

Chapter 6

The Adaptive Musician: The Case of Peter Hook and Graham

Massey

Ewa Mazierska and Tony Rigg

This chapter examines the artistic trajectories of two musicians originating from the North West of England, Peter Hook and Graham Massey. Their music careers began in the 1970s, spanning five decades at the time of writing. Each of them attained major chart success in the UK and many other countries around the world; they both had record deals with culturally significant record labels; they used various vehicles and permutations for their creative output, and they both continue to make their living from music related activities. The question we pose in this chapter is how these two musicians managed to sustain their careers for such a long period of time, given the changing fashions and climate in music and especially, the crisis in the recording industry which began in the late 1990s, the impact of which continues to resonate, particularly for artist's whose practice began before the digital music revolution. To answer this, we consider factors pertaining to their personal circumstances, most importantly their talent and desire to live for and from music, and the wider context in which they operated, especially the time and place they started their work as professional musicians. We also consider whether there are any lessons, which younger generations of musician can draw from their successes and failures. In order to do so, one of the authors, Tony Rigg, conducted in-depth interviews with these musicians in Spring of 2018. Our research takes into account the circumstance of the genesis of Hook's and Massey's artistry and subsequent rise to prominence, the history of music in the North West of England in the 1970s, up to the 1990s. To this history we devote the first part of the chapter.

The late 1970s and 1980s in the North West: Swimming Against the Tide

We just did what we wanted to do. And then post-rationalised it.

Tony Wilson

The 1980s are regarded as a period when neoliberalism began in the UK and the USA, following the election victories of Margaret Thatcher (4th May 1979) and Ronald Reagan (20th Jan 1981), whose politics were informed by the ideology of the ‘New Right’. In cultural industries, as Timothy Taylor argues, the early neoliberalisation was marked by increased corporatisation, ‘held much more to the bottom line than [it was the case] in the past, in part also because of the increasing ownership role played by managers, who through the mechanism of stock options began to think of themselves more as owners with a responsibility to stockholders’ (Taylor 2016: 48).

However, while Taylor is right about the ‘general direction of travel’ of the culture industries, including the popular music industries, marked by centralisation and ruthless monetisation, there were exceptions to this rule. One of them was the North West of England and Manchester especially. At the beginning of the period, which is of interest to this chapter, namely the late 1970s, Manchester, following the period of deindustrialization, was a city in decline, known for dilapidated housing estates, empty shells of factories and a high level of crime. It was a city in ruins, feeding on its past. Although there were popular bands originating from this city and its surrounding areas, such as 10cc, the Hollies, Sweet Sensation, even the Bee Gees, the individual successes did not add up to constitute a sense of a thriving music industry or scene. There was a lack of animators of culture willing to invest in the local talent. This situation also mirrored what was happening in other parts of the North of England. Those who were seeking success in popular music, typically headed to the South of England or overseas, as was the case with the Beatles, who tried their luck in London, a journey depicted in Richard Lester’s *The Hard Day’s Night* (1964), in which the band leaves Liverpool by train to appear on television. The ascent of punk in the UK between 1976-77 however, represented the dawn of a new era.

Punk is widely seen as not only a specific subgenre of rock, but also a distinct subculture and attitude to creating music and conducting music business. It is seen as a response to and marked by a rejection of musical virtuosity and the excesses often associated with preceding incarnations of rock typified by bands such as Led Zeppelin, Queen and Emerson, Lake and Palmer and, by the same token, breaking down the division between performers and consumers of music. Punk musicians were also hostile towards the dominant players in music and the media, including the large

record companies. This was because they represented the conformist political world against which they rebelled, but also because these dominant institutions initially rejected them. Instead, punk musicians favoured small independent companies, which they often set up themselves. As Al Spicer remarks, ‘a “fuck you” attitude and a DIY aesthetic that meant any snotty-nosed teenager could join in’ (Spicer 2006: 5) was the essence of punk. This attitude presented a cohesive ideology for a lifestyle movement beyond that of simply consuming music.

Punk musicians, despite their rebellious posture, proved to be very adaptable to the changing fashions and conditions of making music, thanks to their ability to rely on their own entrepreneurial spirit, rather than the support of large companies. Punk ideology emboldened outsiders, namely to-be-musicians operating outside the centres, in the case of Britain, outside London, in the North West, which is of specific interest here. However, the ascent of punk would not change the fortunes of musicians discussed in this chapter, if not for the fact that it was coupled with the emergence of cultural entrepreneurs willing to invest in the new phenomenon and keep it local, rather than being relocated to London. Tony Wilson was the most important of such local entrepreneurs and subsequently became an object of most sustained research and mythologization, through several books and films devoted to him (Mazierska and Rymajdo 2017; Witts 2018).

Wilson came from Salford and studied at Cambridge University. However, on completing his study there in the early 1970s he returned to the North and started working as a reporter for Granada Television. After attending a Sex Pistols concert at Manchester Lesser Free Trade Hall in 1976, he also started to build up a music scene in Manchester (Nice 2011: 7-8). Before that, as Dave Haslam asserts, ‘the notion of Manchester as a taste-making rock & roll town was unthinkable’ (Haslam 1999: 110).

Wilson achieved this by creating an infrastructure that consisted of a record label, a club initially manifest as the Factory Club Night that started in 1978 and later the Hacienda (though Dry Bar should not go unmentioned), and a collective of like-minded individuals, keen to develop and harness the potential of Manchester’s creative communities. Wilson’s ambitions went beyond creating a music scene: he tried to reinvent the city by associating it with music culture, creativity and a particular brand of socialism: a Wilsonian version of Situationism. As James Nice puts it, he had ‘faith in the romantic magic of Manchester’ (Nice 2011: 12).

Wilson's ambitions about Manchester are conveyed in his book, *24 Hour Party People: What the Sleeve Notes Never Tell You* (2002), which is a hybrid of the script of the biopic devoted to him, *24 Hour Party People* (2002), directed by Michael Winterbottom and Wilson's thoughts about his own life in the context of a wider history of the North of England. At the beginning of Chapter 2, entitled 'Granadaland', Wilson writes:

England's North-West, the background to our little tale, is a bit like that bit of semi-desert between the Tigris and the Euphrates in Iraq; a piece of land and a bunch of people that changed the world forever and then sank back into obscurity. In their aridity and poverty they seem to pay the price for ever daring to kick evolution's arse.... This was the land that gave us the modern world. This was the home of the Industrial Revolution, changing the habits of homo sapiens the way the agrarian revolution had done ten thousand years earlier. And what did the heritage mean? It meant slums. It meant shite. Burnt out by all that 'production'. Capital strides the globe and it walked out on this lot around the time Queen Victoria popped it. The remnants, derelict working-class housing zones, empty redbrick mills and warehouses and a sense of self that it included loss and pride in equal if confused measures. (Wilson 2002: 14)

Wilson's mission seems to be the restoration of pride in being from the North West and especially being a musician from this region. Factory Records and the Hacienda became the pillars of the musical phenomenon known as Madchester. In investing in his enterprise Wilson not only acted against the neoliberal trend of increased corporatization, as mentioned by Taylor, but also against the idea of putting profit above art. Factory was known for its nonchalant approach to spending money, almost making a virtue of creating a deficit rather than surplus. The best-known example of that is reflected in producing Factory Records' most commercially successful single, New Order's 'Blue Monday'. The single's original sleeve, created by Factory designers, Peter Saville and Brett Wickens, showed disrespect for the way records are normally produced, by not including basic information about the product, as if to deter 'ordinary' consumers from buying it and appealing only to 'Factory insiders'. Moreover, due to the use of die-cutting and specific colours (all features

used to make the record unique, even if mass-produced), the production cost of the sleeve was so high that the single sold at a loss (Nice 2011: 207-8).

The two musicians discussed in this chapter had different relationships with Wilson and Factory. Peter Hook, who was a member of Joy Division and New Order, was central to the operations of Wilson's musical 'empire'. Wilson saw Factory as 'a laboratory experiment in popular art' and its survival was propped up by the success of its major acts, Joy Division, New Order and the Happy Mondays (Robertson 2006). The commercial success of Hook's bands provided a significant contribution to both Factory's creative and cultural legacy, as well as resourcing the label's operations and the maintenance of the famously loss-making Hacienda, which became the subject of Peter Hook's first biographical book (Hook 2008).

Despite having music released on Factory records, Massey's involvement with Factory was more peripheral, due to the bulk of his business dealings being with other organisations. However, our argument is that, as much as the 'punk revolution' provided the foundations for the rise of Joy Division, New Order, and 808 State, Manchester and the North West 'swimming against the tide' of neoliberalism in popular music served to further their artistic agenda. They felt compelled to try their hand in music, despite coming from modest social backgrounds and to develop their talent locally.

Peter Hook: Punk to Payment

I didn't start making money from music until I was thirty.

Peter Hook

Peter Hook came from a working class family, living in Salford. His father was a driver for Frederick Hampson Glassworks in Salford. His father was abusive to his mother and his parents split when Peter was a child. Subsequently he and his younger brother lived with his mother and then with his stepfather, Ernest William Hook, whose name he inherited. In his second biographical publication, when describing his childhood, Hook paints a vivid picture of the North West:

We were for a while a pretty normal single-parent working-class family: two-up, two-down, outside toilet, coal hole, living in Jane Street, Langworthy, in wonderful, dirty

old Salford. When I saw Control, all those years later, I didn't even notice it was in black and white because it was exactly what my childhood had looked and felt like: dark and smoggy and brown, the colour of a wet cardboard box, which was how all of Manchester looked in those days. (Hook 2012: 3)

Hook's music career began in 1976 at the age of 20. It was the aforementioned Sex Pistols concert on the 4th June at the Lesser Free Trade Hall, attended by Tony Wilson and a number of other, soon to be important figures, that inspired Hook and his then friend Bernard Sumner, to promptly acquire instruments and form the band. Hook went on to cofound two of the most influential British music groups of his generation and to enjoy success independently with many other music projects. The substantial revenues generated by his creative endeavours, as well as the cultural significance of his work make him thus a perfect example of the 'adaptive musician'.

When we asked Hook about his motivations at the time of forming Joy Division, he replied that then he did not think in such terms:

I had no idea what I wanted to do. I just wanted to emulate the Sex Pistols. It was as simple as that. There was no thought other than wanting to get on stage and tell everyone to fuck off. It was about being a punk and it was about channeling the aggression and the frustration you felt as a human being and as a teenager, not knowing what you wanted to do, what you wanted to achieve. When your hormones are boiling, that's how you feel: angry, nihilistic and aggressive. Music is a perfect antidote to this aggression.

What Hook is describing here are the characteristics of a romantic artist, who embarks on a career in music out of desire for self-expression, rather than to achieve a stable income or even to become a star. He also testifies to his allegiance to punk culture, by emphasising strong emotions, as opposed to rational considerations. What connected the young Hook to punk culture was also a belief that to be a punk musician one does not have to be a virtuoso of an instrument, because the attitude is more important than knowledge or skill. According to Hook's testimony, at the point of deciding he was going to form a band in 1976, he did not have any musical training whatsoever. He taught himself to play bass guitar and he suggests that his auto-

didacticism might be an important factor in the development of his unique style as instrumentalist and composer (Hook 2012: 39)ⁱ.

Whilst the nucleus of Joy Division, Peter Hook, Bernard Sumner and Ian Curtis, came together with the intent to forming a band in 1976, it was not until 1977 that the lineup was completed with the addition of Stephen Morris. With the pre-Joy Division name of Warsaw, they began developing a cohesive musical entity. Hook considers that their musical naivety at that time was beneficial, as it liberated them from the rules and conventions that restricted other musicians. In addition to that there were numerous other factors contributing to the appeal of Joy Division including the distinctive performance style of its front man and the lyrical content which connected them thematically with the youth of the era., Another important factor in the band's transitioning from amateur to professional status was the introduction of manager, Rob Gretton who, himself was only 23 at the time. Gretton kept the band together and freed its members from many organisational tasks, allowing them to focus on their creative outputs. By Hook's admission, the members of Joy Division were making limited progress as a self-managed band, so Gretton's arrival was seen as a very positive development. Gretton coordinated recording activities, television and radio appearances, logistics and touring schedules, initially in the North, then further afield, advancing into Europe, consequently growing the band's fan base. As the band were about to embark upon a tour of North America Ian Curtis ended his life by suicide on 18th May 1980. Whilst the band had gained significant traction prior to the untimely death of Curtis, paradoxically, interest in Joy Division, increased substantially in its wake. The premature demise of the band on the brink of wider success and the relative shortage of material served to further reinforce its cult status.ⁱⁱ The music of Joy Division is still very popular today, in part thanks to the sense of its authenticity, to which Hook alludes in the interview.

The death of Ian Curtis changed the situation of the members of the band, renamed New Order, in a dramatic way. For start, they lost the focal point of the band and the principal lyricist. In the light of the difficulty to replace Curtis, his place was taken by Bernard Sumner, who was previously the guitarist and keyboard player in Joy Division, whilst Gillian Gilbert was introduced to take the pressure of Bernard instrumentally. Perhaps more importantly, the band changed its formula – from a punk-oriented, guitar-based format to a hybrid band, drawing heavily on electronic instruments and new technology. It should be noted that Joy Division were keen to

explore technology and their music did incorporate the use of synthesizers. However, in New Order electronic instruments became a key feature. Hook's bass guitar work continued to be a prominent feature in the new sound. The new approaches helped to locate them at the cutting edge of the British popular music. This transition was strongly encouraged by Gretton, who recognised the potential of combining electronic and conventional rock instruments before New Order's competitors and provided the band with at the time expensive and difficult to access equipment, including prototypesⁱⁱⁱ. Hook suggested that the band's reputation for embracing new technology led to them becoming a testing ground for new equipment produced by the manufacturing companies. New Order achieved even greater commercial success than Joy Division, whilst still maintaining its status of authenticity.

Although Joy Division and New Order found substantial audiences and had chart successes, this did not translate into its members earning a high income from making music. As Hook admits, their material needs were taken care of by Gretton, but they weren't rewarded financially in the manner commensurate with their chart success. Although it is impossible to say with precision why was there this gap, most likely factors were Gretton's prioritizing 'investment' in the band rather over instantaneous gratification, as well as the fact that they were the most profitable of 'Wilson's projects'. The revenue the band created was thus in part used to subsidise other Wilson's operations, in a way typical for the period. It is also plausible to suggest that Gretton represented the new type of 'neoliberal' manager, as described by Timothy Taylor (Taylor 2016: 48), namely somebody who not only managed, but also largely 'owned the band'.

The arrangements with Gretton presented both advantages and disadvantages for the band. The advantage, as Hook admits, was freeing the musicians from financial considerations, which allowed them to focus on their music. At the same time, he alludes to the relationship with Gretton as having hegemonic overtones. 'Manager always keeps the band poor and when they complain, he throws them a bone', he told us. Such an approach helped Gretton to keep the members of New Order focused and motivated them to work with a high level of productivity. The downside was the lack of money to plan long-term and discouragement to engage in activities outside the band. The firm grip of Gretton may also explain why the members of New Order were known for not giving interviews. For Hook, who is an extravert, this must have been difficult not to be able to express himself this way.

As Hook attests, ten years after he began his career in music, he still hadn't accumulated any wealth for himself, despite his role in the creation of numerous hit records. This made it increasingly more difficult for Gretton not to acknowledge by financial reward. Moreover, as the members became older and more experienced, their material needs increased and it was, again, causing them to question what had happened to the wealth generated by their activities.

As was the case with New Order, it is not uncommon for band members to seek alternative vehicles to express their creativity. Hook invested in the Suite Sixteen recording studio in Rochdale in 1984, providing an environment for him to explore the role of producer independently and subsequently producing music for other musicians, such as *Elephant Stone* for the Stone Roses, in 1990 and *Paranoid* by Inspiral Carpets, in 1994. From the early 1990s Hook was able to benefit by compounding the revenues from the legacy of Joy Division's and New Order's catalogue and adding personal projects, such as the two band projects Revenge, formed in 1989 and Monaco, formed in 1996. However, as was the case with all break out projects from the members of New Order, none have attained the level of success they achieved together. The combination of legacy and new projects resulted in Hook finally 'seeing money', as he put it.

Hook remained a member of New Order till 2007, though the band was in hiatus between 1993 and 1998. Rob Gretton died in 1999, but his estate still benefits from the earning of Joy Division and New Order, an arrangement which was not uncommon at the time when he started to work as a manager for these bands, as we noticed. After his death, the new manager became Rebecca Boulton, the previous assistant of Gretton. Although the band still worked in the shadow of Gretton, New Order's relationship with the management has changed, with Boulton exercising less power over New Order. It is worth raising the question, whether if Gretton were still around, would his strong personality and influence have been able to help to prevent the development of irreconcilable differences between the members of the band, which finally led to the widely publicised dispute between Hook and the remaining members of New Order. This dispute not only affected negatively the myth and reputation of the band's members, but also cost them a significant proportion of their earnings and was a factor in their increased activities as producers and performers of music. Hook's current managers are hand-picked by him and are seen by him more as facilitators of his agenda than its architects. As he puts it, now he 'directs his career'.

Hook has continued through the 2000s and subsequent years to instigate and participate in various new music projects including Man Ray in 2010 and Freebass, a collaboration with two other bass players from important Manchester bands, the Stone Roses' Mani and the Smiths Andy Rourke, also in 2010. Hook's own record label Hacienda Records served as a vehicle to release these recordings, further illustrating his tendency towards directing his own activities.

Hook has diversified his portfolio even more and has become a brand in his own right. He is a sought-after media personality and raconteur, appearing regularly on radio, television and in other public events. Most frequently he talks about his active projects and his time in Joy Division and New Order, but he also engages in other topics, such as the state of music, music technology and culture at large. He has also written three bestselling books, one that revisits Joy Division, which we quoted in this chapter, and another that revisits New Order. His first book that catalogued the rise and fall of the Hacienda titled *The Hacienda: How Not to Run a Club* (2008), was ironically followed by a collaboration with music venue magnate Aaron Mellor and the architect who originally designed the Hacienda club Ben Kelly, to create another club Fac251 the Factory, located in the site of the old Factory Records offices in Manchester and launched in 2010. Despite the difficult climate for clubs, this venture has continued to thrive as one of Manchester's most popular night spots.

A key activity for Hook is his work with his band Peter Hook and the Light which began in 2010. This is a band that also features his son Jack who plays bass, like his father, enabling Hook to concentrate on vocals and key bass motifs. This vehicle was initially intended by Hook to recreate and provide fans with an experience as close to seeing Joy Division live as possible, subsequently moving onto touring the New Order catalogue. Hook's work in this period also reflects the changing relationship between recorded and live music as dominant revenue streams. While in the 1980s and the 1990s New Order's success was based predominantly on sales of recorded music, in recent times a substantial proportion of Hook's earnings comes from touring. To illustrate, in the second half of 2017 Peter Hook and the Light played 40 gigs in the UK, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. In 2018, the band played 30 concerts in the United States in two months, equating to one in every two days.

Hook is also known for his DJing. As a consequence of the credibility of his artistry Hook is seen as a purveyor of taste. This activity allows him to travel flexibly with little equipment and present his music choices to audiences all over the world.

Another project of note he has played a key role in is 'Hacienda Classical'. This project has been designed as a live experience combining a large symphonic orchestra with electronic instruments as a reimagining of the music and the Hacienda club experience. Starting off in Manchester's classical music venue the Bridgewater Hall, the show has been seen in venues including the Royal Albert Hall in London and had outdoor festivals built around it. Other legacy brands such as Gatecrasher and Cream have also replicated this formula. Hook is the owner of the Hacienda brand and also the protagonist of Hacienda Club nights, which are typically concert level and pop events on key calendar dates attended by thousands of people. It is worth noting here that from its launch in 1982 until its demise in 1997, the Hacienda was a significant drain on the revenues generated by New Order. Whilst its commercial performance was arguably disastrous during its lifespan, its cultural legacy continues to endure, presenting opportunities for Hook to recoup some of his losses from the venture, in the present day. In this sense Hook can be seen as a follower of Wilson, who managed to learn on mistakes of his predecessor, while recognising his achievements. Clearly having found a satisfactory way to balance his creative and business agendas Hook is able to acknowledge 'There is nothing nicer than being in control of your own destiny'.

Graham Massey: Payment from Punk

Graham Massey was born in 1960 and, like Hook, he is also from a modest working class background, being the third of four brothers raised in Levenshulme, Manchester. At the time of his childhood and teenage years, progressing to higher education was not common in his social milieu. However, his academically gifted older brother attended grammar school and later studied at Oxford University. This success provided a context of expectation for Massey, even though, by his own admission, he was not particularly academic. Massey considers that the success of his brother contributed to him gravitating towards an 'arty persona'. However, opportunities to become one were not facilitated by the education system. Despite his fascination with musical instruments, he was denied music education at school due to not passing a

simple test to get into the choir. 'I felt aggrieved that music had been shut out of my life at school', he confessed to us.

Another factor contributing to his draw towards music was the contradiction of Thatcher's Britain with, on the one hand, an expectation that everybody had to get a job, while getting a job was not a 'serious option', especially in the North of England, where the Fordist order was crumbling and unemployment rates were very high in the 1980s, fueling frustrations, especially of a younger generation. Under such circumstances, which in some ways were similar to the situation of contemporary Britain, where opportunities for young people are very limited, taking up music seemed like a natural thing to do, as it offered a chance of channeling one's energy and of making a career.

Consequently, despite not having a formal musical training, Massey taught himself how to play a range of musical instruments. In this sense, not unlike Peter Hook, he was a product of punk, with its rejection of virtuosity and putting attitude higher than technical skill. Another source of inspiration for Massey were 'noise artists' such as Brian Eno, who likewise were not pursuing conventional virtuoso practices. That said, he was also influenced by styles such as progressive rock and space rock, where musical virtuosity was treated with a higher esteem.

Between 1978 and 1988, Massey was involved in various music projects in the Manchester area, representing different genres and influences, including punk, jazz and hip hop. This period he describes as a time of preparing himself for the music industry. Massey's first record release in 1980 was the *Weird Noise* EP under the mantle of 'Danny and the Dressmakers'. This was a nine track seven-inch record featuring four additional bands. Massey describes this as an LP condensed onto a seven-inch vinyl. The allegiance to punk aesthetics and ideology of this production was not just reflected by the low-fi recordings and the degradation through format choice but also the name of the record label *Fuck Off Records*, which was based in a squat in London and affiliated with *Better Badges* and *Rough Trade*. Massey himself admits that at the time, despite the dominance of punk ideology, getting a record out was 'a rare thing. To this young musician, just to have a record put out was a major achievement. As Massey attests, 'to have been able to contribute to the history of music in anyway was such a badge of honour' and even more so as it was played by John Peel.

One of the key developments in the late 1970s, early 1980s Manchester music was the Hacienda's predecessor, the Factory Club, a regular occurrence held at the Russell Club in Hulme, set up by Tony Wilson and associates. It became a vital conduit and testing ground for the Manchester creative community, offering a space for alternative music and multimedia art. The Factory Club provided the reason for the formation of Massey's next project Biting Tongues, which was instigated by Howard Walmsley with the intention of producing a sound track for his silent film of the same name. Massey and fellow band member Colin Seddon disbanded the Post Nats to join Walmsley and others including Eddie Sherwood who later joined Simply Red. In the interview Massey referred to the notion of 'musical socialising' as part of his preparation for the music business. It is likely that Massey's presence in the creative communities and consequential networking would later help him to become a central figure in Manchester music scene. Biting Tongues released on a number of record labels, initially on Situation 2, a subsidiary of Beggars Banquet. Massey's points to the fact that while many Manchester musicians in this period tried to remain true to their northern roots, it was not always possible and they had to integrate their careers with conducting some business operations in London. Despite interfacing with London institutions Massey felt that it was important not to relocate there and hence has always maintained his base of operations in Manchester.

Massey recalls that DIY record labels in the 1980s were often poorly resourced and could go bankrupt in between commissioning a recording and it being completed. This was the case with New Hormones, a pioneering Manchester-based DIY-label, which was founded by the Buzzcocks and their manager Richard Boon and was responsible for releasing the Buzzcocks' 'Spiral Scratch' EP (1977). Massey considers New Hormones to be a precursor to Factory in its somewhat idealistic, yet haphazard approach to making and selling music. In particular, unlike successful independent record labels, which typically had on their roster one or more commercial bands, which allowed the funding more obscure projects, New Hormones did not sufficiently care to balance more commercial projects with the experimental ones and consequently was constantly in danger of going bust. Biting Tongues released their second album on cassette 'Live It' with New Hormones in 1981 but for the following planned release, the label literally ran out of money half way through the recording. Consequently, the material was released by Paragon in 1983. After this, Biting Tongues went on to release three records on Factory Records, the first being in 1984.

As we earlier mentioned, Wilson was notorious for informal business practices. It is thus perhaps not surprising that there was no long-term commitment between the two parties: the band and the label. In its place, there was a release-by-release arrangement where Factory financed recording and production with profits being evenly shared between band and label. This type of deal was very different to those issued by the major labels at the time, again marking a different ideology to that pertaining to neoliberalism, as discussed by Taylor. From Massey's perspective, the advantage of such an approach was giving a chance of making a record, without much economic pressure, to a large number of artists who otherwise might never make their debut. The disadvantage consisted of the lack of long-term planning and sustainability, hence a difficulty for these artists to move from amateur and semi-professional status to becoming professionals. It could be argued that being under Wilson's wings forced the artist to 'adapt', which was the case with the protagonists of this chapter.

In the case of Massey, part of this strategy was learning new skills, in particular moving from performing to producing music. In the years 1985-87 Massey sought formal education in the technical aspects of music production by studying at the School of Sound Recording (SSR) in Manchester. Learning production skills provided the foundation for Massey taking a prominent role within 808 State studio activities, to which we will soon turn. In the second half of the 1980s Massey added a further dimension to his repertoire by becoming what Brian Eno describes as a 'studio musician', for whom the studio, rather than a guitar or piano, is a principal instrument (Eno 2004). This makes him more akin to scientists or engineers who labour in their labs in solitude, rather than to ordinary musicians who jam. Massey, probably intuitively rather than by design, tried to reconcile his affinity to studio work with punk heritage.

In 1987 Massey formed a hip hop collective called 'Hit Squad MCR' with fellow Mancunians A Guy Called Gerald (true name Gerald Simpson) and Martin Price, which morphed into 808 State in 1988. The name was derived from Roland's 808 electronic drum machine, in this way announcing the band's affinity to electronic music. Price already had a footing in music business, gained with his record shop Eastern Bloc, located in Manchester's Northern Quarter. This was beneficial in many ways, such as providing a window to the musical output of the time, including niche music from the UK and overseas. It also provided a component to inform the overall

808 State's approach to business. In 1988, Price's record label 'Creed' self financed the release of 808 State's debut album, titled 'Newbuild' by way of a manufacturing and distribution deal with Southern Records. Whilst receiving critical acclaim and being cited as seminal by artists such as Aphex Twin, the record initially was not a commercial success.^{iv}

At the time rave culture was coming to prominence in Britain in places like the Hacienda and Warehouse Parties which made Massey, Simpson and Price aware of the great impact of this music on social behaviour and the formation of subcultures, an agenda that was synchronized with the music they were then making. He describes how they were able to combine avant-garde, leftfield practice and punk attitude and re-platform it into dance music. To Massey what had previously been fringe music was now a social music that had come to the centre. Consequently, when talking to record companies they were the experts and ahead of the curve, a fact no doubt contributing to the creative freedom they were afforded. At the same time the relationship with Factory and Tony Wilson continued to develop with Wilson providing exposure for 808 State to TV audiences, when the band was in relative infancy and could not afford to pay for publicity. 808 State continued to develop their operations in the manner of DIY, controlling their own creative agenda and organising their activities.

The next step was the signing of a record deal with ZTT records, a London-based independent label with the backing of a major record label, namely Warner, affording the band 'the power of a major but the front end of an indie'. ZTT was known for its cutting-edge approach to making music and avant-garde taste, as signified by its name, which was taken from FT Marinetti's sound poem, *Zang Tuum Tumb*. Yet, at the same time, it was successful in reaching to a wider audiences (Gillon and Mazierska 2018).

ZTT's Paul Morley's attention was drawn to 808 State by a Friday evening alternative culture TV programme on BBC2 called 'Snub TV', that ran a feature about the band, in itself testimony to the progress they had made independently, without external music business intervention. The notion of a 'ready made' artist who has established his/her potential to be a bankable investment for a record label was a relatively new concept at the time, but 808 State was seen this way by ZTT. While working with this label, Massey enjoyed the benefit of strategic advice and the major marketing engine of Warner music as is evident from promotional videos such as

‘Cubik’ and ‘In Yer Face’, as well as what may or may not have been contrived publicity such as Massey being cited as the ‘Most Eligible Bachelor of 1991’ in ‘Company’, a lifestyle magazine established in 1978, still active at the time of writing this chapter. Massey recognises that they were being commodified through such means. However, the foundations they had established and continued to pursue were based in authentic music, hence they were able to maintain the perception of being credible.

The testimony of 808 State’s success in the late 1980s and the 1990s was measured not only by the popularity of their own output, but the demand for their collaboration and remixes. In this period Massey collaborated with artists such as Bjork, David Bowie and many others. Such brand association was often based on strategic alliances. He became a model example of a musician whose work is organised around discrete units, ‘projects’, which have a specific time span. This involves employing workers on short contracts and paying them on the basis of accomplishing specific tasks, unlike the band, which is a long-term project, to which members dedicate all their energy and typically share costs and profit evenly. As one of the authors of this chapter argued elsewhere, production of music this way is typical for electronic musicians and fits well the approach to work pertaining to neoliberalism (Mazierska 2018; see also Webb 2004).

Inevitably, being in demand meant that Massey could support himself by music and amassed significant reputation and wider cultural capital, which proved important for the sustainability of his career. This means, for example, being able to invest in resources, such as equipment and being able to produce music independently of external circumstances. Massey also adds that an important factor in his and 808 State’s sustainability was the way the band managed their finances, creating a limited company, which they controlled as their commercial vehicle, paying themselves modest salaries, supplementing this with the periodic royalty payments.

By the late 1990s Massey had become a musician with a large portfolio of genres and projects, which also included film and television music such as the 808 State produced theme tune for the popular 1990s youth culture programme ‘The Word’ broadcast on Channel 4. This aspect grew in significance from the 2000s, namely during the crisis years of the recording industry. His current portfolio includes a range of performance and production vehicles including Sisters of Transistors and Massonix, the later of which he was encouraged to embark upon by Autechre. This

incarnation is an experimental solo project, as well as a vehicle of collaboration with other electronic artists, particularly in live contexts. Another of his projects is the jazz-influenced Toolshed, an ensemble of musicians whose line-up and size depends on the circumstances. These projects function flexibly – they can be used in the studio and easily assembled in performance contexts.

As we mentioned, Massey fits well the idea of a studio musician and the studio also is the means of his income. That said, Massey is aware of the importance of live events under current circumstances and he plays live regularly in a plethora of scenarios, from a solo performance as a DJ to large ensembles playing traditional instruments, such as the ‘Part Time Heliocentric Cosmo Drama After School Club’, which was formed in 2013 as a tribute to Sun Ra.

In common with Peter Hook, Massey can be seen as a musician who continues to build his portfolio. The proof of that is his continued maintenance of 808 State, through building his digital legacy and presence on social media. A sign of his awareness of the value of the brand was to appoint Key Music Management and the recent decision to produce a new material under this name and tour with band. 808 State’s live shows are not only in demand for heritage and nostalgia events, but also as a key feature of contemporary youth music events such as Russian DJ and Producer Nina Kraviz’s Galaxiid in 2017.

Conclusions

This chapter compared two musicians from the North of England, with the view of identifying the main factors in the longevity of their careers. The largest part of their success is due to their talent, commitment and, to use the old-fashioned word, ‘authenticity’. Hook and Massey did not approach their music making with the intention of getting rich. Rather their orientation was towards self-expression.

However, we also argued that both Hook and Massey benefited from embracing counter culture, particularly the punk ideology, deciding to pursue a career in music, despite the lack of formal training, family tradition and, initially, the scarcity of financial means to support themselves. They also took advantage of the fact that in the 1980s Manchester became a major centre for the production and consumption of music, able to compete with London. This increased options in terms of signing record deals at the time when having such a deal was a crucial factor in the

music career. What connects them is also their embrace of new technology, especially electronic. This allowed Hook and Massey to move from rock to electronic music and to also develop new approaches to making music, placing them ahead of the curve and translating to dominant position in the youth-oriented popular music. Their relationships with the music industry have also been a key factor in their success. In the case of Hook there was Rob Gretton and Factory; in the case of Massey his consortium, ZTT and Warner. These agents facilitated the proliferation of the musical output. According to Hook, Rob Gretton was of the view that you should ‘never let your band peak’. It could be suggested that this in part explains why New Order were able to produce hit records over such a long period of time.

They are both artists with a large portfolio of activities, which increases their income and cushions them against the volatility of the music industry. Both artists also devote a substantial part of their energy to maintaining their legacy. What connects, yet also differentiates them, is also an ability to direct and manage their own financial affairs. However, while Massey learnt it from the beginning, in part because his operations were not as profitable as Joy Division and New Order, Hook learnt it with the passage of years and is currently in the position of ‘managing his managers’, namely use them to organize his artistic life, while being in charge of his overall strategy.

What the aspiring musicians of today can learn from the trajectories of Hook and Massey? In our opinion, there is no obvious lesson except that the success in music, probably more than in most professions, is an outcome of many factors, which are outside of the musician’s influence such as the existence of the conducive environment for producing and selling music in the proximity of the artists. From this perspective, English musicians were always privileged over their counterparts in continental Europe and those from the North found themselves in such position in the 1980s. Another lesson is that it is difficult to make proper living in a music scene while it is still booming, it has to wear off and become history to open itself to ‘heritage-isation’ and commodification. Finally, most successful musicians need to endure a long period of ‘apprenticeship’, accepting not ‘seeing money’ till one is thirty or working for ten years as an amateur before becoming a professional. In short, to be successful in music, one has to be as ready for success as one is for failure.

Works cited

Eno, Brian. 2004. 'The Studio as Compositional Tool', in Christoph Cox and Daniel Warner (eds), *Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music*. London: Continuum, pp. 127-30.

Gillon, Les and Ewa Mazierska. 2018. 'The Missing Star of MC Tunes', in Ewa Mazierska (ed.), *Sounds Northern: Popular Music, Culture and Place in England's North*. Sheffield: Equinox, pp. 174-89.

Haslam, Dave. 1999. *Manchester England: The Story of the Pop Cult City*. London: Fourth Estate.

Hook, Peter 2008. *The Hacienda: How Not to Run a Club*. London: Simon & Schuster.

Hook, Peter 2012. *Unknown Pleasures: Inside Joy Division*. London: Simon & Schuster.

Mazierska, Ewa. 2018. *Popular Viennese Electronic Music 1990-2015: A Cultural History*. Routledge: forthcoming.

Nice, James. 2011. *Shadowplayers: The Rise and Fall of Factory Records*. London: Aurum.

Robertson, Matthew 2006. *Factory Records: The Complete Graphic Album*. Thames & Hudson.

Spicer, Al. 2006. *The Rough Guide to Punk*. London: Rough Guides.

Taylor, Timothy D. 2016. *Music and Capitalism: A History of the Present*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Webb, Peter. 2004. 'Interrogating the production of sound and place: the Bristol phenomenon, from Lunatic Fringe to worldwide Massive', in Sheila Whiteley, Andy

Bennett and Stan Hawkins (eds), *Space and Place: Popular Music and Cultural Identity*. Farnham: Ashgate, pp. 66-85.

Wilson, Tony. 2002. *24 Hour Party People: What the Sleeve Notes Never Tell You*. London: Channel 4 Books. Mazierska, Ewa and Kamila Rymajdo 2017; The North and Europe in *24 Hour Party People and Control*, in Ewa Mazierska (ed.), *Heading North: The North of England in Film and Television*. London: Palgrave, pp. 235-55.

Wilson, Tony. 2002. *24 Hour Party People: What the Sleeve Notes Never Tell You*, London: Channel 4 Books.

Witts, Richard. 2018. 'Manpool, the Musical: Harmony and Counterpoint on the Lancashire Plain', in Ewa Mazierska (ed), *Sounds Northern: Popular Music, Culture and Place in England's North*. Sheffield: Equinox, pp. 17-36.

ⁱ Hook cites a number of factors that contribute to his distinctive sound and playing style including his posture and the influence of Stranglers Bass guitarist Jean-Jaques Burnel however, the technique of playing the higher notes on instrument was a response to him being dissatisfied with how his early equipment, pertinently his bass speaker, sounded when playing the lower frequencies. Consequentially Hook's bass changed from being a supportive instrument to a prominent feature carrying many key motifs. This gave Hook's playing an authentic dimension, serving to differentiate both Joy Division and New Order from other bands of the time.

ⁱⁱ Several successful films devoted to Joy Division, most importantly *Control*, act as confirmation of this longevity, as well as being a means to prolong it. Joy Division have also been cited as influential by many musicians, with prominent bands including Radiohead and Smashing Pumpkins, recording and performing Joy Division songs.

ⁱⁱⁱ One of the distinctive elements of *Blue Monday* was the kick drum used on the introduction and throughout the song which, as Hook recalls was created using an early version of the Oberheim DMX drum machine. Which according to Paul White, who was the person at Oberheim Electronics responsible for the DMX, there were only a handful of the first version made, and that there were significant differences between that and the commercially available unit.

^{iv} Only when 808 State became more prominent, the limited production run of this record made it sought after which was reflected in the inflated second hand price.