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Searching for the right feelings: Emotional metadata in music

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About me: music, music librarianship, cataloguing, and technology

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Ruth Negri Collection

The University of North Texas library is fortunate to have received a generous donation of over 200 orchestral and opera harp parts from Ruth Negri Armato, retired harpist of the New York Philharmonic. Please explore this collection online (http://www.library.unt.edu/collections/music/ruth-negri).

Biography

Ruth Negri was born in San Diego and began piano lessons at age four and a half. At age eleven when she was introduced to the harp... "the most beautiful sound I ever heard" influenced her study of the harp. In addition to harp lessons, she studied double bass because of the scarcity of orchestral harp parts. At age sixteen, Ms. Negri was harp soloist with the Los Angeles NBC Orchestra as a finalist in the Hollywood Bowl Auditions of the Air.

Ruth was a scholarship pupil of Marcel Grandjany at the Juilliard School of Music and graduated with highest honors as a winner of the prestigious Damrosch Scholarship. While still a student at Juilliard she performed with the New York City Opera, RCA and CBS Orchestras with Fritz Reiner, Leopold Stowkowski, Wilfred Pelletier, Pierre Monteux, Donald Voorhees, and Andre Kostelanetz before beginning a nine year engagement as principal harp of the New York City Ballet Co. in 1950.

How do people look for music online?

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- Name of the artist?
- Name of the song?
- Name of the album?
- These are all bibliographic-based searches… but what if you want to look for something that puts you in a good mood?

YouTube suggestions – based on similarity, past user history…?

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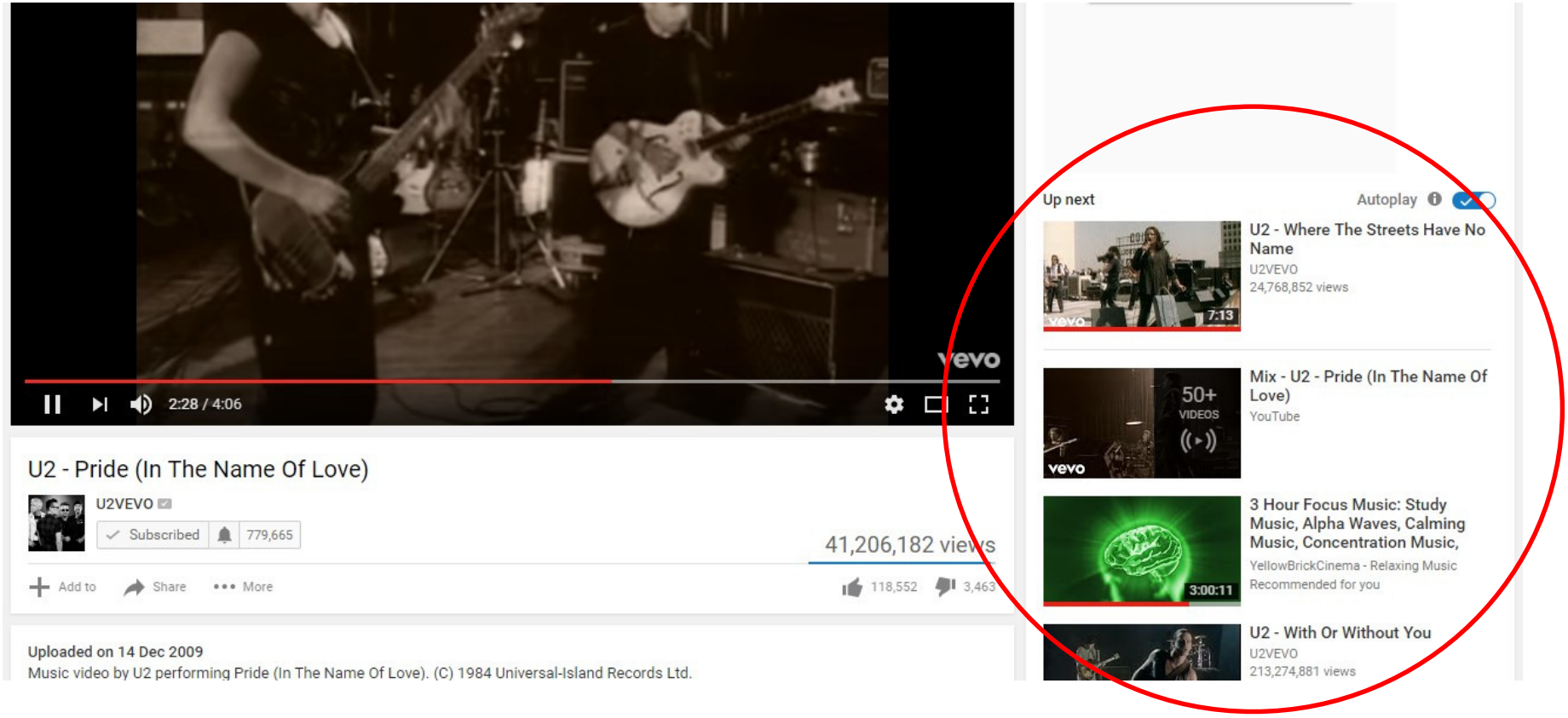

Types of information; ways of finding

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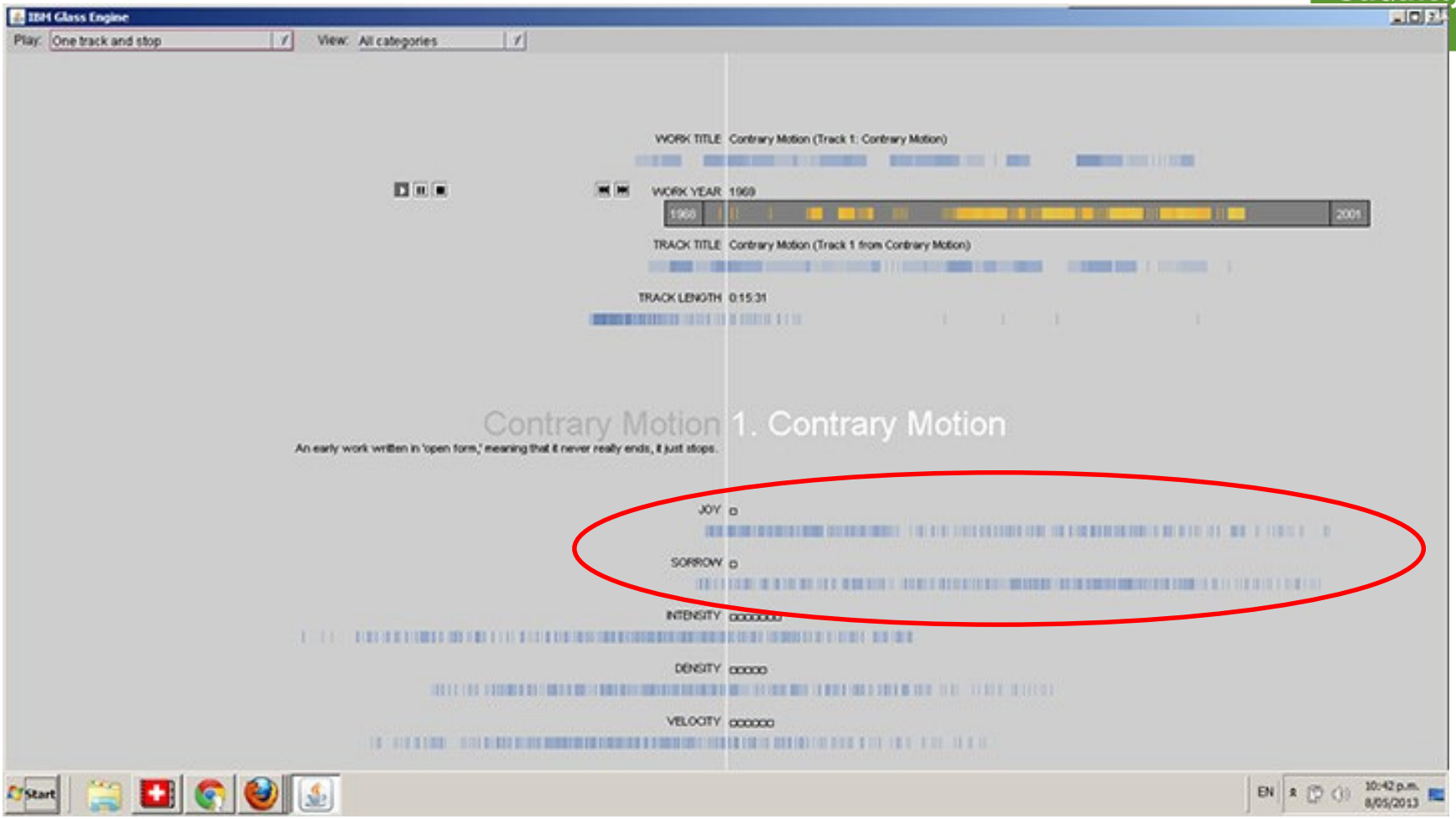
- Information professionals tend to think of online "information" as a textual document residing in a database that meets a user's "need" or "query" based on bibliographic descriptions that cataloguers provide
- Information comes in many forms
  - bodily, such as pain (Yates, 2015)
  - photographs, videos, music (Rasmussen Neal, 2012)
  - "matter and energy" (Bates, 2006)
- "Looking at us as a species that exists physically, biologically, socially, emotionally, and spiritually, it is not unreasonable to guess that we absorb perhaps 80 percent of all our knowledge through simply being aware, being conscious and sentient in our social context and physical environment" (Bates, 2003)

The Glass Engine started it all…



Source: www.philipglass.com/glassengine

Some of my other prior research into emotional information in music

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- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-dYNttdgI0 v. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d8ekz_CSBVg
- Difficult to agree on emotion in music; we respond to music individually, but some musical facets are consistent, like slow songs in a minor key sounding ‘sad’ or heavy metal sounding ‘angry’
- Emotional tags in music
- Online music recommender systems do not cross genres (but probably should)

Rasmussen Pennington, D. (2016). “The most passionate cover I’ve seen”: Emotional information in fan-created U2 music videos. *Journal of Documentation, 72*(3), 569-590.

Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/d/dd/Bono_U2_360_Tour_2011.jpg/220px-Bono_U2_360_Tour_2011.jpg

U2 NEWS TOURS MUSIC MEDIA BAND HEARTS + MINDS ZOOTOPIA U2 SHOP SIGN UP / SIGN IN

ALL BY TOPIC BY YEAR

SING 'SONG FOR SOMEONE' (THEN UPLOAD IT)

19 Mar 2015

Share Your Version Of #SongForSomeone. We'll be showcasing some of the performances.

Recently fans have been posting online some beautiful, personal versions of 'Song For Someone'.

Over the next ten days we're on the lookout for performances being uploaded by fans all ove the world.

Want to get involved?

Here's what to film:
- Shoot the video in a room that's all about you - could be a bedroom, a basement, a garage. Could be any room but it needs to feel personal to you.
- Set your camera to record, sing the song and give it your all.
- Sing it solo or jam with an instrument.
- Let your personality and passion shine through, your country and culture. Make #SongForSomeone your song.

Here's how to submit:
1) Once you've shot your performance:
- Upload the video online (YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, etc..).
- Use the hashtag #SongForSomeone
- Use the #hashtag for your country of residence (eg. #Australia #Brazil #India, #Tanzania etc...)
Your video should include the following copy: #SongForSomeone #Germany

2) Verify your submission by emailing **songforsomeoneU2@gmail.com** and include:
- a link to the platform where you've posted your video
- Your name
- Your phone number
- Your email
- Your location

3) Then watch this space.... we'll be reposting some of the videos.

Source: http://www.u2.com/news/title/sing-song-for-someone-then-upload-it

Watch this video. How does it make you feel? What might the producer have been trying to convey?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lQCsvlrgcn4

Theoretical framework

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- “Basic emotions” from fields such as cognition, psychology, music therapy (Ekman, 1992)
- Emotional Information Retrieval (EmIR)
- Domains of fandom and aca-fandom (Stein & Busse, 2009; Bennett, 2014)
- Online participatory culture, such as writing fan fiction or making cover versions of videos for loved songs (Jenkins, 2013)
- U2 academic studies (U2conference.com)
- Intertextuality as a practice in online participatory culture among fans (Vernallis, 2013)

Methods and sample

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- Discourse analysis, a method for qualitatively analysing language and other forms of communication (Budd & Raber, 1996; Iedema, 2003); applied to intertextuality
- To analyse the emotional information conveyed in 150 YouTube cover videos of U2's "Song for Someone" by:
  - The producers (people who made the videos)
  - The consumers (people who watched the videos)
- Through the videos themselves, producers' descriptions, consumers' comments and likes/dislikes on the videos

Quantitative overview of the videos

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	Lowest number	Highest number	Average	Median
Views	7	228,741	4,697	217
Comments	0	186	6.89	1
Likes	0	1,034	29.47	4
Dislikes	0	5	2.02	0

Types of videos created by producers

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- Cover versions
- Original versions of the song with new visual content
- Tutorials on how to play the song
- Videos showed deep, personal involvement with the song and the band

Cover versions:
Emotions through facial expression

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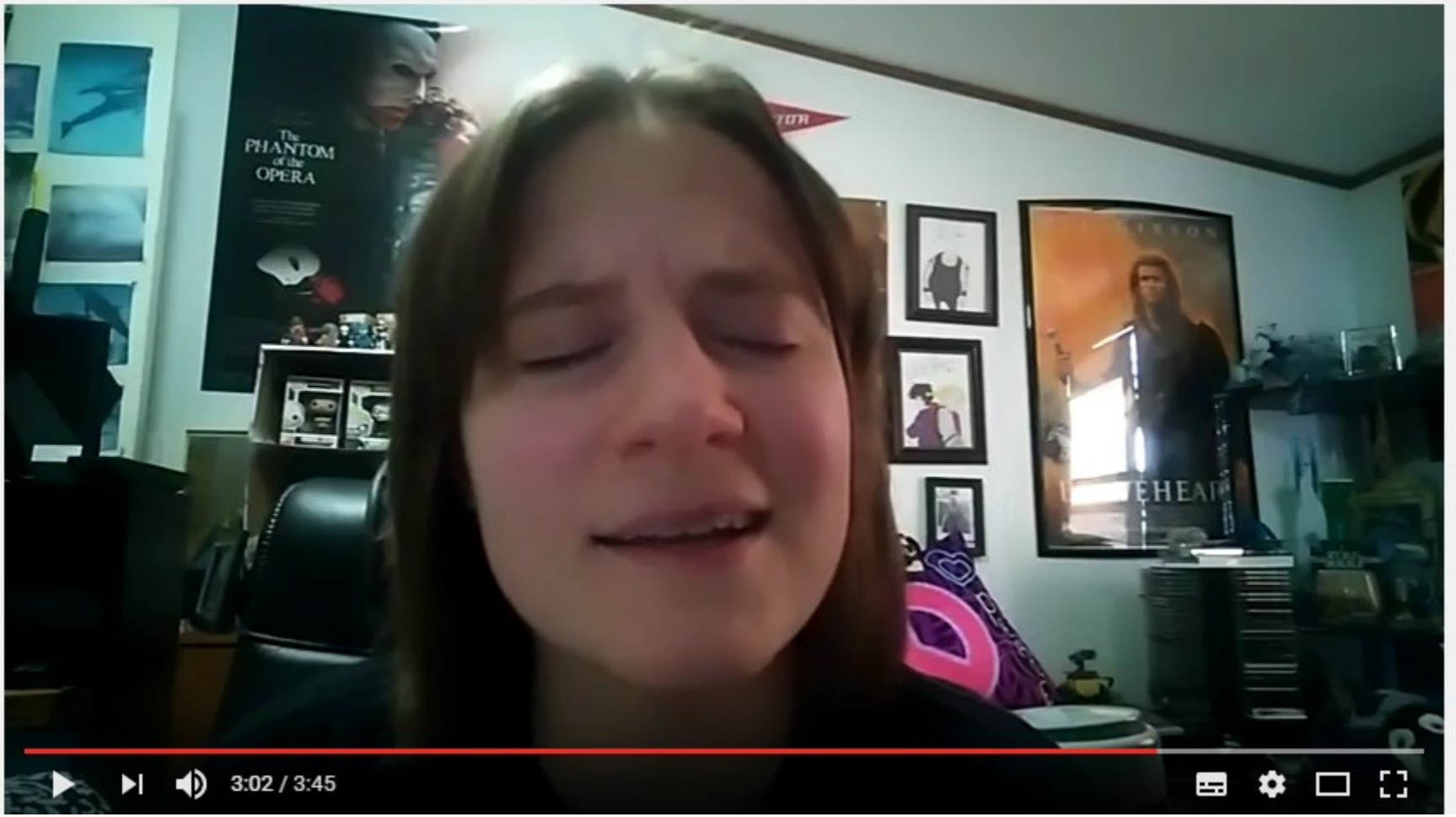


Able to Think 2 years ago
So emocional. I liked it.
Reply •

Cover versions: Surroundings

#SongForSomeone #Canada

C

Candace Balfour

Subscribe 0

51 views

Add to Share More

1 1

Published on 27 Mar 2015

Family sing-a-long! Candace, Lindsay and Jimmy Balfour singing little Cordelia to sleep...

Cover versions: Surroundings

U2 - Song For Someone

stefanocecemusic

Subscribe 350

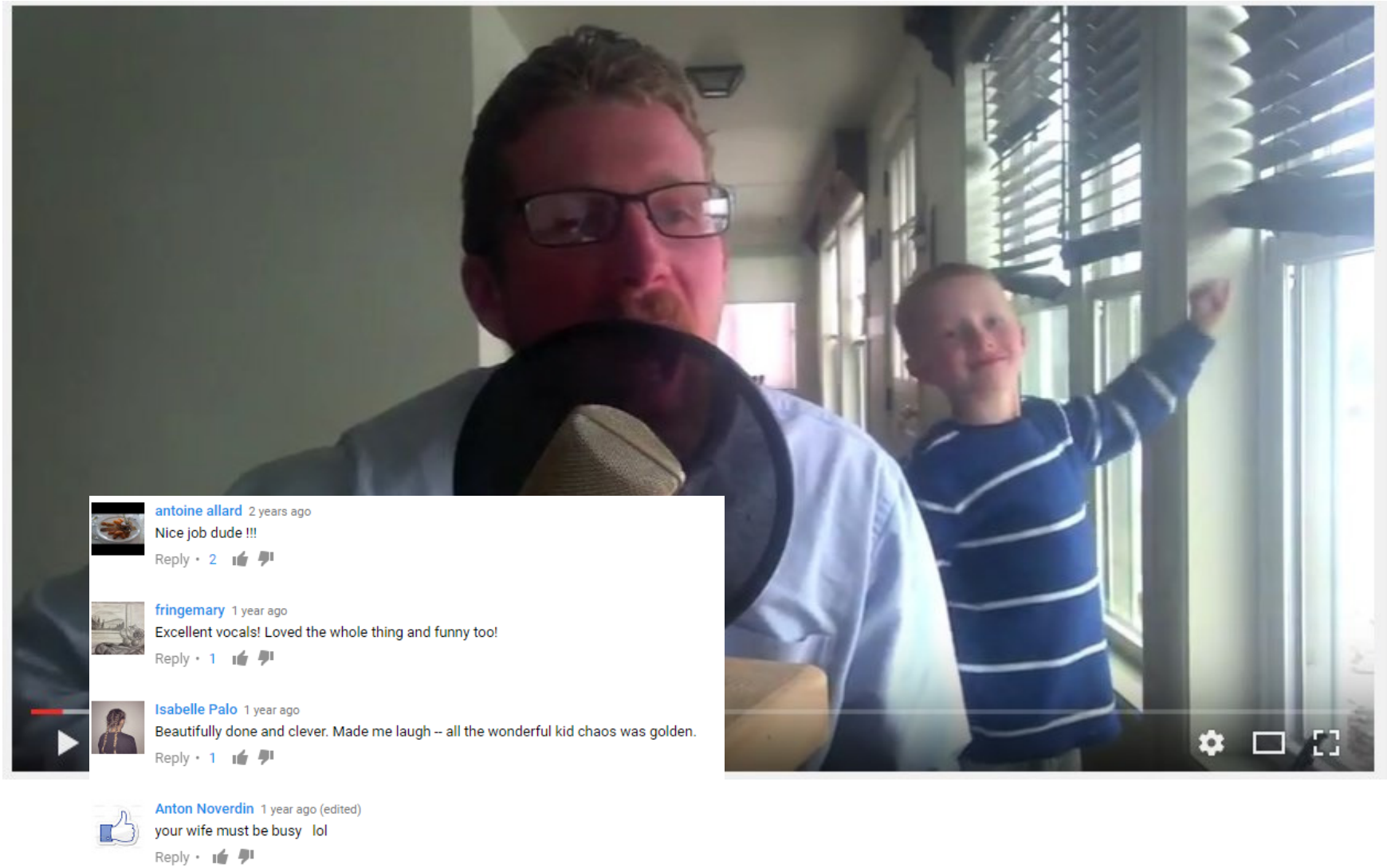
277 views

Add to Share More 4 0

Published on 28 Mar 2015

Just me and my guitar in my own room singing a song I love. Enjoy!

Cover versions: Surroundings; fun with family; humour



Cover versions: Surroundings

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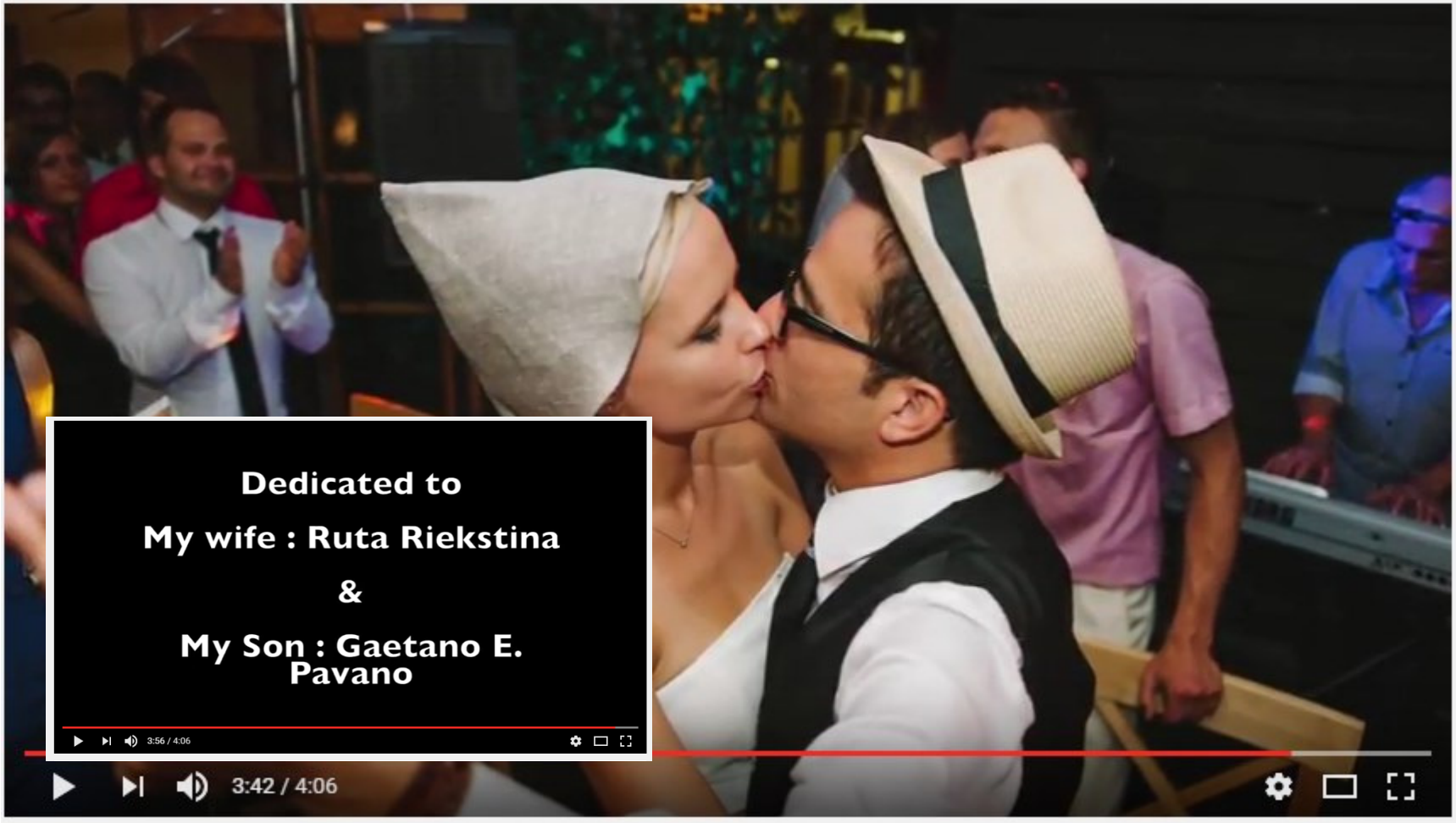
#SongForSomeone

Cover version: Personal experience; the producer's wedding and kid photos



Song for someone

Original version: photographs of friends having fun

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Original version:
Video out a plane window

Tutorials: Guitar

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Song for someone Cover U2 Acoustic guitar tutorial chords

Tutorials: Karaoke Piano

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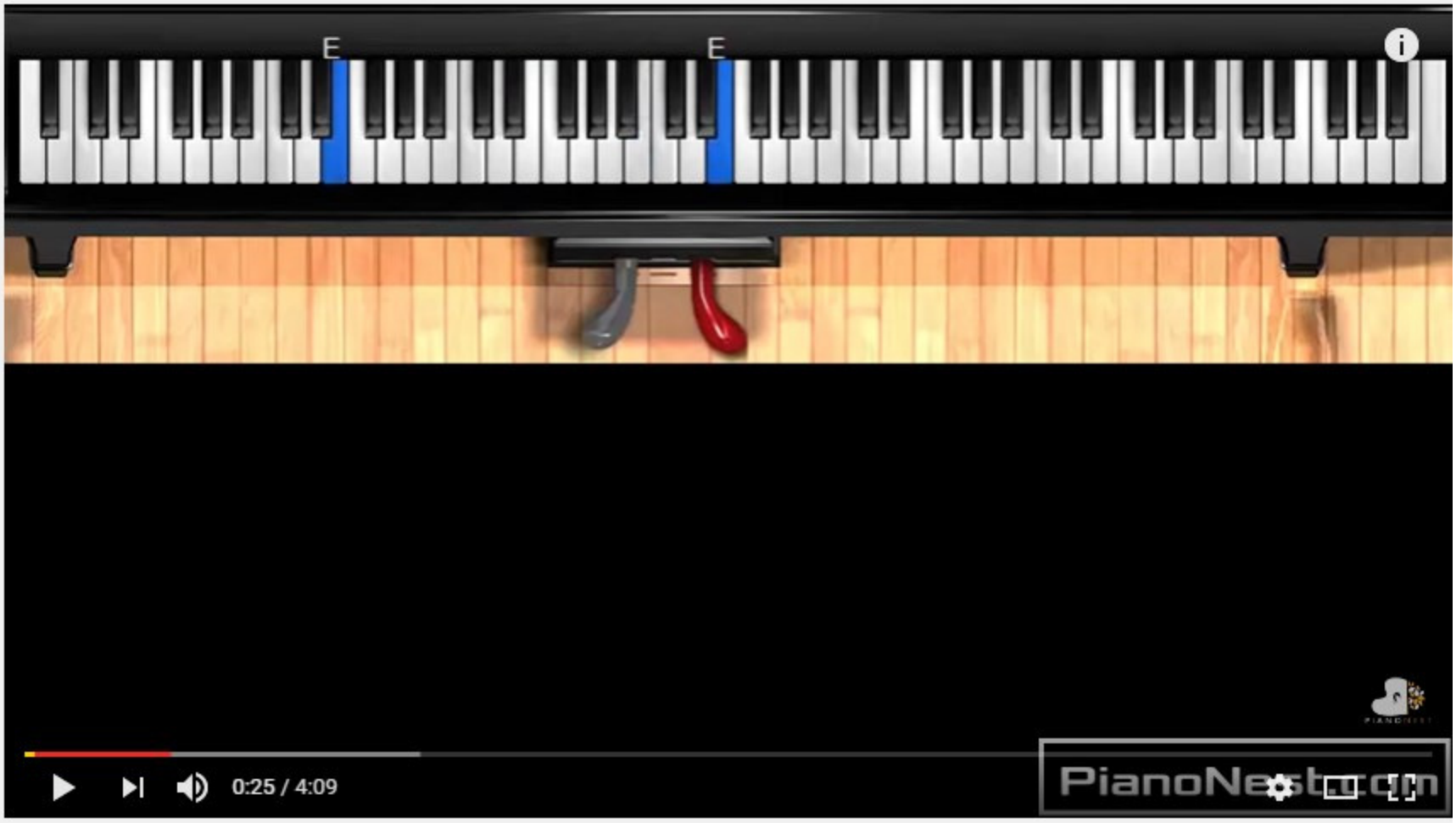
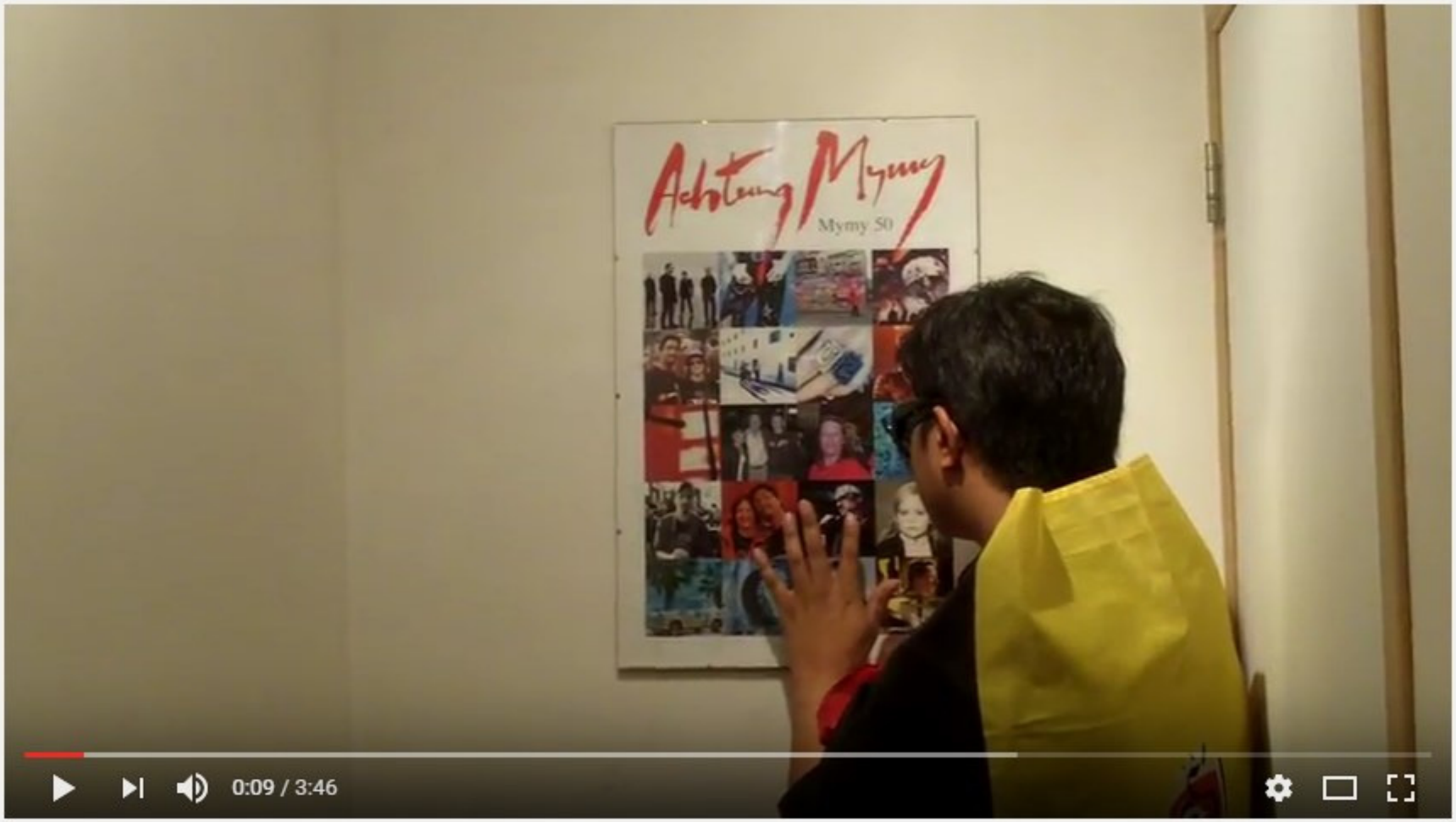


U2 - Song for Someone - Piano Karaoke / Sing Along

Intertextuality: *Achtung Baby* poster



Intertextuality in cover version: “Song for Someone” lyrics and title on wall; “Stuck in a Moment” music

Intertextuality: *Rattle and Hum*; looking like Bono and The Edge

Producers' comments and descriptions

- "So this song is a memory that lasts, an idea that comes from another place that cannot be explained simply as things that happen can be, because there is no reason to forget what had still not enough [sic]".

- "was awaken [sic] by the last three lines […] and I fell in love […] It is amazing how one part of a song can call out to you and make you want to listen to it over and over again"

Responses from consumers: more likes than dislikes; almost all positive

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- Quality of the cover version
  - "Excellent performance […] even makes me appreciates U2's version considerably greater, as your acoustic guitar and incredibly sincere raw, emotionally gifted vocal capabilities emphasize the song with pure soul & heart"
  - "Starts slow, but you get really good (passionate.)"
  - "Really, really amazing. You give me chills, everytime."
- Emotional impact of the song
  - "Sometimes things happen in your life and you have no control, and a song just brings you to tears and makes things ok."
  - "Beautiful song. Intense meaning."
  - "Omg this song makes me melt every time I hear it."
  - "Una canzone piena di emozioni" (Italian for "a song full of emotions")

Discussion: expression of emotion

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- Producers: tenderness, facial expressions, surroundings, musical elements, textual descriptions, U2 intertextuality
- Consumers: likes, positive comments
- Conversations between producers and consumers indicated social constructionism of emotion among fans
- But also individual reactions to the song

Discussion: U2 as authoritative version, and FRBR relationships

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Songs of innocence /

Illustrated by Jacynth Parsons; with a prefatory letter by W.B. Yeats.

Main Creator:	Blake, William, 1757-1827.
Contributors:	Parsons, Jacynth. Yeats, W. B. (William Butler), 1865-1939.
Format:	BOOK
Language:	English
Published / Created:	London, Boston : The Medici Society, [1927]
Notes:	Physical description: 42 p., col. plates : ill.(part col.) ; 25 cm.

#SongForSomeone#USA

Moving forward…

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- We need to design systems for description that accommodate more than just keywords/bibliographic records
- No full text inherent in music or other non-textual document: indexing problem
- Account for not only emotion, but also socially constructed and individually experienced emotional responses to items
- Ultimate goals: help people find things in meaningful ways and even potentially contribute to well-being as in music therapy (Hanser, 2010)
- How can this all be encapsulated?

June 2018: U2CON2018, Belfast

- “Lookin’ for a sound that’s gonna drown out the world”: Resolving musical emotional ambiguity in U2’s *POP*Vision

Source: http://u2conference.com/u2-con-2018-program/

Slides available at https://bit.ly/2GKdNoG

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