networks to interrogate the workings of the jazz constellation and to map the positioning(s) *of one UK jazz musician's career* within it. *More specifically, performativity is applied in relation to*

how jazz-making is an ‘authenticating act’ (Arnould and Price, 2000) that is both individually embodied and socially constructed. We then consider how jazz has become globalised, creating complex spatial relations that require considerable actor-networking across to hold the jazz constellation together. The case study then places a musical career within this conceptual context with the aim of providing a rich, first-hand, and theoretically fresh, account of how the jazz constellation operates at and through the individual level. From this we consider the extent of the negative grip the arts/market dualism has on jazz musicians, and ask if it can be overcome or eased in practice. Finally, we offer some thoughts on the relevance of this article to wider marketing theory and consumer research.

## **Conceptual background**

### *Performativity and authentic jazz performances*

In poststructuralist thought meaning is contingent upon human practice, and because of this is unstable and variable across space and time. Poststructuralism thus targets what might appear to be enduring, stable or common-sense meanings as being potential truth claims clinging to some pre-supposed structural anchor. Dualisms like object/subject, nature/society, global/local, authenticity/inauthenticity and so on are particularly sought out as creating boundaries with no foundational reality beyond their power to privilege one side of the binary over the other. A major aim of poststructuralism is to reveal such power, and is therefore itself a powerful conceptual base from which to analyse the workings of the arts/market dualism in jazz (see, for example, Hill et al, 2014; Bajde, 2013; Roberts, 2012; Anderson and Harrison, 2010; Murdoch, 2006; Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000).

Our analysis of the arts/market dualism starts with the observation that designating an art form or an artist as authentic has the power to convey value in cultural and market terms, though not necessarily both at the same time (Corcioloni, 2014). Not surprisingly,

then, how authenticity is realised and interpreted in society is an enduring theme in marketing theory and consumer research (see, for example, Arnould and Price, 2000; Grayson and Martinec, 2004; Rose and Wood, 2005; Beverland and Farrelly, 2010; Corcioloni, 2014). The emerging consensus in this literature is that authenticity is not something innate to certain people, performances or things but is a social construct, brokered by actors with the power to translate what authenticity is in a given social context (Corciolani, 2014). As Peterson (2005) authoritatively voices:

authenticity, like 'creativity' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1988),... does not inhere in the object, person, or performance said to be authentic (Grayson and Martinec, 2004). Rather, authenticity is a claim that is made by or for someone, thing, or performance and either accepted or rejected by relevant others.

(Peterson, 2005: 1086)

This is about iconic recognition and, more importantly, representation by those with the power to author what is and is not authentic (also see Peterson, 1997). Moreover, in the assessment whether an artistic performance, person or object is iconically authentic there must be some received sense of how the so-called authentic is/are referenced by their culture of origin (Grayson and Martinec, 2004). Rose and Wood (2005), drawing on Arnould and Price (2000), take things further, saying that constructions of authenticity are not reliant on judgements on the genuineness of cultural goods but that consumers construct meaning through 'authenticating acts' that produce a 'true self' (also see Newman et al, 2013; Daniel, 1996). Therefore, authors of authenticity can be consumers as well as producers and thus authenticity can be constructed or reproduced at the individual level as well as in and through wider society.

As important and laudable as these insights are on how authenticity is enacted, translated and represented, we would argue that they are incomplete because they bracket

off the 'non-representational' (Thrift, 2008) from the social by not considering sufficiently the ways in which material and natural aspects of life integrate with our social selves to play a major role in the constructions of our world (Hill et al, 2014; Bajde, 2013; Canniford and Shankar, 2013; Kellberg and Helgesson, 2007; Law and Urry, 2004; Tausigg, 1993). Thus while we retain the insights of social constructionism here we intend to be more inclusive of socio-material relations when considering what goes into creating authentic jazz. In particular, we consider the ways in which talented jazz artists not only perform their music in the artistic sense but are 'performative' (Thrift, 2003) in the way they and their music are mutually brought into being by physical as well as social forces, not least through the unconscious embodiment of doing.

Indeed, to speak of practices is to speak precisely of 'transversal' objects, arrays of activities which, like musical refrains, give an order to materials and situations, human bodies and brains included, as actions undertaken act-back to shape muscles and hone senses.

(Anderson and Harrison 2010: 8)

Here body/culture and society/nature dualisms are challenged by considering how in practice there is correspondence and agential feedback between our natural and social selves when we do things, like playing music for example. In similar relational vein, Sudnow (2001: 130), in his 'seminal' work on playing jazz (Hargreaves, 2012), tells of his practiced mastery of jazz improvisation on the piano: 'I sing with my fingers, so to speak, and only so to speak, for there's a new being, *my body*, and it is this being (here too, so to speak) that sings' (*italics in original*).

Like Sudnow (2001), each jazz artist not only consciously and unconsciously embodies the music in her playing and actions (Thrift and Dewsbury, 2000), s/he becomes

performative in doing so. That is, with each practice s/he develops physical and creative agency, and therefore the potential to deliver originality. In this way individual physical capacity and the cultural capacity of knowing jazz as a socially derived musicscape come together in moments of inspired doing that are at once innate, prepared and rehearsed for, and socially produced and situated. Some artists will be more successful than others in this endeavour as their music is carried by 'citational chains' (Butler, 1990) to achieve wider artistic and/or market recognition, and where myriad consumers reproduce and negotiate the music in their own embodied, situated and self-affirming, ways (cf. Hill et al, 2014; Rose and Wood, 2005; Arnould and Price, 2000). Authentic jazz is, therefore, always becoming from varied socio-corporeal sources and variously played in wider society through space and through time.

#### *Relational space and jazz*

Pinheiro and Dowd (2009: 496) tell us that the human, social and cultural capital of jazz, like other cultural 'fields' (Bourdieu, 1984), 'is ultimately rooted in place'. Famously notable places are New Orleans, the birthplace of jazz, and New York which 'contains the world's largest jazz community' (Pinheiro and Dowd, 2009: 496) that give the music provenance, which is an authenticity that is traceable and tangible in and through space. This also means that the development of the art into a substantial market is fundamentally a journey from the local to the global: a journey which holds many perils for the art itself as it encounters different cultures and the logics of global markets. However, this is not simply about losing authenticity once the music circulates beyond local innocence into 'Otherness' or the objectified world of big business. Such concerns are no doubt of critical importance to the configurations of modern-day jazz (see Corciolani, 2014), but it is also about the necessity of performative practices becoming more formalised in order to meet the demands of up-scaled music production, consumption, distribution and exchange. In assembling greater

heterogeneity at greater distances, the nature and extent of the spaces jazz and its actors create, inhabit and work through are changed, particularly as its mobility uproots the spatial fixities of local provenance.

Bradshaw et al (2006b: 2) allude to the importance of such spatiality when they say: 'it is more useful to understand jazz as a space where the art-versus-commerce dialogue is continuously played out'. Critical to this, we submit, is the purview from poststructuralist geography that space itself, or more precisely space-time, is relational, always in process and expands or contracts depending on the nature of the connections between various people, places and things wherever and whenever they may be. Murdoch (2006: 23) puts this succinctly enough:

Space is made and it is made relationally. This means that space and place have no determining structure; rather, structure is an effect of relations. Moreover, spatial relations reach across spatial scales, indicating that geographical scale is also an outcome of relational processes and actions.

Physical spaces and places are far from irrelevances in this conception, but are on one side of the relational spatial coin. The other side is about 'spatial practices' (Lefebvre, 1991) that in contemporary life iteratively reach forth and back from the local to the global with greater speed, frequency and resonance than ever before. Indeed, Murdoch (2006) tells us that the global is not a single entity but in actuality a connectivity of multiple locales and locals. Thus by our doings we make connections across the physical world to bring various people and places closer together no matter how physically distant or disparate in terms of scale. As such, relational space cannot be prefigured and fixed by such means as Euclidean coordinates or dualistic scalar tropes like global/local. Rather, the intertwinings that make up the jazz constellation, for example, are networked in either short relations (variously local)

or long relations (simultaneously local and global), and are always forming, dissipating or reforming depending on the nature and strength of the interconnections. For instance, when we listen to a 'classic' Bepop track on our ipod in a living room in Durham UK we are, to a significant extent, being transported to, and bringing back with us, a little piece of 1940s New York where Bepop originated, albeit a stretched and striated version of that place/time. Moreover, without the global music industry, and the mobile technologies it depends upon, this connectivity - however fleeting, deep or distant - would not be possible.

To further understand how such relationality is established we now consider how the jazz constellation is what Law (2009) would describe as an actor-network made up of heterogeneous musical and market-making relations that either last or whither in the morass depending upon how well and how strongly they are connected through space and through time.

#### *Actor-networks and jazz*

Actor-network theory has become increasingly prominent in marketing and consumer research in recent years as a means to 'extend knowledge of how markets and consumer cultures are constructed' (Hill et al, 2014: 378; Bajde, 2013). For Law (2009) actor-network theory is a 'material semiotics' which aims to follow how assemblages of varied people and things come together to act in common endeavour, albeit endeavours that are unevenly distributed, long-lived and shaped. In applying this perspective here, we consider how jazz is made up of disparate musical, natural, material, social and market associations that, taken together, make up a constellation of activity that is an actor-network always forming, reforming and always contested the world over. Such dynamism means that formalised and prescribed networking through such things as recording contracts, international tours, media and marketing campaigns, and so on, is required if the constellation is to endure. On the other hand, the art of music-making is less machine-like, often dependent on flashes of



inspiration, improvisation and negotiated interactions that can be instinctive, free-flowing, explorative and risky. From such unscripted happenings certain musical moments will become networked, others will disappear as quickly as they came about, and with others 'lines of flight' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1998) will emerge by which offshoot relations form to create new or hybrid jazz styles with perhaps the potential to challenge the constellation itself. It is, therefore, the jazz constellation's capacity to hang together under such dynamism that is critical to its ability to develop and endure. Developmental endurance cannot, however, be the product of some unilaterally formed centralised force, but is about how the ecology of music and market forces is assembled and held in tension in such a way as to allow morphism, creativity and growth alongside systemic stability and security (see Murdoch, 1998; 2006). Though unilateral force does not produce enduring actor-networks, power, in a Foucaultian sense, certainly does. For Foucault, power and knowledge are indissociable and integral to concrete practices (Law, 1986; Fox, 2000) whereby certain knowledges reproduce certain power relations that produce effective action. Moreover, power is an omnipresence that can be variously harnessed and mobilised with greater or lesser effectivity to act for good or ill in all levels of society, from the local to the global, anywhere (Foucault, 1984; Fox, 2000). Therefore, to create and sustain a cultural field such as jazz, power needs to be harnessed from multiple, potentially unstable, unequal local actions and directed by knowledgeable actors toward the purpose of network building. In other words, from the bedrooms, bars and music halls in iconic jazz locales like New Orleans and New York, and varied other places that now make up the constellation, the music is drawn, widely circulated and reproduced by actors with the performative and networking power to do so.

On the journey from art to market, from the local to the global, many laudable, even brilliant, musical creations, performances and performers will be lost along the way as different network actors and actions emerge, compete and contest the artistic and market

terrain (Lena and Peterson, 2008). Indeed, dominant actor-networkers in the jazz constellation are as likely to be market based as music based, and will always be those best positioned to enlist heterogeneous others from varied origins in network formation. Thus [networking](#) power is not innate to particular actors, such as brilliant musicians, but emerges from the network itself through a process of *translation* in which heterogeneous actors, either human or non-human ([for example, musical instruments, electronic media, music venues, and so on](#)), are persuaded to align disparate goals and dispositions toward the purposes set out by those more dominant. Though humans are not especially privileged as actors in actor-network theory, uniquely they do have linguistic and reflexive capability (Murdoch, 2006). Therefore, the most powerful human actors develop the power to actually speak for others, thereby leading and/or representing them, [or indeed configuring them and their actions as being authentic or not](#).

An example of translation is Bebop's emergence in 1940s US [as an authentic jazz genre](#), which came about as a result of avant-garde experimentalists such as Charlie Parker and 'Dizzy' Gillespie recoiling against the big-band swing of the time and drawing other musicians to their cause. A network of players developed and Bebop's signature style emerged as acoustic instruments, usually led by saxophone or trumpet, [played their part as non-human actors to take centre stage alongside the artists themselves](#). Similarly, certain places and spaces became dominant as clubs like Birdland, in New York's Manhattan, and record companies such as Bluebird, owned by RCA, were established as nodes and distributors of the Bebop sound. 'Boppers' also began to wear a certain dress code and developed an argot all of their own as an integral part of the performance. Once the jazz press debated the music and the behaviour of its practitioners and devotees, the Bebop actor-network, or jazz sub-network, was firmly established in the US. By the 1950s the music/market machine had transported Bebop to the international stage, at which point the relationship between market and art had shifted in its balance of power and jazz artists

became more dependent on large media organisations. These organisations had their own performative strictures and network dynamics and, as a consequence, record companies demanded a dilution of the Be-bop music style itself to increase the share of the popular music market (see Lena and Peterson, 2008).

For Bradshaw and Holbrook (2007), once artists are compelled to serve relatively passive global audiences in this way, the art is lost to the market and both jazz and society suffer as a consequence. Lamenting this as current reality, they balk at compromised, 'pandering' tactics musicians employ such as 'dumbed-down crowd-pleasing' because they do not address the contradictions in jazz that have resulted in the market exerting such a negative grip on the art itself. Meanwhile, as Bradshaw et al's (2006a) research illustrates, musicians are routinely diverting their talents towards purely commercial playing - such as providing music for advertising - to subsidise their more artistic endeavours. Furthermore, artists positioned at a much more elevated point in the arts market do not escape the dualism scot-free. On this Bradshaw and Holbrook (2007) bemoan the 'martyrdom' of famous players such as Chet Baker who have refused to compromise their art at massive personal cost in opposition to the 'alienation' of selling out to the music market which, in Baker's case, led to drug and drink induced self-destruction (also see Holbrook 2005; Bradshaw et al, 2006b, Holbrook, 2006; for a an excellent debate on arts versus commerce dilemmas and dialectics in music production/consumption). In the empirical section of this article we pursue such relational issues, albeit at a more modest and less dramatic level of practice than that of Chet Baker, via a first-hand account of the performances of being and becoming a jazz musician in and from a UK context.

### **Research Methodology and Method**

The case study subject is Noel, a co-author of this article, who is a jazz musician and a marketing academic. Noel has spent his entire life in what he has always thought of as the

jazz community or the jazz 'community of practice'. He was born into a family of jazz musicians and has always purposively developed himself within that community recreationally, as a lifestyle choice, and latterly as a professional jazz trumpet player. Bringing that music world together with that of a professional academic via this case study, Noel has attained 'complete member researcher (CMR) status' (Anderson, 2006) in a typically 'opportunistic' manner by which the researcher is able to reflect on and analyse already first hand familiarity with and in the field (Adler and Adler, 1987: 67-84). This is a typically 'analytic autoethnographic' methodology that draws upon biographical accounts of individual experience and engagement in a way that is both informed by theory and aims to develop it. The experiential, local and everyday is thus connected to wider society in the analytic autoethnography via a textual interplay that moves forth and back from the biographical to the social and from the introspective to the theoretical (see Anderson, 2006).

This methodological approach is ideal for linking our theoretical lens to the concrete world of jazz practice because 'theory is embedded and extended in empirical practice, and practice itself is necessarily theoretical', and case study research offers the best means of understanding how such relationality works (Law, 2009: 141). Similarly, Latour (1997) insists research should follow the actor in order to analyse how, and by what means, they make their own way in the world and how an actor's particular (local) networking power and capabilities constitute and are constitutive of more global forces. Essentially, then, we are following how Noel travels through the jazz constellation, moving from the local to the global, and bringing those spaces together as connections are made and becoming more strategic and influential as he does so.

The means by which this article itself was developed comprised three stages. Firstly, Noel began by writing an introspective biographical account of his life in jazz, using the language he thought best illuminated his experience(s) to that point in 2014. That language is couched mostly in the context of 'communities of practice' because Noel was familiar with

the concept, and a one he felt provided a framework that helped him best illustrate his movement and development through the jazz constellation. Such introspection has become an established and fruitful methodology in marketing (Holbrook, 2006), and was first introduced in the mid-1980s by Holbrook who coined the term 'subjective personal introspection' and utilized it in two seminal papers: one that focused on music consumption (Holbrook, 1986) and the other on fanatic consumption (Holbrook, 1987). According to Brown (2012), arguably introspection came to prominence following the publication of Gould's (1991) groundbreaking article which was somewhat controversial and sparked intense debate amongst the academy. Wallendorf and Brucks (1993) responded with a critique which essentially took Gould's (1991) approach to task, but despite intense criticism from some quarters introspection has grown in usage by a significant number of leading consumer researchers. Holbrook, for example, continued to be a notable proponent (see Holbrook, 1995), along with others such as Gould (1995; 2008; 2012), Shankar (2001); Hackley (2007), Brown (2012), Patterson (2012), and Kozinets (2012) who have continued to contemporise and advance the debate. For our part, we agree that introspection can provide fresh and novel insights for emergent theory building, and the 'researcher introspection' (Wallendorf and Brucks, 1993) approach adapted here goes hand in glove with analytic autoethnography as expounded by Anderson (2006).

In the second stage of developing this article, Tom applied the poststructuralist approach outlined earlier in order to interrogate Noel's personal account with greater analytical purchase than his original communities of practice approach. As useful as communities of practice theory (CPT) is for analysing the situated practices of everyday life, applying an actor-network epistemology to it adds considerable depth because CPT does not so adequately deal with the centrality of power, particularly 'unequal relations of power' (Fox, 2000: 857).

Finally, the article was drafted jointly in the form presented here, which uses excerpts from the full biography in order to allow sufficient space for analysis (which is written in the third person to include both authors equally).

### **Traversing and negotiating the jazz constellation**

#### *Home and away, here and there, back and forth*

Noel Lives in the North East of England, and is a very accomplished jazz artist becoming firmly established on the international stage. The following promotional copy advertising a gig at the Jazz Café in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, North East England – a place with a quite well developed jazz scene - in February 2015 gives some indication of Noel's musical status:

Noel Arthur, probably the North's finest jazz trumpet and flugel horn player, comes together all too rarely in this trio with unquestionably the region's best piano/double bass partnership. Together they will be exploring repertoire drawn from some of Noel's main musical influences including Miles Davis, Tom Harrell, Woody Shaw and Bill Evans.

Noel works professionally as a soloist – Andy Sheppard, Tommy Smith and John Surman have all been collaborators – and leads his own quartet. He also writes and records incidental music for TV and works closely with renowned composer/producer Bob Bradley.

That Noel is mentioned here alongside a number of jazz luminaries shows his positionality, not only with regard to where he does and can play but in the musical company he keeps and in the stellar cast he can emulate. This is a performative feat that takes considerable musical ability as well as purposeful actor-networking which to this point

in Noel's journey has culminated in an almost routinely unconscious threading together of the various relational spaces he moves through, inhabits and is variously dominant in.

In this next excerpt the situation is 2007 in Noel's birth town, Middlesbrough, which is about thirty miles south of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. He recounts a typical set of preparations he went through for a memorable gig with his quartet:

It is the eve of a very important gig and I am busy preparing the material and, indeed, myself for the performance. I have been engaged in some diligent practise today, which started early this morning with a series of pedal notes and Herbert Clarke exercises to warm up, and continued with some transcribing and study of a Tom Harrell solo (Joy Spring by Clifford Brown). Tom Harrell is one of my favourite trumpet players. He has a mellifluous sound on both the trumpet and flugelhorn; is an extremely eloquent and lyrical improviser and an acclaimed composer. Having listened to Tom all day I have decided that some of his compositions, along with some Miles Davis tunes and some standards will appear in tomorrow evening's performance with my quartet and the renowned saxophonist, Alan Barnes. I have worked with Alan on many occasions and know that, like me, he shares a passion for Tom's playing and enjoys playing standards. With the tunes selected (some of them rather difficult in terms of their harmonic structure) and my practise for the day complete; all that is left to do is call the other band members to confirm the details of the gig and text a few people to augment the audience. In the past the gigs with Alan have been a huge success, generating an enormous amount of audience appreciation and there is no reason why this one will not carry on the tradition.

The audience start arriving around 7.30pm and the venue quickly reaches capacity. The venue represents a stereotypical jazz club: red and white table cloths and candles on each table; dim lighting and iconic portraits of musicians covering the

walls. At 8.15pm we begin the performance with a Miles Davis composition entitled Solar, which sees every band member playing with aplomb, something which is replicated throughout the whole gig. The audience is thoroughly engaged and gives rapturous applause and encouragement. It is a truly successful gig and an inspirational musical experience for me and my fellow musicians in the band.

The above gig was part of a residency that Noel and his quartet established soon after the band formed in 1999. To-date, a jazz scene has still not been established locally and this residency remains the epicentre of live jazz playing in the Middlesbrough area, and Noel's quartet has gained a loyal local following because of it. Noel is also committed to a local youth band his father - a professional musician in his own right - set up some years ago. He also works at a university in the region and is, therefore, firmly embedded in the North East of England both for personal and professional reasons. Interestingly, research by Pinheiro and Dowd (2009: 504) reveals that jazz musicians raised in musical families tend to 'go on to enjoy increased economic success relative to those lacking such cultural capital'. However, one might expect that Noel's localness would have stunted his performative capital, though on this he says that his involvement with local 'musical sub-communities has allowed me an entry point from which to traverse the larger jazz community'. Having developed the artistic reach to draw in renowned players such as Alan Barnes, Noel is able to apply his networking to enrich local performances by connecting local playing and audiences to global jazz in tangible, embodied ways that recorded music never could. Indeed, this is a core reason why the above-described local performance was so successful and memorable for him.

The local here is thus a power-base for Noel and the origin of his 'moving substrata of force relations' from which he draws and extends his performative power (Foucault, 1984: 9). The local in this context can also apply to the most innate location of individual



talent, the playing body, from which even the most established global talents develop their artistic powers, and from which will continue to develop their art as long as they have the physical and social capacities to do so. This is where it seems Chet Baker, and others suffering similar fates, failed most: as his body failed so too did his art, as did his capacity to realise the riches once available to him (Bradshaw and Holbrook, 2007).

As Noel develops his performative powers, he is able to move along the local/global continuum in numerous directions with greater dexterity, connecting more or less global performances with local ones depending on what he is doing, where, at any given time. By this he constructs an Ariadne's thread of network relations that increases his translational power the more he moves along it. Noel discusses this in the context of being a student, practitioner and teacher of jazz:

As my musical career has developed my role within it, formally and informally, has subtly changed. Within the youth band, for example, I now exercise a teaching role and help educate aspiring trumpet players. Yet I remain a pupil myself and have regular lessons from my trumpet teacher, which could be described as bidirectional socialisation (that is learning from one another rather than pupil simply learning from the teacher). In jazz, one's knowledge is constantly developing and even the most experienced of players learn from each other within the community... Progressing through the community, however, has required a different standard of teaching.

Yet, each of the communities and sub-communities are interrelated and I move freely between each one. The knowledge I gain from the national community I then share with the other communities, in particular, in my role as a music educator in the youth band but also when I work with peers in my local and regional

communities. It is the local and regional communities that I interact with the most and this is where most of my playing opportunities reside and it is nice to be able to introduce my peers to new tunes or musical ideas that I have been introduced to by members of the national community.

This journey is not a smooth upward trajectory: it is sometimes stuttering, sometimes fast, and is made up of variously short and long lived connection-making events that each act as punctuation points, denoting successes or failures, along the way. Overall though, Noel is resilient and successful relative to so many other talented players precisely because he is able to *develop and embody that talent more deeply as he becomes more able to showcase it by becoming* quite expert at translating key moments into more enduring network connections. *In this way, the feedback between body and society, innate talent and network practices, are always corresponding with and developing each other (cf. Anderson and Harrison, 2010)*

#### *Key moments and enduring connections*

Reflecting on pivotal moments in his musical life, Noel recounts an event when, at the age of seventeen in the 1990s, he met the world-renowned trumpeter Gerard Presencer.

I played a solo in front of Gerard and, although I had very little knowledge of harmony and no improvisation experience, he offered to teach me on the basis that he believed I had a nice sound, good time, some knowledge of the iconic figures in jazz and, above all, potential. It was at this stage I entered the national music community, which was the start of another significant learning journey.

It is telling that Gerard seemed to be assessing Noel not only on [raw](#) talent and current musical ability but on knowledge of iconic figures in jazz. This is a citational action (cf. Butler, 1990) by Gerard that recognises the importance of *knowing* the music's history [and how that history is authenticated by its embodiment in key historical figures](#). Indeed, that Gerard was impressed by Noel's combined cultural and artistic potential seems to have made him more committed to furthering Noel's musical journey than he otherwise might have been. [In this way, Noel's abilities are being guided by Gerard toward a much larger relational space where they can be networked through the jazz constellation in ways that to this point would not have been feasible for Noel. Both a right-of-passage towards greater authenticity and a significant actor-networking moment had been achieved at this juncture, and without Noel's innate potential and dedicated practice\(s\) no amount of social work by Gerard or anyone else could have made that happen.](#)

Further reflecting on his personal trajectory, Noel returns to that important developmental period between about 2005 and 2007, and punctuates it by recounting another salient moment in his enduring relationship with Gerard Presencer.

My musical aspiration was to be accepted as a member in the national community, which comprises some of the world's leading players. Although I did not feel that I was at that stage yet (and may not be for many years) I did feel that I was becoming increasingly recognised. Of course, there is no formal method of qualification to achieve this goal, but informally I often received feedback from fellow professional musicians that encouraged me. One of the most positive discussions I had occurred at Christmas 2005 and resulted from a music lesson with Gerard. After the lesson he sent me an email:

I was really pleased about how your playing has developed. You are the real deal now. You never used to be, so appreciate this very positive news. You need to play with stronger players to stop the over compensation in your own approach. The Sky is the limit!

The 'real deal' in this statement is further anointment of Noel's growing authenticity, indicating how his talent has blossomed to something now containing significant cultural as well as natural register. To further that evolution, however, it seems Noel needs to reposition himself by moving on and through to a higher ecology within the jazz constellation - which also means, of course, leaving less naturally-qua-culturally gifted playing colleagues to network positions that their own abilities and circumstances cannot take them beyond.

This said, the following excerpt reveals that moving onwards and upwards does not necessarily mean leaving, in jazz terms, an inauspicious home - though it does mean extending home's relational reach and connectivity.

In March 2007, I had the privilege of working with one of the world's most respected jazz saxophonists, Bob Mintzer. Mintzer hails from the USA and is a long-standing member of the international jazz community, having played in Buddy Rich's Big Band and being a long standing member of the world renowned band – The Yellow Jackets. My opportunity to work with Mintzer arose from being a member of the Voice of the North (VOTN) (a regional Big Band founded in 1996 and made up of North's leading musicians) where I occupy the 'jazz chair'. I played Bob's compositions in a band that he was directing for the SAGE International Jazz Festival. This was an extremely rewarding experience and introduced me to a new community of practice, the international community. Through this experience, I

mixed with other iconic jazz artists including Brandford Marsalis, Jack De Johnette and Jeff Tain Watts and learned a great deal more about jazz and was inspired to practise even more.

From this point I gained the privilege of regularly working with other eminent figures on the international jazz scene, such as Alan Barnes, who also I class as opinion leaders because they lift my aspirations. It is this community where I aspired to be a full member and become an international name in jazz. Simply spending time with and talking to these players was and is a very profitable learning experience, an experience that influences my musical development, which in turn allows me to, hopefully, inspire others within my other communities of practice.

I have had the pleasure of working with some fine musicians in VOTN, including: Andy Sheppard, Tommy Smith, Tim Garland, John Warren and John Surman to name just a few. Working with Mintzer though had to be the highlight and, arguably, a seminal gig in my musical career. I was featured soloist on a number of the charts we played on the gig and received such positive and encouraging feedback from Mintzer. [This incredible experience was valuable in so many ways but one important lesson I took from this is that Bob's technical brilliance allowed him to go places musically that others might not dare to go and that for me to reach such standards there would be no substitution for the hard slog of daily practice. That aside,](#) it was fantastic that everybody in the band raised their game on this gig and played with real aplomb.

Even though Noel's jazz career is starting to rapidly move to higher ground at this point, he never loses sight of the importance of maintaining his local connections. As already alluded to, this embedded connectivity is many sided but of significant importance is the way Noel's passion for jazz includes others within his influence developing both themselves and the

music at their particular levels. Concomitantly, of course, this also means that Noel's mobility along his growing network is maintained in such a way that he is able not only to stretch but deepen his field of influence and open doors onto previously uncharted spaces. By way of an example, within a few months Noel's (and his band's) trajectory took another international leap, albeit in the same North East venue he had played with Bob Mintzer the previous March:

In August of 2007 my quartet was invited to play another very special gig, again, at the Sage in Gateshead. The gig was to provide late night jazz for internationally acclaimed jazz trumpet player – Wynton Marsalis and his Lincoln Centre Jazz Orchestra, who played an amazing concert to a packed Hall 1 earlier in the evening. I had met Wynton once before when I was 15 and he gave me some advice about practicing, which he insisted should consist of playing the blues every day to develop my personal feel for the music and my own sound. Indeed, Wynton is all about his sound and I still strive to develop mine to this day.

Needless to say, I felt incredibly proud and indeed nervous to be given the opportunity to play in front of one of my heroes at the Sage, Gateshead. The band played great and we received some lovely compliments from the audience, most of who were from Wynton's Lincoln Centre Jazz Orchestra. Indeed, Wynton Marsalis himself spoke to me during the performance and said to me "you're swinging, man". A compliment from a superstar like Wynton was, and continues to be, a major source of inspiration for me musically. Additionally, this particular gig was made even more special when some of the world's leading jazz musicians (Dan Nimmer, Ali Jackson and Marcus Printup) from Wynton's group jammed with my band. We all learned a great deal from them musically, but gained insights into the global state of jazz and being on the road with Wynton. A truly fascinating experience.

### *Making ends meet*

As hard-earned as reaching such heights of artistic recognition has been, Noel's efforts and achievements have not translated to an equal rate of financial success, although he is relatively successful in this respect compared to so many other talented jazz musicians. To succeed at all on a financial level in his musical career, Noel has had to be a pragmatist and take almost any opportunity to advance his artistic talent, all the while recognising the economic ends have hardly justified their artistic means. He elaborates on this a little and demonstrates his performative prowess both as a dedicated jazzer and as something of a sophisticatedly eclectic learner and 'scuffler' ([Bradshaw and Holbrook, 2007](#); cf. [Bradshaw et al, 2006a; 2005](#)):

Since 2007 my playing and outlook on music has changed quite a lot and I put that down to the influence of both Bob Mintzer and Wynton Marsalis. I have changed my approach to practising and have broadened my palette for music, taking into account wider influences beyond jazz, including contemporary classical music, Hip Hop and even mainstream pop. Embracing a greater mix of music continues to prove very useful in my work as a composer of library music, which now forms the main part of my musical activity. Since 2001, I have been working alongside composer and producer Bob Bradley and have co-written over 80 tracks for Audio Network and Universal Music library companies. My music is used on a variety of TV programmes, films, radio and TV adverts across the globe. Most notably my track 'Bop' was the soundtrack to the Panasonic Lumix 2010 TV advert.

Composing library music is a real passion of mine and has opened up a whole new space for me to occupy and put my music on a bigger stage. I use my improvisation skills and draw upon my eclectic taste in music to compose these

library tracks, meaning I can be calling on Miles Davis for inspiration one moment and Herb Halpert the next. It is an incredibly creative experience and very rewarding when you hear the finished product, which I frequently do when watching TV.

Never affording to be the purist, though always loyal to jazz and the jazz constellation, Noel, like many resourceful organisms facing ecological and evolutionary challenges, is necessarily omnivorous in making the music and the market work for him. Though he remains a jazz musician at core, his actor-networking is never far behind. Indeed, and as usual, both are mutually supportive and are called upon in ever more sophisticated ways as market circumstances become more challenging. The challenges are particularly acute when it comes to live performance, which is something most authentic jazz performers would undoubtedly crave.

Live gigs are still important to me and I continue to be involved in a number of projects as a bandleader and as a sideman. I work regularly with Zoe Gilby, who is rapidly establishing herself as one of the best jazz singers in the country. I have appeared on two of her albums and was part of her national 2010/2011 UK tour. The tour was most enjoyable, but it opened up my eyes to the state of jazz in the UK and the lack of a supporting infrastructure. Most of the venues we played were managed by volunteers with a passion for jazz and who received little, if any, funding from the arts council to support the gigs. On the one hand it is fantastic that there are well-known jazz venues run by passionate jazz aficionados (more mature in their years), but on the other this is a huge risk if things were to change and as the audience and volunteer base ages. As a result of this, we could see a further reduction in venues going forward, which would have a detrimental impact on jazz musicians and, of course, jazz audiences.



Though jazz is more of a presence in the world than it ever has been – for example, it has traversed the world on electronic media highways such as CDs, vinyl, TV, the internet and the like - and has morphed into different styles, Noel says it is ‘dying’ as a live experience. As such, he and other well-recognised jazz musicians seem unable to make a sustainable living from it, and the situation appears to be worsening.

Noel’s long time response to this situation has been to further integrate, where possible, his jazz musicianship and practice with the pursuit of a career as a marketing academic.

I try to link my musical activities with my academic work wherever possible. I have a very successful leadership and management workshop – Jazz: A Creative Approach to Business (JCAB), which I deliver with the acclaimed jazz musician and educator – Pete Churchill. We use the creative process of improvisation to highlight the parallels with leadership and strategy and demonstrate how the jazz group is very similar to a business organization. Through practical demonstrations and vocal exercises, we teach participants about process and stepping outside of one’s comfort zone. Our sessions develop team-working skills and encourage participants to critically reflect on their role and its relationship to the organization. We continue to deliver JCAB workshops to public and private sector organizations of all shapes and sizes.

Arguably, this has taken scuffling to levels and places rarely, if ever, brought together in such relational proximity, at least in a UK context. In the process, jazz itself is reaching places of business practice and academia that in a less networked world would have seemed totally incongruous. Sadly, though, when Gerard Precensor told Noel back in 2005 that ‘you could

be the best trumpet player in the world and not have a penny', he was right because being a successful jazz musician takes much more than musicianship, even 'world class' musicianship, and Noel's journey to-date has lived this prophecy. That journey has also taken him to places where, with the help of others who share his enterprise, he has been able to stitch many relational moments together in ways that allow him relatively successful movement through and beyond the arts/market dualism. By this Noel has created his own functioning duality, that of professional musician and academic, that works well for him. Indeed, [in actor-network terms](#), this article is a translational element to that connectivity.

## Conclusion

It is not in doubt that Noel has been able, with varying degrees of success, to traverse the arts/market dualism. However, it is also not in doubt that he has been unable to make a good living from jazz alone, even though he has the talent and the capacity, because the market is not supportive enough of that talent. Bradshaw's and Holbrook's (2007: 133) solution to such effects of the arts/market dualism in jazz is to save the most talented from the vagaries of the market by publicly supporting them to play only for themselves as artist-and-audience in pursuit of 'the Bohemian Ideal of production-as-consumption'. [The upshot of the proposal, it is argued, is that such jazz artists and their art will be secured to the benefit of society at large. However, it is also arguable whether such a proposal could work in practice - which is something we return to below. Moreover](#), such liberal positioning of the subject as *being* an autonomous agent and the only generative actor in the production of her/his authenticity, ignores the collective, socially produced nature of talent, even genius.

In poststructuralism the individual is positioned as a nodal point of intersubjectivity, whereby other subjectivities encountered, some more influential than others, coalesce in and through the individual. Moreover, [such encounters in the jazz constellation are](#)

mediated, made possible and shaped by a whole host of non-human actors - such as transportation systems, jazz venues, musical instruments, record labels and so on. In this ecological situating, the authentic jazz genius is created by a combination of natural, material and social forces that, in certain conducive circumstances in time and space (that is, being there at the right time), converge at the individual level to produce itself as a 'relational effect' (Bajde, 2013). Guattari (2000: 36), for example, sees the individual as

something like a 'terminal' for processes that involve human groups, socio-economic ensembles, data processing machines etc. Therefore, interiority establishes itself at the crossroads of multiple components, each relatively autonomous in relation to the other, and, if need be, in open conflict.

Thus overcoming conflicting circumstances and relations between contradictory forces can allow an individual to grow, to establish him or herself, and arguably contribute significantly to the flourishing of its genius. Furthermore, in order for the jazz genius to be acknowledged, and its power to act realised and conferred, its music needs to be interpolated, circulated and heard – in other words, actor-networked in and through the jazz constellation.

Noel is therefore a nodal point, albeit a mobile one, in the jazz constellation. To play the way he does is born of a process of acquisition as well as a personally innate coordination of intrinsic registers and responses. In this interplay of authentic *being* and *becoming*, hard work and practicality play with love, passion, natural ability and cultural knowing and artistry, to draw others in, whether they be listeners, players or commercial agents. As we have seen, as these performative powers have coalesced and increased in Noel so too has his authenticity as a jazz musician developed and become more recognised. Furthermore, with this his positioning in the jazz constellation has moved from novice

recipient of prescribed actions to someone with the power to actually prescribe to and speak for others (see also Beverland et al, 2010, on authentic subcultural membership).

Noel's authenticity is thus a relational effect of the performative powers and actor-networking he has developed and enacted through time and through space. While this case study signals such relational authenticity it does not verify or prove that authenticity always works in such ways every time everywhere in any circumstance. Indeed, from a poststructuralist perspective, the contingencies and dynamism of meaning-making precludes any study, even one with the largest amount of empirical data, from doing this. It does, however, connect individual and everyday authenticating acts and other performative practices to larger scale movements and power geometries in ways Hill et al (2014) and Bajde (2013) call for in marketing theory and consumer research. Furthermore, analysing this case through a poststructuralist lens indicates that perspectives on authenticity are not destined to set up a social constructionist/objectivist dualism as an unbreakable structural foundation of analysis. This is not to suggest that the social constructionist consensus is wrong in marketing theory and consumer research, it certainly is not, but it is to say that the relational dynamism of meaning-making means that the contingencies which create authenticity are even more diverse and complex than a social constructionist position alone can see. We would therefore encourage more research into the material-semiotics of authentication and related chains of value-making - such as the making of 'creativity', for example (cf. Peterson, 2005).

In terms of the lived practices of jazz-making, the greatest difficulty for Noel and other jazz musicians is that the jazz market, like any other market, is a result of 'entangled collective actions', which also means that market 'development and consequences become a continuous joint responsibility' (Kellberg and Helgesson, 2007: 156). Addressing the dilemmas of the arts/market dualism in jazz is therefore about strengthening the heterogeneous associations in the jazz constellation in ways that empower the art to act

more forcefully in the market. This will take leadership, particularly by those artists who are most performatively authentic and have gathered the power to speak authoritatively for the art and those myriad others who make it. Once again, we would argue that the development of artistry is as much a public as a private enterprise and we would therefore agree with Bradshaw and Holbrook (2007) that there needs to be greater public support for jazz, and indeed for the arts in general. We doubt, however, that this should or even could be achieved by removing leading artists from the market altogether. Rather, increasing the power of the art against the exploitative power of the market will take individual and conjoined working where artistic, commercial and public forces from multiple nodal points and spatial flows *become translated* into remade or newly-formed network connections aimed at resetting the power geometries in the jazz arts/market dualism (see Lena and Peterson, 2008, on the social processes involved in valorising music). From such heterogeneity it may be possible to assemble power/knowledge connections with enough breadth and depth to build more dynamically creative jazz networks. No doubt gains would be varied and often partial in such an enterprise, but if spaces were made in which talented artists making ends meet did not have to resort to 'selling out' or to 'dumbed down crowd pleasing simplification' (Bradshaw and Holbrook, 2007: 133) then arts-based networks might become powerful enough to begin to prescribe the terms rather than simply respond to them.

Finally, we offer the general observation that the spatiality of market practices receives far too little attention in marketing scholarship. It is, however, encouraging that authors such as Hill et al (2014), Bajde (2013), Canniford and Shankar (2013) are explicitly beginning to recognise the importance and complexity of spatial relations in consumption practices in increasingly sophisticated ways. Hill et al (2014) in particular introduce cutting edge spatial theories to this work as expounded by leading geographers such as Thrift, Dewsbury, Anderson and Harrison. On the other hand, only occasionally do geographers

directly engage with marketing in such ways, with Pike being a notable exponent (see Pike 2009; 2011). On branding for example, Pike makes the point that ‘brands are caught up in inescapable spatial associations’, including: ‘geographical origins, provenance and sociospatial histories’, ‘spatial circuits of value and meaning’, and ‘territorial and relational spaces’ (Pike, 2009: 1-2). Although branding has not been our focus here, we have discovered some such spatial associations in the making of a musical identity or set of identities that is jazz, and have opened the door a little further on to the spatial workings of the arts/market dualism. There is scope to do much more in these areas, as there is regarding developing marketing theory and understanding consumer cultural practices in the ways Hill (2014), Canniford and Shankar (2013), Bajde (2013), and Pike (2009; 2011) either allude to or infer. And for us, the experience of constructing this article has revealed an event horizon rich in such possibilities, and one we might dare to venture further towards in the not-too-distant future.

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