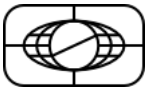
HEARING AID MAGAZINE
ISSUE 22

ST ANDREWS
RADIO PRESENTS

ORIGIN



COVER

Matthew Henry,
Toronto, Canada
Taken August 30, 2016

Compositing: Jack Sloop, 2023

ORIGIN

The University of St Andrews Students' Association's
St Andrews Radio Presents Hearing Aid Magazine

CONTRIBUTORS

EDITORIAL

Ilene Krall
Eli Thayer

CREATIVE

Jack Sloop
Arielle Friedlander

WRITERS

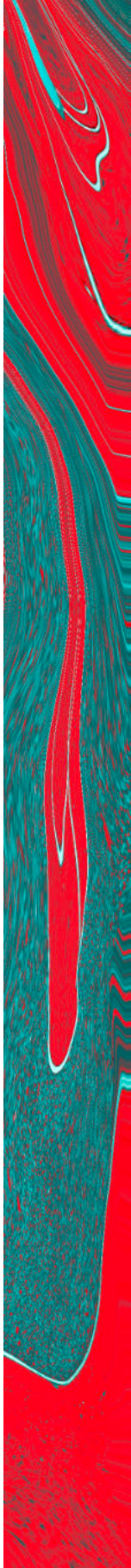
IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE:

Grace Roberts
Catriona Martin
Abena Oppon
Mia Romanoff
Eli Thayer
Tommy MacGillivray
Ilene Krall

A NOTE ON THE DESIGN

Origin—as you see it now—originates from skies above Greenland, stitched together on the E1oo61 to San Francisco. With the icebergs and clouds sailing by, Renaissance art and post-modern were married. I chose to visualise origination through this juxtaposition of sacred art against modern rebellion, analogising the origins of Renaissance modernity with the post-modern. Each is the origin of something unique and yet they're matched in their contemporaneous originality. Of course, the design is but one small part of the herculean effort that goes into creating the moments to follow.

Origin, as with *Reunion*, and *Scandal*, represents a labour of love from from the *Hearing Aid* team. We hope you find creativity, freedom, and ultimately the sound of something greater than these words woven through these pages.



ORIGIN

COLOUR BLOCK

Arielle Friedlander

Auckland, New Zealand

January, 2023

As always, it all goes back to our origins. Having not been home in almost three years, I find myself asking if I've lost that part of myself, if somehow time and space from the places and people we've called home changes our connection to them. *Origin* asks the same of music; do the many origins of artists, genres, and albums define what music is now, what music can represent?

Being a part of *Hearing Aid* has not only taught me all the practical skills of being an editor (correcting the hundredth incorrectly placed semicolon or desperately editing the same article for the fourth time at 2 am) but has taught me so much about music. A quick peek into my Apple music - yes, this and not Spotify - would show the depth and range of music *Hearing Aid* and our writers have exposed me to. The variety of perspectives each of our writers bring to the table is what makes this magazine so exciting. Each article takes a look at the idea of origins in its own way - they deal with origins originally, if I may.

I'm so excited for people to see, read, and experience *Origin* for all that it is: the ramblings of passionate students. The magazine would certainly not have been possible without Eli, Jack, and Arielle's endless skills and commitment, without the support of STAR committee, and a personal thank you to Monster energy drink for keeping me sane. I'm so proud of what we've created together.

—ILENE KRALL

A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

As any perusal of my previous work will make clear, I am obsessed with how music comes to be. The creative process - to the extent that there is any one such thing - is a tantalising mystery to me, and the pursuit of its secrets is at times all-consuming. During a period of 2020 isolation, I discovered Ben Opipari's website *Songwriters on Process* through his interview with Big Thief's Adrianne Lenker. His dedication to treating songwriters as one would any other writer subsequently became a guiding light for my own efforts.

When Ilene proposed "Origin" as the theme for our first print issue this year, I was elated. Selfishly, I hoped to collate artistic analyses from varied viewpoints into a resource on creativity, to help further my personal quest. Part of what I love about *Hearing Aid*, however, is the freedom we provide to our writers: as long as an article is vaguely about music, it qualifies for publication. So naturally, our wonderfully curious team of writers spurned my opportunistic desires and instead produced an eclectic mix of treatises on musical origins, ranging from an investigation into the intricacies of modern film scoring to a dive into the intertwining of music and identity, and the battle between origination and cultural context for control of art's meaning.

I've thoroughly enjoyed reading these pieces, and I know you all will too. Much gratitude as always to Jack, Arielle, and Ilene for putting their hearts, souls, and sanity into this magazine, and to everyone at STAR for keeping us around. Thanks for letting me do what I love.

— ELI THAYER

ORIGIN SETLIST

'Bittersweet Genesis for Him & Her'	Kishi Bashi
'Evening Song'	Wendy Eisenberg
'Nefertiti'	Miles Davis
'Mother Whale Eyeless'	Brian Eno
'Stardust Chords'	Greta Van Fleet
'No Friend'	Paramore
'Kitaguri no Haru'	Shinichi Mori
'ALASKA'	BROCKHAMPTON
'The End Has No End'	The Strokes

WORKING MAN: NEIL PEART AND THE GENESIS OF RUSH'S LYRICISM

GRACE ROBERTS

The creation story of Canadian band Rush is riddled with member turnover and rocky relationships. Yet, in almost fifty years of existence, they have maintained a place amongst the most hallowed rock bands in history, primarily due to their ability to colour outside the lines of tradition, and the musical mastery of Geddy Lee, Neil Peart, and Alex Leifson. But the origins of their lyricism, revered by fans and scorned by critics, are a little murkier.

Rush's distinct science-fiction and futurism aesthetic originated with Neil Peart, the drummer who joined the band as a replacement shortly before their first US tour. After Lee wrote the band's first full-length album, *Rush*, he handed the reins to Peart, claiming that the drummer had a wider vocabulary because of his love of literature. From that moment on, Peart penned the lyrics to every Rush epic, perfecting the narrative tone that accompanied his prodigal drumming skills.

Peart's gravitation towards science-fiction and fantasy bled into his songwriting, filling subsequent albums with distinctly fantastical content. There's a reason why Rush has a niche subgenre of superfan particularly attached to lore and fantasy: many of their lyrics feel lifted from the pages of a Tolkien or Gibson tome. Mythology, science-fiction, and philosophy were integral elements of Peart's writing; wells he often returned to with questions or insight, unafraid of unconventionality.

COLOUR BLOCK
Arielle Friedlander
Auckland, New Zealand
January, 2023

Isolated, Peart's lyrics sound more suited to pieces of poetry, as if he was writing pages of fiction as opposed to songs. Their length corroborates this; one would be hard-pressed to find a song under four minutes, and far more likely to find one in the ballpark of twenty. Albums resemble sagas, with the songs acting as volumes that work in tandem to recount epic tales. 'Red Barchetta' is like a bildungsroman in song form, complete with climax and denouement. Peart assumes the role of lyrical alchemist, pulling from his literary knowledge and crafting new tales that speak to the misfits and the marginalised.

The claim that Rush's lyricism is iconic is not, however, a universally accepted sentiment. Many argue that Peart's personal worldview, atypical views on religion, social order, and philosophy, unnecessarily complicate his lyrics. Even more believe that Rush's songs simply don't make sense. The latter isn't entirely incorrect; '2112' is a twenty-minute number featuring a convoluted narrative about the Temple of Syrinx (Oracles! Priests! A computerised government!). Much is unclear. But there remains something thrilling and admirable about it. How much of a challenge must it have been to record? Rush completes the daunting task with grace, even under pressure.

Peart's lyrics have always been strikingly human, regardless of whether the subject is fantasy or reality. He has an innate ability to touch on the cornerstones of the human condition, the growing pains of the young and unmoored. There is value in the confusion. Much of songwriting is borne out of experience, and many of Peart's stories come from a place of truth. The genesis of good lyricism is belief. Conviction in your writing, regardless of whether it is fact or fiction, gives it an edge above everything else. Accordingly, many Rush lyrics reflect Peart's opinions on religion, philosophy, and society, and songs like 'Limelight' specifically comment on his personal life. Albums like Power Windows were received less favourably, but they remain cult classics because they emulate not something mythical or dystopian, but an earnestness; a "I've been there, I get it." This sentiment from Peart does not go unnoticed, or unappreciated.

Progression is a theme for Rush in every sense. Beyond the umbrella of rock, Rush shrugs off labels, choosing instead to favour a natural progression of genre. Initially rooted in blues-inspired rock, the band found their progressive groove with *Hemispheres* and *Permanent Waves*. As their sound grew more complex, so did their lyrics, moving from the mythology of *Farewell* to *Kings* into realism on *Moving Pictures*. Influenced by trending sounds and popular influences, *Power Windows* and *Hold Your Fire* subsequently gave way to a heavier side of Rush in albums like *Vapor Trails* and *Clockwork Angels*. Sonically, Rush spans vast eras of time and genre, but through it all, their lyricism has remained steadfast.

Neil Peart passed away two years ago, leaving behind a lyrical and musical legacy beyond what most modern artists have accomplished - up until his death, he was considered by many to be the best drummer alive. Rush will go down in history as not only one of the great rock bands, but as a group that defied the laws of music and created magic through song and storytelling. Unafraid to grow, they never broke away from their origins, but constantly expanded upon them, making a name for themselves by way of evolution.

Songs all start from somewhere, and Peart's ability to blend human truths with fictional narratives is the provenance of Rush's genius. Working together in perfect harmony, Lee, Peart, and Leifson mastered the art of intersecting sound and storytelling through teamwork. This synthesis is the true testament to their success and the music they have created together. They all possess a little bit of magic with their respective instruments, but for Peart in particular? His magic touch is not confined to how he handles a drumstick - he is equally as talented with a pen.

ASCENSION

Elia Pellegrini, Rome, & Eugene Chystiakov, Lviv

Compositing: Jack Sloop

San Francisco, California

January 5, 2023

SHOTS

Luigi Boccardo &
The Victoria Museum Archives
Compositing: Jack Sloop, 2023

KEEPING THE SCORE: THE INNOVATION OF SOUND IN MODERN FILMMAKING

CATRIONA MARTIN

My personal obsession with scoring began not with film, but with a fateful click on a YouTube video recommendation back in 2009. I was introduced to 'Kara Remembers', an original composition by Bear McCreary (based on Jimi Hendrix's 'All Along the Watchtower') from the critically acclaimed TV show, *Battlestar Galactica*. The track resonated with me so deeply that it became a sort of sacred ritual to listen to it on repeat. Although the *Battlestar Galactica* soundtrack was McCreary's big break, he went on to be the solo composer for *The Walking Dead* for the show's entire run, as well as working on other high-profile projects. Although McCreary's work is undeniably good, I want to focus on film specifically. And, although TV scoring can be equally iconic (eg. *Game of Thrones* composer Ramin Djawadi), the medium of film lends itself to a more complete analysis of thematic musical progression.

Before the advent of the talkie with 1927's *Jazz Singer*, silent films were accompanied with a score. This was provided by a group of live musicians, or a phonograph, at each theatre. The performed pieces were existing classical works or, although less common, original compositions. Writing an original score only became popular from about the Golden Age onwards, with songs specifically (as opposed to classical instrumental pieces) being introduced into mainstream film in the early 50's.

As technology has improved over the years, so have recording, producing, and editing techniques evolved in kind. However, these advancements have not always been used in ways that improve the cinematic experience. In a strange act of egoism, director Tom Hooper recorded the actors' vocals live on set of the 2012 film *Les Misérables* with an army of mics and earpieces to produce…mixed results. As it turns out, making a 70-piece orchestra rework the rhythm of every piece of music in order to keep in time with the actors' tempo choices leads to an inconsistent and confusing final product.

However, there are times when auditory innovation forms the core of a film's thematic message. Denis Villeneuve and Hans Zimmer have already been heavily praised for their work with the score of 2021's *Dune*, which won the Oscar for Best Sound and for Best Achievement in Music Written for Motion Pictures (Original Score) as well as several BAFTAs and other awards for score and sound design. One of my favourite things that I've learned from watching interviews with both Zimmer and Villeneuve is just how much joy they found in the making of *Dune*, having both been fans of the books in their youth. There are few things that will ruin a film faster than a team making creative choices on a whim, and Dune's score and sound design is more precise than a prop team working on a Wes Anderson set.

One of the boldest musical motifs of the film is a short, melodically simple female vocal that has a throaty, growling quality; Zimmer aimed to create a musical landscape which felt futuristic and organic, part of that vision including an emphasis on the human voice. He also wanted to focus on the women in the film, as they are the true driving force behind the story. Lady Jessica, the protagonist Paul's mother, is part of a religious order of women called the Bene Gesserit, who are represented in the score by layers and layers of whispered, asynchronous chanting over a low eerie drone.

In a video interview with Vanity Fair, Zimmer describes how he perceives the human voice to be the one element which would carry across the ages in the film; instruments (and the materials we used to build them) may change, but use of the human voice remains constant. This sort of pragmatic thinking forms the backbone of *Dune*'s sublime, and unnerving, score. Although Zimmer went so far as to *create entirely new instruments* for this score, voice plays a critical role upon which the rest of the sound design and score are constructed.

For instance, the use of double harmonic scales evokes Arabic influence (although this may be less or more authentic depending on the instruments used). The sound cuts out then reappears right in your face like a ghost in the bathroom mirror. Zimmer's love for short bursts of organic, militaristic drum beats merges with these choices to create an effect both as expansive as the deserts of Arrakis and as intimately uncomfortable as a knife on the back of your neck.

Other films in recent years also experiment with sound design and score in order to support and enhance the story. Sound supervisors for *The Batman*, Will Files and Doug Murray, discussed meticulously choosing props with audio engineer blog A Sound Effect to create the perfect foley sounds for the film (adding sounds in post-production such as footsteps or rustling of clothes) in order to accentuate Robert Pattinson's performance as a slower, more deliberate Batman.

Ralph Tae-Young Choi, who worked with director Bong Joon Ho on *Parasite*, describes using the claustrophobic sounds of air moving in a room to heighten the anxiety of certain scenes. The sounds of the film differentiate to create two distinct auditory environments: one for the wealthy Park family and another for the poverty-stricken Kim family. Innovation for the sake of itself won't give you the lushness of *Dune*, the intimacy of *The Batman*, or the creeping dread of *Parasite* – but innovation in the service of the story? That's how the best art is made.

CASTLE IN THE SKY
Diogo Nunes &
The Birmingham Museum Trust
Compositing: Jack Sloop, 2023

ON THE ORIGINS OF MUSIC: WHAT IT MEANS TO SAMPLE, REMIX, & REMAKE

ABENA OPPON

The process of creating music is far from linear, and rarely involves purely original creations. The Western popular music canon ever compounds upon itself, and the lifespan of a song is broader than from its inception to its release. The constituent parts of a song can exist a long time before it becomes itself, whether it be chord progressions in Rivers Cuomo's Google Sheets, or a stray tweet by Ezra Koenig. During production, songs can change hands, and despite remaining the same on paper, they become different entities.

Even release does not mark the end of a song's lifespan. Nowadays artists tend to 'patch' their songs soon after release due to legal issues, calls to remove certain content, or simply because the song is poorly received. The frequency at which Eurovision entries are 'revamped' because Eurofans dislike it is comical.

The meaning of a song - its literal message, social connotations, and cultural meaning - can change for several reasons. Songs get covered. Songs get sampled and interpolated. Songs can become memed to death and lose all meaning aside from being shorthand for a joke.

Songs can be re-released or experience a sudden resurgence because of current events. Despite being 10 years old and largely insignificant (I say this with a deep affection for it), Tom Odell's 'Another Love' is 13th in the UK's Official Singles Charts at the time of writing, due to its use as a protest song on TikTok by Iranian Women.

Kate Bush couldn't have known that 'Running Up That Hill' would be used in millions of TikToks and covered by dozens of artists. When a song is released, nobody can tell what will be made of it.

WHEELED VICTORY

Winged Victory, Louvre, Tuileries, Paris, 190 BCE

Biker, Asdrubal Luna, Baja California Sur, April 27, 2020

‘VERMONT II’, ‘VERMONT’, & ‘FEAR AND FORCE’

New York-based Vagabon is an artist who has transparently displayed her iterative creative process.

Her first EP, *Persian Garden*, a six-track work about the decline of a relationship, contains early versions of songs that made it onto her 2017 debut *Infinite Worlds*. Track three, ‘Vermont II’ (later entitled ‘Fear and Force’), and track five, ‘Vermont’, are of particular interest.

Vagabon’s voice rings out over a light guitar arpeggio on ‘Vermont II’ as she begs “Freddy”, a lover or a friend, to return to her despite their current happiness elsewhere. It is a gentle track, building only slightly and gliding even through the instrumental breakdown.

After briefly diverting to other topics she returns back to the central relationship on ‘Vermont’. Harsh feedback introduces the song as the beat crescendos to its base level. In comparison to ‘II’, ‘Vermont’ feels accusatory and acerbic. Vagabon recounts the process in which Freddy decided to move back home; the repetition of “you” at the beginning of lines now are like an index finger stabbing Freddy in the chest. Like the subway and the unsavoury feelings that fester within her, this song is a bit repellent, with its profanity, distortion, and sloppy call-and-response instrumentation.

Although ‘Fear and Force’ is an obvious remake of ‘Vermont II’, arguably ‘Vermont II’ could be read as a radical remake of ‘Vermont’. Despite being the sequel, ‘II’ comes first, almost as if after airing her true feelings in the first version, she sat down, re-thought her words, and found the revised version more favourable. ‘II’ is neutered in comparison. The complex rhythms and compound time are flattened out into clean tones and 4/4.

‘Fear and Force’ is something of a ‘Vermont II (Reprise)’. Despite the negligible differences, it is a recontextualisation and development of the story. On it, the residual layers of desperation are buried underneath placid and minimalist production. The acoustic drums are replaced with sparse percussion, only returning for the improved breakdown.

This section revives the richness found on ‘Vermont’ with a momentary wordless explosion before Vagabon straightens her tie and returns to her humble request: “Freddy, come back / I know you love Vermont / but I thought I had more time.”

By remaking the same song and recycling the same themes, the trilogy of ‘Vermont II’, ‘Vermont’, and ‘Fear and Force’ creates an understated tale of miscommunication, and conveys the difficulty in finding the correct words time and time again.

THE COMMON TRUTH OF 'PASTIME PARADISE' & 'GANGSTA'S PARADISE'

Many people do not know that the hook from the late Coolio's 1995 smash-hit 'Gangsta's Paradise' is an interpolation. Stevie Wonder cleared the sample, from track 8 of *Songs in the Key of Life*, once Coolio promised to remove all profanity.

'Pastime Paradise' is unnerving, devoid of the familiar pleasantries one might expect from Stevie Wonder. The strings in the intro border on shrill, and the constant woodblock, panned right, is a ticking clock, counting the days that humanity has to fix its misdeeds.

'Pastime Paradise' mirrors itself in its structure: the choruses juxtapose opposing approaches to life, and as the verses advance and reformulate themselves, they seemingly reveal the key to world peace. The opening chorus uses the title as a metaphor for how nostalgia clouds both individual and societal progress. Living in the past is wasteful because, as the first verse shows, there are numerous societal ills in the present. The second chorus moves from critique to hope, telling of those who look forward to a future when humanity is relieved of suffering. As a call to action, the second verse unifies the list of issues from the first.

The third chorus is a combination of the previous two, comparing their ideologies and upholding those who "look to future paradise". While pertaining to the song's central message, this line also has heavy religious connotations. As a devout Baptist, Wonder takes pride in reflecting the doctrine in his work. The hopeful "let's look to future paradise" could also be interpreted fatalistically when reading the "future paradise" as Heaven. There is a common Christian notion, sometimes adopted to alleviate current suffering, that the reward of ultimate happiness is only found after death (see the Beatitudes). In the face of centuries of system injustice, believing in and hoping for God's deliverance is not at all surprising.

Coolio and LV transform the forward-thinking 'Pastime Paradise' into a nihilistic and semi-apocalyptic epic. 'Gangsta's Paradise' asks Stevie Wonder to consider the difficulties of societal progress. While Wonder spectates and dictates what needs to happen, Coolio narrates the tale of someone stuck in the annals of such deprivation.

Despite being a universally-loved crowd pleaser, its bleakness is blatant. The third verse is particularly hopeless, echoing the sense of a ticking bomb from Wonder's song. The need for change is clear, but the unwillingness to enact it leaves the vulnerable in stasis. The substitution of "been spending most of their lives'" to "we keep spending most our lives / living in a gangsta's paradise" emphasises the cycle of gangster culture.

Coolio turns the lingering backing vocals from 'Pastime Paradise' into a fully-fledged gospel choir. The result is a sense of religious reckoning, on a sweeping scale that feels larger than the intimate original. The first line of the song is a direct reference to Psalm 23, which is about the ever-presence of God's guidance. But while God the father assures King David (purported writer of the psalm) on his journey, Coolio's gangster is abandoned even by his mother. There is nobody to deliver him from "the evils of the world".

The blame for his suffering may be placed upon his own shoulders. There is a certain (false) stereotype that all injustices faced by black people are self-inflicted; you might hear about "black-on-black crime". Although this stereotype is easily extrapolated to be applied to anything, the post-chorus encapsulates this talking point, asserting that people (i.e., the nameless Gangster) are blind to the negative effects of their actions on those around them. closeness of the consequences of their own actions.

There is therefore an underlying ironic level of respectability running through both songs. In the face of the plight on display in 'Gangsta's Paradise', the broad generalisations in 'Pastime Paradise' feel empty. Wonder's demand that Coolio not swear, however, already sanitises the track and widens the appeal to, in the words of Soren Baker, "people who would normally be put off by a traditional, bone-crushing gangster rap song." Black-on-black crime is self-cannibalisation; it is more dignified to blame the self than The Man. This enables the generic listener to hear the song without thinking or feeling social responsibility.

A song is not a thesis, and cannot be relied upon to educate. Implying an attempt to educate makes an assumption about Coolio's intentions while creating the song. On the other hand, what is represented as true on this song is probably not. The fictional gangster has become more acknowledged and embraced than the real people that this simulacrum of a song represents. Now, as Coolio has passed before his time like so many famous black men, his magnum opus echoes the tragedy even he was unable to escape. The "future paradise" envisioned by Stevie Wonder has not yet come to pass.

CHEERS!

Ján Rombauer, Slovak National Gallery, Circa 1841

Space Man, Levi Stute, Dortmund, Gemany, December 21, 2021

Compositing: Jack Sloop, San Francisco, California, January 2023

THE LONG JOURNEY TO 'HOLD UP'

Beyoncé's *Lemonade* was released in April 2016, but its origins lie more than a decade prior. The earlier mention of a "stray tweet" manifests itself in the song 'Hold Up': in 2011, Vampire Weekend frontman Ezra Koenig tweeted: "hold up… they don't love u like i love u". This is a reference to the 2003 song 'Maps' by the Yeah Yeah Yeahs, having substituted the word "wait" for the titular "hold up".

Rumoured to be an acronym for "My Angus, Please Stay", lead singer Karen "O" Orzolek penned the indie hit about her boyfriend at the time, Angus Andrew of the band Liars. The hook of the song came from an email that Orzolek wrote to Andrew, feeling desperate about their long-distance relationship.

Set in a semi-empty high school gym, the music video for 'Maps' is forlorn. The band performs to a group of uninterested teenagers, and Orzolek devolves into tears - real tears, as Andrew arrived late to the shoot, which was the last time they were set to see one another for a while. Anchored around the thumping toms of the iconic drum loop, 'Maps' is sparse in texture and lyrics. The ride cymbal rattles and distorted guitars explode in with the chorus as Orzolek implores Andrew, referred to as "Maps", to "wait".

Despite the despair their relationship instils, she waits for him, and asks him to do the same. After baring her soul, all she can do is ask over and over again.

After *Lemonade* was released, Koenig explained on Twitter how 'Maps' came to be the hook on 'Hold Up'. A few years after his initial tweet, while in the studio, Koenig and a collaborator formulated it into a Vampire Weekend song. Then, in the studio with contributions from Beyoncé and many other writers, it became the final version.

Lemonade is akin to a musical "revenge dress". Like many songs on the album, 'Hold Up' is addressed to unfaithful husband Jay Z. The change from "wait" to "hold up", "slow down", "back up" , and "step down" feels less like a plea than a casual denigration that cuts him down to size. The reggae-inspired beat contributes to the jaunty and nonchalant atmosphere, as Beyoncé treats her strife with a coolness present only in the most PR-savvy. In flipping the tone of the emotive 'Maps', she gains the upper hand.


adn

Ever since the Lift Altercation of 2014 between Solange and Jay Z, Beyoncé's marriage has been under scrutiny. Despite the facade of nonchalance, the interpolation of 'Maps' exposes her vulnerability: "don't you know there's no other man above you? / what a wicked way to treat the girl that loves you". Her attempts to protect her pride are fruitless for a brief moment as she reveals her true feelings, hearkening back to the sadder tone of 'Maps'.

The outro of 'Hold Up' also interpolates Soulja Boy's braggadocious ringtone rap track 'Turn My Swag On'. As the song draws to a close, Beyoncé dons her facade once more, shutting off the honesty and choosing to protect her pride in a way that ultimately reads as immature and insincere.

Even though 'Hold Up' (and its cathartically destructive music video) may appear to be a stereotypical example of how to both express your hurt and keep your dignity, both Karen O and Beyonce were failed by their partners. That sadness and sense of betrayal is what prevails.

'Hold Up' is an example of how intertextuality can enrich a piece of work. Music is constantly self-referential. An artist with no continuity in their discography will find it hard to build an audience, as the narrative surrounding an artist's journey is often as interesting as the music itself. *Lemonade*, for example, was as much a slice of juicy gossip as it was musically refreshing. Sampling, remixing, and remaking pieces creates a discourse with the original work. Without acknowledging the past, there would be no way to trace the genealogy of genres. If works existed in a vacuum, there would be no incentive to engage with anything outside of it.

Citations

Epstein, D., 'Coolio's 'Gangsta's Paradise': The Oral History of 1995's Pop-Rap Smash', Rolling Stone, 7 August 2015.

Hyman, D., 'How Weezer's Rivers Cuomo Used Google Sheets to Make Ambitious New Album', Rolling Stone, 5 October 2017.

Koenig, E. (@arzE), 'hold up...they don't love u like i love u', Twitter, 22 October 2011.

Koenig, E. (@arzE), 'it's not that complicated - but some ppl are confused so here's the short version:', Twitter, 25 April 2016.

Rogers, J., "I just wanted to write a love song that stands the test of time': Karen O on her best work', The Guardian, 14 March 2019.

World Entertainment News Network, 'Karen O's Video Crying Was For Real', Contact Music, 12 July 2007.

Yenigun, S., 'Stevie Wonder Reflects On Motown, God And Prince', NPR, 30 August 2017.

adn
BARRANQUILLA
Educación unificada en el Distrito
James vs. Real Madrid
Junior recibe hoy al "verde"
ROVER
3500 SE

BEING FUNNY IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: A RETURN TO ORIGIN?

MIA ROMANOFF

When The 1975's released their newest album this October, *Being Funny in a Foreign Language*, many were expecting the album to launch the band into a new era both musically and stylistically. However, it seems that the album returns to their origins in many ways. Their first album, The 1975, came after years of name changes and failed releases. Publications like Pitchfork and Rollingstone were quick to deem the album messy, unfocused, and derivative, yet it was this very album that managed to create a cohesive internet fanbase. Whether it was the angsty pop-rock or the aggressive branding, The 1975 were able to carve out a space for themselves in the music world – then change this space with every subsequent album. Each album since their debut begins with a self-titled track that defines the tone for their new era, playing into the idea that each album acts as a reintroduction to the band.

It is impossible to talk about the origins of The 1975 without talking about tumblr. The band dominated the social media site and was able to use the platform to launch itself into global stardom. The band was adopted as a signifier of a larger aesthetic that included wearing fishnets and doc martens, posting pictures of teenagers running through the streets, and listening to bands like The Arctic Monkeys, Vampire Weekend, and, of course, The 1975. The band played into this image, allowing them to become the spokespeople for teenage angst. Though slightly younger than the main fan base in this era, I can remember staying up all hours of the night scrolling through my Tumblr feed, wanting to grow up to be the girl in the 'Robbers' music video: effortlessly cool, fighting with my rockstar boyfriend. Even when the music talked about wild and even dangerous lives that existed far outside my tween reality, it never felt like there would be any negative consequences to chasing these adventures. Whether by the band or by the fans, the 1975 was creating a blueprint of cool to aspire to and one that was near impossible not to fall for.

Their first album seemed tailor-made for this group of teens obsessed with romanticizing their pain, dissatisfaction, and unhealthy coping mechanisms. Switching between heavy synths and punchy guitar, the album manages not to get dragged down by its heavy content. Lyrically, the sentiment that permeates the album is, “you're young, you're alive, do drugs, have sex.” The tracks convey this message while being simultaneously melodramatic and apathetic. Tracks like ‘Girls’, where petty fights and mundane smoke seshes are heightened by teenage desperation and the conflation of sex and salvation, showcase this aesthetic.

As indie-sleaze and tumblr aesthetics begin to come back into fashion as part of the trend cycle, *Being Funny in a Foreign Language* feels perfectly timed as the band returns to the forefront of the cultural zeitgeist. Despite not engaging with the interpersonal angst that drew teenagers to their first album, The 1975 reengages this demographic by bridging the emotional distance caused by today’s internet. *Being Funny in a Foreign Language* showcases a stylistic and thematic maturation and critiques the very internet culture that originally made them famous. This aggressively public internet culture, however, is intensely personal to today's teens, as social media becomes the main way in which they are forced to negotiate their social lives and identities. In a post-pandemic world, where young people just aren't partying like they used to, *Being Funny* stays inside with them.

This return to origin is two fold: there is both a call back to their early pared down aesthetics and a desire to return to their previous societal position as the band that relates to teens’ current state and then guides them. In the case of the latter, the desire to recenter themselves as the heart of teenage culture can be seen in their choice of producer. Whereas their self-titled album, as well as subsequent projects, were produced by Mike Crossey, who also worked on several of The Arctic Monkeys and Two Door Cinema Club's projects, *Being Funny* is the product of Taylor Swift's favorite, Jack Antonoff. Antonoff has become somewhat of a celebrity producer over the past few years due to his work on projects of Taylor Swift, Lana del Rey, Clario, and more. Having Antonoff in the credits of a project is enough to ensure internet attention, but it is also the induction into a cultural grouping, jokingly dubbed the "Jack Antonoff Cinematic Universe." For The 1975, the change in producers feels less like a divergence from previous musical projects and more like an attempt to occupy the same position they did in 2013 as a member of a relevant and influential circle of musicians.

In terms of aesthetics, the band has abandoned the bubble gum pink of *I like it when you sleep, for you are so beautiful yet unaware of it* and the neon yellow of *Notes On A Conditional Form* opting to go back to black and white, not just for the album cover but for almost all promotional materials. The visual cohesion of their Instagram feels appropriate given the focused nature of the album itself, and yet it's hard to ignore the similarities with the glowing black and white images that dominated tumblr feeds back in the day. Ultimately, *Being Funny in a Foreign Language* manages to be a tribute to their early days without being a regression, making it one of their best albums to date.

70’S MOTORS

Cabrio Fiat Spider 124, Markus Spiske, 1973

Mike Von, Chevy Camero, Los Angeles
Compositing: Jack Sloop, 2023

Radial T/A

HANNAH KOEGLER:

'MULTILINGUAL SCIENCE FICTION' FOR ST ANDREWS CENTRE FOR EXOPLANET SCIENCE

ELI THAYER

"I'm so intimidated by the harp, physically."

Sitting on Hannah Koegler's couch in her Glasgow flat, I know what she means. I can feel the instrument towering over me; even with my back to it, the harp's presence is tangible. The harpist (a term Koegler only recently decided she was comfortable applying to herself) sits across from me, her gaze occasionally drifting toward the harp as she speaks. It's as if it has a hold over her, understandable considering the time she's dedicated to the instrument. But her words tell of a symbiotic relationship; one in which instrument and musician trade moments of control, carefully working in tandem to create something greater than the sum of its parts.

The fruits of this partnership abound on Koegler's recent *Translation Project*, recorded in collaboration with the St Andrews Centre for Exoplanet Science. The Centre's 'Multilingual Science Fiction' project aims to translate global works of science fiction into English, with the goal of broadening English-speaking perspectives beyond the traditional sci-fi canon. Koegler's album is one of a number of multimedia projects commissioned alongside the translations to provide external interpretations of the texts. As an academic resource, *Translation Project* is vital proof of the value of collaboration between experts from different disciplines, and the beautifully unexpected results. As a work of art, it is a rare glimpse of an artist truly coming into her own and discovering what it is that makes her perspective unique.

ROYAL ASTRONAUT

Natalya Letunova, April 5, 2020

Isabella Clara Eugenia, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, 17th Century

Compositing: Jack Sloop, San Francisco, January 2023

"It's contained within glass and metal"

Koegler recorded *Translation Project* at the tail end of the 2021-22 academic year, shortly before her graduation from the University of St Andrews. During that period, the Laidlaw Music Centre and its resident harp were her constant companions. The relative isolation led Koegler to experiment with techniques and sounds beyond what one would expect to hear in the mystical forests and Renaissance courts that mentions of the harp tend to conjure. Koegler made frequent use of chrome slides, a favourite tool of country-western and blues guitarists, in her quest to stretch beyond the harp's limitations. When the first track, 'Two Conversations (Hindi)', discards all semblance of its haunting melody in favour of an atonal soundscape replete with unsettling scratching noises that resemble an intruder clawing at the window, it sets the tone for an album seemingly hellbent on destabilising (and disturbing) its audience.

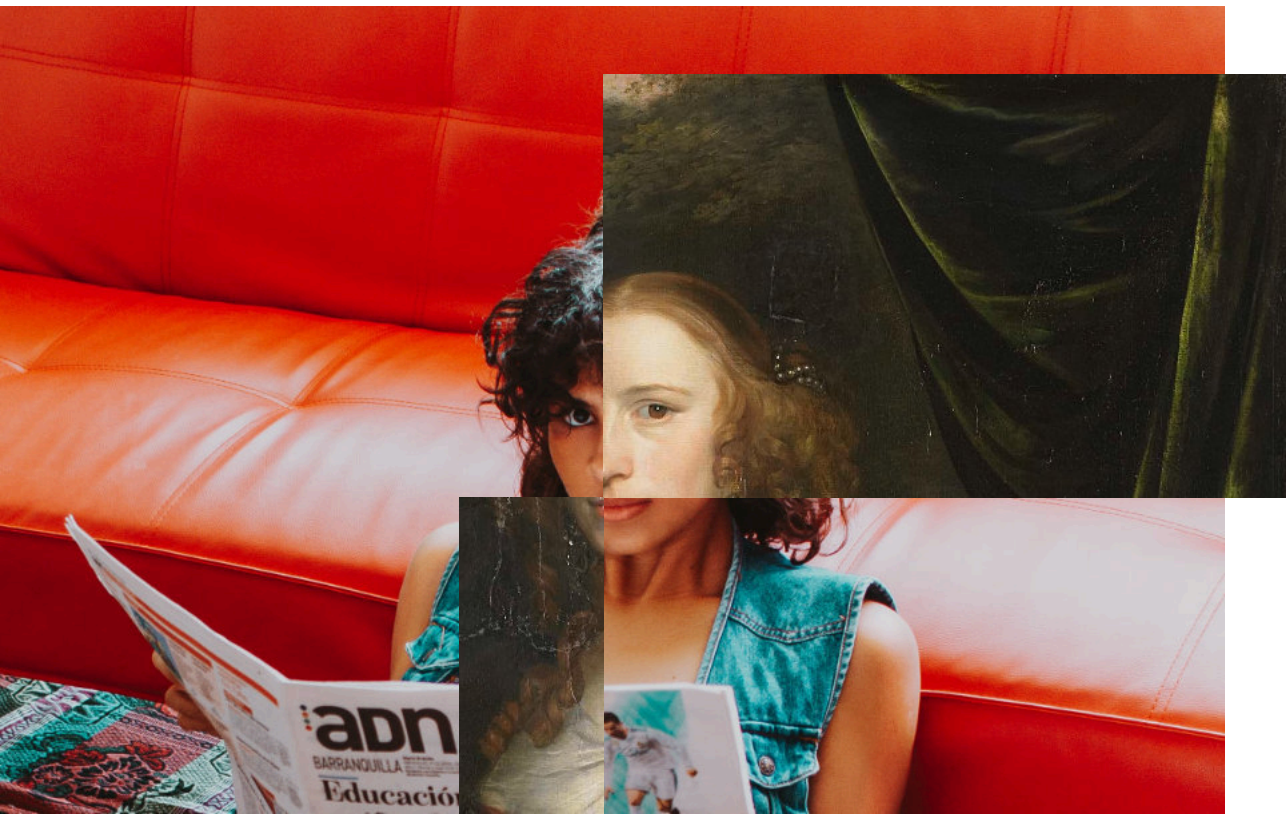
The project derives in part from science-fiction's adaptation of the anthropological concept of first contact: how cultures interact upon learning of and encountering one another, and the ethical and moral implications of such meetings. Sci-fi writers have extended the theme to theorise humanity's first contact with intelligent extraterrestrial life. Koegler's vision of first contact takes the form of songs inspired not just by a theoretical encounter, but also by the world that would bear witness to such an event. *Translation Project* is built around communication, but that foundation extends beyond humans and aliens conversing. On the one hand, the noise at the end of 'Two Conversations' (the working title for which was 'Chatter') evokes alien voices; where I initially heard clawing and desperation, Koegler imagined dialogue between inquisitive species. Listening with that context in mind, the tonal shift into inconstant territory is joined by the bold, enticing unfamiliarity that propels all good sci-fi.

On the other hand, the album represents a different sort of dialogue, one more grounded on Earth: the push and pull of nature and technology. Although the recording took place in St Andrews, the production mostly occurred following Koegler's move to Glasgow. The bustling cultural hub contrasts sharply with quiet, coastal St Andrews, and the tension between the two locations is evident throughout *Translation Project*. Pastoral plucks deftly weave through industrial clanks and bangs, all the while accompanied by ambient swells and the unpredictable string intrusions that constitute Koegler's trademark. She describes listening to demos while strolling down country paths, juxtaposing unkempt, natural sights with the sleek, metallic enhancements emanating from her earbuds.

Koegler's primary spots for workshopping ideas outside the studio, however, were botanic gardens. Contrary to the natural facade that they cultivate, Koegler sees botanic gardens as existing in opposition to the wilds of the countryside. On a base level, she appreciates the gardens for their winding paths and hidden crevices, which enable her to achieve total privacy even while observing other visitors passing by. But beyond their physical structure, Koegler draws inspiration from the greater concept of these man-made constructions of imagined paradise which she refers to as "industrial representation[s] of nature." "We've created something that doesn't exist," she says, "and the way that we've presented it is completely aesthetic and perfect."

Koegler's nuanced fascination with botanic gardens could serve as a thesis for her approach to the album as a whole. There's a level of trepidation surrounding the attempted beautification and restraint of nature, doomed to fail as it may be. Nonetheless, accompanying that caution is a certain respect for those who would dare to face the natural world and decide that it not only can be controlled, but done better. The consequences of the industrial age have dragged humanity and nature into conflict as never before, making communication and understanding vital to prevent catastrophe. *Translation Project* paints a world in which nature and machinery work in parallel, if not in collaboration. It's a disquieting backdrop to thoughts of exploring the galaxy and meeting new species - how can we focus on other planets if we can't live in harmony with our own? As I walked from Glasgow city centre to Koegler's flat, I passed sprawling public parks, extravagant museums of art and history, and rows of brick warehouses and semi-operational smokestacks, all in the span of a few blocks. In retrospect, her seemingly conflicting creative inspirations had been justified to me from the moment I got off the train.

The careful cohabitation between nature and modernity is most evident on track three. 'On Frequencies (Catalan)' mixes a strict quarter note arpeggio with a beat taken straight from a finely-tuned assembly line. It sounds like the inside of a dollhouse: everything is pretty and orderly, and the projection of perfection never pauses. Toward the end of the piece, however, the real world fades in, bringing sounds of city streets and children's voices into focus. Koegler recalls sitting alone in a park in Barcelona, listening to demos, when "all of a sudden, the park became filled with children." She presciently began to record, and in doing so captured a vibrant scene of daily life within the unnatural confines of a city park. 'On Frequencies' settles conflicting ideas, the botanic gardens debate playing out over the course of one song. It's not quite a battlefield, more a reluctant acceptance from both sides, nature and modernity, of the sheer immovability of each opposing force. Koegler sits caught between a rock and a hard place, simply trying to take it all in.



"A very unsophisticated process on a very sophisticated instrument"

Koegler worked on the album alongside producer Jack Mosele, whom she met in London where they were both working on music for a fashion show. She describes picking through sample libraries together, searching for sounds evocative of metallic, mechanical environments. Koegler was especially drawn to machines that replace or supplement basic human functions, such as sewing machines, iron lungs, and power drills. Beyond the foundation of the harp, nearly every aspect of the record's production derives from these industrial building blocks. All percussion is comprised of "organic" sounds, including car crashes and crackling fires, and the backgrounds and in-between spaces are crammed with the clamour of spaceships and factories.

Koegler and Mosele coordinated primarily over long distance, a situation that forced Koegler to surrender some control over her recordings. Although she retained full creative direction, both the recording and production processes led Koegler to develop a positive "relationship with mistakes and chance." Many of the pieces emerged impulsively - using alternate tunings, unusual arrangements of the harp's pedals, and odd microphone placements - and were recorded in one take, due in part to Koegler's inexperience with recording software. 'On Frequencies,' for instance, was performed in what she refers to as a "never tuning." Having let the harp sit untouched for over a month, Koegler returned to the instrument and began recording without tuning it, effectively ensuring that the piece can never be perfectly recreated.

The two 'Improvisation' tracks similarly encapsulate Koegler's do-or-die approach: as the titles suggest, the base tracks were recorded spontaneously. Koegler speaks of learning to trust her ear, as well as the rest of her body's relationship with the harp itself, by picking the brains of her musician friends. "It took a village," she says, but the result of her investigation enabled her to work with the harp, rather than against it. Mosele's production supplements the improvisations, adding starkly intentional synthesised melodies and pounding beats to the harp's nimble, free-time dance. More so than on other tracks, the effects on 'Improvisation' 1 and 2 seem to submit to the performance, accommodating its frivolousness instead of conforming to a structure. In addition to their musical merits, the improvisations offer *Translation Project*'s most impactful statement: that humanity's attempts to prescribe nature through technology will always falter.

'STREET LIFE IN LONDON'
Italian Street Musicians, John Thomson and
Adolphe Smith, LSE Museum, 1877
Compositing: Jack Sloop, San Francisco,
California, January 2023

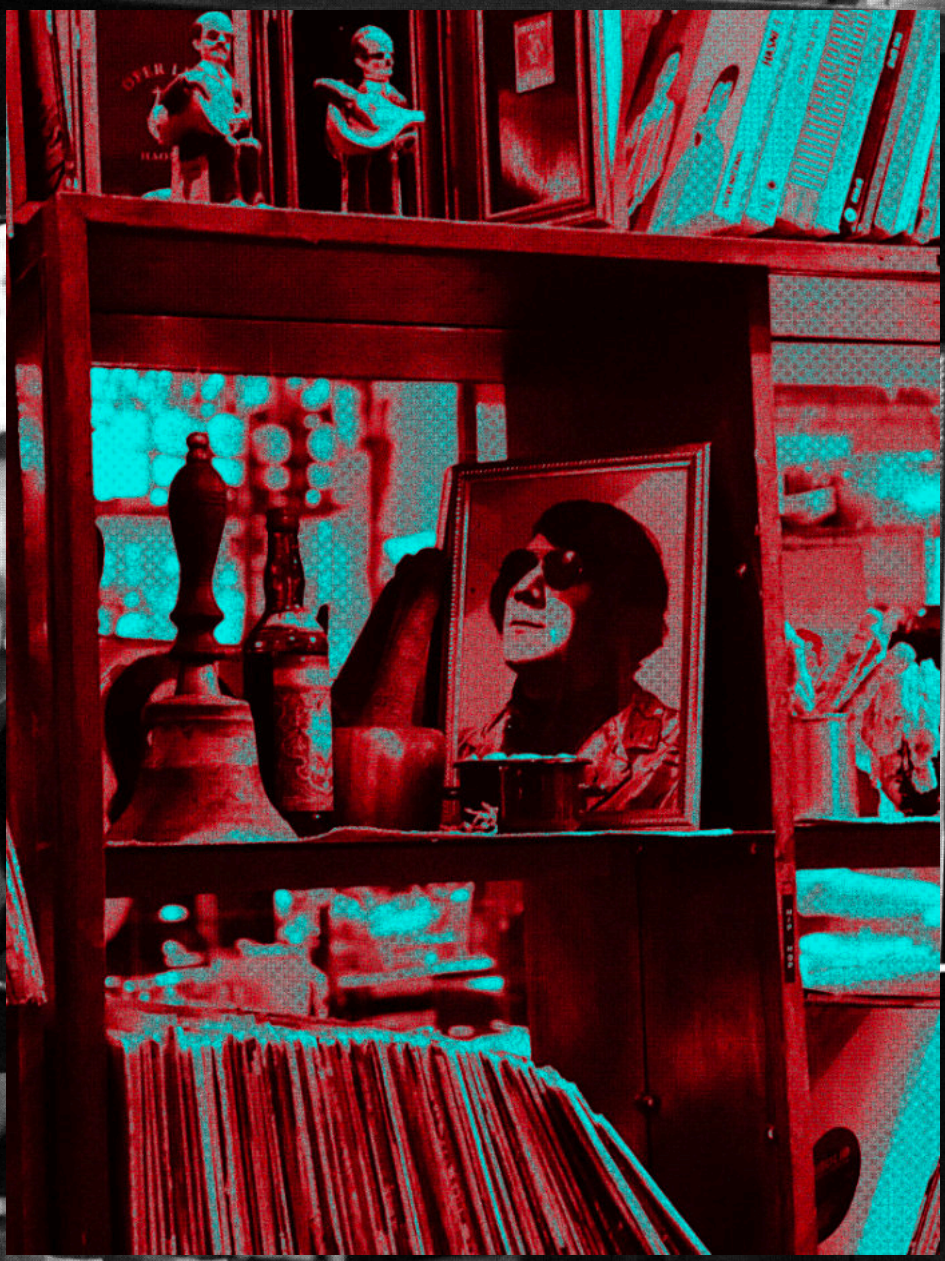
"If I asked you, would you consider this to be music?"

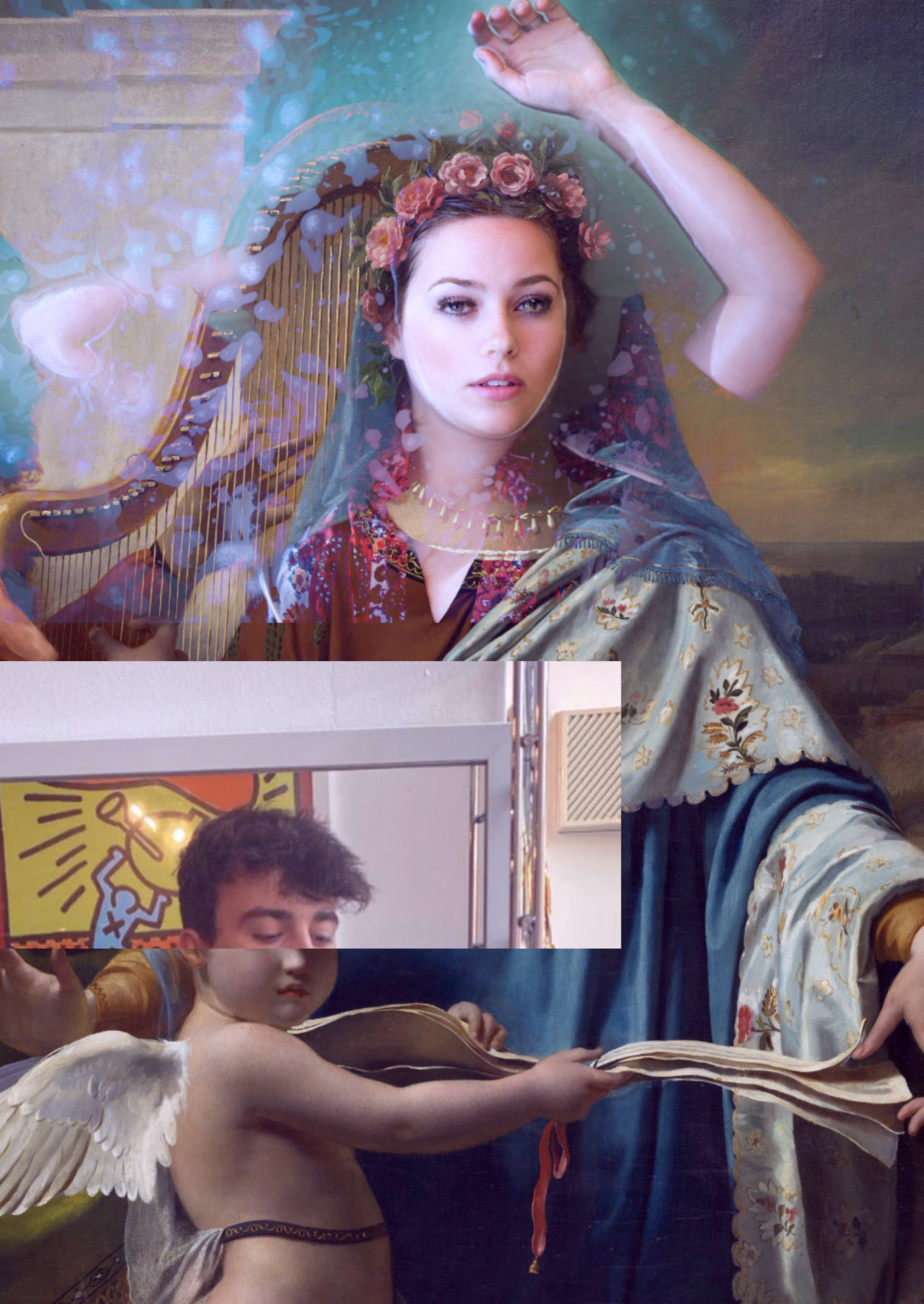
In a way, musical instruments are alien lifeforms themselves. The harp was created by humans, but its inventors could not have imagined every sound that could possibly emerge from it. Harpists of the past would be shocked by today's innovations, a pattern that will almost certainly continue. And yet, despite the impossibility of the task, it is human nature to test boundaries, if for no other reason than so that our successors can pick up where we left off. It therefore makes perfect sense that Koegler, coming from a background in clavssical European-style training, would arrive at scratching her strings with metal tubes and joining her sound with the rhythm of factories. *Translation Project* fundamentally aims to look forward, and first does so by reflecting on the present world around it. The album rejects the pinnacle of yesterday's achievements in favour of relative simplicity. Textural variety trumps singular feats of musicianship, and industrial assimilation threatens to overwhelm individuality and free expression. But in the end, nature's will proves to be too powerful to overcome, as it has time and time again.

Nowhere does the broader philosophical point or any attempt to innovate overshadow the beauty of the music on *Translation Project*. By the end of our conversation, despite her words to the contrary, I am confident that Koegler has long since ceased to be intimidated by the harp. Awed by its capabilities, certainly. But their relationship is one of equals; a complex synthesis of human and extraterrestrial, nature and machinery, harp and harpist.

Learn more about Multilingual Science Fiction and *Translation Project* at: https://www.multilingualsciencefiction.com

UNTITLED NO. 1
Arielle Friedlander
Auckland, New Zealand
January, 2023





SOUND FAMILIAR?

A LOOK AT THE RISE OF INTERPOLATIONS IN POP

TOMMY MACGILLIVRAY

Earlier this year, Kate Bush made history as the artist with the longest time between number one songs on the UK singles chart when her 80s single 'Running up That Hill (A Deal with God)' experienced a resurgence in popularity after featuring in Netflix's *Stranger Things*. It felt strange to hear the 1985 track nestled amongst the brash beats of modern pop radio. The reality, however, is that we've been hearing melodies from the 80s, 90s, and earlier on the radio more than ever in recent years. This is about the growing popularity of interpolations in modern pop music.

One needn't look further than September's Official Singles Chart to see what I mean. Standing proudly atop the chart is David Guetta and Bebe Rexha's 'I'm Good (Blue)', which unabashedly interpolates the hook of Eiffel 65's hit 'Blue (Da Ba Dee)', which held the number one spot exactly 23 years prior.

Interpolating is when one song takes musical material from another - typically a melody - without using the original recording, which would constitute a sample. Dua Lipa, for example, samples Lew Stone & the Monseigneur Band and Al Bowlly's 'My Woman' on 'Love Again'; but interpolates the bassline and melody from INXS' 'Need You Tonight' on her single 'Break My Heart'. Other songs both sample and interpolate, as Yung Gravy's 'Betty' does with Rick Astley's 'Never Gonna Give You Up'.

GHOSTLY SHITPOST
Saint Cecilia of Rome, 1824
Callie Morgan, September 12, 2016
Tommy MacGillivray, October 22, 2022
Compositing: Jack Sloop, January 2023

Interpolations in pop music are nothing new; to quote songwriter Jamie Hartman, they're "as old as the hills." There is evidence, however, that they have increased in popularity in recent years. Nate Sloan, a musicologist and co-host of the SwitchedOn Pop podcast, analysed the Billboard Hot 100 year-end charts of the 2010s. He found that between 2010 and 2015, just 10% of songs credited an interpolation Between 2016 and 2021, however, this number doubled to 20%.

Sloan's findings make sense when considering the biggest hits of the beginning of the latter period, especially in 2017. Some of the most prominent hits of the year; including 'Shape of You' by Ed Sheeran, 'Look What You Made Me Do' by Taylor Swift, and 'Feel It Still' by Portugal. The Man; all prominently feature interpolations of past hits. So, is there a reason behind this seeming surge in popularity?

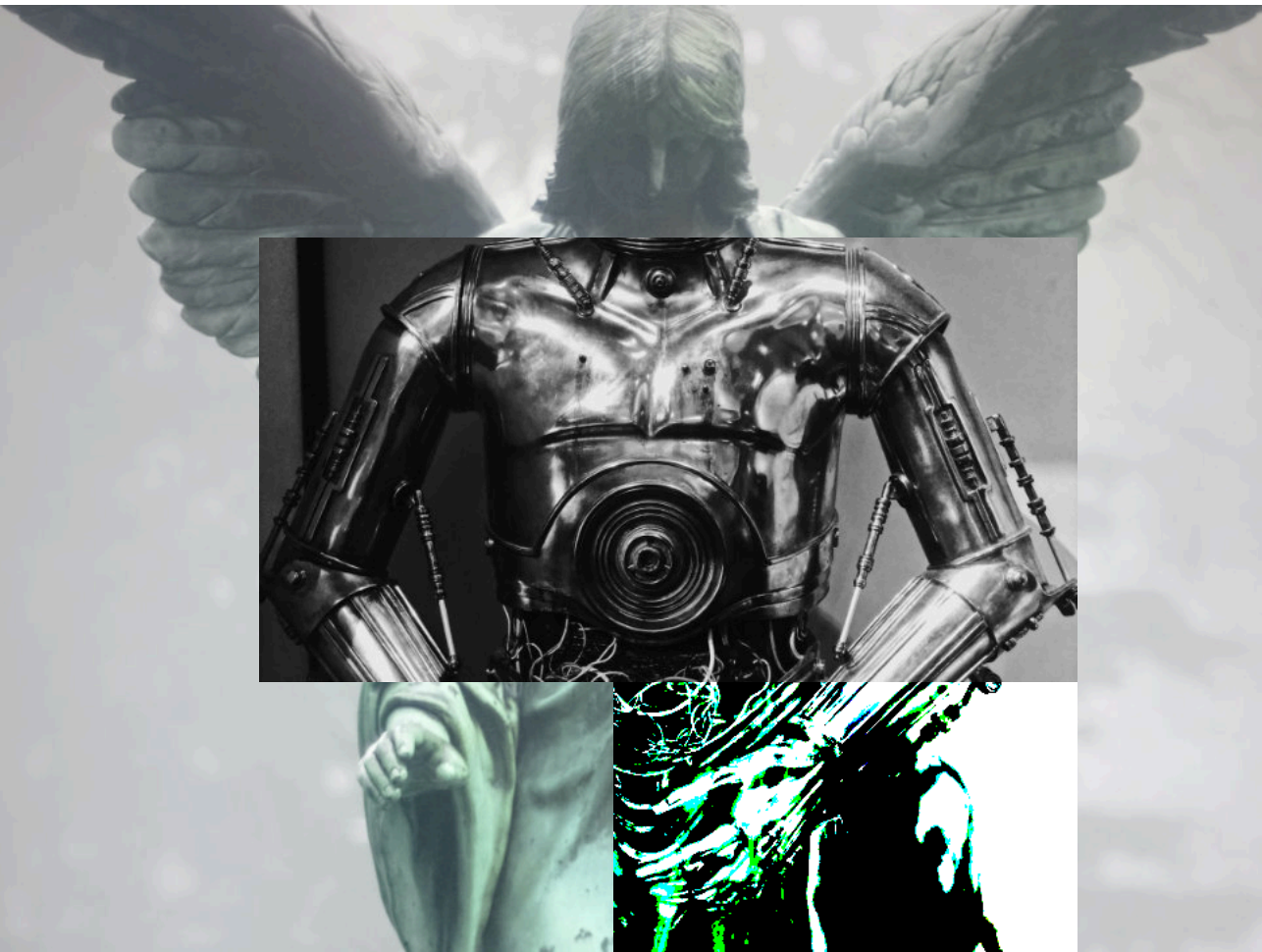
Interpolations in songs can be broadly categorised into two camps. The first includes cases where a song incorporates elements of another song's melody or even just its vibe and credits the original because of it. The second consists of songs where the interpolation is the core of the song itself, as if the song was made with the express intention of flipping the original.

One possible explanation for the apparent rise in songs with interpolations might simply be that interpolations are being credited more often than in the past. High-profile cases of singers being sued for plagiarism has led to songwriters and performers being more careful when deciding whether to include an additional songwriting credit. Notable cases include Taylor Swift being sued for the alleged similarities between 'Shake It Off' and the 3LW song 'Playas Gonna Play', and Katy Perry going to court for supposedly stealing the eight-note riff that opens her 2014 single 'Dark Horse' from rapper Marcus Gray. In a particularly infamous example, Marvin Gaye's family sued Robin Thicke and Pharell Williams for cribbing the vibe of Gaye's 'Got to Give It Up' for their 2013 hit, 'Blurred Lines'.. Despite the lack of direct interpolation in Thicke's record, cases such as these have driven artists to be more cautious than before, even giving co-writing credits when no melodic information is taken. Recent examples include Beyoncé crediting Robin S. on 'Break my Soul', and One Republic crediting Young Folks on their recent hit, 'I Ain't Worried'. When artists do take legal action, even if the interpolating artist wins the lawsuit (as in the cases of both Swift and Perry), the legal expenses and negative media coverage are simply not worth the hassle for major label artists who can afford to fork over a share of the publishing revenue.

On the other hand, the practice of clear, intentional interpolation is becoming more prevalent. A recent phenomenon is that of artists selling their back catalogue to music publishers, as Bob Dylan recently did to Sony for an estimated $150 million. These publishing companies have made significant financial investment in the rights to these songs, and in order to make back that value they must find a way to generate renewed interest in these records. Interpolation is one way of doing so.

Publishing companies now set up songwriting camps with the intention of finding writers to revamp a song from their catalogue and sell it to a new artist. The strategy brings the company double revenue streams: one from the new song and its royalties; and another from new interest in the original record, which the publishing company also owns and can derive revenue from. One such camp was organised in June 2021 by publishing company Primary Wave, which acquired the rights to a swathe of hits by performers such as Stevie Wonder and Bob Marley and sent them out to attending writers ahead of the camp. Resultantly, Dan Wilson's 'Closing Time' (the rights to which Primary Wave had acquired earlier that year) eventually manifested in the Iann Dior track 'Thought It Was', a collaboration with Machine Gun Kelly and Travis Barker.

So, if you've noticed a peculiar sense of déjà vu when listening to the radio (or your personally-curated Spotify playlist because, let's be honest, it's 2022) recently, you're not alone. Interpolations do seem to be on the rise, and are being encouraged behind the scenes in ways you might not even be aware of. While it's possible to take a cynical look at this label-driven means of songwriting, it is impossible to deny their effectiveness in generating hits. As songwriter Jennie Owen Young put it, "no new hook will ever be as hooky as a hook that has already hooked you." Just ask David Guetta.



ENKA:
THE IMAGINED HOMELAND

ILENE KRALL

As I fold my knees on the soft *tatami* of my grandparents' living room, the perpetually running TV plays a performance of a pale woman with dark hair in a kimono, her powerful vibrato running against grandiose backing music. The singer belts out a popular *enka* song. Though it may be unfamiliar to foreign ears, my Japanese grandparents frequently play enka music throughout the house, making sure my brother and I grow up with the music they enjoy and hope to pass on.

Enka, a genre of music endemic to Japan, speaks of the *kokoro*, or soul, of Japan. Its lyrics paint pictures of Japan's rolling mountains, green fields, and sprawling blue oceans. Its themes speak of devotion to the *furusatō*, or the homeland, and of yearning for love, friendship, and loyalty. Emerging in the late 1960s, enka underscored the angst of a destabilised post-war generation that sought to reconnect with the collective conception of their homeland.

DREAMS
Hanging Poems on a Cherry Tree,
Library of Congress,
Ishikawa Toyonobu, 1741,
Unknown, Arielle Friedlander
Auckland, New Zealand, 2023,
Compositing: Jack Sloop, January 2023

For the Japanese (and I speak from experience), being deemed 'truly' Japanese is of great importance. The music you listen to, the food you eat, and the people you spend your time with all indicate how Japanese you are. 'Japaneseness' is earned through devotion to the homeland, and loyalty and respect for tradition are key aspects of earning this label. So, during an era of widespread alienation, younger generations sought to reground themselves to their identity by returning to the traditional. Enka emerged in this context, subverting expectations of younger generations to distinguish themselves from older generations through novel music trends. The emergence of enka thus foregrounded the "introspection boom" of the post-war era, where Japanese society fixated on the question: "Who are we Japanese?" By evoking images of rural Japan, a long-lost lover, or the breathtaking beauty of Japan's nature, enka evoked a sense of nostalgia that allowed the Japanese public to feel connected to their homeland once again. A need for community, and enka's ability to fulfil this yearning, "suggests a forum for collective nostalgia," writes Christine Yano, "which actively appropriates and shapes the past, thereby binding the group together." As a result, enka becomes a tool to create and reshape Japanese identity.

The homeland enka captures, however, is imagined and produced. Specific characteristics of enka reinforce its reputation of authenticity, while others hint at its international roots. The genre's predecessors, *kayō kyoku* or *ryū kō k*, are a primary indicator of enka's non-Japanese beginnings. The genres, which emerged in the 1940s, are heavily influenced by jazz and blues. Western music, first introduced to Japan at the start of the Meiji period (1868) according to Deborah Shamoon in her 2013 article 'Recreating traditional music in postwar Japan: a prehistory of enka', was quickly accepted into the country, and mastery of its techniques was considered crucial to the modernisation of Japan. Jazz grew steadily in influence and, by the 1940's, was merged with *kayō kyoku* to create a fusion genre popular with younger audiences. Products of this fusion genre influence enka.

An example of this fusion is the emergence of the pentatonic scale. Much of popular Western music is based on the seven-note scale. Traditionally Japanese music, however, was often based on three note tetrachords. According to Shamoon, "composers in the Meiji period, in an attempt to fit these older modes into Western classical music theory, incorrectly described them as pentatonic." Thereafter, pentatonic scales were utilised throughout Japanese music and incorrectly labelled as traditionally Japanese. Titled *yonanuki chō -onkai* (pentatonic major) and *yonanuki tanonkai* (pentatonic minor), these scales were used as indicators of authentic Japanese music, though their origins suggest otherwise.

Other hybrid features taint the perception of enka as an authentically traditional genre. Vocally for instance, as Gaute Hellås explained in 2012, enka is sung utilising traditionally japanese vocal styles and techniques. One popular example is that of *kōbushi*, which Hellås defines as "vibrato-like ornamentation that can produce an effect which resembles stylized crying." Paired with themes of longing, heartbreak, and love, this style of singing heightens the song's emotional impact. Techniques which are not traditionally Japanese, however, are also employed. Yuri, more similar to Euro-American vibrato techniques, is used in some enka tracks, evoking a "distinctive 'swinging' of the voice."

Structurally and thematically, enka is highly repetitive. According to Hellås, the repetitive nature of the genre "imprints a set of musical expectations and familiarities over time." This allows audiences to set aside curiosity and listen to enka for what they believe it is: an evocation of the *furusatō*. The genre thus relies almost completely on emotional appeal, intensifying its impact and tightening its relationship with audiences. Enka's general commitment to the poetic features of *Waka* also aids in this emotional connection to audiences. *Waka* consists of three verses of five to eight lines, each of which are made up of five to seven syllables. These lines utilise "emotional lyricism expressing beauty and sadness often through use of images of nature and elements of *nihonjin-ron*, the theory that Japan is culturally and linguistically unique and pure," according to Hellås. Carrying these poetic features through to enka, the genre's seeming commitment to the *furusatō* is heightened, furthering audience perception of enka's authenticity.

Performative techniques are also utilised in order to evoke a 'traditional' Japan. Enka performance is highly ritualised. Singers often perform in traditional Japanese *kimono*, accompanying ballads that describe the performer's Japan with pronounced vocal ornamentation and intense orchestration. Each of these characteristics of the genre serves to establish music that evokes a feeling of nostalgia and belonging.

If enka's image of authenticity is false, however, what does that mean for enka's impact as a tool to create a collective, imagined homeland? The importance of tradition in Japanese culture is reinforced in many ways, particularly through the cultural fixation on imitation versus authenticity. Would you prefer a hamburger over ramen? Ah, not very Japanese, are you. Do you prefer rap to enka? Oh, so you're not really Japanese then. Simple distinctions such as these often hold relevance in someone's perception of one's Japaneseness. But, when enka, an indicator of Japaneseness itself, can be proven to be not completely, authentically Japanese, what does that imply about the concept of true Japaneseness?

Though these questions cannot be answered in this space of this article, enka's role in eliciting the collective imagined Japanese identity speaks volumes on music's ability to unite a group of people. As a cultural tool, enka provides a common ground for now older generations of Japanese to feel more connected to the *furusatō*, and remind them of the Japan that they believe once existed.

By always having enka blaring from the TV, my grandparents passed on not only a love for a genre that has been quite contained to a single culture, but also the nostalgia of the *kokoro* of Japan. Despite its hybrid origins, enka's reputation as authentic and honouring the *furusatō* is more impactful, keeping its role as a cultural unifier intact. Do the origins of a genre or piece of music indicate its impact? Are origins truly important? Though beginnings may be important in a technical sense, such as per the musical makeup of enka, I believe they are ultimately secondary to perception. Enka is perceived as traditionally Japanese, and so it is. Despite my mixed heritage, my family has raised me to be Japanese, and so I am. In our similarly hybrid roots, I feel a connection to enka unmatched by other music genres, and I know it will be blaring out of my TV when I have grandchildren of my own.

Citations

Shamoon, D. (2014), 'Recreating traditional music in postwar Japan: a prehistory of enka', Japan Forum, 26 (1), pp. 113-138.

Yano, C. R. (2003), Tears of Longing: Nostalgia and the Nation in Japanese Popular Song, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center.

Hellås, G. (2012), 'Changes in a Changeless World: Continuity and Discontinuity in Japanese Enka Music', Master thesis, University of Oslo, Oslo.