

Postmodernism, a range of ways in which it shows itself, in thinking about music and its practice

*'The sheer stylistic diversity of postmodernism meant that it resisted convenient categorisation, so its impact was restricted to the recognition an individual player might achieve rather than the force generated by a community of similar orientated and competing artists.'* (Cooke: 2002)

In the latter part of the twentieth century new cultural movements were surfacing through society and into the arts disciplines, including jazz. In this period, many new diverse styles were being devised simultaneously, and were later labelled under the term postmodernism.

Many believe that postmodernist music is a rejection of modernist thoughts, questioning its aesthetics, and a shattering of its theories. Alternatively it can be seen as a continuation of modernism, following similar ideas as futurism and appropriation. Music which comes under the umbrella of postmodernism is entangled with many theories as to how it began, as its connotations are in continuous flux juxtaposing with each other.

In the 1970s we see a social economical conditional change or cultural crisis, where society becomes disenchanted with the dogma of enlightenment. Society started to challenge authority, question cultural codes, and shift from imperialistic thoughts from uniformity to diversity. Cultural aesthetic boundaries started to be challenged, new and old philosophies were used that moved away from scientific logic back to spirituality. There was a deeper conscious awareness and recognition of other global cultures and previous generations, accepting their cultural ethics and aesthetical principles as equal.

These thoughts started to be reflected in art disciplines, especially music. The term in music is hard to define as it not a particular style, rather a characteristic or a word used to describe a culmination of these styles. Styles and thoughts of the musicians usually juxtapose, making it difficult to label which works are postmodern. We notice a shift from the 1970s of the musicians, audience and scholarship in music, who reflect this cultural postmodern ideology. Thoughts towards music started to adopt new conventions, challenging the codes that had been in place. Music started to move away from one musical

thought, and was replaced by a collection of many. There is no more a distinct style, but a palette of styles chosen at will and placed together at the artists' choice. Theorists believed that there would be no more original works of art, only copies devised from past concepts.

In music, postmodern musicians started to question codes and conventions which they had entangled within their practise, such as what constituted as music, and the relationship towards the audience. Barriers started too broken down between the composer, performer and even the audience in live musical works. Composers started to approach their work with new theories towards compositional techniques, appropriating techniques from previous generations and eastern music. We see a change in the way the performer approaches the method of devising there musical style, the new instruments they use, to their cross collaboration thoughts, that leads to problems defining a performer to categorise them into a particular style. Trying to understand postmodern in music through reflection of the musicians thoughts become problematic, ideas are juxtaposed continuously.

Postmodernism is strongly reflected in jazz from the 1970s, even though some of the ideas of style absorption or cross collaboration appear earlier, as this is a key concept entwined in the devising of jazz from its beginnings. Concepts of postmodernism are reflected in the music, from the cultural thoughts, and new philosophies of the performer and composer.