

## The Social and Economic Location of Jazz and Improvising Musicians and Their Music

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### Abstract

Recent studies of jazz as a musical culture have amplified the cultural turn in social theory by presenting a conflicting array of theories and concepts to chase a literary analysis of meanings which renders them reverberatory and mutable, without demonstrating that social subjects subscribe to these meanings, nor offering accounts of their measured consequences, while ascribing musician marginal social and economic locations. In contrast, by using the CAMSIS approach, this paper begins to locate international jazz and improvising musicians within the stratified social space of their social and economic interactions and understandings, and examines musicians' incomes, performances and career experiences.

**Key words :** Musicians, Occupations, Stratification, CAMSIS

### Introduction

As the cultural turn in social theory has increasingly relied on literary analysis of the (symbolic) meanings of social phenomena (Grossberg et. al., 1992; Long 1997) recent studies of jazz as a musical culture have amplified that interpretive methodology. It will be shown that critical theorists of jazz in particular call forth an eclectic, contradictory array of social theories and concepts to chase a literary analysis of 'meanings' which renders them reverberatory and mutable. Furthermore, they do this without demonstrating subscription to such meanings by those, e.g., musicians, to whom they are attributed, without presenting adequately assessed consequences flowing from such meanings, and while preconceiving musician as members of low, oppressed, artistic, social and economic status groupings. Instead, most often,

they proffer interpretations of meanings in terms of their concordance with stereotypical conventions, and whether they reinforce or undermine such stereotypes. Generally critical theorists make no notable attempt to evaluate the application and consequence of meanings in specific, determined circumstances, nor to substantiate actors having widespread subscription to, or disavowal of, these meanings. Instead, for these theorists, the supposed meanings are said to apply and their effects are presumed to ensue, both despite and because of their holding to poststructuralist relativism.

For example, social identities, e.g., of class, gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, etc., are presented as the imposition of oppressive stereotypes and any actual specific expressions of meanings associated with such identities are

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interpreted according to their relative degree of concordance with those stereotypes; thus, they were interpreted as either reinforcing or undermining their stereotypical meanings and social ordering. They often advanced class, usually a two-class model with its residual derivatives, as important for social meanings, understandings and actions, and they present evidence both of, and lack of, correspondence and/or contradiction among class location, understandings and behaviours as evidence of both the complexities of the real world and the sophistication of their theories which admit to such problematic interrelationships in the real world; imprecise correspondence and/or contradiction were not considered evidence of any shortcomings within their theoretical and conceptual framework. Critical theorists encounter similar difficulties in relation to their other preferred identities, of race gender and sexuality, for example, and adopt similar strategies in response. Such a reaction in face of explanatory inconsistencies will be shown to be not limited to critical theorists of jazz, but also found in the synthetic approaches to identity of Bauman and Giddens, as exemplars of that school.

To begin to unpack these sorts of explanatory puzzles, this study examined an occupational group of professional international jazz and improvising musicians to socially and economically locate them and their patterns of interaction within the hierarchy of social stratification, and to examine their evaluations of their occupational and artistic experiences based on interviews and survey sampling of 88 musicians working in the international jazz and improvised music circuit,

and participant observation, conducted over the period mid-1998–2002. The survey is ongoing, thus findings are preliminary, and will be discussed with that in mind. After some brief reference to the findings of occupational studies, the musicians were located within the Cambridge Scale of Social Interaction and Stratification, which shows that people in the social structure interact most often with others, friends and spouses, who sit in close proximity to their own position in the hierarchy of stratification. After showing that their parents, friends, and spouses were primarily from lower professional to upper professional positions on the scale, the educational attainments of these musicians are shown to accord with that. It is also revealed that the cultural and artistic influences of these musicians in early childhood accorded with studies showing a richer range of experience and consumption among those on/above the lower professional position on the scale. It is also pointed out that their early household experiences significantly contributed to their educational, occupational and specific musical choices for their careers. However, it is so that while their upbringing and education would normally prepare them for lower professional and professional occupations and incomes, and that their current interactions in social space would reinforce those understandings and expectations, these are not their actual occupational outcomes.

Few of these currently attain the average occupational incomes of their social background and educational attainment after many years of persistence in their careers, let alone the expected entry income of first occupation of graduates. Unlike graduates entering the lower rung of the

career ladder and gradually accumulating promotion and income increments, these musicians reported many years (between 12 and 15 years on average, before becoming established musicians with adequate income. Their incomes, annual and monthly, are also shown to be generally low, and subject to extreme volatility over the year. It is also shown that they experience considerable difficulty in obtaining regular, well-paid performances and put in many hours of unpaid labour to attain those. To secure performances they participated in numerous performance projects, which widened their contacts with other musicians, and widened their range of experiences. However, it is also suggested that as they invest more effort and time in their careers, as the years pass before they become established, their range of alternative opportunities narrow, with their accumulated skills as musicians and performers coming to be seen as the main area wherein they retain some control, and the one they most invested their successes on. This leads to increasing focus on that area of their life in anticipation that it will lead to success. Something they are reinforced in with ensemble performances and by other musicians commending them their musical achievements. It is suggested that what helps sustain them is their valuation of the music they create in performance with other, like musicians, that they live for performances that are often infrequent and can be underpaid; the ensemble performances are described as the immense products of their considerable investment in practice, study and investigation of musical possibilities.

#### **Relative Importance of Art, Occupation and Consumption**

As the cultural turn in social theory has increasingly relied on literary analysis of the (symbolic) meanings of social phenomena (Grossberg et. al., 1992; Long 1997) recent studies of jazz as a musical culture have amplified that interpretive methodology. Particularly, critical theorists of jazz call forth an eclectic, contradictory assortment of social theories and concepts to chase a literary analysis of 'meanings' which renders them reverberatory and mutable (Ake 2001; Gabbard 1995a, 1995b; Gendron 1995; Kenney 1995; Mackey 1995; Monson 1996; 1998, 1999, 2001; Porter 2002, Radano 1995; Rasula 1995) They do this without demonstrating either subscription to such meanings by those, e.g., musicians, to who they are attributed, and without presenting assessed consequences flowing from these meanings. Instead, they offer an interpretation of meanings in terms of their concordance or not with convention, usually stereotype, and the interpretations is offered are to whether their presentation in specific situations reinforces or undermines such stereotypes. Moreover they assume and assert that cross-cutting social locations and/or identities, e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, etc., lead to generally unstable and fractured meanings and personal identities. However, these critical theorists do not attempt to determine the actual relative weight and effects of the meanings that they ascribe to social situations; instead there is an assumed efficacy and a resort to an eclectic array of social theories to assert their origins and overall importance in social processes.

Curiously, when considering jazz music culture, despite adopting a relativism which excludes value judgments as relative, subjective

and ideological, critical theorists freely opt for what approximates a reflection theory of art, for one of the most abstract and least concrete of the arts. They find this in the expression of cultural identities and social experience. The social experiences of African Americans, primarily focusing on privation and discrimination, are held to be the source of an authentic music which is their expression. Deciphering the authentic from the inauthentic creation, expression and uses of jazz music is one of the tasks they ask of symbolic analysis of jazz and its performance; where the authentic expression is seen to be subversive of ideologies and stereotypical portrayals and the inauthentic is said to be appropriative of cultural creativity. The determiner of authenticity and inauthenticity is, firstly, skin colour, and, secondly, being disadvantaged or advantaged. It is an approach which sides with the underdog, and for that demands that it is taken for granted that all African Americans in the US are equally disadvantaged and subsequently subscribe to a common culture of resistance and struggle in the face of hardship. Simultaneously, the musicians and the range of music which they include within their analysis of the authentic is unduly constrained. The difficulties in such a position leads them to pose the contradictory nature of social experience and the cross-cutting effects of social identities, making the limitations of their own research strategy and theoretical pluralism, those of the social. This study makes no such assumptions, does not limit analysis to presumed meanings of social categories such as class, race,

ethnicity, gender, and so on, but sets out to locate musicians within their actual social interactions, and examines the international nature of their music making.<sup>1</sup>

The critical theorists of jazz attempts to address, perhaps evade, explanatory problems by turning to theoretical eclecticism, to interpretation to displace explanation with a plethora of open ended meanings, and to ascribing excessive complexity and contradiction to social processes is more commonplace than comfortable. The theories they turn to support their interpretations of jazz culture, current and future trends and the appropriation of the music often suggest a periodisation of developments within contemporary societies. Different theorist describe the movement through periods in different ways, for example, as early, mature and late capitalism<sup>2</sup>, or as heavy and light capitalism, or as early, mature, and late modernity/modernism, or modernity/modernism and postmodernity/postmodernism. Commonly, they detail subsequent periods in terms of features and processes said to be operating contrary to the features and processes held to characteristic of the preceding epoch. For Marxists, problems with the homogenisation of labour, monopolisation, commodification and managed capitalism, come to be described in the current periods as flexible specialisation of production, post-Fordism and disorganised capitalism. For, modernisation and functionalist theory, differentiation of culture and social functions in modernity, comes to be described as de-differentiation. Commonly, they make the inversion of what was problematic and

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<sup>1</sup> The jazz musician Jerome Harris has written about the international nature of jazz and the dependence of American musicians on the international performance circuit to earn their living (Harris 2000).

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<sup>2</sup> One might wonder if what is in actual fact late here is the late arrival of theoretical expectations for this capitalism,; these being primarily for its demise.

incoherent for their theoretical explanations, what was not demonstrable empirically for the previous theoretical phase of development, the characterising feature of the succeeding phase. In other words, they determine that what was problematic for their theories, contradicting their explanations, to be the distinctive attributes of the present phase, and tend to make the complexity of empirical reality confirmation of their view that theories and reality must diverge. The very contradictions of their theories and the social complexities they throw up are given to depict the present, a procedure advanced as necessary and as acknowledging a realism by which theorists are converging on common explanatory solutions; in fact they are converging on common explanatory problems.

The effects of these proposed movements through social phases for work and art, the position and relative importance of each, and the social processes said to be effecting them generally, are presented differently in accordance with the preferred theoretical approach and periodisation. Critical theorists tend to call on all of these at different points in their interpretive deconstructions, in a manner which implies a compensatory fit of theories, whereby one theory makes good for what another lacks, in the manner presented as convergence on common theoretical problems and solutions within social theory. With music, for example, the process of creation and the art works produced have been described, in neo-Marxist terms, as a relatively autonomous culture subject to, and resistant of, commodification and proletarianisation (Adorno 1981 1984, 1987, Garofalo 1987, Jameson 1984); as conforming with differentiation common of industrial

production systems (Becker 1982, Greenberg<sup>3</sup> 1960, Gilmore<sup>4</sup> 1987); as subject to modernist processes of routinisation and/or ritualisation of social norms (Faulkner 1973, Small 1987, Weber 1968); as a career structure within modernist society (Becker 1963, Faulkner 1973); or as an activity pursued by 'outsiders' in musical sub-cultures working against the grain of modernist culture (Becker 1963, Polsky 1960); or as a cultural activity dislocated from social structure and social practice (Bell, 1973); or as being subject to late modernist or postmodernist de-differentiation (Lash 1999, Lyotard 1981, Foucault 1998), for example. However, it is precisely difficulties with the above periodising of modernist or industrial society which leads to the inversion of favoured defining processes being said to be characteristic of subsequent periods, and to the emptying out of social identities and locations which fail to conform.

The emptying out of social identities and locations in the face of explanatory difficulties can be seen in the twists and turns of the contemporary social theory of Bauman and Giddens,<sup>5</sup> for who even employment, work (thus significantly social stratification) is said to have become a consequence of free lifestyle choices. Bauman draws this conclusion, offering no strong supportive evidence, in his treatment of the importance of work for both identity and social reproduction he writes:

"Given the intrinsic volatility and unfixedity of all or most identities, it is the ability to 'shop round' in the supermarkets of identities, the degree of genuine or putative consumer freedom to select one's identity and to hold it as long as desired, that becomes the royal road to the fulfilment of

identity fantasies." (2000, p. 83)

And

"Work can no longer offer the secure axis around which to wrap and fix self-definitions, identities and life-projects. Neither can it be easily conceived of as the ethical foundation of society, or as the ethical axis of individual life.

Instead, work has acquired - alongside other activities - a mainly aesthetic significance. It is expected to be gratifying by and in itself, rather than be measured by the genuine or putative effects it brings to one's brother and sisters in humanity or the might of the nation and country, let alone the bliss of future generations.... It is instead measured by its capacity to be entertaining and amusing, satisfying not so much the... the producer and the creator as the aesthetical needs and desires of the consumer, the seeker of sensations and collector of experiences." (2000, p. 139)

Thus, there is an implied indifference to work and its outcomes, it is another 'aesthetic' lifestyle choice. Bauman describes work as flexible and meaningless, subject to the lowest common denominator of conditions and rewards, the relation of capital to labour held to be mere cohabitation, not marriage, with the free and easy movement of capital in and out of countries, with precarious employment for workers who are

equally uncommitted to their positions. Subsequent to stating this, he cites a 1991 study classifying four broad types of work, noting that only the fourth, 'routine production workers', fit his characterisation of work.<sup>6</sup>

Giddens, 1991, addressing the issue of self-identity in modern society also shifts from a previous position of class and economic constraint on life chances and work opportunities to these being a free lifestyle choice within an overall context of identity formation. While he notes that occupational location is a crucial limiter of life chances, he stresses self-help guides are critical for identity formation and employment, career, choices; the reflexive individuals who he once argued were influenced by sociology in making free choices, i.e., free and contrary the theory supposedly altering their actions, he now argues that they are swayed in their course by psychology, (pop psychology<sup>7</sup>):

"I make fairly extensive reference to social research and practical 'guides to living', not as a means of documenting a definite subject-matter, but as symptomatic of social phenomena or trends of development I seek to identify. These are not just works 'about' social processes, but materials which in some part constitute them."

(Giddens 1991 p. 2)

These guides are shop-bought, or market purchases, as are the identities they recommend for individuals: the choice of a lifestyle guides the selection a job and its requisite range of declarative products<sup>8</sup>. Thus, what Giddens singles out as a crucial restraint on lifestyle

<sup>3</sup> Greenberg's aesthetic is essentially an aesthetic of the differentiation of modernism; that each art purifies itself of features extraneous to its medium focusing every more specifically on that; thus each art becomes a functional specialist for its expressive medium.

<sup>4</sup> Gilmore writes: "The regularised patterns of interaction and exchange between compositional and performance activities represents a production system in an art world."

<sup>5</sup> Monson (1996, 1999) presents a musical metaphor of Giddens's structuration model to attempt to explain the interaction among improvising jazz musicians on stage, their understandings and actions in life, and the reproductions of a global society and system of African American diasporic music making. Such are the wide ranging claims of critical theorists of jazz.

<sup>6</sup> The other three are, first, symbolic manipulators who work with ideas and making them marketable, next are educators and welfare state employees, and last, those providing various personal services.

choices for many people, occupational location, he argues itself to be the consequence of lifestyle choice. While there may seem to be some justification to this, that the characteristics of occupations, their identities, do make them more or less preferable and their relative attractions are made known by a number of routes; nevertheless, there is more to the matter than purchasing a paperback guide to life from a shop, and there is some need for sociologists to demonstrate the exercise of this choice and the composure of behaviours in line with the texts' proscriptions, not to simply assert that. As expressed, it is a circular, self-contradictory argument. There are a host of factors which need to be evaluated in terms of their importance for people pursuing certain occupations in preference to others, and their social backgrounds are critical for getting them started on the road to a particular career in a particular location in the occupational stratification. Lifestyle handbooks may or may not sell a lot, but how many of them are truly read, let alone have immediate and lasting impact on people's life courses?

<sup>7</sup> In a later book, *The Transformation of Intimacy* 1994, Giddens turns to therapeutic and self-help manuals to explain the changing, increasingly reflexive nature of sexuality and intimate relations within late modernity. These have such scientific titles as '*Secrets About Men Every Woman Should Know*' and '*Burning Desires*', full reference for these texts can be found in Giddens, 1994.

<sup>8</sup> Thus:

"The choice of work and work milieu forms a basic element of lifestyle orientations in the extremely complex modern division of labour.

In work, for all groups freed from the hold of traditional contexts of activity, a plurality of lifestyle choices exist. Naturally, as Bourdieu has emphasised, lifestyle variations between groups are also elementary structuring features of stratification, not just the results of class differences in the realm of production." (Giddens 1991 p. 82)

Which, quite characteristically, shows Giddens collage of explanatory factors, thankful of their contradictory principles, without producing coherence.

## Evaluations of Occupations

The issues of the characteristics of employment, that is of paid employment, and how they are received by employees (and their products sought and consumed), remain important ones regardless of attempts to displace work within the overall life pattern or to aestheticise and/or consumerise society. It is certainly the case, that people who enter the workforce by taking on paid employment bring with them sets of expectations and personal characteristics acquired prior to entry. However, it is equally true that they are then faced by factors of the immediate work experience, foreground factors; they would need to be remarkably obstinate or socially incompetent not to alter their understandings consequent upon first hand knowledge of circumstances. Prandy et al., found that,

"there can be no doubt that systematic factors... in particular the associated rewards and perceptions, play an important part in the explanations of orientations.... it is misleading to think of priori orientations. To do so entails an artificial division between work and non-work life which is just not supported by the evidence. Orientations to work are not just something brought into work from outside; they derive from the individual's total experience. Background factors certainly have an influence... but... present work experience is of crucial importance in shaping these orientations. Once this is allowed for the continuing direct effects from social background are very limited."

(1982 p. 112)

Thus, foreground factors are variables which became dominant, that the causal effect of background factors on orientations comes to be

superseded by current circumstances for understanding orientations and evaluations of work. They found that background factors,<sup>9</sup> critical in locating a person in their first job, receded in importance over time, especially where careers yield improvements in employment circumstance, particularly promotion. The subjects can be then said to have transcended the social background, but not the 'present circumstances' of their orientations which remain more reasonably located in the context of their application. However, it is also an orientation towards the future and future prospects based on current experiences and practices. It is the expectation of future promotion prospects which explains the supposed status discrepancy of clerks, for example, where they obtain a lower salary, despite possessing higher educational qualifications, than the manual workers below them (Lockwood 1958, Bourdieu 1984).<sup>10</sup>

This issue of expectations is of particular interest when examining improvising and/or jazz musicians, as is their point of social origin, and current relationships of friends. Expectations brings suggestions that these may be reasonable expectations; expectations constrained by circumstances, quite different from the true wants of individuals. It is also the case that occupations are hierarchically structured in terms of rewards

and conditions they afford occupants, and that there is not a compensatory relationship amongst rewards as perhaps an economic model of occupations would expect; where occupations low in some reward(s) are high in others to compensate for the disadvantage. It is generally the case that occupations located at the bottom of the hierarchy are poor in all, and those at the top are rich in all, of the rewards and conditions sought, which is recognised in the social status attached to occupations, and is fairly accurately evaluated by people, particularly within the parameters of their social interactions; i.e., occupations fairly close to their own, of their friends and spouse, also Blackburn and Mann, for example, found that the subjects of their study had an accurate perception of the qualities, status of employers and occupations within close proximity to their own location of the labour market; that those they recognised as having higher prestige were indeed the ones offering across the board higher rewards, conditions and job security (see also Stewart et. al., 1982 on status perceptions).

Within the bundles of rewards and conditions that a situation affords there can be a sense that some are of greater importance than others to occupants, however attempts at measurement of relative importance have proved both problematic and fruitful. The idea proved problematic, when attempts were made to have respondents hierarchically order a set of rewards according to the relative importance of each reward for them (Dubin 1956, Goldthorpe et. al., 1968, Blackburn and Mann 1979). The idea proved more fruitful when respondent were asked to order rewards according to the importance of an improvement

<sup>9</sup> The distinction of background and foreground factors is not so clear as may seem, some factors which are background, e.g., education, social characteristics are applied by employers as indicators of employee qualities, thus bringing them into the market returns for labour, foregrounding them.

<sup>10</sup> This is movement s not quite the same as Bourdieu's concept of social trajectory; which is characterised by necessary inadequacy as Bourdieu explains the movement up the social, for him class, structure as the parvenu experiencing inadequacy due to socialisation within higher class positions giving an unstated advantage to existing members. This is clearly stated by Bourdieu when attempting to explain the odd persistence of aristocratic privilege; the force of tradition over modernity.

in them, which then becomes an indicator of dissatisfaction; the ones given higher priority for improvement being the ones offering the least level wanted or satisfying expectations (Prandy et. al., 1982). Many of the orientations models that placed work secondary to consumption advanced a compensatory model of rewards, i.e., that more money reduced the importance of, and expectations for, other rewards. In this regard, Prandy et. al., (1982) found that compensation only for perceptions of promotion, which reduced current expectations for, and salience of, other rewards, otherwise high perceptions of a reward marginally increased the expectations and salience of other rewards, suggesting that satiation of one reward heightened the desire for improvements in others, not making them acceptable as a necessary cost. Consequently, rather than high levels of one reward compensating for others, there is an increased awareness of the inadequacy of others, perhaps also reflecting that that is the way the employment market is structured; hierarchically. Thus, the only way that we can speak of compensatory model is where promotion prospects indicate that the future will very likely bring higher levels of all rewards, particularly to the qualified.

It appears then, that occupations come in hierarchically ordered packages, and that point of entry onto the occupational structure is first determined by social background and educational attainment. Further, in terms of assessing occupations and the composite package that they afford, it is necessary to know the location and horizon of occupational opportunity within which individuals are situated. The evaluative framework that musicians bring to determining

the nature of their occupational experience is initially set by their social background, which yield them a patterned set of socialisation, of a frame of reference whereby horizons of expectations are formed and achievements and rewards evaluated in consequence. Social processes that reproduce over time display degrees of stability, this is true of the patterns of inequality, whereby with occupations, for example, there is a strong correlation between the occupation of the parents and that of their offspring's first job. However, more than that, parents present models of achievement socialise offspring patterns of expectation, regarding the range of opportunities they may rightfully consider potentially theirs, and can afford education commensurate with their own position in the stratification hierarchy; children of, say, a surgeon will not necessarily become surgeons, but will be more likely to consider that range of occupation achievable, receive support for similar levels of education, and be accustomed to that somewhat affluent lifestyle. However, as well as being socialised into that range of attainable occupational expectations, they will also be socialised within particular frames of social interactions and cultural experiences. In this section, I propose to consider this respecting the replies and evaluations of jazz/improvising musicians.

### **Location Within Social Interaction and Stratification**

To consider this, to lay some framework for assessing musicians' circumstance, it is fruitful to consider utilising the Cambridge Scale of occupational classifications, to examine the social background of musicians, and their current social

location, as the scale offers the potential to locate musicians within stratified patterns of social interaction, rather than artificial theoretical class constructs:

"The theoretical basis of CAMSIS (Cambridge Scale of Social Interaction and Stratification) scales is the idea that differential association is an essential feature of social stratification. It is a familiar argument in stratification that persons sharing a similar social position, in terms of social class or status group membership, are more likely to interact socially on the basis of equality with members of the same group than with members of other groups. So, acquaintances, friends and marriage partners will all tend to be chosen much more frequently from within the same group than from without. The usual approach, though, is to define a structure composed of a set of classes or status groups and then to investigate social interaction between them.

The CAMSIS approach reverses this, using patterns of interaction to determine the nature of the structure. The crucial point is that differential association can be seen as a way of defining proximity within a social space and that this social space can be reconstructed from the distances between groups. Social interaction will occur most frequently between persons who are socially close to one another and relatively infrequently between those that are socially different."

(Prandy and Lambert 2002)

Thus, the scale offers the advantage of locating people within actual patterns of social interaction related to their position on the occupational structure, therefore of contextualising their evaluations within horizons of expectations and

potentially attainable, if not actually attained packages of rewards. The scale also does not presume what it should uncover; it does not derive from a theoretical construct of social classes, whether that be Marxist or Weberian or some odd mix of the two (Bourdieu 1984), which incurs the problem of dislocation of class and understanding, whereby classes are proposed and people neither behave to the expectations of the posited class location, nor perceive themselves to be of that common class, which is encountered in many class based explanations, and does not necessitate positing an accommodating false consciousness (Bourdieu 1984, Kelley<sup>11</sup> 1993, Lockwood 1981 Wright 1990).

The Cambridge scale, because it locates people within a system of stratified social interactions, offers a means to locate musicians respecting what they could reasonably be expected to earn and the concomitant lifestyle experiences given their past and present positioning within the occupational stratification of social interaction. Their past and present location in the scale and the associated patterns of interaction is to be expected to provide the reference group within which expectations will be formulated and rewards evaluated. In conjunction with their educational attainment, the scale also indicates a potential that musicians should be reasonably be expected to earn; progression up the ladder of educational attainments brings concomitant rises in mean average earnings (c.f., U.S Census

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<sup>11</sup> Kelley's argument is interesting, in that he found his class consciousness on working class black's opposition to racism, indeed the whole essay focuses on unruly behaviour, a mirror of the focus on vandalism and sabotage said to be of working class opposition in the place of production. In effect, it comes to see socially mobile blacks as subject to the illusion that they could become white; suffering from the false consciousness that their identity should confer.

Bureau Income Data 2000, for example.). The Cambridge scale, as it situates within a framework of social value, a conjoined status and occupational evaluation, positions musicians' activities and music within that evaluative framework; an intriguing question then becomes whether their social background, educational attainments, and their standing as self-employed musicians, without employees, on the scale matches their occupational experiences in terms of rewards and efforts and the music they produce.

In line with the approach of the Cambridge scale, to position of jazz and/or improvising musicians within a wider framework of occupational opportunities and social stratification and interaction, questions were inserted into the questionnaire respecting, parents' occupations on leaving school, the occupation of their spouse/long-term committed partner and the occupation of five friends.

Given their social background, stratification is transmitted through generations (Prandy 1990, Blackburn and Prandy 1994), that incomes and occupational status generally increase conjointly with qualifications (e.g., U.S Census Bureau Income Data 2000, which shows that average incomes rise educational attainment, for example.), there is reason to expect levels of rewards commensurate with investment and achievement. The revised Cambridge scale also indicates that incumbents of occupations tend to interact with, have friendships with and marry occupants of similar occupations. Thus, by examining the occupations of fathers, spouses/partners, friendships, and also the we can obtain some sense of where musicians

are placed and place themselves within the structure of occupations

With the case of jazz and/or improvising musicians alongside the shared features which allow comparison with other occupations, such as the aforementioned rewards, there are also unique features which differentiates its occupational identity from other occupations. Thus, there is an occupational identity which marks it off, and commands a commitment which supports musicians in their career where others would have left to find more lucrative positions. This is also aided by the understanding that others, perhaps those they admire, have endured and succeeded, even after considerable lengths of time and in face of opposition. That having endured a period, perhaps long, of low aesthetic recognition and financial rewards, musicians commitment to their aesthetic principles has come to be regarded as correct all along, and worthy of widespread recognition, respect and improved incomes, especially given their endurance. This may lead some to persist where they may not have otherwise.

### **Sample and Methodology**

The sample is composed of 88 improvising/jazz musicians from 16 countries, seven of whom were female, the remainder male. The study sample is composed of 36 musicians interviewed in person, and 48 surveyed through the internet using written question covering the same basic materials, with some questions added, conducted over the period 1998–2002, in Japan, New York and France (with responses still coming). An initial email survey was part of an ongoing research project, which utilised a mixture of face

to face interviews and participant observation,. A second batch of email surveys was sent out, with modifications suggested by the responses to the first batch, sent in 2001. The responses to the face-to-face interviews were more extensive, than the internet ones, although there were questions which were not put to the early face-to-face interviews, which are now being followed up on. Information was also gathered from these and other musicians' homepages, published writings, interviews, and their recorded output; the additional information was used to supplement that on music projects involved in and the musicians that they have performed with. In addition, evidence was gathered using participant observation and observation of concerts and their preparations in Japan, the U.S., and France, providing supplementary data of interactional practice. All of the subjects were professional musicians, a few with secondary occupations to music (approximately 9% of the sample). with most classifying themselves solely as musicians, about 9% of the sample had secondary occupations (e.g., 2 doctors, 1 university professor, 2 healthcare workers, 1 nurse, another 4% classed themselves as musicians and music educators (e.g., 1 a university professor, with others taking students, writing textbooks). The sample remains small, however, the pattern of their performance interactions with other musicians locates them in the midst of the most important of current jazz / improvising musicians, more generally, something that hopefully can be extended. Relevant data was supplied by 5 additional musicians, who responded to the survey by sending combinations of biographical data, press releases, their writings on music and/or themselves, recording releases, musical project

information, itineraries, etc.)

Table 1 details the sample distribution by nationality and country of residence, this shows that single largest group of musicians are from and live in the United States; 45% are US citizens the remainder are distributed over 15 countries. A number of respondents live in countries other than their country of birth, nationality, and one respondent lives equal time in two countries. This large concentration in the US is possibly an artefact of the survey being distributed in English, (though sometimes the most detailed returns came from other countries).

Table 2 shows their age distribution of the musicians in the sample, where it can be seen that the single largest group is in the age range of 40–49, 41%, with the next largest is the range of 30–39, 17%, and the next in the 50–69 range, 15%. This has an advantage in yielding data from musicians with substantial experience; the years reported as working as improvising/jazz musicians began at 7/9 years and reached to 55years experience at 5% and 1% respectively, with the largest group with 10–19 years experience at 40%, the next with 20–29 years 28%, followed by 30–39 years 24%. There is one distinct disadvantage with a relatively small under 30 group; initial ambitions and perceptions of anticipated future career outcomes at a critical career stage are under-represented<sup>13</sup>.

Table 3 details the musicians according to the music that they perform. Mainstream jazz,

<sup>13</sup> This research project will target former jazz and improvising musician to investigate why they no longer work as musicians; when evaluating commitments, it is important to consider why some abandoned aspirations and commitments.

includes that music which goes under the name of big band, bebop, hard bop, cool jazz, neo-bop, modern jazz, Latin jazz, etc.; perhaps a common feature is that it is more tonally oriented jazz, using harmonics and/or modal scales, even where there are dissonant extensions and micro-tones employed, they are fitted into an overall harmonic function or modal pattern or their combination. Avant-garde includes that music which commenced with free jazz, and continues partly under that rubric today, it also includes the free improvisors and those working in what is called the downtown scene, which is highly

experimental in technique, instrumentation, marrying together elements of distinct musics, and, while tonal elements may be employed, even as major structural elements of pieces, they are often not, and atonality and microtonal approaches are often more important. What is equally important is that these two generally coalesce as different groups of musicians who play with each other, the performs in generally different sets of venue, are recorded by the same sets of recording labels, and are also likely to face the same range of earnings opportunities, which is true for performing and recording

**Table 1: Musicians by Country of Origin and Residence. (N=88)**

COUNTRY	MUSICIANS BY COUNTRY OF:			
	ORIGIN		RESIDENCE	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Australia	2	2%	4	4%
Austria	1	1%	2	2%
Belgium:	1	1%	1	1%
Canada	4	5%	4	4%
France	9	10%	9	10%
Germany	5	6%	4	4%
Italy	1	1%	2	2%
Japan	7	8%	5	6%
Netherlands	2	2%	6	7%
Norway	1	1%	1	1%
Portugal	1	1%	1	1%
Rumania	1	1%	0	0%
Sweden	3	3%	3	3%
Switzerland	2	2%	1	1%
UK	8	9%	5	6%
USA	40	45%	41	46%
Totals:	88	98%	89	98%

(Note, 1 musician resided equally in and is recorded for two countries. All figures rounded up/down to the nearest percentage point.)

**Table 2: Musicians age by Country of Origin and Residence. (N=88)**

	<20	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	20-29	>70	NOT GIVEN	TOTAL
Number	0	6	19	37	15	3	1	7	88
% 1	0	7	22	42	17	3	1	8	100%

**Table 3: Number And Percentage Of Musicians Working In Each Music (n=88)**

	STYLE OF MUSIC			
	Mainstream	Mainstream/A-G	Avant-Garde	Total
Number	38	10	41	88
Percentage	43%	11%	47%	100%

Thus the basic sample is composed of 88 respondents, from a range of 15 countries, who reside in 16 countries, they are concentrated in the age grouping of 30 to 59 age range, are highly educated, formally, and who play a variety of musics that can be located within the above three categories in terms of music structure, the interaction of musicians for performance and recording purposes.

### **Social Background and the Evaluative Framework**

The framework that musicians initially bring to evaluating their occupational experience derives from their childhood social background; they experience a specifically patterned socialisation shaping their frames of reference and horizons of expectations. Social processes that reproduce over time display degrees of stability, this is so for the structures of inequality, whereby, for example, with occupations there is significant correlation between the occupation of parents and their offspring's first job. Parents present models of achievement that inform their children's expectations regarding the future opportunities they may consider potentially theirs, and parents can afford education commensurate with their own location in the stratification hierarchy; while children of, say, a surgeon will not necessarily become surgeons themselves they will more consider that range of occupation achievable, receive support for similar levels of education,

and be accustomed to that more affluent lifestyle. However, in addition to that range of occupational expectations, they will also be socialised within particular frames of social interactions and cultural experiences. In this section, I propose to consider this respecting the replies and evaluations of jazz/improvising musicians.

To consider this, to lay some foundation for assessing musicians' circumstance, it is fruitful to apply the Cambridge Scale of Social Interaction and Stratification to examine the social background of musicians within the hierarchy of social stratification and its ensuing patterns of social interaction, and their current social location in terms of social interactions, as the scale offers the potential to locate musicians within stratified patterns of social interaction. To that end this portion of the paper focuses on the musicians social background, their parent's attitudes to their music studies, and responses to them selecting a career in jazz/improvising music, and the sometimes almost revelatory terms within which they describe their reasons for having selected that career. It will be argued that this frames their appraisal for their activities as musicians and performances and musical interactions with fellow musicians to which they devote themselves with single minded determination. Further, that perhaps initial anticipations of early success and receipt of rewards commensurate

with, if not significantly greater than, that of their social background and educational achievement, gives way to realisation that such attainment will, should be expected to, take some years, if it is ever to come. Until it does, they view that as a price to pay for the pursuit of their authentic musical voice, which should not be over-exaggerated as they seldom have any idea how they could make their music more popular. They experience intense moments of musical interaction and musical success, which they share with other musicians, jointly reconfirming the reasons that they determined their careers, for example. However, as each year passes they invest cumulative time and social energies on an ever narrowing horizon of alternative opportunities in tune with their commitment and experience. The second part of the paper will discuss such aspects as the levels of financial rewards attained; it will be argued that there is not an opposition between the aesthetic and the economic; their activities may not bring the rewards they believe equals their personal investments, their educational attainments, and their creativities, this they experience as a frustration, and lack of respect; they do not experience it as mark of aesthetic value; they want for these to equate, confirming their own evaluations and bringing with it some material comforts, perhaps those of their origin.

To begin to locate the position of improvising and jazz musicians within a wider framework of occupational opportunities and social stratification and interaction, a number of questions were inserted into the questionnaire; parents' occupations on leaving school, occupation of spouse; and the occupation of five

friends. There was always a danger with this last question that the respondents would be an insular group, associating only with other musicians (the studies of Becker 1963, and others argue not just as much, but more, that they are deviants who find it impossible to fit in with others than fellow musicians), thus offering limited value information. However, in another sense this was a test of the Becker position; should musicians interact with other occupational incumbents than musicians then this would suggest that they are not the insular oppositional group some have come to expect based on the perspective Becker and others presented. Moreover, this interaction might indicate something of their social position within a wider space of social stratification and social interaction. To anticipate that musicians might associate only with musicians, questions were included asking them to make evaluations of other occupation comparative to their own as jazz/improvising musicians. They were asked to make these comparative evaluations in terms of (a) the occupational requirements in terms of education, training, practical abilities and experience; and, (b) in respect of the hours worked, tasks performed, the conditions experienced, and the rewards attained.<sup>14</sup> The respondents were also asked to say which other, occupations in terms of the work they had to do, the hours of work, efforts, conditions, incomes, etc., they would consider similar to their own. The hope was that the combination of these

<sup>14</sup> These two question proved particularly problematic to compose; initially the aim was for simplicity, as the language variation of the target audience was anticipate to be extensive long questions in English potentially inhibited. Interestingly, the simple format proved to be more effective with those whose first language was not English, than with native English speakers, thus the question was modified with a set of examples to make it more precise, and the results were interesting.

question, ideally cumulatively rather than separately and/or singly would help to locate musicians within a social space of stratification and social interaction. (There is an assumption of constancy in occupations internationally, given that the subjects were from major world economies, I do not think that is unwarranted, and that any variation would not be significant.)

The findings of studies show social background is a critical determinant for most people's first occupation after finishing full-time education, and also for the sets of expectations that they initially bring to bear on that position (Stewart et. al., 1980, Prandy 1987, Willis 1977). Thus, by determining their parents' occupations when the musicians left school we can firmly locate them within social processes and opportunities, indicating not their precise first occupation but the occupational level from which they would normally be expected to commence their careers.

Table 4 shows that the occupations of the parents of these musicians were primarily in the professional range, 67% of the fathers are found in the 61 to 90 range of the CAMSIS scale. Furthermore, 40% of their mothers were reported as having occupations within the same range. This itself is a remarkable finding, particularly given the gender inequality disadvantaging women uncovered by the scale; women usually, not always, are registered with lower scale figures than men in the same occupations. Thus, given that the first occupational position generally correlates highly with parents' occupations, these musicians should be targeting lower to upper professional occupations as their starting point in their career ladders. Such first occupations should, of course, be anticipated to be superseded

by subsequent experience and career development, with most improving their circumstances; it is far easier to climb from a high to a higher position, than it is from a low to a higher positions; normally people from the same social background as these musicians would anticipate such career progress, this is what these musicians should anticipate, and perhaps less often attain, especially with the same security of location and gradual career progression.

### **Social Factors Influencing Initial Career Choice**

There is considerable sociological evidence that those in the upper layers of the stratification hierarchy are more interested in the arts, have greater knowledge of the arts and have more intimate contact with a wider range of arts than those in the lower layers (Bourdieu 1984, DiMaggio 1987, Peterson and Simkus 1992). Whereas earlier discussion tended to argue high-status positions correlated with highbrow artistic (Lynnes 1954, Levine 1988, Murphy 1988, and for variations on that theme for national cultures Anderson 1964) more recent discussion contends that artistic taste among the upper strata has shifted from a snob to omnivore, the latter having extensive knowledge of a broad spectrum of arts the and culture, high and low art and culture (Peterson and Kern 1996). Whether the preference among those in the upper strata of the stratification hierarchy are snobs or omnivores is less important than their interest in the arts and culture, here in music in particular. Given the social background of most of these respondents, the interesting question relates to their childhood artistic and cultural experiences. For reasons of practicality, the questions in the survey focused

on their musical experiences, rather than asking about their broader experience of art and culture; the questions did their parents play an instrument, was music a large part of their childhood household and, if yes, which musics, did their parent support their musical studies. Responses to the questions show that for a significant

portion of these musicians, their parent(s) performed music, either professionally or as amateurs, that various musics was a significant part of their household and that while their parents often supported, if not sponsored, their earlier study of music, they less often supported their choice of a career as musician.

**Table 4: Parents' Occupations When Respondent Left School on the Cambridge Scale (n=45)**

CAMSIS VALUE:	FATHER		MOTHER		FATHER + MOTHER	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
>91						
86-90	3	7%	1	3%	4	5%
81-85	7	17%	0		7	9%
76-80	5	12%	7	21%	11	15%
71-75	4	10%	1	3%	5	7%
66-70	8	19%	4	12%	12	16%
61-65	1	2%	12	36%	13	18%
56-60	6	14%	2	6%	8	11%
51-55	4	10%	2	6%	6	8%
46-50	1	2%	2	6%	3	4%
41-45	1	2%	2	6%	3	4%
36-40						
31-35						
26-30	1	2%			1	1%
21-25	1	2%			1	1%
16-20						
10-15						
<10						
Total	42	99%	33	100%	74	99%

(The occupational estimates are lower for the mothers, reflecting the lower social status accorded them generally for most, though not all occupations. In addition to the 33 mothers

recorded above, a further 9 were full time housewives/keepers and one was deceased. In addition to the 42 fathers registered above, 1 was retired with no occupational position reported.)

**Table 5: Musician's Parents Who Played Music (n=52)**

	PROFESSIONAL			AMATEUR			NEITHER PARENT MUSICAL
	Mother	Mother	Mother	Mother	Mother	Mother	
Number	1	3	0	14	4	11	19
%	2%	4%	0%	25%	8%	22%	37%

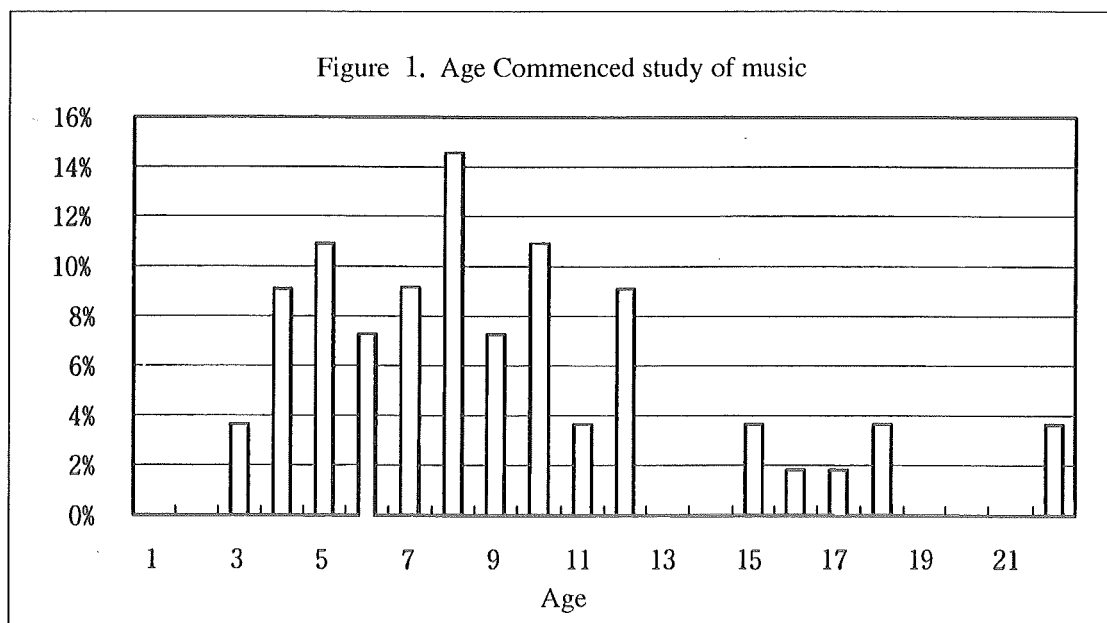
Table 5, strikingly reveals that for 63% of these musicians that at least one of their parents performed music, either professionally or as amateurs, and with 22% of these both parents performed as amateurs. While 33% of the parents performed no musical instrument at all, nevertheless for many of those parents music was a striking part of their daily lives, as is seen in table 6:

Table 6 shows that music was an either very significant or significant part of the upbringing for 79% of this sample. The variety of musics reported important in their childhood household were, by number of musicians reporting each, classical 26, jazz 17, popular music of the day 10, folk 9, dance music 6, church music 5, rock 4, country and western 2, gospel 2, the rest scored a single report each, gypsy music, Jewish music, rhythm and blues, and soul. Thus, of those whom music was an important part of their environment, 63% reported classical music and 41% cited jazz

as important in their household. In addition, 70% reported that they began studying music through learning to play classical music, usually by being sent by their parents to private tutors and/or in their music, instrument, studies in school. Of those for whom music was very significant in their household, the majority commenced studies before the age of 9, and of those for whom music was not significant, they commenced study in their mid- to late-teens, with a couple much later than that. This later group of learners all began as self-taught musicians, usually through attempting to play the popular music of their time, most often rock, before turning to jazz and/or improvised music. This can be seen in the data on age of the musicians commencing their musical studies, shown on figure 1, where 73% had commenced study by 13 and 62% had done so between 3 and 9 years old:

**Table 6: Significance Of Music In Musician's Household As A Child (n=52)**

	VERY SIGNIFICANT	SIGNIFICANT	OF NO SIGNIFICANCE
Number	31	10	11
%	60%	19%	21%



The proportion of parents supporting their children's musicals studies displays a remarkably similar pattern, as can be seen in table 7:

**Table 7: The Musicians' Parents' Attitudes to Their Studying Music (n=52)**

	SUPPORTED OR SPONSORED STUDY	NEITHER SUPPORTED NOR OPPOSED	OPPOSED	TOTALS
Number	36	6	10	52
%	69%	12%	19%	101%

However, while 69% supported their children's studies and only 19% opposed them, not all of the parents who supported musicals studies envisaged their children pursuing a full-time career in music, some viewed their studies as a wholesome part of a rounded education that highlighted a university degree leading to a professional career, prioritised over any musical studies. Most of those that who did foresee and accept, if not favour a musical career most a career in classical music, not jazz or improvised music, on grounds that this was more honourable and secure career choice. When asked whether his parents were supportive of his career as a jazz musician, one musician replied.

'My mother wanted me to be a classical musician. My parents took me to piano school at four... I studied classical music until I was 19, then I found that I could only play music written on paper. When I was a child I improvised on the piano, but now I could not improvise, only play what was on the paper. I was shocked, and classical music could not speak from my heart. I gave up classical study, I wanted to know about the origin of music. Jazz was a way to improvise... My mother was shocked, she wanted me to be a classical pianist. I moved out of the house and it was very hard to live. I wanted to make music from my heart... not be a trained dog playing other music, not my

music."

Another musician noted that his parents were:

"Quite supportive with harsh economic times while I kept in the classical/academic field. When at 16/17 I dropped off the 'serious' business of music and went into... jazz there was war. Only quite recently [This musician is now 53; it has taken a long time.] they managed to realise that I was making a living through the music I had chosen... Reasons were basically economic and for my own security - I should have a proper job with regular income and then do whatever I wanted on the side as a hobby. They were meaning well. It was quite difficult for them and it was dictatorship in Portugal back then."

(His reporter earnings do not agree completely with his assessment of making a living, however.) Both parents supported these musicians, paying for further education in music, so long as it was in classical music studies, as soon as their child developed the idea to change to jazz/improvisation they became quite hostile. What these responses indicate also is that the relationships with parents can become strained, if not severed, due to their making a career choice that was believed unfitting or lacking financial security. In fact, those reporting parental opposition spoke primarily in terms of the parents concerns for their security, although some also

hinted at their career not be a real job.

Some parents did, however, view a career in jazz and or improvised music as perfectly acceptable, especially if their child was cognisant of, prepared for, the likely uncertainties and volatility of that career. This was a view that most of the jazz and improvised musicians interviewed here echoed when asked if they would support their own children becoming jazz or improvising musicians, they repeatedly said if that is what they wanted to do and were fully prepared for the long climb to some success, the fickle uncertainties, the roller coaster ride in incomes, and the lack of adequate recognition of talents and musical output. One musician explained his parent's support:

"Both my parents were perfectly supportive of my wish to be a musician; they had understood my connection with music from a very early age and I doubt they thought I'd do anything else with my life. But they would have supported me if I'd said I want to import guns or drugs, I reckon. I think it's because they love me and want me to be happy and fulfilled, or follow the path I believe will lead to happiness and fulfilment. I know too that my father (who became a priest in the Anglican church) had had problems with his parents (particularly his father) when he was a teenager and sorting himself out, and would have hated to bring the same sort of thing upon myself or my siblings... Obviously that they supported me was helpful, and I can only speculate on what it would have been like if they had not. I'd like to think I'd have done it anyway, but who can say? I think they were glad when I followed my bachelor's degree up with a diploma of education, but they

have seen I think that in the long term this was the least useful qualification I have received. The decision to do the DipEd was mine, too."

Another highly reputed musician wrote, of her parents:

"Both supportive. They saw that this was what I loved doing, and might also have felt that I had enough talent to do this professionally. I never discussed with my parents about future perspectives of being a jazz musician, I think they were also not aware of what that means exactly (the difficulties of it). They were very supportive in letting me focus on my studies by paying my tuition, part of my living expenses. They always paid all my music lessons, also when I studied more than one instrument at once. They never guided me with it though, it was always my own decision what I wanted to study, with whom etc."

When asked if she thought her parents attitudes were important to her decision, she put that as her parents giving her the independence of choice:

"I was a quite "wild", independent child, because my parents did not really "guide" me with making choices. I did have the freedom though to study music, choose for it etc. and be supported once I had made the choice. I think the early exposure to music was important, also because it was an important part of my life early on, it meant comfort, my own world, joy."

In the long term, persistence with the career choice, especially accompanied by accumulated success, brought most parents to acknowledge, if not admire, the career choice of their children. The majority of the musicians parents did stimulate their children's interest in music, and their studies, and expressed pride in their children's early achievements, it would be wholly

perverse for them not to come to some point where they admire achievements in a notoriously uncertain career.

This sample of musicians came from predominantly lower to upper professional households, and in normal circumstances most would have entered the same range of occupations as their parents. These represent their potential horizon of alternatives, yet they chose to embark on the uncertain career of jazz and/or improvising musicians rather than the more secure occupations of their parents. In part their careers can be explained through their home and educational experiences. On the whole, studies find that professionals with higher educational achievements and incomes tend to be more knowledgeable and active partakers of the arts generally, and specifically many of these parents were musically active, as amateur or professional musicians. Moreover, for nearly everyone music was a significant part of their household and largely they supported, if not instigated their children's study of music which they could financially support. From there, music became a growing fascination for many of these musicians, and their accumulating skills, knowledge, inquisitiveness and interest in the logic and problems of musical expression, as we shall see, took over as a major driving force in their lives. For the moment, it should be recognised that these musicians did not fall into the career route of their parents, and that their choices were not made out of necessity, due to lack of alternative possibilities; indeed the forewent more secure and, for most, as we shall see, financially rewarding occupations for the fickle fortunes of jazz and improvising musician,

and for uncertain recognition of their compositional and performance creations. Their potential is confirmed in these musicians level of educational attainment.

### **Educational Attainment of the Musicians**

These musicians largely educational achievements are in line with those of their parents. In Table 8 we can see that 69% have graduate degrees of some variety, and a further 15% had post-graduate degrees (8% MA, 7% PhD), in addition, another 4% had entered university but abandoned study after 2–3 years before completion.<sup>15</sup> (What does not appear in these figures is that some who did not enter a full-time under-graduate course, and some who did but who did not major in music, attended (short) courses in music, jazz performance studies at conservatoire when they were working musicians, e.g., in the New England School or the Berklee school. A few musicians had also taught course in jazz in university or conservatoire.)

The best part of those who majored in music, in university (primarily) or in conservatoire (secondarily), studied classical music, a minority studied jazz, none of the musicians reported studying improvisation as their major. There is, though, some indication that the numbers majoring in jazz increases among the younger musicians. For the non-music university graduates, we find predominately degrees in the natural sciences, with the social sciences, humanities or arts a distant second. For those who majored in music in university (primarily) or

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<sup>15</sup> Their explanation was that they did so to concentrate on their musical performing careers full time. That their degree courses were not music courses.

conservatoire (secondarily), studies in classical music were the most common, with those majoring in jazz coming second, which increases among younger musicians. Having entered and graduated at these levels, these musician register a capacity for tertiary level educational accomplishment which may be transferable (to the extent that entrance and graduation requirements equate). These, significantly high numbers of, graduates would be socialised into, and justified in looking forward to, levels of financial rewards, social status and security, for example, commensurate with lower professional and professionals. To the extent that they do not attain these, we may consider them under-achievers relative to their capacities. In terms of salaries, if we take the median US incomes for graduates as a rough indicator, the 2000 census median income figures for those with a bachelor, master, or doctorate degree was \$49,178, \$59,376, and \$71,738 respectively. Whether we consider the situation with the US or any other advanced economy, this is the sort of structure of earnings that would pertain; with higher education comes increased opportunity to earn better incomes.

Together, the family background of these musicians and their educational attainment firmly

locate the majority of them within a specific framework of economic opportunity cost; what they could have achieved otherwise, in this instance what they forgo by not pursuing the path to lower professional and professional occupations. If these musicians were generally from low down on the social stratification ladder their situation would perhaps seem transparently obvious; they are musicians because that is the best they can do in unfavourable economic circumstances. That they are not from such a social background and that many possess very to exceedingly high educational accomplishment, feasibly we might pose the question, are they underachieving, given their social background, educational and other achievements? Do their performance and earning experiences equate with these sorts of potentials.

#### Occupations of the Musicians Spouse or Partner and of their Friends

The original construct for the CAMSIS scale came from a study (Stewart et. al., 1980), which asked about the occupations of four friends of the respondents. With the international project to construct CAMSIS tables for a number of nations, the focus shifts to marriage partners, to showing the close proximity in occupational positions between the husband and wife.

**Table 8: Highest Level of Educational Attainment (n=85)**

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT										
	① High School	Music Major				Non-Music Major				
		Conservatoire/ University				③ College				
		② ASC	Graduate	MA	PhD	OQ	③ Inc.	Graduate	MA	PhD
No.	8	1	38	6	1	2	3	20	1	5
%	9%	1%	45%	7%	1%	2%	4%	24%	1%	6%

① High school degree only; ② ASC: Attended some semester of classes in music theory and/or performance technique; ③ This is vocational college, further education college in the UK; ④ These respondents enrolled but did not complete their degree, leaving after 2, or so, years of study. (I have no information for 3 of the respondents.)

This relationship of spouse is one of the most important ones for the CAMSIS scale, as it is readily attainable from census data for a large range of countries and over an extended time period. This survey of musicians examined both, the occupations of friends and of partners. However, recently the issue of spouse has become more complicated by the trend for people to set up households in a variety of relationships, forming committed partnerships outside of formal marriage, sometimes preceding marriage, at other times instead of marriage, and also of relationships of same sex outside of marriage. Increasingly, such relationships are gaining the rights and responsibilities that accompanied those of traditional marriage. Thus, where the question would have before been simply for the spouse on marriage, to encompass these more heterogeneous types of relationships, the question for this survey was directed towards spouse or long-term committed partners<sup>16</sup> (Bakker 1993; Bergman 2002; Prandy and Jones 2001). The occupations of the spouse and partner of the musicians is shown in table 9. Again, as with the parents, the reports indicate lower professional and professional occupations predominate for the spouses or partners of musicians, with 72% in the 61–90 range of occupations, although there are more in lower part of this than was the case with the fathers, it fits the musicians' mothers' profile

<sup>16</sup> Giving equal significance to committed, cohabiting partner also does not preclude same sex relationships, which relations of marriage would, partly due to either the legal prohibition on, or lack of legal provision for, same sex relationships. This also recognises an equality of relationship, of marriage and committed, cohabiting partner contrary Giddens (1993) pure relationship which seems capable of either lifting itself by its own bootstraps, or to be based on an immediate exchange evaluation. There is an issue of whether this question is best composed to ask what was the occupations of partner or spouse on marriage or committing themselves to the relationship, this anticipates for any possible drop in occupational level after marriage of the spouse.

more closely.

The musicians were also asked to indicate the occupations of five friends, and these are shown according to their CAMSIS placement. Of the 55 respondents who provided detailed information regarding the occupations of their friends, only 5 reported all of their friends were musicians, and 3 reported 4 as musicians. While 17 reported 3, meaning that most of their friends were musicians, 18 reported 2 and 5 reported only 1 musicians among their close friends, with a further 7 who reported no musicians among their close friends.

**Table 9: Spouse's or Committed Partner's Occupations Cambridge Scale: (n=48)**

CAMSIS Value:	Spouse/Partner	
	No.	%
>91		
86–90	2	7%
81–85	0	0%
76–80	3	10%
71–75	1	3%
66–70	5	17%
61–65	11	36%
56–60	3	10%
51–55	3	10%
46–50		
41–45		
36–40	2	7%
Total	30	100%

(NB. 10 musicians gave no data on, and 8 reported having current, spouse/partner.)

When the occupations of their friends are located on the CAMSIS scale, it is apparent that these are very similar to their parents and spouses or partners; they are also within the lower professional and professional strata of occupations. Even were we to exclude their friendships with other musicians their interactions would remain in the same top 66 to 80 segment of the scale, however, there is no reason to do that,

**Table 10: Occupations Five Friends  
Cambridge Scale: (n=55)**

CAMSIS Value:	No.	%
>91		
86-90	2	1%
81-85	12	5%
76-80	35	13%
71-75	147	57%
66-70	48	18%
61-65	3	1%
56-60	6	2%
51-55	4	2%
46-50	0	
41-45	0	
36-40	2	1%
26-30	1	.5%
Total	260	100.5%

(55 respondents reported 262 occupations for friends, 260 are given above and 2 were reported as currently unemployed, with no previous occupations given.)

especially as the location of musicians on the scale does not depend on the interactions of these musicians, but derives from larger data sets. Thus, this measure of the social space within which these musicians interact finds their interactions occurring within the lower professional to professional range of the stratification scale. Thus, these findings are in agreement with those of Prandy et al., (1990, 2002) and others concerning social interactions mostly occurring within close proximity to ones own location on the hierarchy of stratification.

Thus, the reference group for social knowledge and the evaluations of occupations, comes from this range of interaction and knowledge of lifestyles. It is within the framework of lower professionals and professionals that these musicians interact, it is in that social location that they most lived as children and were educated for; it is this that provides one frame against which they can compare their current circumstances and

experiences as jazz and/or improvising musicians.

As well as locating musicians more firmly in their patterns of social interaction and stratification, this question also offered a partial test of the jazz sub-culture thesis. The thesis was that jazz musician because of their work demand, aesthetic values and lifestyle compose a completely distinct culture and pattern of social interaction utterly out of synchronisation with the culture and activities of the average citizen. This thesis was first proposed by Becker (1963) who argued that jazz musicians work to anti-social hours and who were only capable of, interested in, socially interacting with other musicians, congregated into a tight nit, exclusionary community that resented the rest of society and its demands on them. These results suggest that contemporary jazz and/or improvising musicians are far from being the insular group, utterly isolated by their language, work and lifestyle from the rest of society, that they reject as with the sub-culture thesis of Becker and others; they would seem to be located within the world of lower professional and professional people in terms of their friendships and partners..

#### **Other Occupations Comparable with Jazz and/or Improvising Musician**

In terms of their family background, their educational achievements, the occupations of their partners/spouse, and of their friends these musicians are justified in making occupational evaluations in terms of their occupational interactions and opportunities, and these musicians are mostly justified in making their evaluations within the frame of lower professional and professional occupations. These are the

alternatives that they generally forego in order to pursue their career in music, and the rewards and conditions of these lower and professional occupations should be the ones that they bring to bear in evaluating their own circumstances and careers as jazz and improvising musicians. To address this a number of questions were asked, two of which involved hypothetical evaluations of, a, the educational, training and skill requirements to be a professional jazz and/or improvising musicians, and b, the occupations that the musicians would think similar to their own in terms of the conditions and rewards offered. These are shown using the CAMSIS figures on tables 11 and 12, with the explanations of these assessments shedding some light on their thinking beyond the comparisons themselves. Of course there were some who insisted that being a jazz

**Table 11: Educational/Skill Comparison  
Cambridge Scale: (n=55)**

CAMSIS Value:		
	No.	%
>91	1	1%
86-90	6	8%
81-85	11	15%
76-80	28	39%
71-75	8	11%
66-70	8	11%
61-65	4	6%
56-60	3	4%
51-55		
46-50	2	3%
41-45		
36-40		
Total	71	98%

(All percentages rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage point.)

and/or improvising musician was largely unique, that there were no like or comparable occupations, their reasoning was just as enlightening. Of the 55 respondents answering this question, 6 insisted there were no comparable

occupations, and a further 5 reported it an impossible question to answer, implying the same incomparability, 4 simply gave no data. Thus, 39 respondents reported 74 comparable occupations, 71 of which are listed.<sup>17</sup>

The second question investigated the comparative evaluations of the task requirements, conditions, lifestyle and rewards of a jazz and improvising musician, asking which other occupations they considered equal to these. Of the 55 respondents asked this question, 35 reported 82 occupations as comparable in rewards, work tasks, conditions of work and the associated lifestyle to being a jazz and/or improvising musician, with 78 listed according to their CAMSIS scores on table 12. The number reporting that there were no comparable occupations rose to 14 arguing that jazz offered a uniquely high set of demands and a uniquely low set of financial returns, and the number of those giving no information was 6 for this question.

**Table 12. Work Task Conditions and Rewards  
Comparison- Cambridge Scale: (n=55)**

CAMSIS Value:		
	No.	%
>91		
86-90	4	5%
81-85	7	9%
76-80	34	44%
71-75	5	6%
66-70	18	23%
61-65	6	8%
56-60	2	3%
51-55		
46-50		
41-45	2	3%
36-40		
Total	78	101%

In the case of the first question the assessments drew comparison with occupations in the upper quartile of the scale, indicating professional

<sup>17</sup> Another 3 were given, prostitute, soldier of fortune, and pirate, all evocative comparisons.

occupations; e.g., doctors, university professors, research scientists, psychologist, were among those specialists. They would seem to be stressing the degree of formal education and study required in their comparisons here. A few quotes of the replies to this question on educational and other requirements indicate the thinking common to them:

"I would say a painter/sculptor, or a scientific investigator, or a computer programmer - but all of these [are] without the live audience feedback or contact...."

A searching, if very critical response was:

"Interesting question. In terms of educational level, there are musicians at all kinds of levels, some jazz musicians are actually not very educated even informally, and even in music. But lets assume you are talking about someone like Michael Brecker... very well schooled. I would say that being a doctor is the closest comparison in terms of devotion and discipline. But you can even be a doctor at all kinds of different levels... I think that a musician playing 'classical' music is, if s/he wants to do it creatively and with intelligence, required to do much the same soul-searching as improvisers are. I can't really see how it's much different for any artist. Certainly there are occupations in which money is easier to come by..."

The question is being read as formal education, jazz musicians pursuing formal education, and he is noting that not all musicians have pursued their studies academically. But the evaluative comparison is drawn with highly skilled medical doctors, among whom there are variations in educational attainment too; nevertheless, the top, the best musicians compare with the top doctors in their education; their commitment and

devotion are as high, implying that their rewards, perhaps are not. This established musician, whose partner was a research medical doctor, replied:

"I guess any endeavour that you want to pursue properly takes time, dedication, love, etc. Medicine (one I have observed over some years) certainly does..."

And:

"Not many. It is the passion for change and new concepts that creates the desire to study and continue contributing time and effort, when there are so many negative aspects. I guess people involved in charity work and those that work for the good of mankind."

The quotations began with a stress on creativity and scientific research, and the last one makes similar points, but focuses more on the demands that this musician requires of himself to fulfil the ambitions set before him; in other words, it is this level of engagement with the music that is sought, it is this which proves to be among its rewards, and the absence of incomes commensurate with these high level occupations that some consider indicates a lack of respect for their devotions and their efforts. While one of the quotes indicates that an audience is an essential part of what they do, there is also the implication that this exploration for new concepts and for change is relished away from the audience also.

Interestingly, the comparison with tasks, conditions and rewards also took the comparisons slightly above that of their own location in the Cambridge scale, and their reported associates. However, 14 respondents claimed there was no other comparable position, some indicating the rest of their answers as explanation, e.g., see answers above. The responses could cite

extremes in claiming non-comparability. For example, one musician replied:

"No. Most people would quit a job where the money is bad, you get treated like shit most of the time and the majority of hours involved in the job are unpaid (practice). We must be crazy. But a good crazy."

He is expressing a frustration of underpayment for the effort he considers required to be a highly skilled, capable jazz/improvising musician and the lack of financial rewards; that an extreme imbalance between the moneys earned and the efforts and time that the musician considers necessary, after all, this is a self-discipline. That he does not give up, when he thinks most others do indeed quit poorly paid jobs, is wryly noted as good, it may seem insane, but it is good; there is more to it than money, to get the money too would be welcome, but there is always the possibility to apply humour to disarm the lack of cash:

"Maybe comedy; it's the only other occupation where you work real hard just for the opportunity to NOT get paid for what you do best!"

Most of their efforts are self-imposed, self-disciplined; it is difficult to draw comparison with this self-motivated discipline. But what motivates him and others? Perhaps what a research scientist, particularly an explorer for obvious reasons of travel and hardship of working in unknown environments and seeking discoveries:

"Some other artistic occupations maybe. A travelling research scientist or a scientific explorer or something like that. There is really nothing to compare it with. Working hours are

long, but the payment so low - it is difficult to make comparison."

The working hours are long, and a good number of them are not in performance; it is all of the additional work that makes the hours of work long, practice, hours seeking performances, travel, etc.<sup>18</sup> In all of these explanations and comparisons, rich evaluations are being drawn between other occupations and that of the jazz and/or improvising musician. Many of the comparisons drawn are with demanding high levels of educational achievement, skills, and commitment, in the professional range, which are usually accompanied with higher salaries, more so the upper ranges of those cited. If these along with musicians' complaints about the lack of money accurately illustrate the reality, it cannot be money incomes that explain their commitment to music making, particularly, as will be shown later, given the numerous years of low returns generally encountered to become established.

Bourdieu (1984) advances the proposition that artists originate from professional and upper class positions because of a contradiction between the materialistic (economic) and aesthetic principles. That he constructs his theoretical edifice to explain the class structure of contemporary societies on the twin foundations of economic and cultural capital means that this contradiction goes to the heart of his theoretical undertaking. Possession, or lack of possession, of either or both of these capitals is what he advances to

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<sup>18</sup> The 4 occupations not listed were racing car driver, test pilot, soldier of fortune and prostitute.

<sup>19</sup> The last musician had experienced an extremely worrying spell of four months without a single performance; despite having no performance, the hours of work remained long, and possibly increased with the heightened effort he applied to finding work as the time with no offers and no gigs became longer.

explain location on the class structure. He argues that possession of large amounts of either or both economic capital or cultural capital brings elevation to the top class positions in society, and that possession of large amounts of economic capital yields access to cultural capital to enhance social location. As economic and cultural capital are said to compose different forms offering the same outcome, economic and social advantage, they are separated by principle and united by markets. Their division in principle takes the form of materialistic resources as opposed to cultural resources, or, in another sense, of money versus aesthetic (and social) values; they are united by markets in that they are both are said to be interchangeable and exchangeable, high amounts of either can access high amounts of the other, in order to enable access to the same ends. This appeal to conflicting principles he contend leads the children of those highly placed to reject the materialism of their parents and seek the purity of principle in an aesthetic and ascetic life in the arts. Why they should reject the compromise that so effectively led to their life of privilege is never fully explained by Bourdieu, it is assumed to ensue from the contradiction itself.

He writes, that artists:

'are able to play on the symbolic licence with which the 'bourgeois' are in a sense obliged to grant them, if only because they are obliged to recognise the supreme affirmation of their spiritual point of honour in the negation of popular materialism implied in the artistic negation of 'bourgeois' materialism.'

(Bourdieu 1984; 316)

What this thesis depends on is a support essential conflict between the economic and the cultural, the material and the values, and a rejection of one

and the preference for the other. The musicians of this sample did not subscribe to such an opposition, selecting the ascetic and artistic values in preference to the material and economic; they sought both, with the view that the financial returns was the equivalent of recognition of their skills and talents in creating innovative, sophisticated and expressive pieces of music, mostly through ensemble performance. If creating music brought low, inadequate or insufficient incomes this was not worn as a badge of honour, but was reckoned as a mark of low social esteem, which did not properly evaluate their skills, creativity, and endurance in the face of uncertainty. In other words, they seek for both economic and cultural, monetary and aesthetic, rewards as joint recognition of each other. The concepts of class and status were produced in an effort to explain apparent discrepancy between economic returns, education and occupational position and understanding (Lockwood 1956); however this division is by and large an artefact of explanatory inconsistency ensuing from theoretical constructs which is repeated in Bourdieu; with these musicians that their economic returns are lower than their family background, educational achievements, social relationships and work efforts bring lower incomes than they evaluate from within their frame of reference as equitable, this is something they think they have to endure in order to create that aesthetic value of the music produced in performance, mostly ensemble performance

### Incomes and Rewards

The occupations of these musicians parents, of their spouses/partners, of their friends, and of the occupations with which they compare being a

jazz and improvising musicians are all generally within the lower professional to professional range. These factors, along with the fact that the same proportion of musicians are graduates of conservatoire or university would lead one to expect that these musicians should attain similar occupational ratings and incomes. However, as we shall see, that while musicians register around 68–72 on CAMSIS their incomes do not accord with their family background, social interactions among with partners and friend, and educational achievements. Here, in examining the incomes of jazz and improvising musicians the focus will be on four things; first, the annual incomes and their sources (the low level of some of these incomes will probably surprise, especially given the years that a good many of these musicians have been active, but that it is to be remembered there is a significant degree of inequality within musicians incomes); second on the maximum, and minimum and average incomes reported for performances; third, on the irregularity, high variability of monthly incomes, and finally, the maximum possible annual incomes these musicians consider potentially achievable in the future. (These income data I have for only a subset of the total of 88 musicians; 54 musicians)

### Annual Incomes

The data for annual incomes of musician elicited by the interview survey is beginning to look extremely interesting, but, at this moment the quantity is too small, and there is indication that the questions need further refining. First glance at this data reveals a very wide spectrum; \$6,000 - \$120,000 (in US \$), per year, however, the one musician reporting the highest figure, also reported an \$80,000 income from publishing

musical study books for musicians and royalties, making the annual income reported from performance and recording as \$40,000, thus there were two groups of incomes reported at \$40 or \$50,000 per year; the rest ranged from \$12,000 to 30,000, with three between \$6 and 9,000. Those earning below \$8,000 per year reported alternative sources of income, the lowest supplementing their incomes by about 90%, with this dropping as incomes from music rises to \$18,000 where alternative sources accounted for between 60% to 40% of total annual income, with one musician with \$15,000 reporting no additional income.<sup>20</sup> A European musician speaking of their commitment to being a jazz musician:

"My prime occupation is being a jazz musician, piano player, having my own band. But for a living I have also been teaching [music] and giving workshops. I also have a small record label, which does not give me any bigger income, but it goes together with this being a musician - I have control over my CD releases."

Thus the musicians earning below \$8,000 as jazz and improvising musicians usually reported a number of income source, usually related to their musical skill - sometimes in rather unique ways, e.g., music therapist. Most usually, supplementary incomes came from giving private music lessons, advertising music, teaching in universities or colleges(part-time and full-time), but also from playing cocktail lounge jazz, others were part-time music therapists, or health care workers, kitchen porter, in that order of importance. The

<sup>20</sup> There was a separate question placed on alternative income sources, which and this was more widely asked and responded to than that on annual incomes. Of the musicians who responded to this 27% supplementing their incomes from non-musical source by between 10 and 30%, and, 46% reporting not doing so, and 10% left it blank, but the other answers implied that this meant no additional sources.

remainder reported incomes from \$20 - 30,000 per year from music, mostly, but not all, working in avant-garde or free improvisation. All those earning in the region of \$40,000 to 50,000 were mainstream jazz players, with long established careers. The lower income musicians were mostly avant-garde improvising musicians, although there were a few of the avant-garde musicians reporting this level of income. and as we move up the income scale we move increasingly into mainstream jazz musicians; however for those too, incomes of \$30,000 above appear to be minority ones, irrespective of educational attainment, though these findings are preliminary. Initially, the suggestion is that for these musicians, given their educational achievements, they are underachieving. There is other data, some supplementary, which lends credence to that view.

Indeed, there was a general dissatisfaction with the level of incomes they received, one among the highest income group here, when asked if he thought he was paid fairly for performance, wrote:

"I could easily be paid more, but I do OK. How many people have prepared for what they currently do for a living since they were 8? Many people have invested a lot of time and effort in me over the years."

What troubled him most about playing jazz:

"Lack of respect for what we do."

Among the top in the mainstream jazz profession, plays major venues with major players, tours the festival circuit in Europe and performs with one of the most popular of jazz bands, with a very high reputation among critiques and festival audiences, this is a significant remark. Nevertheless

it is a common one; most remarked on the lack of respect their profession received, as well as lack of money:

"Most of the time I should definitely be paid more for a performance. But this kind of music [mainstream jazz] has to base income... on the number of people listening to it, there is definitely too little money involved to get paid according to the work you put in to this."

The problem as these musicians reported it was the level of income obtained relative to the amount of work and the study and training that is required to perform at this high calibre, and the hours of effort hidden behind the few hours in performance. Another musician remarked in this respect:

"People often complain that the fees we charge are too high - the conversation goes like this:

People: '\$200 for two hours' work?'

Me: 'No, it's \$200 for 18 years' experience.'

I definitely earn my money, but I do feel that much of what we do is perceived as a luxury expense by other people."

These fees, \$200 dollars, were to pay for 5 professional musicians to perform for a two-hours evening concert. Thus, there was not the notion that adequate or high incomes were to be foregone, rejected in the name of aesthetic purity. The income was part of the measure of worth, as well as necessary for comfort and security in the career as a jazz and/or improvising musician. They would consider that the aesthetic and the financial evaluation should in some ways be commensurate with each other, that it is not is something that has to be forborne, not relished as a mark of aesthetic (and ascetic) purity, in a form of rebellion against bourgeois or market society.

### Volatility in Monthly Incomes

There was also the issue of volatility in their monthly incomes from their musical activities, which was considerable for all types of music; incomes were reported to rise or drop very considerably above or below average monthly incomes between 1 and 3 times per year by over 90% of the respondents. Such volatility needs to be planned for, but can still impose severe hardship, especially on those with lower incomes and where the income drop persists for a long spell.<sup>21</sup> Sometimes these were wild swings, from 5X monthly average to 50% of monthly average below zero monthly income, the latter taking account of continued expenditures associated with the occupation. Average volatility reported was between 50–75% below, to between 2 to 3X above, average monthly incomes. However, there were also a few reports of 5X above average monthly incomes, and the 50% of average below zero, where monthly incomes were around the 1,000 to 2,400 dollar a year mark, determined from the reported annual incomes. These indicate considerable volatility in incomes over the year.

Responses to what they thought of this were usually resigned, e.g., that is the way it is, I don't think about averages, I look at the total, One European musician<sup>22</sup> who reported an income of around \$15,000 dollars per year, when asked to evaluate and his income fluctuations, he wrote:

"I do not look at my income in such detail, I am

not interested in "averages" I just accept what I get. I just adjust my lifestyle accordingly. [It is] no big deal. I am prepared to give up all luxuries when necessary and live at subsistence level if I have to."

This income he supplanted by part-time restaurant work, and when asked about the balance he achieved between these occupation, he remarked:

"I would prefer to spend less time at work and more on music but sadly for me I have chosen to play the most unpopular form of music that humanity has ever known. There is no point being unhappy about it, it is the situation that 90% of the musicians in the world find themselves in. I do prefer to play music than something else."

I would think he is giving up more than [do] luxuries, and there is an obvious feeling of dismay and resignation. It is interesting to compare the generally rather resigned nature of the responses to this income volatility with the rather more upbeat ones of Scottish fishers, from research in 1987 – 89. They reported that the volatility in their incomes was to be welcomed; they also had a keener perception at the time that their efforts were important in determining their incomes. They were, however, reporting incomes much higher than the average for people with comparable educational achievements to theirs, some greater than the maximum of the musicians in this study. Thus, the reported income volatility as a source of excitement when high and dismay when low, but attributed to their efforts. In contrast these musicians had higher educational

<sup>21</sup> In the US, to cope with such hardship can see musicians either reducing or stopping altogether their health insurance. This is an extremely hazardous response to a temporary income crisis, but perhaps unavoidable. In the other countries covered by this survey, such is not a problem as health care is usually some form of universal coverage, but other necessary expenses are similarly reduced.

<sup>22</sup> With 10 CDs released in his own name, features on others as side man and played with an array of well-known musicians, the compass of which would include Evan Parker, the London Music Collective, and others of high renown, in the improvising world.

attainments and lower incomes, and less sense that their social background should lead them to expect.

### Incomes for Live Performances

One last point on incomes that I want to consider here is the income reported for performances. An enormous spread here arose from a minimum to maximum income from individual performances; from 0 - \$25 to \$1,500 for a single lead<sup>23</sup> or solo performance; for even those in maximum incomes reported here that latter is 15% of annual salary. The respondents who reported this, also gave a figure of \$5— 6,000 per performance as the maximum attained for their ensemble (from a nonet to a big band), and an average of \$100 and \$500, thus these maximums are not the common occurrence. What concurs with that interpretation is that incomes for local performances are reported as lower than for international ones, in a context where most performances are local for most musicians; they report an average of 1 to 2 tours internationally per year. Again incomes for mainstream musicians tend to be higher than for avant-garde ones, and higher for European than American ones. Avant-garde, improvising musician tend to report between the 0 to \$100 rate most often, whereas the mainstream musicians tend to more frequently report between \$100 and \$300 as their average per performance, still noting they are sometimes paid nothing, and some gigs as very poorly paid.

One mainstream musician:

"No. I'm not paid fairly. A perfect example would be that I have been playing Kavehaz Art Gallery Cafe since 1966 once every other month.

They pay me \$100 and my band is a quintet, so I always end up paying them out of my pocket, which means I make no money. That's the way it is at these gigs."

With the quintet he pays each \$25, leaving nothing for himself, in fact after accounting for travel costs for himself and the group he is somewhat out of pocket; he agrees to appear there, he stated, because it offers a regular gig, which maintains his public profile and gives work for to his ensemble, keeping it a working ensemble. However, as a side musician he reports average earnings of \$150 to 200 per hour, which could be \$300 to \$400 per gig, which with 2—3 performances per month is \$150 to \$300 per month from performances.; this calculates at \$1,800 to 3,600; most of his income comes as a session musician for recordings, once a month.

These levels of income are even poorer among avant-garde musicians in some situations. In New York it is common to attend concerts with 8 to 10 members of an audience paying \$8 each for a show of 3 musicians; even if all of the money is given to the musicians, they received \$21 — \$26 each. Usually the venue retains a percentage of the music charge. In Japan, the usual is 55% of the music charge is retained, with attendance varying from 2 — 6, to 150, for ticket prices of \$30 to \$50, depending on the popularity of musicians, with the usual in the lower end; with a full house that is \$2025 maximum for the ensemble. Thus, in answer to, 'Do you think you are paid fairly for performing in public?', the answers:

"Depends on the location. Sometimes yes, often not. But speaking in terms of travelling costs/time, instruments (I play 5 flutes, being

<sup>23</sup> This is individual, not group, income; the group maximum by the musician indicating the \$2,500 maximum was \$6,000, for .

worth around 5000 Euros each, rehearsing, composing, arranging, managing, organising, etc) this efforts are never paid."

A famous avant-garde musician:

"No. Improvised music is rendered invisible by every cultural management organisation in the UK."

"No, but nearly nobody is. In Germany the club scene is under enormous pressure because costs are exploding, so there is less and less live music and more and more musicians on the other hand."

"Depends how you look at it. How much should you get paid for playing a (small) minority music? In comparison to the size of the audience, yes I do well... However, if the comparison is with classical musicians, then probably less well. I would like to be seen as a fine artist, but because I have a saxophone round my neck, the arts establishment assume I'm an entertainer. because I look like one."

"Rarely! The S B Trio, because of P... gets paid quite well. Most of my other work is highly underpaid. Most avant-garde music exists in the underground where little economic support exists. Recently Americans are getting an attitude that they need not pay for music anymore. The net is in part to thank for this attitude."

"It depends on the gigs. Most of them not, regarding the time I spent (and am still spending) on learning music and learning how to play and instrument..."

"Yes, otherwise I would not play."

And a major artist of long standing in mainstream jazz:

"Most of the time, not enough. Jazz doesn't get the same artist fees that classical music [gets].

Less subsidies also for the jazz events."

Another, musician commented that their income per-performance was:

"Sometimes OK. Sometimes not. I try not to think about it because it drains your energy. It's better to concentrate on the music."

Thus, incomes for performances can at times be for most of these musicians satisfactory, if not excellent, and, quite rarely, it can be many above times the average, indeed it can attain a significant percentage of annual income. The one common feature, is that most incomes seem to be small for average number of monthly performances that are mostly equally small.

Essentially, low incomes are not welcome; they pursue a way of life which does not hold out significant prospects for good incomes, and have come to accept, even while they resent, that. It is not a matter of a conflict between aesthetics and economics; a choice for aesthetic purity over commercial impurity. They, like most, think their contribution, as devotion to many years of study and practice, along with their commitment to applying their hard-won skills to the creation of inspired performances deserves recognition, in the form of equitable incomes, which they mostly do not consider that they receive. They acknowledge that they have, in some cases, chosen to play music that is not popular, as one put it, 'the must unpopular music known to man', that they have chosen music that is not commercially popular. Yet, this is not a choice of aesthetic in exchange for economic rewards; they consider their aesthetic efforts and creations deserve the economic returns that are just in society. They consider themselves to be professionals and locate themselves as professionals, by and large,

in their social interactions, therefore just incomes would be professional incomes. Their educational attainment would locate most of them within the reach of these professional occupations, had they pursued or persisted with, educational studies which would have carried them in that direction. They do not willingly, accept low incomes for high volumes of other rewards, e.g., in general terms, use of abilities, control over work tasks, variety of tasks, (good) social interactions, job satisfaction, and in specific terms the pursuit of creative music making; ideally they would prefer to have high incomes as well; high incomes would reflect wider social recognition of what they devote their lives to; as one musician wrote; "it is pretty much 7/24". Thus, professional incomes would recognise them as professionals and provide a good package, including what others in Europe, Japan and Australia take for granted, a health care package, which a good many US musicians cannot afford.

### **Obtaining Performances**

The public performance represents a crystallisation of all the efforts of jazz and improvising musicians. It is at that point of interaction with others, the place where they not just present, but create and develop, in public what they have sought and striven to understand, and formulate as a distinctive musical identity which they can integrate with, in private, in practice, or with others, e.g., in rehearsals. It is in the public performance that all of these efforts comes together, where the risks of failure in public are encountered and where the ecstasies of success supped upon when achieved. It is here that their music making receives wider public credence, from other musicians or measured in audience applause and

in as incomes. Obtaining steady, good paying performances is one of the most difficult tasks that musicians can encounter, involving hours of telephone calls, sending out promotion packs, a good range of other social contacts within the performance world, depending on personal contacts with other musicians, and this can be as much the situation with or without a booking agent; one prominent musician remarked that he had an agent for overseas touring, but that he seemed to obtain as many gigs as his agent did, if not more. Having a booking agent can assist with performances but not all musicians were convinced that booking agents worked as well for them as they should and could themselves.

To place this in some perspective, it is advisable to consider the number of performances that these musicians report on average per month. The on average is critical because they also report considerable fluctuation in monthly performances. I have comparable data for 50 musicians, for the numbers and hours of performance. Most respondent supplied averages, some complaining the volatility of their monthly schedules made calculating averages impossible here; indeed, one musician replied that they tried not to think of their average monthly performances, and another reported that for the period from November 2001 to April, 2002, he had only one gig, and that was over the New Year period. Only three of the musicians interviewed said that they worked constantly and regularly every month; 3 between 10 and 15 gigs per month, depending on tour schedule, 20 to 30 hours in performance, reported averages were 2 hours per engagement, nevertheless they also reported noted that the number can vary very considerably among

months. Given that the number of performances displays irregularity, 94% reported 10 or less performances per month, with most of these, 68%, falling within the range of 3 to 5 live public engagements per month, between 6 and 10 performance hours, with about 20% obtaining between 6 and 9 engagements, between 10 hours and 18 hours per month on. The remainder, 6% each, recorded either 1 to 2 gigs per month, 2 to 4 hours, or more than 12 to 20 or over, between 24 and 40 hours (those reporting these high numbers of gigs, of over 20, also reported very much lower incomes per gig on average). The ideal seems to be between 12 and 15 engagements per month, as this is where incomes payments per performance look the highest. Below that incomes are low and above that average incomes per performance can look extremely low, It should also be remembered that 94% of musician reported experiencing months with extremely few or no performances. Thus, it is apparent that for the most of these musicians, the time they value the most, performing on stage to an audience with fellow musicians, is a very small part of their monthly experience, work. Nevertheless, occasional months they are performance rich, with relatively highly paying gigs.

There is a similar reporting of irregularity in the time spent seeking performances, one person reported it as an "ongoing process", meaning that all the time they were in some ways working for bookings<sup>24</sup>. The single largest block is 74%, who reported spending 10 to 20 hours trying to make bookings; this subdivides down into 52% at 10 —

<sup>24</sup> This is the possibility that there is probably some overlap in this individuals reported figures; that parts of the time noted for performance, or rehearsal, or whatever he also included in the time seeking performance, giving double counting.

14 hours, 22% 15 — 20 hours. Of the remainder, 14% report 5 hours or less and 9% spending 30 to 100 hours per month. Immediately obvious here is that those reporting the most hours in, usually report the least hours at pursuing, performance. Thus, it is obvious that on average most spend less than 10 hours performing but more than 10 hours per month seeking gigs; a ratio of between 1.5 and 2 times. The most frequent method reported were constant telephone calls, emails, and mailings of promotion packages of press kits with CDs, with telephone calls the most important. (At the same time, phone calls is reported as the single biggest expense encountered in their occupational activities<sup>25</sup>.) Another interesting feature is that the musician reported detesting this part of their activities; they called it 'hustling' for gigs; it is not hard to see why, they must be rejected more often than they successfully obtain bookings.

Establishing and cultivating contacts with a wide range of musicians was crucial for information about venues and engagements, and for inviting musicians to play in their ensembles. Not even those who may be considered amongst the most established devote their attention to single projects; they generally have, are members in a minimum two to four main active ensembles and participate in other intermittently active projects, in addition to special packages put together by promoters, more on that later. Dave Holland wrote specifically about this:

"A lot of it is economics. It takes a lot of will-power and persistence to keep to keep a band on the road. There's a lot of temptation and enticement

<sup>25</sup> Travel was not reported here, probably because where gigs were local and infrequent, the cost was not so great, but where gigs were distant the travel was reported as paid on top.

from promoters to do all-star projects and special projects. So the business is not geared to support working bands. Even record companies often discourage bandleaders to use their working bands on records. They prefer to have a line up that includes a group of bandleaders, which is fine, it's just that if it excludes the opportunity to develop bands, the whole farm system of the music suffers."

In other words, maintaining a constant working band is not easy, as the business preferences of record company executives and major concert promoters is for all-star and/or remembrance projects; they believe that these immediately offer a potentially larger audience than a single leader with musicians not of equal renown among CD buyers and concert goers. This may attract larger audiences, but concentrates the lucrative performance and recording opportunities on a few already established musicians. He simultaneously has a steady working quintet as well as a big band, and participates in other continuous projects with other musicians as sideman or joint lead, and also participates in the all-star concert or recording session. He himself records for an independent recording company, using his working ensemble, whose members themselves are involved in a number of other projects.

The number of projects involved can be explained by two factors. First, musician interaction is highly significant for obtaining performances; as performing as side-musician on other projects, and in being informed of, or recommended for, performances. Musicians also assist each other internationally, when touring, by recommending venues to contact and/or recommending musicians to venues. And musicians forming a network

connect musicians they are associated with to each other. Every single respondent noted that other musicians were very significant for their obtaining performances, with a good many writing their replies in capital letters, and reporting that these contacts usually added 1 — 3 performances when touring nationally and internationally, stitching together an otherwise more fragmented series. One of the musicians interviewed talked about these sorts of linkages:

"I first met John Lindberg during a tour I did in November/December 2000. Georg Graewe had run into him in New York a few weeks before and mentioned that John was back in Detroit, and since I came thru I invited him to play. Our paths had never crossed, but he immediately agreed, when I called him up. So on a cold winter's night on December 9, 2000 we found ourselves on stage at Entropy, Detroit and it turned out that we love playing together and that we have to continue . . . When John came to Europe the following spring I set up a trio concert with him and Georg at the Loft in Cologne, the same place where my first duo concert with Georg had been recorded nine years before... In fact, my collaboration with him goes back to 1997 when he hired me for his Grubenklang Orchestra (Lindberg had been in that band in 1985/ 86), and since 1997 I've been a regular member of The Georg Graewe Quartet."

Contacts with other musicians and participation in others projects establishes links and potential future links.

Secondly, participation in a number of projects, enhances to possibilities of continuous work, more often affording ensembles of available

musicians than if limited to one ensemble at any time; the latter only is feasible where popularity is such as to sustain a continuous year round schedule of performances with adequate income for all the members. This is seldom feasible or sought; most musician prefer the opportunity to perform multiple ensembles because of the enhanced stimulation, possibilities to acquire new skills and insights, and to pursue distinctive musical ideas in altering settings.

Thus, while performance is what their activities are directed towards, is the high point in their musical lives if not lives, obtaining regular performances is one of the most difficult accomplishments that these musicians face. Largely, most are performance poor, and would heartily welcome more monthly performances on a more regular basis. Obtaining regular performances is one impediment to a sustained and successful careers with incomes that match their ratings on CAMSIS as lower professional and professional people, next I will consider their incomes.

## Conclusion

As the cultural turn in social theory has increasingly relied on literary analysis of the (symbolic) meanings of social phenomena (Grossberg et. al., 1992; Long 1997) recent studies of jazz as a musical culture have amplified that interpretive methodology. It was shown that critical theorists of jazz in particular invoked an eclectic, contradictory array of social theories and concepts to chase a literary analysis of 'meanings' which renders them reverberatory and mutable. Furthermore, they did so without demonstrating subscription to such meanings by those, e.g., musicians, to whom they were attributed, without

presenting adequately assessed consequences flowing from these meanings, and while preconceiving musician as members of low, oppressed, artistic, social and economic status groupings. Instead, most often, they professed interpretations of meanings in terms of their concordance with stereotypical conventions, and whether they reinforce or undermine such stereotypes. Generally the critical theorists made no notable attempt to evaluate the application and consequence of meanings in specific, determined circumstances, nor to substantiate actors having widespread subscription to, or disavowal of, these meanings. Instead, for these theorists, the supposed meanings were said to apply and their effects were presumed to ensue, both despite and because of they themselves holding to poststructuralist relativism.

For example, with social identities, e.g., of class, gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, etc., their meanings were presented as the imposition of oppressive stereotypes and any actual specific expression of meanings associated with such identities were interpreted according to their relative concordance with such stereotypes; thus they were then interpreted as either reinforcing or subverting those stereotypical meanings and social ordering. They often advanced class, usually a two-class model and its residual derivatives, as important for social meanings, understandings and actions, and they present evidence both of and lack of, correspondence and/or contradiction among class location, understandings and behaviours as evidence of both the complexities of the real world and the sophistication of their theories which admit to such problematic interrelationships in the real

world; imprecise correspondence and/or contradiction were not considered evidence of any shortcomings within their theoretical and conceptual framework. Critical theorists encountered similar difficulties in relation to their other preferred identities of race gender and sexuality, for example, and adopt similar strategies in response. Such a reaction to explanatory inconsistencies was not to be limited to critical theorists of jazz, but is quite common among the synthetic approaches to social theory and identity of Bauman and Giddens, as exemplars of that school.

To begin to unpack these sorts of explanatory puzzles, this study will examine an occupational group of professional international jazz and improvising musicians, to socially and economically locate them and their patterns of interaction within the hierarchy of social stratification, and to examine their evaluations of their occupational and artistic experiences based on interviews and survey sampling of 88 musicians working in the international jazz and improvised music circuit, and participant observation, conducted over the period mid-1998 – 2002. The survey is ongoing, thus findings are preliminary, and will be discussed with that in mind. After some brief reference to the findings of occupational studies, the musicians will be located within the Cambridge Scale of Social Interaction and Stratification, which show that people in the social structure interact most often with others, friends and spouses, who sit in close proximity to their own position in the hierarchy of stratification. After showing that their parents, friends, and spouses are primarily from lower professional to upper professional positions on

the scale, the educational attainments of these musicians are seen to accord with that. It was also revealed that the cultural and artistic influences of these musicians in early childhood accorded with studies showing a richer range of experience and consumption among those above the lower professional position on the scale. It was also revealed that their early household experiences significantly contributed to their educational, occupational and specific musical choices for their careers. However, while their upbringing and education would normally prepare them for lower professional and professional occupations and incomes, and that their current interactions in social space would reinforce like understandings and expectations, these were not their occupational outcomes.

Few of these currently attain the average occupational incomes of their social background and educational attainment after many years of persistence in their careers, let alone the expected entry income of first occupation of graduates. Unlike graduates entering the lower rung of the career ladder and gradually accumulating promotion and income increments, these musicians reported many years (between 12 and 15 years on average, before becoming established musicians with adequate income. Their incomes, annual and monthly, were also shown to be generally low, and subject to extreme volatility over the year. It was also shown that they experience considerable difficulty in obtaining regular, well-paid performances and put in many hours of unpaid labour to attain those. To secure performances they participated in numerous performance projects, which widened their contacts with other musicians, and widened their

range of experiences. However, it was also suggested that as they invest more effort and time in their careers, as the years pass before they become established their range of alternative opportunities narrow, with their accumulated skills as musicians and performers coming to be seen as the main area wherein they retain some control, and the one they always invested their successes on. This leads to increasing focus on that area of their life in expectation that it will lead to success. Something they are reinforced in with ensemble performances and other musicians commending them on musical achievements. It was argued that what helps sustain them is their valuation of the music they create in performance with other, like musicians, that they live for performances that are often infrequent and can be underpaid; the ensemble performances are described as the immense products of their considerable investment in practice, study and investigation of musical possibilities.

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## ジャズ・即興音楽ミュージシャンおよびその音楽の社会・経済的位置

Allan J. Sutherland

### 要 旨

音楽文化であるジャズの最近の研究は、社会理論の文化指向的潮流を増幅していて、反射や朝令暮改的になるような意味の文献分析を追及するため矛盾した社会理論・観念を並べ立ており、これら意味が帰する社会主題やその結果の評価を示さずに、社会経済的に非主流なミュージシャンの位置づけに起因するものとしている。これに対して本研究ではCAMSSIS アプローチを用い、複数国のジャズ・即興音楽ミュージシャンを社会経済的相互作用・理解の成層社会空間で位置づけすることを開始し、ミュージシャンの収入、演奏、およびキャリア経験を考察する。

キーワード：ミュージシャン、職業、社会成層、CAMSSIS