Jason Woolley: The cultural politics of using technology to support the aesthetic in jazz record production

Abstract

This paper discusses the attitudes some contemporary jazz musicians have toward the use of technology and the thresholds of studio 'intervention' they are willing to cross in order to achieve their preferred studio recording aesthetic. The discussion draws upon personal experiences of mainly free jazz production, and also the returns of a pilot survey of jazz musicians, who were polled on the subject of the use of technology in the production of jazz recordings. Grounded theory was utilised as a methodology to code the survey responses into two main categories of 'idealistic' and 'pragmatic' responses. This coding enabled a discussion of the themes which were evident in the responses. This limited study found that clear consensus on the extent to which studio techniques should be used in the production of jazz recordings was not apparent in the data. There were instances where some studio techniques were considered acceptable, whilst others which were as similarly technically invasive as the acceptable, were not acceptable. It also appeared that it was generally acceptable to edit pre-composed elements of the musical performances, but not acceptable to edit improvisations. This perhaps reinforces the notion that for the jazz performer the ephemeral 'moment', which many studio productions aim to represent, occurs when they are improvising. Finally, it appears for these participants, whether a studio intervention such as an edit is audible in the final recording is irrelevant. The fact that a studio intervention was required or occurred due to perceived deficiencies in the recorded performance, crosses the boundary of acceptability in terms of their own interpretation of 'authenticity' in jazz recordings.

Introduction (background and context)

Both jazz and classical music are played by highly trained performers, who have spent a lifetime perfecting their ability to read music, and in the case of jazz, to improvise a certain way. Thus these forms of music are generally recorded live, without overdubs, and with minimal, if any, post-performance enhancement. (Moorefield 2005: xiv)

We are aware from a number of writings that for many jazz musicians there exists, what we might refer to, as tensions between the jazz community's ideological notion of 'authenticity'[1], and how practitioners respond and order their practice upon this, including how they engage with processes of recording and producing a recording of jazz music. This tension manifests itself in the potential for studio techniques to be used to present a 'dishonest' representation of a performance. Consider John Hammond, jazz producer, in 1953, quoted by Khan on the use of editing via tape splicing. 'It made it possible to make more dishonest records than ever before, through splicing' (Kahn: 2000, p.110). As Khan points out for 'traditionalists' like Hammond, '[I]f it altered the sanctity of the improvised jazz moment, it was simply wrong'. (Khan: 2000, p.110) Although certainly not exclusively, those jazz musicians who aim to achieve a 'live' in the studio aesthetic, whilst striving for great sounding records, appear to also want to ensure that the production process is transparent, and in being transparent, there is no sense that, when the recording is disseminated, what the listener is hearing is something which has been manipulated beyond the artist's ability to play. Jago (2012) has made discussion of the challenges of reconciling the use of the studio with jazz authenticity when presenting the example of Tristano, and although the topics discussed share comparison, the context is somewhat different to this study in that the focus in this research is on the 'live in the studio' recording aesthetic rather than the use of extended studio techniques as an artistic tool. This study attempts to understand the attitudes jazz musicians have toward the application of studio techniques such as pitch correction, rhythmical edits, overdubs, and/or other methods for 'improving' or creating a more convenient version of a recorded 'live' performance in pre and post-recording contexts. I will occasionally refer to the application of these sorts of techniques for the latter strategic aim as being studio 'interventions'. Although some of the techniques might be considered as extended studio techniques, they can also be considered interventions when the purpose is to create a more convenient sonic aesthetic.

Across a broad range of music which falls under the category of jazz there exist varying levels of engagement with studio based sound manipulation techniques. We might consider that in the case of those practitioners who seek a 'live' aesthetic from the studio, studio manipulation is supposedly minimal, and that this contrasts to instances where the use of 'extended' studio techniques in a post-recording context are integral to an artistic vision. It is interesting that at both ends of this spectrum, 'to the point of parody' according to Hegarty (2007, p.10), artists often like to present a kind of account of the production process which some would argue attempts to frame the work within the boundaries of the acceptable and authentic in order to

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[1] I will define 'authenticity' in the context of this study later in the paper.

'gain acceptance with an audience' (Zagorski-Thomas: 2010, p.261). Some might also argue that liner notes are a marketing technique and/ or merely an addition to the product that is there to contribute to the listener's experience, by providing a context and perhaps story backdrop to the production.

In the context of this study, the use of studio techniques as correctional tools are unlikely to be explained and presented on album liners, as for many jazz practitioners and fans this would demonstrate studio strategies that stretch the boundaries beyond the notion of an authentic representation. This study is concerned with consulting jazz practitioner's views on where studio interventions are appropriate and if there is a threshold point where the amount or type of intervention travels beyond the acceptable.

'Authenticity' for 'traditionalists'/ 'purists' and beyond

As Grazian and others have written, authenticity is a construct rather than an 'objective quality' (Grazian in Bennett and Peterson 2004). Although more than one notion of authenticity is apparent in the practices of the respondents discussed in this writing, the main focus of this paper is concerned with the status of jazz recordings as documents or 'inscriptions' of the moment (Corbett in Gabbard 1995). Therefore, in this context a recording of jazz might be 'authentic' when it is considered a document or inscription of the moment that was the original recorded performance. In theory such a recording can therefore not contain anything other than the musicians performing together at the same time, or the soloist performing alone in what was in the moment. This type of recording of jazz is considered authentic because it purports to represent what happened in the moment during the performance that was recorded and was 'unaltered' by further overdubs, musical edits or processing. Milner has discussed how recording engineers such as Laico sort to create for the record listener a sense of being in the 'presence' of the musicians by '…mak[ing] the records as "transparent" as possible' (Milner: 2007, p149). Of course when a deeper consideration of the recording process is made, we understand that a recording is never a neutral or a 'transparent' representation of the moment (Page 2009).

As authenticity is a construct, a shared belief between groups of individuals, there are those within the data sample, and beyond, that might argue a different notion of what is authentic in the recording and production of jazz. In this paper, when referring to the term authenticity, it is the former definition of the term which is of most interest to the discussion of this study.

Liveness and the fiction of recording

Auslander (1999) has asserted that an important part of jazz music, for the genre's players and fans, is in its 'liveness' within the 'spur of the moment' (Taylor quoted in Jago: 2013, p.no page number). This is in contrast to Rock music, where often the aim of live performance is to recreate the idealised studio recording (to affirm the authenticity of the music). Whilst recreating the sound of a live recording for jazz musicians is important, authenticity for 'purists' is affirmed from their ability to recreate moments like (but not the same as) all the moments heard on their fixed recorded version. Therefore we might consider that in many instances, the challenge for some recording jazz performers (and their producers) is to avoid unwanted mediation in the production process which distorts the moment beyond what was actually played in that moment and this might be achieved perhaps by limiting studio interventions within the production process of their performances. Many will agree that the avoidance of mediation in a studio recording context is impossible, as the studio processes always impart something, and as Crooks puts it, '...the sonics of jazz recording are not true to the original performance–no recording is' (Crooks: 2012, p. no page number). We might also consider Anderson's assertion that '[A]ny recording is a 'fiction', a falsity, even in its most pure form' (Anderson quoted in Page: 2009, p. no page number), and furthermore Williams' discussion on the status of sound recording as being a 'reading' of an event.

> The practice of sound recording implies by definition a reading, a deciphering, an attending to a sonic event. This is the meaning of the difference between the three-dimensional physical "sound" and its recording as a one-dimensional analogically encoded event (Williams: 1980, p. 12).

What do the jazz musicians themselves actually think and consider?

We know something about how some jazz practitioners and fans view the recording process and how they consider that it can be considered to have impacted negatively on the ideological authenticity of their recorded music, from anecdotes and interpretations of other clues such as album liner notes and scholarly writing. Jago (2012) has documented Atlantic's inclusion of a disclaimer on Lennie Tristano's 'The New Tristano' outlining that extended studio techniques had not been used. Jago goes on to explain that this was in response to a critical and fan backlash to the overt use by Tristano of extended studio techniques on his earlier record 'Tristano' and here Jago appears to be suggesting that the liner notes were a commercial decision by the record label in response to a backlash to Tristano's earlier work. Tristano's use of extended studio techniques was an artistic consideration, and not a studio intervention as I have outlined here. Jago has documented that although many might consider the use of extended studio techniques to be beyond the

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threshold of jazz authenticity, Tristano himself did not. Jago's rational for the backlash to Tristano's work can be suitably applied to explain why studio interventions might not be acceptable for some practitioners and fans.

> The record is held to be an artifact of a live event, and even if it were not recorded in a "live" setting complete with audience, but rather "live in-studio," the general assumption has been that the musicians were subject to the same constraints – the same improvisational demands – as they would have been in a club or concert setting (Jago 2013).

Intervening to change some element of a performance on a 'live' Jazz recording takes the constraints on the performers beyond the club or concert setting.

Within the study of Popular Music, Zagorski-Thomas (2010) has discussed the example of the liner notes of Queen's early albums, which may or may not have been (according to Zagorski-Thomas) for the purpose of anchoring Queen's early records within the acceptable paradigm of Rock authenticity, as it stood at the time. Zagorski-Thomas outlines what appears to be a contradiction in that whilst Queen exploited the use of extended studio techniques to achieve their artistic vision of over-dubbed guitar parts, Brian May and Queen felt the need for an album liner note disclaiming the use of synths in the production of the music, perhaps to reassure their fan base of their authenticity as a Rock band. This example has some parallels to the Tristano example given by Jago, where the artistic aim results in the creation something that cannot be recreated live without some form of extension to their respective ensembles, be that in the form of additional ensemble members or the addition of electronic augmentation such as backing tracks. It also suggests something of a threshold to the application of studio techniques, in that at the time of the Queen albums discussed, it was acceptable to overdub to a point where recreation beyond the live capabilities of existing band members was impossible but not acceptable to use a synth, as '[S]ynthesisers, [were] once seen not as musical instruments but as machines that had no place in rock…' (Auslander 2008, p.84)

I am interested in instances where the studio techniques are being used to enhance a 'live' performance. That is to say, no additional musical parts are added other than those individual and singular contributions made, solo or ensemble based, during the recording and therefore if overdubbing occurs, it does not involve anything beyond overdubbing more than each ensemble members initial part. This study is interested in the use of the studio as a tool in order to achieve the artists 'ideal' live recording in the studio, and where it is that the threshold for studio processes and interventions is crossed, rendering the finished recording as unauthentic for the artists themselves. Previous studies on this topic have often concentrated on the reception and perception of the listener and critic, this study aims to look toward an understanding of

the view of the artist/practitioner. So for the artist, for example, is it acceptable to 'correct' the less appealing aspects of a recorded 'live' performance using studio techniques? And in instances where studio techniques are applied to 'correct' or enhance a recorded moment post recording, what is the threshold upon which a recording travels from 'authentic' to 'unauthentic' in the perception of the performer(s).

My own experience of engineering jazz recordings revealed tensions between jazz musicians wanting to respond to the ideological demands of authenticity, and the desire to produce a sonically satisfying recording of their moments. As one respondent to the survey said, the challenge when producing a jazz record with an intentional 'live' aspect is to present an account of the music, through recording, which reconciles with the '...album format.' On two recent free jazz productions for The Markov Chain (2014), and Spirit Farm (2015), I found that the tensions between 'authenticity' and the impact recording/ post recording process has on the perception of this did exist. However, there was no clear consensus from any of the 8 performers involved in these separate projects on where the threshold before the impact of studio intervention renders the recorded representation beyond the authentic was or is. To give an example, performers in the one session requested limits to the number of microphones to be used in order to limit post-recording rebalancing, whereas performers in the other session did not make any similar demands. Understanding the rationale of the jazz performer in a studio context I feel would contribute to practice. With this goal in mind, I felt it would be useful to poll jazz performers beyond the confides of my practice and experience, through online survey polling of jazz musicians who partake in recording sessions.

Method: The challenges of survey design

An anonymous online questionnaire survey of jazz practitioners was considered a possible way of supporting and expanding upon my personal practice led insights. Whilst the survey has quantitative and qualitative aspects to its design, due to the limited number of responses, the discussion of this paper focusses on the qualitative aspects of the data collected. Given the challenges with survey 'noise' such as 'socially desirable bias' outlined by Neumann (2014), it was felt that participant anonymity would serve to gather more accurate responses from the jazz performers. The latter is considered a twofold design consideration. In the first consideration the anonymous framework would help support and encourage respondents to respond faithfully and honestly without concern for presenting socially un-desirable responses. The 2nd consideration of the same concern guided the choice of online survey as opposed to other approaches to data collection such as structured interviews. It was felt that within this pilot study, asking participants to com-

municate their responses personally to the researcher may have resulted in data noise in the form of socially desirable bias. Furthermore, the 'online' approach with a web link to the survey rather than email or other means to identify participants, gave the respondents further assurance that there was no option for the researcher to trace electronic identity or other information. However, none of the latter two considerations are considered assurances that participants did respond with complete honesty.

Method: Jazz style and sub-genre

Given the complexities and debate on defining jazz practice, the survey design had to consider the question of jazz sub-genre from two main perspectives. Firstly, there appears to be no absolute collective agreement within the jazz community on terminology when describing practice. The survey navigated questions on terminology by asking practitioners to describe their practice in their preferred terms which, as expected, resulted in a number of different terms being used by participants such as 'free', 'free-jazz', 'plain jazz', 'improvised music', 'straight-ahead', 'large ensemble', 'big band', 'small ensemble', 'electronic', 'traditional, and 'modern'. The 2nd consideration was the possibility that practitioners were likely to practice more than one sub-genre or elements of a sub-genre. Therefore the survey design allowed participants to specify more than one sub-genre of jazz practice if they wished. The advantages were that data collection would not exclude any type of jazz practitioner and would not be hampered by entering into a debate on terminology which is not considered the aim of the study.

A pre-considered disadvantage to this methodology is that where a participant indicates more than one style or sub-genre in their practice, it might be more challenging to identify which of their practices they are referring to in response to a survey question. Therefore a 'partially open ended' questioning framework was utilised in the survey design (Neumann 2014). A multiple choice element formed part of the survey design and each participant was given the opportunity to choose more than one answer from a number of presented responses including 'none of the above'. Participants were also encouraged to comment and qualify their answer to a multiple choice question by referring to their practice in the free text comments section available for each question.

Method: Survey design - Language

The survey design consciously avoided language such as 'authentic', mostly because I wanted to avoid the survey reponses, especially in the free text areas, veering toward a discussion on the topic of authenticity in jazz (although some respondents did have a view to offer regardless of my intentions). Also, it was felt words like authenticity might well influence

responses toward a socially desirable bias resulting in additional noise within the data.

Alongside 'socially desirable bias', other considerations of where 'noise' may occur included the possibility that participants might not understand some of the language and terminology required to outline the studio recording context of the questions. Therefore, the studio process questions were as 'plainly' worded as possible in order to assist in the gathering of views from those practitioners within the sample who were not as experienced and familiar with studio production process terminology.

Participants and recruitment

Jazz practitioners who engage with studio recording and production as performers were invited to engage with the survey via an internet link to the survey which was created using the BOS online survey tool (https://www.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/). My institution currently requires researchers gathering data by survey to use the latter survey tool. The survey design was subject to ethical approval including providing participants with a Participant Instruction Sheet prior to their engagement with the survey itself. Invites were sent out over a six-week period via email from myself and also via the networks of jazz musicians and researchers I have contact with, and participants generally would have been from networks within the UK, Portugal and Sweden. There were no other restrictions to the eligibility to take part in the survey other than the above and the data gather showed that participants spanned an age range of adults up to the age of 60 or above.

Data Limitations

There are of course limitations to what can be concluded from the data collected. The partially open ended framework of the survey design and also the opportunity for multiple responses from participants which occasionally allowed participants to give more than one answer if they desired, means the quantitative data is not reliable enough to draw any conclusions. If the data collection could have been restricted to, for example' practitioners who perform and record free jazz only, and the survey responses had been more numerous, a much more traditional scrutiny of the quantitative data would have been possible. In my analysis, the quantitative elements are occasionally referred to in the discussion of the qualitative information supplied by participants in the free text comments box of each question.

This is a small pilot study which was open for participation for a relatively short period and avoided techniques for gaining broader engagement such as unsolicited contact. I asked members of my own small network, whom I mostly knew through recording activities, to engage with the survey, and to also distribute the survey link to their own network of contacts. Thirty-three

anonymous responses were collected during the six-week period from when the survey link was published.

Results and Analysis

For the analysis of the data, I used Glaser and Strauss' Grounded Theory approach as detailed by Urquhart (2013) as a method for the analysis of qualitative data and this involved data- driven coding or 'open coding' of the survey responses (Gibbs 2012). Although I am '…an observer of the social world and a part of that same world…' I wanted to begin with as near to an open approach as possible (Gibbs: 2012, p9). This seemed appropriate as before the coding began, anecdotal evidence seemed to indicate that the survey data would potentially contain a broad range of viewpoints which might not necessarily mirror the viewpoints of those jazz musicians I had produced recordings for in the past. Furthermore, a similar approach has also been successfully used by Brand et al (2012) on a smaller number of twenty-four responses in their qualitative study of jazz performers and audience members recruited from a series of eight gigs at The Vortex Jazz club in London.

When reading through the responses collected I noted some themes within the responses to a number of the survey questions[2]. In my analysis I coded these themes on whether they were either 'idealistic' or 'pragmatic'. By idealistic, I mean where the decision making process would appear to be motivated by a rationale that is abstracted from the sonic aesthetic of the outcome, and relies more on a ideological belief of what is acceptable practice in the production of jazz recordings. A decision or choice that is motivated by a belief which places the utmost importance on the process irrespoective of whether this might negatively impact on the sonic aesthetic of the outcome. As a polarity to idealistic, pragmatic coding refers to where the response indicates that a clear strategic goal of achieving the best sonic aesthetic, regardless of the processes involved, is of the most importance to the respondent. Once the codings were completed, I identified some theoretical insights for discussion on how these jazz musicians interact with the recording studio and associate processes, and how this interaction is reconciled with the demands of their community of fans and fellow practitioners.

Pragmatic

As discussed, this is defined as where the response in some way indicates that the quality of the sonic aesthetic supersedes any concerns about the pro-

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[2] This approach was not appropriate for all the questions and responses within the survey framework. Some questions were designed to enable a contextual analysis e.g. age of respondent, and sub-genre of jazz practice.

duction process introducing elements that are not part of the original moment. For instance, this could be where the music and/or conceptual elements are the most important aspect of the outcome, rather than adherrence to a guiding set rules which govern what is for instance politically or culturally accepatable as studio practice in a jazz production context. Where there is no ideological or other concern that the studio process is impacting on the authenticity of the recorded performance as a document of music in the moment, and the only concern is that there is a convenient musical and sonic outcome, and/or the conceptual starting point is maintained. Here are some example responses that fall into this coding:

> The process is driven by the work, at times it is relevant to capture the moment of spontaneity unchanged at others the integrity may be better served assembling in post to represent the intention. Process is flexible and unique driven by the conceptual goal of an individual project. [in response to survey question 5]

> Getting the idea out how you want it to be is the most important, so all the above are acceptable. [in response to survey question 5]

Idealistic[3]

As explained above, this is defined as where the response in some way appears to indicate that a belief, whether social or cultural, dictates what is acceptable in terms of recording workflow when producing the recording. For instance, this might be where the purpose of the production process is to present the 'liveness' of the moment in a truthful, honest, and unaltered way. The responses categorised in this coding bracket, demonstrate an approach which places the utmost value on a belief that jazz performance is a 'live' activity, and the recordings of jazz performances must represent a faithful representation of that moment – away from the 'adulteration' of post recording interventions. Here are some example responses from the survey data:

> …the more improvisation there is, the less post-production there should be. [in response to survey question 5]

> They're all acceptable practices but with my own work, I'm not fully comfortable with excessive edits/overdubs within improvised contexts. [in response to survey question 5]

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[3] Although 'Idealistic' refers essentially to an ideological motive, to avoid confusion and a debate outside of this paper, I have avoided the use of the term ideology as a coding category. For example, 'pragmatic' practice may be driven by commercialisation which could also be argued as an ideological motive.

> Limited overdubbing etc., regardless of listening stance of audience, as long as the overdubs are improvised (never the same twice). [in response to survey question 5]

Also assigned to the idealistic category were those instances where an importance appears to be placed on the collective viewpoints of the activists of the session. This appears to suggest instances where some type of ensemble 'democracy' is at play, where the collective decide what is best for the music, rather than a dictation by any individual activist. A democratic idealistic approach which has the potential at least, to supersede the musical and/or conceptual outcome as a factor of importance. Here are some example responses from the survey data:

> The answer would emerge through discussion with everyone involved. We'd reach a consensus and go with that. [in response to survey question 9]

> All depends on the wishes of the other performers. [in response to survey question 9]

Discussion

Theme 1 – What is acceptable as an intervention and where is it acceptable?

> Jazz is, however, a genre where the cultural norms are rather different in terms of the settings and conventions of performance. It places improvisation at its core, and so its dominant discourse puts the performer, in the specific here and now, right into the driving seat (Crooks, 2012).

When considering processes such as how much studio intervention is acceptable to the jazz artist in the production of a jazz recording, the data unsurprisingly demonstrates a polarity of views. There are those coded as 'idealistic' where the viewpoint collected indicated that factors outside of the importance of the sonic aesthetic appear to influence the participant's practice and use of the studio. There are also those I have coded as 'pragmatic' where viewpoints indicate the partcipant's goal is to achieve the best sonic aesthetic regardless of the processes involved and included comments such as '[T]he studio is a tool to be used in any way possible in order to produce the best result'. For those respondents that gave viewpoints coded in this study as 'idealistic', there was some indication of where the threshold for studio intervention procedures would be deemed to contravene the boundaries of an authentic recording as defined for this study. In some of the free text responses to the survey questions, some participants indicated that stu-

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dio interventions were unacceptable on areas of the music which were originally improvised by the musician(s). Comments included the following:

> I wouldn't want any editing done on a free improv[sic] recording…

> I'm not fully comfortable with excessive edits/overdubs within improvised contexts.

> Personally I don't like to do any overdubbing at all, as my aim is to present accurate representations of the music made in the moment. This is because improvisation by the players makes up most of the music being recorded, meaning that there are no 'mistakes' that need to be corrected with overdubbing.

> Limited overdubbing etc., regardless of listening stance of audience, as long as the overdubs are improvised (never the same twice).

> With improvisations I would be more restrictive towards post-processing.

This is in contrast to pragmatic comments made on the composed or fixed musical elements of a recording.

> ...but on a piece that was fully composed, editing and splicing takes where necessary [is ok].

> If it's plain jazz with mainly acoustic instruments then you should just do the necessary work in the post-recording process.

> I would tend toward unlimited post-recording action but only in the sense of faithfully presenting the original concept.

> However, if I found myself having to record heavily-notated big band music, for example, where the accurate performance of the notation is priority, I would use overdubs to correct mistakes if necessary.

These free text comments appear to indicate that, for this small survey, and for some respondents within the data collected, the threshold of studio intervention is not found in the nature and amount of processing, the threshold appears to be at what type of musical element is subject to the intervention. It appears that for some respondents, the threshold is whether the section which is subject to an intervention was originally an improvised passage of music. For some participants it is within the boundaries of their authenticity to intervene where there appears to be a less than ideal take of a performance of composed music, but to intervene on an unsatisfactory improvised element, other than to re-record an alternative different version of the whole musical piece, sits outside of the boundaries of authenticity. We might conclude that for these participants, the ephemeral interaction of the moment

occurs when they are improvising. Anything that is pre-composed and recorded exactly as scored prior to the recording session could be considered as being pre-created and outside of the moment. For some respondents, by applying studio editing techniques to unsatisfactory improvised elements, we are distorting the moment and creating an alternative reality of what happened in that moment, and perhaps by doing so, creating a record of another and different moment of interaction.

Theme 2 – Jazz performer's perceptions of where and how the studio intervenes and the sliding scale of acceptability

From the responses to this survey, as a group, the respondents demonstrate a broad range of viewpoints on what is acceptable as studio practice. Individual responses also demonstrate what we might consider either as a non-acceptance that production techniques are never impartial, or, that there is a sliding scale of what is, and what is not acceptable as studio practice. This is evident when individual responses appear to demonstrate idealistic and also pragmatic responses to different questions in the same overall return. Consider the comments from the same participant shown in example 1 below:

Example 1:

Personally I don't like to do any overdubbing at all, as my aim is to present accurate representations of the music made in the moment. [in response to question 5]

Sometimes when a group has recorded multiple extended improvisations, I think it's acceptable to lift out sections to make tracks for an album… I see this excerpts approach as a way of reconciling free improvisation with the album format… [in response to question 12]

In example 1, the respondent aims to record music in the moment, but considers the reordering of the moment in post-production acceptable practice. Corbett would consider that the recording strategy referred to in example 1 is compositional practice rather than free improvisation.

…recording involves the post-facto selection, editing, organization, sequencing, titling and packaging (all compositional, not improvisational considerations) of music that has been made by means of improvisation but is now repeatable and fixed (Corbett in Gabbard 1995).

Example 2 (shown below) also demonstrates idealistic and pragmatic responses in the same individual's return. Whilst there appears to be a commitment to capturing the moment, it appears to be acceptable to edit the moment if it is not a convenient moment.

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Example 2:

> I prefer to record live as part of an ensemble. Jazz is an "in the moment" music which largely depends on the rapport between the musicians in time/space. [in response to question 8]

> I have released recordings with "mistakes" but also have inserted corrections if the mistake means the music suffers to a degree that I find unacceptable. [in response to question 9]

Whilst in the context of musical performance, the dynamic, pitch and timing are all part of the performed moment, the responses in Example 3 (shown below) demonstrate that the participant is comfortable with the post-recording rebalancing of the dynamics of the recorded performance, but not as comfortable altering pitch and timing of the recorded performance. I would argue, that in terms of the moment, altering dynamics, pitch or timing are all equally invasive to the presentation of the original moment.

Example 3:

> To change/enhance the levels and dynamic balance of the music where this is lacking in the original performance. [in response to question 10]

> I would only alter pitch or timing in exceptional circumstances. [in response to question 11]

As outlined above, at this stage it is not clear whether participants accept or have fully considered the impact recording and the processes involved have upon of their music. It is my intention that this matter will be explored further in my plans for the future development of this research.

Conclusion

Within the data collected, respondents demonstrated approaches and attitudes to the studio recording and production of jazz that I was able to define and code as 'idealistic' or 'pragmatic'. The idealistic approaches often relate to the production recordings of improvised music which may be where, for these respondents, the jazz moment resides. The responses coded as pragmatic often demonstrated an 'anything goes attitude' to the use of the studio and their practice often demonstrates use of the studio '… as a compositional tool' (Eno in Cox and Warner: 2004, p.115). Some responses demonstrated a contradiction in approaches to studio practice, with individuals advocating clear idealistic studio strategies in some areas of the survey, but demonstrating that they were also willing to undertake pragmatic action in order to enhance their original recording in other areas of the survey. For example, it

could be argued that whilst no overdubbing might help to create a somewhat 'honest' document of a jazz moment, the use post-recording editing creates something which is further away from the original moment. In the case of these musicians, there appears to be no agreement on where the limit of studio intervention is, and there appears to be something akin to a 'sliding scale 'of acceptability in terms of jazz production practice (Grazian in Bennett and Peterson 2004).

A final thought on this pilot study is that it is interesting to consider that a studio intervention, as a corrective tool, when applied effectively, should be inaudible to the listener, therefore rendering it 'invisible'. The only people that will be aware of its existence are the production team and the artist(s). However, as this data collection reveals, for some participants the fact that an intervention was needed seems unacceptable regardless of whether anyone beyond the production team is aware or not of any corrective intervention in the final version.

Future research

Further research aims to gather additional data through semi-structured interview as this will hopefully provide the opportunity to discuss with jazz practitioners the points raised in this pilot study in more detail.

Acknowledgements

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Appendices

Survey Questions

1. Please confirm which category best describes you as a Jazz practitioner

a. I am a Jazz performer aged between 16-29 years old.

b. I am a Jazz performer aged between 30-39 years old.

c. I am a Jazz performer aged between 40-49 years old.

d. I am a Jazz performer aged between 50-59 years old.

e. I am a Jazz performer aged between 60 years old or above.

f. Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

2. Please describe the type(s) of Jazz music-making you take part in when recording. I understand there may be more than one type you take part in, so please include them all. Some Jazz musicians align themselves to practice terms such as 'Free' or 'Straight-ahead' or ensemble terms such as Trio or Big Band. Whilst these terms are fine, if other terms and language are more appropriate to you as a practitioner, please feel free to use them. This question asks you to type in the comment box below.

3. What are your priorities when choosing to organise or perform in a Jazz recording session?
a. Budget
b. The availability of a good sound engineer
c. The availability of good equipment
d. Other (please specify and comment in the box below)

4. In your opinion, when a Jazz recording is produced for dissemination, please tick which are the most important of the following statements. (Choose more than one if you wish)
a. The production process and strategy should strive to faithfully represent the performances captured during the recording session without any post recording editing or manipulation.
b. The production process and strategy should strive to present the performances captured during the recording session in the best way possible, and in order to achieve this aim, post-recording editing and processing should not be overly used.
c. The production process and strategy should strive to present the performances captured during the recording session in the best way possible even if this involves unlimited post-recording editing and processing at the mixing stage.
d. Other (please specify and comment in the box below)

5. In your opinion, which of the following are acceptable as part of Jazz music production. (Tick more than one if appropriate).
a. Unlimited overdubbing, editing and processing of the recorded performances as part of the production process regardless of whether this is noticeable on the final recording.
b. Unlimited overdubbing, editing and processing of the recorded performances as part of the production process as long as this goes unnoticed by any one listening to the final recording.
c. Limited overdubbing, editing and processing of the recorded performances as part of the production process regardless of whether this is noticeable to anyone listening to the final recording.
d. Limited overdubbing, editing and processing of the recorded performances as part of the production process as long as this goes unnoticed by anyone listening to the final recording.
e. No overdubbing, editing and processing as part of the production process.
f. Other (please specify and comment in the box below).

6. In your opinion, which of the following are most important to Jazz music fans? (Tick more than one if appropriate).
a. The recording is a faithful reproduction of the performances captured during the recording session.
b. There were no edits or overdubs utilised in the production process.
c. None of the above. The only thing that matters is the music sounds great, the production process is irrelevant.
d. Other (please specify and comment in the box below)

7. If you were to take part as a performer in a Jazz recording session, which microphone techniques would you prefer?
a. A single microphone placed close to my instrument.
b. Multiple microphones placed close and/or in proximity to my instrument
c. A single mono or stereo microphone placed in the room to capture the whole ensemble
d. Other preference, no preference or unsure (please comment in the box below).

8. When recording with a Jazz ensemble which of the following applies to you?
a. I prefer to record live as part of an ensemble.
b. I prefer to overdub my parts by layering my parts on top of previously recorded parts.
c. Other (please comment in the box below)

9. If a player or players made noticeable mistakes during a Jazz ensemble recording session, which of the following actions would you be happy to take?

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a. Re-record the whole ensemble until all players get their parts correct or are satisfied with their parts.

b. Overdub only the parts where the noticeable mistakes occurred.

c. Edit the recording to correct any mistakes.

d. Release the recording as is with no re-recording or edits.

e. Other (please comment in the box below)

10. Considering the recording and production of Jazz, in your opinion which is the most important mixing strategy?

a. To maintain the levels and dynamic balance of the music as it was performed.

b. To change/enhance the levels and dynamic balance of the music where this is lacking in the original performance.

c. Allowing the levels and dynamic balance of the music to be altered even if this leads to development of a new musical outcome which was not the planned intention of the performer(s).

d. Other (please comment in the box below).

11. In your opinion, which of the following are acceptable when producing a mix of a Jazz recording?

a. Rebalancing of individual instrument levels between the instruments of an ensemble.

b. Reorganising the positions of ensemble instruments in relation to each other so that they vary from the actual positions they held in relation to each other during the recording session. c. (E.g. Piano was on the left of the room/stage during recording, but is placed in the right stereo speaker in the final mixed recording).

d. Adding artificial reverb.

e. Introducing additional effects such as Chorus, Distortion or Flanging to the recording.

f. Rebalancing the level and dynamic articulation of an individual instrument.

g. Editing timing mistakes made by a performer.

h. Applying tonal enhancement to any part of the recording using equalisation techniques

i. Editing and correcting recorded pitch mistakes.

j. Adding audio samples which were not part of the original performance

k. None of these are acceptable. (if you wish to comment, please do so below).

12. When you or someone else produce a Jazz recording you have performed on, which of the following structural edits would be acceptable?

a. To creatively edit an instrument out of sections of the recording.

b. To creatively edit an instrument out of the entire recording.

c. To remove or reorder whole sections of the overall recording.

d. To edit in order to loop/repeat a section of the recording which was not repeated previously by the ensemble.

e. None.

f. Other (please comment in the box below).