SOME SOCIOLOGICAL ISSUES OF LIVE MUSIC PERFORMANCES

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by

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ABSTRACT

This research seeks to explore some of the sociological aspects of live music performance contexts. Research into the impact of contemporary mechanical means of musical reproduction has tended to divert attention away from the study of live performance. But the two major music traditions in western industrial societies, Western European Art Music (WEAM) and Afro-American have their origins in the pre-recording era. Consideration of the development of their forms must take into account the changing contexts within which they were performed. The development of notation coupled with the emphasis on composition within WEAM facilitated the rise of an aesthetic autonomy for the 'work' giving rise to the most appropriate context for its performance: the purpose built modern concert hall celebrating in its rituals and relations a particular form of aesthetic address. The Afro-American tradition with its roots in disadvantaged and dominated black culture, and its emphasis on improvisation rather than formal composition, is less autonomous and is mediated more closely by the social relations of the contexts within which it is performed. Observations of various performance venues was undertaken, using a comparative frame developed from that used by Qureshi (1987) modified to take into account the commodification of music in an economic market. Observations were supported by interviews of jazz musicians about attitudes to performance and preferred settings. Two venues have been selected for detailed consideration: The Royal Festival Hall (a classical concert) and The Pontalba Cafe (a jazz cafe in New Orleans). On the basis of the observations, the interviews and consideration of the current literature, models of aesthetic ideology are constructed. It is suggested that there is an homology between 'fixed' forms and 'tight' contexts and 'flexible' forms and 'loose' contexts.

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P R E F A C E

In his introduction to an entertaining collection of essays, the American jazz critic and journalist Gary Giddins (1981) suggests that 'the illusory blue note' links a wide spectrum of musical artists who are often classified into different genres by music publishers, recording companies and writers. As he says:

> The blue note is endemic in jazz, blues and gospel, and has settled in every corner of American music, from Tin Pan Alley to Nashville and from symphonies to New Wave rock. Yet it is invisible in Western musicology: a microtone - a wavering pitch between, say, a third and a flat third - can't be notated. In recent years, musicologists have comforted themselves by redefining the blue note as a flat third, flat fifth, and flat seventh. Even so the blue note remains elusive, appreciable only in relation to another note. But we know it when we hear it and we hear it constantly. (Giddins 1981:xiii)

There is much which is elusive in music - meaning of course, the impossibility of complete translation from the sonic to the literate worlds. If the blue note is one aspect, another is that 'something' which makes a live performance successful, and can never be captured by a recording or a journalist's account. This study attempts to approach the question of live performance's contribution to the development of music traditions. It is argued that the two major traditions, Western European Art Music and Afro-American operate according to different assumptions about the organisation of live performance contexts and that this relates to the different inherent formal properties of the music and the way in which aesthetic judgements are to be made.

Although the dominant way of listening to music in the contemporary world is through records and tapes, the live performance retains its uniqueness, its 'aura' (Benjamin 1970). Its ritualistic enactment of a musical tradition conveys so much that can never be captured in print. But this 'elusive' quality demands some attention and it is currently

neglected. This study is a small attempt to sketch out a possible line of approach based on empirical observation and interviews. The field is enormous and a great deal more needs to be done.

Thanks should go to those venues that were prepared to tolerate a curious observer and notetaker who seemed to play little part in the proceedings and could easily have made some customers feel uneasy. To those musicians, sometimes tired, frequently poorly paid and 'off duty' who were prepared to talk at length about their work, life style and approach to live performance to a stranger based solely on a personal recommendation from another musician, must go a gratitude which is sincere and personal.

THE RESEARCH

The last three decades have seen a continuing and progressive assault on idealist conceptions of culture. Perceived liberal orthodoxies in various fields have been challenged. The sociological approaches to deviance, education, gender, race, and more recently the arts have relativised and exposed the ideological nature of prevailing consensual definitions. By judicious use of versions of interactionism, social phenomenology, and varieties of neo-Marxism, the 'taken-for-granted' *has been shown to be* constructed through social processes located within hierarchical social formations.

The preference for materialism over idealism within the sociology of the arts, symbolised by the use of the metaphor of cultural production rather than the idealist notion of creativity, has only recently been absorbed into the study of music (cf, Wolff 1981, 1987). Music's apparent radical non-materiality seemed to make it resistant to those theoretical systems which concentrated, amongst other things, on the investigation of textual meaning through an analysis of the external referential nature of signs. Radical formalism is to be found in the work of a large tradition of critics, musicologists and philosophers who would attempt 'to expunge all traces of music's involvement with a world outside its own self-enclosed, ontologically privileged domain'[1] (Norris 1989:7). Yet while it is important to address the issue of textual meaning, much of the work in this area tends to operate at the level of 'grand theory' at its most seductively perplexing.[2] In contrast, Frith (1985a) has called for the adoption of 'low theory' as a means of bridging what he sees as the present gap between European theorists and American empiricists. It

would seem as if the parallel tensions between the Formalists and the Anti-Formalists and the *Grand* and *Low theorists* have been around for some time. As McClary argues,

> ... from early times up to and including the present, there has been a strain of Western culture that accounts for music in non-social, implicitly metaphysical terms. But parallel with that strain is another which regards music as essentially a human, socially grounded, socially alterable construct. Most polemical battles in the history of music theory and *criticism involve the irreconcilable* confrontation of these two positions. (McClary 1987:15)

It would seem desirable, in the present stage of the development of the sociological investigation of music production to have studies which at least attempt to be grounded in the empirical investigation of an observable world. This study attempts to explore some aspects of the social organisation of live music performance and although not concerned directly with the meaning of music itself, addresses certain dimensions of the conditions for the construction and communication of such meaning.

<u>Why Live</u>?

The British strain of 'cultural studies' was partly formed as a reaction against the open elitism of the 'Culture and Civilisation' tradition of Mathew Arnold (1869), F.R.Leavis (1930), T.S.Eliot (1948) and others, and partly in response to the perceived covert elitism of Frankfurt School theorists such as Adorno (1976). This reactive tendency led to a concentration of research interest on those cultural products previously regarded as inferior aesthetically because they were born from the womb of 'the age of invention' and were associated with technologies of mass reproduction and the culture industry. Film, photography and literature designed for (and creating) a mass market became important areas for study, and in music, those forms fundamentally connected with modern

recording technology have taken the brunt of the research interest. The literature on pop and rock (and indeed the whole massive record industry) has rapidly expanded (cf, Frith 1983), the more recent developments of scratch, mix, dub and hip-hop have been examined (Hebdige 1988), and sociologically informed speculations have been made about the not-so-future trends towards MTV and CDV (Frith 1988; Goodwin 1987; Laing 1985, Wolfe 1983). But apart from important consideration given to the construction of 'authenticity' (Frith 1986) little work has been done on performance contexts in those traditions of music which have clear origins in live performance.

It is true that ethnomusicologists have been concerned with live performance, but the vast bulk of their work has been applied to non-industrial societies. One important exception is Charles Keil's study of Urban Blues (1966) which focusses on the stage performances of various electric Chicago-style bluesmen such as B. B. King and Big Bobby Blue Bland. But as a 'discipline', ethnomusicology had, and to some extent still has, major identity problems. Some practitioners identify with the parent discipline of cultural anthropology (e.g. Merriam 1964) defining the object of study as 'music in culture', others (e.g. Hood 1971) identify most strongly with 'musicology'. In this case the term 'musicology' is defined as the study of musical texts in general rather than the study of specifically Western European art music (WEAM) which is the way the term is often used. This distinction within ethnomusicology has been called 'context musicology' versus 'product musicology' (Kerman 1985:164). In fact one of the important controversies within the discipline is the appropriateness of literary based WEAM musicological categories for the study of non-WEAM musics which

are seldom capable of adequate translation into WEAM forms of notation (cf, Shepherd 1982). More recently, attempts at a consensus within ethnomusicology have clustered around the central concept of 'performance' (Behague 1984) but again largely in non-industrial societies. Performance contexts within the two great live music traditions which have had the most impact on Western industrial societies, the WEAM tradition and the Afro-American (A-A) Jazz/Blues tradition have been neglected.

By concentrating on live music traditions it becomes possible to examine the relation between the form of the music (its inner structure and mode of development etc.), the structure of the performance context (perceived as constraints and possibilities by musicians and audience members) and a particular performance event.

Dodging Reductionism

Yet the basic limitation of all micro level research must be overcome. Performance contexts are not isolated groupings but part of larger hierarchical systems in which class, status and power relations are worked out, where systematic ideological construction occurs and cultural practices and products are bought and sold on an economic market. The aim of this research is to open up the study of contemporary live music performance contexts, not merely as a cataloguing of 'behaviour in public places' (Goffman 1963), but as sites for the construction of 'aesthetic ideological complexes' (Hodge & Kress 1988:3). Ideological complexes are never completely internally coherent, and the various elements need a further level of regulation. As Hodge and Kress put it,

> Each producer of a message relies on its recipients for it to function as intended. This requires these recipients to have knowledge of a

> set of messages on another level, messages that provide specific information about how to read the message ... We will call this higher-level control mechanism a logonomic system.[3] (This) is a set of rules prescribing the conditions for production and reception of meanings; which specify who can claim to initiate (produce, communicate) or know (receive, understand) meanings about what topics under what circumstances and with what modalities (how, when, why). (Hodge & Kress 1988:4)

Contexts for the live performance of music are sites of communication regulated by logonomic systems which constrain the production and reception of meanings. Because the cultural products are defined as 'arts', the dominant mode of the logonomic system will be aesthetic. What is produced by its regulation is a mode of aesthetic address. In so far as aesthetics 'has (been) centrally concerned with the nature of art and of aesthetic experience, and the question of aesthetic judgement' (Wolff 1983:12), performance contexts may be seen as articulating aesthetic codes, constructing and transmitting modes of aesthetic address through the practices of performer(s), audience and indeed all the social actors involved in the musical occasion. Lucy Green (1988) argues that musical experience brings the participants into relation with two categories of meaning: inherent meaning derived from the musical sounds themselves and delineated meaning derived from extra-musical social definitions and associations (cf, Chapter Eight). The link between the two is provided through the awareness of 'style' which simultaneously allows certain sounds to be understood as music and enables the dual musical experience of inherent and delineated meanings to reach 'consciousness as a unified, undifferentiated, apparently inseparable whole' (Green 1988:37). Unfortunately Green does not explore the way in which live music performance contexts contribute to the delineation of musical meaning and style. It is central to this thesis that the context

of reception cannot be ommitted from a consideration of the way in which a musical text is addressed.

The Interpretation of Performance Contexts

For the purposes of this study, 'aesthetic ideological complexes' may be said to include the following three aspects of live performance contexts:

1. The Construction of Performance:

How do performers and audience construct a performance from their perceptions of the constraints and possibilities of the context? This is the empirical level at which the observations of performances took place. For this purpose a comparative observational frame was constructed which attempts to combine some of the insights from ethnomusicology and interactionism with an awareness of the commodification of music production in advanced industrial capitalist societies.

2. The Framing of modes of aesthetic address:

How do these performance constructions 'frame' a mode of aesthetic address which enables the participants to 'know what is going on there'? In other words performance contexts 'frame' the event in such a way as to limit the range of possible applications of aesthetic judgement. In Lucy Green's (1988) terms, the performance context would be one of the delineators of 'style', by which she means the conjunction of two sets of meanings: those derived from the sounds (inherent meanings) and those derived from social categorisation (delineated meanings) (cf, Chapter Eight). It will be argued that in Western contemporary industrial (or post-industrial) society there are two broad foci for aesthetic judgement in a live music performance: the performance product-as-text, and performance process-as-text.

3. The Structure of Aesthetic Ideologies:

Modes of aesthetic address become ideologies in the sense that they make the world meaningful to the human subject locating him/her within an hierarchical structure of culturally valued performance contexts. Performance and attendance at a venue provide not only a living or an entertainment but an identity, a socio-cultural location. An important element in this 'locating' is the position of the venue within the ranking of the aesthetic hierarchy of music.

An Homology of Form and Context:

It will be argued that there is an homology between the musical form and the social relations of the performance context. Various types of homological analysis have been around as long as sociology (eg. Weber's 'Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism') but contemporary approaches, especially those emanating from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham University, have combined the analysis of cultural form with ethnographic studies. Paul Willis (1978) uses the technique to connect cultural form and life-style but homological analysis of this kind has been heavily criticised (cf, Chapter Four). A more convincing case can be made for the connection between cultural form and performance context. It will be argued later that there is an homological relationship between certain musical forms and particular social relationships of performance context and consideration of the historical development of forms should not be divorced from study of the performance contexts through which the forms 'emerged'. Briefly, those forms which emphasise 'fixity' (Wade 1976), where the performance is tightly constrained through the written score and/or traditions of performance practice (most WEAM), are homologically related to

performance contexts tightly structured to encourage a mode of aesthetic address focussing on the cultural product-as-text, whereas those emphasising 'flexibility' (Wade 1976) with relaxed formal constraints, are most usually found in performance contexts only loosely organised for the performance of music. They thereby encourage a mode of aesthetic address focusing on the performance process-as-text.[4] The hierarchical ranking of cultural forms and contexts places the former higher than the latter resulting in a potential 'problem' for 'flexible' forms aspiring to higher 'artistic' status.

Form, Context and Aesthetic Autonomy

A particularly important aspect of the relation between form and context is the degree to which the context highlights the 'product', the 'music-as-text' and its 'performance-as-text' to be addressed aesthetically. This seems to be the core of aesthetic autonomy and stems historically from the immediate pre-Romantic period of WEAM and reaches its peak in C19th Romanticism. An alternative mode of aesthetic address is often understood in the literature to be the concentration on process rather than product, the performance as 'unfolding creation' rather than the 'work-as-already created'. At first glance, this dichotomy seems to rest on an analysis of the music's form and it is true that some commentators have seemed to imply that such a formal division exists (cf, Ch. 8). However such a formalism tends to ignore the context of reception (consumption) and the mode of address framed within it. It is as possible to have the 'unfolding' as the object of aesthetic judgement as it is to have the 'work'. However, the tendencies within general ideology towards ahistoricity and universality tend to be most clearly articulated in the mode of address which is traditionally associated with

'Art' in Western European culture namely the attempt to express a universal human spirit (Green 1988). The focussing on the product rather than the process, which is to be found in the performance at the Royal Festival Hall described in Chapter Seven, carries with it a symbolic dimension which attributes to it a higher aesthetic value thereby relegating processual forms to lower status contexts.

The Research:

1. The Observations:

The bulk of the empirical work consisted of observations of a range of jazz performance venues. These were the Bull's Head at Barnes (SW London); The Canteen (Central London); The London Musicians' Collective (NW London); the Pontalba Cafe (New Orleans); the Eddie Condon Club (New York); the Bloomsbury Theatre (Central London); the Royal Festival Hall (South Bank, London) and the Queen Elizabeth Hall (South Bank, London). Wherever possible a range of performers were observed at the same venue, and also the same performers on a number of different occasions. The objective was to build up a model of the 'script' which participants in events at that venue used to construct a performance. A particular performance event was then described as an illustration of this socio-culturally located occasion. One account of a specific dated performance has been selected, The Pontalba Cafe, New Orleans, as an example of a 'loose' performance context and is the subject of Chapter Six. As a contrast, a description of a dated performance in a 'tight' performance context, the Royal Festival Hall, London, is given in Chapter Seven.

In order to make the observations meaningful as far as the research was

concerned, a comparative frame was constructed based on a modified version of that used by Regula Qureshi (1987) in her investigation of qawwali, the music of the Sufi assembly of India and Pakistan. The attempt was made to incorporate categories which took account of the overwhelming commodification of cultural production in contemporary advanced industrial capitalism. There are certain contextual parameters which seem common to all attempts to make live music into a commodity. The 'packaging' of sound is difficult. It is one thing to make a performance invisible to non-purchasers; it is much more difficult to make it inaudible. The commodification of sound has particular characteristics which are probably unique and when these are combined with the use of sound as a method of enhancing the commodification of something else - food and drink for example - the contextual parameters can become extremely complex.

2. The Interviews:

To add to the observational material, information about the attitudes to performance of jazz musicians was obtained. 'Textbook' methods of sampling depend on an adequate definition of the population and the availability of a sampling frame. Both factors are absent. Active professional musicians are usually employed for a number of purposes, and although some may personally identify themselves as jazz musicians they are open to offers of jobs from many sources. Which they choose to accept may largely depend on their current financial state: the more successful they are, the greater their choice of job and the more likely they are to choose jazz jobs. Many of the players have 'daytime' jobs either in music (possibly as session musicians or music teachers) or outside it (teachers, surgeons, biologists, chemists) and play jazz in the

evenings or Sunday lunchtimes as a way of 'letting their hair down'. In short, a clearly defined sampling frame was impossible to construct.

Fortunately (or unfortunately) getting jobs depends almost entirely on personal contacts as Becker (1963) notes and the phone network is extensive.[5] As many jazz musicians as could be contacted were interviewed. This was by no means easy. Foreign jazz players are usually on tours with an extremely tight schedule and have 'other things to do' after a session which may typically end at 3.00am., and indigenous performers are notoriously private about their work and either very busy (no time), or temporarily unemployed and reluctant to give time without payment. However contacts with musicians were built up by meeting particular performers at school concerts, and at the 'Jazz School' run by the Richmond Adult Education unit at the Parkshot Centre. After initial interviews, a 'snowball' (Rose 1982:50) developed through personal contact and recommendation. This enabled access to be gained to some of the London based players who were prepared to give generously of their time. Interviewing ceased when the information became repetitive and was sufficient to enable a degree of categorisation to be made about attitudes to performance, interest in composition and arranging, preferred performance venues etc. Nevertheless the sample was biassed by age (mainly middle-aged), sex (mainly male, but this reflects the great imbalance amongst jazz musicians generally) and race (none of the players was black which may seem highly significant, yet it is only relatively recently that there has been a sudden outburst of young indigenous black jazz players).

The interviews were semi-structured and the material collected very

'qualitative'. Data from these has not been systematised as a separate element within the research but was used for sensitising to aspects of performance which might not otherwise have been perceived, and as a useful source of information when constructing the chapter on 'Aesthetic Ideologies' related to jazz performance. The total number of interviews was nineteen and they vary in length from an hour and a half to two and a half hours depending on the time the musician could spare.

The Thesis

In the next two chapters, the historical development of the two major traditions of music which have an important live component and have played a dominant part in the development of styles of music in contemporary Western industrial society are briefly examined by reference to secondary sources. The focus is on the contexts of live performance and some possible relationships between context and form. Chapter Four presents a survey of the literature dealing with the key concepts involved in the study: performance; ideology; frame; homology etc. Sources are drawn from the fields of ethnomusicology; the neo-marxism of the Frankfurt Institute, and contemporary cultural studies; symbolic interactionism; the contemporary sociology of music.

Chapter Five presents the comparative frame developed to guide observations. In constructing the frame, a number of different sources were pillaged for ideas, in particular ethnomusicology, the Frankfurt School, symbolic interactionism, and social semiotics. Examples of the use of the frame are given in Chapters Six and Seven as accounts of observations undertaken in two performance contexts: The Pontalba Cafe (a cafe where jazz is played) and The Royal Festival Hall (an archetypal

WEAM concert-hall).

Chapter Eight discusses some issues in social aesthetics and their relevance for an interpretation of the observational data generated in this research. Models of music aesthetics are outlined and discussed as a basis for the construction of models of contexts of performance/consumption from data drawn from the interviews and the observations. A final section discusses the possible homological link between musical form and the social relations of the performance context.

Chapter Nine provides a summary of the arguments developed in the previous chapters relating music performance to contexts of performance/consumption. The importance of a consideration of performance contexts to any historical account of the development of musical forms is stressed and some issues of 'meaning' in music are related to the operation of aesthetic ideologies in contexts of performance/consumption. Examples are taken from the performances at the Royal Festival Hall and the Pontalba Cafe to illustrate the usefulness of the concept of ritual in their analysis.

THE CLASSICAL TRADITION

The young classical music student contemplating a career as a practising musician enters an occupation where a performance is assessed according to conventional criteria of performance practice, each context of live performance is a complex of social relations and there is an hierarchy of venues for public performances. The career ladder of music college concert and later Wigmore Hall debut, from the various instrumental competitions to the pinnacle of the international concert-hall circuit is a progression through live music settings. It is a career of graded social relations and 'success' requires the ability to manage those social relations as well as 'play the Work'. In fact, as Alan Durant (1984) has pointed out, the term 'Classical' refers as much to a particular mode of address as it does to a canon of works. The object of this chapter is briefly to delineate the recent historical development of the mode of address of WEAM. It will be argued that the most consistent trajectory has drawn a heterogeneous collection of musical practices into the general form of the concert whose prime site is the modern concert-hall celebrating an ideology of aesthetic autonomy.

The Social Relations of the Concert Hall

Firstly, the contemporary concert-hall is not solely a geographical and architectural object, it is the micro-context for a set of social relations and practices which construct and symbolise what is taken to be 'the classical concert'. It separates and symbolises the separation of music production from other kinds of production situated in the work-place and in the home, and sets it apart as something to be visited, heard and seen. Secondly, the practices which construct the concert have a

considerable symbolic dimension. The complexities of the concept of ritual and the problems involved with its use in sociology are outlined in Chapter Four, however at this stage it seems reasonable to suggest that the WEAM concert-hall performance involves practices which show a degree of ritualisation (Grimes 1990) celebrating, like many rituals, those elements which comprise the 'sacred history' of the culture (cf, Eliade 1965; Small 1987).[1] In so doing, ritual practices may perform a number of functions: they can serve as a meta-communicative 'framing' device establishing a centre/periphery or figure/ground relation, directing the audience to distinguish 'performance' from 'non-performance', 'front-stage' from 'back-stage' (Goffman 1959, 1975). A frame enables the participants to interpret what occurs within it and in some aesthetics encourages the willing suspension of disbelief. Aspects of WEAM celebrated by ritual practices include the separateness of the 'artistic' from the mundane. By requiring the audience to visit the concert, rather than the musicians to visit the listeners, the musicians are not perceived as 'hired hands' but as celebrants of 'something else', the audience being in attendance as spectators. The design of the auditorium and the various seat prices involve notions of the 'ideal' position to observe the spectacle, which in turn invokes concepts of acoustic balance and volume. The anonymous dress of the musicians converts the individual members of the orchestra into a single instrument under the control of a separate and majestic individual, the great learned creative maestro. The advertisements rank the 'Works' to be played into a programme 'menu' constructed according to traditional principles and also by implication the composers and conductors according to systems of stardom. Through ritual practices, the activities in the auditorium are

separated from the more secular and corporeal by having bars, restaurants, cloakrooms and lavatories set well outside the performance arena. Such ritual practices reinforce the understanding of the concert-hall as a place dedicated to the 'separateness of Art'. A more detailed consideration of these issues with reference to the Royal Festival Hall is to be found in Chapter Seven.

The Concert Hall and the 'Live'

Before tracing the development of the contemporary twentieth century concert-hall from its origins in the seventeenth century it is important to note its role in post-industrial society as a celebrant of 'the live'. In this respect it differs from its predecessors. Technological invention in this century has enabled the virtual 'isolation' of sound as a creative medium. The use of discs and tapes permits music to be realised in almost any context.[2] Listeners have the voluptuous opportunity of having a Beethoven late quartet played by the Amadeus String Quartet for them alone - and in their sitting-room. With modern technology one's kitchen can reverberate to the lower frequencies of a Bach organ fugue and the mind can hardly comprehend the luxury of having an entire orchestra, chorus and soloists, not to mention a herd of horses untangling the narrative complexity of Wagner's 'Der Ring des Nibelungen' while bathing. If one has FM stereo in the bathroom the Bayreuth audience can be there as well on certain Sunday afternoons during the Season. This sonic 'autonomy' does not mean that sound can be experienced without any other senses impinging on the listener, rather that sound has become easily transferrable between contexts of reception which are always 'mixed-sense'. As Alan Durant says:

> To take as music in all instances only what is heard is to abstract,

> and in that process inevitably idealise, an acoustic dimension of practices always and only realisable within definitions and limits of a given scenario ... Concerts, for example, are sites of hearing, but always arranged around an element of sight and focus. (1984:86-87)

In the post-industrial world therefore, the concert-hall becomes but one context amongst many in which music may be experienced. It is the context celebrating 'the live', constructed by an ordering of practices specific to itself but 'containing' music which may be derived from other contexts and historical periods predating the contemporary concert-hall. A contemporary concert programme may include genres, and elements of genres originating before the historical development of the concert-hall and in sites wholly distinct from it. Liturgical rites and civic ceremonials, so closely entwined with music in the medieval period, had to yield to the progressive separation of musical performance for musical works to become the principle objects of focus. Similarly, the music from opera and ballet which would otherwise be contextualized as part of a 'mixed media' narrative can be performed in concert form. This purposeful focus upon the sounds and their origins, the performing musicians, becomes crucially significant both for the emergence of concert music in the seventeenth century and for what the development of recording technology compels us to call 'live' music performance today. It is this live performance context which produces, as Durant puts it,

> ... a pleasure in seeing which, viewing at source, confirms that the sounds heard by the ear are not just sounds overheard, but are sounds purposefully addressed to an audience. It is the knowledge this viewing produces, that the sounds being made are offered in communication, which initially creates for concert-music its distinctive mode of address and expression. (1984:33)

Concert Performance and 'Art'

The concert developed historically as the notion of 'Art' acquired its high status in the cultural world of western Europe. Kristellor argues that the modern system of the arts derives from developments in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Kristellor 1951, 1952). In the ancient world an art was any activity that was governed by its own set of rules.

> Neither for Dante nor for Aquinas has the term Art the meaning we associate with it, and it has been emphasised or admitted that for Aquinas shoe-making and cooking, juggling, grammar and arithmetic are no less and in no other sense artes than painting and sculpture, poetry and music, which latter are never grouped together, not even as imitative arts. (Kristellor quoted in Taylor 1978:40)

Two Renaissance figures cited by Kristellor, Leonardo and Castiglione include activities like mathematics, fencing, horse riding, the collecting of coins and medals under the arts heading. Of course, as Roger Taylor points out, the evidence available to Kristellor is that of ...

> ... contemporaneous attempts at theorising about a society's practices, and they are as likely to be at variance with what goes on as are our own theoretical writings about our own activities. (Taylor 1978:41)

Nevertheless the views can be supported by archaeological evidence of buildings and other artefacts which correspond in their design with particular systems of classifications. In western Europe the gradual emergence of the bourgeoisie and their economic values of the market place associated with the rise of industrial capitalism inevitably challenged the dominance of the land owning aristocracy. Part of this more general process was the accelerating rise in importance of science with its emphasis on the instrumental control over nature so necessary for the growth of industrialism. With this emphasis, those practices regarded as not instrumental were 'available' for recategorising. This

took two forms, firstly the grouping of specific activities such as dance, music, painting, sculpture etc. under the heading 'arts', and secondly the evaluation of such categories relative to others and the recognition of gradations of quality within those categories. In other words the term 'Art' not only became applied to modes of activity - music, painting, sculpture etc. - but also to certain qualities of practices within them. Music may be an artistic activity, but not all musical activities are given the status of 'Art'. Furthermore the concept itself is socially and historically located. Not all cultures have the concept despite the prevalence of the belief in the 'universality of art' and although objects may be produced by what may appear to be artistic activities they are not necessarily defined as 'Art' objects. The eskimos are reputed to produce carvings because they enjoy the activity of carving not because they have a transcendent desire to create beauty and truth. In an argument based heavily on Arnold Hauser's The Social History of Art (London 1962), Adkins Richardson traces the historical emergence of the term 'Art' from the class conflict of the seventeenth century, arguing to considerable effect that the concept of 'Art' with its attendant standards of decorum in life was a ...

> ... response to the incursions of a 'patent nobility' (drawn from the wealthy middle class) upon the ancient privileges of the nobility of gentle birth. (Adkins Richardson 1971 quoted in Taylor 1978:43)

Often the origins of the music played in concert performance can be discerned in the religious motifs, dance rhythms, solo and choral parts for the voice which are the components of so much of the classical repertoire. Yet the concert has a particular visual component and this plays its part in communicating those principles of social relationship

that are embodied in the concert-hall and are connected with contemporary notions of 'art' such as the creative composer, the talented performer, the ranking of *audience members by price of seat.* These are recognised through the association of various performers' practices, types of physical set and bodily movement, with various motivations, emotions and values. These are coded not only specifically within the concert-hall, but also more generally in contexts of social action outside: the workplace, family, school and peer group. Although some codes are conventionally specific to the concert-hall, for example the prohibition on applauding between movements, a first-time concert-goer would have little difficulty in reading many of the others.

The classical aesthetic ideology concentrates on the 'Work' as a piece of art, and this idealist view divorces the product from those social practices and relationships necessary for its production. Becker (1982), from his perspective grounded in the practices of social actors, considers the way in which participants in what he calls 'art worlds' coordinate their activities by referring to a body of conventional understandings.

> Works of art, from this point of view, are not the products of individual makers, "artists" who possess a rare and special gift. They are, rather, joint products of all the people who cooperate via an art world's characteristic conventions to bring works like that into existence. Artists are some subgroup of the world's participants who, by common agreement, possess a special gift, therefore make a unique and indispensable contribution to the work, and thereby make it art. (Becker 1982:35)

Becker is quick to emphasise that there is no clear or firm boundary around any one 'art world'. Rather the image is one of a series of intersecting groupings, and overlapping clusters of practices. A complex of institutions like conservatories, examinations boards, and schools are

involved with the training of technical skills necessary for instrumental performance. Different departments within the same institutions and others provide theoretical legitimation for particular performance styles, and technological developments of instrumentation and sound manipulation may occur within entirely separate organisations specifically devoted to scientific research and development. Detailed concern with these is beyond the scope of this enterprise, however a consideration of the siting of performances in classical music is a central issue.

A concert is usually marked by two 'absences'. The artist (the composer) is not generally present, and the technical aspects of performance should not be visible. The first is made possible by the development of notation, and the second by architectural design and the temporal separation of rehearsals from public performance.

The Rise of Notation

A central feature of the classical music tradition is the salience given to notation with its dual functions of recording and prescription and the consequent potential for the musical work's autonomy and the relation between the roles of the composer and the performer (Bennett 1983). Notation has a retrospective aspect as well as a future orientation. Durant (1984) suggests that contemporary recording technology also functions in the same way - as literally, a record of a performance but at the same time a prescription of a future performance. The significance of this for 'authenticity' is profound as Frith (1986, 1987) and Bennett (1983) have pointed out. The development of notation paralleled the rise in importance of the composer in the fifteenth century followed by the inclusion of courses in composition in university

curricula during the sixteenth. During the seventeenth century the refinement of notational techniques was connected with the accelerated development of the music publishing industry and it also gave the composer increasing control over the detailed performance of the composition. This increasingly prescriptive element reduced the discretion of the performer so that the license for cadenza, embellishment, rubato and other forms of executive indulgence became dramatically reduced. In the nineteenth century the composing role became established as paramount but it is important to note that many of the great composers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century were accomplished performers in their own right, and particularly of their own music. It was only in the late nineteenth and twentieth century that composition became so established as a specialist disciplined activity that many composers rejected the performing role, and some do not even see the necessary conclusion of their compository efforts as live performance at all.[3] In such circumstances, composition becomes an abstract theoretical and academic exercise.

Max Weber (1958) has drawn attention to the way in which the development of systematic notation was related to the increasing rationalisation of music and the development of the tempered scale. Despite this convergence of technical dimensions, notation remains approximate. Sound is one thing, literacy another, and attempted translation always involves a degree of indeterminacy, an interpretive gap. Within the contemporary emphasis on the role of the composer in classical music, this 'gap' enables an academic industry to arise concerned with the elucidation of the composer's intentions which in turn leads to the current interest in historical authenticity (cf, Kerman 1985

Ch.6). The debate over the definition of authenticity with respect to the composer's intentions is too complex to detail here, nevertheless the interpretive gap left by notation is filled by the development of conventions of performance practice. With such a battery of constraints on the performer, the dominance of composition practices in the classical music art world is assured. Moreover the further we move into the twentieth century, into the 'post-gramophone' era, the more electronic recordings take the place of the recording function of notation. Prescriptive notation however is becoming increasingly intricate as contemporary composers continually invent new forms to incorporate their use of non-traditional sounds and acoustic relationships. In itself, this can produce strained relations between composers and musicians because the latter generally receive their professional training within traditional academies and have served their apprenticeship playing and practising music with conventional notation. The time taken to learn to play many contemporary pieces can seem counter productive to orchestral players who know that audiences are likely to be very small and that some composers are unsympathetic to the technical difficulties instrumental players may have. However even a single recording of such a work can help considerably in supplementing written prescriptive notation. When coupled with the increasing availability of historic and not-so-historic recordings of performances by famous conductors and soloists of compositions from the pre-recording era, a _tradition of performance_, and therefore of interpretation can be built up which in certain ways exists independently of the 'authenticity to composer's intentions' tendency already mentioned. It is now possible to _hear_ how Bruno Walter conducted Mahler and to compare such an interpretation with that of

Klemperor, Furtwangler and Solti, and also similarly with Schnabel's and Bakhaus's Beethoven. Both functions of notation have been tightened-up, and recording technology has played its part in this process. These developments generally confine rather than enhance performance freedom, and also have a major social implication: they tend to restrict the 'competent' performance of music within the classical tradition to the musically educated. They also provide a readily available standard of 'competent' performance, that to all intents and purposes is unattainable for the average mortal.

Technique and the 'Final Draft' Performance

Earlier it was argued that the 'absence' of the composer was paralleled by the absence of a visible technical dimension to practical music making. Musicians spend many years learning and refining their techniques in educational institutions, their instruments are crafted in distant workshops and consumables like reeds and strings purchased separately. Rehearsals are generally not open to the public gaze, and private instrumental practice is as its name implies, a private activity. The modern concert-hall caters for such arrangements in its architecture with practice rooms, changing rooms and sometimes even rehearsal rooms deliberately separated from the performance auditorium. In Goffman's terms (1959), performance is 'front stage' and rehearsal and practice is 'back stage'. In the design of the contemporary concert-hall, the demarcation is clear and decisive and 'solidified' in bricks and concrete.

The Rise of the Concert

However such decisive rationalisation of the performance context has not always existed. The contemporary concert emphasising music's relative

autonomy from the rituals of church and state may be traced to performance in private houses. John Bannister, previously a leader of Charles II's violin orchestra opened his house in White Friars, London on 30th December 1672. For the price of a shilling, the audience could witness musical recitals in the afternoon. Seats were arranged around tables in ale-house fashion. This was followed in 1678 with Thomas Britton's ten shilling subscription concerts in his own house in Clerkenwell. In the early eighteenth century two taverns in London became important venues: 'The Crown and Anchor' in the Strand and 'The Devil' in Temple Bar. The former hosted The Academy of Ancient Music, a name recently revived by an important band dedicated to historical authenticity. 'The Devil' was the home of the Philharmonic Society which became The Academy's rival. It was not until John Hickford, a dancing-master, opened the Great Room in his premises on the south-side of Panton Street, off the Haymarket in 1713 for public performances that London got what might be called a specialist concert-house. Later that century two other settings, the Ballroom of Carlisle House, Soho Square and Almack's in King Street, St. James' were both used by J. C. Bach and Carl Friedrich Abel. In 1774 John Gallini, in association with Bach and Abel, built the Hanover Square Rooms which became London's first purpose-built concert hall and lasted for more than a century. However the production values were different from those governing contemporary concert-hall design! In 1775 a Mrs Harris wrote the following letter to her son, the Earl of Malmesbury:

> Your father and Gertrude attended Bach's concert, Wednesday. It was the opening of his new room, which by all accounts is by much the most elegant room in town; it is larger than that at Almack's. The statue of Apollo is placed just behind the orchestra, but it is thought too large and clumsy. There are ten other figures or pictures, bigger than life. They are painted by some of our most eminent artists; such

> as West, Gainsborough, Cipriani, etc. These pictures are all transparent, and are lighted behind, and that light is sufficient to illuminate the room without any lustres or candles appearing. The ceiling is domed, and beautifully painted ... 'Tis a great stroke of Bach's to entertain the town so very elegantly. (Quoted in Pudney 1951:26)

Concerts were financed by subscriptions of half a guinea ensuring a Society audience. The general populace had the early promenade concerts in the pleasure-gardens in Vauxhall, Ranelagh and Marylebone. With admission of one shilling they were within reach of a much wider section of society than the concert-hall subscriptions.

Apart from the Hanover Rooms, the immediate predecessors of the contemporary purpose-built concert-hall, were the Exeter Hall in the Strand, remodelled for music performance in 1850 (currently the Strand Palace Hotel) and the Royal Albert Hall opened in 1871. However the latter's poor acoustic stimulated the scientific investigation of acoustic architecture with the rectangular auditorium layout achieving dominance. This was the pattern for the Queen's Hall, opened in 1893 with a seating capacity of 2,500 and used almost continually until its destruction during a bombing raid in World War II. Apart from mass spectacle concerts in the second half of the nineteenth century at Crystal Palace (the largest audience in 1888 was an astonishing 86,300 for a three day Handel festival) and the Alexandra Palace which may be considered as the early predecessors of the contemporary Wembley and Earls Court pop concerts, the consistent trajectory traces a path to purpose-built auditoria like the Royal Festival Hall designed on acoustic architectural principles.

The neo-Marxist Jacques Attali (1985) argues that concerts are <u>the</u> total spectacle of what he calls the Age of Representation convincing people

of the rationality of the world and the necessity for its organization. The concert represents power in the industrial economy. Musicians are anonymous, hierarchically ranked salaried productive workers. Each member has no value in themselves because they produce only a part of the whole. To begin with the leader was just one of the musicians and early orchestras were very small by modern standards. From the mid-nineteenth century onwards section parts were expanded, raising the orchestra to over a hundred and in some cases even larger. Attali cites Berlioz as the first great 'organising conductor' portraying the image of the legitimate and rational organizer of a production whose size necessitates a coordinator, but requires that he/she makes no noise. For Attali, this is the representation of economic power in the capitalist market. The concerto soloist occupies a mid point in this hierarchical scheme. Since the great leader is <u>too</u> great for ordinary people to identify with, the soloist represents the person who has risen from origins in the orchestral group to achieve a position above the crowd.

Be that as it may, the focus of this study is the micro-context of music performance and its role in constructing aesthetic ideologies. The central theme of this chapter has been to suggest that the social relations of WEAM performance have crystalised into the form of the contemporary concert-hall performance. The autonomy of sound is celebrated and addressed to an audience in a rationalized context thus continuing its origins in sacred rituals by maintaining the distinction between the sacred and the mundane. The ideology of aesthetic autonomy 'replaces' the autonomy of the sacred.

THE JAZZ TRADITION

In the previous chapter it was suggested that the historical development of contexts for the performance of classical music has reached its apotheosis in the contemporary, architecturally designed purpose built concert-hall which embodies within its social relations particular emphases on sight and sound celebrating aesthetic autonomy. This development took more than two hundred years to achieve, and is continually being refined as the science of acoustics improves and building techniques enable further possibilities. The contemporary classical musician is aware of this idealised performance context. Some halls may be better than others acoustically, some too large for chamber works and others too small for a symphony orchestra, but there is a general consensus about the ideal relation between sight and sound and between audience and performer. This is not the case in the jazz tradition.

Although the music critic Henry Pleasants suggests that the development of jazz shows 'an accelerated history of the development of classical music' (1969:140), such a generalisation obscures more than it illuminates. During the early part of this century when jazz music emerged, major aspects of the social and cultural structure of the U.S.A., especially of the Southern States, were radically different from those in western Europe. Firstly there is the social subordination of blacks and their struggle for emancipation as equal participants in the white dominated mainstream of American society. Secondly there is the cultural dominance of aesthetic values derived from western Europe. These two strands are inextricably entwined in any history of the

development of jazz. One of the characteristics of dominant ideologies is their espousal of a universalism which conceals the social basis of their construction. As an emerging folk art of a subordinate group, the origins of jazz are more visible. It is not surprising therefore, that Lewis (1987) notes that 'the history of jazz, unlike that of classical music, has always tended to be viewed in social as well as musical terms' (1987:33). Moreover, as blacks struggled for emancipation within a social hierarchy defined by whites, they also *struggled for cultural recognition within an* aesthetic hierarchy, the pinnacle of which was the notion of aesthetic autonomy.

Any consideration of the development of jazz immediately becomes involved with the changing political position of blacks in the U.S.A., and their attempts at the redefinition of the status of their music. For example, LeRoi Jones (1963) argues that the exclusion of the American negro from the white dominated mainstream of American society has resulted in the development of a black culture which has clear African roots.[1] Frank Kofsky (1969) suggests that black jazz musicians suffer both racial and economic exploitation of the sharpest kind and are therefore able to articulate the periodic emergence of black nationalism most successfully. Ben Sidran (1971) asserts that jazz music is the most highly developed aspect of the black oral culture. Using McLuhan's (1974) thesis about the mediated differences between literate and oral cultures, Sidran contrasts the oral basis of jazz with the dominance of literacy in white culture and its music. There is also, of course, the massive rise of recording and reproducing technology in the twentieth century which has often been the site of economic exploitation of black musicians but also on occasions their advancement (cf, Giddins 1981,

Perry 1988).

The contexts in which jazz musicians, both black and white, have performed, are related in various ways to these social and cultural changes. This chapter will outline the historical development of jazz drawing attention to the particular types of venue in which the growth of this musical form occurred and the ways in which contexts of performance mediated the aesthetic expression of a subordinate group.

It must be remembered that the high status given to the notion of 'Art' in the culture of western Europe developed from changes in practices in the seventeenth and eighteenth century (cf, Chapter 4 & 8). The emergence of the classical tradition of music was itself a constituent of the notion of distinctive artistic practices differentiated from the mundane. The classical tradition emerged and developed, crystalising eventually into its nineteenth century mode of romanticism, as part of this process of differentiation. Jazz's genesis occurred within a social context in which this had already happened, within a culture in which the concept of 'Art' was already firmly in place, 'imported' from western Europe (cf, Taylor 1978).

The Musical Origins of Jazz

Histories of the development of jazz abound. Most concentrate on the social dimension, possibly for the reasons given above, (cf, Blassingame 1973, Blesh 1958, Blesh & Janis 1971, Cayer 1974, Finklestein 1948, Grossman & Farrell 1956, Jones 1963, Kamin 1974, Kmen 1966, Leonard 1962, Ostransky 1978, Stearns 1956), and some examine the musicological (cf, Bebey 1975, Mellers 1964, Ostransky 1977, Schuller 1986). Most commentators agree that jazz consists of an amalgam of African musical

elements (usually rhythm) and European (usually harmony), there are disagreements about the relative weighting and the relationships between them. One of the earliest attempts to deal with the emergence of jazz sociologically was done by Slotkin (1943) using Robert E. Park's concepts of acculturation and assimilation in an attempt to describe the birth of jazz. However, as Levy (1978) points out, these terms imply modification of the different cultural elements but do not make clear the extent of that modification. Levy argues in favour of a dialectical interpretation which would understand the emergence of jazz as a substantially different form created by the synthesis of two (or more) 'opposing' forms - in this case, African and European. There are numerous examples in the extensive literature on jazz which argue for jazz being a new form rather than a hybrid (cf, Blesh 1958, Cayer 1974, Finklestein 1948, Grossman & Farrell 1956, Jones 1963, Kamin 1974, Leonard 1962, Stearns 1956). The majority of these writers are sociologists or social historians. For a musical analysis we need to turn to Gunther Schuller's (1986) The History of Jazz Vol.1. Schuller argues that the traditional interpretation of jazz comprising African rhythm and European harmony is an over-simplification resulting from 'well-meant enthusiasm and amateur research'.

Schuller makes the point that 'unlike the "art music" of Europe', African music is 'not a separate, autonomous social domain' (1968:4). The word 'art' does not even exist in African languages, 'artistic practices' are not distinguished from the mundane but serve 'not only religion but all phases of daily life, encompassing birth, death, work, and play' (1986:4). LeRoi Jones (1963) argues that the split between 'art' and 'life' occurred in the West after the Renaissance as the significance of the Church as

the very centre of Western life became diminished and that 'it was, and is, inconceivable in the African culture to make a separation between music, dancing, song, the artifact, and a man's life or his worship of his gods. Expression issued from life, and was beauty' (Jones 1963:29). This radical difference between Western and African culture is illustrated by the impossibility of comparing a Wagnerian tenor with a blues singer because the the concept of the 'cultivated voice' is foreign to African (and therefore Afro-American) music. According to Jones, in the West 'only the *artifact can be beautiful*, mere expression cannot be thought to be' (1963:30). However, Twentieth century pop and rock has taken the African, non-Western styles more seriously. The 'natural thing' is more highly regarded than the 'beautiful thing'.[1]

Schuller (1986) bases much of his musical analysis of African music on the work of A.M.Jones (1959) and points to the extraordinary sonoric and timbral richness of African languages, the close parallel relationships between words and pitch, and the integral rhythmic nature of all verbal activity. He points to the centrality of rhythm in jazz phrasing, the importance of 'swing' in generating the propulsive flow as evidence for the way in which jazz music continues the African tradition of a socially functioning form 'in the primary sense of being related to physical activities'. By a detailed analysis of form, melody, timbre and improvisation, Schuller seeks to demonstrate that those elements of jazz music thought to derive from European traditions can be shown to be related to the African way of singing. Even harmony, often thought to be the European contribution, is closely related to the African heritage.[2]

However, it is the sound of jazz which distinguishes it most. Timbre is

not able to be reduced to the technical variations which are sometimes produced by musicians trained in the European tradition. It is much more than a particular kind of vibrato. Schuller argues that:

> One of jazz's great attractions is that it has preserved the typically African open tone and natural quality. Some would refer to this quality as "earthiness," others as "beauty of sound", while still others have seen it as raw and vulgar since it lacked the "polite" sounds of European art music. But in purely acoustical terms of purity and amplitude, the open-toned, natural quality of African speech and song appears in the playing of all the great jazz stylistic innovators ... The African quality of jazz sonority can be heard, moreover, in the individuality and personal inflection of the jazz musician's tone. His is not basically the cultivated and studied tone of Western art music, not a tone that is bought in the music store along with the instrument. Jazz's strength and communicative power lie in this individuality, which comes from inside the man; indeed a jazz musician without this individual quality is not a jazz musician in the strictest sense' (1986:56-57).

Jones (1963) makes the same point about a musician's tone using the alto saxophonists Paul Desmond (white) and Charlie Parker (black) as examples, but adds that 'Desmond always insists he is playing an instrument, that it is an artifact separate from himself. Parker did not admit that there was any separation between himself and the agent he had chosen as his means of self-expression. (1963:30-31)

Schuller (1986) points to the characteristic of collective improvisation in African music, which differs so much from the mere embellishment of most European forms. When he also argues that the call and response format of so much African singing parallels the solo and ensemble arrangement of larger bands, it is clear that the African heritage in jazz results in a unique language. This uniqueness makes cross cultural investigation difficult and the use of aesthetic theories derived from the European tradition misplaced.

A further complex fusing of elements occurred because of the racial mix

of the South in general, but New Orleans in particular.[3] Levy (1978) identifies two principal groups, the Uptown blacks whose major musical means of expression was West African and the Downtown 'Creoles of Color' whose culture was essentially European in origin.[4] According to Jones (1963) there was strict segregation between the two groups. He notes that the Downtown Creole bands would have nothing to do with the "raw raucous playing of those darker folks" (1963:74). There was a marked difference between the playing of the two groups. Downtown musicians were 'schooled' and musically literate, the Uptowners had learned their instruments by ear and had a tone and style relying heavily on the non-European vocal tradition of the blues. The use of the word 'Creole' in the title of many New Orleans jazz bands is not a description of the racial origins of its members, but a quest for status, for respectability. It was an attempt to confirm the identity of the players as musicians, people who knew what they were about and had the skills to do it. Despite these differences the two groups shared the aesthetic premise of the interrelationship of musical practices with other aspects of lived culture. In many respects this is demonstrated in the variety of performance contexts available to those early jazz musicians.

Early Performance Contexts

Where were these skills practised? The range of performance contexts available to a black musician (negro or mixed race) in New Orleans in the early decades of this century included parades, picnics, funerals, dances, and riverboat excursions.

Parade bands were similar to military marching bands and often used old instruments left over from the Civil War. The band parts were usually

written and little improvisation took place (cf, Shapiro & Hentoff 1955). Many blacks were members of 'secret' societies which acted as small-time insurance organisations paying sickness and burial benefits, and offering opportunities for social gatherings. When a member died, the society provided a band to play at the often expensive funeral, and if the deceased was a member of more that one society there was more than one band.[5]

Picnics were held in the public parks in the city which gave the musicians a chance to 'blow free'. Many of the favourite places were (and are) situated around Lake Pontchartrain and some have given their names to jazz tunes: Milneburg, West End, Gretna and Spanish Fort. These occasions were free from the constraints that formal dances and balls imposed on the bands and allowed improvisation to be developed within the ensemble line-up of the marching band. Formal dances generally required a minimum of sight-reading from the musicians in order to play the fox-trots, waltzs, polkas etc. demanded of them.

Schuller (1986) notes that:

> ... jazz existed for many years as a multi-faceted music whose character depended largely on geographical disposition and the social and racial constitution of its audience. But since, until the race record boom of the early 1920's, the main consumer was the white man, and since even most middle-class Negroes shunned the blues and other rougher but more authentic forms of jazz, it is not difficult to see where the emphasis in style and conception lay. (1986:71)

The importance of the white audience and colour generally is seen most dramatically in the work available to musicians in Storeyville, created in 1898 by Ordinance in order to control prostitution in New Orleans. The 'District' of about thirty-eight blocks contained some of the most lavish

brothels in the world catering entirely for white customers. Both black and white prostitutes were employed in Storeyville, but not in the same house. Two particularly lush 'sporting houses' provided octoroon women - Lulu White's Mahogany Hall and Countess Willie Piazza's house at which Jelly Roll Morton played the piano. There was a complex hierarchy of brothels. Basin Street's Mahogany Hall had four stories, five grand parlours on the ground floor and a pianist (The Professor earning as much as $15-$18 a night or more if tips were good). It also had fifteen bedrooms each with its private bath on the upper floors.[6]

The cheapest end of the market were the 'shabby cribs' of the street prostitutes (Williams 1967:15). The whole red-light district contained about 2,000 registered prostitutes in 38 blocks and 230 'sporting houses'. Band musicians in the cabarets were paid from $1-$2½. Less dramatic but similar situations were to be found in most large cities all over the United States but they had particular salience for the development of jazz in New Orleans. In Storeyville the jazz musician could make a living. At the particular historical moment of the conjunction of African and European cultures, it was possible for musicians to have a sufficient degree of relative autonomy to enable a new musical form to emerge. The big sporting houses allowed the piano to enter jazz even though the music played in them was probably fairly genteel. The piano could not of course form part of a marching brass band although these provided the model for the traditional New Orleans line-up, but the range of instrumental skills available in the city was very wide indeed. There were two large dance halls in the District and a number of smaller places including the saloons which employed musicians. The groups included string trios, accordion players and various 'symphonic' groups

which played light classical pieces, overtures, operatic medleys, ballroom dances and arrangements of popular songs. For poor black children, learning to play an instrument was seen as a means of escape to a 'glamorous' world. The contrasting performing contexts of relative freedom (picnics, parties etc.) and instrumental discipline (respectable dances and 'high-class' brothels), provided just the appropriate experience necessary for musical development.

When Storeyville was closed down in 1917 after strong demands from the U.S. Navy, the musicians produced by this environment had to find work elsewhere. The obvious places outside New Orleans were up-river. Many bands got work on the riverboats until they could join others already established further up-stream, eventually as far as Chicago. As Marshall Stearns (1956) says:

> New Orleans jazz had to make the transition from a more or less private music, played by Negroes, to a public music which had to survive commercially in the white world at large. The music went indoors, shifted from march to dance music and the musicians changed status from amateur to a professional, playing a mixture more palatable to a white audience. (1956:317)

In the second decade of this century occurred the largest exodus from the rural South. Between 1910 and 1920, 60,000 blacks migrated from New Orleans to Chicago alone.

The Chicago Years

Storeyville was closed in 1917, but musicians in New Orleans were beginning to look for work in other cities before the First World War. Although music was to be heard in many other cities, there are a number of reasons why Chicago became a major centre. Firstly Chicago was an important stop on the Theatre Owners Booking Association

(T.O.B.A.) circuit which produced shows for black audiences. Many travelling vaudeville shows commenced their tours in New Orleans and had Chicago as a principal stop. Secondly, the city was an important water and rail transportation centre with the consequent gathering of transients with money to spend and only a brief time in which to spend it. Chicago had retained a 'frontier spirit' of crime and violence until the end of the nineteenth century and was extraordinarily cosmopolitan containing Anglo-Saxons, French, French-Canadians and Indians. The Irish, Germans (including Austrians and Bohemians), Scandinavians and German Jews came slightly later and shop signs were often written in Italian, German, Russian and Yiddish. Thirdly, Chicago had a slum and red-light district to rival New Orleans. Some of the brothels were incredibly opulent boasting a grand piano inlaid with gold leaf, and there were of course the 'shabby cribs' of the street whores. Almost all the prostitutes were white at this time. With the influx of blacks from the South, a Black Belt emerged on the South Side of the city with mixed cabarets and the bars and saloons in the white and black sections of the city provided places to work which were familiar contexts for the immigrant musicians. The Chicago Vice Commission of 1911 reported that prostitutes were promised immunity by the police if they stayed in black areas, and Chicago's Commission on Race Relations in the 1920's gave the reasons for the emergence of the Black Belt as low rents, 'white sentiment' and the weak political power of blacks.[7]

Between 1910 and 1920, Chicago's black population increased from 44,103 to 109,594 (Ostransky 1978:83). In 1920, ninety percent of the black population lived in the slums of the Black Belt and crime and vice escalated. Political corruption was very high, and a black 'politician',

Big Bill Thompson, whose main 'support' was Al Capone and who always seemed able to rally the black vote behind him, became mayor. Despite frequent public utterances about cleaning up the city and throwing out the gangsters, Thompson maintained a Black Belt that was 'wide open' during the Prohibition days. As Ostransky says, 'He set the tone for Chicago and its night people; and the jazzmen, had they thought about it, would have agreed that they owed Big Bill a considerable debt' (1978:99). As a corrupt politician, Thompson's main 'support' was Al Capone.

In this city environment the performance venues open to jazz players covered virtually the whole range, making work possible for all standards and levels of skills, sight-readers and ear players alike. There were the taxi-dance halls, cabarets and the newer roadhouses which were situated outside the city limits and whose existence was made possible by the growing use of the motor car. At the more respectable end of the spectrum there were ballrooms, some independent and others in hotels. The Stevens Hotel which opened in 1927 had a ballroom for four thousand dancers. The best paying jobs went to white bands willing to play 'sweet', although some black bands offering a similar repertoire could also find work outside the Black Belt. Most of the 'big name' jazz players had work in Chicago during the 1920's and it is not appropriate to list them here, but they are a roll-call of jazz innovators and developers.[8]

The Chicago experience enabled the New Orleans jazz musicians to assimilate new influences and have greater competition. Their migration also enabled Chicago players to hear some of the great instrumentalists,

band leaders and soloists who were developing jazz. Both groups benefited as a result. Above all, the ready availability of work provided the opportunity for a great deal of playing which developed technique, stamina, and given the nature of the often violent customers, the ability to please an audience through the skilful manipulation of performance techniques.

The Kansas City Years

In the historical accounts of the development of jazz, the importance of the Southwestern tradition tends to be neglected. Many of the characteristics of New Orleans and Chicago were to be found in Kansas City. After the Civil Way it was probably the major destination for the cattlemen because the railway initially served to link the western cattle industry with the Chicago stock yards. Later, Kansas City opened its own yards and it became a slaughtering and dressing destination in its own right. The influx of workers, black and white and the rapid growth of the town lead to a completely inadequate police force and law enforcement agency. The rise of the big city bosses, with the corruption which followed, also occurred in Kansas City: for 'Big Bill' Thompson read Tom Pendergast. Under the Pendergast regime, the town was 'wide-open' during the nineteen twenties and thirties. 'For musicians, these were golden years' (Ostransky 1978:153). There were over fifty nightspots in a six blocks square in what was the heart of the black area.

The indigenous popular music was ragtime: James Scott, Scott Joplin and others worked in the area at the turn of the century. At the same time there were many concert bands operating in the Southwest, the most

famous being that of John Philip Sousa, 'The March King'. These continued for many years and by 1924, Sousa's band comprised seventy-five men and featured as part of its programme a half hour of 'syncopated' music. There were many legitimate theatres in the town and a range of burlesque houses. There were also large hotels and dance halls. Nearly all these including the bands, were white.

In the black areas of the city, the dominant musical form was the blues, and although the larger concert bands were playing a kind of ragtime until the early twenties, eventually the twelve bar blues format filtered through to those too. The rural negroes had brought with them the early form of solo blues singing which under the influence of urban living was adapted 'to fit the chaotic harshness of a new world' (Jones 1963:167). At first the singers used guitar accompaniment, but later moved to the piano, developing a highly rhythmic style. Increasing the size of the instrumentation lead to the growth of a large number of small blues groups which eventually developed into the type of blues playing swinging big-band of which Count Basie's band of the nineteen thirties was the supreme example. The style of singing changed to a characteristic blues 'shout', usually over a fairly simple but very hard-driving accompaniment. The blues shouter Joe Turner worked as a bartender in a saloon, and used a two piece band comprising the boogie-woogie and blues piano player Pete Johnson and a drummer. Turner is reputed to have been able to be heard blocks away. According to LeRoi Jones, 'the "shouting" blues singers like Joe Turner and Jimmy Rushing first were heard literally screaming over the crashing rhythm sections and blaring brass sections that were so characteristic of the Southwestern bands' (Jones 1963:168). Turner's basic rhythm section attracted many

musicians who came to sit-in and a tradition of jam sessions was developed attracting the best young jazz players on all instruments not only to the club (The Sunset) but to the city. The Kansas City musicians admired the technique of the visiting sophisticated New York bands but found their overall sound 'thin'!

This style of music became known as 'Rhythm & Blues' and according to Jones, the singers and their groups rejected the solo and solitary stance of the early blues singers, but still had very legitimate connections with older blues forms. It was an exclusive music in the sense that it was performed by and directed at black audiences. Jones argues that it was hated by middle-class blacks and either not heard or not understood by whites. In the late forties and early fifties the style bifurcates into the continuing blues tradition of B. B. King, Big Bobby Blue Bland (Cf,Keil 1966) and Muddy Waters, T-Bone Walker and Jimmy Witherspoon and the merger with white country music which developed into rock 'n' roll for whites (Cf, Perry 1990).

The crowd-pulling, gallery-playing strand within much of the Afro-American (jazz based) musical tradition cannot be attributed to its African roots alone, or its constant involvement with commercial pressures, it is part of the whole context within which the music developed. The musicians and the customers were dealing with a complex of social relationships through which the performances were finally realised. In the blues tradition:

> Singers with gold lame jackets and orangeish pants were canonized along with the older types who still sang of the solitary isolation of the Negro's lot in soft plaintive voices that could never have been heard above the electric guitars, harmonicas and blasting rhythm

sections of the young shouters (Jones 1963:170).

Essentially the human voice had to struggle to be heard, and the vocal tradition of the blues was taken up by the instruments especially the saxophone.

> In fact, during the heyday of rhythm & blues, blues-oriented instrumentalists, usually saxophone players, would vie to see who could screech, or moan, or shout the loudest and longest on their instruments. Men like Eddie "Lockjaw" Davis, Illinois Jacquet, Willis "Gatortail" Jackson, Big Jay McNeeley, Lynn Hope, and many others would have "honking" contests and try to outshout and outstomp any other saxophonist who would dare challenge them. Finally, when most of the "honkers", as they were called, had reached a similar competence, the contests got more athletic. Jay McNeeley used to lie on his back and kick his feet in the air while honking one loud screeching note or a series of identical riffs ... (Jones 1963:172).

Recording, and the playing of the records on various radio stations throughout the U.S.A. undoubtedly increased demand for the music and gave some financial returns to the musicians, although few got the full proceeds from the royalties to which they were justly entitled (Cf, Perry 1990). Essentially the music developed through the necessity for live performance in particular environments which could only have existed in those sections of the big cities in which they sprung up. By the mid-thirties the competitive centre of the music had moved to New York.

The New York Era

During the twenties and thirties, New York increasingly became the town in which aspiring musicians had to 'prove' themselves. New York accounted for the majority of jazz recorded output, with the West Coast Los Angeles scene emerging later. Racial divisions were prevalent and housing zones developed with the major division being between Uptown (Harlem) black neighbourhoods and Downtown white areas. The

Depression made the divisions more conspicuous and visiting the nightlife of Harlem became fashionable for wealthier Downtown whites, and this helped to maintain the economy of Uptown. There was also the usual mixture of theatres, ballrooms, dance halls, hotels, cabarets, clubs and bars where musicians could find work _if_ they could get a cabaret card. This licensed the musician for paid employment and was removed by the authorities as a 'punishment' for misdemeanours thereby denying the performer their means of livelihood.[9]

The exotic significance of race in white culture was exploited by both black and white entrepreneurs and musicians.[10] The idea of the 'primitive', the 'mysterious Dark Continent' of Africa, seemed to fascinate Downtown whites. Some musicians deliberately exploited aspects of jazz performance which were the least Western. One of jazz's many facets is the use of the instrument in 'non-formal' ways. Instruments can be made to produce a variety of sounds not necessarily intended either by the inventor, tradition, or 'legitimate' performance practice. Brass instruments can be made to growl, squeak, howl, moan and even talk through the use of various mutes, cups and other techniques. Already well known to many jazz musicians, such sounds and techniques became most fully developed in the Ellington Orchestra during the late twenties and thirties.

Each city had its own particular brand of piano playing. New Orleans had its brothel 'professors', Kansas City its boogie and blues bar players, Chicago its band pianists. In New York the piano's solo potential was explored in small venues because of the instrument's lack of volume and the upright's compact size. Rent parties used piano players who could

play for eight hours and were able to generate considerable excitement and dance potential. Many of the finest 'stride' pianists like James P. Johnson, Thomas 'Fats' Waller, and Willie 'The Lion' Smith, owe their skills to their frequent employment at rent parties where their stamina and often prodigious technique was developed and sharpened.

Whereas rent parties were held at home, 'after-hours' parties were gatherings of musicians who wished to play in the company of other musicians after their usual paying job was over. The restrictions of playing in a large dance orchestra night-after-night, playing the same arrangements over and over again, allow little room for musical development. 'After-hours' parties during the thirties and early forties enabled many of the best musicians who had gathered in New York from all over the country to hear each other and play in what became known as 'cutting contests'. The resulting competition for technical virtuosity and creativity enabled some musicians to develop skills and aspirations which could no longer be satisfied within a dance band format. New and complex chord sequences were substituted for hackneyed ones and a variety of rhythms were tried out.

One of the main objectives of this was 'exclusion'. Firstly, what Dizzy Gillespie called the 'no-talent guys', the regular run-of-the-mill sidesman in a dance band, were excluded from the experimenting initiates by the sheer complexity of the music and the enormous commitment required to learn and practice it. Secondly, the understanding required from a listener made the involvement of an audience - Schutz's 'sharing of inner time' - problematic (Schutz 1964). Initially the traditional problem of the avant garde in art applied to the bebop players. Audiences had no

access to the aesthetic code which created a deliberate 'separation' of the listener from the performer. This reinterpreted the jazz aesthetic along bourgeois 'Art' lines. The music was clearly and deliberately defined as 'Art' in the sense that listeners were made to witness an act of creation by the musicians. On some occasions the players actually sat or stood facing each other, acting as if they were oblivious to the presence of the audience. Whereas the older band leaders had, of necessity, to present themselves and their musicians to the dancers and the audience, seeing themselves as largely responsible for generating the 'atmosphere' and the success of the event, the new 'bebop' players recognised no such obligation. In part this was a reaction to the racial situation in American culture.

The Harlem Renaissance

During the twenties and thirties, black cultural leaders in New York actively promoted a Harlem Renaissance. They wanted to show that the blacks were now 'civilised'. Since white Americans were entranced with European culture as <u>the</u> high culture, black intellectuals wished to show that their race was also capable of similar heights of cultural production. They accepted the prevailing dominant hierarchy of cultural production, the white European, and rejoiced when black singers like Marian Anderson and Roland Hayes won music competitions, Paul Robeson gave a successful concert in New York and poems by black poets were set to music. For Alain Locke (1936), the true negro music is its folk music and any development must avoid commercialisation and trivialisation. He argued that a negro music could develop which would take its place beside the already established high art musics of the world. For Locke, this quest is roughly synonymous with the art of composition and

although Locke acknowledges that the improviser is simultaneously both a performer and a composer he nevertheless adheres to the European notion of 'Art = Composition'. The creation of 'bebop' and the modern jazz movement, can be interpreted as a reaction against this stance. The claiming of artistic status for a black musical form and the musicians who could master it demanded recognition on their terms, not those of the white European. Nevertheless in adopting this stance they were moving towards embracing the separation of the creator from the audience which is part of the European principle of aesthetic autonomy.

By the late forties, jazz in various forms had spread throughout the U.S.A. as musicians travelled in search of work and some radio stations broadcast live shows and recordings almost twenty-four hours a day. The presence of the record industry ensured that New York remained an important centre, but Los Angeles also developed as a very important jazz base because of the growth of the record industry there and the number of musicians associated with the movie business. However bebop continued to be played in small clubs in front of enthusiastic audiences of cognoscenti, often including young white middle class intellectuals. It could not get accepted in ballrooms though, and bandleaders who were sympathetic to bebop had to modify their programmes. In 1948, drummer Buddy Rich who was thirty-one is reported as saying 'It's not that I dislike bop, but there are lots of other things I want to play. These fellows want to play bop, and nothing else. Let's make it clear I'm not going commercial, everything that isn't bop is not necessarily commercial' (Chilton 1979:103). Even Dizzy Gillespie, a creator of the original bebop style said in 1949, 'Bop is part of jazz, and jazz music is to dance to. They don't hear those four beats. They're not particular

about whether you're playing a flatted fifth, or a ruptured 129th as long as they can dance' (Chilton 1979:103).

Jazz in Crisis

In a way, jazz was in crisis. Striving for artistic status had caused problems in appropriate types of performance context and modes of aesthetic address associated with them. The small group format for bop in clubs in front of small audiences was fine as they learned to 'hear' the harmonic progressions, but did not pay well for the musicians or the managers of the clubs. Big-band ballroom work paid a regular salary but left many of the musicians frustrated creatively. One answer adopted by Stan Kenton using white musicians in California was to opt for concert-hall presentation and proudly reject the concept of 'music for dancing'. His music is highly composed, almost symphonic in scope, exploits the sounds of the ensemble instruments to great effect and includes solo spots. But the concert-hall mode increases the 'objectivity' of the music by 'distancing' it from the audience. A different answer was a return to the Rhythm & Blues tradition from Kansas City, mainly in small group format. Those who incorporated elements of this within the modern movement rejected the excessively complex harmonies of original bop in favour of a driving blues-influenced style that became known as 'hard bop'. Gillespie himself increasingly experimented with Latin American rhythms, and the trumpeter Miles Davis, after a lengthy period leading very high quality small groups which were renowned for their smart dark suits and cool disdain for the audience (Davis used to actually walk off the platform while others were soloing) moved at the end of the nineteen sixties into electrified instruments in an attempt to keep abreast of developments in the progressive rock field and reach the

same kind of mass audience.[11]

Two other developments of importance must be mentioned. In California there were a number of highly proficient and usually schooled musicians who played in recording and film studios. Many had gained experience in Kenton's big-bands but formed smaller groups playing a well-executed, clean-cut and understated form of jazz. Partly in response to criticism that their music was excessively 'clean' and lacking individuality, many West Coast players experimented with unusual instrumentation. Gerry Mulligan's Quartet was pianoless, and Chico Hamilton's groups included cello and flute. This way of searching for a different ensemble sound was sometimes criticised by non-West Coast jazzmen because the personal tone, attack and timbre of the great Eastern jazz players was so identifiable. Miles Davis claimed that all West Coast tenor players sounded alike to him. This was partly a comment on the fact that West Coast musicians are usually white and partly a criticism of the excesses of valuing technique over 'soul'.

One musician from the West Coast who reintroduced a strong black element into the music was bass player Charles Mingus. His aim was to use modern techniques of instrumentation, composition and arranging and combine these with the vigour and authentic earthiness of early black music, particularly the blues and gospel music. He also performed live a great deal but is recorded as making a diatribe against club customers in New York who did not keep quiet enough while his band was playing (Dorr-Dorynek 1960). This outburst against noisy clubbers must be set in the context of the racial and economic disadvantages still suffered by jazz musicians as late as 1959 and experienced as especially frustrating

by a self-defined 'art' musician like Mingus. To get financial security a musician can become a studio session player, but this is routine and boring work, not conducive to creative development. Mingus signed a permanent contract with a lower west side club, but this had to be broken after pressure from the police who complained that black bands in the club brought too many blacks into the vicinity. When he took his group to Harlem, the police complained that this brought too many white people to 118th street! Playing in a club that was unused to listening to music provoked Mingus's highly coherent and moving outburst.

The development from about the early sixties, known as The New Thing, or 'free jazz' celebrated the 'Art' aesthetic at its strongest. Whereas the earlier bebop revolution had fractured swing rhythms and relatively simple harmonic sequences in the attempt to create a new form, it had in essence just made the existing system much more complex. The New Thing effectively abandoned both of the main structural dimensions of rhythm and harmony (Wilmer 1977). Ornette Coleman, one of the original avant-garde players rejected the basic measure of time for a solo as a given number of choruses and in so doing rejected the fixed harmonic sequence which comprised a chorus. In musical terms there were no bar lines, therefore no fixed pulse and no way of using a harmonic sequence. The player continues to play what he wants until he feels that he has expressed himself. In a group, the musicians pass ideas to each other and develop these in their own way, constructing a set of flexible parameters within which they operate until they decide to finish. Explicitly rejecting what he called 'Tin Pan Alley songs', by which Coleman meant the twentieth century popular song tradition, he constructed his own new music with a number of other sympathetic

players. Any hierarchy between instruments was dissolved, there was no longer a 'rhythm section' which supported 'front-line' players, and drummers became highly creative members of the group in their own right. Duos became a frequent combination. Alfred Willener (1970) interprets this development as part of the general cultural explosion of the nineteen-sixties. He interprets the writings of LeRoi Jones and the music of Archie Shepp as a form of 'counter-terrorism', an 'anti-white racialism' which through the provocative abuse and resulting alienation of the audience asserts the independence of the blacks from white liberalism. Shepp adopted African dress and never acknowledged applause. It is interesting that both Jones and Shepp are highly educated, the former a skilled writer and the latter a university trained playwright and speaker at public meetings. In an interview Shepp said that the message of the new jazz:

> ... tells of the suffering of a whole mass of people. It speaks of emancipation, of the destruction of the ghettoes and of fascism. I'm a black jazz musician, a black father, a black American, an anti-fascist; I am outraged by war, Vietnam, the exploitation of my brothers, and my music talks about all that. That's the New Thing. (Willener 1970:245)

Although the African style was adopted by many black players during this period, not all 'free jazz' was so actively political. John Coltrane became obsessed with various forms of oriental mysticism and seemed to extend the technical possibilities of the saxophone in extraordinary directions in an attempt to explore ever more personal horizons. He even developed a way of playing the three notes of a triad at once. This 'spontaneous' way of playing jazz revived the idea of collective improvisation which had been one of the features of New Orleans jazz in the early nineteen-twenties, except of course that the new music was

atonal and required an apparently prodigious technique for proper effectiveness.

A problem which all avant-garde arts share however, is establishing criteria for evaluation. This becomes even more problematic in a form as apparently solipsist as free jazz. How can aesthetic judgement be made? If a musician is playing what he or she feels, how can another person know whether the sounds have been successful? Might not the lack of formal discipline be a cover for poor musicianship? Avant-garde aesthetic codes by definition are known only to a minority, so how do they attract audiences? The answer is of course, that they don't!

Eventually, free form became a style and was increasingly incorporated into standard forms as exciting 'moments' within more predictable (and accessible) surroundings. A few musicians continue to play 'pure' free jazz to a very small group of listeners who regard themselves as initiated into its esoteric nature. The size of the groups (musicians and audience) makes the small club or arts centre the ideal performing context.[12]

Essentially the relationship with the audience had changed. After the bop revolution in the forties, jazz had become perceived as an art by both musicians and listeners. There was a greater accent on the cerebral and far less on the physical involvement of the audience. This changing mode of address was helped by the development of the L.P. record which enabled longer 'takes' and a more sophisticated production and marketing technique and permitted extended and repeated listening. A musician's personal creative musical development over time could now be appreciated by buying consecutive releases. However this almost

inevitable development into the avant-garde drove jazz into a cul-de-sac.

The electrified music of Miles Davis seemed to offer a solution and a number of groups developed in this way, sometimes playing to massive audiences e.g. Weather Report. But a further route was also open. A return to the idea of 'music for dancing' has developed during the eighties featuring small groups often playing a form of accelerated hard bop at breakneck speed. Many incorporate Latin rhythms to increase excitement and make recordings collected together and released in composite albums specifically for dance purposes. For these groups the concept of 'Art' has little meaning, yet they have not sacrificed the necessity for great technical facility. Audience appreciation has become extremely important and although the financial returns from selling records for dancing in discotheques may be higher than the earnings from live performances, the basic creative drive is gained from 'putting on a show'.

At present, the contexts for performance include the whole range: open-air stadiums, concert-halls, small theatres, arts centres, clubs and pubs. In each of them there will be a different mode of address. Some of the basic variations are discussed in Chapter Eight, but it is difficult to see how jazz would have developed in the way it did without the social relations of the venues in which it was played being a constitutive element.

THE CONCEPT OF PERFORMANCE IN THE SOCIOLOGY OF MUSIC

INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to examine the available literature relevant to issues of music performances. It will be argued firstly, that with the possible exception of ethnomusicologists, researchers have under-valued the concept of performance and that present attempts to address questions of 'meaning' in musical texts might, with advantage be supplemented with a consideration of the social organisation of the performance contexts within which such texts are 'realised'. Secondly, those theories involving the concept of a 'structural homology' between musical form and social relations omit the crucial mediating role of the performance setting in framing the musical sounds for the listener.

Performance Art?

A major difficulty for anyone trying to investigate music performances is the conceptual complexity which surrounds the term 'performance'. The phrase 'performance art' has been conventionally understood to refer to cultural forms which involve the live encounter between performer and audience. The implication is that a clear distinction can be made between such 'performance arts' as music, dance and drama, and 'non-performance arts' like painting, sculpture and literature. However with the development of modern reproduction technologies, performance no longer needs to be 'live' at the point of reception. The enormous social implication of this have been explored by Jacques Attali (1985), Helmut Rosing (1984), Paulo Prato (1984), Shuhei Hosokawa (1984) and others. Earlier this century, certain branches of modernism spawned new

performance events using multi-media techniques and new relations between performer(s) and audience which were deliberately designed to shock. The development of electronic media within a developing post-modern culture has produced further fragmentation and re-alignment of traditional forms. At each point established conceptions about 'fundamental' differences between forms disintegrate challenging previously taken-for-granted notions of performance.[1] Because of this, the simple cultural production paradigm of the 'producer-product(text)-consumer' relation will be used as a basis for discussion. This is not to ignore the complex differences between those various practices which are signified under the generic title of 'arts' within our culture.[2] Nevertheless, a sociological approach to the arts emphasises the situated nature of all artistic practices, the mediation of aesthetic codes, and the importance of ideological, social and material processes and institutions, while at the same time insisting 'that we do not lose sight of the artist as the locus of this mediation and the facilitator of its expression.' (Wolff 1981:137)

Current terminology emphasises the artist as cultural producer rather than creator in order to demystify the arts, the artist and the act of creation, while stressing the essentially social and collective nature of all production whether material or cultural. Similarly the cultural product - the text - is no longer seen as transcendent but the complex result of ideological, economic and social factors mediated through the art form's formal properties and owing its existence to the particular practices of located individuals. Such a view is highly suited to a study of music performances and their locales which are both the sites of production

practices and usually visibly collective events.

Grahame Thompson (1985) suggests with respect to literature and film that:

> ... the formal analysis of textual practices is now well advanced ... but when these (textual) codes and their structure have been disentangled in various ways, we tend to be left with an unsatisfactory residue - the 'performance code' one might say. (Thompson 1985:78)

Whilst questioning the suggestion that the textual analysis of music is well advanced, a purpose of this chapter is to explore further the notion of a 'performance code' in relation to music performance.

Over-view of Issues

The 'PRODUCER -- TEXT -- CONSUMER' paradigm (basically a set of social relationships) must be situated socially and culturally - in the case of live music in a context of performance. However the model provides an organising framework for discussing a number of relevant issues. The terms describe functions not individuals and each category is problematic.

1. The 'Producer - Text' relationship: Some sociological approaches emphasise the text as the objectification of the intentions of the producer (eg. Hirsch 1976, cf, Kerman 1985 Ch.7), others argue for the 'death of the author' in favour of the dominance of the text and the consumer (eg. Barthes 1977, Hadjinicolaou 1978, Macharey 1978). There are those forms where the text may be said to record the intentions of the producer in as detailed and complete way as possible: a novel, painting or a film for example. In the case of music, the composer leaves a notation which requires interpretation by a performer, who may or may not be the composer. At its best this notation can only be a set

of directives although there are numerous conventions and traditions of 'performance practice' to constrain too wide a range of alternative interpretations. What are currently known as 'recordings' of music are in fact constructed recordings of constructed performances. However there are some contemporary forms (e.g. certain types of electronic music) where the composer uses 'recording' technology directly thereby uniting composition, performance and recording in one objectification. In this case the record, whether it be vinyl, tape, C.D. or computer disc, stands in a similar relationship to the composer as does a printed novel to its author.

Those theories which assert what, following Roland Barthes (1977), has become known as the 'death of the author' thesis argue for the demystification of the 'author' as the creative subject, in favour of a re-emphasis on the importance of the textual structure and the consumer. The earlier emphasis on the priority of the author/producer/creator is seen as an aspect of the bourgeois ideology of the creative individual, developed concomitantly with the rise of capitalism in Europe. This remains supremely visible within music, where the 'towering' figures of nineteenth century composition were also often heroic performing figures: Liszt, Chopin, Beethoven for example. It is essential to 'locate' the producer function within a social, historical and ideological context and to take into account the aesthetic mediations of the text when considering the way in which the intentions of the producer are thought to be objectified within it. The aesthetic mediations of the performance context also provide further constraints on a producer but are seldom emphasised in the current literature probably because the 'death of the author' thesis was largely generated with

reference to literature rather than music.

2. The 'Text': Although Thompson argues that textual analysis is well advanced it is still highly problematic in music. Traditional musicology enables considerable analysis to take place, but there are problems in applying its categories to non-WEAM traditions including most popular forms of music in the West. Ethno-centrism is as much of a danger in ethnomusicology as it is in anthropology. However the major problem for the analysis of music texts centres on the classical sociological theme of the relation between social and cultural systems: the question of ideology in neo-Marxist cultural studies and the question of meaning and concepts of signification in textual studies. At one extreme there are those who argue for the self-referential (or non-referential) character of music, who emphasise the apparent abstract nature of its essential unknowability (cf, Hanslick 1854). At the other are those who attempt to apply the referential logic of structural linguistics to organised sound (cf, Bratby 1987, Feld 1974, Middleton 1985, Nattiez 1975, Tagg 1982). Between these extremes lie those who claim that music does signify, but primarily at the level of emotions, psychological constants with a universal applicability (cf, Cooke 1959, Langer 1960, Meyer 1956).

Attempts to transcend these difficulties include the playing down of the signifier/signified relationship of linguistics in favour of the relational dimension of internal systemic structure. Reference can then be re-introduced by employing the concept of structural homology where the structural relations of a cultural form are said to 'parallel' or 'correspond' to a similar pattern of structural relations between social

actors (cf, Hebdige 1979, Willis 1978). Problems emerge at this level also because sounds are not sufficiently constrained in their meaning to be said to relate clearly to one particular group, sub-group or culture. Structural homology models tend to be 'tighter' than reality and there is a real danger of tautology in their construction and interpretation (cf, Middleton 1985 & Section III below). Musical codes are very 'open' and polysemy has to be 'constrained' by amongst other things, song lyrics, video images or performance contexts (cf, Barthes 1977, Laing 1985). Denotation seems limited in music; connotation is looser and permits the entry of ideology into the meaning system. Issues in ideology have been most fully addressed by the Birmingham University Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (C.C.C.S.) in their attempt to emancipate Marxism from a crude economic determinism by developing a processual approach heavily influenced by Gramsci (cf, Section II below).

Another key question concerns the text's origin. In music traditions where the composer is separate from the performer in time and space as well as in function, the notation is mediated through the performer in the light of performance practice codes. In other traditions, principally those which rely on improvisation, the performer and composer are one and the same. It is important to recognise that even in strongly composed traditions, the composer can never have total defining power over the text. There will always be an element which is the performer's. Notation systems emphasise those dimensions of the musical which can be called the most 'visual' (Shepherd 1986). Pitch and duration, as Wishart (1977) has pointed out, are easily made visual through notation, but timbre - the quality of sound which distinguishes one instrument from another - is not. According to Shepherd (1986),

timbre is the most 'musical' element in music, and according to Schuller (1986) one of the distinguishing features of jazz (cf, Chapter Three). For Barthes (1977) this dimension is the 'grain', the most sensuous level and speaks to the unconscious. It is important to emphasise that 'the text' is not necessarily the same as the score, the notation. Tagg (1982) distinguishes between four 'musics': music as notation, music as perceived by listeners, music as conceived by the composer and/or musician before the actual performance and finally music as the sounding object. He selects the last for detailed textual analysis.

3. The 'Text - Consumer' relationship: the meaning of the text is 'realised' through its interaction with the audience. There are three analytical levels of meaning involved here. Firstly there is the meaning of the text 'itself'. The connotations (and to a far lesser extent the denotations) of the sounds themselves will be constructed in the interaction between the music text and the listening audience. Listeners of course, have social origins, prior socialisation experiences and are members of a social structure hierarchically organised by age, sex and class. They will exhibit consumption patterns related in some way to these dimensions (Shepherd 1986).[3] Secondly there is that level of meaning which can be called the 'aesthetic code' which tells the listener how to address the text aesthetically. But there is also a third level, the logonomic (Hodge & Kress 1988) or meta-lingual (Barthes 1977) which will enable the participants to construct the meaning of the musical event. In a sense the third level includes the second, and is constitutive of the first. The three levels are analytic and are united in each performance occasion. Neither music nor any other cultural product can exist in isolation from the social context which gives rise to it and

the assessment of this context forms a constitutive element in the construction of meaning. Taken together the three levels constitute an 'aesthetic ideological complex'.

It is for this reason that an investigation of contexts of music consumption becomes so important.[4] Contexts will have characteristics internal to each, relations between consumers, between consumers and performers and between all the personnel involved in producing and maintaining the context. There will also be relations between one context and others. Contexts will almost certainly be ranked in some way and those with higher prestige may have physical properties which differ markedly from those with a lower ranking. To paraphrase Althusser, no context is 'innocent' (Althusser 1971). Encapsulated within it, and in its relations with other contexts, are to be found economic, ethnic, but particularly aesthetic ideologies where cultural forms are ranked according to prestige, where participants are categorised according to dominant conceptions of aesthetic value and taste, where commodity fetishism wages war on notions of cultivation, residual cultural traces (eg. rural blues, folk music etc.) vie with emergent forms (e.g. urban blues, disco etc) and consumers and producers both receive and construct their identities.

The literature is enormous and despite the risk of distortion has been divided into three 'strands' for ease of organisation: ethnomusicology, cultural studies and textual studies.

Ethnomusicology examines the location of music within culture. The exact definition is the subject of an on-going paradigm contest within the discipline. Ethnomusicology is concerned with the problems of

addressing non-Western musics from the standpoint of an 'external' culture, the ways in which music relates to culture and the ritual practices which surround its performance. But in general, because the societies are small scale and tribal, there are few conflicts to promote detailed consideration of ideology and the role of music in subcultural contest. Attention will be given to a proposal by Gerald Behague (1984) that ethnomusicology should focus on what he calls 'Performance Practice' as the basic disciplinary paradigm.

'Cultural Studies' addresses the relationship between cultural production and social structure directly. Focussing on hierarchically structured advanced industrial capitalist societies has prompted the development of a stance of aesthetic neutrality. A neo-Marxist conception of ideology is central to Cultural Studies and a major focus of attention is subcultural conflict, rituals of resistance, and the use of structural homologies as a way of linking cultural products with subcultures.

'Textual Studies' continues the central problematic of Cultural Studies through the concept of signification. This has developed in a variety of ways from traditional structural linguistics, through post-structuralism, to an analysis of discursive formations.

Each of these strands of thought has contributed to the development of sociological approaches to music in general and each has much to offer anyone considering a study of musical performance contexts.

I. 'PERFORMANCE' IN ETHNOMUSICOLOGY

In an introduction to a reader on ethnomusicological perspectives on performance practice, Gerard Behague (1984) distinguishes the

anthropological concept of performance practice from the traditional musicological view. The latter, Behague argues, is motivated largely by the concept of 'authenticity'.[5] The anthropologist however, is concerned with the way in which both sound and its context of realisation combine to construct a multi-textual event. Whereas the musicological approach to performance practice privileges the sounds, ethnomusicologists use the term 'performance' in its broadest sense to include context. Traditional musicological categories tend to be derived from the musically literate tradition of WEAM and are unsuitable for the study of non-Western and non-literate cultures and for musical forms which are largely improvised by performers (cf, Kerman 1985 Ch.5).

'Performance Practice' - a paradigm shift?

Behague's contribution, together with McLeod (1974,1975) and McLeod and Herndon (1980) marks a focussing of ethnomusicology on the study of performance. The severe professional 'struggle' between the musicological faction stressing the analysis of the music (e.g. Mantle Hood 1971) and the anthropological stressing culture (e.g. Alan Merriam 1964, Blacking (1974), Davis (1972), Johnson (1974), Asch (1975), Midgett (1977), and Stone and Stone (1981), is overcome through a study of performance.[6] Behague's intervention is therefore pertinent.

Studies of performance occasions

Although many ethnomusicologists have considered performance occasions some of the more pertinent will be considered here. The notion of 'cultural performances' proposed by Milton Singer (1955), includes a range of events which go far beyond the narrow Western definition of 'culture as art': plays, music concerts, lectures, prayers, ritual readings,

rites and ceremonies of all kinds. A cultural performance is defined as having a limited time-span, a definite start and finish, an organised programme of activity, a set of performers, an audience and a place and occasion of performance. Singer argued that such performances were symbolic and meaningful for the participants and were thought to be encapsulations of their culture by members. Whether the latter, as a conscious belief, is necessary to the concept of 'cultural performance' is open to question. The important point is that music performances are part of a broader range of cultural performances.

Two anthropologists specialising in folklore and in particular the ethnography of speaking are Roger Abrahams and Richard Bauman. Through a discussion of the concept of 'genre', Abrahams (1969) argues that it is conventionality which allows understanding of ceremonial communication in small groups and study of generic typological distinctions provides insight into the ways in which group members organise themselves for social and rhetorical purposes and how social and aesthetic elements may reinforce or undermine each other.

Pursuing the concept of 'cultural performances' in greater theoretical detail than Singer, Abrahams argues that effective performance requires a consonance between three dimensions: form, content and context. The appropriateness of this complex of elements is crucial to effectiveness and constitutes the package of rules defining the genre. He distinguishes three important structural levels in folklore forms:

a. the structure of materials - the interrelationship of words, actions, 'tones', their physical quality and their organisation relationship;

b. the dramatic structure - conflict of characters and its resolution,

the different literary types eg. comedy, tragedy, romance;

c. the structure of context - the way in which the dramatic structure is interpreted and received. The structure of context varies from direct personal interaction - the smallest and most intimate forms involved as part of direct and spontaneous discourse - to the larger and more symbolic genres which rely 'upon a profound sense of psychic distance between performer and audience' (Abrahams 1969:111). Between these poles are conversational genres, play genres, fictive genres and static genres. The shorter forms are said to employ fairly direct strategies to convince the audience, and the longer genres increasingly use upon vicarious involvement. Static genres are exemplified in a situation where folk paintings are exhibited in the absence of the painter. The artist 'steps back and lets his creation 'speak for itself'' (Abrahams 1969:119).

Although Abrahams is primarily concerned with verbal forms, can his ideas be related to musical performances? Movement along the continuum away from complete personal involvement is likely to involve a progressively formal and performer oriented context, one reliant upon symbol, imagination and the vicarious involvement of audiences.[7] The most intimate pole, a musician playing solely for his or her own satisfaction, through family performance (the original venue for most early chamber music for example), through small 'club' to large concert hall productions would seem to be a close parallel. Finally the static genre of recording production transforms the previously 'fluid' and 'ephemeral' quality of sound, lost in substance as soon as it is emitted except for the memory of the audience, into an object of 'display' and

exchange independent of the creator.

Abrahams's discusses the use of genres for comparative purposes and suggests that ethnographers may find that some communities tend to gravitate towards one type of genre. He maintains that Afro-American groups show a tropism toward play genres and that songs and folk-tales are performed ...

> ... with the expectation that the audience will become so totally involved with the performance that they will become a functioning part of it through making audible comments and exclamations to which the performer will react. (Abrahams 1969:124)

The relevance of this to the 'call and response pattern in much Afro-American singing and religious occasions is shown by Charles Keil's (1966) study of the 'Urban Blues'. Abrahams contrasts this tropism with that shown among rural American whites 'where the performer in these groups commonly creates as great a sense of removal as possible while singing, playing or telling a story (Abrahams 1969:124).

In an article of 1972 Abrahams (1972) gets near to the early Goffman in emphasising the ubiquitous nature of performance as a means whereby men and women get together and operate a shared culture. Abrahams concerns himself with a number of problems not least that of the transition from an oral to a written tradition. He asks 'what occurs when an improvised performance designed for a small-group audience suddenly becomes a permanent composition capable of being perused by an audience of infinite numbers?' (Abrahams 1972:84). Although his exploratory attempts at an answer address the work of the seventeenth century poet Robert Herrick - the initial problem is one concerning

improvised music also.

In a later article, Abrahams (1975) clarifies the concept of performance further by distinguishing between 'Pure Performance' - the generalised occasion side of his definition, and 'a performance' which refers to an artistic activity in its own right. Distinctions of this nature are critical in any theoretical or empirical study of performance. Does the concept of 'performance practices' refer to the practices of the performers themselves in the act of performing, or to those practices which constitute the performance occasion in a broader sense? Any observational frame to be used for comparative purposes must make clear distinctions of this sort.

Framing Performances

Richard Bauman, focusses on a slightly different problem. He is concerned with that property of speech which enables it to be used both in the realm of the 'natural or normal' and in the realm of 'art'. He concentrates on the performance act and argues that ...

> ... performance sets up, or represents, an interpretative frame within which the messages being communicated are to be understood, and that this frame contrasts with at least one other frame, the literal. (Bauman 1975:292)

In other words a verbal performance requires (or is) a frame within which a reading of a poem, say, is understood by an audience as requiring different criteria of address from 'everyday' speech. This would not be to argue for some naturalistic or privileged form or speech which lies outside, or beyond, framing but for a different frame. This frame would require keying for the audience to understand (a) that a performance is taking place and (b) how to assess its content.[8] Bauman

cites Gregory Bateson (1972) as arguing that ...

> ... a frame is meta-communicative. Any message which either explicitly or implicitly defines a frame, ipso facto gives the receiver instructions or aids in his attempt to understand the messages included within the frame'. (Bateson 1972:188)

This stance challenges the common-sense quest for the discovery of the 'artful text' as a precursor for establishing whether 'art' is going on. The concept of an artful text dissolves into a performance frame. Performance is thus constitutive of artistic practices, not something 'which is done to' an art object. Bauman lists a selection of eight techniques for keying performances from those that have been widely documented in various cultures:

> (1) special codes, e.g., archaic or esoteric language, reserved for and diagnostic of performance ...
>
> (2) special formulae that signal performance, such as conventional openings and closings, or explicit statements announcing or asserting performance ...
>
> (3) figurative language, such as metaphor, metonymy, etc. ...
>
> (4) formal stylistic devises, such as rhyme, vowel harmony, other forms of parallelism ...
>
> (5) special prosodic patterns of tempo, stress, pitch ...
>
> (6) special paralinguistic patterns of voice quality and vocalization ...
>
> (7) appeal to tradition ...
>
> (8) disclaimer of performance. (Bauman 1975:295)

Such keying devices, Bauman argues, bear an important relation to the very nature of performance itself. He cites Kenneth Burke's (1969) emphasis on the power of formal patterns to elicit the participation of an audience through the arousal 'of an attitude of collaborative expectancy ... Once you grasp the trend of the form, it invites participation' (Burke 1969:58).

Keying therefore, fixes the attention of audience members on the performer. In effect it binds the performers to the audience in a relationship of mutual dependency which keeps them caught up in the display. Bauman's list of possible keying devices refers to verbal performances; they need adaptation to be applied to musical performances. Also he emphasises that each performance event is essentially unique within a broader cultural system, and that each requires empirical study. However, such events, despite their essential uniqueness are recognised within a cultural system as being constituted by performance practices. Keying devices must therefore be communicative within a community of competent members and consequently finite in number. The issue of 'keying a frame' is part of the more general problem within communication theory of categorising 'messages' into genres to which particular criteria for assessment and understanding may be applied.[9]

Performance structure and Social structure

Behind most of the anthropological work on performances lies the explicit or implicit project of relating performance structure to social structure. For example, Norma McLeod (1971, 1974, 1975, 1980), Marcia Herndon (1971, 1975, 1980), and Bonnie Wade (1976, 1984) take the examination of content, form and context, not just as performance alone, but as indices of aspects of social structure. They argue that social structural principles can be perceived in musical occasions. McLeod (1975) compares the structure of musical forms within a single culture using the concept of 'redundancy', and McLeod (1971) uses a 'semantic referent approach' which resonates with Levi-Strauss's (1963, 1969) attempt to relate music and myth.[9] Herndon (1971, 1975, 1980) considers the

'named musical occasion' (e.g. the Cherokee ball game cycle) as a cultural event symbolising within its structure certain central social and cultural principles (cf, Singer 1955).[10] Wade (1976, 1984) compares the ratio of 'fixity to flexibility' in the musical form with that in the social structure of North and South India.

One of the most famous attempts to relate music to broader social and cultural parameters, is Alan Lomax's (1968) Folk song style and culture. Because of the universality of song in all human societies, Lomax argues that its chief function is to express the shared feelings and mould the joint activities of a human community. To enable him to compare song styles across a vast range of societies, Lomax devised a comparative grid with multiple dimensions which enabled the researchers to construct a world map of folk song style. This technique - cantometrics - was later supplemented by choreometrics (dance), phonotactics (phonemic patterning in sung verse) and concept analysis (conceptual patterns of sung verse). According to Lomax these four systems overlap in remarkable ways. Essentially it is claimed that song styles shift consistently with:

1. Productive range
2. Political level
3. Level of stratification of class
4. Severity of sexual mores
5. Balance of dominance between male and female
6. Level of social cohesiveness. (Lomax 1968:6)

However Lomax's analysis, despite or possibly because of its world-wide application ends with a too gross correlation between song style and cultural elements with not enough detailed exploration of contextual specificity. This results in some major discrepancies in which tribal

communities having different source structures perform almost identical song structures. Although this is explained by 'borrowing' from one culture to another greater detail of investigation needs to be done to discover how such 'borrowed' forms are made meaningful.

The question of 'meaning' however, is something generally lacking in large-scale statistical studies like Lomax's despite their pioneering contribution. Work which studies in a cross-cultural context, the cultural products rather than the social and cognitive processes by which they are constructed, locates the 'meaning' of a piece of music solely in its sonic structure rather than in the interactional inter-subjectivity of the performers and the audience, or the cultural field within which they are competent participants. In a way this places the performer in an elite privileged position. In a brief critical comment on Lomax's cantometrics, Blacking (1979) insists that 'as in language, the power of musical invention is possessed as much by the receivers of music as by its creators and performers' and that musical capabilities are innate ' for all members of the species and not only a tiny minority (Blacking 1979:5).

Also as McLeod (1974) points out, much music making is a solitary activity and ritualised redundancies can be used to express emotions and crises of feeling that may be entirely personal. Music does not always support the social order and many ethnomusicologists regard it as a truism 'that song texts allow persons to sing what they cannot say' (McLeod 1975:17).

It is clear from studies such as these that the position within ethnomusicology is that an ethnography of musical performance should

bring to light the ways meaning is ascribed to the performance by all participants both musicians and audience and that a complex of factors, both musical and non-musical will be involved. Performance practices are the result of the relationship between content and context and this relationship is highly complex. As McLeod says, in a statement that points directly to the heart of the ethnomusicological controversy:

> ... music provides sufficient density of marking to enable scholars to separate it from its context. That is, when music is being performed, it is usually quite clear that this is the case. With the development of notation systems, and later of recording devices, it is all too easy to separate musical sound from its cultural context. This is both a curse and a blessing. While the separability of music from its performance context allows us to compare this art of human behaviour with other areas, it also tempts us to regard music as separate from culture, simply because it is separable from culture. (McLeod 1975:17)

A recent study by Jan Fairley (1988) of a particular group of Chilean musicians and the music composed and performed by them investigates the ways in which music can communicate meaning. The method employed by Fairley is largely ethnographic - a detailed charting of a tour of Great Britain by the group, a report of one particular performance in detail and a discussion of the process of composition and rehearsal. The ethnography is supplemented by an analysis of the way in which the political stance of the group and their commitment to the constitutional struggle of the Unidad Popular in Chile permeates all levels of their lives but particularly the production and performance of their 'music of the Chilean resistance'. Within this study a musicological analysis of the music is linked at all stages with the clear ideological commitment of the musicians and their way of life which is inseparable from their performances. Fairley's study involves structuralist and semiotic levels. There is an emphasis on the performance context's

function in limiting the potentially limitless semiosis of music, and sustained movement between levels of analysis through the use of metaphors. This would suggest that ethnomusicology is entering a new phase in which the tensions between the approaches of musicologists and anthropologists have largely been overcome.

There is an element, sometimes explicit but often implicit, common to all the studies mentioned above from Abrahams and Bauman to McLeod, Herndon and Fairley. All the scholars mentioned in the folklore and ethnomusicological traditions insist on the crucial significance of the social context of the performance including the interaction of performers and audience. At certain points in the performance this interaction may consist of ritual practices marking boundaries between spatial regions (Goffman 1963), keying the shifts in frame (Bauman 1975, Goffman 1975, 1981), and constructing ideologies (Bloch 1987,1989). At this point a consideration of the concept of ritual becomes necessary.

The Concept of Ritual

Concluding his contribution on Ritual to the 1968 edition of the International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, Edmund Leach writes:

> ... even among those who have specialized in this field there is the widest possible disagreement as to how the word ritual should be used and how the performer of ritual should be understood. (Leach 1968:526)

Such disagreement has not prevented the continued use of the term however, which has had a wide range of definitions and sometimes no explicit definition at all. The American, Ronald Grimes (1990) recognises the complexity of the concept, likening the search for a definition to the search for the Holy Grail. It has become a catch-all term for action

which is habitual, repetitive, exotic and mysterious. The psycho-analytic tradition has equated ritual with obsessive neuroses and the student of liturgy emphasises the complex co-ordination of symbolic actions in sacred contexts. In fact these examples illustrate two aspects of the term which have led to misunderstanding and distortion.

The idea that rituals must be habitual and repetitive, largely confined to religious, preferably exotic ceremonials has dominated much of the popular literature on the subject and been helped by cinematic representation of tribal cultures. Many anthropologists seem concerned about the ill-considered use of the term. For Mary Douglas (1973) ritual has acquired negative connotations. She argues that ritual 'has become a bad word signifying empty conformity' (1973:19). It is interesting that Robert Merton's (1968) famous essay on anomie uses the term 'ritualistic' to describe the performance of actions in a routine or habitual manner. Their original ends having long since been forgotten, the enactment of the means for their attainment becomes an end in itself.

Because of ritual's association with religious activity, increasing secularization in Western societies has led to calls to abandon the concept altogether or at least use it advisedly (Goody 1977). Such an approach could leave the concept marooned on the island of liturgical studies (Moore, et. al. 1983) or confined to the work of anthropologists studying the contracting number of small preliterate tribal societies that remain. Max Gluckman (1963) argues that ritual is functional for societies where formal differentiation of role is weak, where relationships are multiplex and comes to the conclusion that modern industrial society

with its high degree of formal differentiation has no need of ritual. Jack Goody (1961, 1977) addresses the question of definition and the use of the concept in research. With the general trend of sociological research in favour of quantification, ritual, with its relationship to symbol systems, meaning construction and communication, is left in an uncomfortable position. As Geertz points out, ritual 'connects action to its sense rather than behaviour to its determinants.' (1980:178)

Faced with the difficulty of perceiving exotic rituals in contemporary society, the ambiguity of the term, as Leach (1968) points out, has tended to multiply the analytic categories. Max Gluckman (1962) distinguishes 'ritual' from 'ceremony' arguing that the former should most properly be confined to the consideration of religious activity and the latter to secular activities. However the distinction between religious and secular activities is often obscure in pre-literate societies where religion is 'embedded' in most areas of social life (Bloch 1989:122). In contemporary industrial societies where it seems as if religious activities are more clearly defined within a complex structure of pluralistic enterprises, Binns (1979) finds the use of the term 'ceremonial' to be advantageous when investigating the changing and supposedly atheistic ceremonies of the Soviet Union. However, as recently as 1983, Robert L. Moore et al 'link(ed) the history of secularisation in Western culture to a history of the 'decline and devaluing' of ritual' (cited in McLaren 1986:17).

If the definition of ritual is contested so also is that of religous activity. For Bocock (1974) as for Susanne Langer (1951), humans are symbol producing animals. It is difficult to separate the religious from other

non-rational beliefs; the religious is 'in itself' not really about something else. One of Durkheim's most important legacies to social science was the rescuing of the idea of the non-rational from the jaws of the nineteenth century debate about the inevitable displacement of supposedly irrational (religious) beliefs by expanding rational science. Langer develops an important distinction between discursive forms of symbolism such as language with its fairly permanent units of meaning of fixed equivalences permitting definition and translation and capable of combination into larger units and what she terms presentational symbolism such as music, dance and magic which communicates meaning in an altogether different way. Presentational symbolism is 'all-of-a-piece' and tends to be understood through 'involvement'. Bocock (1974) builds on this by insisting on the ever-present non-rational dimension, salvages the term 'ritual' and applies it to non-rational activities of a symbolic kind which can be secular as well as sacred. This incorporation of both sacred and some secular activities under the more general notion of the 'non-rational', enables him to use the term 'ritual' in the context of industrial societies.

This broadening of the concept to include a wide range of symbolic communication has been embraced by Leach (1968, 1976) and Wuthnow (1987). Leach argues that as social relationships cannot be observed directly they must be imputed from observable behaviour. The interpretation of the complexity of daily life requires seeing social communication as ritual action. In so far as behaviour 'says things' as well as 'does things', what Leach calls the 'aesthetic communicative aspect' (1968:523), symbolic communication is involved and 'ritual action' is the term to use. Similarly for Wuthnow (1987), 'ritual is not a type

'posture'. For him, ritual communication involves symbols which evoke gestures and postures.

A second possible response to the 'all inclusiveness' criticism is suggested by McLaren (1986). He argues that not all ritual is symbolic because the relation between the sign and its referent may be indexical or self-referential. The articulation of meaning does not rely on the symbolic dimension alone. However the question of meaning is central. Do sets of social actions and their accompanying meanings operate as a language? In daily life we interpret the behaviour of others, and manipulate our own according to taken-for-granted patterns of meanings. As Leach points out, we take for granted that in daily life we manipulate symbols 'of an intricate behavioural code, and we readily decode the behavioural messages of our associates' (Leach 1968:524). Without this ability social life would be impossible. Perhaps the term 'ritualistic' should be applied to communicative social behavioural patterns which have become stylized? For Bloch (1989) the move away from daily norms of conduct can intensify restraint (ascetic response) or go some way to its elimination (ecstatic response). At what point in this stylization can the notion of 'ritual' be used? Is the term 'ritualistic' more applicable to patterns of ascetic actions than ecstatic? Furthermore, is the kind of meaning being communicated of relevance? For Lukes (1977) the significance of the meaning articulated in ritual is a key aspect. Adapting Radcliffe-Brown's (1952) position, Lukes's definition of ritual is:

> ... 'rule-governed activity of a symbolic character which draws the attention of its participants to objects of thought and feeling which they hold to be of special significance.' (Lukes 1977:54)

The emphasis on symbolic meaning has been explored by Bloch (1989), not so much as displayed in ceremonial activity, but as acquired through the ritual process.

Bloch contrasts two approaches to meaning acquisition. One is derived from theories of learning developed by psychologists and child-developmentalists which emphasises the interaction of the person with the environment as an external given, and the second which he argues is the conventional anthropological stance emphasising the continuity of culture through history. Whereas the former emphasises day-to-day experience as a source of cognition, the latter asserts the primacy of blocks of concept patterns derived from culture. Using the example of Marx's recognition of the importance of the experience of exploitation by the worker in challenging the received ideology of the ruling class, Bloch explores how the shift is made from one mode of meaning generation to the other. He finds an answer in the complexity of the ritual process which 'compels' - by denying alternatives - a move from the immediately experienced to the level of ideology (Bloch 1989).

In his exploration of this transition Maurice Bloch (1974, 1989) concentrates on language use although he states that a parallel case can be made for music (especially song) and dance. There is a tendency towards the increasing formalisation of language in ritual Bloch argues. This limits the potentially infinite varieties of syntactic combination and consequently restricts the generation of meaning. As he says:

> The effect of formalisation and the impossibility of linguistic creativity means that ritual is a kind of tunnel into which one plunges, and where, since there is no possibility of turning either to right or left, the only thing to do is to follow; but the reason why this direction has been taken is only misleadingly explained in terms of a

conscious choice between equally possible directions.' (Bloch 1974:76)

Language used in such a way permits no choice. It is alogical since logical argument requires the possibility of an alternative response, the illogical against which the logical can be assessed. Where there is no possibility of a counter claim, logic cannot operate. Bloch's originality is to make the link between this kind of 'inevitability of process' and traditional authority. Traditional authority is not open to logic; it is accepted or rejected. In many of the ceremonies discussed by Bloch (1989), the formalisation of speech by the elders increases to such a point that the ritual elements 'drift out of meaning' as a result of their isolation from normal communication. The elders become representatives of the dead - the eternal elder - even to the point of 'possession' by the spirit world. Eternal truth 'speaks through' its representatives on earth. Bloch argues that the parallels between religion and traditional authority are such that the former is a particular mode of the latter. For 'faith' read 'allegiance'. It is the attitude of 'faith/allegiance' which is demanded for successful ideological inclusion. The early stages of meaning generation from the interaction of the individual with the environment (nature) have to be converted into the absorption of the person into the continuity of culture (ideology). The shift to ideology occurs through the ritual process. Bloch adapts Van Gennep's account of ritual as a marker of the boundary between one social status and another - or between one representation of the world and another. For Bloch, the move is from the world of cognition where the participants recognise 'the natural', through an intervening process of negation through chaos, to the stage of ideology. Bloch describes this stage as ...

... expressed in an alogical medium; it is vague and hazy. It however

> turns out to be an apparition of the world where everything is in its place and where the power-holders are at the source of everything. (Bloch 1989:128)

Ideological representations have their power because they are enforced by the powerful as a legitimation device, they provide an all-encompassing scheme in which every event can be placed, and they are alogical and cannot simply be denied. For Van Gennep ritual acts as a rite of passage from one status to another, for Victor Turner (1969) this passage takes the form of a ritual process of three stages: structure, anti-structure (communitas) and restructure, but for Bloch the move is from non-ideological cognition, through negation, to ideological cognition.

In the light of the focus of this study on music performance, it is interesting to note that in his 1974 article, Bloch has a footnote where he says, 'Instrumental music ... may be considered as the final product of drifting out of meaning as a result of formalisation' (Bloch 1974:76). Bloch's ideas on ritual, the 'drifting out of meaning' and the representation of the dead by the elders through formalisation of communication can be applied to the organisation of the classical concert and this will be explored more fully later (cf, Chapter Seven). At the moment it is important to note that the emphasis on alogicality (the non-rational) in ritual has a long history (cf, Robertson Smith 1889, Durkheim 1912, Harrison 1912, Radcliffe-Brown 1922, Mauss 1925, Malinowski 1923, cited in Leach 1968).

If the term can be applied to any non-instinctive predictable action (or series of actions) not able to be justified by means-end rationality, the question of how such rationality is to be assessed becomes central. For some it must be the rationality of the participants (Tyler 1871, Goody

1961) but the problem this poses for cross-cultural generalisation is considerable and the traditional weakness of 'insider' viewpoints is that immersion limits analysis (Gellner 1973). However it is possible to assess whether a belief is rational, irrational or non-rational using the basic criteria of inference, contradiction, negation and so on, but this is a separate issue from assessing the belief's truth or falsity. A belief may be false but related rationally to other beliefs. Also those activities which in the past have been traditionally regarded as ritual by anthropologists are never completely devoid of an element of means-end rationality. The aesthetic communicative aspect referred to by Leach may be salient, but a technical aspect is never completely missing. It is clear that a 'narrow/broad' definitional continuum seems to operate here also. There are those scholars who would apply the term 'ritual' to a limited range of activities - usually those to be found in pre-literate societies, sacred activities of a predominantly non-rational, non-instrumental kind - and those who are prepared to recognise the communicative aspect in almost all activities and apply the term accordingly.

Like other scholars Grimes (1990) recognises the complexity of the concept of ritual but rejects the search for a definition. 'Formal definitions are sometimes too dense to be very helpful, and they often isolate one or two characteristics as definitive' he argues, '... better ... to get at the nature of ritual (by identifying) its "family characteristics", expecting only some of them to show up in specific instances' (Grimes 1990:13). By doing this Grimes recognises degrees of ritualisation. He constructs his own Table of Qualities of Ritual:

Qualities of Ritual

performed, embodied, enacted, gestural (not merely thought or said)
formalized, elevated, stylized, differentiated (not ordinary, unadorned, or undifferentiated)
repetitive, redundant, rhythmic (not singular or once-for-all)
collective, institutionalized, consensual (not personal or private)
patterned, invariant, standardized, stereotyped, ordered, rehearsed (not improvised, idiosyncratic, or spontaneous)
traditional archaic, primordial (not invented or recent)
valued highly or ultimately, deeply felt, sentiment-laden, meaningful, serious (not trivial or shallow)
condensed, multilayered (not obvious; requiring interpretation)
symbolic, referential (not merely technological or primarily means-end oriented)
perfected, idealized, pure, ideal (not conflictual or subject to criticism and failure)
dramatic, ludic [i.e., playlike] (not primarily discursive or explanatory; not without special framing or boundaries)
paradigmatic (not ineffectual in modeling either other rites or non-ritualized action)
mystical, transcendent, religious, cosmic (not secular or merely empirical)
adaptive, functional (not obsessional neurotic, dysfunction)
conscious, deliberate (not unconscious or preconscious) (Grimes (1990:14).

This table has advantages over a definition because it is fuller than any single definition could be, and does not imply that one dimension is definitive. When an activity becomes dense with these qualities it becomes increasingly proper to talk of it being ritualised.

From his researches into the literature and in order to assist precision, Grimes suggests the use of four terms: rite, ritual, ritualizing and ritualization. It is worth considering Grimes's definitions of these. "Rite" refers to a set of actions, specific enactments located in a concrete time and place. "Rites" are widely recognised by members of a culture, differentiated from normal behaviour and assigned a special place. If they are combined with other rites, a cluster of rites, they can form a ritual system. For Grimes, the term "Ritual" should not be used as a substitute for "rite". "Ritual" is a general idea, a formulation

by scholars and does not 'exist' in a concrete sense. The "rite" is an enacted example of "Ritual". But rites are social constructions, historically generated. The recognition of this enables Grimes to elaborate his two other terms: "ritualizing" and "ritualization". The former is the act of cultivating rites, the emergence of rites on the threshold as it were. The latter differs from the former in the level of analysis being used. Whereas "ritualizing" relates to the concrete level of the "rite" as an actual cluster of social actions, "ritualization" is the use of metaphor applied to actions which are not conventionally seen as ritual by a culture's members but which can be interpreted as if they were ritual. "Ritualization" includes processes that fall below the threshold of social recognition as rites. 'Ritualization is to a rite as a forest is to a house. Nothing makes a forest appear to be lumber except a carpenter's eye. (In a bird's eye the tree is already home).' (Grimes 1990:10). Just as 'social drama' goes on all the time, but is occasionally focussed upon, written-up and turned into a play, so ritualization goes on all the time but is occasionally turned into a rite. Ritualization is deeply embedded in ordinary human interaction. For this approach, ritual is not a thing, not a 'what', but a 'how' quality and there are degrees of it. Any action can be ritualized, although not every action is a rite. What is productive about Grimes's approach is that it enables exploration of everyday (and not-so-everyday) activities and directs attention to the degree of rite-emergence, the boundaries between ritualized, not-yet ritualized and the not-to-be ritualized that Grimes refers to as ritualization. Grimes (1982) talks of 'hard' and 'soft' definitions involving substantive and methodological implications. The 'hard' definition asserts that rituals are bounded, circumscribed and

somewhat 'frozen' acts. Their identification by the researcher is theoretically at least, relatively easy. 'Soft' definitions enable the researcher to incorporate the growth and decay of rituals over time, and allow meaning to accumulate during fieldwork. He calls his approach 'ritual criticism' and in his book of the same name discusses a variety of different phenomena including archaeological field excavations, museum displays, mystery plays.

A further dimension of ritual which appears in the literature refers to the degree to which ritual actions inscribe, display, reflect states of affairs and the extent to which they bring states of affairs into being. As well as the Durkheimian emphasis on the function of ritual as symbolic communication of the social totality, what Victor Turner (1980) calls the 'flat view' of ritual, there is the important recognition that ritual practices alter states. This creative capacity of rituals goes beyond their symbolic function as boundary markers in the work of van Gennep (1960) which enable changes of social status or cultural viewpoint to be adequately negotiated. Rather it emphasises ritual's 'paradigmatic function' (Turner 1980), focussing on ritual's articulation of a 'model for' which 'can anticipate, even generate, change' (Turner 1974, 1980) rather than as a 'model of' which 'may inscribe order in the minds, hearts, and will of participants' (1980:163, cited in McLaren 1986). The resurgence of interest in ritual which has occurred in the U.S.A. revolving around the work of Victor Turner and Ronald Grimes, insists on the twin faces of ritual: as reflection of reality, and as construction of reality. Moreover the functionalist view which stresses the unity of society and culture, and the way in which a society persists over time and maintains itself, is highly contested. While functionalist analysis has

tended to dominate work on pre-literate societies, it appears particularly problematic when applied to complex industrial and post-industrial societies. Even Turner's (1974) interpretation of pilgrimage which emphasises the uniting function of communitas has been heavily criticised by Sallnow (1979) who points to the everpresence of political tension and conflict.

The awareness of potential contest and struggle informs Bocock's (1974) discussion of ritual in industrial society. He categorises ritual practices into four types: religious, aesthetic, civic and life-cycle and life-crises (Bocock 1974:52). In industrial societies, the social contexts and the cultural spheres within which these types are regularly performed may be discrete or may overlap at different periods of history. In contemporary England churches are the site of religious rituals expressing the numinous but are also, in the case of the Church of England at least, celebrations of civic allegiance to the Monarchy and the nation-state. Theatres and particularly Opera Houses are contexts for the enactment of aesthetic dramatic forms but at the same time can enable the ritualistic display of social status and civic honour. Many life-cycle rites take place in churches or offices of the State bureaucracy, weddings, baptisms, funerals and so on, but ritualized actions concerned with health and sickness take place in hospitals and the home. A tentative distinction may be made between ritual practices which celebrate religious and aesthetic experience from those others which are mainly about something 'else'. Religious and aesthetic experience seeks to be their own justification; they are of themselves. That is not to deny that ritual practices are frequently 'layered' referring to a number of different levels of meaning at once, but to explore the difference between primarily non-instrumental

activities and others such as life-cycle rites which act as rites of passage. The similarities between aesthetic and religious ritual forms lead Bocock to distinguish between 'audiences' and 'congregations'. The former are not usually known to each other, are heterogeneous and generally 'passive', the latter meet fairly regularly, generally know each other and some minimal level of active participation is required. Bocock argues that the rise of aesthetic ritual practices largely located <u>separately</u> from religious rites in industrial society is related to the degree to which the dominant religion has developed an orientation towards a supernatural realm, a distrust of this world and an unspontaneous and unsensual ritual system. When this occurs, participation in aesthetic ritual practices can substitute for religious ritual as a quest for the numinous, the non-rational. For sections of the middle class, especially intellectuals, attendance at the opera or a concert takes the place of attendance at church. For the working class, who have been outside the influence of the church historically, sites of aesthetic experience have developed which recognise the sensual, indeed corporeal aspect of human existence. One of the contentions of this thesis is that a similar opposition can be detected in the sites of music aesthetic rituals. That as the 'classical/art' tradition increasingly separated itself out from other contexts of performance, establishing its own 'preferred' site - the concert-hall - there has been a corresponding expansion of the range of contexts which embrace the sensual and the parallel development of musical forms which correspond in their inner structural relations to the structural relations of their contexts of performance (cf, Chapter Nine).

Wuthnow (1987) embraces the broad Leach (1968) view of ritual. His

discussion of the ritualistic aspects of a diverse range of examples including traffic turn signals, rites of passage, witch-hunts and encounter groups, concludes that ritual is most likely to occur in situations of social uncertainty. The three areas of uncertainty he focusses upon are social position, commitment to shared values and behavioural options likely to influence other actors in the setting. Where uncertainty exists in these areas, behaviour is likely to take on a ritual dimension and involve important aspects of expressivity. Wuthnow defines certainty in terms of predictability. In a culture which is highly predictable, an area of uncertainty is thrown into relief. Actions take on a ritualistic dimension enabling the uncertainty to be 'managed' by emphasising an expressive content which over-lays the instrumental dimension. Traffic turn signals not only serve an instrumental function at complex junctions, but express the social relationship between vehicles and drivers. The signalling vehicle indicates aspects of social precedent: who should go first, who give way, who is in front, who behind? Expanded options make outcome predictions difficult. Ambiguity resulting from the convergence of cultural systems previously separate can create confusion. Colonialism bred a panoply of rituals around the edges of the overlapping cultural traditions, as well as uncertainty within both cultures. But uncertainty can also operate within a symbolic system where polysemy may be rife. In such cases ritualistic practices serve to define, limit and 'place' a text composed of equivocal symbols. Yet Wuthnow also recognises that ritual often serves to exaggerate that very uncertainty which gives the ritual activities their interest. Turner's development of van Gennep illustrates this point nicely. The route from one structure to another lies through a period of anti-structure: communitas. The

uncertainty is heightened, and in acting upon this heightened uncertainty the individual's 'roles and obligations in each setting are dramatized to their confederates' (Wuthnow 1987:123). Rituals demand action as a moral responsibility. Actors commit themselves to abandoning uncertainty through the ritual act.

One of the greatest areas of potential confusion lies in the problematic conversion of power into authority. Bloch's accounts of religious ritual in Merina (1989) and the nineteenth century royal bath ritual of Madagascar (1987) illustrate the processes involved in establishing traditional authority. The ritual process is compelling and contains the 'drift out of meaning' outlined above. Symbols normally located within one sphere of action are translated into others which construct an ideology in which the 'elders' (of whatever kind) are at the centre of everything yet not responsible for anything. This transcendent order is beyond experience, created through dramatic contrast with what is experienced. The tension between the ideal and the immediately experienced is perennial but 'resolved' through the ritualised actions of the ceremony.

The relevance of the concept of ritual to any analysis of music performances lies in its ability to sensitise the analyst to the way in which the practices constructing a performance carry cultural codes, whether the rituals are associated with the performance by the musicians, or the contextual performance practices surrounding and sustaining it. Such rituals shape listeners and viewers perceptions and ways of understanding and link these with larger ideological constructions. They may also enable actors to negotiate between various symbol systems

which compete for attention. Because performances take place within the hierarchical structures of the wider society, performance rituals may be considered political events and part of the distribution of dominant interpretations of systems of meaning, taste, attitudes and norms which support existing social orders.

One of the contentions of this study of music performances is that performance rituals, manifested in contextual performance practices provide a framing device through the communication of aesthetic ideologies enabling the activities taking place within the performance event to be assessed and 'understood' by the participants.

Ritual and Music Performance Contexts

Following from the previous summary of some of the contemporary issues in the analysis of ritual, it is necessary to outline how 'ritual criticism' - to use Grimes's (1990) term - may be usefully applied to music performance contexts. Because of the controversy about definition, Grimes's 'family characteristics' approach seems the most constructive. When a large number of the characteristics listed in his 'Qualities of Ritual' table (cf, page   ) are present it is appropriate to talk of a 'rite' being enacted. Since rites are by definition clearly differentiated from everyday secular activities they will be at the highly differentiated end of a continuum which moves to the scarcely differentiated at the other. The refusal to accept a 'hard' definition of ritual as the only appropriate one, enables a range of practices to be investigated below the level of a fully developed rite. Within the range of contexts which are less differentiated than a formal rite fall music performance venues.

It is likely that concert-halls, cafes, pubs etc. which provide live music are thought of as service institutions geared to the requirements of the general public. Without public involvement they could not operate. Even non-profit-making establishments like the South Bank complex which includes the Royal Festival Hall require a public to justify their existence and guarantee future funding. Nevertheless this is not the complete story. Performance contexts are also quasi-religious and quasi-political. In so far as some venues espouse ultimate values they may be regarded as 'quasi-religious' but they also help mobilise power in the interests of particular groups. Such groups may be closely associated with the music performance such as the musicians, further removed like the pub or cafe manager, or even functionally disconnected from it but represented symbolically. At this level, Bloch's ideological level, the participants may be drawn into representations of the world beyond the immediately experienced but from which they cannot escape and still remain actively involved in the performance process.

Music performance contexts are contexts of display. Cultural products are presented to an audience and the way in which such presentation is enacted both reveals and conceals dimensions of power. In any consideration of power, the surface level of the 'agenda' - the issues which it is thought are important for action - can conceal the processes of its construction. Who decides which items are important, which issues are not to be included, what is the rationale for selection? Similarly the construction of a musical performance's 'programme' (whether in pre-published form or put together during the performance) reveals and conceals levels of decision making and the mobilisation of power. The display of 'symbolic capital' as Bourdieu has argued is never neutral

(Bourdieu 1977:177). Performance in the present often 'condenses' previous historical periods and different cultures. Whose reality is being represented? How are the cultural objects described in the printed programme or during the course of the performance by the musicians or master (sic) of ceremonies? How do such descriptions contribute to cultural mystification? The point which Grimes (1990) makes about museums applies equally to sites of music performance. When he argues that 'Museums, like churches and universities, invent reality by re- and de-contextualizing objects' (Grimes 1990:84) he could be describing the way in which musical objects, composed in previous historical periods are presented in performance in late twentieth century Western societies.

It is important to emphasise that an examination of music performance as ritual is not concerned with aesthetic judgements but with the whole event. Spreading beyond the music itself to the cultural and social circumstances in which it is to be found, the focus of attention is the world view(s) projected by the event and the forms of action which participants are required to make. In so far as ritual involves a gestural component, it demands action as a moral responsibility. The uncertainty which Wuthnow (1987) regards as the seed-bed of ritual practices can only be overcome through the active involvement of the participant. An awareness of the inculcation of moral obligation through participation is one of the keys to understanding the ritual process. It is here that Langer's (1951) distinction between discursive and presentational symbolism is relevant. She is correct to emphasise the 'all-of-a-piece' nature of the latter. Yet this should not blind the commentator to the fact that ritual may be analysed. A distinction must be made between the 'absorption' experienced by the participant, and the analysis made by

the researcher.

Bocock (1974) certainly does not confine his discussion of ritual in industrial society to the narrow confines of the event itself. His argument that increasing other-worldliness in Christian religious ceremonials has provoked a reaction within largely working-class groups who immersed themselves in popular contexts introduces very wide levels of analysis. His perception of the tension between the ascetic and the sensual parallels Weber's ideas in the Sociology of Religion. Similarly Bocock's suggestion that in a time of increasing secularisation, far from promoting the dissolution of social class, ascetic aesthetic performances have provided a site for the consolidation of middle-class ideology. With the decline of religious observance, the middle-class has tended to desert the church but far from joining the working-class in popular culture performances have found solace in aesthetic rituals of a non-sensual orientation.

Similarly Green's (1988) delineation of the theory of ideology implies a move from the level of the immediately-experienced to that of the apparently eternal. In the previous discussion of the concept of 'ritual' where the quick-sand of conceptual contestation threatened to sink the term altogether, one thing _is_ certain. Any consideration of ritual must include specific practices within a broad ideological horizon. It is through ritual that the particular and the general become indisoluble.

Methodology

Research techniques required for the examination of this relationship between content and context are as yet still fairly crude (Behague 1984). An approach based on the symbolic interaction of Blumer is advocated by

Behague, where in the process of interaction the meanings of the event are constructed by the participants from their subjective interpretation of various signs and symbols of the performance. These subjective interpretations are the area focussed upon by the researcher. Secondly the relationship between content and context is complex and difficult to detail, but the multi-dimensionality of context must be documented before an attempt can be made. Behague (1984) opts for a balance between participation and observation supplemented with interviews and other techniques, however emphasis on interaction alone can result in reductionism. A fuller discussion of the methodological issues involved in the present study is included in an Appendix.

In a complex study of 'qawwali', the music of the Sufi assembly of India and Pakistan, Qureshi (1986, 1987) uses a sophisticated combination of music transcription and video-tape to produce what she calls a videograph - a chart of sound and vision - to capture the performance event for analysis. This technique awaits further development but is likely to enhance the research tools available to ethnomusicologists. However Qureshi recognises the wider social context within which performance occasions are located and thereby avoids the reduction of social structure to the level of small group interaction.

<u>Summary</u>

In summary it may be argued that this overview of ethnomusicology indicates certain clear guidelines for the researcher interested in music performances:

1. An analysis of musical sounds alone is totally insufficient. A performance is a multi-textual event embedded within a multi-

dimensional context.

2. Ethnocentrism must be avoided both when categorising musical forms into a taxonomy and when responding subjectively to a particular performance. All forms of music are worthy of study irrespective of aesthetic evaluation.

3. Music performances may be seen as 'cultural performances' (Singer 1955) involving clusters of symbolic structures which invoke ritual responses on the part of musicians and audience members. The meanings invoked in these responses may be consciously or unconsciously held.

4. 'Effective' performance within a genre requires a conjunction of structure, form and context. (Abrahams 1969) A study of the systems of classification of music performances into genres within a culture requires a focus on the 'structure of materials', the 'dramatic structure' and the 'structure of context'.

5. The range of social relationships between performer and audience may vary in size (numbers involved) and social distance (from intimate, through spectacular to individual static). (Abrahams 1969) The patterning of these social relationships is not arbitrary and may give an indication to the system of classification used within a culture and the status of the content being performed.

6. Cultures will have a 'problem of translation' when moving from oral to written forms. (Abrahams 1972) There may be a range of exclusivity of genres depending on the degree of formal initiation required for audience response.

7. Performance requires performers and audience to share a common culture at least for the duration of the performance.

8. Performance is meta-communicative in that it acts as a framing device enabling both performers and audience members to know 'what is going on'. (Bateson 1972) Performances are therefore constitutive of artistic practices and evoke an 'attitude of collaborative expectancy'. (Burke 1969)

9. A musical occasion may reveal social structural principles both in its organisation and in the organisation of the elements of the content of the performance itself.

10. Musical performance may be regarded as ritual, shaping listeners' and viewers' perceptions and ways of understanding.

II. 'PERFORMANCE' IN CULTURAL STUDIES

The main orientating theme of Cultural Studies views all 'arts' as aspects of cultural production and consumption. The neo-marxist work associated with the C.C.C.S. at Birmingham University has made a uniquely central contribution in detailing and refining the theoretical basis of cultural studies.[11] Some of the writers who have been or are associated with the Birmingham Centre also use structuralist, semiotic and homological theories in their work, either lodged within a neo-marxist paradigm or deliberately distinguished from it.[12] Their work will be dealt with in greater detail in Section III.

The 'Cultural Studies' paradigm

The three basic characteristics of the cultural studies approach are the result of its reactive stance. The rise of cultural studies during the

nineteen fifties and sixties was a deliberate attempt to offer a new paradigm for the study of cultural products. This paradigmatic shift (Kuhn 1962) involved firstly, the abandonment of all a priori valuations of aesthetic worth on the part of the investigator, secondly, the critique of essentialist views of cultural forms and their reinterpretation as cultural practices and thirdly, the 'question of ideology': the attempt to relate cultural form to social structure.

Richard Hoggart's (1957) evocation of the 'lived culture' of his working-class background was paralleled by Raymond Williams's (1961, 1965) redefinition of the term 'culture' away from its high culture application in the work of the 'Culture and Civilization Tradition' and the Scrutiny Group.[13] Williams defined the theory of culture as 'the study of relationships between elements in a whole way of life' and the analysis of culture as 'the attempt to discover the nature of the organization which is the complex of these relationships' (Williams 1965:63). Later refinement came to regard culture as 'that level at which social groups develop distinct patterns of life, and give expressive form to their social and material life experience' (Hall and Jefferson 1976:10). Such a view immediately makes popular cultural forms (including music) a central area of study with a special emphasis given to the standpoint of the participants.

From Culturalism to Neo-marxism

This approach, now labelled 'culturalism' has as its basic premise the notion that the 'meaning' of any cultural practice may be discerned by reference to the way of life of a consciously lived community of 'subjects'. This emphasis on 'interpretation' as a crucial element in

analysis both liberates the study of popular culture from a priori aesthetic evaluations about its worth (or more characteristically its worthlessness) and emancipates those groups or 'collective subjects' from the assumption of their complete passivity, an assumption particularly associated with neo-marxist theorists of the Frankfurt School.[14] This emphasis on the subjective centre of meaning parallels the development of reception theory and the recognition of the contribution made by hermeneutics to theory and interpretation within social science (Wolff 1975). However the critique of this position revolving around the concept of the 'interpreting subject', enabled the incorporation of structuralist and semiotic insights to counter-balance what sometimes appears to be a reductionist tendency in Williams's version of culturalism.

Williams's early work ran the risk of constructing a consensualist model of the social and cultural world. His essay of 1973, brings issues of power and control to the centre of any study of cultural production and consumption while at the same time attempting to overcome the static, 'reflective' nature of culture implied in crude economic determinism. Williams translates the metaphor of base and superstructure from its macro-structural interpretation into essentially a process or micro-dialectical analogue. Here structures are not in some way supra-human but practices of a patterned kind in the 'practising' of which cultural forms are constructed. Cultural objects therefore become objectified forms of human practice and consciousness. In so far as it is meaningful to talk of an economic base, what is referred to is the way in which such patterned practices relate to others in terms of their relative abilities to define the parameters within which such practices operate.

Popular forms (including music) are able to be understood, not just from _within_ but as part of a structured totality.

Williams's position is that there is a 'dominant structure' in society which emphasises 'a central system of practices, meanings and values which we can properly call dominant and effective' (1973:9). He points out that many critics of the crude 'reflectionism' of early marxist theory adopted the more active stance of _mediation_, and that some contemporary researchers use the notion of _homologous structures_ in which relations between elements on one plane of analysis are said to 'parallel' or 'correspond' with a pattern of relations at another plane. However, those practices, meanings and values which arise 'outside' the definitions of the dominant have to be incorporated within it. Incorporation is a process, never fully complete: 'no dominant culture in reality exhausts human practice, human energy, human intention' (Williams (1973:12). The process of incorporation contains what Williams calls ...

> ... the _selective tradition_: that which, within the terms of an effective dominant culture, is always passed off as 'the tradition', '_the_ significant past'. But always the selectivity is the point; the way in which from a whole possible area of past and present, certain meanings and practices are chosen for emphasis, certain other meanings and practices are neglected and excluded. Even more crucially, some of these meanings and practices are re-interpreted, diluted, or put into forms which support or at least do not contradict other elements within the effective dominant culture. (Williams 1973:9)

In an advanced capitalist society, heavily based on a market economy, incorporation processes are likely to be very swift as even a cursory examination of the world of pop culture will show (cf, Garofalo 1987, Melly 1970). Furthermore, this incorporation process has accelerated

since the last war (cf, Williams 1973:11).

Williams (1973) sums up the cultural studies enterprise at that time. The emphasis may be marxist, but it is a processual form, involving the notion of 'intention', not in the manner embraced by utilitarianism or certain contemporary theorists of an 'humanistic' persuasion (cf, Dawe 1970) but in the sense of an intended link between a dominant class position and its need to pursue the incorporation of meanings and practices within a wider hegemony. This compels any analyst of the 'arts' in contemporary society to view cultural products, not as objects but as practices. Williams argues that the 'performance arts' demonstrate '<u>a much wider truth</u>', that all arts are an activity and a practice and although an accessible form may have the character of a material object, e.g. a book, 'it is still only accessible through active perception and interpretation' (Williams 1973:15).

<u>Ideology</u>

However culturalism seems to require some modification in the light of contemporary theoretical positions on 'ideology'. Stuart Hall (1977) notes an ambiguity in the concept of 'culture'. On the one hand, social classes show a distinctive 'shape' in their social practice which may be called 'lived class culture', and on the other there is the level of people's experience, the making sense and giving accounts of the 'lived shapes'. Early cultural studies tended to conflate both these interpretations in its studies of, for example working class life (e.g. Hoggart 1957), and the descriptive 'anthropological' level was only faintly distinguished from the experiential interpretative. Hall's theoretical work distinguishes this second level as 'ideology proper' and

it is at this level of 'meaning' that issues involving language and other forms of signification play their mediating role in human consciousness.

The rejection of a simplistic economic determinism enables practices to be investigated in terms of their 'relative autonomy' and thus attempts to avoid a naive economic reductionism which relegated artistic practices, including music to the realm of the epiphenomenal: meaningless refuse of an all important system of economic relations and determinants. Reactions against such reductionism, the Frankfurt Institute, the work of Antonio Gramsci (1968) and later Louis Althusser (1971), raised the concept of ideology to a central position within marxist analysis.[15]

Although many publications from the C.C.C.S. explore the implications for cultural studies of Althusserian theories, the dominant theoretical position, probably because of its suitability for empirical work, is the Gramscian. His notion of 'hegemony' conceptualises dominance as the 'containment of the subordinate classes within the super-structures' (Hall 1977:332). In this way the subordinate class live a reality which is favourable to the dominant class. The unity of contradictory capitalist society is maintained by the ability of the dominant class to frame the reality of others in the terms applicable to their own. The way in which it is often thought inappropriate to study popular music in an academically 'serious' way would be an example. But as in Williams's conception of cultural struggle, dominance has to be actively maintained, it is never certain and the process of incorporation into the dominant frames is one of perpetual definition and redefinition. The 'meaning' of any cultural product is never fixed, but subject to interpretation by a

variety of groups and participants who have different levels of power to 'frame' the structure of meanings according to any particular set of historical exigencies.

This emphasis on meaning construction within a social and historical context involving questions of dominance, subordination and incorporation enables the Gramscian perspective to be applied in a variety of areas of popular culture.[16] When combined with the notion of 'incorporation' the perspective enables performance contexts to be seen as part of a macro-structure and at the same time, sites of meaning construction and contest 'framed' by dominant structures.

An interesting discussion of the importance of the notion of 'ideology' for any study of music is to be found in Green (1988). She regards ideology as ...

> ... a collective mental force which both springs from, and perpetuates, our material social relations. Along with producing objects, societies produce ideas. ... (ideology) makes our world intelligible to us, and in so doing, helps to perpetuate a state of society amongst us ... (It creates the meaning of what we call "the truth". (Green 1988:2)

By penetrating to the very heart of daily life, to the level of 'common-sense' ideology remains invisible. By determining what is accepted as 'normal', by providing the basis for communication in the general unquestioning acceptance of fundamental norms and values, ideology is the 'cement' as Althusser would call it, of social life. Just as the basis of social life is only rendered visible when challenged, so ideology requires criticism to reveal it. Two of the chief characteristics of ideology are the denial of historicity and the assumption of universality. Music like all products is the result of a set of social relations. These

are located historically. To view products as anything other than objectifications of social relations is to reify them, to give them an independent existence. To concentrate on the individual differences between objects deflects attention from the social relations which produced them, to fragment the totality of which they are an integral part. Similarly the tendency to universality assumes that all people are basically the same, essentially like 'us' and that a product - music, for example - will 'speak to' all people equally. Adopting the German tradition of dialectical thought, Green challenges both these assumptions. The surface appearance of the world cannot be taken as an explanation of how it is; it is description only. Explanation requires an understanding of society as ultimately 'a totality of which no part is explicable in isolation from the others' (Green 1988:4). The present has developed through processes of history and an awareness of historicity enables an imaginative transcendence of personal immediate experience. Similarly the assumption of universality is under attack in many different areas of culture as increased technologies of communication enable differences to become visible.

Green distinguishes between general ideology and its specific manifestations in musical ideologies. The emphasis to be found in musical ideologies on the individual listener and performer is a manifestation of the fragmentation to be found in general ideology, a denial of the historicity of music and its production. Similarly the idea that music 'speaks' to the universal in men and women and is aesthetically great the closer it gets to that 'universal', mirrors general ideology's denial of cultural difference. It is interesting that Green compares the classical and popular musical traditions and finds that they

both share the same common characteristics of general ideology despite frequently being portrayed as opposites.

> ... supporters of what is broadly called classical music often praise its ability to express the natural and eternal qualities of the human condition; and ... opponents counter this with popular music, arguing that the latter encapsulates the immediate and universal feelings of common people, making it the fuller expression. (Green 1988:5)

This example shows ideology's capacity to reify its objects and contain opposition within a broader consensus. Furthermore, the characteristics of ideology implicitly construct a system for the measurement of musical value. The more capable of reification and universality, the greater the aesthetic value. With this insight from Green, it is possible to connect the characteristics of general ideology, with her division of musical meaning into 'inherent' and 'delineated' forms (Green 1988, Ch.2 & 3; cf, also Chapter Eight). Inherent meanings are those which are evoked by the experience of particular sound structures taking place in time. The reification tendency of general ideology generates an assumption that such meanings are somehow 'in the work itself'. Although it is essential to recognise that there is an external element in the construction of meaning - not all music evokes the same meanings, so different 'works' must have some effect on the listener - it would not be correct to assume that this meaning construction takes place independently of the listener and the listening context. To assume so would be to make J.B.Meyer's (1956) error (cf, Chapter Eight) and permit general ideology to define music asocially and ahistorically. Similarly delineated meanings which relate to music as an historical object, play their part in orientating the listener to the inherent musical meanings. Being part of the structure of the day-to-day world, delineated meanings 'place' music

as part of the production process aimed at particular audiences and categorise that audience in the process. The various styles within pop and classical music are not only directed to particular groups of listeners, but in the process contribute to the definition of those very groups. By listening to a particular style one takes on a membership identity. By attending a particular performance event, one is involved in the music production and again take on a membership identity. What are the ways in which such events construct meanings and how is the general ideology transmitted in such contexts? What particular musical forms does it take and how is the listener incorporated into the general ideology through the specifics of the musical event? The attempt to provide provisional answers to these questions is the project of this thesis and analysis of the empirical work is to be found in Chapters Six and Seven.

The Question of Meaning

Max Weber: The question of 'meaning' in music will be examined in more detail in Section III, but looking briefly at the classical sociologists, it seems clear that Weber, in particular, had notions of 'immanence' in music in the sense that he regarded western European music as an example of the progress of rationality exemplified by the development of the tempered scale in music theory and the piano keyboard in technical hardware (Weber 1958, Freund 1968). The progress of rationality also enabled the development of sophisticated notation techniques which aided the autonomy of the composer's product, the increasingly complex organisation of large orchestras and the rise of the 'educated listener' in Adorno's hierarchy (see below). However, many of Weber's followers, misreading his value-free exhortation, have maintained that sociology can

only contribute to the gathering of information about social context and data about the categories of persons involved. This has the effect of turning studies claiming to be of music into branches of other more established areas in sociology. Following Etzkorn (1974), it can be argued that Howard Becker's (1951, 1953, 1963, 1972) study of jazz musicians can be seen as part of the sociology of deviance, Morroe Berger's (1972) article on the diffusion of jazz through the United States is part of a more general field of cultural diffusion and many studies of the music industry can be interpreted as part of a sociology of industry, production and consumption. The point being made here is not that such studies are without worth, on the contrary they have increased our knowledge of the industrial 'infra-structure' of music considerably. But the situation until the late nineteen seventies, with the notable exception of Adorno, was that the sociology of music seemed to be about everything _but_ music.[17]

Theodor Adorno: The neo-marxism of the C.C.C.S. seems to have been partly framed in debate with the Frankfurt Institute and in particular the work of Adorno. Certainly the Frankfurt Institute figures frequently in their publications and Bradley's (1980) occasional paper includes an extended critique of Adorno's theoretical premises. Whilst sharing an a priori stand on the aesthetic value of different cultural forms with the 'Scrutiny' group, Adorno approaches music from a different political perspective.[18] He also disagrees fundamentally with the neo-Weberian rejection of sociological concern with the _content_ of a musical work. Music has a meaning, and it is subject to immanent laws which are social in origin. Musical 'laws' develop dialectically in a similar way to those governing social structural relationships. That is to say sounds

develop within socio-historically created directions and limits which govern their meaningfulness.

The concept of 'autonomous art' is crucial to Adorno's aesthetic theory. It refers in essence to the ability of art to play a determining role in individual consciousness in awakening the necessity for change. This autonomy is economically determined and was only historically possible during the rise of the bourgeoisie in western Europe.[19] The central importance of autonomy for performance contexts is exemplified by Adorno's (1976, 1978) typology of relationships between the consumer (listener) and the musical text which range along a continuum from the highly knowledgeable and musically educated response to musical structure by a self-consciously critical listener, through various stages of emotional involvement with 'melodious works', to consumption 'listening' where music is used as an accompaniment to economic exchange e.g. Muzak. For Adorno, the former stages are liberating, the latter enslaving. The concept of the autonomous work informs the design of the contemporary concert hall at every point, and provides the legitimation for the social practices of performance which take place there (cf, Ch. 7).

The theoretical underpinning of Adorno's aesthetic rejection of popular music is provided by his assumption of the total collapse of use-value into exchange-value; alienation is total in advanced capitalism.[20] Commodity capitalism demands a psychologically dependent consumer devoid of critical faculties. Standardisation of the product is the overwhelming quality, with sufficient pseudo-individualism to keep up consumer demand (Adorno 1941). At no point must the consumer be

challenged and be provided with a product demanding critical thought. Although Adorno's (1974) essay 'On the fetish-character in music and the regression of listening' may be considered a critical reply to Walter Benjamin's famous essay on 'The work of art in an age of mechanical reproduction' (1970), Adorno's stress on the objective structure of commodity exchange seems to prevent him acknowledging any possibility of contradiction within, what is after all, a social relationship. As Chambers puts it:

> The music listener becomes a prisoner who, like a person unable to conceive of any other possibility, willingly welcomes his or her cell. In Adorno's scenario the marxian axiom that production determines consumption takes on the grotesque shape of a hammer that unremittingly beats out the pattern of consumption and the subject of the consumer in the very same blow. (Chambers 1982:25)

Paddison (1982) asks why Adorno did not subject his own arguments to the technique of negative dialectics? Adorno lived through the counter-cultural movements of the nineteen sixties yet seemed unable to recognise that popular music might change its function and that forms might arise which were not solely the degenerated material of art music but genuinely new forms existing within the dominant system but avoiding its embrace. For example, music technology which had a particular function within WEAM has a radically different one within contemporary popular music. By penetrating the production of music it penetrates the music itself. Music becomes 'technified' in a wholly new way.

Bradley (1980) points out that Adorno's ethnocentrism means that his notion of music is highly biased towards the European concept of composership which carries with it the centrality of the written score. Bradley offers a reinterpretation of Adorno's concept of autonomy, based

on a theory of meaning which gives priority to the social relationship between the producers, the consumers, and textuality. The latter, whether it be written music, disc, tape or computer disc, is an objectified form of the composers/producers intentions in a given technological period of history. This crystalises past 'impulses' of music composition (the theory of composition, conventions, the quest for creativity within those traditions and theories) and embodies the social practices of musical production. For Bradley, the autonomy of music is:

> ... a coincidence of musical understanding between producers and listeners extending over a period of perhaps a century or two, exhibiting steady <u>internal</u> change but even greater continuity, and enabling the <u>idea</u> of the 'work' which wholly contains an intended meaning, to be realised repeatedly, more or less, <u>within the milieu</u> in question, although even in this milieu <u>some</u> development of the work's meaning over the decades still remains inevitable. (Bradley 1980:48)

<u>John Shepherd</u>: Another sociologist who rejects the withdrawal of sociology from questions of the meaning of music is John Shepherd (1977, 1979, 1982, 1985a, 1985b, 1986a, 1986b, 1987). Unlike Adorno, his work rests on McLuhan's (1962, 1964, 1970) insights into the way in which particular reproductive technologies either hinder or facilitate the codification of cultural values. Shepherd argues that music encodes ideologies and that major changes in - largely western European - music are reflections of major aspects of social structure. In his early work, the arguments are framed at such a high level of generality that they seem able to ignore conflict and power relations like class and sex. and conceptions of intentionality. In a critique of Shepherd's section in <u>Whose Music?</u> (Shepherd et al. 1977), Dick Bradley (1981) argues that at no point does Shepherd raise the question of how conscious the Medieval musicians he discusses actually were of articulating the 'world-sense of

their time'. Any discussion of intentionality is lacking from his analysis. As Bradley points out, this is all the more surprising given Shepherd's starting point: the theories of Berger and Luckman (1967).

> He writes only of the moment of composership. He insists that musical meaning can only be understood as social meaning, created in common by producers and listeners, but he considers works as containing this meaning in something like a fixed sense. One can apparently interpret the Musica Enchiriadis from its score (one of his Medieval examples), with little consideration of how, when and where it used to be performed, by how many voices, instruments if any, etc. (Bradley 1961:213)

Shepherd's later work, in particular his article of 1982 uses the insights of Braverman (1974) into the production and consumption relations inherent within advanced industrial capitalism. Shepherd argues for a homological relationship between the basic assumptions in WEAM (its literary and theoretical traditions which he argues are essentially elitist), and the dominant middle-class white cultural world of the U.S.A. predicated upon those aspects of the division of labour noted by Braverman. For survival and any hope of incorporation, the American black has had to accommodate his/her cultural products to this basic model. For Shepherd therefore, ideological content in music is largely a question of structure although he does draw attention to the importance of the black's use of 'bent' and 'distorted' notes which are not able to be notated using conventional techniques. Shepherd's current work (1986) involves an investigation of the patterns of popular music consumption among young people in Montreal and marks a change in level from 'grand theory' to a more empirical research application.[21] Despite criticisms of Shepherd's early work, he has constantly insisted upon the possibility of a sociological analysis of musical content.

Jaques Attali: An interesting application of the marxist labour theory of value to composers and performers is to be found in the work of Jaques Attali (1985). He argues that music is a form of 'representation' where what is represented must be experienced as having an autonomous value. Western music created an aesthetic which implied a value in music independent of its exchange. For Attali the 'Age of Representation' coincided with the age of the concert hall in the nineteenth century. Brief reference to Attali's interpretation of the representational value of the classical concert has been made in Chapter Two. But at its heart is the concept of autonomy representing the anonymous value of the economic market. Attali explores the contradictions inherent in such 'autonomy' being the subject of economic exchange and 'ownership' and by doing so, locates the performance context within a wider system of supposedly equal, but in practice hierarchical economic structures.

Summary

In summary, this overview of the neo-marxist tradition in the sociology of music suggests the following implications for a study of music performances:

1. Investigators must abandon a priori views of the aesthetic worth of music being performed. All forms are there to be studied and all forms comprise the panoply of cultural production available within a culture.

2. Sound is 'material' and there is no fundamental distinction to be made between for example paint, marble and sound as a medium for the objectification of human practices. Given this, all activities which make music concretely available such as composition, performance, listening, improvisation, instrument technology and construction, record manufacture, as well as practices involved in a performance context such

as concert halls, night clubs, bars and restaurants are included within the 'social practices perspective'.

3. Within a differentiated and hierarchical social formation different social groups will inhabit different 'realities' and cultural products including music, will give expressive form to a group's social and material life experiences. Music production is the result of purposeful human action. It is directed towards some social end and its meaning exists within a social context.

4. Music consumption may take place within a context that is radically different from that envisaged in production largely because of the development of recording technology. There is the possibility of a radical dislocation between the producer's intention and conception of use in consumption.

5. Listening is an active and creative process mediated by the listeners knowledge and personality. All music is co-produced by its performers and its audience. Meaning is constructed by an interpreting subject in a particular social and historical location. The setting and context of performance will be one of those sites of meaning construction.

6. Making sense of a music performance operates at the level of ideology and is part of a wider distribution of cultural products which encapsulates within it, the systems of power and authority operating within a social formation. Relationship between 'levels' of a social formation may be shown through structural homologies. There can be no such thing as a 'neutral' situation allowing only the immanent qualities of the music to impinge on the listener.

7. A process of incorporation operates in which dominant definitions

are in a position to 'frame' the reality of subordinant groups in such a way as to give a meaning to that reality which incorporates it within a dominant framework. Incorporation can be seen operating in the distribution of performance contexts and settings and their perceived appropriateness for particular types of music.

8. The process of commodification acts to mediate both music production and consumption. This applies to live music performances as well as the objectified products of the music industry.

III. 'PERFORMANCE' IN TEXTUAL STUDIES

For the purposes of this section, textual studies will be understood to include a diverse body of work including structuralism, structural linguistics, semiotics and homological studies. It will be argued that the question of 'meaning' in music cannot be divorced from a consideration of the context of its reception and that an application of the concept of homology to the internal form of a musical language and the relations embodied within its conventional reception contexts reveals continuities which are socially structured.

The Question of Meaning

Within Saussurian structural linguistics, meaning is produced in two ways: from external reference and internal relations. Can such an approach be translated from its standard application to literary texts and be applied to music? Can music be treated as a language? Both music and language, at least its spoken variant, consist of structured sounds consciously produced to communicate meaningful messages to listeners. They both have an internal syntactic pattern: grammar in language and harmony in music. Yet there seems to be a traditional difficulty in

using language to comment on music's expressive, affective potential and music's social context. As Durant (1984) points out, the former tends to be left to the level of personal impression, and the view that somehow music communicates at its own non-linguistic level contributes to the view of music as radically 'unknowable'.[22]

Taking the dimension of external reference in language first, Saussure's basic concept of the sign is the arbitrary conjunction of a signifier (signifiant) with a signified (signifie). The relation between these two elements is regarded as arbitrary in the sense that it is more or less conventional, weakly or strongly motivated with less or more representational value. Response to signs is intersubjective not individual; that is to say, reception occurs within a community of shared conventions permitting interpretation. Any attempt to relate music to language must account for signifying elements within a musical text, and be able to relate these to a social context of reception.

The synchronic approach to textual analysis of Saussurian linguistics insists that a sign element within a text derives its significance from contrast with other internal elements. The emphasis demands attention to the internal textual structure in its own right, not solely as a social and historical construction within an intersubjective community. It is fair to argue that some theorists of musical meaning have attempted to apply the external referent dimension to music, and others have concentrated on the second level of internal structure. A few have tried to do both.

External reference (extrageneric signification)

Before the seventeenth century music was largely used integrally with

ceremonial occasions: contexts of a courtly, religious, or military nature. The notion of music's self-referential character developed in parallel with its increasing autonomy on the growing economic market. The often quoted Walter Pater asserted that 'All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music' (Durant 1984:8) and by so doing articulated the prevalent notion of the indistinguishable nature of form and content in music, and the sacred nature of the art form in nineteenth century Romanticism. For Hanslick (1854), the great conservative nineteenth century critic and champion of Brahms against the newer Wagnerian school, music was entirely self-referential. Music communicated to the individual soul through a free-floating, non-material phenomenology incapable of scientific explanation.

However there are a number of revisions of this absolutist position. Deryk Cooke (1959) argues for a linguistic analogue: music communicates emotions through a vocabulary of signs which are used by a composer, or performing musician, to express emotional states. These are read by the listener because of certain physiological responses to particular sounds. Syntax in music is the development of thematic materials through the use of pitch, time and volume in a succession of tension producing harmonies resolved at various points through the work until the ultimate and final resolution in consonance at the end. This closes the narrative. However such a view ignores historical and cross-cultural variation (Blacking 1973). The social contexts of both production and consumption, within which referents have intersubjective validity, are not considered.

A variation on the idea of external reference is that a musical symbol has no obvious external referent, but an unconscious connection exits

between certain sounds and certain emotional responses. Langer (1942) and Meyer (1973) argue for psychological constants which in effect assert that the content of music is to be found 'outside' its form in the mental processes common to all individuals. Psychologistic theories of this kind, link form at the level of music with form at the level of mind. Little is actually said about content as distinct from form. As Shepherd (1986) points out:

> The only problem with this approach is that 'mental' processes are usually taken to belong very much to the 'inner' world which stands in such stark opposition to the 'material' and 'physical' world that the absolutists are at such pains to eschew. Formulated in these terms, psychologistic theories do not guarantee music an 'outerness' where significance is concerned. They only guarantee it in the sense that music communicates beyond itself to people. (Shepherd 1986:310-311)

Many of the difficulties which bedevil theorists addressing the external referential nature of music derive from a traditional misleading version (and misreading) of Marx's base/superstructure model. The 'reflectionist' interpretation attacked by Raymond Williams (1973), tends to assume that the 'real' world outside the cultural product is material in the hard sense of the term: socially located people, goods and services. External reference seems to involve a directional determination akin to what Shepherd (1986) describes as 'blueprinting', eliminating music's relative autonomy and reducing music to 'little more than a passive ideological gloss on the surface of social life' (Shepherd 1986:311). However the dynamic and relational interpretation favoured by Williams would admit the referential dimension in musical analysis to be combined with the relational in the form of a structural homology (Williams 1973). This is not a form of 'hard' referencing but a form of signification which is non-denotative (Barthes 1972). Since 1977 Shepherd has constantly

complexity unnecessarily, I would argue that there is a further level, Music E if you like, which locates the performance within a wider social context - Hodge and Kress's 'logonomic level' (1988). The suggestion that the 'sounding object' can be isolated from the social relationships which enable it to be produced and consumed at the point of reception is essentially non-sociological.

This 'isolation' of the text occurs in other approaches like information theory (cf, Middleton 1981)[25] and traditional semiotics (cf, Eco 1977).[26] Such approaches are interesting but the central question of 'meaning' still remains. Traditionally this implies some interpretation of signification but the form that this takes is problematic. The usual distinction is Barthes's (1972) denotation/connotation division, the former giving musicologists more difficulties than the latter. Self-referentialists argue that music denotes itself, which implies music's total autonomy, and strong extrageneric denotation has the reductionist flavour which Shepherd (1986) criticises. Connotation on the other hand, seems almost irretrievably subjective. Nattiez (1976) suggests that this can be explored by reconstituting the transmitter's intentions, interpreting the ambiguities of the text itself, and testing the audience reactions experimentally. All these are of course easier said than done. What much of this points to is the extraordinary polysemic nature of musical signs.

Internal structure (congeneric relations)

Middleton (1985) prefers the term 'articulation' to signification. He argues that musical categories must be grasped as social processes and not as having a one-to-one correspondence with extramusical factors.

Following Fabbri (1982), Middleton argues that musical categories need to be located 'topographically', that is, the grounds on which the social processes are worked need to be specified in socio-historical terms. The emphasis on process means that the result of any articulation is always open to contestation. Middleton regards this as a more sophisticated alternative to homology theory with its static and tautological tendencies.

Homology Theory

In certain forms homology theory has been around as long a sociology. There are clear elements of it in Marx's work on the ideological representation of class relations, in Durkheim's work on cultural forms and the division of labour and probably most clearly in Weber's use of the ideal type method to compare the 'Protestant Ethic' with the 'Spirit of Capitalism'. A more recent, limited and unfortunately static application of homology theory which probably exemplifies Middleton's worst fears, is the correspondence theory used by Sam Bowles and Herbert Gintis (1977) in their study of the American schooling system.[27] Many of the British homology theorists have come from within the C.C.C.S. approach which is heavily engaged with Gramsci's work and have managed to avoid the most static features of a study like Bowles and Gintis (1977). But the tendency to couple together popular music styles with certain delineated sub-cultures can deflect attention from the degree to which sub-cultures are not rigidly insulated from the parent culture and the extent to which the cultural products associated with them can be expropriated by other sub-cultural bricoleurs. No sub-culture is an island and neither are its cultural products.

Stuart Hall (1976), while pursuing his interests in ideology focussed on

various rituals of subcultural style arguing that rituals and significant objects were those which enabled the group to symbolise their central values. This approach was explicitly used by Paul Willis (1978) in Profane Culture where ethnographies of a motorcycle gang and a group of hippies were followed by an analysis of their preferred musical style. Willis argues that there is a clear and unambiguous 'fit' between life-style and the structure of the style of preferred music.[28]

However problems abound both methodological and theoretical. Willis's study has been criticised by Shepherd (1982), Middleton (1985) and Chambers (1982). Shepherd rejects Willis's proposal that the best available tools for the analysis of musical style are derived from traditional musicology. Such a resource is irredeemably elitist, argues Shepherd because traditional musicology is predicated upon the asocial definition of Art. An alternative framework is required to relate 'in a structurally homologous fashion ... Afro-American influenced musics ... to the social/historical context of their creation.' (Shepherd 1982:149) Shepherd proposes a theoretical approach derived from a neo-Marxist interactional phenomenology where alienation is characteristic of a system where both the production and consumption of material and symbolic goods are an aspect of social control. Functional tonality, according to Meyer derives its interest from deferred gratification in the listener who waits for the successive complex manipulations of tension to be resolved by the keynote at the end of the piece. According to Shepherd this parallels the hierarchy of control experienced in capitalist society. If a musical style diverges from explicit functional tonality it is highly likely that it will be associated with a subculture in a marginal position within society.[29] Shepherd's system is considerably more

sophisticated than Willis's musicological analysis, but operates on the altogether wider canvas of major ideological formations.

The criticisms of Chambers (1982) and Middleton (1985) point to the tendency of homologies to be static and over-emphasise the separateness of the particular subculture from the parent culture, and other subcultures. Whilst acknowledging the importance of some insights, they emphasise the need for the examination of historical process and the heterogeneous musical practices that coexist in the social and cultural formations of contemporary industrial societies. Chambers uses the different emphases in the theoretical work of Chester (1970a, 1970b) and Merton (1968, 1970) to reinforce the necessity for regarding music as both autonomous, requiring aesthetic analysis in its own right and at the same time part of a determining social and cultural formation. What Althusser calls 'holding both ends of the chain at the same time'. Middleton goes further in his criticisms, and although he too emphasises the need for synchronic and diachronic analysis, is prepared to salvage only Willis's notion of 'objective possibilities' from the homological approach. For Middleton the construction of homological models is an undialectical blurring of what is essentially a complex social and cultural process. The method is given to circular arguments based on the error of supposing that subcultures are perfectly structured internally. It is more important to see musical codes as 'open' (particularly when comparing them with linguistic codes) and to examine the way in which other structures 'close them off'.

But in holding to the 'objective possibilities' inherent in particular cultural forms, Middleton is acknowledging the tension between autonomy

and determinacy at the level of structure. It is important to note that Willis clearly argues that meaning is supplied by concrete social action and relationship, structure provides the 'means' as it were, and the argument about objective possibilities refers to the way in which some 'means' (structures) limit and enable some meanings to be constructed and articulate more easily with the interests of some groups rather than others. If there is a confusion between meaning and structure it is possibly because in the accounts of the two subcultures which he provides, Willis does seem to slide from a discussion of structure to one of meaning. Certain aspects of the musical structure are interpreted as if they had inherent meanings. The heavy and regular beat of 'Golden Age' rock 'n' roll is said to be easier to dance to and reflect the physicality of the motorcycle culture. But there is no clear justification of that other than the fact that the motorcycle culture is physical and uses the music as dance music. Similarly the progressive rock of the hippies is seen as cerebral (despite its volume) and not conducive to dancing. Presumably because Willis's hippies did not dance to it.[30] Middleton is correct to point out the dangers of tautology in homologies, but some notion of 'objective possibility' must be retained if the determining link between structure and meaning is to be investigated.

Semiotics and discourse theory

Dick Hebdige (1979) offers a semiotic interpretation of subcultures. He rejects a 'traditional' semiotic approach - 'a semiotics which begins with some notion of the 'message' - of a combination of elements referring unanimously to a fixed number of signifieds' (Hebdige 1979:117) in favour of a semiotics which emphasises polysemy. Each text is seen to generate a potentially infinite range of meanings. The construction of

to operate. The punk performance is located within a wider socio-cultural context.

Alfred Schutz: Before summarising this section dealing with theories of meaning construction and communication in texts with particular application to music, two writers from earlier sociological traditions who have contributed to an understanding of performance contexts will be examined. These are Alfred Schutz from the tradition of social phenomenology, and Erving Goffman whose work originates in the interactionist school but has developed well beyond its original limited confines. Schutz's (1964) article 'Making music together' makes his position clear from the start.

> Music is a meaningful context which is not bound to a conceptual scheme. Yet this meaningful context can be communicated. The process or communication between composer and listener normally requires an intermediary: an individual performer or a group of coperformers. (Schutz 1964:159)

The meaningful structure is not capable of being expressed in conceptual terms. It is unlike linguistic communication, which assumes 'that each partner interprets his own behaviour as well as that of the other in conceptual terms which can be translated and conveyed to the other partner by way of a common semantic system' (Schutz 1964:160). There is a certain social relationship which precedes all communication - what Schutz calls the 'mutual tuning-in relationship by which the "I" and the "Thou" are experienced by both participants as a "We" in vivid presence' (Schutz 1964:161). Furthermore this relationship originates in the possibility of living together simultaneously in specific dimensions of time. Musical notation is just one among several vehicles of communicating musical thought and Schutz foresees the time when a

composer will 'individually' produce music 'directly in terms of the phonographic needle' untrammeled by the technique of instruments. Any equation of music with its notation is an error because of music's almost total conventionality. Musical signs are interpreted in the light of musical culture at the time. This is a much more fundamental concept than knowledge about a composer's lifestyle. Works of music have autonomy and can be appreciated by the listener in their own right because music is 'a meaningful arrangement of tones in inner time' (Schutz 1964:170). Schutz makes the crucial distinction between 'inner time' and 'outer time' where the latter is scientifically measurable, and the former is the listener's experience of the piece of music as it unfolds. Performance and listening unites the participants in sharing the composer's thought, his/her inner time, even though they may be separated from each other by hundreds of years. This does not depend on the mode of the performance: live or recorded. The participants are 'tuned in' to each other, 'are living together through the same flux, are growing older together while the musical process lasts' (Schutz 1964:173). Group performances have further complexities because although the music is experienced in 'inner time', the performance is located in 'outer time' and the performers have to relate to the inner time of the composer and the inner and outer time of their fellows. In large groups of players, for example a symphony orchestra, a conductor facilitates this complex interaction. For Schutz this process is the same no matter what form the 'performance' takes.

> It is of no great importance whether performer and listener share together a vivid present in face-to-face relation or whether through the interposition of mechanical devices, such as records, only a quasi simultaneity between the stream of consciousness of the mediator and the listener has been established. The latter case always refers to the former. The difference between the two shows merely that the

> relationship between performer and audience is subject to all variations of intensity, intimacy, and anonymity. This can be easily seen by imagining the audience as consisting of one single person, a small group of persons in a private room, a crowd filling a big concert hall, or the entirely unknown listeners of a radio performance or a commercially distributed record. In all these circumstances performer and listener are "tuned-in" to one another, are living together through the same flux, are growing older together while the musical process lasts. (Schutz 1964:175)

If a performance is signalled by this sharing of inner time and modes of performance are immaterial does this mean that the context of reception is irrelevant? Surely some contexts facilitate this sharing and others may not? Also Schutz has a preconceived notion of the ideal form of listening to music. This idea of 'getting lost in music' is but one form of listening, and an intense one at that. Many musics are experienced in other ways: as an accompaniment to other activities many of which may be unrelated. The model is taken from an 'autonomous' Romantic music which 'sweeps the listener away'. In Chapter Eight the degree to which various contexts of reception may help or hinder the tuning-in relationship will be considered.

Erving Goffman: In his article on approaches to performance, Grahame Thompson (1985) points to the work of Erving Goffman as seeing performance as being enacted through 'interaction rituals', moving the analysis from concentration on a narrow definition of textual practices to the area of ritualistic practices. Goffman's early work has been heavily criticised for its all inclusive definition of 'performance' which covers virtually all interactional activity, and its model of the human subject responding as an already fully formed personality to externally imposed norms of behaviour on 'the stage of life'. No explanation is offered as to how the personality is formed or the norms constructed. In short the

approach is ahistorical and undialectical. However it would be foolish to jettison all Goffman's insights because his theoretical premises are unacceptable. He remains one of the most perceptive observers of social action and both The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (1959) and Behaviour in Public Places (1963) provide many guidelines and pertinent suggestions for the empirical investigation of contextualised behaviour and may be easily modified for musical performance situations. Goffman (1959) introduces 'front-stage' and 'back-stage' as an entry to the theorising of space and time location (cf, Giddens 1979, 1984) and the latter book examines the ways in which institutional techniques for mobilising attention in audiences can operate. Nevertheless Goffman's later work, stemming from Frame Analysis (1974) enters a complex world concerned with the patterns and rituals which govern perception of reality. The link with the concepts of Bateson (1972) and Bauman (1975) is clear. Goffman suggests that the rules implicated in encounters can be seen as being clustered in frameworks or 'frames'. These frames provide the ordering of activities and meanings which sustain 'ontological security' (Giddens 1979) while daily routines are enacted. Essentially frames are clusters of rules which enable participants in a social situation to make sense of the encounter and guide their activities according to this meaning. The multiplicity of frames of day to day activities, which Goffman refers to as 'primary frameworks', may in certain situations be 'keyed' into a secondary level where it takes on a different meaning. Peter Manning writing in The View from Goffman (1980) says:

> Goffman seeks by borrowing (and elaborating) from Bateson, ... to use the concept of a frame to: (a) indicate the reflexive nature of social life; (b) to show that simultaneous meanings are present in life as they are in language (such as when we change the meaning of a term

> from literal to metaphoric by placing it in quotation marks); and (c), to show that as actions change our definitions (or frames), we can alter our principal or original meanings and confer new ones, or add them to the first set. A frame, then in Goffman's terms, contains principles of organisation: "definitions of situations are built up in accordance with principles or organisations which govern events - at least social ones - and our subjective involvement in them; frame is the word I use to refer to such of these basic elements as I am able to identify." (Goffman 1974:10) (Manning 1980:273-274)

What it would seem we have is the highlighting of ritual elements involved in small scale cultural activity. If Thompson's assessment is accepted, that this change of emphasis shifts performance from the limits of textual practices to ritualistic practices, a link can be made with the previous discussion of polysemy. The polysemic nature of texts requires ritualistic limitation of the potential over-spill resulting from their non-closure. These ritualistic limitations - frames - are determined extra-textually and can be seen as located in the broader context of ideology. One major criticism of Goffman is his failure to contextualise motivation in situations beyond the individual subject. The use of the concept of frame as a ritualistic practice seems to provide the possible entrance for such an enterprise. Jameson (1976) suggests that frames can be seen as semiotic in character and that socio-semiotic frames do not rely upon a conscious observing subject to activate them but rather function as the very organisation of social meaning in the form of a contextualising constraint. There is considerable scope for the investigation of the way in which ritualistic practices may index frames and the way in which such frames 'construct' the listener's aesthetic response.

The Dual Articulation of Aesthetic Ideologies

This requires a study of contexts of reception. As suggested in the

introduction to this chapter, there are three levels of meaning: that constructed out of interaction between the listener and the text (the connotations and so on), secondly, the meaning derived from the use of an aesthetic code which tells the consumer what the performance event is and how to assess it (mode of aesthetic address), and thirdly, that level derived from the 'aesthetic ideology' which 'locates' the audience participating in a particular performance event within a broader structure of performance contexts. It is the second level that 'frames' the performance aesthetically, and the third that locates it ideologically. There is therefore, a dual relationship in every performance context: textual meaning and aesthetic code (internal to the context); aesthetic code and aesthetic ideology involving the broader ideological ranking of aesthetic forms (external to the context). It is possible to argue that movement by cultural forms through the hierarchy of contexts - from the street, through the bar, the club to the concert hall - is not just a move through social spaces but simultaneously a move through modes of aesthetic address and ideological location. Is this not a form of incorporation possibly more conclusive than the mere commodification process which features in the literature on subcultures so much?

There is a further area of exploration. Willis's concept of 'objective possibilities' might be applied to a possible homological relationship between music structure (the structure of the text) and context structure (the structure of the performance context). The question is a complex one. If it can be argued that certain music genres can be analysed in terms of their objective possibilities for linkage with certain life styles, how much more might it be the case that certain music structures might

relate to certain types of performance context?

In the two previous chapters which explored the WEAM and jazz (Afro-American) traditions the grounds were laid for the construction of aesthetic ideologies for each. A detailed consideration of this based on findings in the research will be the subject of Chapter Eight.

Summary

In summary, examination of the literature in the area of 'Textual Studies' suggests the following implications for a study of music performances:

1. The meaning of music at performance must be sought in the relation between the text and the listener/consumer. At the level of the text, sounds may have external referents and be differentiated from other sounds within an internal textual structure. Response will be intersubjective.
2. Some concept of 'objective possibility' must be maintained if the notion of the determinate relationship between structure and meaning is not to be abandoned.
3. Contextual structures may be viewed as constraining the potentially wide polysemic nature of musical texts.
4. Consideration of performance should not be narrowly confined to the actions of the performer alone, but include the totality of the performance: the situation, the audience, the connotations of the event and its style within a larger socio-cultural context.
5. Any particular performance event will involve keying devices which evoke performance frames defining the focus of attention of the performers and the audience.

In the next chapter, the basic principles extracted from the consideration of the literature will be used to construct the comparative frame used in observations of the performance contexts.

THE COMPARATIVE FRAME FOR PERFORMANCE CONTEXTS

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Four it was argued that for an event - defined as a cluster of related practices - to be recognised as a performance occasion certain 'keying' techniques must be available for the participants to 'recognise' the shift to a performance frame (Bateson 1972, Bauman 1974, Goffman 1975). Within the frame the habitual practices maintained by the participants, function as rituals celebrating particular aesthetic ideologies. These enable the participants to identify, assess and respond to what is going on and locate the performance and themselves within a wider cultural spectrum of artistic practices. Bauman argues that the aim of ethnography is to discover the 'culture-specific constellations of communicative means that serve to key performance in particular communities' (Bauman 1974:295-6).

Outlined in this chapter is an attempt to construct a comparative frame for the observation, description and analysis of music performance contexts. It is based on the assumption that within our western culture there is firstly, an important keying code contained in the fact that many live performances take place within conventionally recognised performance contexts, secondly there is a more complex keying code contained within the participatory practices of a performance occasion and thirdly, a keying code derived from both of the former which is associated with an aesthetic ideology. The first sensitises the participants to the fact that a performance is likely to take place, and the second indicates when the performance is taking place and when it is

not. The third enables the framing of the performance within an appropriate aesthetic ideology thus enabling the participants to identify the nature of the art product, experience it, and make aesthetic judgements of it appropriately. A more detailed discussion of the concept of 'aesthetic ideology' based on the observations occurs in Chapter Eight.

Performance Occasion and Performance Event

Herndon (1971) distinguishes between a performance 'occasion' and a performance 'event'. 'Occasion' refers to the abstracted normative pattern of which the 'event' is the specific occurrence. The former operates at the paradigm level and enables participants in a performance event to classify that event and by so doing frame the performance practices of both musicians and audience thereby recognising their symbolic dimension. 'Occasion' and 'event' may be regarded as dialectically linked in that participation in a musical event will be understood as one occurrence of a class of occasions. The understanding of the composition of that class of occasions will be modified as a result of participation in the unique event. The importance of this relationship should not be underestimated. The classification of occasions involves ideological issues of superiority/inferiority as well as aesthetic issues of 'authenticity' and 'originality'. (Horowitz 1973) Many of the debates about 'High' and 'Low' (usually 'popular') culture, which in their turn relate to dimensions of power, are articulated around issues of the appropriateness of particular performance occasions for particular cultural forms. The question of inclusion and exclusion depends on the defining power of dominant groups. Inclusion of a divergent event may result in modification of the occasion paradigm, exclusion reinforces it.[1] The

social processes through which this acceptance or rejection occurs have been described by Bourdieu (1971, 1984) and illustrate the way in which innovation, far from being a fundamental break or disruption of the present, is itself structured by that present.[2]

Sets of rules which govern the production of meaning, logonomic systems (Hodge and Kress 1988), serve to make larger ideological complexes unambiguous in practice. Where the understanding of a particular musical event is 'taken-for-granted', that is unambiguously regarded as an example of an occasion, a large ideological framework stemming from the socio-cultural classification of occasions will be in operation. However such taken-for-grantedness is fragile and constructed and reconstructed out of the practices of the performance participants at each event. Contestation can occur and is more likely in events whose classification is ambiguous. It is important to note that the paradigm of a 'performance occasion' includes the normative practices of many groups of people: the performers, the audience and personnel employed by the venue's management are all involved in making the occasion happen (cf, Bradley 1980:49-50). However, of the various categories of participants in any performance occasion there is likely to be a greater obligation on the performer/musician to 'make the performance event work' in a sense which is not required of audience members. How this is done will vary from context to context and use will be made of a variety of devices that following Goffman (1959) can be called 'props' and which may include aspects of the setting such as microphones, loud-speakers, instrument cases and music stands.[3]

In describing the comparative frame, reference will be made to some of

the theoretical discussion in the previous chapter, and illustrated with examples from the historical development of music performance contexts, the observations made in the research and interviews with jazz musicians.

THE CONTEXT OF PERFORMANCE

The construction of a comparative frame was based on Qureshi (1986, 1987) but adapted for application to musical performances in industrial society. Qureshi argues that the 'Performance Context' consists of two levels of practices. The Performance Setting includes those factors that pre-exist the occasion and are generally prerequisites of it such as place, scheduling, personnel and rationale. These usually remain constant during the occasion. The second level, The Performance Procedures, refers to aspects of the performance and its processual unfolding such as programming, pacing, and the behavioural cues of all the participants in the performance occasion. The relationship between the two levels is a complex one, with the former providing the parameters through which the latter is both constrained and enabled to operate. It is important to avoid the assumption of structural, or indeed environmental determinism. Giddens (1979, 1984) has argued that the concept of social structure inevitably combines synchronic and diachronic dimensions and emphasises this through his use of the term 'structuration'. The enabling-constraining relationship he seeks to elaborate, is very apparent in the relationship between 'settings' and 'procedures' and is seen in the descriptions of real performance events where performers make use of what they perceive as available setting possibilities.

1. THE PERFORMANCE SETTING:

There are three main aspects of a performance setting. Each addresses

a fundamental dimension of social reality: (A) the organisation of space; (B) the organisation of time; and (C) questions of intentionality.

A. Spatial Parameters: - these apply at macro and micro level. The macro level includes issues surrounding the geographical distribution of performance venues.[4] The micro focusses on the architectural aspects of the venue related to the sale of music as a commodity and the constraining and enabling potential of the performance area for the performance participants.

1. Distribution of Performance Venues: Conventional performance contexts, concert halls, theatres, clubs, music pubs and arts centres etc., are not randomly distributed within a society. There may be a deliberate policy on distribution by an official decision-making body like the Arts Council, 'invisible' market forces will play a part and there will be certain cultural traditions (e.g. working men's clubs in the North of England). An analysis of these may provide the sociologist with insight into the venue's rationale and priorities. Jazz, because of its traditional connection with night-life will be effected by the way in which cities are zoned into business, shopping and entertainment areas. Some classic examples have already been described in chapter three: Storeyville in New Orleans before the 'district' was closed by the Naval Authorities in 1917, negro areas in Chicago and Kansas City during the twenties and thirties, the Harlem area of New York in the thirties and forties and the fifty-second street club area in the forties and fifties. (cf, Ostransky 1978) Clearly, the distribution of venues relates to more than the distribution of customers, it may also indicate priorities given to particular cultural forms rather than others, for example the 'culture

complex' on London's South Bank. The 'matching' of venue with urban zoning would be an interesting area of sociological enquiry.

2. Characteristics of Performance Venues: At the architectural level is the degree to which the venue has been designed and built, often by specialised architects and designers, with a particular type of performance in mind. Purpose built venues - concert halls, theatres, opera houses and arts centres etc. - will usually contain architectural props like staging and lighting, and definite areas demarcated for particular purposes: foyers, bars, cloakrooms, and restaurants (e.g. The Royal Festival Hall, cf, Ch. 7). Venues which were not designed for performance purposes but have been either permanently, semi-permanently or temporarily converted for performance use include pubs (e.g. The Bull's Head, Barnes), bars, cafes (e.g. The Pontalba Cafe, New Orleans cf, Ch.6), church halls (e.g. The London Musicians Collective), churches and even sub-ways and pavements. These may be adapted for performance purposes by simple re-arrangement of the existing furniture, or the strategic placing of an instrument case. Performances in these situations are often adjuncts to other activities which have 'situational priority' (cf, C. below.).

The architecture of performance

The relation between the architectural dimension and the performance procedures is complex. The degree to which the performance design is 'built-in' to the architectural design of the building is of great relevance to the performance participants. Is there a stage? If so, is it fixed or re-arrangeable? Is there a proscenium arch? Has the performance area been designed for performances in the round? Is there an auditorium and

does it have fixed seating? Some 'arts centres' are designed as a flexible space to enable a variety of activities to be encompassed: poetry readings, music concerts (orchestral, chamber, choir and solo performers), plays, dramatic improvisations etc. The way in which the venue defines performance in these material and spatial terms will affect what the performer(s) can do with the performance environment. These 'built-in' parameters will be perceived by the performer(s) as providing constraints and possibilities. This is not to argue for a form of environmental determinism. Spatial arrangements may be perceived as constraining and enabling in ways unanticipated by the venue's designer. However it would be a radical phenomenology indeed which denied the existence of _any_ level of objective possibility, and certainly performers perceive venues as having particular objective possibilities and constraints.[5]

Region demarcation

A spatial dimension _within_ the venue which has a strong influence on the procedural aspects of performance is the region demarcation which may be built into the original architectural design of the building, maintained through furniture arrangement, or in the most 'informal' situation be 'suggested' by visible but transitory objects like instrument cases. When discussing region demarcation, Goffman (1959, 1975) must be mentioned together with Giddens's re-appraisal of the importance of Goffman's ideas for sociological theory. Giddens discusses the importance of the notion of front and back stage as a feature of the social management of space:

> The social management of space is ... a feature of all societies. Virtually all collectivities have a _locale_ of operation, spatially distinct from that associated with others. 'Locale' is in some respects a preferable term to that of 'place' ... for it carries something of the connotation of space used as a _setting_ for interaction. A setting is

> not just a spatial parameter, a physical environment, in which interaction 'occurs', it is these elements mobilised as part of the interaction. Features of the setting of interaction, including its spatial and physical aspects ... are routinely drawn upon by social actors in the sustaining of communication ... (Giddens 1979:206-7)

Giddens draws attention to Goffman's insight that the social separation of back and front regions 'can be connected in an illuminating way to practical consciousness and the operation of normative sanctions' (1979:207). Goffman argues that front and back regions can be used to hide potentially compromising features of interaction. One particular mode of conformity, pragmatic acceptance, can be controlled through the careful use of front and back settings. In the front regions the performer is on display (and conforming), in the back, relaxed (and maintaining distance). Regional demarcation also allows division between types of activity to occur. In the front, what is produced is likely to be 'final draft', in the back, experimentation and technical activities take priority. There are two main types of technical activity engaged in by musicians: firstly, technical aspects to do with the mechanics of their instruments, e.g. fitting reeds to saxophone mouthpieces, strings to guitars, oiling the valves of a trumpet, and secondly, those associated with the term 'technique' when applied to the musician's playing ability. Technique is improved by instrument practice , but this is not usually on show to the audience. Region demarcation enables the performer to demarcate the musical practices involved in constructing a performance. The audience similarly is able to recognise the difference between instrument practice and performance through the availability of performance frame keying devices. Recognition of this can be seen when puzzled audience members at a concert of contemporary music say: "It sounds like they're tuning up!" At a surface level this refers to the

content of the piece being heard, but the comment is made meaningful as an implied criticism through the unstated reference to frame shift. In the case of orchestral concerts the frame shift is keyed by the entrance of the conductor (cf, Ch. 7). In a sense what occurs before that key is 'back stage' even though it may take place in full view of the audience. It is generally not acceptable for the technical aspects of instrument maintenance to be revealed in formal performance settings at this stage except in emergencies: violin or guitar strings breaking for example. Instrument maintenance must be literally back-stage as must those constructional activities conventionally known as back-stage work such as set construction, wiring up lighting banks and doing sound checks. The 'final draft' performance requirement of particular aesthetic ideologies will be discussed more fully in Chapter Eight. For these, the front-stage _must_ be distinguishable from the back-stage, the demarcation only breached in a recognised emergency. A 'processual' aesthetic ideology will not require such a distinct divide and technical matters of the mechanical kind may be undertaken with only symbolic differentiation between regions and this is regularly done in most jazz clubs where a physically separated back-region does not exist.

Purpose built performance venues nearly always have clearly demarcated regions. Access to backstage areas by non-performers is difficult and often restricted to those holding a 'Pass' of some kind. The strong demarcation allows activities like instrument preparation to be concealed from the audience and the performer is able to be fully prepared and ready to face the public. The start of a performance is usually keyed by the musician(s) appearing on the stage in many pop programmes. In the case of orchestral concerts the keying can be drawn out. The

musicians drift on to the platform, take their places, tune their instruments and await the Leader. Applause marks the emergence of the Leader of the Orchestra (always a violinist) as preparation for the even more impressive entrance of the Conductor 'emerging from nowhere' (the back region) accompanied by more applause. A few seconds of silence keys the start of the musical performance proper. Similarly, the end of the performance is keyed by the withdrawal of the performers from the front stage into the back region. The manipulation of this boundary for the purposes of increasing applause whilst maintaining the personal 'front' of modesty is regularly seen at concerts, theatres, and particularly opera houses where the final rituals often have a character all their own involving the complex use of curtains, attendants dressed in wigs, white stockings and eighteenth century costumes accompanied by the wholesale showering of female performers with dying plants.

In venues which are not purpose built for performance or which have been designed for performances of a highly flexible or of even an experimental kind, region demarcation may be symbolic rather than physical, with areas mapped out by the loudspeakers of the p.a., the arrangement of instruments, instrument cases, cafe tables or even as in one jazz club observed, the floor area near the gentlemen's lavatory serving as a 'back' region. Although the musicians may talk together in groups when not actually playing they are that much more members of the larger community of people attending the venue, they are approachable and often make themselves available for conversation with members of the public - in short they often 'mingle'. At the Pontalba Cafe, the back-stage region was behind the piano and at the end of the bar counter next to the till used by the waitresses. At the Canteen, the

musicians had a back-room for their own use but generally went to it by leaving the platform and walking through the tables occupied by diners. During this promenade they would pause to sign autographs, talk to customers and on one occasion sing 'Happy Birthday' with a table of revellers. The Bulls Head's back-stage is the floor area marked out by instrument cases in front of the gentlemen's lavatory and performers at The London Musicians' Collective use the wall at the back behind the loudspeakers where they pile bags, cases and coats. But since the majority of the audience seem to know the musicians personally, region demarcation is very weak and a great deal of moving goes on across whatever weak barriers there are.

Performance as commodity

An important spatial dimension of performance venues is the degree of control over entry and exit. The restriction on physical entry is usually, but not always associated with the payment of an entrance fee. Some clubs may not charge for entry, but have a high 'minimum' charge on food or drink, others may have strong membership requirements - possibly because of the licensing laws. At certain venues a ticket must be booked in advance. Entry to the performance area may only be possible at certain times - before the start of the performance or at intervals - and it is possible that exit may be similarly restricted. For such control to operate, a physical 'barrier' of some kind is usually required. It may be useful to classify performance settings on a continuum of Closed to Open according to the degree to which the performance is separated from other activities. This can be applied to spatial, visual and auditory separation. All these separations also create social identities with different roles applying to social actors in different

contexts. Inside a 'closed' auditorium one is either an audience member, a performer or an official - an usher for example - outside one is not. A concert hall or a basement club has a 'closedness' about it that an open-air cafe or a pub bar-room has not. Closedness may correlate with the degree of specificity of the dominant activity of the venue and the extent to which performance is built into the design of the building. A major reason for 'closing' performance settings is the basic economic one of marketing sound. Where the consumption of sound is a commodity on offer to potential consumers, sound must be 'packaged' by erecting barriers to illicit reception. For live performances, barriers to the reception of sound are likely to be barriers to visibility. Sound is particularly difficult to control, especially in its ownership and exchange. The printed page can be sold in a shop, or kept in a library, but sound permeates all spaces and is part of the general public world. In order to be sold or transferred effectively, sound must be converted to a 'solid' medium such as print (sheet music), acetate (records), electronic imprints (tapes) or 'closed' in a performance venue.

For commercial live performance, music provides special problems of perceptual demarcation and this has implications for the distinction between on-lookers and audience. For the professional musician and the venue management, this distinction is of crucial economic importance: audience members pay, on-lookers do not. This fact is known only too well by buskers and street performers who have little control over the distribution of their product because they operate in very 'open' settings. When the hat goes round audiences tend to turn into on-lookers with great rapidity!

In terms of performance, manipulation of theatrical technology (complex lighting effects, scene changes and sound systems) will be easier in a 'closed' setting. Acoustic engineers played a central role in the design of The Royal Festival Hall and other modern purpose built concert halls and increasingly sophisticated technology enables detailed adjustments to be made. Such 'tuning' would be impossible without a 'closed' auditorium (cf, Ch. 7). Concert hall acoustics are considered essential for the correct performance of most classical works and recording engineers go to great lengths to ensure that classical recordings have an acoustic that is regarded as 'correct' for that particular work.

Auditory demarcation is likely to be strong where the performance of music is the venue's dominant activity. Where the dominant activity is the selling of other commodities, auditory demarcation reduces the power of the performers to attract custom. In such cases deliberate attempts may be made to reduce barriers to perception whilst maintaining control over the onlooker/audience distinction by different means. Bands or pianists may be placed near open french windows as at the Pontalba Cafe in New Orleans (cf, Chapter Six). In other situations doors to bars may be kept open so that the sound can permeate the street and be heard by the passers-by outside. Crossing the threshold however symbolises the move to the customer role and the intention to purchase food or drink. Some night-clubs have a more sophisticated solution to the problem of visual and auditory 'leakage'. The Eddie Condon Club in New York and The Canteen in London had a closed circuit television screen outside so that the band can be seen but only indistinctly heard by passers-by. Perceptual demarcation is an issue that different venues solve in different ways, and to some degree the particular solution is related to

the design of the building and the dominant or subordinant activities which go on there. Intricate social rituals may be adopted by performers and other staff to assist in the definition of the onlooker/audience distinction. Waitresses play a major role in this in many venues where food is on sale. This demarcation problem is one which purpose built concert halls dedicated to the exposure of performance as the dominant activity have generally solved by architectural means. Perceptual barriers are practically total and only penetrated after the individual has defined him/herself as an audience member by paying for a ticket and entering the auditorium.

One possible concomitant of the commodification of music is that performers with enough 'draw' to command fairly large audiences increasingly find themselves in contexts which operate strong region demarcation. The purpose built concert hall 'separates' performers from audience members in ways which might be regarded as undesirable within certain aesthetic ideologies. However the monetary rewards gained from performing to large audiences together with the sale of records and tapes means that the musician gains not only 'recognition' by becoming a 'concert artist', something which has probably been striven for for some time, but also an end to the financial insecurity so often linked with the life of a professional musician.

B. Temporal Parameters: - as far as the performance setting is concerned, the main temporal parameter is scheduling.

Many factors determine what time of day a performance may take place. Since it is usual for western industrial culture to define performance attendance as leisure, most performances take place outside normal work

time. The worker employed during 'unsocial hours' often gets higher wages as compensation. For musicians engaged in live performances, the working/non-working day is reversed. This is one of the reasons why the Musicians Union is a strong one and particularly defensive about statutory payment for rehearsal and performance times. Jazz musicians in particular are associated with 'after hours' night work and some jazz clubs feature regular 'all-nighters'. This life-style is part of the 'jazz myth' and has resulted in much romanticised 'folklore' about the 'jazz-life's' Bohemian image portrayed in films and novels. The undoubted link between drugs and jazz, particularly bebop and post-bebop, increases the romanticism further. But it is interesting to note that during the hey-day of the traditional jazz boom of the late nineteen fifties, most of the jazz clubs in London were unlicensed. Nevertheless the 'jazz myth' was strong enough to act as a major motivating force. As Harry Christian (1987) notes:

> For young whites, however, it (jazz) served as a suitable vehicle for musical protest because its relative musical simplicity and its atavism offended their elders. as did its racial connections and these shocking factors could be reinforced by the myth of the red light origins of New Orleans jazz and the less mythical association with the gangster speakeasies of the prohibition era. (Christian 1987:222)

The affectation of wearing sunglasses or 'shades' by jazz musicians in the 1940's might be interpreted as a symbolic celebration of night living and the rejection of daylight hours.

Not all musical performances take place during the evening however. There has been a long tradition of 'tea dances', and in holiday resorts and tourist areas bands, brass or otherwise, often play in the afternoons in cafes, bars and in the open air. There is the tradition of picnic bands

in New Orleans and of buskers on pavements and subways. All these musical performances must be keyed and framed. The way in which the afternoon players in the Pontalba Cafe do this is described in chapter six.

Less general constraints on scheduling include the contractual arrangements made by management for non-performing employees: ushers, caretakers, cleaners, waitresses for example. Large purpose built venues employ a lot of people who are likely to go on to complex extra pay rates after 11.00 pm, and the large size of the audience means that transport facilities are a major consideration. The management of The Royal Festival Hall on London's South Bank complex imposes financial penalties on performers who start late and consequently over-run because of the extra costs involved. The performance of long operas - Wagner's for example - are generally started earlier, at 5.00pm in some cases rather that extended late into the night. Performances in pubs generally adhere to the licensing laws. In interviews some pub performers expressed resentment that 'external' parameters such as licensing laws can actually determine notions of 'value-for-money'. The band leader and composer Graham Collier complains of one occasion when his band, having played conscientiously for at least two hours was compelled to continue for a further twenty minutes by the management because the bar was still serving.

C. Situational Priorities and Proprieties (Intentionality): - a continuing debate within sociology concerns the imputation of purposes to organisations and institutions. For this study, it will be assumed that a venue's purpose(s) will be defined by groups in relative positions of power. The most powerful definers may lie outside the organisation -

architects, the Arts Council, the South Bank Centre, in the case of the Royal Festival Hall - and be remote from the organisation's day-to-day participants. If the group has been powerful enough to build the purpose into the venue's design, the active participants must regulate their practices in the light of their perceptions of such 'built-in' situational priorities and their own intentions as social actors. Virtually all spaces are used for multiple purposes necessitating management, and this may involve prioritising and/or demarcation to avoid conflict. However, this is unlikely to be a simple matter of 'line authority'. Social actors will decide on their own priorities which may include maximising their financial reward, job satisfaction or career advancement amongst other considerations, and a variety of complex interactional negotiations are often required. Goffman calls the 'communication traffic order' which results from these negotiations: situational proprieties. These will be considered more fully in the section dealing with the 'performance procedures'.[6]

Normative Disorganisation

Few commentators on social behaviour have made such detailed analyses of the context and process of social interaction as Erving Goffman. He describes a social occasion as ...

> ... bounded in regard to place and time and typically facilitated by fixed equipment; a social occasion provides the structuring social context in which many situations and their gatherings are likely to form, dissolve and reform while a pattern of conduct tends to be recognised as the appropriate and (often) official or intended one. (Goffman 1963:18)

and later:

> The same physical space may be caught within the domain of two different social occasions ... the social situations that occur in these overlapping behaviour settings support gatherings that possess a special

type of normative disorganisation. (Goffman 1963:20-21)

The term 'normative disorganisation' is used to refer to situations in which participants recognise competing priorities and need to 'navigate' their way through them. This is not to argue for a voluntarist theory of social action, which is often regarded as one of the weaknesses inherent in Goffman's early work (cf. Giddens 1979, Thompson 1985). The position taken in this study is that <u>all</u> performance venues from the most formal to the most informal need to justify their existence economically whether that is interpreted as profit or as demonstrable demand (in the case of non-profit-making concerns). Within this over-arching constraint a division of labour is usually required which structures actions to fulfil different tasks, some of which may seem to the social actors involved to conflict at certain times with the actions of others within the organised structure. It is always important to remember that social actors inhabit social realms outside the organisation (unless they are in a 'total institution') and that they bring with them a variety of purposes which in their turn may potentially conflict with those of their role in the division of labour and the over-arching economic requirements of the performance venue.

It has already been noted that region demarcation, especially the front-stage/back-stage distinction enables social actors to operate 'pragmatic acceptance' as a mode of conformity. <u>All</u> participants in a performance event to some extent operate forms of back-stage and front-stage demarcation, not only the musicians. It is an awareness of this which provoked Goffman into his early stance of making the definition of 'performance' so wide that it included virtually all aspects of social

behaviour (cf, Goffman 1959). Whilst a narrower definition is needed to recover the concept of performance as a managed enterprise contrasted with some notion of the 'natural', it is important not to lose sight of concepts like 'pragmatic acceptance' which enable actors to maintain a degree of 'personal integrity'. Discussions, sometimes heated, between the waitresses and the musicians at the Pontalba Cafe persistently revealed tensions of this kind, and a member of the audience surreptitiously 'nodding-off' during a performance of Schoenberg at the Festival Hall is conforming to the outward definitions of audience behaviour.

Architectural demarcation

Purpose built venues often attempt to avoid normative disorganisation by clear cut region demarcation: auditoria are separated from bars, cafes and restaurants, and in some buildings these may be open to the general public as well as audience members. Rituals surrounding their separation are likely to be clearly demarcatory. Rules, which can be sanctioned with various degrees of severity are applied to entrances and exits from the auditoria: drinks may not be taken in, cigarettes have to be put out before entry, and there may be official uniformed personnel present to enforce the rules. Such procedures enable the principal activity, the engagement in 'performance practices' within the auditorium, to be undertaken with the least competition. Strong demarcation also allows individual choice for all participants whether audience members or otherwise because it enables the non-performance activities of the venue to be enjoyed by those who do not want to be in an auditorium as participating members. The economic advantage to the establishment is obvious. Heavy capital equipment and employed personnel can be used

for the whole period of opening not just in times defined by performances.

Architecturally strong demarcation will generally provide barriers to sight and sound between competing activities enabling them to be undertaken relatively free from 'distractions'. Which activities are regarded as competing (or distracting) will be determined by the aesthetic code operating in the performance occasion. WEAM has clear notions of which activities constitute distractions, the jazz tradition, or more broadly the Afro-American tradition finds the definition of 'distraction' far more problematic. Strong demarcation also allows the non-performance activities - eating, drinking, and general pleasurable social contact - to take place without the 'interference' of noise or the normative pressure to be involved in performance occasions.

Frequently however, performances of all kinds, but especially musical forms which do not have high status within Western European culture, take place in venues with low demarcation. The participants - performers, audience and other personnel like bar staff and waitresses - have to develop complex procedures for the maintenance of situational priorities. Although the fundamental purpose of the establishment is likely to be the maximisation of profit or of financial return of some kind, there may be short term, but none-the-less strongly perceived conflicts of interests between participants <u>within</u> the organisation.[7] At the Pontalba Cafe in New Orleans where a small band of musicians were hired to attract customers, the waitresses were paid a low basic wage but were able to supplement it with bonus payments if the takings were good. The musicians were paid standard union rates with no bonus and

needed periodic breaks because of their lengthy playing time. The two groups developed an uneasy symbiotic relationship where the musicians would use a variety of behavioural devices to encourage custom if they knew that their position on breaks was understood (cf, Ch. 6). At the Canteen, London, and the Eddie Condon Club, New York, the musicians were more formally 'displayed' on a raised stage. That slight extra 'distance' between the performers and the customers freed the restaurant staff to pursue their activities unrestrained by the music.

Temporal demarcation

Potentially competing activities may be demarcated by time as well as space. The more clearly demarcated the performance setting is from other activities the more 'regimented' a whole batch of secondary activities have to become if they are not to interfere with the primary one. Basic biological needs have to be taken into account in organisations. Refreshments need to be organised and going to the lavatory, has to be programmed into the evening because leaving and re-entering the auditorium is a major problem in purpose built concert halls. The aesthetic code which is at the basis of the rationale for such auditoria, prohibits the disturbance and disruption of moving down a row of seats and walking up an aisle. Much informal censure from other members of the audience may be the result. Such difficulties do not occur in the same form in weakly demarcated venues, particularly since the other purposes are usually to do with the sale and consumption of food and drink. In situations of competing involvements the individual has fewer direct behavioural controls impinging.

Goffman (1963) uses the categories of 'Tight' and 'Loose' to refer to

the degree of external discipline applied to the individual participants in the ways in which respect for the gathering and its social occasion can be expressed. For example, strong situational controls on dress and bearing in 'Tight' situations symbolise respect for the gathering externally as far as the individual is concerned but can also allow 'internal' freedom through pragmatic conformity: daydreaming at the theatre for example (cf, Ch. 7). Weak situational controls in 'Loose' settings may require greater 'internal' discipline or alertness of mind. However the degree of usefulness of this distinction is open to doubt in that all of the performance occasions observed which could be described as 'Loose' had competing priorities which rendered problematic the notion of 'respect for the gathering'. However 'Loose' settings do allow the internal involvement of participants to be visible to an observer, including the performer, and enable the success of the performance in mobilising attention to be monitored. In 'Loose' settings the performer is often aware of the need to 'win' the audience in a way which is not so apparent in 'Tight' settings (cf, Ch. 6).

Temporal demarcation may set up spatial problems for venue designers. Facilities like bars, cloakrooms and lavatories have to be of a size to withstand the onslaught of nearly the entire audience virtually all at once. At one major opera house in London it is a common sight to see, in the otherwise elegant surroundings, a very long queue of women originating in the ladies lavatory curling round one of the vestibules and winding its way across the entrance to the room containing the coffee, sandwiches and bar. Such corporality seems ill at ease in the bourgeois surroundings of High Art.

Situational Proprieties

Competing (and conflicting) normative procedures require a further 'layer' of procedures to produce what Goffman calls 'situational proprieties'. The way in which these are constructed by the participants in each situation will be examined in more detail below under the heading of 'Procedures', but at the level of the 'Setting' of the performance context it is necessary to consider ways in which the spatial and temporal parameters might serve to limit 'normative disorganisation' or enable it to be managed more effectively.

S U M M A R Y

THE PERFORMANCE SETTING may be said to consist of:

A. Spatial Parameters - which include:

The distribution of available venue types

The architectural characteristics of the venue

The design of the performance area

The control of entry and exit to the auditorium

The barriers to perception

Region demarcation including back-stage/front-stage arrangements amongst other 'physical/material' structuring aspects which a performer needs to bear in mind as resources (both constraining and enabling).

B. Temporal Parameters - which include:

Scheduling constraints derived largely from factors extrinsic to the performance event.

Programming factors derived from factors extrinsic to the performance content.

C. Situational Priorities and Proprieties - the set of parameters that are likely to be derived from perceptions of the purpose of the building within which the performance occurs. For the majority of venues the basic need to survive in the economic market by the maximisation of profit or its equivalent, will be the dominant priority.

The Situational Priorities have an 'externality' as far as the occasion participants are concerned and present parameters within which both audience, performers and other personnel construct the occasion.

The Situational Proprieties are negotiated by participants in situations of normative disorganisation to deal with conflicting demands made upon them.

2. THE PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES.:

'Performance procedures' include aspects of the context which are directly relevant to the construction of the performance event - the way the performance is to unfold.

A. Programming:

The parameters within which programming takes place are complex. Certain definitions of 'appropriateness' may only allow certain types of programme on particular days of the week - e.g. dance music may be prohibited on the Sabbath. Pressure groups like the Musicians's Union and N.U.P.E. may only allow certain programmes in particular venues to be a particular length. But the central issues are how far the form of the music permits 'pre-programming' and how the performance is paced and regulated.

Pre-programming

Precomposition enables a programme's content to be organised and publicised before the performance. Precise notational techniques enabled sounds to be organised according to academic rules of acceptability and compositions to be 'fixed' (cf, Weber 1958, Bennett 1983). Tempo markings allow the length of time for the performance of the piece to be calculated fairly precisely. Although particular performers may vary tempi and quantities of repeats in a piece, these can be predicted beforehand and are likely to be regarded as idiosyncratic to particular performers or conductors. It is possible to construct a programme which conforms to fairly strict and predictable temporal parameters, while at the same time showing an interesting variety of content. For advertising purposes this is essential. There are conventional rules which govern the construction of programmes, particularly in 'classical' music and flouting these may lead to the criticism of imbalance. Basing his comments on Mary Douglas's analysis of the social codes involved in constructing menus (Douglas 1975:255), Christopher Small argues that orchestral concerts follow similar patternings.

> Like a meal, a concert tends to begin with what Douglas calls an unstressed course - an overture, perhaps, or some other relatively lightweight work - followed by a stressed item - a symphony perhaps, or a concerto. It is generally felt that a symphony is heavier (more 'nourishing') than a concerto, and somehow of more moral/intellectual value (this idea of course dates only from the nineteenth century - Mozart certainly would not have agreed); this being so, it is usual to find the symphony forming the most stressed item of the concert and being placed, like the main course in a meal, as the penultimate item, while the concerto forms a kind of sweets dish which, while still stressed, is not viewed as being of quite equivalent importance to the main course. (Small 1987:23)

Small continues the analogue by using terms like 'indigestible' and 'lollipops' to describe types of concert programme and even argues that

explanations for the 'failure' or lack of popularity of particular works may lie in the impossibility of programming them. He suggests that Schoenberg's 'Gurrelieder' lacks sufficient internal variety to act as a complete menu, yet is too long to be a single dish. Similarly:

> The works of Webern, being of symphonic weight but lollipop length, have always posed a problem to programme planners and audiences alike; they subvert the ritual conventions of the symphony concert in much the same way as that science-fictional pill containing in one mouthful all the necessary nourishment of a meal would, were it ever to materialize, subvert all the existing rituals of eating. (Small 1987:24)

It is tempting to extend this analogue further to ask whether concert-goers are after a night out, are after a particular dish for dinner or wanting to find out how one particular chef will cook it!

Musical forms which are not 'through-composed', which emphasise 'flexibility' rather than 'fixity' (Wade 1976) are less predictable and seldom pre-programmed. Advertisements specify the performers' names rather than the works they will play (except on those rare occasions when a mainly composed large-scale work which has probably been recorded is being featured).

The attitude to pre-programming was explored in interviews with professional jazz musicians and found to vary greatly. Those who identified themselves as predominantly composers and arrangers rather than featured soloists favoured quite tight pre-planning, a few to the extent of pre-publication. Musicians who regarded themselves as performers first and foremost preferred flexibility to fixity, and would rather leave programming to be decided after discussion with the other players 'on the night'. But the multifarious nature of a professional

musician's life means that each will find him or herself in different kinds of performing contexts on various occasions and adapt programming strategies accordingly.

Original compositions usually require rehearsal periods of at least a minimal kind, and it is preferable to have a band with fairly static membership or comprising players who are well known to the composer. Such a package may be toured and the personnel and programme publicised in advance. The British jazz pianist and composer Stan Tracy, who regularly produces extended works for a Big Band format, includes most of the established British jazz musicians of the 'modern' school in his line-up. Tracy's recent work 'Genesis' was featured in a concert in the Royal Festival Hall.

Solo virtuosi who regularly tour around London and provincial jazz venues playing with local rhythm sections often decide what to play after an on-the-spot consultation with the others in full view of the audience. This approach was often observed even in groups which had a fairly constant membership.[8] A visiting 'modern' soloist playing with a resident rhythm section may hardly know the musicians he/she is playing with and will generally select from a range of jazz standards which are part of a well known repertoire. No rehearsal is involved and the structure of the piece is likely to be formulaic: a statement of the theme, first and second chorus taken by the soloist, third chorus piano, fourth bass, fifth chorus four bar interchanges between soloist and drummer (or another player) sixth chorus the soloist, the final chorus a restatement of the theme and finish. Variations are possible on the spot if a soloist is going really well, or if the audience is being particularly

responsive. This "What shall we do now, lads?" approach is visible to the audience who are part of the process of programme construction in so far as the musicians are taking audience responses into account.

An element of front-stage/back-stage ambiguity is involved in this approach. When discussing what to play the musicians talk quietly or whisper and because of the arrangement of the staging, the soloist will inevitably have his/her back to the audience when talking to the rhythm section. This symbolically excludes the audience from the technical issues of programming and they are 'not supposed to notice' what is going on until the musicians regain their 'front' by turning around to face the audience again. This region ambiguity varied from venue to venue. In the Festival Hall, Stan Tracy (appearing in a pre-publicised programme as band leader, composer, arranger and pianist) would not dream of being so flexible and the programme would be tightly organised before the event, but in the more intimate confines of The Bull's Head, Barnes, where he often plays as pianist and leader of a quartet, the atmosphere is considerably more relaxed. Similarly Barbara Thompson (composer, leader, tenor, alto and baritone saxophones and flute) is noted for her emphasis on pre-planning but _might_ be persuaded to play an old favourite in The Half Moon pub in Putney on the rare occasions her band plays there. It would seem that formality is constructed out of a series of practices of which front-stage/back-stage demarcation is an important component. Musicians adapt their performing practices quite dramatically according to the degree of 'formality' of the venue and an index of this is the extent to which demarcation between front stage and back stage is built-in to the performance setting.

B. Pacing and Regulation of Performance Itself:

Composed and relatively predictable 'units' of music enable pre-programming but also restrict the creative role of the performer. Although there have been historical variations, the development of sophisticated notational techniques and the tempered scale (Weber 1958) made the score the prime reference base coupled with traditions of 'performance practice' for particular composers and historical periods. Musical scholarship became an integral part of a performer's musicianship as researchers attempted to discover the composer's 'real' intentions. The classical musician has a double constraint: the score and 'performance practice'. On the other hand jazz musicians do not like being tied down too rigidly to a fixed programme. This was not just found in answers to interview questions, but confirmed in observations. When performing, attempts are usually made to vary tempi or rhythm so that alternating tension and relaxation is generated. This is known as 'letting the music breathe'.[9] The more competent a musician in terms of range and technique, the better he/she is able to do this manipulation. Some musicians expressed strong criticism of others who did not attempt to adapt their programme to the mood of the audience. Even those with original compositions and pre-planned programmes argued for adapting solos and forms of verbal presentation to the 'feeling' of the event.

The large number of ethnomusicological studies of music in 'folk cultures' repeatedly stress the integral part musical performances play in the cultural life of communities (cf, Ch. 4.1). The separation of musical practises from daily life - which tends to accompany the defining of music as Art - is minimal (cf, Blacking 1976). In its historical development, jazz has moved away from its folk/community origins (cf,

Ch. 3). This separation has at times been gradual and at other moments drastic (cf, Lewis 1987, Newton 1959, Taylor 1978). Part of this movement has involved the redefinition of audience-performer relations. At times musicians have deliberately rejected audience 'rights' in order to establish their own artistic status. The mid-to-late 1940's is said to have been the time when jazz musicians 'emancipated' themselves from the twin subservient bonds of hired hand in the big dance band era, and the stereotyped image of 'nigger folk' in popular American culture, in the struggle for artistic recognition.[10]

As was argued in Chapter Three, the definition of 'artistic' status was derived from the established criteria of Western European cultural hierarchies. In the context of western culture the position of 'Art music' was already filled by a musical form of a specific type - through-composed music listened to as an objectified 'work'. Amongst the many implications of this for the development of jazz, the two most important might be the tendency towards musical literacy, composition and the pre-planned programme and the exaggerated concept of the creative artist as someone to be wondered at and viewed from a respectful social distance.

The recent increase in commissions from bodies like the Arts Council going to jazz musicians are generally for works which contain considerable compositional emphasis. In pieces of this kind the improvisatory elements become part of the composition and operate within fairly closely defined parameters of pace and time defined by the 'work', rather than being the basic mode of its construction (cf, Carr 1973, Chester 1970).

In performance, the musician will encounter parameters within which a varying degree of space, both social and micro-geographical will be available. There will be factors of a general kind such as the spatial, temporal and purpose dimensions of the setting, together with the aesthetic code of the musical tradition within which the performer is operating. There will be specific and immediate possibilities and constraints in the micro-geography of the setting such as regional demarcation, the size and type of playing space and the availability of props like microphones and loudspeakers. Will the musician be playing on a stage, if so how high is it, and how large? Where is the audience in relation to the stage? If there is no stage, will there be just a bare playing area with no tangible demarcation between audience and performer? Is dancing going on, and if so where? Questions of this kind need to be answered by the performer before the session can be played adequately. However, during the performance there will many different cues that the musician will register to tell him/her how the audience is reacting. What is taken as desirable audience behaviour will be assessed in the light of the aesthetic code of the performance occasion and the musician's own level of competence and confidence.

Earlier it was suggested that performance contexts will usually be situations of normative disorganisation within which the participants will construct priority strategies. These negotiated, and often contested set of proprieties form a complex interactional network. The location of the performer within this will affect his/her ability to manipulate the occasion. He/she will have little control during breaks, when the bar staff are fully occupied, but will have superior control during the sets. Cecile Taylor, a black American free-improvising pianist, found it

difficult to get work initially because he attracted an audience who came to listen rather than drink and played sets according to the flow and 'inner' possibilities of his music rather than according to a set club timetable (cf, Wilmer 1977:48). Behind these competing demands will lie the basic need for the establishment to make a profit. Ornette Coleman has said that in his early days as an avant-garde saxophonist he had to force himself to remember that although there was an audience in front of him, he was employed by, and therefore really playing for, the manager of the club (cf, Wilmer 1977).

C. Involvement Management:

At the individual level Goffman (1963) uses the term 'involvement' to cover the activities of social actors in settings. They can be ranked as Main or Side involvements. An involvement is a 'Side' involvement when indulging in it does not challenge the individual's 'Main' involvement. Many activities such as smoking, humming, foot tapping act as Side involvements which do not challenge the Main involvement of listening. Of course it is not always easy to assess what an individual's priorities are at any particular time. It is unlikely that audiences have paid entrance fees just to sit and tap their feet or smoke. It is possible that some members may have entered the venue to get out of the cold or rain, and it is quite possible that some may have come with a partner for the purpose of making an impression or in the anticipation of sexual conquest. Eating and drinking may be powerful involvements in some venues. Some members of the audience may have come to listen to the music. In venues where dancing is allowed, a further involvement is possible. The main point here is that such involvements require 'managing' and that different members of the venue staff will be

involved in this managing in different ways according to their own position within the network of situational priorities. An obvious factor, but one which needs to be made clear, is that although the musicians' task may seem to be to ensure that listening to the music becomes the audience's main involvement this may not be so in all (or even most) venues. Music for dancing is not necessarily the best music to listen to, and vice versa, but dancing makes people hot, and when they are hot they drink. Management makes more money on bar profits. Close emotional personal encounters involving quiet talk may be interrupted by raucous noisy numbers. Performing musicians in all contexts have to be aware of situational priorities and the main and side involvements of individuals. The management of these is a crucial criterion for the assessment of good performance and is done according to situational proprieties. Alfred Brendel tries to avoid taking his hands from the piano keyboard during pauses in the music because "if you do, you get the cough!" In interview, Clive Wilson, a jazz trumpeter in New Orleans tries to catch the eye of each member of the audience at least once during a set.

> "It makes them think I'm playing 'just for them', it can make their day! - especially if they're pretty. Can't do it too much though, cos the waitresses can't take their orders, just enough to make them want to stay for another set, and who knows come back tomorrow! I tend to concentrate on the pretty ones for me, and the ones who are spending for the waitresses!"

A clear example of the complexity of priorities and involvements is given by Avron Levine White when talking of the problem of volume in a Zurich jazz club. Arguments about volume seemed perpetual, but particularly likely at the start of the evening.

> The management wanted some kind of volume to attract passing trade.

> The bar staff wanted little volume so they could hear the requests for drinks. Also, in the early part of the evening when there were very few people in the club, some of the customers complained about volume levels ... Initially this problem affected the choice of material, until after the first week, when the bandleader had a full-scale confrontation with the manageress and the bar staff. After that, we all simply carried on without further attention to volume. It never really became very loud. (White 1987:204)

There are many similar examples in the various observations of different performance venues.

SUMMARY

THE PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES may be said to consist of:

A. Programming Issues - which border on the scheduling parameters outlined under the 'performance setting', through pre-programming issues to the construction of the programme.

B. Pacing and Regulation Issues - which look at the degree of fixity vs. flexibility which is available to the musician in the performance of the programme. This is derived from the aesthetic ideology of the musical form and the contextual constraints of the setting.

C. Involvement Management - the musician is involved as one of the participants in the complex process of managing the involvement of the audience members in the occasion. The complex structure of proprieties which guide the management of the involvements needs to be delineated from behavioural cues including the pacing and regulation of the musical content of the performance.

With this last element of the performance procedures the final component is reached: the performance process.

3. THE PERFORMANCE PROCESS:

In the process of performance, the musical content with its particular form and structure combines with the contextual structure to produce the particular and unique event.

Alfred Schutz: Making Music

Schutz (1964) has focussed attention on the way in which musical performance draws together the audience and performer through relationships and processes which are fundamental, not only to performance analysis but also to the basic communicative relationship of social life. What he refers to as the 'mutual tuning-in relationship' is the foundation of all communication (cf, Ch. 4.3). In Schutz's essay, dimensions of time are explored in considerable detail. The key distinction is between 'inner' and 'outer' time. The performer explores the piece of music in its 'own' inner time: in relation to its past, its unfolding present and its anticipated future. The hearer shares with the performer this experience of inner time ...

> ... (the) performer and listener are 'tuned-in' to one another, are living together through the same flux, are growing older together while the musical process lasts. (Schutz 1964:173)[10]

Whether the 'sharing' makes the performed content successful aesthetically is debatable.[11] However, Schutz points to the tension between the awareness of inner and outer time. The performance event will take place in outer time, and in group performances the musicians will have to relate to each other for cues in outer time. Performances therefore, involve the manipulation of several dimensions of time and some governing the organisation of outer time in the performance process are derived from aspects of the performance setting and performance

procedures. Others are concerned with the management of involvement (cf, Fairley 1988). And as Schutz points out, sectors of time are shared together with sectors of space. The complex negotiation of both micro-geographical and social spaces is an integral part of the performance process.

Such factors make the study of performance so important for a sociology of music. Musicological study of form and content, what might be called the structure of music, takes place in a realm of its own specialist discourse. Its isolation of the music content from contextual issues tends to privilege musical structure (cf, Shepherd 1982). Concern with contextual structures on the other hand emphasises the limits and possibilities within situations, and what is particularly important, provides a way of detailing aspects of 'outer time' in both temporal and spatial terms. Both the musicological and the sociological fields of study have their own discourse and tend to 'solidify' the fluidity of a performance event. Study of the performance process in actual performance events re-asserts the process dimension, or as Schutz eloquently describes it:

> ... making music together is an event in outer time, presupposing also a face-to-face relationship that is a community of space, and it is this dimension which unifies the fluxes of inner time and warrants their synchronization into a vivid present. (Schutz 1964:177)

The difficulties for the observer are considerable. Observation requires a degree of social distance from the event, a resistance to the tendency to be absorbed within the phenomenological circle of shared inner time. Yet for some aesthetic ideologies it is one of the criteria of a successful performance that such absorption takes place. Secondly, how does the observer tell if inner time is being shared by others? It is here that

'Loose' settings with conflicting situational priorities become easier to examine than 'Tight' settings. It is possible to see the degree to which audience members are directing involvement to the music performance in the former by noting the degree to which other involvement opportunities are being ignored. Levels of conversational noise will decrease, food and drink will be purchased or ordered less frequently in 'Loose' settings. In formal or 'Tight' settings the contextual rules demand that outward appearance be directed towards the performance and observation of involvement in inner time is more problematic. Nevertheless some cues are available for observation, fidgeting and coughing levels decrease during inner time involvement and a certain 'feel' in the atmosphere of an auditorium can be detected.

What is needed therefore, is a close description of the process of an actual performance in which the context of performance, the musical form and the social structural and historical location of its operation occur as a series of mediations of each other.

THE OBSERVATIONS

Multiple observations of performances were undertaken over a long period of time in a wide range of settings. Because of the way in which venues book jazz musicians it was not always possible to make repeated observations of the same performer(s) in exactly the same setting, but where possible that was done. The attempt was also made to observe the same performer(s) in different venues. The list of venues includes the following: The Bull's Head, Barnes; The Canteen, London; The Eddie Condon Club, New York; The London Musicians Collective, London; The Pontalba Cafe, New Orleans; The Queen Elizabeth Hall, London; Recording

Session, New Orleans; The Royal Festival Hall, London.

Each of these venues has its own unique characteristics and it was from an initial comparison of these together with an examination of literature on performance contexts that the dimensions of performance setting and performance procedure were constructed. Two of the venues have been selected for extended accounts: Chapter Six describes the Pontalba Cafe, New Orleans, and Chapter Seven, the Royal Festival Hall, London.

SUMMARY

THE PERFORMANCE SETTING may be said to consist of:

A. Spatial Parameters - which include:

The distribution of available venue types

The architectural characteristics of the venue

The design of the performance area

The control of entry and exit to the auditorium

The barriers to perception

Region demarcation including back-stage/front-stage arrangements amongst other 'physical/material' structuring aspects which a performer needs to bear in mind as resources (both constraining and enabling).

B. Temporal Parameters - which include:

Scheduling constraints derived largely from factors extrinsic to the performance event.

Programming factors derived from factors extrinsic to the performance content.

C. Situational Priorities and Proprieties - the set of parameters that are likely to be derived from perceptions of the purpose of the building within which the performance occurs. For the majority of venues the

basic need to survive in the economic market by the maximisation of profit or its equivalent will be the dominant priority.

The Situational Priorities may be perceived as having an 'externality' as far as the occasion participants are concerned and present parameters within which both audience, performers and other personnel construct the occasion.

The Situational Proprieties, or the rules which the participants negotiate with each other to deal with the demands made upon them.

THE PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES consist of:

A. Programming Issues - which border on the scheduling parameters outlined under the 'performance setting', pre-programming issues, through to programme construction.

B. Pacing and Regulation Issues - which look at the degree of fixity vs. flexibility which is available to the musician in the performance of the programme. This is derived from the aesthetic ideology of the musical form and the contextual constraints of the setting.

C. Involvement Management - the musician is involved as one of the participants in the complex process of managing the involvement of the audience members in the occasion. The complex structure of proprieties which guide the management of the involvements needs to be delineated from behavioural cues including the pacing and regulation of the musical content of the performance.

THE PERFORMANCE PROCESS

As detailed a description as possible of the way in which an actual performer(s) attempts to involve individual audience members in the process of inner time, while at the same time being aware of the

ubiquitous constraints of outer time on what he or she does. In short, what is being described is how the individual performance event is accomplished within the performance context and how this accomplishment takes into account the constraints and enabling potential of the setting.

THE PONTALBA CAFE, NEW ORLEANS

The Pontalba Cafe was chosen as an example of a venue where the performance of music is not the prime situational priority. It differs dramatically from a purpose built concert hall or many jazz night-clubs. The musicians must take into account a complex set of competing priorities and negotiate equally complex and subtle situational proprieties with staff who are not musicians. These become constitutive of the process of musical production and therefore of the product.

THE PERFORMANCE SETTING

A. Spatial Parameters:

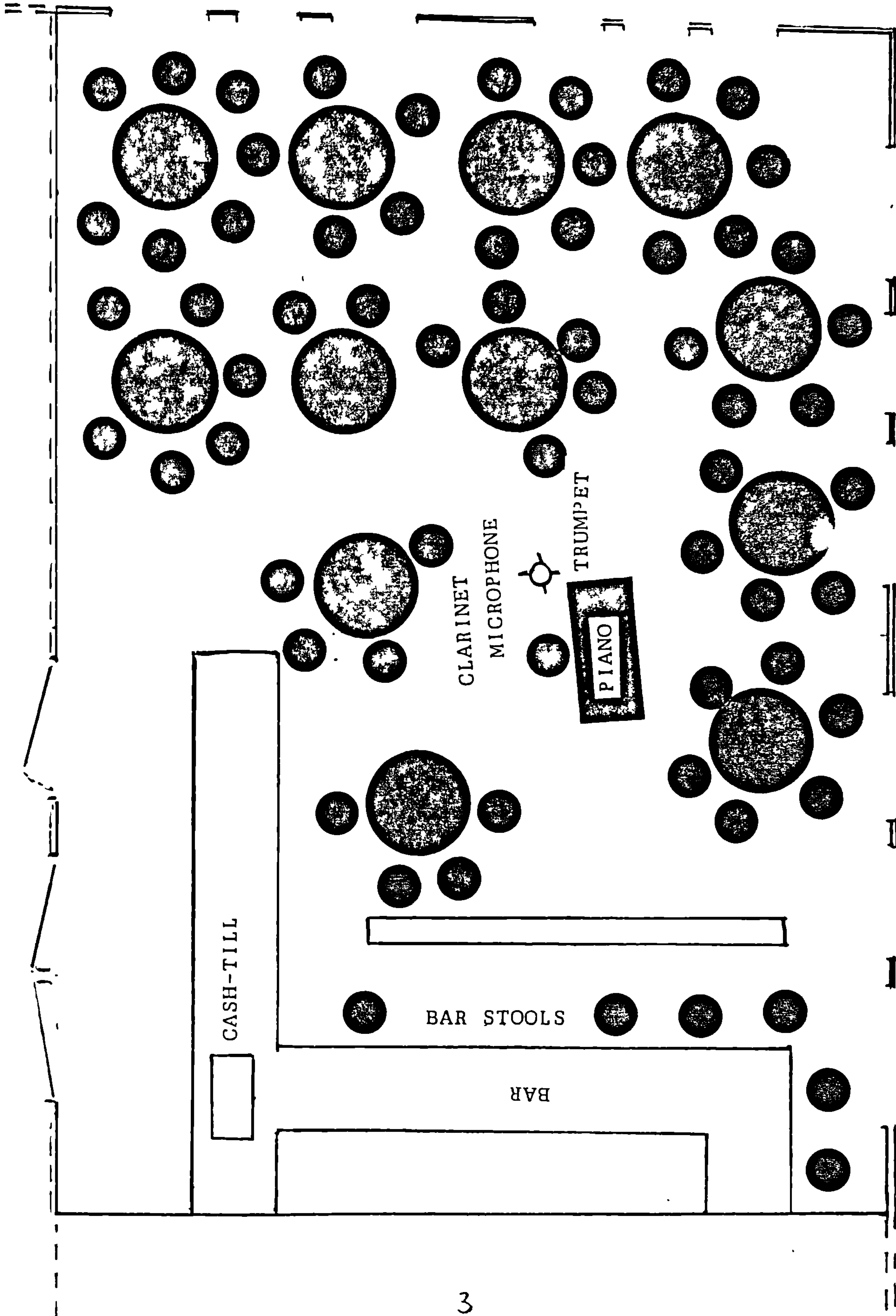
The Pontalba Cafe is on the corner of Jackson Square at the junction of Chartres and St.Peter in the Vieux Carre in New Orleans. Jackson Square, often regarded as the tourist centre of the French Quarter, is an open park with carefully mown grass, seats for passers-by to rest on, and statues of historic figures. The large St.Louis Cathedral at one end faces across the grass square to a raised walkway on the bank of the Mississippi River.

Around the outside of the grass park is a roadway that is traffic-free enabling pavement artists, portrait artists and buskers of all kinds to ply their trades. Informal and free entertainment like fire eaters, one man bands, guitarists, card tricksters, tapdancers, and cartoonists, create a constantly shifting 'side show' for the sauntering camera-carrying visitors. Boutiques and small museums, surround the cavalcade and are sheltered from the burning sun by a cloistered colonnade. At one corner of this setting is the Pontalba Cafe. All the enterprises in the square, including the Cafe, are directed at entertaining and profiting from the

tourists who congregate there. Of the many concerns which seek to profit from the influx of visitors during the 'season' in New Orleans, only a few cater for families. There are a multitude of bars ranging from the highly respectable to the most disreputable, from the aggressively macho (featuring country and western music), through a panoply of 'clip joint' stripper bars in Bourbon Street, to a range of gay bars further down town. The Pontalba is not a bar but a cafe. It has a bar within it but its main attraction is as an eating place for family groups of all ages. It is not a restaurant and one would not 'go out to dinner' there, but food ranging from very light snacks to full meals is available.

The basic aim of the establishment - the attraction of tourists in order to sell food and drink - is helped considerably by its architectural characteristics. Situated on a corner, the cafe has a double public aspect. The windows which open on to two streets at right angles to each other: Chartres and St.Peter, are full length - floor to ceiling - and can be hinged back, concertina style, to increase ventilation and access. The shady interior with its huge brass and mahogany ceiling fans provides a welcoming and cool environment contrasting with the burning sunlight in the square outside. With the windows hinged back access is easy and a certain amount of wandering in and out is possible. The small band is hired explicitly to attract the wanderers inside. Once in, the visitor can eat and drink a variety of reasonably priced refreshments and sit at one of a number of round marble tables. The bar with fixed bar stools is at one end of the cafe. A symbolic division between the spatial areas of the bar and the cafe proper is made by a free standing railing (see plan).

THE PONTALBA CAFE, NEW ORLEANS



The musicians are arranged on the cafe side of the railing. The upright piano is backed against a pillar with the trumpet and clarinet in front. They make a compact group and become the visual centre of the room. The group have a small loudspeaker and a single free standing floor microphone used for announcements and the amplification of clarinet solos. A sheet of hardboard with a simply lettered poster announcing the group as the "Hot Jazz Trio" rests on the open lid of the piano. A similar poster is propped outside the folded windows on the Jackson Square side of the cafe. No attempt is being made to offer 'hard-sell' advertising like a music night club or theatre. There are no 'barkers' outside extolling the glories to be viewed within - as there are outside the stripper bars in Bourbon Street - no lurid posters proclaiming show titles and names of big draw stars as there are outside the theatre and cinemas in other parts of the town. The message is clear. The venue is a cafe first and foremost which also provides musical accompaniment. The musicians are not 'stars' or internationally known through exposure on television and New Orleans has many of these: Pete Fountain (with his gold plated clarinet), Al Hirt (with his own privately owned night club) and Woody Herman's 'Thundering Herd' at the Hyatt Hilton Hotel. These have posters and press advertisements throughout the city. The Pontalba is a cafe in a musical city full of tourists. It provides a musical accompaniment to its proper business of providing food and drink to visitors who are hot and hungry and have limited money to spend. The musicians are not large entrepreneurs and are paid normal union rates. They cannot command large fees and their job is to draw in customers from the hot sun outside during the day and early evening. Their employment depends on their ability to do this and like the waiters

and waitresses, although to a far lesser extent, tips are part of their working arrangements. A large glass pint beer mug is kept on top of the piano with the coins and dollar bills in it clearly visible to the audience. A notice reads: 'Most tunes 50cents - The Saints 1$'. The beer mug is known colloquially as "The Jug". Requests for tunes have to be paid for!

In the discussion of the construction of the Comparative Frame it was argued above (cf: Ch.5) that some form of perceptual demarcation is an essential requirement in any performance situation. By definition a 'performance' is distinguished from the 'natural' in perceptual terms by the operation of a frame which is cued by the transition from one perceptual region (the 'natural') to another (the performance). It has also been argued that the commodification of organised sound requires a further layer of situation closure to control its reception. It is partly the ability to penetrate this layer of closure that is purchased with the commodity. Sound becomes an environmental pollutant if the recipient is unable to control his/her reception of it. More pertinently, without closure the vendor of commodity sound has no commodity to sell. In performance settings, situation closure varies considerably from venue to venue. Strong closure is a marked feature - probably a characteristic feature - of formal clubs, theatres and concert halls. In contrast the Pontalba has weak situation closure; a distinctive mark of this type of venue. Closure around the cafe is limited by the need for semi-casual access. Tourists are wary of entering establishments from which they feel they might have difficulty in withdrawing. The fear of being caught by unrealistically high prices was often observed as families negotiated with staff about what was involved in sitting and ordering food and

drink. During observations I was frequently asked what the prices were and was told stories of the previous evenings experiences in other slicker night spots. To some extent the lack of a formal entrance fee exacerbated this ambiguity, yet having one would have had radical implications for the cafe. Currently its transitory clientele ensured the dominance of the sale of food and drink as its 'situational priority'. To have an entrance fee might convert the establishment into a performance venue proper or at least give the musical performance greater salience. The weak situation closure relates to situation priorities and the negotiation of proprieties. These will be examined in more detail later.

Two examples taken directly from the observation may serve to illustrate the weak closure.

> 1. I am sitting at a table drinking a coffee and a number of people come through the open french windows. One woman sits at my table and after a few minutes I get chatting to her:
>
> C.J. "Hi! What brings you here?"
>
> W. "Well y'all seem to be having a good time in here. Is it pricey?"
>
> 2. Later during a fast lively tune a couple of small black boys outside the windows tapdance to the music waving their arms around and grinning widely. This seems almost too good to be true for some tourists outside who gather around them with a variety of complex camera equipment. The boys perform with alacrity and then pass around a cap for small change. They manage to collect quite an amount and even, with some daring, try to collect from customers in the cafe who are sitting next to the open windows. This seems to be possible so long as their feet do not actually cross the threshold.

This is an interesting aspect of boundary maintenance. The problem of partially open access for the cafe is a real one. The small boys are entertainers - buskers - and therefore part of the tourist business in their own small way, and although they may be operating with a spin off from the trio in the cafe they cannot be prevented from doing so.

Indeed if their entertainment value is successful they may enhance the sense of well being of the customers inside the cafe. If they cause a crowd to congregate, they may even be the means of pulling further custom in. Their activities spread the aegis of the cafe outside the physical confines of the building, and simultaneously reinforce the New Orleans nostalgia myth of music and black street tap dancers happily engaged in expressions of well being in the Southern Sun. The perpetuation of this myth is a vital part of the tourist industry generally, and is signified in many of the holiday brochures. The cafe staff are well aware of this and the point at which they might regard the boys as a nuisance would presumably have something to do with the degree to which customers found them annoying. This situation was never observed though, as after a short time the boys moved on to another section of the French Quarter. They were frequently seen in different areas, usually in Bourbon Street after dark, performing dances for the evening strollers.

Since the architecture of the building did not materially support a front and back stage <u>region demarcation</u> for the musicians, they had to signify this symbolically. They devised various behavioural techniques for satisfying their perceived need for a private back stage. They were in full view of the audience at all times and had to be very clear about rest breaks and the start and finish of musical 'sets'. Announcements were made into the microphone accompanied by clearly defined facial and bodily gestures whenever a break was taken. Often the names of the members of the band were announced which is a traditional signing-off technique because it can be done in such a way as to evoke applause (a conventional way of finishing a performance) for each musician

separately. During a break instruments were placed clearly and carefully in full view of the potential customers outside. To help prevent theft they were also clearly visible to the customers and the musicians inside. They acted as a symbolic indication to all that music was in temporary abeyance but would resume shortly. Great care was taken in placing the instruments because they are easily damaged and prey to curious but well-meaning customers. Without instruments in correct working order the musicians cannot earn their living. Instruments are very expensive to repair, and although the 'house piano' is the property of the management and any repair its responsibility, trumpets, clarinets, saxophones for example are portable and at constant risk. The use of instruments to demarcate front and back stage regions (with their supplementary use as advertising) was therefore at some risk to the musicians.

Certain customers regarded the breaks in a programme as a time to talk to the players, and although in some situations musicians go out of their way to mingle, regarding this as part of their job in keeping the customers happy, this was seldom the case at the Pontalba. During breaks the musicians usually went to the far end of the bar furthest from the majority of the customers and close to the tills used by the waitresses. There they would huddle together and chat with their backs to the audience. Free glasses of cold beer were given to them during breaks, and although they recognised queries addressed to them by customers, these were politely but not enthusiastically answered. During slack periods waitresses might talk to the musicians about the state of the takings, or about problems with management. This was a different matter, and conversations could be highly animated when dealing with wages, tips and ways in which management could improve the takings if

only they listened to the work force!

B. Temporal Parameters:

The temporal parameters of the performance setting were unusual for jazz venues. The scheduling of performances was not confined to normally defined leisure times. Because the cafe was located in a tourist town, leisure hours for tourists - basically the whole twenty four hours - were potentially available for use. The management had decided that the Pontalba's priority would be the cafe rather than the bar because it was situated away from the immediate night-life area of Bourbon Street with its noisy stripper bars, take away food parlours, its peep shows and porno video arcades. The management, in line with policy guidelines for tourist development set down by City Hall considered there was a place for a cafe catering for families and mature groups of adults rather than businessmen at conventions and young single males in search of alcohol and sex. Defining the clientele as groups of all ages and both sexes essentially confined opening times to the day rather than the night. Waitresses and musicians who wished to work gruelling hours in order to make as much money as possible during the season were able to work at the Pontalba during the morning and afternoon and then move on to other establishments in the evening if they could stand the pace. The trio which were a regular attraction were generally hired to play for two sessions. In the mornings they played from 9.30am to 12.30pm. In the late afternoon they started at 4.00pm and continued until 7.00pm. During the heat of the day, between 12.30pm and 4.00pm the volume of customers slackened off because of hotel lunches and afternoon naps, and the cafe confined itself to

providing a solo pianist or guitarist on an 'ad hoc' basis.

The three hour sessions were divided into three 'sets' of about fifty five minutes each, allowing a five minutes rest for the musicians. From the point of view of the management, this encouraged a turnover of customers by preventing an individual sitting at a table all day with a single cup of coffee. The cafe operated a minimum charge for each set of two dollars which allowed a customer to buy approximately two beers or coffees during that time. A calculating customer would be able to have about an hour of music with refreshment for two dollars which is a very reasonable price. Some larger groups and families with three or four children found this charge per head difficult to take, but waitresses seemed to operate some discretion when applying these charges. This charging system provided an external structure for the musicians' performance, and they were adept at manipulating the music, the announcements, the jokes and contributions by visiting musicians wishing to sit in, to pack the set with interest and variety. Not only did this provide good entertainment but also helped to persuade customers to commit themselves to staying for a new set and a further two dollars a head minimum charge. The ability of the musicians to use this structure creatively was sometimes a source of conflict with the waitresses and this will be examined in more detail below.

C. Situational Priorities and Proprieties:

When discussing Goffman's work and its relevance to the construction of the comparative observational frame I argued that most situations contain the potential for competing, and sometimes conflicting claims on the commitment of the personnel involved. These may take the form of

different priorities held by different groups of people - e.g. listeners and eaters - or more than one claim impinging on a single group or particular individual - e.g. wanting to listen and wanting to eat. Such conflicts require modes of conduct, or what Goffman describes as a 'kind of communication traffic order' to enable normative disorganisation to be avoided or ameliorated. The architecture of buildings may help resolve some conflicting or competing priorities. Enclosed auditoria separate the musical performance from the bar and restaurant for example. Strong barriers to sound reception enable priorities to be clarified in concert halls and theatres. Where musical performance has priority, regional demarcation and barriers to reception are likely to be '<u>strong</u>'. In situations like the Pontalba Cafe where the dominant priority of the management is to make profit from selling food and drink and the performance of music is seen as a useful adjunct and support to this, demarcation is likely to be '<u>weak</u>'.

This general weakness of demarcation, while allowing the music to be used to attract customers in a highly effective way, led to repeated conflicts between the musicians and the waitresses, despite their similar economic relationship with the management. Both groups were employees engaged in extracting money from tourists, and both were paid out of profit gained by management. Yet there were serious differences between the two groups. The musicians perceived themselves as highly skilled artists who had to make a living out of doing what at heart they enjoyed. They were also very intelligent and able to work at other jobs should the music market collapse. The trumpet player was a science graduate from Newcastle University and had for some time worked in a bank in New Orleans dealing with computers while playing his trumpet

when jobs came his way until his music career became established. The clarinetist was an ex-miner from Yorkshire with an extrovert personality who doubled as a comic and all round entertainer and was married with a family. His wife was a fully employed and successful nurse in a private hospital in New Orleans. The pianist was a European music graduate who was generating a career as a concert pianist specialising in the works of early American composers. The point here is that the musicians had a reference group beyond the confines of the cafe. This was not an elitist view of themselves as 'Great Artists' but as they revealed in interviews, another way of life. As manipulators of musical sounds they, as the trumpeter said quoting Louis Armstrong, try "to do pretty things to a tune and make the people happy." All the players had other commercial interests. The trumpet player's main interest is the leading of an 'authentic' New Orleans band. This band plays at large local festivals and makes recordings for a small independent record label. Its personnel include a number of indigenous New Orleans musicians some of whom play at Preservation Hall - the house of historic New Orleans music. The trumpeter researches 'authentic' arrangements and recordings and 'rehabilitates' many retired older musicians. These resources are channelled into his larger band. Yet he sees no distinction between his major interest in preserving and developing an 'authentic' New Orleans music and his work in the cafe. For him New Orleans music has always been entertainment. It has always been played at dances, in bars, hotels and on the streets in marching bands - in one of which he also plays. He expresses this by saying that he "tries to reach the people, to touch them in some way." The commercial setting in which this is done is not a hindrance but a fact of life. 'Touching' the listener is possible in any

setting, but the particularities of a context may effect how it is done. He does not resent playing in a cafe to attract customers - it is his job and enables him to 'reach the people' as effectively as any other. In fact the more successfully he does this, the more successful the cafe is commercially, and the more likely he is to be rehired. Yet clearly the commercial nature of the establishment dictates certain priorities.

All the musicians enjoyed what they were doing; without exception all the waitresses loathed their jobs. They needed their work in a way which the musicians did not. Many had small children to keep and quite a few were single mothers. Both groups recognised their need for each other and individually quite liked each other but the working relationship was uneasy. The musicians were conscious of themselves as artists and this dominant priority enabled them to be sufficiently free from the grinding compulsion of the work situation to exercise role distance when they wished. The waitresses never seemed able to do that sufficiently to feel they were in control of their job themselves. However it was possible, although seldom done, for the musicians to bend the parameters within which they were supposed to play using the 'demands of the music' as an explanation. A piece of music being played is experienced by musicians as containing its own momentum (Schutz's 'inner-time') and may be difficult to contain within the tight temporal structure of fifty-five minute 'sets' (Schutz's 'outer-time'). The waitresses had no similar legitimate reason to vary their parameters. Despite these tensions, the musicians and the waitresses negotiated modes of social conduct to enable them to work effectively together in accordance with the priorities set by management.

Goffman (1963) notes that 'the same physical space may be caught within the domain of two different social occasions ...' (Goffman 1963:20). In these circumstances situational proprieties are negotiated and developed between participants. In many contexts officials may regulate the operation of situational proprieties by indicating changes of 'occasion'. An obvious example would be the announcement of an interval in an evenings entertainment by an M.C. In the cafe there is no official to do this and the proceedings are regulated by the band itself according to prior arrangements with the cafe staff - in particular the waitresses. Between themselves these two groups have negotiated situational proprieties which allow the cafe to function most effectively - that is to say, to maximise profits for management and tips for themselves. The former is necessary if the musicians and staff are to keep their jobs, because although alternative employment may be available it is unlikely to be as pleasant as this one and probably will be temporary or downright casual especially during the tourist season. The second is especially important for the waitresses. Wages were low for them, whereas the musicians were paid basic Musicians Union rates and displayed their membership books on the piano. The musicians were aware of the waitresses' problems and tried to help them with exhortations to the customers to 'drink up and order some more' at appropriate pauses between numbers. Pauses not only gave the musicians a short rest and a time for exhortation for more consumption, they also enabled the waitresses to have free reign with the customers' orders. Ordering, serving and paying are noisy activities and there is a potential clash with listening to music. Nevertheless the business of the cafe is to do with consumption and waitresses seldom modified their behaviour.

When they did so it was because of a definite 'act' being generated by the musicians, who in their turn took care not to overdo the frequency of these. They had to entertain the customers to bring them in and keep them, but not to such an extent that they deflected their involvement in the situation away from consumption. Here we have a clear contrast with many concert halls or a jazz club where an entrance fee is charged at the door (eg. The Eddie Condon Club, New York; Ronnie Scott's Club, London). This together with bar and food profits usually constitutes the main financial return for management but is not really the responsibility of the musicians. In the Pontalba, the musicians and staff did not seem to resent this responsibility but from time to time complained amongst themselves that management was not doing enough to help. If management were not happy with the financial return coming in, there was little more that the musicians and waitresses felt they could do about it. They certainly had suggestions they could make which would improve matters but whether these ever reached a more concrete form which was communicated to management was not clear. It is likely they were mutually supportive grumbles between themselves which rehearsed a protective strategy should management ever feel like imposing its dissatisfaction more directly. An overheard conversation between the trumpet player and a waitress during a break between sets illustrates the point.

> The musicians are huddled together at the end of the bar away from the main body of the cafe when a waitress who would normally be taking orders and delivering food and drinks during the break joins their group.
>
> W. "Nice one Clive, we did quite well out of that set."
>
> M(a). "But we're not full yet - if only we could get those window watchers in to commit themselves."
>
> M(b). "The management here don't really try - they need some boards

outside giving the prices and making it clear about the two bucks minimum. People are nervous about the cost, they're afraid it's going to be like Bourbon Street."

W. "Well it's not my job to write notices for these goddamn bosses - I'm just a waitress, I need this job, I got a kid to look after on my own."

M(a). "Well it looks like we're filling up now! Perhaps we should have more breaks! Ho! Ho! Back to work!"

A basic conflict of priorities remained the need for the musicians to get the customers to listen to the music and watch the performance - and this extended to the 'window watchers' or potential customers outside in the Square - and the need for the waitresses to talk to customers, get orders, deliver them and clear tables ready for new clients. The ease and efficiency with which this was done determined speed of customer turnover and the enjoyment that customers might have. This of course could lead to a good size tip and tips were of vital importance to the waitresses. Although the band got tips, these were few and usually only for playing requests, an activity which they did not push. The band got their Union basic and extras were considered lucky. The waitresses had tips as part of their employment agreement and their wages were paid with that in mind.

This conflict was one of the major parameters which constrained the musical performance, and yet those same constraints produced particular solutions which would not have been produced in a different situation. Both the constraining and the enabling will be illustrated in more detail in the description and analysis of the Performance Procedures.

THE PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES

A. Programming:

In Chapter Five it was argued that programming encompasses general aspects of scheduling, conventions regarding acceptable programme packages and the rank ordering of their contents. How far preprogramming is possible depends on the music's form and the performance parameters of the venue. Jazz, in common with other musics with a high improvisational element is highly resistant to detailed preprogramming. It is difficult to determine the length of a piece because of the flexibility required by the performers when improvising, and in 'orchestral' or 'big band' jazz there is often a tension between the planned coordination required by a large ensemble and the spontaneous musical development and expression of a soloist.

For the Pontalba musicians, the programming parameters were clear. The pieces played had to fill fifty five minutes give or take a couple of minutes either way, and there were three of such 'sets' in each employment period. The musicians' only gesture in the direction of preprogramming was to have a list of numbers on a small sheet of paper from which they selected each piece in turn. The pianist would tick off each title after it was played to ensure that the same tune was not performed twice in the same set, or ideally in the same period of three hours. There were also some 'spectacular' pieces: a trumpet feature - "Cornet Chop Suey" (Louis Armstrong), a piano solo - "Finger Buster" (Jelly Roll Morton), a novelty singing number by the clarinetist, a spoof Latin American Rumba and numerous other 'specials' which might involve visiting players sitting in. The period of the observations coincided with a large jazz and folk music festival in New Orleans which attracted

musicians from all over the U.S.A. and Western Europe including the United Kingdom, and it was impossible for the trio in the Pontalba to predict either which visiting musician might drop in for a couple of numbers or when they might do so. When they did, the band made use of them and endeavoured to fit them in to the fifty five minute sets in as constructive a way as possible. The 'spectaculars', the 'novelties' and the 'visitors' were distributed carefully throughout a playing period to enable a bit of excitement to be kept in hand. The need to regulate the audience's involvement between the vital activities of ordering and consuming food and drink and listening to the music was a vital constraint on the construction of the programme. The tension between enticing customers in, keeping them there and ensuring they spent money underpinned the way the musicians organised their programme.

B. Pacing and Regulation:

To what extent is it possible for musicians to pace and generally regulate the process of the performance? Different aesthetic ideologies define the nature of a musical work and the part played by the performer in its production. Those aesthetics which stress the dominant role of the composer as the 'author' of the piece may be broadly contrasted with those which emphasise the creative role of the performer (cf, Chapter Eight).

In the case of the musical form played in the Pontalba considerable flexibility is allowed as none of the musical pieces have a set length. Each and everyone of them may be played with any number of variations, solo instrumental choruses, sung choruses or repeats. The small band know each other very well and have played together for a

long time. They know how each other react to different cues, how to signal to each other by as little as a raised eyebrow, and can interpret these signals according to the stage reached in the piece or the atmosphere in the cafe. Given that their material is flexible, the major constraint on the pacing and processual regulation of the performance came from the musicians' perception of the requirements of their function in the cafe. The relaxing of the tension of the music contrasted with deliberate moments of attention-demanding performance, enabled each set to have a variety of interest. Towards the end of each fifty five minutes the tempos increased and some 'novelty' number was played. Customers who had come in half way through that set were sufficiently excited to wish to stay on for a second one (and of course pay a further $2) because they had enjoyed themselves. Other customers who had been there for the whole set left feeling they had had a good time, and might return the next day. During the observation period it was clear that 'regulars' would often meet each other and chat about their individual holidays and dates of return, and on two occasions mini parties were held by groups of families who had got to know each other well during the week or so they had been meeting, but were now about to part. The musicians did not just play _in_ front of or even to the customers, it is little exaggeration to say they played _with_ the audience. That is not to imply that the customers had no power and that the musicians were omnipotent, but that the experience of the band enabled them to understand what the customers wanted and to incorporate it in their musical response to those external constraints set down by the management's perception of the place of the cafe in the context of a tourist industry town. Without those particular constraints

the music would have been different. The trumpet player in interview talked of the difference between playing at the Pontalba and playing in the "Open Door" in Bourbon Street which was a job he had taken the previous year. The "Open Door" was a 'tourist trap' saloon which consisted of one long bar with the musicians standing behind it. Since the saloon was situated on the corner of one of the busiest (and noisiest) streets in the Vieux Carre, the band's job was to draw in customers from the streets during the late evening in competition with dozens of other bars and various strip clubs. This meant playing very loudly and brashly most of the time and although the money was good, mainly because drunks tip well, the wind musician tends to develop a coarse tone and can give himself lip problems. The trumpeter had decided to give that job up and much preferred playing at the Pontalba because he did not have to strain and his whole choice of programme and playing style could be more relaxed and flexible. "Here I can reach people, on Bourbon Street I was just blasting at drunks, and they didn't give a shit what I was playing." This question of the pacing and regulation of the performance by the musician will be illustrated in greater detail in the section dealing with the performance process.

C. Involvement Management:

The term 'involvement' refers to the way in which the individual participants allocate their own energies to particular priorities originating in the necessities of the context. Individuals can be involved in situations for a number of disparate reasons. In the case of the Pontalba these are likely to include refreshment, the sociability experienced through meeting others who may have been seen before in the same

place, the enjoyment of the music, to get into the shade and out of the burning sun, to pacify fretting children who may be hot and tired or give couples a chance to sit down and have few moments 'out of themselves' to prevent nerves being frayed. No doubt there could have been many more reasons why customers entered the Pontalba Cafe. Whatever the personal motivation of the customers, the job of the musicians and the other staff of the cafe is to manage the individual involvements in such a way as to encourage consumption. Each individual must want to stay, each must either wish to order or at the very least not mind ordering so that the cafe can be maintained as a business concern. That way the musicians, waitresses and other cafe staff like cooks, bartenders and cleaners keep their jobs. The management of involvement was seen to be mainly the role of the musicians with the waitresses keeping a watchful eye on their success.

Goffman (1963) distinguishes between Main and Side involvements of individuals, the latter being those activities which do not interfere with the former. Examples of Side involvements are smoking, and foot tapping in jazz clubs, and listening to muzak in shops. But as Goffman also points out, some supposedly Main involvements are too weak to be effective. In these cases Side involvements may temporarily become salient. In-flight movies in aeroplanes and reading on train journeys would be examples of this. It is important to realise that when called upon to do so the individual can retrieve the dominance of the Main involvement. There are social rules against 'having no purpose', and in situations of weak individual involvement the context can supply a purpose for the individual. Solitary eating tends to be done rapidly as if in a hurry to be somewhere more important and solitary drinking easily

becomes converted into the purpose of getting drunk. The jazz cafe requires a delicate steering between aimlessness and boredom on the one hand and desperate commitment on the other. Either of these extremes would result in a lessening of profits. Heavy drinking would change the clientele that the cafe seeks to target, and rushed eating would limit the takings from drinks during slack daytime periods. Strong commitment to listening to the music as the Main involvement might slow down consumption and too weak an involvement would not pull in as many customers. Where the band go out of their way to become the Main involvement this may increase the time spent in the cafe, but does not necessarily increase the rate of expenditure. The latter is the responsibility of the waitresses and the two groups work as a team. For this reason the musicians regulate their sequencing of numbers and seldom go all out to capture the whole audience more than once in any set although at various points the involvement of particular individuals or groups may be targeted. Performers are well aware of the need to establish themselves as objects of involvement and thereby convert 'on lookers' into 'audience members'. However the nature of this is delicate in contexts where music performance is not the main situational priority.

The concept of 'involvement management' provides a useful slant on the musicians' organisation of performance. The activity of 'reaching the people' is tiring because it involves the continuous management of 'front'. Hence the importance for the musicians of managing a front/back stage demarcation. A particular example of 'front management' would be the trumpet player walking from table to table. But such manipulation is always at risk. Can he play *and* walk

effectively? Is he able to get between the tables and chairs without tripping? If he did stumble this would not only spoil the performance front but might actually damage his lip or his instrument. Does he mind having his photo taken with daughters, aunts, wives and husbands while he plays? How accessible is he to the audience? Will he talk to them, joke with them, or does accessibility stop after visual and musical display? A number of instances from the observation suggest clear limits to his involvement. He can and does accept comments from the audience but filters them according to the passage of the organisation of the 'set'. He will talk to individuals or groups between numbers but not during a tune even if he personally is not playing at that moment. Between 'sets' he chats to his fellow musicians and enquiries from audience members are 'cooled out' politely but firmly until he has finished his business. Since there is no retreat into a 'back stage' area like a dressing room, interpersonal manipulation is heightened. If members of the band decide to mingle with the customers they do so deliberately as a technique. Verbal interaction is always on their terms. Involvement 'shields' are used effectively. Sheet music, waitresses, trips to the lavatory, chats with personal friends standing at the door, can all serve to mask a temporary lowering of 'front'. All indicate that although present, the performer is not available for mutual involvement by an audience member at that moment. Even the music itself is paced. Playing a wind instrument is very tiring physically. Fast numbers are alternated with slower ones, and the two wind instruments take turns in soloing. Variety may make the tunes more interesting for the audience but they are a physical and technical necessity for the performer. If the trumpeter's lip should be strained,or worse, actually split, he may be

unable to work for a short time. Walking around a crowded room playing a trumpet is a risky business - one nudge or jolt might damage the player's mouth. Many trumpeters refuse to play without a minimum of distance between them and others. Yet the players remain on view the whole time. The performing musician is the centre of attention, not the musical 'work'. All aspects of his craft are visible except for the daily practice routine. He regards himself as an artist but essentially in a folk tradition where aural communication and tradition is dominant and the purpose is to give people enjoyment in a situation in which they are an integral part. To integrate the audience and the music is a difficult and subtle skill. How this is done is the subject of the Performance Process.

THE PERFORMANCE PROCESS

The process of the performance refers to that part of the total performance occasion where the musical content with its particular form and structure combines with the contextual structure to produce the particular and unique event. The way Schutz (1964) has drawn attention to the relationships and processes fundamental not only to performance but to the basic communicative relationship of social life has already been outlined (cf, Chapter Five). The importance of the 'tuning in' relationship, the distinction between 'inner' and 'outer' time discussed by Schutz are all apparent in the process of the performances in the Pontalba Cafe.

The Performance

At the start of the session the band organises itself to play. The microphone and stand are set up, the loudspeaker tested and the instruments tuned to the piano. The musicians stand chatting to each other about the sequence of tunes and solos to be played, and make various remarks to a couple of waitresses

standing around. The stance is relaxed and informal. Their standard dress of dark trousers, slip on shoes and white shirt with dark tie is always adhered to. The performers are professional and simulate the black and white uniforms of the waitresses and bar staff. The buskers in the street are not dressed like this. Their colourful clothes of various 'peasant-hippy-gypsy' styles attract the attention of tourists and hint at an 'authentic' casual street style of life in the American 'easy rider' mould. The contrast with the serious professionals in the cafe could hardly be more marked.

The cafe is about half full with the customers engaged in normal cafe activity such as chatting, drinking, eating, smoking, ordering more consumables from the waitresses bustling through the chairs and tables carrying trays of coffee, beer and sandwiches. Six people are at the bar chatting and drinking. One couple are kissing heavily. Without any spoken announcement the band start playing a jolly version of "Who's sorry now?". There is no apparent impact on the audience. After the opening ensemble the clarinet solos while the trumpeter claps in time with the music. A group of strollers outside pause by the open doors and look in. The twenty five people at the tables are joined by two more. With a final ensemble chorus the piece finishes. There are some claps from the audience in a desultory way. The musicians tune up again because the trumpet is warmer and going out of tune. Four people pay their bill and leave, after some discussion with their waitress, who with an arm gesture indicates a notice on the wall which says that a $2 minimum charge for each set operates when the musicians are playing. This minimum charge arrangement is to cause difficulties and confusion at times during the session. It is not clear whether this charge applies to each person or to each table. When asked the waitresses often gave ambiguous replies. They used this

ambiguity to assess the needs and motivations of various groups of customers in relation to the size of the eventual bill. A single person sitting alone at a table and thus tending to monopolise it for some considerable time would be charged the two dollar minimum automatically. A large family group of two adults and three children who had worked up a reasonable bill would not necessarily have the two dollars per person strictly applied. A waitress was able to 'pretend' that she was letting the children off and hint at a small conspiracy against the management by so doing. This 'personal' approach was thought to encourage the family back again and in fact many did return but whether it was because of the 'conspiracy' it was impossible to tell. Certainly many families thought the prices were reasonable.

A father in singlet, shorts and sandals holds a small infant up to look inside the piano. This investigation continues while the band go into their second number - "Deed I do!". The same musical format as before: ensemble, clarinet solo, trumpet solo, ensemble. There are now seventeen people at the tables, eight at the bar and two more enter and sit at tables. While the trumpet is soloing the clarinetist claps and smiles trying to engender a happy feeling in the audience. The father and child move away from the piano and the crowds outside the window seem to have dispersed. At the end of the tune there is some sporadic clapping. During a pause of two minutes the pianist smokes and the band chat giving regular glances at the state of the tables and the sauntering passers-by outside. Suddenly the trumpet and clarinet are standing together and start a faster tune: "At the Jazz Band Ball". After the ensemble the trumpeter moves around the tables playing for customers individually - especially women. Each table in turn is clearly pleased but also embarrassed as he comes along-side. He is quite effective in giving the impression with

eyes and tilt of the instrument that he is playing 'just for them'. Some middle aged women nudge each other and giggle and a young teenage daughter of a family group blushes profusely as she is singled out for special attention. The tune finishes and the applause is greater now. There is more tuning up by the musicians and one or two soto voce comments about some girls walking past outside wearing shorts. There are now twenty one people at the tables and ten at the bar.

Twenty five minutes after the start of the session the next tune is announced by the clarinetist as a trumpet feature. "Some day you'll be sorry!" starts with the trumpet standing and the other two instruments sitting. He remains standing during the whole of the number. After two choruses the trumpeter sings and imitates the actions of a crooner by holding the microphone stand and leaning it over in the direction of particular tables. This direct focussing on particular members of the audience has an effect similar to his previous perambulations. It is as if each table in turn is illuminated by a spotlight. For a moment each group becomes involved as participants in the performance itself. The 'spotlighted' group is observed with some amusement by the other members of the audience as part of the show which is entertaining them. In a sense the group has ceased to be part of the observing audience, and become part of the musicians' performance. Soon it will be the turn of the other groups to be the focus of attention. The ambivalence of this experience is clear from the way in which they respond. A mixture of embarrassment and excitement is apparent in the expressions on their faces, as is the relief expressed by glances and sharp exhalations of breath when the 'spotlight' moves elsewhere. After the vocal chorus the trumpeter returns to his instrument and plays some beautiful improvisations around the melody. The flickering of his

half closed eyes and movement of his fingers on the trumpet valves give the impression of great concentration and delicacy of touch. The audience have become involved with him and are swinging their legs and tapping the table tops in collective encouragement. The spell is almost broken as a toddling infant wanders over to the trumpeter's vacant chair and climbs on to it. As the microphone stand is about to be scaled, the clarinetist quickly lifts the child down and points her in the direction of her parent's table. The potential threat to the band's central position is deftly converted into an asset as the audience beams in amusement. Finishing his chorus with a flourish, the trumpeter grins and pointedly sits on his chair, revealing that he has been aware of what was happening all along. No more vacant chair, no more threat. He laughs and the whole trio finishes in an ensemble version of the melody. The applause is loud and spontaneous augmented by laughter and genuine responses of friendship and support. The musicians sit back and relax and grin at each other, the number was clearly successful.

More people enter the cafe and sit down. The reason is summed up for me by one woman who replies to my enquiry:

> "It seems kinda fun in here, relaxed and ... like good value, y'know?"

> The next tune relaxes the tension and people chat to each other about their holidays and the music. More ordering of drinks and food takes place as waitresses bustle about. There are now forty people at the tables and as the final number of this set is announced there is an audible murmur of disappointment from many who have been involved for some time.

This tune is faster and livelier and a couple of small black boys outside the windows tapdance to the music waving their arms around and grinning widely. This seems almost too good to be true for some tourists outside who gather around them with a variety of complex camera equipment. The boys perform with alacrity and then pass around a cap for small change. They manage to collect quite an amount and even with some daring, try and collect from customers in the cafe who are sitting next to the open windows. (The implications for the complex business of boundary maintenance have already been noted earlier in this chapter.)

During the next tune the trumpeter again goes 'walkabout' this time concentrating on a group of pretty young girls sitting together at a table. The effect is made more exotic by his use of a plunger mute that alters the tone of the instrument in a highly vocal and suggestive way. The final ensemble statement of the theme ends with the two front-line musicians standing pointing their instruments upwards. There is a great deal of applause including some cheers from outside the cafe. The clarinetist moves to the microphone and thanking the audience says:

"We're taking a five minute break now - back in ten minutes."

Chuckles from the other players and some from the audience greet this remark and the musicians carefully place their instruments out of the way on the top of the piano. They go to the end of the bar far from the majority of customers and get free glasses of beer. They return to the back of the piano and huddle chatting. Occasional queries from particular customers who walk up to them are answered politely but unenthusiastically. They are having their break now and clearly

demarcate, if only symbolically, their own private space as separate from the main body of the cafe. A couple of waitresses join the huddle:

W. "Nice one Clive, we did quite well out of that set."

M.a "But we're not full yet - if only we could get those window watchers in to commit themselves."

M.b "The management here don't really try, they're a load of wankers if you'll pardon my French. They need some boards outside giving the prices and making it clear about the two bucks minimum - people are nervous about the cost, they're afraid it's going to be like Bourbon Street."

W. "Well it's not my job to write notices for these goddamn bosses - I'm just a waitress, I need this job, I got a kid to look after on my own."

M.a. "Well it looks like we're filling up now! Perhaps we should have more breaks! Ho! Ho! Back to work!"

(This example of conspiratorial resistance against the management has already been discussed earlier in the chapter.)

The second set starts at about one hour after the first. The trumpeter takes the microphone ...

> "Hello ladies and gentlemen, we're starting the second set of the afternoon here at the Pontalba Cafe. We hope you enjoy yourselves. Please remember the music is free but a minimum of two dollars operates for each set ... so eat and drink what you like up to two bucks because your paying for that anyway. I'm sure the management would like you to buy more than that though ... and why not? What can you get for two bucks these days? Ho! Ho! Our first number is an old New Orleans favourite: "Shine".

The band are seated and the trumpeter taps the number in with his foot at a jolly lilt. There are fifty four people at the tables. Some take photos of each other and of the band. Soon the trumpeter walks from table to table doing his 'gypsy violin' act and gets his photo taken while he is playing. A father indicates that he would like him to stand next

to his daughter while he snaps - this the trumpeter does with slightly exaggerated eagerness while he plays.

> "Say buddy, is this guy here everyday?" asks a tourist at the next table to me.
>
> C.J. "Most days, do you like him?"
>
> T. "Sure, he's got a great way with him! Plays nice too!"
>
> C.J. "This is a good place to come."
>
> T. "Yeah ... Seems so! It's easy to get ripped off in this city, it cost me nine bucks for a drink in Bourbon Street last evening!"
>
> C.J. "It's not like that here. Ask the waitress, she'll be straight with you."

Another number is announced and played in a similar format but without the 'walkabout'. After enthusiastic applause the clarinetist stands and talks into the microphone. It is quickly clear that he is the group's funny man. He makes a great play of the fact that the two front line musicians are English.

> "Well ladies and gentlemen" he says in an excellent imitation of Frankie Howerd. (Whether Frankie Howerd has a following in the U.S.A. or not, the customers think it is funny!)
>
> "In case you're wondering, we're British, Oh yes indeed! We owned this place once. There's a few thousand of us buried just outside the city and we've come back to haunt yoooou!" (Laughter from the audience.)
>
> "I heard the news today and have just had my backside kicked by the French ..." (More laughter. This is a reference to a story given prominence in the local press about Anglo French relations.)
>
> "... so now it's my turn. We're going to play one of <u>your</u> tunes and I bet we do it better than any of you can! Ho Ho! (More laughter.)

While this has been going on the trumpeter has moved unnoticed to the side of the room furthest from the piano and is standing by one of the open doors. Using his plunger mute he plays the unmistakable opening bars of 'Basin Street Blues' making the instrument growl and wa wa

evocatively. There is a murmur of response from the audience. Clarinet and piano come in with the answering refrain. The trumpet calls again still using the mute. A similar answer from the clarinet and piano. This is repeated until the ensemble refrain is reached and the complete trio play together although separated by the distance of the floor and table space between them. The trumpeter moves back to his vacant chair by the pianist and together they play a basic accompaniment as the clarinetist sings some racy lyrics - with exaggerated movement of his eyes and teeth. Waitresses are standing still at the side, they know that it would be unwise to break this spell. The clarinetist stops singing and plays his instrument as the whole trio play the tune. Thinking the number is moving towards its finish, the waitresses start to move forward to take some orders but the band have some more tricks up their sleeve. Piano and trumpet play an accompaniment in 'stop time' - two bars on and two bars silence - while the clarinetist makes full use of the rich tone of the woodwind by playing into the microphone when soloing in the breaks. The effect is very moving. Waitresses remain stationary. Everyone is looking at the band. No one drinks or eats. People outside stop and peer through the open doors aware that something is happening inside. The band have mobilised attention very effectively - even the barman has stopped serving. Suddenly the trumpet stands and the full trio play the penultimate chorus. The final refrain is a repeat of the call and response pattern of the first introduction. The trumpet plunger mute is answered by the clarinet and piano. The final phrases from the trumpet are slowed down for greater effect as the piece comes to a

halt. There is tumultuous applause from the customers and the staff and even from some by-standers at the door.

After their undoubted success the musicians sit and smoke, grinning at each other, while waitresses bustle about gathering up the orders left as a result of their inactivity. Trays of coffee, open sandwiches and mugs of beer are brought and customers relax and talk enthusiastically about the previous performance and their general state of well being. A husband and wife next to my table are talking.

W. "Do you want another beer, honey?"

H. "Sure, why not, it'll be hot out there and I don't fancy too much more sight seeing today."

W. "Man, I'm about tuckered out too!" "Where're we eating tonight?"

H. "What's the food like here? I don't want to have to go back to the hotel and get changed and have all that hassle of finding a place that's still got some space left and won't cripple our finances."

W. "Oh it's fairly ordinary I guess but O.K. - it's hardly a greasy spoon!"

H. "For Brits these guys are O.K., nice and relaxed, you know."

W. "I hope Mary Jo wasn't hearing those words too good they were kinda racy!"

H. "Sure she was, but what the hell, they're funny!!"

Suddenly the trumpet taps in a faster tune with his foot. Three ensemble choruses and the clarinet solos while the trumpet talks to a white haired old musician by an open door. He coaxes the newcomer in who is wearing shorts, leather flip flops and a large straw hat. He is carrying an instrument case. While he assembles a clarinet the original clarinetist finishes his solo and sits beaming at the new arrival. The piano 'vamps until ready' and the sounds of the new clarinet are clearly

heard tuning and warming up until he too joins the band for a couple of solo choruses. Some customers are clearly heard saying:

C.a "Who's this guy?"

C.b "He's good whoever he is, must be great to be able to just drop in and play like that for fun."

C.a "Yeah, makes it just like a party."

The waitresses refuse to be involved in this. The musicians may be having fun but the staff have to bring in the money. They bustle about asking for orders, carrying trays of beer and returning change from the till at the back. The husband and wife are talking ...

H. "I want to hear this set out, I think I'll have an oyster poor boy, I feel kinda peckish."

W. "We said we'd meet Dan at 6.00 honey and try that place on Royal tonight."

H. "Goddamnit whenever I'm having fun we have to move on someplace else."

W. "I'll go meet him and bring him here for a drink - you stay, keep my place d'you hear!"

H. "Great!"

The piece over, the trumpeter moves to the microphone and with a sideways arm gesture indicates the newcomer:

"Arnie McMillan ladies and gentlemen, one time with the Lawrence Welk Orchestra, doesn't play much these days but when he does - boy!"

The new clarinetist bows slightly and acknowledges the applause with a wave of his hand. He dismantles his instrument and quietly packs it away in its case undisturbed at the side of the piano. His brief fling is

over and the main business of the trio must continue - they are working for their living, he is retired.

After a fairly run-of-the-mill number the final piece of the second set is announced by the clarinetist. A trumpet feature, it is the Louis Armstrong classic: "Cornet Chop-Suey". The trumpeter stands and plays a complex solo introduction while the audience hushes expectantly. The theme starts as the rest of the group come in on time. The trumpeter is stamping his foot in time to his own playing and the audience clap in time also. Waitresses move deftly between the tables as customers wave for their bills. The end of the set is a natural closure for their time in the cafe. The small minimum charge helps to keep the turnover going and prevent customers just sitting and listening without consuming anything. A clarinet solo wails its way around the melody and gives the trumpeter time to rest his lips and sip a cold beer. A couple of girls nudge him and ask to see his trumpet. He holds it out to them to inspect but remains aloof. He is not available for chit chat, he is performing and listening carefully for his next cue. When it comes he stands immediately without a glance at the girls and roars into a frantic last chorus. Notes fly all over the cafe as his eyes shut and the trumpet points upwards. After a typical New Orleans flourish he ends on a piercing high note which is held slightly longer than musically necessary. Enthusiastic applause almost drowns the clarinetist who leaps to the microphone and shouts:

> "Clive Wilson, ladies and gentlemen, Clive Wilson with Louis Armstrong's "Cornet Chop Suey". Let's hear it for Clive Wilson and Louis Armstrong's "Cornet Chop Suey".

More applause, even from the waitresses who are obviously impressed with his playing. "Well done Clive!" they shout in a brief pause before returning to the activity of giving change and collecting money. The trumpeter takes the microphone ...

> "Thank you ladies and gentlemen, that is the end of the second set and we take a break now. If you're going have a good evening, if not please stay and enjoy the amazing food on offer here. Seriously it's not bad. I even eat it myself, and the trio are here 'til seven. If we don't stay 'til seven we don't get paid, and we don't get to eat that lovely food!! So see you soon."

The trumpeter turns his back on the audience and whispers to a passing waitress who nods. He has ordered his supper which he gets free as a perk of the job. Someone yells from the tables: "What about the 'Saints'?" He turns looking slightly annoyed but covers quickly: "Sure we'll play the 'Saints'. Just put a dollar in the jug and we'll do it next set." He indicates the glass on the lid of the piano which has some loose change and a couple of bills in. He finds a spare table at the back and sits to eat. The two other musicians chat and mingle with some of the crowd. A pavement cartoonist outside comes in with a rather bad profile line drawing of the pianist and presents it to him. He holds it up, looks at it and guffaws with laughter: "Great Danny, great, I'll treasure it forever!" They all laugh as the pianist pins it to the side of the piano.

The 'front-stage' performance is now over and the musicians are visible but no longer 'on show'. They are involved with eating, drinking and general friendly social behaviour amongst themselves and their friends - not all of whom are musicians. Since they began work they have been operating a complex boundary manipulation in which tension and

relaxation have been generated through skilled use of ambiguity. The larger structural constraints of the social context of the cafe have been revealed as having an interactional under-belly in which constraints become translated into enabling potentialities and musical content and form is negotiable with audience expectations. Musical numbers can be lengthened or shortened, played fast or slow according to the musicians' perceptions of audience response, the requirements of the cafe to maximise profits and the necessity of the staff to maximise earnings. Within the time structures constructed by the musicians and the waitresses, earning potential is maximised and paradoxically customer satisfaction is increased by reducing ambiguity about financial obligations. In short customers 'know where they are' at the Pontalba and in a town which relies heavily on the tourist trade supporting and constructing the 'New Orleans Myth', this is an important element in family satisfaction. The music is part of a tradition of flexibility in which the assessment of authenticity is combined with a fluidity of process in musical performance. The band's music is not a slavish repetition of previous historical styles to be aurally 'observed' in a kind of musical museum, nor is it pastiche - a guying of styles - it is a continuation of a living tradition of music played as it has always been in contexts of sensual enjoyment: eating, drinking, dancing, talking and flirtation. It requires mutual participation by all parties to make a set a success, and this success is assessed on a variety of dimensions, some distinct and some over-lapping, by musicians, customers and cafe staff. The product is not meant for posterity. It is not enfolded in a myth of artistic creation

but produced for the moment to standards founded on the musicians' own interpretation of artistic integrity.

The Pontalba Performance as Ritual

Any consideration of performance as ritual must attempt to avoid aesthetic judgements. The musical merits or demerits of the performance are not at issue. The objective must be to describe the whole event including the cultural and social circumstances in which the performances are embedded. By so doing it is hoped that the world views projected by the event will be made explicit. As Grimes (1990) argues, 'Performances, like texts, construct "worlds". A performance creates a microcosm in gestural and concrete form' (Grimes 1990:90). But the world 'portrayed' is not necessarily the world as 'is'. Within the performance elements of a historic tradition compete with contemporary constraints and parameters. The Pontalba musicians are in New Orleans, a city renowned as the 'Birth Place of Jazz'. Despite the historical evidence which suggests that music which could be described as 'jazz' was developing in a number of different locations in the USA, New Orleans has taken pride of place in that particular nativity story. The myth of New Orleans and jazz is all pervasive. The streets in the Vieux Carre resonate to the sound of music. The names of the bars, cafes and restaurants signify the 'Old Deep South', the connection with France, the Louisiana purchase, the slave trade and black music. Even the not-forgotten racial tensions of the Deep South, the fights for de-segregation are reflected in the 'informally' segregated cab companies and the few Country and Western bars catering for the groups of red-neck Texans on vacation. It is impossible to avoid the history of jazz in New Orleans

and the observations took place in May during the annual Louisiana Jazz and Heritage Festival when the tourist trade is at its peak and the vitality of the various musical forms on display unavoidable.

Performances do not just reflect (or mime) the immediately recognisable world. They can also contain within them the tensions between different realities. In the case of the Pontalba performances there were elements of 'historic' New Orleans and of contemporary New Orleans combined in various complex ways. Further there were references to 'historic' New Orleans and contemporary New Orleans outside but 'around' the performances as it were. The perception of these multiple realities requires an awareness of the metaphoric 'frames' which enable the observer/participant to move from one to another. Often these are the least visible aspects of a performance being its by-product rather than its main purpose.

The chief components of framing are time and space. An insight into the multiple realities on display at the Pontalba is given in answer to the question 'When did the performances take place?' At first glance the correct answer might be in May 1982. Yet virtually all the tunes played were New Orleans 'standards', recognisable from a thousand record sleeves and radio broadcasts. Some were almost direct note-for-note replicas of famous Louis Armstrong hits - Cornet Chop Suey being the obvious example. Another favourite, Basin Street Blues is named after the wide business street separating the Vieux Carre from 'up-town' and the wealthier Garden District. The real Basin Street is literally only a quarter of a mile if that from the Pontalba, and although a thriving modern shopping centre including along its dead-straight almost-a-mile

length an enormous branch of Woolworths, the largest department store in New Orleans, a few cinemas, clothing stores and a bus terminus, is given an historic resonance by the slow tune named after it. Contemporary modern Basin Street, a multi-laned urban traffic-filled axis between the Vieux Carre and the residential area with an ultra-modern skyscraper, the Trade Center at the river end is seen through a frame signified by the title of a jazz tune. Almost everyone has heard of Basin Street, but it is the street of the tune. Only a fraction have actually _seen_ it, and if they do it is still the street of the tune. _This_ performance of Basin Street Blues took place in 1982; it is _heard_ through frames derived from films, radio broadcasts, gramophone records and even books and magazines.

At the same time the performances took place in the mornings and afternoons; the particular one described between 4.00 and 7.00 pm. In late May in New Orleans the temperature is beginning to rise and little can be comfortably accomplished during the mid-day break. Many shops close and open again for the early evening and cater for the same non-working clientele as the Pontalba. The early evening period represents the change from the morning rush, the lunchtime heat to the balmy evening. Later in the year the humidity will rise to the limits of tolerability, but in May it is possible to be relaxed but still active in the evening. It would be superficial to describe the performances as designed to evoke nostalgia. The clientele of the cafe, and certainly the performers were far too young to have experienced the world signified in various ways by the songs. Yet for a time they were taken-out-of-themselves, were part of yet also beyond the contemporary present. The

sense of 'conspiracy' which linked the musicians to their audience was heightened by the obvious Britishness of the players. Although they had lived and worked in New Orleans for most of their adult lives, they were clearly different from their American audience. An all black group of 'old-timers' would be in place at Preservation Hall, but out of place in a fast-food cafe like the Pontalba. Their music would have been too over-laden with 'authenticity' to have permitted the flexibility required for the fifty-five minute sets, the musicians too much of a spectacle to encourage eating and drinking. The competing frames of old-time (if bowdlerised) New Orleans, contemporary fast-food (with a Southern flavour - oyster poor-boys) were subtley interwoven through the symbolic referents of song titles, geographical situation and seasonal and temporal placement. The dominant temporal frame was the contemporary present, but the metaphoric shifts to communal 'good-times' also included the historic other-world, that escape from the routine of work and obligation which is often the hallmark of a successful holiday.

It would not be correct to describe the Pontalba performance as a rite. The degree of differentiation from the everyday is not sufficient. Rather we are dealing with levels of ritualization, practices which to the participant seem matter-of-fact, but to the outside observer are charged with symbolic significance. Leach (1968) argues that actions do not just do things, they also say things. At the level of meaning, what Leach refers to as the 'aesthetic communicative aspect' (1968:523), the actions of the participants in the Pontalba performance say a great deal. The more general level of framing has already been outlined. 'Good-times' are signified through sensual enjoyment, active participation, personal

contact, verbal repartee, but with a particular New Orleans resonance derived from references to the city's history through the titles and the conjunction of the inherent and delineated meanings (Green 1988) of the music. The minor thirds and sevenths of blues harmony, the organisation of the programme into varied collections of slow blues, bright march tempi and verbal interchange, the instrumental line-up, the use of the plunger mute by the trumpeter all <u>sound</u> like New Orleans music. It is what visitors to the city expect to hear. Inherent meanings and delineated meanings neatly coincide.

The time of day of this particular performance separates eating and drinking as a 'necessity for keeping the body active during a hard day of sightseeing or shopping', from eating and drinking as a formal motive for 'going out in the evening'. The late afternoon is a time for relaxation between two periods of frenetic activity. It is a time for calming the children, resting tired legs and snacking before returning to home or hotel for a shower and a change of clothes. For the musicians it is the best 'slot' to be playing in. The audience are the most receptive, the heat is bearable and listeners too weary to be critical. The significance of the time of day is determined as much by when it is <u>not</u> as by when it is. It is <u>not</u> first thing in the morning when the new day's energy is high, the organising of the day occurs and certain instrumental activities have to be accomplished. It is <u>not</u> during the evening when people go out for some night-life. In fact evenings were often planned while families were relaxing in the Pontalba. The 4.00 - 7.00 period was both <u>after</u> and <u>before</u>, a boundary period of relaxed 'easy-living'. Boundaries are notorious areas of symbolic significance because of their ambiguous

status. Van Gennep (1960), Turner (1969), Leach (1976), Bloch (1989) and others discuss the tendency to ritualised action in ambiguous situations. Not only can it help to 'firm-up' the uncertainty, it can also provide the occasion for constructing new realities free from the structured constraints on either side. It would be stretching Turner's concept of liminality too far to suggest that the Pontalba between 4.00 and 7.00 provided a context for communitas, that period free from two structured worlds when consciousness of social role identity dissolves into unselfconscious humanity. But there were moments when the performance 'worked' in such a way as to take the audience 'out-of-themselves' and this seemed less likely to happen in the morning performances. Many couples and family groups returned to the Pontalba on a regular basis. Having learned the minimum charge system, they could be seen hovering outside until the start of a new 'set'. They even tried to get a particular table and looked suspiciously at customers they had not seen before and were occupying 'their' spot. For those 'regulars', the Pontalba rounded off the day nicely. In Grimes's terms ritualizing was taking place even though a rite had not been established.

Within these large framing issues, the performance process reveals a number of instances of 'aesthetic communication' (Leach 1968). Wuthnow (1987) argues that actions take on ritualistic significance during periods of uncertainty. The three areas he focusses on are uncertainty about social position, problematic commitment to supposedly shared values and behavioural options likely to influence other actors in the setting. There are many examples of these in the Pontalba performance.

Question: "When does an onlooker become an audience member?"
Answer: "When they cross the threshold of the open french windows."

The coaxing of onlookers into the Cafe was one of the objectives of the musicians. By crossing, the listener performed an expressive act of commitment. Hesitation is uncomfortable. There is even an element of guilt in standing outside the Cafe and listening to the music without contributing anything. There is also the feeling of being excluded from the collective enjoyment inside. For some the 'outsider' role may be conducive but for most it is a less than satisfactory situation to be in. This uncertainty is 'solved' by stepping over the threshold. For the musicians the task of heightening this discomfort is important. Their performance must be directed to the customers inside the Cafe. They must try and involved the insiders in the collective celebration and enactment of 'Good Times'. They must emphasise eye-contact with their audience and eschew it with the onlookers except as a 'come hither' move. In fact the involvement with the customers took a variety of forms including having their photos taken with offspring and making 'eyes' at blushing daughters. At intervals the gaze would be turned on the onlookers quite deliberately as if to hint at their involvement in so much more if only they would commit themselves and cross that threshold.

But the symbolic boundary between insider and outsider had to be maintained if only for the sake of the insiders who must be encouraged to feel that their commitment had been worthwhile. This commitment was reinforced by a variety of techniques during the performance. Applause at the end of each tune is a clear gestural response signifying

membership of an audience as well as a traditional way of showing approval of the performance. Similarly booing would also signify membership while expressing disapproval. In the description of the performance there are many examples of the musicians actively encouraging commitment. The strategic placing of the trumpeter in different parts of the cafe helps to overcome the impression that the players are only performing for the front row of tables. Focussing attention on individual members of the audience draws them in to the collective celebration of 'Good Times' and allowing photographs to be taken permits membership to be extended beyond the immediate present into the future, where it can be relived in the contexts of home and the work place. Probably the most important signifier of commitment is the payment of money for food and drink to the limits of the two dollar minimum per set. It is for this fundamental reason that the musicians are hired and the ultimate source of their wages. Not only is food and drink purchased, so also is membership of the collective celebration of 'Good Times'. Through the quasi-aesthetic (almost the quasi-religious) ritualizing emphasising the altruistic (humanistic) irrelevance of social difference in the common enjoyment of music, food and drink, the cafe management are able to sell their commodities in a market already glutted with competitors.

As well as being a quasi-religious ritualization of altruistic humanism, the Pontalba performances are also quasi-political. That is they mobilize power. City Hall operates a zoning policy for tourist attractions. The Vieux Carre is an obvious centre for the tourist interested in soaking up the atmosphere of historic New Orleans. The presence of the musicians

in this cafe, rather than in one of the thousands of other diners all over the city is the direct result of these zoning policies. The encouragement of tourism ultimate filters down to the actions of individuals in face-to-face contact. The musicians enact these political decisions. "What do tourists want when they come to New Orleans?" "They want the sights, the smells and the sounds of the Deep South." The Pontalba and the musicians who play there attempt to provide just that but in a contemporary mode. At almost every point in the performance the musicians are in command within the parameters of the fifty-five minute set arrangement. They have to negotiate with the waitresses but in the performance they have the power. The communal shared experience of 'Good Times' obscures the skill of the musicians as constructors of the event. The techniques of performance which go way beyond the technical skill on their instruments are seen as spontaneous expressions of a joy of life rather than the intricate manipulation of skilled professionals. Even the technical mastery of the music, the years of practice and study are rendered invisible by the apparent 'spontaneity' of the performers' response to particular individual members of the audience and to each other. Just like eating and drinking, music and comedy is seen as a natural ingredient of life itself.

THE PURPOSE BUILT CONCERT HALL

Any consideration of a purpose built venue must examine the aims of its planners, architects and their musical advisers. Official statements may be found in public records and published material such as the Minutes of London County Council and documents in the library of the Royal Institute of British Architects. In the following account, details of the building seem to dominate the description of the performance of the music because it is the arrangement of physical space which facilitates (and is predicated upon) a particular mode of aesthetic address: that associated with aesthetic autonomy.

THE ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL, LONDON

The Royal Festival Hall was chosen as an example of a modern purpose built concert hall with the performance of music a clear situational priority. In the early official planning documents there are occasional references to other uses, but there is no doubt that the design parameters called for the construction of a concert hall to international standard using 'state of the art' architectural and engineering techniques. Designing, detailing and building the Royal Festival Hall took an extraordinarily brief two years and nine months although later developments and improvements continued at intervals for at least another fifteen years.

In their County of London Plan of 1943, Professor Sir Patrick Abercrombie and Mr. J. K. Forshaw then architect to the L. C. C., examined the south bank of the Thames with a view to post war reconstruction. One of their proposals was for a cultural centre including a concert hall to

replace the blitzed Queen's Hall.[1] The Government initiated the decision to build as part of the Festival of Britain of 1951. The official decision to proceed was made early in September 1948, and the first sketches were started in that month. The L.C.C. meeting of 19th October 1948 agreed to the preliminary estimate of £1,260,000 presented by the General Purposes Committee. By December the full scheme had been approved by Committee, and in April 1949 competitive tenders for the building were received from a number of contractors. The L. C. C. selected the contractor on 3rd May and equipment arrived on the site on May 4th. By December 1950 the building work was nearing completion and was followed by a period set aside for acoustic tuning involving invited audiences and orchestras playing 'specimen' concerts not open to the public.

The rapid building signifies its symbolic importance. Prime Minister Attlee laid the foundation stone in 1949 saying: "We shall show that our old skill has not deserted us, and that our old spirit and determination to serve our country and serve the world is still strong and vigorous." (Quoted in Pudney 1951:18) Similar sentiments were expressed by John Pudney (1951) when he argued that the Festival Hall 'surely presents a clear affirmation that those generations who lived with fear and bombardment, with doubt and desperate action, also cared for life.' (Pudney 1951:9-10) The new concert hall was to reflect this impetus in its architecture - the Architectural Review in 1951 described the Festival Hall as a 'monumental modern building' (Richards 1951) - and was planned to be part of The Festival of Britain, scheduled for 1951 and designed to celebrate every aspect of British culture as an antidote to the economic astringency and frugality of rationing of post-war Britain.

There was also a hint of international pride involved in constructing 'a worthy setting to which people in many lands will be able to look as a vital focus for the enjoyment of music and the Arts.' (L. C. C. 1951:7) The rapid progress required a simplification of official procedures, the ready cooperation of Government departments, and integrated teamwork among those actually engaged on planning and building.[2]

The part of the Festival of Britain which endured was the new concert hall. The other constructions like the Dome of Discovery and the Skylon were exhibition pieces celebrating new techniques in engineering and building, mid-twentieth century conceits, follies almost, to be visited, marvelled at and preserved in memory and experience - photographs in souvenir brochures rather than the permanent concrete structures of reality. The Royal Festival Hall represented the more permanent values of 'Great Art' and since the destruction of the Queen's Hall there was no other concert hall in London apart from the massive Royal Albert Hall with its unsatisfactory acoustic. Sir Malcolm Sargent was invited to be the musical adviser to the architects and acoustic experts during the planning and construction stages of the project. He concludes his Introduction to the official L. C. C. book on the Festival, thus:

> May the Festival of Britain have all success, and may the Royal Festival Hall remain for many years the temple of those spiritual joys which are so mystic but so very real. (Hayward 1951:10)

How such a 'temple' is socially and materially constructed is the subject of this chapter.[3]

THE PERFORMANCE SETTING

A. Spatial Parameters:

The Royal Festival Hall, situated close to the centre of London and on a prime site on the banks of the Thames, was designed to project post-war optimism and national competence through the symbolic medium of a 'non-functional' art form using the modernist architectural language of functional rationality. The architect, Clough Williams-Ellis says that the Royal Festival Hall ...

> ... employs the accepted current architectural vocabulary to convey its contemporary message both to us and to posterity, in a taut economical prose, purged of all purposeless conceits ... For the Royal Festival Hall will be chiefly judged, and rightly on how well it fulfils its function as (almost) itself a musical instrument, and no one is better aware of that than its architects.' (L.C.C. 1951:13/14)

The Royal Festival Hall's architectural characteristics are best discussed under two headings: the external and the internal. Both aspects 'place' the Hall as a symbol of post-War British architecture - externally as a sign of national spirit, civic pride and renewed economic growth, and internally as a functioning witness to the application of technology in the service of a particular aesthetic code. Both aspects are related to the problems of marketing sound and its reception by consumers.

External Architecture

Externally the Hall took fifteen years to complete. Although it was opened in 1951 there was much temporary building particularly at the rear, and the original proposal had incorporated a small theatre of 750 seats into the same building as the main auditorium. This was abandoned and became the impetus for the later Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room development. In 1961 The Architects' Journal commenting on the

later developments on the South Bank suggested that they would complete what had been begun at the Festival of Britain and,

> ... should have achieved an impressive unity and maturity with the Royal Festival Hall at last fitting into worthy surroundings, and the whole providing a cultural centre such as nobody has attempted to build in this country since the uprush of museums in South Kensington. (March 30th, 1961)

After enthusiastically commenting on the alterations to the Hall in the early sixties, on the internal visual 'sweep' and the 'breathtaking views of St Paul's ... and the Houses of Parliament', the Architects' Journal of 24th February 1965 concludes: 'Seen from across the river, the Royal Festival Hall is more impressive than ever.'[4]

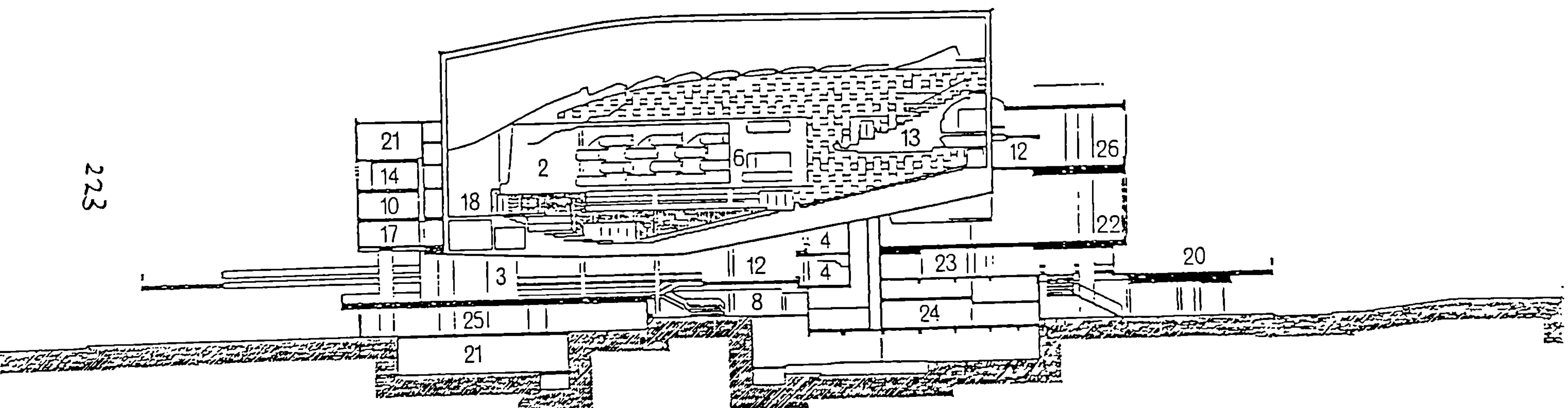
Certainly in the literature of the period there is little doubt about the intended symbolic purpose of the building. What also needs examining is the way in which the marketing of sound determined some of the external architectural aspects of the building. There were many critics of the original proposals who pointed to the problems in situating a concert hall in the arc between two very busy bridges (one of them a railway bridge) and directly in front of one of the busiest railway stations in the country. There were also proposals to build a helicopter terminal a short way along the river and the noise from river traffic to contend with. The strong aesthetic code associated with WEAM would characterise any extraneous sound as noise, disruptive of the performance and distracting for the listener. The sound of a train crossing Hungerford Bridge in the middle of a Mahler symphony would be a clear case of 'sound out of place' or 'dirt' as Mary Douglas would describe it. (Douglas 1966) Customers do not pay for dirt! In order to prevent this pollution, the architects designed the auditorium within a double 'skin' of

reinforced concrete. The walls are ten inches thick with a twelve inch cavity between them. The auditorium has been variously described as 'an egg suspended in a box' (The Architects' Journal 24/2/1965:478) and 'an egg poised on stilts and partially enclosed' (Pudney 1951:21) because it is supported at each end by massive sleeved columns designed to prevent sound transmission up their length. Furthermore the 'box' contains those other areas required to maintain an international level of concert performance: administration offices, the restaurant, the bars, cloakrooms, lavatories, the dressing rooms, the rooms for the conductors and the soloists to dress, relax and prepare themselves, instrument storage facilities and so on, 'wrapped around' the egg-like auditorium contributing to external sound insulation. Even the heating and air conditioning system has sound absorption processes built into it to remove any sound produced by the boilers and treatment units from entering the auditorium with the processed air. The result has been entirely successful in preventing sound incursion although there have been certain ramifications for the Hall's internal acoustics which will be mentioned later.

Internal Architecture

If the external appearance may be described as using a 'taut economical prose, purged of all purposeless conceits' (L.C.C. 1951:13) the architectural qualities of the interior epitomise functional rationality to an even greater degree. The American acoustical engineer Leo L.Beranek in a comparative study of fifty-four top rank international concert halls and opera houses in 1962, described the Festival Hall as the first of the modern concert halls and acknowledged the ground-breaking work done by the designers and acoustic engineers and the resulting benefits for later

The Architects' Journal Information Library 24 February 1965—SfB 95). UDC 725.8



2 Auditorium
3 Ballroom
4 Bar
6 Boxes
8 Buffet
10 Corps de ballet dressing-rooms
12 Foyer
13 Gallery
14 General offices
17 Orchestra dressing-rooms
18 Organ
20 Pedestrian walkway
21 Plant
22 Restaurant
23 Servery
24 Service
25 Storage
26 Terrace

Long section through auditorium—River Thames on the right ($\frac{1}{80}$in = 1ft)

'an egg suspended in a box' The Architects' Journal 24/2/1965 p.478

projects. (Beranek 1962) The architects appointed Mr.Hope Bagenal D.C.M., F.R.I.B.A. 'whose knowledge and experience are recognised as being pre-eminent in this field' (L.C.C.Minutes 14/12/48:787) as acoustic consultant. Acoustic engineering at this time was in an early stage of development as a science and Hope Bagenal, at a meeting of the Royal Institute of British Architects is quoted as saying: 'To design a concert hall is to go down into the arena and risk death from the violence of contending emotions ...' (Pudney 1951:19) The potential for tension between the 'objective' categories of acoustical engineering and the 'subjective' aesthetics of musical appreciation is enormous. Nevertheless modernist architecture demands rational justification and to construct a mid-twentieth century concert hall on the basis of 'experience' or 'traditional design' alone would have been out of the question.

Despite the development of electronic forms in twentieth century music, the WEAM tradition is pre-eminently a performance tradition originating long before the invention of electrical methods of sound enhancement. The overwhelming repertoire for classical concert performance is acoustic and acoustic concerns are central to modern concert hall design predicated on often implicit assumptions about desirable 'balance' and 'tone'.

Allen and Parkin (1951) address the question of the problem of 'musical value' when assessing acoustics.[5] For the performers, the acoustic must enable them to hear one another well in order to play in good ensemble and intonation. For the audience the output of all departments of the orchestra should be heard in all parts of the house in the balance intended by the conductor. Definition should be clear and tone should be

'full' and have a 'singing quality'. The complexity of this is readily apparent. The hall should allow all instruments to be heard as 'equally' as possible and should also contribute to their tone. This is a difficult objective as instruments have very different acoustic 'carrying ' properties. At the same time the hall must provide a 'neutral' environment within which the conductor can manipulate the orchestral balance and tone without apparent 'interference' from the hall's acoustics. In other words the acoustic environment must both contribute and not contribute to the overall sound of the orchestra! There is a further complication with soloists, particularly solo singers, and the speaking voice causes special difficulties for acoustic engineers. Allen and Parkin (1951) suggest that musicians rank the musical qualities of 'tone' first, 'definition' second and 'balance' third. Acoustically there is a relationship between all three. Definition is partly solved by designing the auditorium so that the musicians can be seen clearly from all seats so that a direct sound line is possible from each instrument to each member of the audience. But to distinguish different instruments from each other requires a hall which reverberates across as wide a frequency range as possible and does not absorb those crucial overtones which comprise an instrument's timbre - that quality which makes a trumpet playing 'A' sound different from a violin playing 'A' for example.[6] Factors helping differentiation also contribute to a 'neutral' balance. Tone quality, the most 'subjective', is thought to depend mainly on the Reverberation Time (R.T.) of the hall: the time taken for a sound to cease to be audible after emission. This must not be confused with Echo which is always considered undesirable. In fact one of the problems in acoustical design is how to increase R.T. without running into Echo.[7]

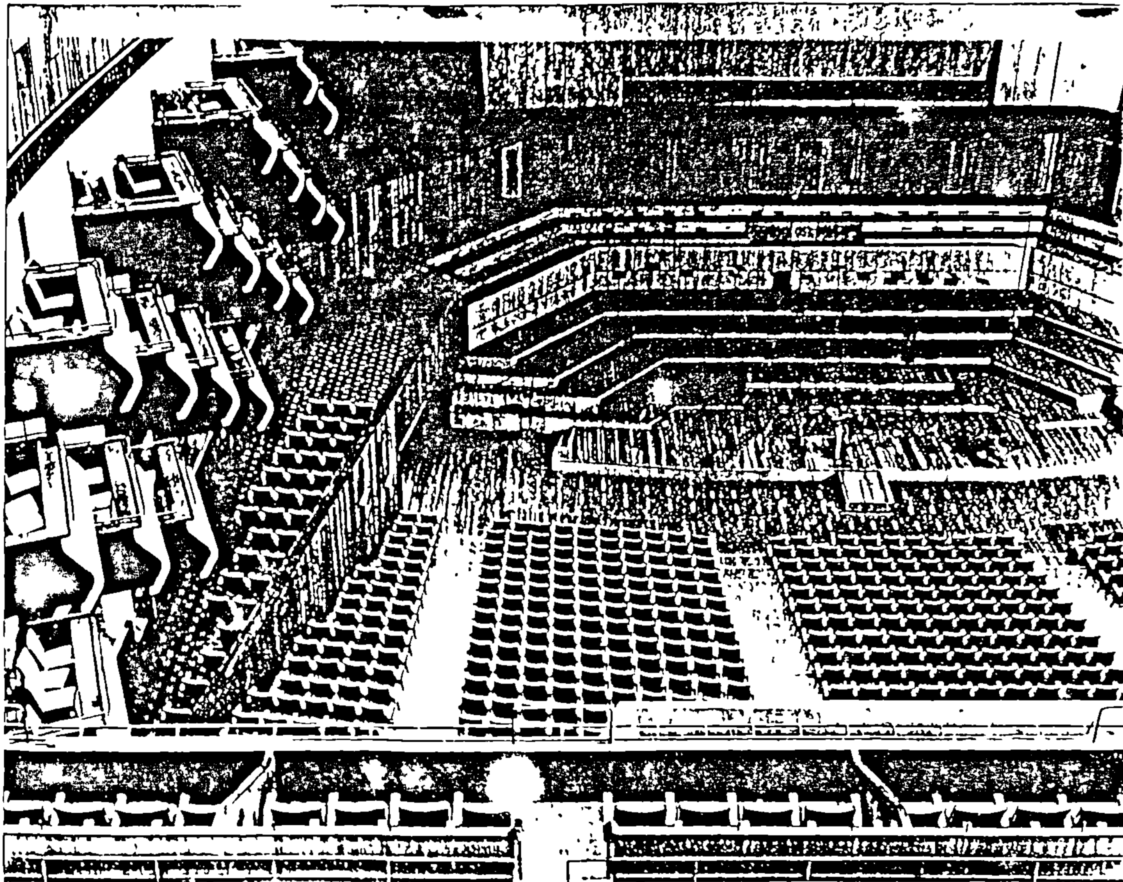
Certain techniques were used to create a desirable acoustic. The tip-up chairs were padded with fibre glass on the under side so that when empty (with the seat tipped up) the final acoustic of the auditorium does not alter dramatically with the size of the audience. Elm panels with resonating chambers behind them were placed along the side walls of the hall, and polished slate flooring between the first row of seats and the orchestra together with a resonant suspended canopy help weaker instruments. The parallel sides with absorbent surfaces and the straight rear wall discourage echo. Finally the wooden ceiling was 'tuned' by drilling 2½ inch diameter holes leading to Helmholtz resonators behind. After its completion but before being opened to the public, the 'tuning' of the hall was adjusted during 'specimen' concerts before invited audiences. Despite aiming for a R.T. between 1.7secs and 2.2secs the engineers had difficulties getting up to this, principally because the particular mix of the component parts of the concrete used in the construction reduced reverberation dramatically. The result was a R.T. of around 1.0secs!

However, for a time after the Hall's opening in 1951 it was considered by some music critics and musicians to have the finest acoustic of any concert hall in the world. But musical tastes change and acoustic technology developed to the extent that the Hall's acoustic was criticised for 'lacking warmth for <u>certain types</u> of music'. (Humphries 1964 My emphasis) What was needed was a longer R.T. even after all possible 'tuning' had been done. The only way to increase R.T. is to increase the Hall's cubic capacity without increasing the seating. Raising the ceiling a few feet was considered but ruled out on the grounds of impracticality and cost but also for fear of creating echo.

Photo of R.F.H.

A U D I T O R I U M

Looking into the auditorium from the projection room at the back



Auditorium Finishes

Side walls panelled in elm   walls of side galleries are faced with Copenhagen ribbing in elm : : back of auditorium of padded leather panels · · reflector of slate paving between front stalls and orchestra : . sycamore canopy over orchestra platform : · box groups surrounded by walnut frame, which carries round behind orchestra platform : side of fibrous plaster boxes, faced with dark blue flock paper : : wall surface below boxes of red padded leather.

Humphries (1964) reports an experiment to assist the resonance electronically through the use of single frequency microphones, amplifiers and loudspeakers.[8] Parkin and Morgan (1971) assess the results of the experiments and urge minimum discussion of the new system 'because of the passions likely to be aroused in some breasts by the thought of loudspeakers in the R.F.H., however unlike the conventional use of loudspeakers the assisted resonance system may be.' (Parkin and Morgan 1971:1033/4).

It is interesting to note the hesitancy with which Parkin and Morgan mention the use of microphones and loudspeakers in this concert hall dedicated to the performance of music in the acoustic (non-electronic) classical tradition. Might this be an explanation for why a possible development was not followed up? In the earlier paper, Humphries suggests that an adjustable artificially assisted resonance system could enable the musician to play a more active part in controlling the acoustic conditions of the hall which would no longer have to be '*fixed by the architect for all time*'. (my emphasis) This interesting option which virtually makes the hall a musical instrument in its own right has not been taken up. Under present arrangements the musician has one choice, either to use the assisted resonance or not. An infinitely variable acoustic environment, although technically possible remains to be fully developed. Adjustment of the acoustic by the musician to suit different tastes or criteria of performance practice for different forms and music of historical periods, might be a central feature of the design of new concert halls. The virtually complete rejection by the classical tradition of contemporary systems of electronic sound 'enhancement'

within the acoustic tradition must be overcome first.

The organisation of physical space within the auditorium is designed for the functional requirements of acoustic WEAM.[9] The floor is raked in two directions - from the conductor's rostrum forward to form the orchestra platform, and backwards for the audience. This arrangement provides good visibility and assists acoustic definition. The orchestra platform is staged and big enough for a modern symphony orchestra of at least 120 musicians with more space behind the staging for a choir. The back row of the stepped platform has a concrete base for percussion and heavy brass. (L.C.C. 1951:44) The concrete is not only weight supporting but has acoustic properties which help the balance between the strong voices of percussion and brass and the weaker sounds of the strings placed further forward on timber staging. Since it is normal practice for this kind of configuration to occur, such built-in arrangements are unlikely to be seen as restricting. Yet they construct an aesthetic concept of 'normal balance' and any divergent preferences which particular conductors might have must take these built-in assumptions into account. The centrality of notation in the classical music tradition is recognised by optional music stands which fit into slots in the floor giving performers maximum foot room.

In accordance with post-war functional rationality in architecture, the designers favour a centrally controlled mixture of direct and indirect lighting suitable for the restricted objective of music production and consumption and their use during the performance as a keying device will be examined in more detail under the Performance Process. The whole interior decor of the auditorium, the use of natural wood, dark leather-

style deep-buttoned padding on the panelling and the use of soft toned carpets signifies a seriousness of intent. The rejection of the excessive, of the lushness of many nineteenth century concert halls encourages concentration on the music rather than social display. It is a formal statement designed to promote a relaxed seriousness of purpose. It is a context which celebrates and frames a specific form of autonomous aesthetic address.

There are clear assumptions about the nature of music performance built into the whole auditorium design. The ready sighting of musicians aiding acoustic balance, the raising and lowering of lights acting as a cueing device, in fact the whole arrangement of the auditorium is an exercise in spatial and temporal region demarcation. Performers are differentiated from spectators not only by dress and function, but by physical space. Dress will be considered under 'Performance Procedures', however it is clearly expected that musicians will not be playing in day-time clothes because dressing-rooms are provided.

Function is indicated by the formal and rational seating in the auditorium. All seats face the performance platform and are in full view. Access to them is by wide aisles and rows are kept reasonably short. No row of seats is usually more than eleven wide and tickets indicate which aisle should be used to get to a particular position. For access, no seat requires the passing of more than five others. Standing is permitted under certain circumstances only at the back of the hall. There is differential light distribution between musicians and the audience and there is no doubt that the audience is there to watch what is taking place on the platform. Sight and sound are united in a very particular

and highly contrived setting.

Both the key groups, musicians and audience, have their own front-stage and back-stage regions. The musicians have dressing rooms approached by steps from the platform which are not accessible to members of the audience. The audience have their various foyers, bars, cloakrooms and a restaurant permitting mingling, conversation, smoking and friendly social activity. Re-entry to the auditorium requires extinguishing cigarettes, putting aside drinks, and an assumption of a general readiness to consume the music. The only way in which the two groups can meet is by the Green Room system where a member of the audience must negotiate a large door guarded by an attendant, show a 'pass' of some kind and gain entry to the musicians' back-stage area.[10] Once inside a corridor must be navigated before reaching the Green Room where the musician, possibly a conductor or soloist, will 'receive' the 'visitor'. For that is precisely what a member of the audience becomes when entering the performers' back-stage region.

Entrances and exits are also segregated. The audience have their main entrance with its panoply of box-offices, poster hoardings, lavatories and sweeping staircases, the musicians have their 'Artists' Entrance' at the rear of the building leading to their back-stage facilities. The technology of music making - the instruments and other material objects - even has its own entrance. Touring orchestras and bands can unload their equipment at the back of the Hall and lifts, including one large enough for a full size concert grand-piano, raise the huge cases and boxes to platform level. Segregation between audience and performers is virtually total. Territorial invasion is organisationally and architecturally

discouraged.

Although the major social division is between the audience and the musicians, there are important further divisions within those groups. Status ranking between musicians is indicated by the range of facilities available to them back-stage. Conductors and soloists have their own rooms with their own washing and dressing facilities; members of the orchestra share. At the performance level, differentiation became pronounced as orchestras increased in size in the last century. As Attali points out:

> For a long time, the leader who directed them was just one of the musicians (Haydn directed on violin or harp), or was one element in the spectacle ... The orchestra leader did not become necessary and explicit until he was legitimated by the growth in the size of orchestras ... After 1850, when the size of the audience and the halls made it feasible, the same works (e.g. Beethoven's Ninth) were played with over one hundred musicians, with duplication of instruments. Berlioz, the "organizing conductor," was one of the first to mount the rostrum and beginning in 1856, gave theoretical expression to this power. In the theory, the orchestra leader appears as the image of the legitimate and rational organiser of a production whose size necessitates a coordinator, but dictates that he not make noise. He is thus the representation of economic power, presumed capable of setting in motion, without conflict, harmoniously, the program of history traced by the composer. (Attali 1985:66)

This separation from the orchestra is reflected in the conductor's rostrum which is part of the platform but also a form of appendage to it. The conductor is part of the performing group yet not a playing musician but a controller. Further aspects of the differentiation within the group of musicians will be considered later as part of the Performance Procedures.

Audience members are differentiated by the price of the ticket which largely reflects its distance from the platform. Each ticket has

instructions on how to navigate the corridors and stairs, which door to use to enter the auditorium and so on. Yet the Royal Festival Hall performs this differentiation in a less dramatic way than the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden for example. The latter has a small separate entrance for the area of cheapest seats, the Amphitheatre, at the side of the building and even though the others are reached through the main foyer, the interior decoration becomes dramatically less opulent as the ticket holder moves higher. At the Festival Hall the foyers, terraces and promenades at various levels appear interchangeable and this is helped considerably by the use throughout the building of a specially designed carpet with a simple pattern. Even in this respect the design of the building points to its central purpose. Due 'respect' for the serious consumption and performance of classical music rather than the ostentatious display of social rank is what the Festival Hall design proclaims. The autonomous aesthetic code does not contain concepts of social rank or class within its discourse. It claims an asocial universality. In an era of public financial support for institutions like the South Bank and the Opera House, Covent Garden, the ostentatiousness of the nineteenth century theatres becomes an embarrassment, a badge of obsolescent social exclusiveness making public funding difficult to legitimate. But generally the principle holds in the vast majority of concert halls and theatres that the cheaper the seat the further the climb.[11]

The crucial symbol of role shift from 'member of the public' to 'audience member' - the public display of a purchased ticket - reinforces the notion of musical performance as commodity and the authority of the Hall management to control consumption. When there is

high demand for a famous orchestra or soloist, advanced booking is necessary. This increases the 'aura' (Benjamin 1977) of the works and the performers. Performance, a process of creation and interpretation is objectified.[12] Nevertheless the concert hall provides the setting for a unique event and it is the experience of this that is being purchased. Due respect is demanded by the 'Aura'.

For Attali (1985) a classical concert is a 'spectacle of representation' and reached its zenith in the nineteenth century celebrating the political economy of that time. Entry to 'the spectacle' is only possible at a suitable moment. Because of the expense of maintaining a concert hall, the promoter who contracts the Hall is fined if the performance overruns. Generally therefore, concerts commence on time and the impending start is announced by an electric 'gong' (tuned appropriately to 'A', 440 cycles). This 'calling-in' is an indication of the strong spatial demarcation between performance areas and others. Latecomers are admitted 'at a suitable moment' which generally means between programmed items or between the movements of a concerto or symphony. Outside each door to the auditorium is a television monitor which shows a black and white image of the platform accompanied by very low level sound. The general quality of the closed circuit transmission is very poor and not intended as a substitute for direct listening. It is used as a guide to the progress of the concert largely for the benefit of the ushers who regulate entrances.

The doors themselves form a 'sonic-lock'. The double doors are arranged in pairs about twelve feet apart. At the outer pair tickets are inspected and a large circular dish filled with sand is provided for

discarded cigarettes. The second pair of doors, about twelve feet from the first, opens directly into the auditorium. When both pairs are closed very little sound penetrates in either direction.

It was argued in Chapter Five, that venues constructed with the primary purpose of selling sound are likely to have strong barriers to perception. The crucial dimension in the classical aesthetic tradition which elevates the music above visual display will be strong auditory demarcation. Since the music comes in tight 'packages', specific named works by specific named composers, there is no question of casual entry or exit. There is thus nothing to be gained for the promoter in making the concert visible in the hope of attracting passing trade. This would increase the likelihood of sound leakage and radically alter the acoustic property of the Hall. It is this concentration on 'isolated sound', visibly directed at an audience which is one of the prime characteristics of the contemporary manifestation of the autonomous aesthetic of WEAM.

B. Temporal Parameters:

The temporal parameters of the performance setting apply to scheduling and programming. The former is determined by the general classification of time with associated activities within our culture. The latter is a result of performance traditions within particular genres, their appropriate aesthetic codes and the situational priorities and proprieties negotiated within the performance context.

Scheduling

The Royal Festival Hall books its music performances in the evenings with occasional concerts on Saturday mornings, Saturday afternoons and Sunday afternoons. The Saturday morning concerts are usually for

children, and high status concerts are always scheduled for the evening and generally start at either 7.30pm, 7.45pm or 8.00pm depending on the length of the programme. If a 'star' performer is appearing, there may be two houses, one starting at 6.30pm and a second at 9.00pm although this seldom applies to classical performers. Second houses generally have a higher status reflected in demand for tickets. This may be due to rush-hour transport problems for the earlier start and/or the difficulty of completing 'going out' preparations before 6.00pm. The whole ritual of 'going out for the evening' sits uneasily on a performance commencing at 6.30pm and ending at 8.30pm. The strong demarcation between 'work' and 'leisure' in our society seems to demand rites de passage between time/activity categories. Washing, changing and eating after a working day prepare not only the body but also help construct the social personality prepared to be involved in 'going out for the evening'. The same system of time/activity categorisation is responsible for the transport problems and the prohibitive over-time costs for contract personnel which make late night performance almost impossible. The management of the Festival Hall imposes a penalty for performances which over-run and prevent the Hall being cleared by 11.30pm of musicians, audience and all performance related employees like stewards and programme sellers, before the building is vacated, closed and turned over to the control of contract security staff.

Programming

Whereas scheduling operates within parameters produced by the complex interrelation of the economic and the cultural, programming is almost entirely the result of a structured cultural code. Chapter Two noted Christopher Small's (1987) development of the work of Levi-Strauss

(1966, 1970) and Mary Douglas (1975) exploring the connection between music and food. Small uses Douglas's analysis of a meal as an ordered structure of contrasting elements, to draw parallels with the balanced programme of an orchestral concert. There are huge historical variations however. In the early nineteenth century the movements of a symphony were often interspersed with songs and Small notes that in 1808 the first performance of Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, Fourth Piano Concerto and Choral Fantasia along with a number of other items was programmed in a single concert. Large scale and lengthy single works can be performed in a concert but they should have sufficient internal variation of stressed and unstressed elements to provide a variety of experience. Furthermore a long work causes practical problems for the organisers because of the difficulties of providing an interval. Bar profits will be reduced and the longer the audience is confined to the auditorium the greater the chance of illness or discomfort causing a disruption. Similarly very short but stressed works like those of Anton Webern's subvert programme conventions because they cannot take up the time normally expected from a 'value-for-money' concert programme - a relatively simple solution is often used in Webern concerts, the pieces are played twice. The cultural expectations of 'value-for-money' together with the accepted structure of programme construction provide the parameters for the content of a symphony concert.[13]

C. Situational Priorities and Proprieties:

In Chapter Five it was argued that for all venues the basic need to survive in the economic market place through the maximisation of profit will be the dominant and over-arching priority. It was also suggested that this takes two forms: (i) direct financial profit - the need for a

profit margin on the economic market; (ii) demonstrable demand - measured by attendance. The 'normal' operation of market forces will be bracketed for certain experimental or minority genres targeted at particular minority groups. Funding from the Arts Council, or a Local Authority is likely. The Royal Festival Hall needs to maximise its direct financial returns and demonstrate demand. The South Bank Board gets a sizable grant from the Arts Council (£10,347,000 in 1989) which is designed to cover the costs of the Festival Hall, the Queen Elizabeth Hall, the Purcell Room and the Hayward Gallery. If a major capital city like London is to be part of the international orchestra touring circuit and provide a home base for first class established national orchestras it must have an international status concert hall. This is probably the dominant reason for subsidy. The management of the Hall is directly accountable to the South Bank Board for expenditure, and the Board in its turn is accountable to the Arts Council. Escalating costs and the general rise in expectations of both musicians and concert-goers means that the Hall is under constant pressure to balance its books. This pressure is increased because most other European countries invest considerably more in the central funding of the Arts than the U.K.

Architectural Factors

The Royal Festival Hall cannot waste money and must ensure as far as possible that its 'plant' is fully used. This means that the singular architectural priority of the building, the concert performance of classical music, conflicts with the Hall's contemporary economic requirements. Ballet is performed there on a raised stage - usually during the 'silly season' summer period - but although facilities exist for changing rooms back-stage it is clear that they were not given as

careful and detailed thought as those for musicians. For example the doors to the showers for the corps de ballet open into a corridor rather than the changing rooms. The repositioning of the doors would be a relatively simple building operation, and whilst denying the occasional 'frison' to administrative staff would be highly desirable for the performers. It has not been done. Jazz concerts are performed in the Festival Hall and because of the trend away from acoustic music towards electronic techniques and high level amplification the complex architectural technology that was involved in the Hall's design and 'tuning' is largely wasted. An architecturally single-purpose - or more precisely, single genre - concert hall is increasingly being diversified into multiple purposes or being used for performance genres other than WEAM. The desirability of such a move is irrelevant. Situational priorities at the level of performance are architecturally supported and constrained. Styles of performance that fit most closely are those which celebrate an acoustic autonomous aesthetic.

In Chapter Five, Goffman's concept of 'normative disorganisation' was used to describe social situations in which competing (and often conflicting) priorities demand the construction of 'situational proprieties'. The Festival Hall, like all other venues has to regulate potentially competing and conflicting priorities. People may go to concerts for a variety of reasons, but whatever they are, the potential for normative disorganisation is present.[14] Situational proprieties - patterns of normative 'traffic order' - are supported spatially and temporally by clear demarcation. The basic design of the building, following the acoustic aesthetic code, requires the isolation of the auditorium from areas of 'distracting' activity. The Festival Hall has its expensive

restaurant with river-views, entirely separate from the concert auditorium. The bars and lavatories are placed at an end of the large promenades. The walk-ways on the different levels look over the river and the skyline of London. There are a few seats and pillars where chatting people can congregate away from the noisy bar areas. People can stay in the auditorium during intervals and quiet conversation is possible but smoking, eating or drinking is not permitted. Because of the seating, space is restricted and exercise after sitting for a lengthy period is difficult. Such clear spatial demarcation is a characteristic of performance venues which are purpose built according to the autonomous aesthetic code.

Temporal Factors

Temporal demarcation is also strong. The start and finish of the concert performance is clear and so are the intervals. The electric gong sounds, and a verbal announcement of the time left before the start of the performance is made at one minute intervals. Notices telling the customers that drinks and coffee may be ordered before the performance for collection in the interval are placed strategically in the foyers and near the bars. However, the division of time is not arbitrary. The autonomous aesthetic code requires the interval to come between musical items. There is a reciprocal relationship between the length of a work, its position within a programme and the point within the evening when the interval occurs. Potentially conflicting priorities are demarcated within parameters defined by the length of performance items. The musicians are not free to decide amongst themselves when they would like a break, frequently done in jazz venues like the Bull's Head, Barnes, because intervals must occur at points determined by the length of the

musical works. The autonomous 'work' structures the evening.

THE PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES

A. Programming Issues:

Programming has to take into account the capabilities of the musicians, the length of time available for the total programme, the 'balance' of the individual items and their length. Because of the dominance of composition and notation, it is possible for a programme to be planned after detailed discussion, and publicised in advance to sell tickets. Even encores, often played with the illusion of spontaneity, are rehearsed beforehand. A particular concert (by The London Schools Symphony Orchestra) will illustrate the procedures.

The London Schools Symphony Orchestra consists of musicians drawn from Inner London Education Authority schools. Because they are learning the role of the concert performer the principles involved are made explicit. Lengthy preparation for the concert, a residential course at Bishop Otter College, Chichester, and an awareness of 'being on show' to friends, relations and pupils from other schools, heightens the careful presentation of performance rituals. The only area in which scheduling was affected by the youth of the players was in the early start for a programme lasting one hour and forty minutes. The usual starting time of eight o'clock was brought forward to seven-thirty because of the young age of many members of the audience.

The programme itself followed contemporary practice. The detailed pre-programming made no concessions to inexperience, and the standard programme structure was followed: an overture, a concerto and a work of symphonic length and weight.[15] The printed programme (bought for

50p) gives details of the three 'works' including brief biographical details of the composer setting the pieces in an historical context and a short musicological analysis of the 'work's' structure.

A separate section of the printed programme contains photographs and brief musical biographies of the conductor, the leader of the orchestra, and the french horn soloist.[16] The weight given to each is interesting. Elgar Howarth (conductor) has nearly three times as many words as Amy Siddall (leader) and David Pyatt (soloist) has twice as many. The printed programme also contains the names of all the members of the orchestra listed by section in the order in which the sections appear on the platform: First Violins through to Percussion. The leader of each section is asterisked. The printed programme reflects the complex and disciplined hierarchy of the symphony orchestra.[17]

The concert is divided into two halves. The Overture and the Concerto comprise the first half of about thirty-five minutes including the time taken to change orchestral personnel on the platform. An interval of twenty minutes separates the first half from the second with its huge 'symphonic' work. The timing can be fairly precise because the length of the various works are well known. The concert is over by nine-fifteen because of the early start. The whole concert programme is heavily pre-planned, highly structured and predictable. Each element within it is chosen for a specific reason and individually balanced by the other selections. The first half consists of relatively accessible compositions which provide a foil for the second half's longer, more complex and less tuneful work. A novice concert-goer would probably feel happier with the first half; the second requires greater

sophistication. In a concert performance of this type there can be no question of the audience having any control over the programming. The 'artistic directors' will determine this in the light of the capability of the musicians and the necessity to 'balance' the 'meal'. The audience are invited to buy tickets and become 'audio-spectators' of an event presented as autonomous, located within the historical tradition of concert-going, containing individual autonomous works. The 'autonomy' is both synchronic and diachronic. The event is a 'one-off' structured entity in its own right but also meaningful as part of the continuing tradition of concert-hall performance elaborated in the nineteenth century, and constructs and reproduces the ideology of the individual autonomous work.

Finally in this section it is worth illustrating the way in which not only the commodification of sound, but also the desired aesthetic mode of address is clearly reinforced by the final page in the published programme. A copy of this page is below and may be allowed to 'speak for itself' in the light of previous discussions!

(See Over)

Programme extract

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE
LONDON BOROURGH OF LAMBETH:

Persons shall not be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating or sit in any of the other gangways.

No smoking in the auditorium.

The taking of photographs is not permitted.
Members of the public are reminded that no tape recorder or other type of recording apparatus may be brought into the auditorium. It is illegal to record any performance or part thereof, unless prior arrangements have been made with the South Bank Halls management and the ILEA.

If you normally wear a hearing-aid but find that you do not need to use it during the concert, please make sure, if you remove the ear-piece, that you turn it off. Failure to do so may cause a high-pitched whistle which could be distracting to your neighbours.

Audience participation: During tests in the Hall, a note played mezzo-forte on the horn measured approximately 65 decibles of sound. A single uncovered cough gave the same reading. A handkerchief placed over the mouth when coughing assists in obtaining a pianissimo.

Patrons wearing digital watches are requested to ensure that the alarm is switched off.

First Aid facilities are provided by the British Red Cross Society.

A warning gong will be sounded for five minutes before the end of the interval.

B. Pacing and Regulation Issues:

The performer's flexibility is restricted by notation and academic traditions of performance practice which allow only a limited interpretative 'space' confined to those dimensions of music difficult to score. Timbre, phrasing, attack, tone, dynamic range for example, are characteristics which can make or mar a performance, but in terms of the overall work they are relatively minor aspects and generally covered by 'performance practice'. Some composers have attempted to cover all aspects of performance in their scores, but this can lead to a situation where the notes of guidance accompanying the score are longer and seem more complex that the 'work' itself. Musicians are reluctant to undertake the homework required for the realisation of such a performance, and the corresponding demands on the listener can also be enormous. Audiences tend to be restricted to a small number of educated initiates. The individual performer is also constrained by the necessity to create a 'personal' interpretation, which in effect requires a detailed knowledge of the 'personal' interpretations of others in order to avoid the criticism of being 'derivative'. The relationship between originality and authenticity is a complex dialectic between theory and practice as Bourdieu (1971) has shown.

The musical performance may be heavily constrained but what scope might the musicians have to vary the pacing of the whole event? The answer would seem to be 'Very little'. Even the 'spaces' between the individual pieces are tightly constrained by ritualistic behaviour. The assembling of the orchestra on the platform, the tuning-up ritual, the separate entry of the leader to applause followed by the entry of the conductor to a further burst of applause is a stylised format which is

rarely altered. During the clapping which follows the performance of the music, the conductor (and soloist) leave the platform only to return as if 'demanded' by the response of the audience. The bowing, leaving and returning may continue for some time and 'milking' the audience in this way is sometimes done by performers to try and keep the applause going for as long as possible, but it is eventually determined by the enthusiasm of the audience. This is in fact the only major contribution the audience can make to the whole affair. A concert is a clear example of a context bounded by a strong 'frame' (Bernstein 1971). There is a strong vertical dimension of control over the choice of content, its pacing and regulation, which eventually can be traced to forces outside the performance occasion itself.

C. Involvement Management:

In Chapter Five, Goffman's classification of settings as 'Tight' or 'Loose' was described as referring to the density of the behavioural expectations which operate in particular contexts. The greater the number of expectations, the tighter the control. Goffman also uses the terms 'Main' and 'Side' to refer to priorities given to actions by individuals in particular settings. All settings provide more or less effective means of regulating the Main/Side involvements of participants in such a way as to permit the setting to operate effectively. The concert-hall is an excellent example of a Tight setting which facilitates the specific involvement of participants in a particular mode of aesthetic address. As Goffman points out (Goffman 1963), Tight settings may 'demand' formal conformity but permit a degree of freedom for the 'personal'. The appearance of concentrating on the platform is what is outwardly required in a Tight setting. The personal imaginings of the 'participant'

cannot be subject to this external control.

How is the involvement of personnel managed within a concert-hall? Ritual demarcation separates regions spatially and temporally, and simultaneously demarcates priorities. Keying devices 'frame' new contexts, progressively 'tightening' the setting as the participant approaches the auditorium. The electric gong's regular pulse indicates the move from the easy going bustle of the foyers, the box office and the in-house shops, to the formal, disciplined concert arena. The taking of tickets and guidance to the specific appropriate seats indicates the move from a 'looser to a 'tighter' setting. The changing intensity of the lighting marks a further change and at this point the audience stops gossiping and shuffling and begins its concentration on the platform. The ritualised entry of the musicians, the orchestra members first then the leader to his/her applause and finally, the conductor with more clapping, marks an ever increasing 'tightening' of the setting. When the conductor raises his/her baton, pauses, and actually waits for that sense of 'black' silence to 'echo' from the auditorium, the involvement management is complete.

Involvement management therefore largely consists of moving personnel between temporal and/or spatial categories. Confining different activities to specific times and places recognises the potential threat of competition. (Nothing is more likely to distract from concentration on the music as needing to go to the lavatory. Each concourse in the Royal Festival Hall is adequately supplied with suitable facilities, and each interval long enough to make use of them.) Involvement management is therefore built in to the construction of the place. This contrasts vividly

with the Pontalba Cafe in New Orleans where involvement management became the responsibility of the musicians and the waitresses working in an informally negotiated 'team' with only tenuous support from temporal and spatial categories in the setting. In short, the musicians had to 'win' the audience in a way which classical performers in a concert hall seldom if ever need to. Having 'won' the audience, the players were then in a position 'to deliver the musical goods', always remembering that the goods being delivered, and the manner of their delivery were an integral part of the 'winning' process. In the concert-hall the audience is already 'won' but the musicians then have to deliver <u>under circumstances which makes the product liable to intense and detailed scrutiny</u>. For a musician, that first 'black' silence in the hall before the start of playing can be awesome.

<u>THE PERFORMANCE PROCESS</u>

The particular concert by the London Schools Symphony Orchestra on September eleventh, 1989, has been chosen for this account because it is atypical. Whereas the performance at the Pontalba Cafe described in Chapter Six was similar to others at the same venue taking place in the summer season in New Orleans, the L.S.S.O. concert occurred before an audience which included many children unsocialised into the rituals and requirements of a classical concert. The musicians were performing novices, being carefully prepared for the big event and schooled into what was expected of them. The advantage for the observer was that the conventions of a classical concert were made problematic and attempts to 'repair' rendered them visible. (Garfinkel 1967) Certain aspects of the performance event may be seen as a chance form of 'disruption'. The social construction of Sir Malcolm Sargent's 'temple'

became clearer. In the following account the term 'rites de passage' refers to rituals associated with a change of social role, and 'keying device' to cues which signal a frame shift.

The Performance

Rites de passage (1) 'Entry to the Temple': -In the entrance foyer two long queues of people stretch from the box-offices situated on the left of the wide entrance doors. One queue is for potential customers wishing to buy tickets for the concert that same evening, and the second is for those who have already booked their tickets and are waiting to collect them. Both queues are slow moving and many people are looking at their watches anxiously. If tickets can not be obtained in time, the first part of the concert will be missed. Entry to the auditorium is only permitted when there is a pause in the music and concerts regularly start on time. Apart from the queues all is movement in the foyer. People are arriving and meeting friends, looking at various posters advertising future events, and generally adjusting to being inside rather than outside. Coats are removed and there is a general sense of relaxation and relief after the travelling which in many cases seems to have been quite hectic. Overheard conversations include comments about the difficulty of parking, the rush to get away after work or after getting the children's supper, the difficulty of getting a 'sitter' and general comments about anticipating the evening's activities. It is clear that people have not entered the building because they happened to be 'just passing and thought they would drop in to see what was going on' but have planned their visit in advance. The first floor is very busy. Apart from the cafe and the separate bar which are an integral part of the building itself, a number of free-standing small shops have been

erected. There is a book shop, a music shop selling scores and stands selling records, mainly Compact Discs. The total ambience, the queues, the music shops, the cloakrooms constitute a zone of transition from the outside 'secular/profane' world of transportation, streets and pavements, to an inside world of 'sacred' expectations.

Rites de passage (2) 'Entry to the Inner Sanctum': - The electric gong sounds signalling the concert's start in five minutes and people begin moving towards the various entrance doors leading to the auditorium guided by the instructions on each ticket. There is a movable stand outside each door where an usher sells programmes. A large heavy sand-filled ceramic 'saucer' about two feet in diameter serves as a place to drop cigarettes safely before entry to the auditorium. The double doors leading to the auditorium have been wedged open for the mass entrance, but the space between them has to be traversed. The rituals required to do this mark the transition from someone committed to going to the concert through the purchase of a ticket, to a participating audience member. The tearing of the ticket confirms ownership of the seat, the watchful eye of the usher scrutinises each person in turn to make sure they are not smoking or carrying too much 'baggage', and a gesture indicates that the dark sombre space between the two sets of doors may be crossed without hindrance.

Once inside, almost emerging into the light as it were, another usher gives careful directions as to how the seat may be found with the least inconvenience. Each seat is individually numbered as is each row of seats. Purchase of a ticket gives access to a very precise position within the auditorium and consequently a specific sound and vision

balance. Pricing policy is guided by a generalised notion of a 'best balance' but many regular concert-goers have favourite positions which do not necessarily coincide with the the most expensive seats. There is a general hum of chatter and movement as people find their places and settle down. Programmes are read and coats folded, noses are blown, watches are checked and a general atmosphere of readiness begins to form.

Keying Device (1) 'The arrival of the acolytes': - The sense of readiness is 'tightened' as members of the orchestra come on to the platform from the dressing-rooms through a door towards the back and to one side of the platform. Their door is set at a lower level than the platform and musicians must climb a short flight of steps in order to get to platform level. The 'mechanics' of their entrance is thus concealed from the audience and they give the appearance of just emerging into view. They find their correct position within the precise instrumental layout of the orchestra, adjust their seats, finger their instruments and check their music. There is no attempt at formal presentation, they are just coming on the platform to do their job. Although visible the orchestral musicians are still 'back-stage'. They are dressed in a 'uniform' of white shirts or blouses, and black trousers or skirts and chat quietly to one another. The oboist sounds the tuning 'A' and the musicians tune their instruments. This does not take long and it is clear that the basic preparation has already been done behind the scenes.

Keying Device (2) 'The illumination of the chancel': - The sudden full illumination of the platform focusses the audience's attention on what is happening there rather than on activities dispersed within the auditorium.

The shifting of 'region' has occurred, the musicians are now 'front-stage' and sitting up, all conversation has ceased.

Keying Device (3) 'The entry of the high priests': - The orchestra's leader enters to some applause from the audience. She bows and takes her seat at the front of the first violins next to the conductor's rostrum. At this point a voice announces through the auditorium's public address system that there has been a misprint in the programme: the interval will last twenty minutes, not ten. Whereas this announcement breaks the audience's concentration on the platform, it also reflects the tight degree of temporal organisation of the event. The lights in the auditorium dim _but do not go out_. It is still possible to follow printed scores should anyone wish to do so. The platform is now in bright light and the focus of attention is clearly directed to the glittering array of instruments and the white shirts and blouses of the musicians.

Keying Device (4) 'The entry of the controller': - The conductor enters. Elgar Howarth is a tall man and his presence is given greater solemnity by his black tail coat and grey striped trousers, white shirt and bow tie. He walks briskly to the conductor's rostrum, pauses and looks carefully and deliberately at the audience. He bows, holding the balustrade of the podium in both hands. There is gentle applause.

Keying Device (5) 'The Sacred Silence': - The conductor turns to face the musicians, pauses again and looks carefully around the orchestra this time. He raises his right hand which holds his baton. It is visible to the entire auditorium. The musicians raise their instruments into their playing positions and their eyes are concentrated on the conductor. His left arm is raised until the two hands are in line with each other some

way above his shoulder-line. There is another pause and complete silence in the concert-hall. A slight lift of his hands preceding a clear and deliberate downward movement of the baton starts the orchestra playing the Mozart overture.

Each of the five keying devices serves to heighten the tension in the auditorium, directing the gaze of the audience through a series of stages leading progressively to a readiness to listen to the music. During the later stages, a response is required from the audience, clapping, which emphasises their readiness to respond to actions on the platform, and silence which indicates readiness to respond to sound. The final keying device (5), 'the pause', is a silence which eradicates all other sounds and provides the tabula rasa on which the musical communication can be 'written'.

During the playing of the piece, the conductor appears to have *complete* control over tempi, dynamics and volume although his discretion is limited by the score and traditions of performance practice. Quite small, but always deliberate gestures guide the musicians through their scores. A glance and a movement of the head often coupled with a gesture of the left hand brings in a section of the orchestra at the appropriate point. Spreading the arms wider seems to increase volume, more focussed gestures encourage particular groups of instruments and a long arm and pointing finger bring in an individual, the timpanist for example. The musicians are dividing their attention between the score in front of them, and the gestures of the conductor. To observe them in detail is to witness a complex web of social interaction which both creates and harnesses sound in a complex construction situated in a

precise spatial and temporal context.

At the close of the overture, there is a pause before the audience applauds. The conductor turns away from the orchestra to face the audience, pauses and bows slowly and carefully. Then he raises his arms either side of him, palms upwards, gesturing the orchestra behind him to stand. They do so to more audience applause. The conductor lowers his arms and the orchestra sit down. The applause dies away. The conductor leaves the platform. He has been not only the controller of the musical performance but of the timing of the audience's response.

With the conductor's absence from the platform the tightness of the frame has been relaxed. There are murmurs from the audience while more musicians carrying their instruments enter to augment the orchestra. After tuning up, the conductor returns with the soloist for the horn concerto. There is considerable audience applause. Fifteen year old David Pyatt looks incredibly smart in his formal tail-suit and carries a shining french horn. He stands to the left of the conductor's podium in front of the orchestra's leader and faces the audience. He is the only instrumentalist standing and looks very exposed. The only two people standing on the large platform are the conductor and the soloist and this not only makes the pair highly visible but also illustrates the priorities in the social relationship between the soloist and the orchestra, the orchestra and the conductor and the conductor and the soloist. The soloist has priority over the orchestra but they actively support his playing, the conductor has control over the orchestra but has to actively support the soloist. The two people standing are the controllers of the piece. According to Attali (1985) the soloist bridges the social gap

between the orchestra and the conductor. The conductor, the controller who makes no sound, is too socially distant from the ordinary orchestral musicians. However the soloist is 'one of them', a performing practical musician who has probably risen through the ranks of the orchestra.

Certain technical problems are revealed at this point. Pyatt tunes his horn, which takes a little while. Brass instruments react strongly to changes in temperature and need adjusting during performance because the musicians breath changes the tuning. The french horn is particularly vulnerable to such changes and can be a difficult instrument to control. It also has a major 'spit' problem. There are ways of emptying the instrument of spittle which involve removing U shaped pieces of tubing and shaking them. The instrument may also be rotated like a wheel in order to roll the spit around the long length of tubing until it drips out of the bell. This can appear indecorous and may threaten the presentation of confidence that a formally clad soloist wishes to project. Too much tinkering with technology can threaten not only the 'front/back-stage' distinction so ritualistically reinforced in formal concert-halls, but also distracts from the presentation of the 'autonomous work'. Pyatt handles the situation well by remaining impressively formal throughout reinforcing his front-stage presence.

There are a few murmurs from the slightly restive audience which are stilled by the raising of the conductor's baton. The silence keys the performance. He glances carefully at the soloist and starts the orchestra playing. When Pyatt raises his instrument to play, the lights on the platform catch its brilliant sheen reflecting tiny beams of light throughout the auditorium. At the start, Pyatt plays two very badly

formed notes which easily happens when a brass instrument is cold. Neither the conductor, the soloist nor any of the other musicians give any indication that they have heard the 'fluffs'. The potential 'disruption' of the performance is consequently 'repaired' instantly. Pyatt is not required to play continuously, and in the orchestral passages lowers the horn and cradles it in his arms in front of him. The instrument is always on display and forms an important focus of attention. From time to time Pyatt empties the spittle out of it by removing the U shaped tube and carefully replacing it. Throughout the concerto the conductor and the soloist exchange glances. Entries and tempi have to be carefully coordinated. At the *conclusion of the piece* there is loud applause and the conductor stands to one side of the podium while the soloist goes off the platform on his own. After a short moment, he returns to an increase in clapping and moves to his playing position in front of the orchestra's leader. He bows to the audience. The conductor motions to the orchestra to stand and they all bow. After the orchestral musicians have regained their seats, the conductor and soloist leave the platform together while the applause continues. After a few moments they return, move through the orchestra to the front and bow again. The soloist bows twice, the orchestra are raised again by the gestures of the conductor. All bow to the audience and the soloist and conductor leave the platform. They are followed by the leader of the orchestra and the rest of the musicians after her. The lights on the platform are dimmed and the house lights raised. The first part of the concert is over and the end has been keyed by the same devices used at the start, but in reverse order. The concentration of the audience on the platform has been relaxed by

signalling a frame-shift away from performance.

The end of performance ritual follows a traditional pattern which reflects complex status hierarchies. The soloist who has taken the brunt of the exposure leaves the platform without acknowledging the applause as if emphasising that the applause is for the music rather than the performer. However he is 'dragged back' by the continuing response of the audience and 'forced' to recognise them by taking the first bow. He then 'invites' the conductor to acknowledge the applause. Yet the conductor is but the controller of the orchestra; he creates no sound on his own. He motions the orchestra to stand and bow, thus acknowledging the applause, and he bows with them as if a member. In concerto playing the conductor and the orchestra are considered more or less as one unit supporting the soloist. However before the end both the soloist and conductor leave only to be 'dragged back' by the applause again. Yet the hierarchy is maintained by the soloist bowing twice while the conductor stands aside resuming his orchestral membership. The conductor has an ambiguous status and reinforces his place in the hierarchy by leaving after the soloist but before the other musicians.

The Interval

For Schutz (1964), a performance is a complex inter-twining of shared 'inner' and 'outer' time. Whereas the conventions within the auditorium increasing tighten the audience's focus on the product and enable the sharing of inner-time, the interval re-asserts the parameters of outer-time. It is not a 'space' in the concert but integral with it. Inner-time sharing is fragile and easily disrupted by seemingly trivial physical necessities which can penetrate the 'ongoing flux of the musical process'.

(Schutz 1964:173) To organise these into a precise section of the evening's events both enables the 'sharing' and reinforces its phenomenological uniqueness. Outer-time in the interval enables drinks to be bought, snacks consumed, trips to the lavatory to be made and the books in the book shop to be browsed. Friends and lovers can have conversations renewing their own unique forms of personal sharing. The 'educated' concert-goers can exercise their discourse in critical comments on the interpretation of the 'Work', others can express their generalised emotional response to the music to their friends. But the electric gong sounds and people slowly make their way back to their seats inside the auditorium. The slow move back permits a degree of anticipatory 'tuning-in' to take place, and the hushed, almost reverential atmosphere prepares audience members for those 'tight' concert-hall behavioural constraints thought to be necessary for the successful bracketing of outer-time.[18]

Rites de passage (2) is repeated except for the checking of the tickets, but cigarettes must be discarded along with any other trappings from the interval. The Keying Devices used for the start of the first half of the programme are repeated using differential lighting and the ordered return of the musicians to the platform in the same way as before. The spectacle of the full orchestra is impressive. The wood of the string instruments seems to glow a deep red and the copper of the timpani and the sparkling brass of the wind instruments render all other visual stimuli in the auditorium drab by comparison. The audience is silent. Its attention has been focussed on the platform by the succession of rituals which lead to a preparedness for the absorption into the 'inner-time' of the music. A slow movement of the conductor's baton and a gentle

wave of the left arm bring the start of the massive tone-poem 'Pelleas and Melisande' by Schoenberg.

The length of this piece, around forty minutes, and its complex internal structure, make it a difficult piece for a concert given by a schools orchestra for an audience largely made up of parents, friends, relatives and juvenile school supporters. Deliberately chosen in order to stretch the orchestra's capabilities, it has its origins in the late nineteenth century romantic period but contains many sections which anticipate Schoenberg's later atonal developments and there is little extended melodic content. Considerable effort is required to follow its internal structure. This gave rise to an unpredicted 'disruption' of the taken-for-granted conventions of the concert hall. Garfinkel (1967) has drawn attention to the way in which the reflexive monitoring of the setting of interaction coupled with that of the behaviour of others is a basic feature of the ethno-methods involved in the day-to-day constitution of social interaction. In fact it is the main basis upon which a member's 'competence' is adjudged by others. In this sense, quite a number of the audience might be considered to be 'incompetent' concertgoers. This gave a chance for 'disruption' and 'repair' to be observed without suffering the embarrassment and possible ostracism that the artificial disruption often advocated by Garfinkel might have produced.

Disruption of the 'taken for granted':

Some of the younger members of the audience began to get restless. Instead of sitting quietly and attentively they began squirming in their seats and looking around them. Some made faces at the people sitting behind them in the next row of seats and others started crawling along

their row until they reached the aisles. The consequent distress felt by nearby 'competent' concertgoers was clearly visible. Various forms of avoidance behaviour were attempted. Legs were crossed and re-crossed the other way around and the angle at which people were sitting in their seats changed slightly. Those sitting nearest the disruptive children turned slightly to one side as if disassociating themselves from the source of the problem. Others attempted to counter the visual distractions by closing their eyes and either raising their faces to the ceiling or lowering their heads towards their laps in an effort to transcend the visible and concentrate on the audible. A more direct confrontational technique was to stare back at a particularly annoying child. None of the techniques used involved making any noise except for one elderly woman who's 'Sssh' directed at a group in the row in front of her evoked a measure of disassociation behaviour itself. At all times the orchestra played on the platform either unaware, or as _if_ unaware, of the silent threat in the auditorium. No alteration of tempi, no change in dynamics or use of interpersonal behaviour was employed by the musicians to try to gain the children's attention. It was almost as if the audience were not there.

Repair of the 'taken-for-granted':

Garfinkel mainly makes use of the concept of 'repair' in those situations where the expectations of participant members have been suddenly shown to be 'false'. That is to say, the characteristics of the interaction have not coincided with those predicted by the participants' stocks of practical consciousness. In the face of the subsequent confusion, examination of the 'accounts' given by actors may reveal those areas of practical consciousness - tacit knowledge that is skilfully applied in the

enactment of courses of conduct - which the actor is not able to formulate discursively. 'Accounts' overheard and given in response to my questions after the concert had finished seemed to concentrate on two areas: (a) justifications for the perception of the disruption and the mode of sanction used, and (b) explanations for the causes of the disruption and attributing blame.

(a) Justifications for the perception of the disruption and the mode of sanction used showed that participants felt constrained by their understanding that a concert prioritised the audible over the visible. Overheard conversations after the concert outside the auditorium included phrases like "I just shut my eyes and pretended they weren't there!" and "I really wanted to say something to that teacher. She was just sitting there and pretending it wasn't happening, but I couldn't say anything because I'd be making a noise." In fact the fear of making a noise and thus adding further to the distractions seemed to be a strong limit on the wielding of sanctions. "I was going to go over to the attendant and ask him to do something, but I'd have to have climbed over people to get to him and it would all make such a fuss. I stared at him to try and catch his eye but couldn't. I think he was just pretending not to notice." The sound-over-sight priority was most explicit in "I suppose I don't _really_ mind what they do so long as they shut up. It's the sweet papers that get me."

(b) Explanations for the causes of the disruption and attributing blame seemed divided between those who focussed on assumed deficiencies in the children's subcultural background, those who thought the choice of music for the second half of the concert inappropriate and those who

thought the choice was 'risky but brave'. "Well of course they've never heard anything like that before where most of them come from I'm afraid. It's just wall-to-wall pop I shouldn't wonder. And their parents won't know any better either of course", and "Well they must have known, for Heaven's sake, ... If you have a schools orchestra you're going to get school kids there aren't you ... So what do they choose? Bloody Schoenberg!" and again "I nearly went to sleep myself, what a dreary thing, I thought it would never stop!" The 'risky but brave' position was common and is exemplified in the comment: "Y'know, they don't make any concessions do they? I thought they did that really well, not just well for a schools orchestra, but actually really well!"

Major disruption of the event was actually prevented, not by other audience members wielding sanctions, but because the children who were restless expressed their restlessness silently. Annoying as it may well have been, to be sitting near a row of fidgeting eleven year olds, none of them were removed nor I suspect would be likely to be unless they actually started to make a noise.

Despite the activities going on in the audience, the conductor and the orchestra continued as if nothing was happening, apparently oblivious to everything other than the music. Eventually the final bars were reached and there was a long pause. The 'work' has no obvious conclusion, no loud chord to mark the culmination of the various musical processes within it. Only previous experience of the piece or a very sophisticated musical appreciation of its inner structures would indicate its conclusion. The conductor seemed to appreciate this and after a long pause with his hands held high above each shoulder, he deliberately, and obviously brings

his hands together and slumps his shoulders while lowering his arms. The sign is very clear. There is a major frame-shift.

This long and demanding work has ended. Applause starts at various points in the audience and soon everyone is clapping. The children who had been a 'problem' earlier were clapping and cheering as if supporting a school football team. The conductor faces the audience and bows repeatedly turning a little each time to face a different section of the auditorium. He raises his arms either side of him, palms of his hands turned upwards to bring the orchestra to their feet behind him. He leaves the platform with the orchestra still standing. As soon as he has left, they sit down. The conductor returns to the podium accompanied by even more vigorous applause and brings the orchestra to its feet again. He bows, leaves the platform, and the orchestra sit down. After a slightly longer wait the conductor returns to more applause and some stamping of feet in the audience. He raises the orchestra, bows again and goes off. The orchestra sit down for the third time, but soon afterwards the leader stands, bows to the audience and leaves the platform followed by the members of the orchestra as the house lights come on and the spot-lights on the platform go out. The performance in the auditorium has ended. The audience are returned to outer-time with the rise of the house lights.

The tight control has relaxed. People are chatting to each other, gathering coats, scarves and other belongings together. Some are putting their coats on, others clutch them in untidy bundles as they mingle with the crowds heading for the exit doors. The general noise is noticeably louder as I reach the concourse outside the auditorium. People are

noises derived from mundane day-to-day existence.

The WEAM aesthetic code, celebrating a particular form of aesthetic address directed at an 'objectified' work is reproduced through complex social practices of which the architectural dimension is a material manifestation. The framing of practices as 'performance' requiring a mode of address distinct from the 'natural' is keyed, firstly by the special purpose-built nature of the venue and secondly by rituals within it which operate a progressive tightening of social control upon the participants.

The Royal Festival Hall Performance as Ritual

It has been progressively argued throughout this thesis that performance contexts encourage particular modes of aesthetic address, that the social relationships involved both construct and are simultaneously the products of particular aesthetic ideologies. The brief outline of the historical development of the WEAM music tradition, suggested that there has been an uneven, but nevertheless fairly continuous movement from performance contexts which were multi-functional - state occasions, church services etc. - towards the development of purpose-built, functionally designed concert-halls specifically intended for the performance of WEAM. It was argued that the aesthetic ideology most closely associated with such a development was that stressing the aesthetic autonomy of the work. A more detailed critical discussion of the literature dealing with aesthetic ideologies is to be found in Chapter Eight. At this point it is necessary only to sketch the outlines of the ideology of aesthetic autonomy before considering the way in which the performance in the Royal Festival Hall

functions at the level of ritual to incorporate the audience within it.

In Chapter Four the way in which ideology operates at both the general level and the level of day-to-day common-sense was described with reference to Gramsci (1968), Hall (1977) and Green (1988). Green argues that music ideologies are specific manifestations of general ideology. That the twin tendencies of general ideology, the denial of historicity and the assumption of universality are to be found within music ideologies in different modes. The first tendency of general ideology is to ignore the historically located social relations in the production of music. The 'assumption that music is the atomised and fragmented creation of isolated individuals' (Green 1988:5) renders its historical origins invisible. The second assumes that music 'speaks' to everyone directly without mediation through cultural difference and in doing so constructs the listening subject like "us". As described in Chapter Four, Green goes further than a description of ideologies to argue that the ahistorical and universalising tendencies within general ideology contain within themselves an implicit notion of aesthetic value. The nearer the art form gets to an ahistorical and universal stance, the greater its aesthetic worth. Music is judged to be at its greatest when it expresses a universal human spirit. *How is this ideological* incorporation accomplished? How is it possible that the audience at a concert who can see musicians performing, who have the evidence of their own eyes (and ears) on which to base their assessment, are drawn into the twin tendencies of general ideology? Maurice Bloch's (1974, 1989) analysis of ritual and ideology might suggest a solution. It will be remembered from Chapter Four that Bloch argues for two sources of cognition. Firstly there are the conceptual forms available to members

of a culture which maintain a continuity over time, and secondly there are day-to-day experiences resulting from the interaction of the individual with the environment. The link between the two is forged in the ritual process. General ideology, like religion and traditional authority is sustained through faith rather than challenged by experience. If the former is successfully internalised, the latter serves to confirm it. The function of the ritual process for Bloch is to ensure the continuity of traditional authority. It does so by formalising the ritual actions to such an extent that the participants cease to have any choice about what occurs - they are either a part of the process or outside it. Although Bloch's illustrations are largely linguistic he mentions instrumental music in a footnote, suggesting that it represents the most extreme mode of formalization (Bloch 1974:76). Sounds have 'drifted out of meaning', to use his phrase. and are incapable of being countered by logic or reason. Commitment to the ritual practices by the participants moves them from directly experienced interaction with the environment to the level of general ideology where immersion in traditional conceptual categories translates the immediately experienced into the framework of traditional authority.

Is it pushing Bloch's analysis too far to suggest that a similar process occurs in a performance of WEAM in a concert-hall? Is it possible that there may be a parallel between Bloch's examples (the Merina circumcision ceremony, the ritual of the Royal Bath in Madagascar) and a concert at the Royal Festival Hall? Bloch's examples are rites in Grimes's terms although it is doubtful if a WEAM concert could be called that. The participants would not call it that nor would they think of a concert as a ceremony or sacred ritual like a church service.

Nevertheless there are many dimensions which are similar. A glance at Grimes's 'Qualities of Ritual' (cf, Chapter Four) reveals a large number of characteristics present in a concert-hall performance. Concert-going and audience membership is 'enacted and gestural', there are levels of 'formalisation and differentiation from the everyday', the celebrations are 'collective and consensual', there is a high degree of 'standardisation' and a considerable 'dramatic or ludic' form to the proceedings. There are also degrees of 'repetition and redundancy', hints of 'traditional, almost archaic forms', and certainly 'deeply felt, sentiment-laden and meaningful' layers to a concert performance. Finally, although many of the actions involved in a performance can be clearly justified on the basis of functional efficiency, the <u>ends</u> of the means-ends rationality chain are non-rational and the product of the ideology of aesthetic autonomy. Technical aspects of time-keeping, lighting, seat-numbering, applause etc. eventually mesh together to convey at a symbolic level, a particular <u>app</u>roach to the sounds produced by the orchestra. This approach, a mode of aesthetic address, celebrates an ahistorical and universal ideology of aesthetic autonomy. How is this done?

The nationalistic symbolism of the Festival of Britain and the Royal Festival Hall as a testament to post-War reconstruction has already been described in the early part of this chapter. However of more immediate significance is the location of the large concert-hall as part of the South Bank complex with two other smaller halls, the Hayward Art Gallery, the Museum of the Moving Image, the National Film Theatre, and the National Theatre. The sign-posting of these starts at the concourse of Waterloo Station acknowledging that people will be travelling some

distance to attend. There are many car parks at various points within and surrounding the complex. Clearly it is a place people travel to, and it would be tempting to make an analogy between regular concert attendance and pilgrimage but this might be to place too much strain on the concept. However for some audience members who regularly attend concerts at particular points in the year, pilgrimage might be a term to use. Certainly the opening and closing concerts of the Prom season at the Royal Albert Hall might be seen in this light for some regulars. There is a commitment needed to travel to the South Bank, to 'go out to a concert' which marks the separation of the event from the everyday. The form of the event is highly predictable, one knows what one is getting and what will be required of one. By choosing to attend a concert one is taking on an identity and some of the practices which comprise such an identity will include the prior arrangements necessary for booking a ticket - looking up the schedule of concerts well ahead, posting or telephoning for a booking, sending a cheque or using a credit card, arranging a baby-sitter, organising transport etc. Each of these acknowledges the separateness of the event, its predictability and the personal commitment required to attend.

On arrival at the hall the physical separation of the audience from the performers, the separate entrances, the clear distinction between the performers' platform and the seating in the auditorium, the complex arrangements of the 'Green Room' system, demarcate the concert-goer from the object of his/her scrutiny. Although these component elements can all be justified instrumentally and functionally, they also reflect aspects of the rationality of life in contemporary Weberian bureaucratic society and their symbolic effect goes beyond the technical and

traditional concert seems to hold sway for the majority of concert-goers. Why does this form have such a tenacious hold, not only on performance but on the design of concert-halls?

Bocock (1974) offers a potential explanation. He argues that the decline of regular church attendance amongst the middle-class has led to a corresponding increase in involvement in aesthetic activities of which concert-going would be one example. If indeed there has been this substitution, it might explain why the WEAM concert proves such a resilient form. With the decline of locally based ritual celebrating communal membership in industrial societies, and it is precisely that decline which has led many commentators to suggest that the term 'ritual' is inappropriate for industrial society (cf, Chapter Four), it may be that attendance at a concert (or a theatre) provides just that reassurance that the educated and culturally self-identified middle-class need that _their_ values still exist. This may be particularly so as class membership is scattered over a relatively wide geographical area through our urban sprawls. The activities required for concert-going with their need for forward planning and careful organisation of family and home, signify a commitment both to successful rationality of means and to non-rational ends. For the concert-goer, the apparatus of technical rationality surrounding the event serves to signify the centrality of their traditional values. The eternal verities still command respect. In short, the values which they claim to uphold, despite the perceived assaults on them by numerous contemporary forces (which for different individuals at any one time might include, amongst many others, Thatcherite market forces, the perception of declining educational standards in schools, mass television and commercial radio stations) still exist. And more than

exist, actually represent a form of unchallengable traditional authority which to reject implies banishment to a cultural wilderness dominated by the three-minute culture.

AESTHETIC IDEOLOGIES

It was suggested in the introduction to Chapter Four, that in any context of reception three levels of meaning are operating. The first concerns the relationship between the listener/consumer and the text and involves the construction of textual meaning from denotation, connotation and internal textual structure (cf, Ch. 4.3). This chapter considers the second and third levels: the mode of aesthetic address (governed by an aesthetic code), and the meaning of the musical event (governed by an aesthetic ideology). Any event is located in social time and space, the producer, the performing musician and the consumer learn how the text is to be addressed, and how their roles should be interpreted.[1] These levels include the aesthetic code which is used by both musicians and audience when addressing the text and the aesthetic ideology which performs what Jakobson (1958) and Barthes (1972) have called the 'metalingual' function and Hodge and Kress (1988), the 'logonomic'. All messages have to tell the reader (explicitly or implicitly) which code is being used to avoid 'aberrant readings' (Eco 1965).

Aesthetic codes have very high conventionality and their weak motivation requires considerable contextual 'support' (Fiske 1982). The term 'code', despite its origins in numerous discourses tends to be largely understood within the semiotics tradition with its central concern with textual meaning (cf, Corner 1986). In order to emphasise the importance of the performance context with its interacting social relations in framing the product and indicating the aesthetic code appropriate for its reading, the term aesthetic ideology will be used. Each aesthetic ideology therefore, contains within it an aesthetic code. Each context of reception has a

dual articulation: between aesthetic ideology and the text (the internal contextual relationship) and between aesthetic ideology and the cultural hierarchy of contexts (the external contextual relationship). In other words, the question "What am I hearing, what does this mean?" cannot be divorced from the question "Where am I hearing it?"

In this chapter, the relationship between aesthetics, ideology and the sociological approach to cultural forms will be very briefly examined before giving an overview of attempts to construct models of music aesthetics in terms suitable for sociological exploration. The final section of this chapter argues for the salvaging of a modified concept of 'homology' and its application to performance/reception contexts. This enables the performing career of a musician (or a musical form) through the hierarchy of performance contexts to be seen as a mode of incorporation.

Aesthetics and Ideology

The debate between sociologists (or social historians) and aestheticians is clearly summarised in Wolff (1983). In so far as aesthetics pursues its subject matter in isolation from an examination of its historical contingency it performs an ideological function by defining cultural products in metaphysical rather than materialist terms, by emphasising the 'timeless' quality of concepts like beauty through implicit rejection of historical and relativist critiques. There is an understandable resistance by aestheticians to any attempt to reduce aesthetic value to political value, to relegate what they perceive as an irreducible and specifically artistic quality to the product of ideological pressures or economic determinations. Different positions are taken on this issue by

Gombrich (1975), Eagleton (1976), Lukacs (1971), Althusser (1971) and Marcuse (1969, 1978) amongst others (cf, Wolff 1983). The problem for sociology and social history would be the assumption by aesthetics of universal values supported by Kant's emphasis on the essential 'disinterestedness' of the aesthetic experience. Critiques have come from feminism (cf, Parker and Pollock 1981), the social history of taste (cf, Bourdieu 1980(a), 1980(b), 1984) and hermeneutics and reception theory (cf, Wolff 1981).

The world of arts funding has intense debates over the control of scarce resources and so do administrators of institutions like art galleries and concert halls but few of the protagonists actually deny the existence of aesthetic value of some sort.[2] As Wolff points out, just because all art is ideological it does not mean that it is only ideological. Neither does it mean that the ideological dimension is historically constant. Certain patterns of practices may play different ideological functions at different periods of history, and particular ideological functions may be performed by a range of different practices. Furthermore, if words are polysemic needing constraint within a discursive formation, how much more is non-representational painting, music and non-narrative dance? How is this contained? As a limited answer to this, it will be argued that contexts of performance embody particular modes of aesthetic address which provide answers to the central aesthetic questions of the nature of the art product, its evaluation and how it should be experienced.

It will be argued that certain aspects of the 'universal' in music are constructed by the rituals of the performance context and are not intrinsic to the work itself but to the mode of address codified in those

rituals. In the visual arts, the modernist movement sometimes used the framing potential of galleries and exhibitions to translate mundane objects into aesthetic works - 'ready-mades' and collage for example. In his 'Critique of Judgement', Kant argued for an 'aesthetic attitude' which enabled anything to be looked at in an aesthetic way. But this fails to take into account the way in which cultures differentiate between objects. If anything - material objects, practices, representations - may be viewed as aesthetic objects, what becomes of 'art'? A flower, a sunset or bird-song is not conventionally regarded as art, although a representation of these might be. Contexts of reception may provide the frames which cue the application of the aesthetic attitude and reception ritual may be constitutive of artistic status, reinforce and reproduce it.[3]

Models of Music Aesthetics

This section discusses models of music aesthetics in the work of the aestheticians Leonard Meyer (1956, 1967, 1973) and Andrew Chester (1970a, 1970b), the sociologists Phil Virden (1977), John Shepherd (esp.1977) and Graham Vulliamy (1976, 1977, 1982), the composer of experimental electronic music and musicologist Trevor Wishart (1977), the ethnomusicologist Charles Keil (1966), the musical analysts Frank Tirro (1974) and Paul Rinzler (1983), and the music educationalist Lucy Green (1988). Attempts to combine or compare the various approaches are difficult because of the different use of terms, the lack of clarity in analytical categories and the different discourses within which they are articulated. The one basic axis around which all except Green turn their arguments, is the essential difference of WEAM from most others and the necessity for elaborating an aesthetic theory appropriate to a

particular tradition to avoid a confusing and frequently damaging ethnocentrism when making aesthetic judgements across musical forms. Between them the writers consider the nature and origin of meaning in music, the extent to which any piece of music text may be said to have a narrative structure, the social function of music, issues of audience response and audience/performer interaction and the confusions which can result from inappropriately applied aesthetic paradigms. Lucy Green's (1988) position however, derives from a modification of Hegel's views on consciousness and enables her to make radical critiques of those theorists who insist on the essential differences between WEAM and other musics.

For Meyer (1956, 1967, 1973) meaning in music is derived largely from syntax. Although he makes a gesture in the direction of cultural specificity, the central core of his argument remains that the music product, the 'work', contains something 'encoded so successfully that it has ceased to depend for its meaning on the particularities of an audience.' (Bradley 1981:206) This one might call the 'strong' version of aesthetic autonomy implying as it does the virtually universal nature of musical language.[4] Meyer's acknowledgement of musical difference is grudging and he maintains the importance of syntax while differentiating audiences in terms of their psychological needs. He distinguishes 'art' music from what he calls 'primitive' music. His use of the word 'primitive' is unfortunate as it has both an ambiguous anthropological currency and pejorative overtones. Meyer says:

> The differentia between art music and primitive music lies in the speed of tendency gratification. The primitive seeks almost immediate gratification for his tendencies whether these be biological or musical. Nor can he tolerate uncertainty. And it is because distant departures from the certainty and repose of the tonic note and lengthy delays in gratification are insufferable to him that the tonal repertory of the primitive is limited, not because he cannot think of the other tones.

> It is not his mentality that is limited, it is his maturity. (Meyer 1967:32-33)

At first sight it might seem that Meyer is making distinctions between cultures, and this is exactly what Shepherd (1977) assumes. He castigates Meyer for his ethnocentrism and his unjust comparison of industrial man (sic) with preliterate man (sic) (Shepherd 1977:43-44). But Meyer makes it clear that he is not necessarily referring to non-literate people, and it is interesting that Shepherd's response should assume that he is. Shepherd's own arguments constructing an aesthetic model of music rest strongly on Marshal McLuhan's theories of the different world views of literate and non-literate peoples and the encoding of ideologies resulting from technology.[5] So what <u>does</u> Meyer mean by 'primitive'? This is not clear but it is likely that he would regard various types of rock music as primitive. If this is so, then his classification may involve the degree to which musical forms emphasise component elements differing from the functional tonality of WEAM.[6]

There is an unfortunate tendency for analysts of music aesthetics to construct very general dichotomous models: Meyer has 'sophisticated' and 'primitive', Shepherd has industrial (literate) and preliterate, and Phil Virden and Trevor Wishart (1977) use the terms 'explicit' and 'implicit' derived from Bernstein's (1971) theory of 'elaborated' and 'restricted' codes.[7] The assumption that tonality remains the dominant musical language within the 'European' tradition is coupled with a theory of cultural - and therefore symbolic - domination to enable Virden and Wishart to argue that:

> ... in music, we should expect that the conventions of the forms favoured by the ruling elements would exert a great deal of influence upon the music of the general population. We should equally expect

> almost a complete lack of 'pollution' of elite music by any music generated by the peoples. (Virden & Wishart 1977:163)

In support of this thesis, Virden and Wishart undertake an analysis of the 'blues', drawing a clear distinction between 'authentic' rural/country blues and the 'blues chord sequence' as used by jazz musicians - the latter being the result of the cultural imperialism of functional tonality over a beleaguered community newly released from slavery.

This argument is not new but the explicit way in which the inner structure of music becomes central to their thesis is highly productive. One of the classic works in the sociology of jazz is Morroe Berger's (1947) 'Jazz: Resistance to the Diffusion of a Culture Pattern' where he explores the implications for the diffusion of jazz, of the negro's low status in the U.S.A. Although he shows how jazz was more readily accepted in the northern States than in the South because of the negro's greater penetration of the class and status system he at no point discusses _what happened to jazz in the process_. It is true that he raises this question at the end of his essay, but it is crucial for his case. Successful diffusion can only be demonstrated with reference to the degree of accommodation that the music itself has undergone in the process.

But if functional tonality is _that_ dominant, in what sense can there be an alternative? The answer would seem to be in the 'inner' form of the symbol system itself. That is in the way in which 'the implicit' unfolds through the development of the music. Virden and Wishart cite Andrew Chester's (1970a, 1970b) use of the terms 'extensional' and 'intensional' to describe the inner development of a musical work. In the former,

> The complex is created by the combination of the simple, which remain discrete and unchanged in the complex unity ... Western classical music is the apodigm of the extensional form of musical construction. Theme and variations, counterpoint (as used in classical composition) ...' (Chester 1970:78)

By contrast, in 'intensional' development,

> The simple entity is that constituted by the parameters of melody, harmony, and beat. while the complex is built up by modulation of the basic notes, and by inflexion of the basic beat. (Chester 1977:79)

All those very qualities which make a particular performer unique and instantly recognisable, which make the performance a personal one, timbre, emphasis, attack, complex rhythmic inflection, are produced within the basic structure. The repeating chorus of a blues or jazz number allows a variety of intensional moves, the quantity and quality of which are determined only by the skill of the musician and the constraints of the performance setting.

One of the more detailed analyses of different musical forms is Charles Keil's (1966). Because he is one of the few writers to have attempted to tackle the complex area of performance and because his classic essay contains numerous convolutions and ambiguities it will be examined in some detail. Keil uses a critique of Meyer's classic 1956 book, 'Emotion and Meaning in Music' to enable him to elaborate his own thesis. His points of agreement with Meyer are a concern with teleological or goal-directed music, an emphasis on understanding music itself irrespective of any referential or extramusical content it may possess and general if qualified agreement that the formalist and expressionist viewpoints in musicology should be seen as complementary rather than conflicting. Keil's criticism of Meyer comes at the point Meyer attempts to transpose his theory to the music of cultures outside the Western

tradition. However it is not clear exactly what Keil is arguing. He seems to assert that there is a distinction to be made between those music cultures which are performance based - largely non-Western - and those which are not - largely WEAM.

'Outside the West musical traditions are almost exclusively performance traditions' he argues. (Keil 1966:338) But surely are not WEAM traditions also performance traditions? It is only in the last three decades or so that electronic recording technology has been used by musicians as a direct expression in the act of production; that the recording studio has become a musical instrument in itself. However Meyer's emphasis throughout his book is on musical syntax as the producer and conveyor of 'embodied meaning'. This emphasises the music product, the work, rather than the process of its production, and may work tolerably well for through-composed and harmonically orientated musical forms Keil argues, but is inadequate for non-Western performance styles.

> "Music must be evaluated syntactically" (Meyer, 1969:496). When however, this equation and the corresponding evaluative criteria are applied to non-Western styles or to certain Western compositions in performance, we often find that something is missing. It is that something ... that I will attempt to specify in some detail. (Keil 1966:338)

Keil agrees with Meyer that all music has syntax and 'embodied meaning' and that the task of the analyst is to discover the grammatical rules of the particular type of music being investigated. But he insists that there is also 'an elusive quality designated here as "process" ... whenever music is performed the processual aspect becomes important.' (Keil 1966:338-339)

Keil takes issue with Meyer's over cerebral approach to music and emphasises the complex and fundamental relationship between sound and physical movement. Music is inextricably related to dance in so many cultures that attempts to separate the two is like 'separating myth from ritual, or mind from body, for that matter'.

> No less an avowed formalist than Stravinsky states, "The sight of the gestures and movements of the various parts of the body producing the music is fundamentally necessary if it is to be grasped in all its fullness." (Keil 1966:339)

Keil therefore seems to be arguing that all music is only received 'in all its fullness' in the live performance context because of the important paralinguistic dimension (presentational codification) and that there is a syntactical and processual element in all music performance. In which case why does he make such an issue of cultural difference? There seem to be ambiguities permeating the whole of his article. It is also not clear whether Keil is arguing that there are two (at least) radically different musical traditions requiring radically different aesthetics for their evaluation or that the differences between musical forms are not radical but differences of degree.

Although there are substantive and substantial ambiguities Keil's distinctions may be treated analytically and be of use. He proceeds by contrasting Meyer's 'embodied meaning' with a context based notion - 'engendered feeling'. To clarify these distinctions Keil draws up his 'Table of Contrasts':

Table of Contrasts:

	Embodied Meaning	Engendered Feeling
1. Mode of Construction	composed	improvised
2. Mode of Presentation	repeated performance	single performance
3. Mode of Understanding	syntactic	processual
4. Mode of Response	mental	motor
5. Guiding Principles	architectonic (retentive)	"vital drive" (cumulative)
6. Technical Emphasis	*Harmony/melody/* embellishment (vertical)	*Pulse/meter/* rhythm (horizontal)
7. Basic Unit	"sound term" (phrase)	gesture (phrasing)
8. Communication Analogies	linguistic	paralinguistic (kinesics, proxemics, etc)
9. Gratifications	deferred	immediate
10. Relevant Criteria	coherence	spontaneity

(Keil 1966:338)

Although Keil explicitly describes his contrasts as 'loose and fuzzy' and insists that 'they are meant to be thought-provoking rather than precise', his scheme may be used as a basis for a consideration of 'music as a creative act rather than as an object' (Keil 1966:338).

His emphasis on process rather than product is illustrated by his discussion of 'swing' and the way in which different styles of bass

players and drummers may help to produce it. 'Product' approaches analyse the 'architectonic levels', the vertical dimension, whereas 'process' must be seen horizontally. 'In improvised music the fitting analogy is not to a building but to a train' (Keil 1966:345). 'Where is each musician placing his notes in terms of the subjective pulse?' (Keil 1966:345). But, Keil's emphasis on the horizontal forward thrust of the pulse in improvised music leads him to under estimate the importance of it in Western music. Similarly his emphasis on harmony, the vertical, in Western music results in an underestimate of its importance in jazz. Many of the major developments in jazz have been harmonic, and the notion that forward propulsion is not important in through-composed music is clearly wrong as any cursory listening to a Beethoven piano Sonata or a Bach fugue will show. Clearly Keil <u>cannot</u> mean that Western musical forms are vertical and non-Western are horizontal.

Tirro (1974) points out a fundamental conceptual error in Keil's scheme.

> I would argue that Keil has confused compositional process with its result, the notated version or performance of a traditional Western composition: a confusion of process and product. In jazz, process and product are simultaneous. When the analyst deals with syntactical relationships, he is dealing with the results of the compositional process, the music itself.' (Tirro 1974 quoted in Rinzler 1983:127)

In other words Keil's assertion that distinctions between 'vertical' and 'horizontal', syntactical and processural etc. are aspects of different musical traditions, is the result of the confusion of compositional process with performance practice. In one tradition they are separated by time, and function, in the other they are simultaneously performed by the same individual.

Some of the ambiguities in Keil may be resolved if the 'Table of

Contrasts' is seen as an heuristic device, designed to direct attention to areas of music reception and aesthetic judgement ignored or rejected by Meyer. Keil argues that all music contains both a syntactic and processual dimension. In which case Keil's 'Contrasts' may be reinterpreted as two modes of address through which music is to be understood. The 'contrast' is not so much between forms of music (musical structure), but between aesthetic ideologies. The dominant position of the syntactic ideology results in the categorisation of musical forms weak in syntax as 'primitive'.

In a book explicitly targeted at music teachers in schools, Vulliamy (1976) seems to reinforce the dichotomous interpretation of Keil's article. Having argued that pop music should be treated seriously as worthy of study in its own right, and not solely as a stepping-stone to the study of classical music, he goes on to suggest that the analytical methods traditionally used to dissect a classical piece are not suited to the study of pop music. It may be that musicological analysis is an inappropriate method in schools for pedagogical reasons, however Vulliamy's argument is that its suitability for WEAM derives from the 'embodied meanings' of that tradition and its inappropriateness for pop is due to the latter's 'engendered feeling'. This type of viewpoint has ideological implications in the educational music scene as it, no doubt unwittingly ...

> ... affirmed the very superior appearance given to classical music that he [Vulliamy] assumed himself to be attacking. Not only is analysis in schools the very mode of study that ingenuously deposits upon music the reified appearance of eternal value generating out of itself: but Vulliamy's implication that pop cannot be analysed in the same way is problematic. (Green 1988:41)

It is the emphasis on the essential correctness of musicological analysis for WEAM that has helped to support the dominance of the classical tradition in school music education. The support for the ideology of aesthetic autonomy given by this dichotomy continues to reify 'the work' beyond its performance by insisting on the 'content' being found in its 'embodied meanings'. It is correct to emphasise the differences in aesthetic criteria between musical styles, but this has little to do with the application of the analytical method to the music's inherent meanings (cf, Green 1988).

The tendency to produce dichotomies is reinforced by Paul Rinzler (1983) who goes so far as to construct a table:

	Western	Non-Western
Meyer	sophisticated	primitive
Shepherd	industrial	preliterate
Virden	explicit	implicit
Chester	extensional	intensional
Keil	embodied (syntactic)	engendered (processural)

(Rinzler 1983:126)

How do these dichotomies help a study of music performance contexts? All the writers listed by Rinzler are dealing with different aspects of the musical text and concern themselves with its inner structure. Meyer is talking of relative levels of complexity of syntax, Shepherd concentrates

on the encoding of world views largely determined by levels of musical literacy and Virden and Wishart refer to the degree to which musical meaning is explicitly structured in the work or left to the shared understanding of a close-knit community. Meyer implicitly, and Shepherd and Virden explicitly, relates music's structure to the cultural life styles of social groups. For Meyer and Shepherd these operate at the highest level of generality and for Virden at the level of class divisions and power distribution. Chester focusses on the way in which the 'narrative' of a musical piece unfolds according to different developmental principles. Only Keil's schema introduces an element of audience response and hints at a possible way of conceptualising reception contexts. His ambiguities however, leave him open to a variety of reinterpretations, some of which have unfortunate implications (cf, Vulliamy 1976).

For Lucy Green (1988), the principal error of musical aestheticians to date, is their tendency to give scant consideration to the 'nature of musical experience as it takes place in time' (Green 1988:12). Making the formal analytical distinction between music (its real historical nature) and consciousness (individual consciousness affected by listening to music in time), Green argues for a position based on the notion of _mediation_ between the two. Founded on a critical discussion of Hegel's theory of consciousness, Green's view is ...

> ... that music lacks any subjectively understood objective structure _at any given instant_; and that music thereby causes the listener to structure each instant in terms of a wide _field of presence_ related to past, present and future. Although in so doing, the subject necessarily engages with music as an external object, it is also forced to engage with its own structure of knowledge through time: at every indistinguishable instant the musical object changes, and with it, the subject's knowledge of the object's past and its expectations for its future must also change, never at a single point in time but only

through a continuous temporal flux'. (Green 1988:16)

The subject structures its intentions towards music according to its knowledge of music. But this is in a continuous state of transition. L.B.Meyer, on the other hand, removes the musical object from the point of experience, reifies its content and postulates its universality. Furthermore his theory of response which distinguishes between unconscious affect and conscious meaning, is based on the listeners relation to the musical work as it unfolds through time. A future orientation is at the core of this response, emphasising a linearity. This future orientation is inadequate. Green cites Clark and Ford (1981) in support of her contention that Meyer's emphasis on linearity is too limited. For Clark and Ford, a foreground/background model is preferable, where immediate experiences refer to larger structures on a higher level, and these in turn to a higher level still - e.g. the dominant seventh 'means' the later tonic, which in turn 'means' the dominant to tonic convention, which 'means' the diatonic scale system etc. etc. In this way Green is able to retain the notion of an objective 'musical structure as a process that has a real effect upon us' without falling into the trap of assuming that such 'externality' has the solidity suggested by Meyer's 'embodied meaning'. Green's alternative view of externality, stressing experience through time, should not be confused with Meyer's despite her use of the phrase 'inherent musical meaning' to refer to the ability of music to have a real effect on the human subject.

Where the criticisms of Meyer by Keil (1966) and Vulliamy (1976, 1977) are in error, according to Green, is in their assumption that the presence of 'embodied meaning' in WEAM is a particular characteristic of its

form, rather than something which is an aspect of all music. Afro-American music and other non-WEAM musics have internal structures which impinge on the subject and therefore have 'inherent meaning'. This meaning is not however independent of the listening subject, there is no immediate relationship, no automatic response. Further, Keil and Vulliamy reinforce this error by distinguishing WEAM from Afro-American musics in this respect and arguing that they require different criteria of assessment because of this. It is not that Meyer's notion of 'embodied meaning' is correct for classical forms but not for pop and jazz as Keil and Vulliamy suggest, but that his theory of musical meaning is inadequate for all music. His emphasis on linearity does not allow a satisfactory explanation of any musical experience. Inherent musical meaning is only a logical moment, it cannot exist alone but is part of a web of extra-musical social meanings.

'Extra-musical social meanings' Green calls 'delineated meanings' and they refer to music as an historical object (1988:Ch.3). This category is enormous and includes images, associations, memories, queries, problems and beliefs. Music production industries generate delineated meanings which are applied to social groups - age, class, race etc. Delineated meanings apply at the macro-social level and to individuals; to major social ceremonial conventions like weddings - the Wedding March (Mendlessohn) - and to the impact of a particular occurrence of that ceremonial on an individual - his/her own wedding. Green argues that within an hierarchical society the supreme delineation is that between the elite and the mass.

Green asks the question: 'How do (inherent meanings and delineated

meanings) relate to each other, or come to consciousness as an integrated experience, at all?' (1988:33). Her answer is through the medium of 'style'. Style enables the interpretation of inherent meanings and their recognition in terms of the historical delineations of what counts as music.

> It is through style that the dual musical experience of inherent and delineated meanings reaches consciousness as a unified, undifferentiated, apparently inseparable whole. (Green 1988:37)

Without a recognition of style sounds appear random, without form or meaning. Style is the recognition of coherence, and the placing of that coherence within a spectrum of other coherences. Experience of differing styles enables a 'catalogue' to develop within the listening subject whereby inherent and delineated meanings are conjoined within a style to produce a musical experience. Style enables not only recognition but aesthetic judgement to be made. It also operates at a variety of different levels of detail. For some listeners music may be divided generally between the classical and pop styles. For others there will be further divisions between symphonies and concertos, between orchestral and chamber music, between Haydn quartets and Beethoven quartets, between early and late Beethoven and so on. Similarly divisions operate in other areas. Tamla Motown, Soul, Middle of the Road, Disco, Rock, Pop, R'n'B, etc. are all differences of style enabling various levels of discrimination on the part of the listener if he/she is sufficiently experienced in that area. Particular styles form points of reference for the listener without which the inherent musical materials could not be understood, yet styles remain conceptually removed from them. If the listener becomes interested in the sounds stylistically, questions the novel

way in which a particular composer or performer deals with stylistic parameters for example, the music is delineating the style.

What is the relevance of Green's concept of 'style' for a study of performance contexts? One of the ways in which styles are delineated must surely be the context within which the music is being heard - the context of reception. Clearly this will not be the only source of delineation. Disco music is recognisable as Disco whether heard on the radio at home, in the car or through a Walkman. Yet one of the prime delineations must be that such music is used extensively in Discotheques. Furthermore, in her description of delineated meanings as relating music to its historical and social context as an 'historical object', Green (1988) refers to the division of labour in musical production. She distinguishes between a 'technical' and a 'social' division, with the former being concerned with the production of music itself - composing, improvising, performing, recording etc. - *and the latter with organisations which* combine these tasks to produce different styles of music.

> Thus, not only is musical labour divided, but its divisions correspond to the production of diverse musical objects: to put it shortly, and using these stylistic terms advisedly, classical musicians produce classical music, and pop musicians, pop. Viewed in this way, divisions which are present in the mode of production can be seen to have expression in musical meaning, as aesthetic differences between musical products. Ideologies about music explain, legitimate and perpetuate these aesthetic divisions ... not according to the requirements of music as an autonomous sphere, but to the maintenance of musical aesthetic differences as elements in the social totality. (Green 1988:45)

The relation between musical production and the context of reception will be complex. It is likely that music is produced with particular notions of the 'ideal' reception context in mind. Although Disco records can be danced to at home, their success in a commercial Discotheque is

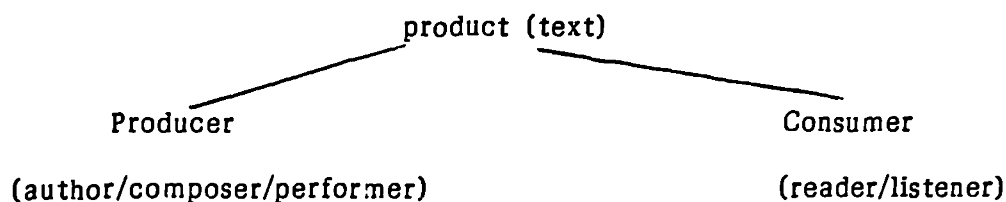
likely to be a prime consideration. Recording and reproducing technology allows the possibility of disjunction between intended contexts and actual contexts. A classical recording may be produced with the ideal concert hall acoustic in mind, but may be played in an automobile. However in live performances the context of production and the context of reception are the same. The performance context will delineate aesthetic ideologies which will affect reception by the listener and production by the performers. Both groups will be affected by what amounts to a 'performance frame' - an integral part of a more general aesthetic ideology. Attention will now be turned to the social and ideological relations which occur in live performance contexts.

Performance/Reception contexts (Internal contextual relationship)

In the first section of this chapter it was suggested that aesthetic ideologies have a dual articulation: the internal, which addresses the meaning of the event, and the external, which locates the event within a wider cultural hierarchy. The internal, event-orientated dimension will be considered in this section and the concept of 'objective possibilities' used to relate textual form with the structure of the context of consumption with its implied mode of aesthetic address. It will be argued that a certain structure of relationship between the producer and the consumer are built into traditions of musical form in such a way as to allow a tentative assessment of the appropriateness of certain performance contexts for the full realisation of particular forms. Rather than apply the concept of homology to the content of the text and the content of the subculture of the consumers as Willis does in 'Profane Cultures' (1978), it will be applied to the relations of production and the

relations of consumption. The argument will be illustrated by reference to the descriptions of performance venues and the comments of some of the jazz musicians who were interviewed.

In Chapter Four the basic paradigm for cultural production was briefly outlined:



1. The Producer - Product relationship:

The previous section examined the work of commentators who suggest that one difference between musical traditions is the division of function of the role of the producer. There are those musical traditions which stress the centrality of the 'work' (the text) as the product of a prior compositional process, and those in which composition and production occur simultaneously through improvisation by a performer.

Tagg (1982) has drawn attention to what he calls the multiple 'Musics' involved in music production and consumption, but the term 'text' will be used here (cf, Ch. 4). The separation of the composition role from performance leads to the production of two 'texts'. The composer produces the notated score (Text 1) and the performer produces the sounds (Text 2).[8] Written notation can at best only be a guide and there are many qualities of musical sounds which cannot easily be translated into written form (cf, Ch. 4, Shepherd 1977, Virden and Wishart 1977, and Chester 1970a, 1970b). Interpretation of the written score is done according to the knowledge that a performer has about the

traditions of notation prevailing at the time of composition. Traditions of 'performance practice' (P.P.) vary historically and nationally and academic music institutions have current 'state of the art' cannons of interpretation.[9] However there is no doubt that the performer is tightly constrained by TEXT 1. and that the flexibility provided by the inefficiency of notation in translating sound to written form is severely curtailed by traditions of performance practice. It is for these reasons that commentators can refer to a 'work', critics and musicologists discuss its merits and demerits, its finely balanced structure or possibly stodgy harmonies. For the same reasons, Meyer can talk of 'embodied meaning' and Keil talk of 'repeated performances' in his Table of Contrasts despite the fact that no two performances will be exactly the same. The visible presence of music stands and scores, the lighting arrangements allowing members of the audience to read scores if they wish, clearly indicates the importance of Text 1 in the Royal Festival Hall. The performance, Text 2 is judged against Text 1 and prevailing P.P. traditions.

Derek Bailey (1980) distinguishes 'Idiomatic Improvisation' (I.I.) from 'Non-Idiomatic Improvisation' (N-I.I.). The former works within traditional (generic) expectations (e.g. a chord sequence) and the latter aims for a 'free' spontaneous music. In I.I. traditions, the performer's knowledge, although not necessarily able to be expressed and articulated formally, will be of performance traditions (P.T.) and the complexity of harmonic sequences and scales. Each piece will be a subtle complex of authenticity and innovation (Horowitz 1973). It is important to recognise that Keil's 'spontaneity' does not mean untutored, although many great improvisers have never had formal 'school' training, nor does it imply

that the music sound, TEXT 2, is randomly produced. In N-I.I. the explicit objective is to break with tradition and either play entirely for oneself and the pleasure of doing so, or with others for the pleasures of communal creation. Any notion of audience involvement is irrelevant.[10] This discussion will concentrate on I.I. only but for a discussion of N-I.I. see Durant (1989).

The Producer - Product relationship may be summarised thus:

Prior-Composed:

```
Composer ---------- TEXT 1.---------- Performer ---------- TEXT 2.
                     \                                      /
                      \--------------(+ P.P.)--------------/
```

Improvised:

```
Composer/Performer ----------- TEXT 2.
  \                            /
   \ (+ P.T.)--------------- /
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2. The Product - Consumer relationship:

In through-composed traditions, the priority given to TEXT 1, enables a particular type of consumer/listener to exist. In fact Adorno constructs a hierarchy of listening based on giving priority to the educated, musically literate listener, aware of the work's internal structure (cf, Ch. 4). This is not to deny that pleasure may be gained from listening to composed music, but to emphasise that the existence of TEXT 1 and the analytical listener are both products of the same literate musical tradition. TEXT 1 also facilitates development of the relative autonomy of musical practices. This has implications for the organisation of the context of reception and the way in which it prioritises a particular

mode of aesthetic address.

Traditions which conflate composition and performance virtually abolish the necessity for TEXT 1 except in those cases where complex coordination of many performers is required. However in the polar position of completely improvised music every product, TEXT 2, will be different and one of the fundamental criteria for assessment is originality. Keil (1966) calls this 'spontaneity', incorrectly in my view, and incorrectly opposes 'spontaneity' to 'coherence' in his Table of Contrasts. Good improvised music is extremely coherent although this may be gained from 'intrinsic' rather than 'extrinsic' development (Chester 1970a, 1970b). However because the product is original, the performance can only be done once and when there is a live audience there is potential for audience response to directly influence the development of TEXT 2. Most of the qualities listed under Keil's 'engendered feeling' column in his Table of Contrasts refer to physical or emotional response of some kind. In contexts of consumption which are 'loose', physical responses, which may include foot-tapping, head waving, and audible cries, communicate readily to a performer and can feed into the process of production.

Without exception, all of the jazz musicians interviewed referred to the importance of audience feedback, not just because of vague notions of 'atmosphere' but because of the way in which it enables the performer to monitor the effectiveness of her/his playing. At its broadest this influences programming as numbers can be organised during the event in terms of tempi and rhythm to generate more or less excitement as desired, at its most detailed it encourages differences in phrasing,

emphasis, dynamics etc. to produce more immediate audience response. Chapter Six includes many examples of this in the Pontalba Cafe. Ian Carr, a professional jazz trumpeter and band leader describes this process as 'letting the music breath' in his musical biography of Miles Davis (1982). The importance of audience response is illustrated by Carr's comments in interview. He said:

> "I don't care how much they (the audience) cheer and shout at the end and want 'more, more, more', if they've given me no help during the evening and I know I've given everything, I know it's been good, well then I just won't play anymore, I really won't!".

Peter King, an alto saxophonist used to playing in different venues of all kinds understands the importance of rituals in performance contexts.

> "Sometimes I'm hired to play in places that have never had jazz before. It can be really 'cold' so I have to help them, I put my hands together and mime clapping when one of the other guy's finished soloing so they know what to do. Because if they don't give out a bit, they'll never get into it and the gig is just 'dead' ... you don't know what you're playing somehow, there's nothing to bounce anything off."

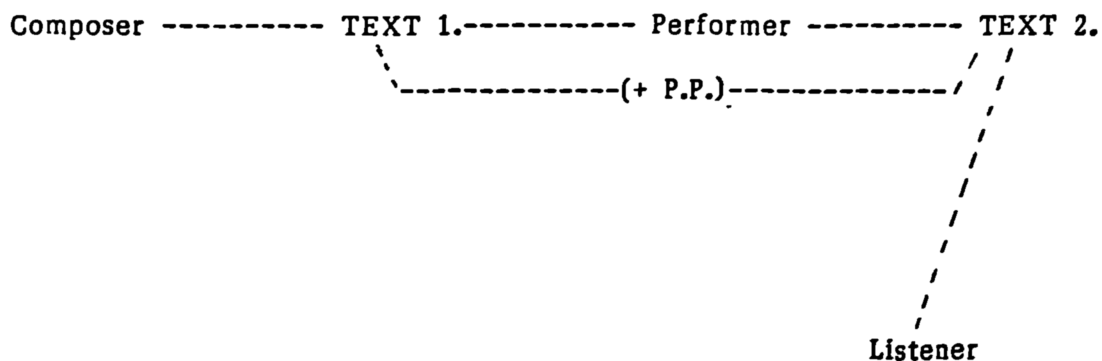
An excellent example of this kind of relationship was the performance in The Pontalba Cafe (cf, Ch. 6). Quite detailed 'adjustment' of the musicians' performance was found in all the small 'club' settings: The Bull's Head at Barnes, The Canteen in Covent Garden, The Eddie Condon Club in New York, and The London Musicians' Collective although detailed accounts of these have not been included here.

This kind of relationship between audience and performer is not possible when the performer is constrained so heavily by TEXT 1 or a context of reception as 'tight' as the contemporary concert hall. Performers in the classical tradition <u>are</u> aware of the presence of a live audience and some

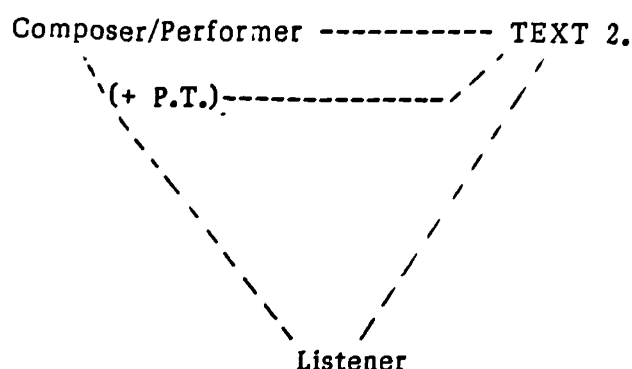
prefer this to the recording studio which they regard as 'cold'. In concert performance Alfred Brendel does not take his hands off the keyboard between movements of a piano piece because, as he says "If you do, you get the cough!", but awareness of the presence of an audience is not the same as having the freedom to actually change what you are playing because of audience response. The difference between the two relationships is one of kind, not one of degree. No increase in informality in a concert hall, no relaxation of the tight constraints on audience behaviour can alter this fundamental 'objective possibility'. No tightening of the rituals in a jazz club can alter the basic fact that TEXT 1 just does not exist.

The relationships may be illustrated thus:

<u>Prior-Composed</u>:



Improvised:



Although the existence of Text 1 has an 'objective' existence allowing constraints and possibilities in its performance, the mode of aesthetic address will be implied in the consumption context. Although an improvisation may be viewed as a process in certain settings, it can also be addressed as a product as far as the audience is concerned. As Durant (1989) points out, the musicians may be having fun in the process of improvising, but the audience feel excluded, and may regard the result, Text 2, as an alienated product.

The development of recording technology has dramatically widened the possible range of reception contexts and is discussed by Attali (1985), Benjamin (1970), Rosing (1984) and others and briefly noted in Chapter Two with reference to WEAM.[11] However the impact on music traditions which emphasise improvisation with its simultaneous composition and performance process has if anything been even greater than on WEAM. The intimate feedback potential in live settings, which because of the 'objective possibilities' of the music's form can be such a creative element in improvised music, is immediately lost. Although jazz

musicians interviewed recognise the importance of recording for their careers as professionals - financial security, publicity, etc.,- the majority saw live performance as, in the words of tenor saxophonist and flautist Don Rendell, 'the pure gold of jazz'. Musicians most keen on the potential offered by recording were those who were also most interested in composition and arranging. Graham Collier (double bass) and Barbara Thompson (reeds and flute) although fine and very skilful performers consider themselves to be composers and regard each new record as a major production exercise _in its own right_. For such musicians records are not an alternative to live performance but a very important adjunct. Compositions, often in the form of 'suites' of pieces related to a theme (what might be called in rock circles, 'concept' albums) are usually capable of live performance (unlike many rock albums) although open to more sophisticated production in a studio than in a club, arts centre or small theatre. The technique of composition in the jazz and classical traditions has important differences. In the jazz world, the composer does not attempt to construct an entire musical edifice, to 'through-compose' to the limits of notational technology, but to create themes and harmonic sequences which allow _particular musicians_ to express their personalities through their technical powers of musicianship. In other words the composer produces a broad outline of themes and harmonies, a set of linked parameters, within which the individual instrumentalists can create their own statements in cooperation and coordination with others. Substitution of individual performers can therefore raise 'problems' - or produce new insights - in the sense that a particular composition is never fixed but dependent upon both personnel and context of realisation.

At first sight it might appear as if so-called 'live' recordings would go

some way towards capturing the 'spontaneity' of a 'real' performance but more careful thought shows that this cannot be so. In the rock idiom, 'live' albums are highly constructed productions as Steve Connor has shown in a recent discussion of Bruce Springsteen's monumental five-album live compilation 'Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band Live! 1975-1985' (Connor 1987). Although jazz albums generally have nowhere near the same level of sophisticated production as their rock counterparts, even a completely 'straight' recording of a live performance - should such a thing be possible - would capture only the audible response of the audience at the time of the recording. There is no possibility of the listener's response to a record in <u>any</u> reception context being able to feedback into the performance process. The recording of the processual unfolding of Keil's single performance has been converted into the potential for repeated performances and in the process become a static commodity calling for a different mode of aesthetic address.[12]

However it is argued here that the context of consumption embodies an aesthetic ideology which contains within it, at the metalingual (logonomic) level, a mode of aesthetic address which is symbolically communicated by the ritualistic social practices of the participants and embodied in the spatial and temporal organisation of the performance event. The two principle modes have been discussed above: the one which addresses the 'embodied meaning' of the textual product has been contrasted with the second which focusses on the process of 'engendered feeling'.

Performance/Reception Contexts (External contextual relationship)

Just as no performance context is 'innocent', so the status ranking of different contexts conceals taken-for-granted values of high ideological significance for western European culture. The variety of situations in which music is performed are such as to make any social analysis of their ranking both problematic and extremely complex.[13] Nevertheless there are sufficient clues within western culture generally to suggest a possible argument.

First, the historical dominance of the printed word as the premier medium for the storage and dissemination of cultural production has been argued by McLuhan (1964) and numerous others, and adapted by John Shepherd (1977) in his analysis of the ideological encoding inherent within musical styles. If such arguments are accepted there will be two principle effects: the tendency to reify the text, to see the 'work' as an entity which has a 'life' independent of the social processes which have gone into its production, and the tendency to emphasise the written score as the site of this independent 'life'.

Second, the dominance of the cerebral, theoretical and analytical approaches to 'knowledge' over the manual, practical and sensual has been a major problematic motivating the work of many philosophers and social theorists including Marx and his followers. Seemingly almost inherent within the division of labour of western industrial societies, and particularly so with the increasingly systematic application of scientific knowledge to the industrial production process over the last three centuries, the mental/manual divide seems as entrenched as ever within the cultural and social hierarchies of western social formations. It is no

coincidence that Adorno's hierarchy of listeners (cf, Ch. 4) places the analytical and musically educated (that is to say, theoretically equipped) listener at its pinnacle.

Third, the 'pure/applied' status division is a parallel aspect of the mental/manual hierarchy and within the music world facility in performance techniques, whilst greatly admired, is not considered sufficient unless guided by a theoretical awareness. Members of the orchestra have lower status than conductors and soloists (theoretically guided interpreters), and professional musicians, unless solo performers, are not so respected as professors in music colleges.

Fourth, many sociologists including Max Weber but more recently and relevantly Mary Douglas (1966) and Basil Bernstein (1971) have noted the apparent importance of the 'purity' of cultural categories with the consequent 'impurity' of blurring them. This still seems sufficiently entrenched to make 'mixed media' events or those requiring a variety of activities from their participants to have lower status culturally than those where the focussing of concentration is clearly defined.

Fifth, the combined ranking of rural/folk customs as inferior to urban/art culture has for centuries been a factor in the hierarchy of cultural production.[14] The urban centres, often with cathedrals providing the major focus for choral composition, schooling and performance, and capital cities with their court orchestras and singers provided a contrast with rural folk music and rustic customs. The rapid development of towns in the nineteenth century, coupled with the rise of the industrial working class developing its own work-based folk music produced a

parallel distinction within urban communities.

Sixth, the development of commodity music in the nineteenth century using technology for mass production increased the distinction between 'mass' culture and minority 'art'. The policy of broadcasters which provides different stations for different musical tastes, increases the visibility still further by increasing the segregation.

Philip Tagg (1982) comments on the difficulty of uniting the notion of 'serious purpose' with 'fun' in contemporary cultural definitions. It appears impossible for any popular cultural product to be considered in the <u>same serious way as a minority product</u>. Seriousness tends to be associated with a deliberately focussed purpose. A concert hall is a more 'serious' environment than a jazz club. The 'externality' of the 'work', the performance within a specially designed auditorium (cf, Ch. 8) and the higher levels of Adorno's hierarchy of listener very closely resemble, incidentally, the high status subject based curriculum.[15] Similarly the use of multi-purpose venues by jazz and rock musicians, the presence of conflicting activities and demands on the listeners, the constructive possibility for the production process of audience response, conflicts with the dominant high status approach to 'the work' - and 'knowledge' - as having an objective facticity, independent of the participants in the production process.

Young (1971) attributes the traditional value placed on non-vocational disciplines in education to the 'residual' traces of an aristocratic way of life and Taylor (1978) argues that the concept of 'Art' arose in the seventeenth century as a differentiated field in contradistinction to the rising area of 'Science'. He suggests that 'Art' as a form of life is

highly specific to this era and symbolises the aristocratic retreat into cultivation from the attack of a functionally economic bourgeois science. According to Taylor, the bourgeoisie appropriated the 'Art' label with their own ascendancy and in the quest for universalising their ideological dominance 'discovered' the 'Universality of Art'. The view of the aesthetic as essentially disinterested and non-functional, derived from Kant, enabled different and possibly challenging cultural forms to be incorporated and diffused by redefining their location as part of this 'universality' and thereby separating them from their particular and 'authentic' roots. In his discussion of jazz, Taylor argues that,

> ... jazz writing (the major area where notions of jazz are made articulate) is a misinterpretation of jazz, because it seeks to relate jazz to an illusory concept of art as universal. In other words, jazz is misinterpreted because it is seen through the ideological function of the art concept, whereas jazz has entered within the boundaries of art because this seeing of it through the ideological function has been socially realised. (Taylor 1978:90)

If the arguments above are accepted, the performance context with the highest residual status is likely to be one in which the dominant social practices embody a mode of address emphasising the importance of theoretical and analytical 'appreciation' of a product capable of 'universal understanding', that is, a context which embodies the practices of aesthetic autonomy. Those contexts of performance which are visibly located within a web of competing demands, particularly if they are concerned with biological functioning (eating and drinking), and economic objectives (profit maximisation) are those which least encourage such a mode of address. Furthermore within many religions, and especially Christianity, there is a traditional polarisation between the Flesh, Mammon and the Spirit. The historical sources of art music within

sacred contexts of worship coupled with the apparent non-materiality of sound and the proclaimed universality of music have given rise to the almost total over-layering of the spiritual with the eighteenth and nineteenth century classical music tradition. The shift from cathedral and court to the concert hall context enabled music to retain its spiritual 'aura' within the ethos of a more secular romanticism (cf, Bocock 1974). Music performed in contexts which celebrate the corporeal and the profitable are frequently regarded as somewhat corrupting if not downright sinful. Crossing over performance contexts can lead to a sense of pollution as when a rock group proposes to play at a major classical concert hall, or when a major symphony orchestra produces disco dance records.[16]

There is however a seventh factor contributing to the status division between contexts of performance and that is the racial dimension which has particular significance in the United States. Because of the fundamental contribution made by its black population to the whole of twentieth century popular music (including jazz, rhythm 'n' blues, rock 'n' roll etc.) the association of blacks with 'low-life' activities, their position at the lowest levels of class, caste and status groups, has meant that musical forms derived and produced by them together with the performance contexts associated with those forms have been given low status (cf, Taylor 1978, Berger 1972). Taylor describes the way in which the intricate mores governing the interaction of members of the complex racial social groupings present in New Orleans during the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries provided venues for black musicians. Most of the venues were meeting places for fairly prosperous white males to contact various 'shades' of black females (quadroons, octaroons, Creoles,

free-coloureds etc.). There were regularly organised Quadroon Balls, held on Wednesdays and Saturdays, employing dance bands and there was also the complex hierarchy of brothels.[17]

This connection between Afro-American music and the 'low-life' made cultural diffusion extremely problematic and gave rise to many outcries against this 'agency of the devil' including those from some Negro pastors who thought that 'Jazz, with its ... appeal to the sensuous, should be stamped out.' (Berger 1972:13).[18] Although the details may have changed, the association of jazz clubs, cabarets and pubs with certain styles of life and entertainment ensure their lower status in the aesthetic hierarchy.

The racial dimension is also pertinent when looking at the musicians themselves. The origins of western classical music in Europe is reflected in the almost complete lack of black orchestral musicians. The recent heavy recruitment of non-European string players come mainly from the Orient, particularly Korea and Japan. The only area in which black performers have made their mark is opera and this has been a gradual input over the past thirty years. In jazz however, black musicians are acknowledged to be the major developers even though there are a large number of very skilful white performers, and there have been many significant white big-bands.

If the various dimensions of differentiation outlined above are accepted one would expect performance contexts with the highest status to be those emphasising a mode of address which highlights the theoretical and analytical compared with the intuitive and sensual, the purity of autonomy rather than the worldliness of the applied, and a clarity of

focus rather than a complexity of competing allegiances. One would also anticipate an urban 'art' location rather than a rural folk or proletarian industrial setting, a fundamental 'seriousness' of purpose either intellectual or spiritual rather than dedication to 'fun' or entertainment and finally a celebration of European rather than Afro-American history and cultural values.

The prime contemporary site for the social relations which embody such cultural values of aesthetic address must surely be the concert hall (cf, Ch. 7) and when a musician asks 'to be taken seriously as an artist', he/she aspires to the role of a concert performer however far that happens to be from their position at that moment. A prime method of incorporation (cf, Ch. 4) therefore operates when musicians move between types of performance context ranked on a scale culminating in the concert hall. It is not just that live audiences are much larger and performers are able to command higher fees although that is always very welcome in the financially fragile world of the professional musician, it is that the way the mode of music production is addressed changes with the context. In the case of improvised music the potential for audience input is radically reduced in the concert hall. In the small club, restaurant or bar, the possibility of giving full concentration to the 'interpretation of the 'work'' at the higher levels in Adorno's hierarchy of listening roles is severely curtailed. There is of course no hard one-to-one relationship between context and audience member's attitude, but different contexts facilitate and embody forms of address which must be actively resisted by the participants if they wish to adopt a different one.

Forms of resistance do occur, often in quite small ways. The arrangement of instrument cases to form a small 'stage' in a cafe attempts a separation of musician from listener as in The Pontalba Cafe in New Orleans (cf, Ch. 6) and the Bull's Head, at Barnes. The parade around a concert hall by a New Orleans jazz band tries to break down the built-in separation by artificially recreating a marching-band's 'second line' at the performance at the Fairfield Hall in Croydon by the Preservation Hall Jazz Band. In "Ronnie Scott's Club" in London, which features live performances of internationally famous jazz musicians, as well as serving food and drink, a large sign has recently been put up at the maitre d's queuing barrier, asking customers to keep quiet while performances are taking place and to tell club staff if any particular group of customers is making too much noise. This message is repeated on small cards placed on each table. One of the effects of this is to stimulate an interesting debate in the 'Readers' Letters' section of the Club's newsletter as to whether musicians should be pampered in this way or whether it is an integral element in jazz performance that they be expected to learn how to 'deal' with an audience.[19]

Relations with the audience have often been a key aspect of changes in the art definition of jazz. In order to emphasise their seriousness as technical musicians and their aesthetic distance from the big dance band performances in the nineteen-thirties, the early bebop players of the nineteen-forties often turned their backs on the audiences in clubs preferring to play facing each other. In the nineteen-sixties, the black saxophonist Archie Shepp used his tenor saxophone in a quite aggressive and threatening manner in front of white audiences in order to indicate his level of black political consciousness. More recently some established

jazz musicians like Miles Davis, as well as many newer ones like the band Weather Report have deliberately chosen the electronic modes of sound production and enhancement used by more commercial rock groups to move jazz into the late twentieth century world of contemporary music production. Such electrification of jazz with its potential for high volume sound can render the small-scale performance contexts problematic and has not been entirely accepted by some of the jazz listening public. Nevertheless it takes jazz musical traditions and forms into the *mass performance and reproduction market* place and away from what some commentators see as a rather small and introspective groups of 'jazz officianados'.

Within the political economy of contemporary cultural production however, live performance contexts tend to be secondary to, and often parasitic upon recordings. Tours by rock bands seldom make major profits but are designed to promote album sales. They are multi-media events where the sheer size of the venue compels a simultaneous reproduction of the 'live'. Huge video screens render the 'live' performer visible to the audience and monstrous amplification makes the 'performance' audible, except that of course, the amplification is the performance. Such events provide the raw material for endless discussions on post-modern cultural production and reproduction. 'Are we increasingly living in a cultural world of simulacra - repetitions without originals?' 'Does the proliferation of reproductions actually intensify the quest for origin?'. Within the contemporary world of fluctuating benchmarks, the increasingly 'beleaguered' high status performance contexts which celebrate a tradition of aesthetic autonomy, attended by an educated minority class dedicated to 'higher things' can seem oases

of certainty and clarity of purpose.

CONCLUSION

The objective of this thesis has been an examination of some of the sociological aspects of contexts of live music performance. The establishment of Cultural Studies as a reaction against previous approaches to the study of culture (cf, Ch.4.2) produced a concentration of studies of contemporary forms of popular music and the central role of electronic techniques in their production and reproduction. Since many of these forms have developed symbiotically with the technology it is not surprising that this feature has been the focus of so much research. However this has led to a dearth of studies of live music. Any cursory glance at a listings magazine reveals an enormous amount of music being performed live. From the corner 'local', a vestige of the nineteenth century working-class residential community, to the contemporary technologically refined purpose-built concert hall located in a 'culture-complex', a wide range of venues is now available. Far from the development of the record industry leading to the demise of 'live' performance, it has generated a demand for it by consumers and a need for it in would-be recording stars. Live exposure is a necessary precursor to discovery for musicians in almost all areas of music-making.

There is a more positive reason for examining contexts of live performance however. The frame through which music is perceived is partly a performance frame. The way we hear, appreciate and assess music is partly the result of our perception of its performance. In her book Music on Deaf Ears, Lucy Green (1988) explores the basis of musical experience. Using a modified Hegelian stance on consciousness and mediation, she persuasively argues for a dialectical approach.

Assuming the two logical categories of music as an historical object and individual consciousness, Green argues that experience of music involves the dialectical conjoining of each in the other. When experiencing music the listening subject engages with music as an external object, but 'is also forced to engage with its own structure of knowledge through time' (1988:16). This experiencing involves the listener in structuring 'each instant in terms of a wide field of presence related to past, present and future' (1988:16). Using this basic framework, Green argues for two categories of meaning in music: inherent and delineated. Each is dependent on the other. Inherent meanings are those which make one piece of music different from another and relate to its internal textual structure. However as meanings they have no objective material existence independent of an experiencing subject. Delineated meanings are those imposed from outside the structure of sounds yet make those sounds meaningful. At their most general, delineations enable music to be distinguished from noise, at their more specific they enable quite subtle categorisation of music into 'schools' or genres. The integration of inherent and delineated meanings in musical experience occurs through the medium of 'style'. The recognition of style gives coherence to sounds that would otherwise appear random and relates that coherence to a spectrum of other coherent styles. Yet despite her insistence on an historical and materialist approach to music, Green (1988) never examines the context in which musical experience takes place: the performance/consumption context. All traditions of music will have a performance dimension even though this does not have to be live performance. Performance, to paraphrase Grahame Thompson (1985), is placed at the intersection of the text, the musician and the audience. A

recording, an objectified text produced by a musician outside the context of consumption, will be played/consumed in many contexts and experienced accordingly.

A study of contexts of consumption is an area of the sociology of music which needs urgent exploration. The observations and analyses which feature in this thesis make a small start by focussing on contexts of performance/consumption which are live; those contexts which have musicians and audiences in social relations with each other not directly mediated by recording technology. Yet despite the absence of visible technology, the experiences of the music by both producers and consumers <u>are</u> mediated. Music never speaks to the individual subject directly but through a complex of social relations. As many theorists of ideology have pointed out (cf, Ch.4.2), the twin tendencies of general ideology, ahistoricity and universality, act to produce the experience of music as an ahistorical and universal language. This is reinforced by those aestheticians and musicologists who ignore the social relations of performance and reception by their concentration on the written score. They thereby tend to reify the text rendering the audience passive recipients of preprogrammed meanings and significances. Designers of concert halls - architects and acoustic engineers - struggle with enormous complexities of data and skills to produce a building which allows the music to be heard as 'neutral', untrammeled by supposedly irrelevant factors like 'colour'. The appearance of music as a 'universal language', far from being a natural attribute of the artistic medium towards which all other arts aspire, is the result of a great deal of labour. To see how a live performance is constructed considerable

conceptual and empirical work has to be done.

In any performance of music, at least three 'levels' of meaning must be operating for the participants. Firstly there is the meaning generated between the listener and the musical text. This will be constructed by the listener in context from the component sounds acting as signifiers, their various denotations and connotations and the internal structure of the music (cf, Ch.4.3). Particular pieces of music will have particular effects on particular listeners. Although these different meanings are partly the result of the differences inherent in the music, they are not 'embodied' in it in Meyer's (1956) sense but are the result of the interaction of the music with the listening subject. Secondly, all contexts are complexes of sight and sound. They are multi-textual events and audiences need to know what they are supposed to be addressing. The object of aesthetic judgement needs to be framed and this is particularly the case with aesthetic codes which have high conventionality, weak motivation and therefore require strong contextual support (Fiske 1982). I have argued that in Western culture there are two broad modes of aesthetic address which are framed by performance contexts (cf, Ch.8). One of these focusses on the musical text as _product_ and the other on the musical text as _process_. Clearly there will be variations within these two broad foci and it is probably preferable to think of them as 'clusters' rather than as two clearly distinct and defined types. Thirdly, no musical performance is an island entire unto itself. Each event will be part of a spectrum of events and take its place within it. Since contemporary societies are hierarchical there will be a hierarchy of performance contexts corresponding to status differences in the wider society. Green (1988) argues that those

aesthetic forms which come closest to the twin tendencies in general ideology, ahistoricity and universality will be ranked higher than others. All performances of music are situated in time and place and involve complex relations between the participants. The experience of the music by both musicians and audience will involve all three of the 'levels' acting on each other simultaneously. For this reason I referred to contexts of performance as sites for the construction of aesthetic ideological complexes, combining textual meaning, modes of aesthetic address and the 'placing' of the event.

However it would be simplistic to assume that the three levels of meaning are somehow of equal significance because they are all combined in the act of experiencing a performance. It is the second level which plays a particularly important role. Modes of aesthetic address have a significance beyond the codification of a 'gaze'. There is a major ideological dimension involved which becomes apparent through a double articulation. One is the relation between the mode of aesthetic address and textual meaning, when the focus of critical attention is directed to the performance (what I have called the 'Internal Contextual Relationship), and the second is the relation between the mode of aesthetic address and the wider social and cultural hierarchy (what I have called the 'External Contextual Relationship). Because this *pivotal* role goes beyond the simple codification of aesthetic address, this second level acts as an aesthetic ideology.

Brief reference to the two performances described in Chapters Six and Seven may serve to illustrate the point. In the case of the performance at the Royal Festival Hall described in Chapter Seven, the mode of

aesthetic address emphasises the musical 'work' as a preconstructed entity. Although Schoenberg's 'Pelleas and Melisande' can be clearly located as a particular historically situated cultural product in the post-Wagnerian movement, it is signified in the concert Programme as a composition by a particular individual. Its 'authorship' (Barthes) is portrayed as unequivocal. However its aesthetic value is considered to come from its potential to transcend both its historical origins in the first decade of this century and its musicological significance as the last great post-Wagner composition by a man about to revolutionise the harmonic principles of WEAM. It is not presented in performance as an historical curiosity, but rather as a work achieving its greatness through its universality. Its 'meaning' is assumed to communicate itself directly to a late twentieth century audience. At the same time, that particular mode of aesthetic address enables the context, the Royal Festival Hall, to be located in a particular niche in the range of performance venues specialising in orchestral WEAM in London.

The performances at the Pontalba Cafe described in Chapter Six operated in a very different manner. The mode of aesthetic address does not privilege the 'work'. Beyond the barest of bones, a title and a theme in most cases, the music is produced within contextual parameters which communicate a different message, that of the process of performance in response to the needs of the audience as perceived by the musicians in the unfolding of that performance and the functional requirements of the cafe management operating through the practices of the waitresses. Also the Cafe as a performance venue occupies its place in the tourist provision in New Orleans, not in competition with Symphony Hall but as one of the competing fast-food cafes catering for daytime family

refreshment.

If it is accepted that the two performance contexts described embody different aesthetic ideologies, how are they constructed by the event? How do musicians and audience experience them and how does this experiencing relate to their cultural production? A possible answer may be found in the contemporary debate about ritual outlined above (cf, Ch.4.1). Those scholars who argue that the term can be used in industrial society, embrace a 'soft' definition and reject the limitations which stem from rigid application of the term to traditional religious rites. That is to say, they emphasise the potential communicative dimension of all social action (Leach 1968,1976) whether nominally secular or sacred. Some, like Lukes (1977) emphasise the way in which communicated meanings may relate to certain significant beliefs, others also incorporate a gestural component to their definition (Grimes 1990). Possibly most significantly they argue for levels of ritualization. It this view is accepted, one which emphasises the possible layers of meaning which may be associated with particular actions or clusters of actions then performances can be seen, if not as formalised and differentiated as rites, then at least ripe with ritualization - to use Grimes's (1990) term. Ritual requires some form of response on the part of the participant which simultaneously constructs the ritual and commits the participant to active membership. Music performance contexts are both quasi-religious in espousing ultimate values and quasi-political in that they mobilise power in the interests of various groups. It is through ritual practices that the audience at the Royal Festival Hall is drawn into the ideology of aesthetic autonomy embracing its 'ultimate values' of ahistoricity and universality. It is through participation in the concert that the

musicians, particularly the orchestral players subsume their individual identities into the collectivity of the orchestra. It is as a controller who makes no noise (Attali 1985) that the conductor can represent that legal-rational authority which serves a non-rational end. It is through ritualised action that the performers feel able to 'speak for' the composer, often long dead. Above all it renders invisible the operation of power which has harnessed highly complex technology and considerable economic resources to produce this immersion in the transcendental. Similarly the fact that the orchestral players are all 'hired hands', who by their contract are obliged to play precisely what the conductor requires and have no individual freedom is obscured by the ritual process. To apply Maurice Bloch's (1989) ideas to this contemporary Western phenomenon, the participants are drawn into a non-rational aesthetic ideology as a route to the acceptance of a form of non-rational traditional authority. Aesthetic ideology replaces the religious element in Bloch's *original analysis and instead* of a ruler, the traditional authority operates in favour of a social class which believes its values to be 'ultimate'. Yet these autonomous values are supported by an infrastructure where no one has any autonomy, controlled either by employment contract, the written score, traditions of performance practice and interpretations of the intentions of dead composers.

Possibly less obviously, the Pontalba Cafe is thick with symbolic action. Response by the audience is not confined to the end of a particular performance as in the Royal Festival Hall but required repeatedly throughout. The musicians actively work for it, feeding on the feedback and developing their performances accordingly. However the audience's enjoyment of the performance is largely a function of the musicians'

ability to engage the customers, to incorporate them into the performance itself by a variety of techniques which speak apparently directly from the musicians to the individual audience members. Each listener feels that the players could be playing for them and the techniques used for this incorporation are many and varied. If successful, the performance will epitome 'Good Times' for the participants. It is for 'Good Times' that the tourists have come to New Orleans, for the sun, the music, the food and drink. The music, its harmonies, the titles of the tunes, its presentation are signifiers of the 'having fun' image of New Orleans. Yet for the musicians their context provides them with a contradiction. There is danger in their success. The more the audience is involved the less they may spend on food and drink, and since the musicians are hired to promote expenditure they may loose their jobs. Paradoxically, despite the 'invisibility' of the management, the power relations are more visible in the Pontalba. The absent management is always present, dictating the length of time of the sets, the relations between the waitresses and the players and even the way in which the musicians pace their act. The management is ever-present although never-present. Ritualized action obscures contradiction in both the Festival Hall and the Pontalba Cafe. Whereas the relations of the WEAM concert-hall construct autonomy for the work, provide a degree of status for the musician as 'speaker' for the dead composer, they confine the player to the dictates of the score. For the Pontalba musicians, the freedom to construct a text is given but simultaneously constrained by parameters set by the functional necessity of economic survival both for the management of the Cafe in the competitive world of New Orleans's international tourist trade and the musicians who are

self-employed but available for hire at various points during the season.

A perspective which takes seriously the importance of the context of performance/consumption will be able to make a contribution to the study of the historical development of musical forms. Although such an investigation was beyond the scope of this thesis, even the briefest of outlines in Chapters Two and Three serve to show at least some of the ways in which form and context are related. The emancipation of WEAM from the Court and the Church required the development of its own sites for performance. Initially these were in 'secular' premises like taverns and ballrooms but differentiated from the usual activities of those places. Shortly afterwards the move was made into purpose-built or converted premises designed specifically for the purpose of concert performance. The stripping of extraneous embellishment occurred in the mid-twentieth century with the development of a rational scientific approach to acoustics and architectural design. At the same time the orchestra increased in size during the mid-nineteenth century and instruments were developed which coped with the increased size of auditoria. The currently fashionable trend to historically authentic performances is not only a musical phenomenon, it is also a move to a smaller scale of performance context. One of the problems for contemporary WEAM composers is the sheer scale of the available concert-halls and size of orchestras so eminently suited to large-scale late Romantic works and equally unsuitable for smaller-scale experimental pieces. Even in the recording age, record engineers take enormous trouble to ensure that the acoustic on record resembles that of a concert-hall. 'Creative' input at the recording stage should not be too audible, certain instruments should not be 'out of balance', be 'too

forward'. Although the use of 'takes' is customary, generally the longer the 'take' the more satisfactory the recording is thought to be. How different this is from the multi-track mixing and remixing which plays such a creative part in the pop music world!

The development of jazz shows a close relationship between performance context and musical form. From the necessity for portable instruments in marching bands, the parlour piano in Storyville sporting houses, the large brass (or silver) ensembles of the dance band eras, the history of jazz is the history of a music responding to its context. The striving for respectability on the part of jazz musicians, the attempt to be taken 'seriously as artists' in the forties meant a break with the social relations of entertainment contexts. It meant a rejection of the audience of winers, diners and dancers because the image of the artist that was aspired to was the white bourgeois one of aesthetic autonomy. A different mode of aesthetic address was required, a different aesthetic ideology, a different social relationship in the performance context. The 'resistance' took the form of deliberately developing an harmonically complex musical form often delivered at breakneck speed and occasionally even playing with their backs to the audience. The rejection of the popular song tradition meant that an uninitiated audience found the music very difficult to follow and impossible to dance to. This was a deliberate challenge to the parameters of a performance context by the performers themselves. Although this position was later modified and a spectrum of styles now exists, only a small minority of jazz musicians see themselves as concert-hall performers. The rapport with the audience is not there.

An historical investigation of music traditions and their performance contexts will reveal that there is a relationship between musical form and context. The concept of homology has been severely criticised (cf, Ch.4.3) yet some notion of 'objective possibility' must be retained. The relationship between a form and its performance context cannot be random. I have argued, (cf, Ch.8) that there is a homology between 'fixed' forms associated with a text-as-product aesthetic, aesthetic autonomy and the social relations of the concert-hall. Conversely I have suggested that there is a relationship between 'flexible' forms espousing a text-as-process aesthetic and those contexts where the audience performer relations are demonstrably interactional. The relationship between form and context is not a hard determinist one. Clearly it is physically possible for forms to be played in almost any context as long as the number of performers will fit. The relationship is tropic rather than deterministically causal and the tropism is stimulated by an aesthetic ideology, which may be clearly formulated or operating at its taken-for-granted level of 'common-sense'. In which case it is likely to manifest itself as a feeling of appropriateness.

Any study of performance contexts will need to construct a comparative frame through which to compare and contrast concrete instances. Ethnographic description on its own is limited, particularly in modern societies, unless an attempt is made to incorporate it within a wider context. In this study a considerably modified version of Regula Qureshi's (1987) was used, suitably adapted for industrial (or post-industrial) societies. Qureshi developed her frame for her study of 'qawwali', the music of the Sufi assembly of India and Pakistan. However it seems essential that any comparative frame takes into

account the commodification of sound in contemporary capitalist society. Performances are marketable products and sound has particular qualities which make its marketing problematic. These are not shared with cultural products that take a more concrete form, and in Chapter Five the problems of marketing sound are discussed in conjunction with a detailed description of parameters of the comparative frame. As far as the latter is concerned, I argue that the Performance Context can be divided into two basic components: the Performance Setting and the Performance Procedures. The first includes the fundamental dimensions of space, time and purpose, each of which must be seen at both Macro and Micro levels. Space for example involves the distribution of venues and the way in which the interior architectural arrangements provide parameters which the performers must take into account. Time involves aspects of scheduling performances during the year, week and time of day, as well as the length of time performances can be permitted to last. The Purpose dimension will consider the way in which these are built into the building, and those issues like profitability and so on, are external to the performance itself. The Performance Procedures include the way in which the actual programme is constructed, the pacing and regulation of the performance and involvement management. Taken together these two components provide the parameters within which the actual performance itself occurs. The result is described in the Performance Process which aims to show how the performance progresses through time for both musicians and audience. The frame was left deliberately general to allow for the full variety of different contexts to be taken into account.

Finally it is important to stress the preliminary nature of the findings.

A much wider range of performance venues were studied, and two were selected for detailed description in this thesis. The range of venues is enormous, and music performance is a small segment of a vast range. Within music performance however further study would be profitable. A more detailed and systematic survey of musicians' attitudes to performance might reveal a great deal which could have implications for venue design. If data was linked to musical style, information might throw more light on the homological relation between form and context. Not all contexts of performance/consumption are 'live' of course, and study of the others has hardly been attempted. Much needs to be done.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Some Issues in Ethnography

The Observer's Field-work Role:

The tradition of ethnographic research is based on some relationship of estrangement between the researcher and the subjects of investigation. The broad objective is, in Michael Agar's (1986) words 'to show how social action in one world makes sense from the point of view of another' (Agar 1986:12). In traditional anthropology, the researched culture was often non-formally educated, pre-literate, and the subject of an imperialist power. However with the increase in ethnographic studies of communities within industrial society the issue becomes more complex. Marilyn Strathern (1987) asks what it means to say that an anthropologist works 'at home'? In order to avoid unanswerable questions about relationships and degrees of familiarity, Strathern rephrases the question: How far do the investigator *and investigated* share the 'premises about social life which inform anthropological enquiry?' (Strathern 1987:16). Making ethnographic studies in the social context which produces them, Strathern calls 'auto-anthropology'. However some degree of estrangement is still present if the area is thought to need investigation, and inherent in the academic research process is the mediation of frames of meaning from the world of the investigated to the world of the investigator. An ethnographic account cannot be framed solely by concepts drawn from the group being studied, the result would be biography or local history. In 'auto-anthropology', two assumptions are often made. The first assumption is that operating on a familiar terrain permits greater understanding because of the lack

of linguistic and cultural barriers. The second is that since the area is already familiar, all that can result from a study of it is an account of 'what everyone already knows' at a greater level of complexity. This assumption implies either mystification or trivialisation. At the core of this is the concept of reflexivity. The investigation of the apparently familiar enables reflexivity; because studying our society will by extension be investigation of ourselves. Yet this suggests a form of joint authorship for the ethnography. Framing the ethnography in the concepts derived from the investigated culture is tantamount to the informants speaking for themselves. For Strathern this is unacceptable because academic anthropology translates material from the lived experience of groups outside it into an academic discourse. The investigated operate with emic concepts, the ethnographer's account with etic. This of course does not make the researcher immune from criticism. The charge of exploitation can be made as the ethnographer translates the lived experience of the investigated into a product alien from them. However different cultures have differing notions of fair exchange, and whether the ethnographic enterprise is regarded as exploitative will depend on the cultural definitions of the investigated community.

Musicians are a particular occupational group. Their conditions of employment are generally rudimentary despite the efforts of the Musicians' Union. Contracted orchestral players have a regular salary, regulated hours - if anti-social - a requirement that they are prepared to go on tour if the orchestral management decides to do so. They have a long period of schooled training behind them, usually in particular Higher Education establishments and therefore regard themselves as professionals. Most jazz musicians are self-employed, taking jobs as they

come through personal contact. Their training background can vary from the self-taught to music college graduate. Their hours are long, often late into the night and they form their own network of interpersonal communication and off-duty friendship groups. They are friendly but tend to be suspicious of non-musicians who think they know something about music on the basis of a small record collection and listening to Jazz FM. I felt it important to be seen to be taking their work seriously and decided to augmented my limited experience of performing by attending Richmond Adult Education Centre's Jazz School (see below).

Whereas music theory has its own discourse, and musicians frequently converse in it when rehearsing and performing, issues surrounding performance contexts are generally framed in lay-person's terms. Any academic account will inevitably translate these into formal discourse in order to make generalisations from comparative data. I am confident that the musicians I interviewed did not regard my questions as potentially exploitative, although when approached almost all asked if there was any possibility of payment for their time. When I explained that the information was for a thesis I was writing on performance contexts, their preferred venues etc and that I was to gain no financial advantage from it and so could not pay them for their time they immediately relaxed and proved very generous in their help. Some seemed pleased that I was actually bothering to ask them what they felt. "There's so much junk written about jazz, its good that you're actually trying to find out about it first" said one saxophone player.

One of the traditional issues with ethnographic studies concerns their 'objectivity'. Agar (1986) argues that conventional notions of objectivity

must be abandoned. No description can be independent of the 'historical or cultural context of the act of describing' he says (Agar 1986:19), and James Clifford likewise insists that 'ethnographic truths are ... inherently partial-committed and incomplete' (Clifford 1986:7). Nevertheless it is important to eschew a 'cognitive atheism' (Hirsch 1976), the group being investigated actually exists independently of the researcher and will continue to exist after he/she has left the scene. 'Ethnography is neither subjective nor objective. It is interpretive, mediating two worlds through a third' (Agar 1986:19). Different ethnographers will differ in their accounts according to their own cultural backgrounds and professional socialisation. This thesis makes no claims beyond 'partial truth' yet repeated observations, careful notetaking, interviewing etc. ensured the collection of much data. I would claim that the descriptions are accurate, the analysis of course is speculative although I hope rational and coherent.

A major problem however, is the difficulty of addressing various levels of analysis in one ethnography. Is it possible for a detailed study of a way of life to permit the incorporation of macro level forces of determination? Some ethnographers are now experimenting with 'new writing possibilities that blur the distinction between anthropology and sociology, subverting an unproductive division of labour' (Clifford 1986:22). This is a problem which this study has had to confront. I attempted in the construction of the Comparative Frame (cf, Ch.5) to incorporate levels of description and analysis. Nevertheless the ethnographic description is clearly separated from the contextual levels.

Although investigation of musical performance contexts is not, in itself,

an investigation of the sub-cultural world of musicians, there are aspects of the life-style of professional musicians which are opaque to the outsider and are relevant for the investigation of performance practices. In Howard Becker's famous study of dance band musicians in Chicago undertaken over forty years ago, he describes their activities as '... formally within the law, (although) their culture and way of life are sufficiently bizarre and unconventional for them to be labelled as outsiders by more conventional members of the community.' (Becker 1963:79). Becker's Chicago musicians in 1948 and 1949 saw themselves as a beleaguered group and had developed an idiosyncratic life-style based on their rejection of many of the conventional values of 'square' society. Such a radical disjunction between the sub-culture and the parent-culture demanded Becker's participating research role. Only by fully participating as a musician (a piano-player), was Becker able to penetrate this 'deviant' world. My research differs in two crucial respects from Becker's. Firstly, the musicians I had contact with, did not feel themselves as alienated from conventional society as did Becker's in Chicago in the late 1940's. They were sometimes resentful about the struggle for jobs, the poor pay and the lack of understanding of some of their employers, but the majority had families to support and were 'realistically professional' about their careers and what was required from them in order to maintain their income. Secondly, my research was not concerned with a detailed examination of their sub-culture - if such exists - but of their part in music performance in particular venues. The amount of inside knowledge required for this did not demand Becker's full participant role. Nevertheless there are aspects of a musician's role which are technical and there are many

'trade secrets'. The final performance, if successful may appear to be the result of effortless inspiration, but only the practising musician is likely to understand the amount of perspiration which has gone into it. A degree of inside knowledge is necessary to render the construction of the performance transparent.

Obtaining appropriate 'insider' knowledge:
Professional musicians are a relatively 'closed' group based on a high level of skill and a particular life-style characterised by non-social hours of work, fragility of income, strong unionisation and a personal network of contacts for employment. In order to maintain their incomes, many musicians teach. Some even regard music education as being important - as a way of 'spreading the word' - and enjoy the personal contact and satisfaction which teaching gives. I was able to gain contact with professional musicians and learn many of the basic skills required for understanding professional musicianship by enrolling at an Adult Education class (The Jazz School, Richmond) to play keyboards and saxophone. This basic technical knowledge proved useful in observation and the interviews and enabled me to see the construction of a performance and to ask questions and discuss issues in a way which would have been impossible otherwise.

In the observations of performance events, technical knowledge proved invaluable. In its own particular way, each instrument has mechanical requirements. Instruments are complex mechanisms with their own idiosyncrasies. Saxophonists have reed problems. Bought by the box, reeds often prove to be unplayable. They also come in different strengths, and strengths and mouthpieces need to be matched to suit the embouchure of the particular musician. Some players modify their

mouthpieces (which also come in a variety of shapes, sizes and 'lays') by sticking plasticine inside to alter the tone quality. One musician I know, carries a plastic carrier bag full of mouthpieces around with him to be prepared for any eventuality. Reeds may need replacing in the middle of a performance. Pianos may require spot-tuning, guitar strings may break, drums shift on the floor during a performance, and microphones go 'dead'. If sheet music is used, the fragility of music stands and the tendency of paper to slide to the floor or blow away in a sudden draught may add extra tension to a performance. This extra tension needs to be 'managed' by performers.

There are also aspects of the performance proper which are revealed to the musically initiated. The brief instructions given to the players about the organisation of the sheet music (charts), soloing and the return to ensemble playing, the taking of 'fours', the use of harmonics and alternative fingering etc. are all part of the construction of the performance. For the professional musician they are part of the skills of the trade, for the audience they are likely to be invisible. A researcher who understands the complexity of the performance construction is in a position to observe it.

Observing the Performances:

Probably the most sophisticated method of observing music performances is described in Regula Qureshi (1987). Video-recordings were made of performances of qawwali, the music of the Sufi assemblies of India and Pakistan. In order to capture the detail and dynamic of the interplay between music and audience behaviour, Qureshi developed two methods of transcribing and interpreting the video recordings. The "videograph"

provides a visual record of audience behaviour, and the more interpretive "videochart" '... traces the interaction between the musicians's ongoing performance decisions and the audience responses as he perceives them, along with the resulting song sequence ...' (Qureshi 1987:72). The "videograph" and the "videochart" provide two notational systems portraying the complexity of the performance dynamic. Qureshi gives examples taken from these two notational systems, and it is clear that their detail and refinement is in the tradition of ethnomusicological research. I fully admit that I have doubts about my own competence to operate Qureshi's method effectively. Nevertheless, the concentration upon the manipulation of the musical sounds themselves - a traditional feature of ethnomusicological investigation - is tangential to the objectives of my study. There is a danger that the social context of the performance, the musicians' perceptions of constraints and possibilities, the operationalizing of aesthetic ideologies etc may get lost in the welter of detail provided by Qureshi's method. There is also the practical difficulty of persuading club owners and/or managers to allow video-recording of a commercial event together with the danger, however slight, of the presence of recording equipment effecting the performance. The camera would become another aspect of the context to be taken into account by the musicians and audience members alike. For these reasons, it was decided to observe and take field notes, relying on my own perceptions of what was happening. Wherever possible I chose a corner seat to permit observation of both performers and audience and made jottings in a small exercise book. A personal code, a shorthand, was developed to enable notes to be made quickly and without undue annoyance to customers around me. On a number of occasions it was

suggested by listeners nearby that I was a journalist preparing a possible review. The musicians had far too many things to concentrate on to notice me and I am confident that my presence did not alter the performance in any way.

Wherever possible performances were observed on four consecutive occasions. Although the bulk of the work was done on the first observation, the follow-up sessions served to add detail. Certain mannerisms of players became apparent, jokes were repeated, and tunes varied. The cumulative observations gave data of greater 'depth' and understanding. Finally one particular (dated) observation was selected for detailed description and analysis. I avoided constructing a composite 'typical' performance in order to minimise the danger of subjective selection. I must stress that my own guidelines for observation developed over time. It would have been impossible to construct an observation frame 'ab initio'. However a general framework evolved fairly rapidly and I found observing and notetaking skills developed quickly.

Description of Pontalba performance on 23/5/82

Description of Royal Festival Hall performance on 11/9/89

Strategies for listening: eavesdropping, situational conversations and interviews:

Schatzman and Strauss (1973: 70-3) list three "strategies for listening": eavesdropping, situational conversation and interviewing. Each of these was used to gather information. I found eavesdropping to be particularly informative. Many music venues, particularly jazz clubs and cafes are very crowded and conversations are easy to overhear. Insight was gained

into the reasons why some members of the audience attended the venue as well as their opinions on the particular performance. Examples of snatches of conversations are given in Chapters Six and Seven.

Situational conversations involve some action by the investigator who engages others in conversations at opportune moments and I used these on a number of occasions although I seldom had to initiate contact with customers. Generally other members of the audience would chat to me, ask me what I was doing or require information about the venue or the band. When this occurred I was able to probe motives and responses in an 'unforced' way. I had to be very careful not to appear too knowledgeable or to influence their response to the musicians by giving opinions on the quality of the performance, but I was happy to chat and find out how they were feeling about the event. When a snatch of conversation seemed relevant to my investigation I could always legitimately go to the 'Gents' and make quick notes. Interviews however, need forward planning.

Sampling issues:

The selection of interviewees inevitably raises the question of sampling. The quest for a representative group of jazz musicians did not seem appropriate, or indeed possible. The notion of a representative sample is predicated upon the specification of a defined population (Seltiz et al 1976). Although the enormous registered membership of the Musicians Union could have been used to define the population, there is no way of systematically omitting musicians who do not play jazz. Furthermore because of the job situation, a player who considers him or herself to be a jazz performer is seldom able to concentrate solely on this. Jazz musicians are not a clearly defined group: some are session musicians

'letting their hair down' in their spare time, some aspire to the concert platform but cannot get enough work there, and some are committed jazz players who need to take other types of job to maintain their income. There are also marginal positions like dance-band players who might not be considered jazz musicians but work on the fringes of the jazz scene. In such situations where a population is not able to be clearly defined, conventional sampling techniques are unsuitable. Wiseman et al (1970) call such groups, 'small worlds' and argue that representativeness can only be approximate in such situations. I therefore decided to construct a sample by snowballing, using my contacts at the Adult Education course, my own saxophone teacher and other contacts through schools. After the interview I asked each musician if he would put me in contact with another and this developed until I had interviewed nineteen professional musicians in the London area. I also interviewed the musicians playing at The Pontalba Cafe in New Orleans with whom I had contact in England. Interviews were semi-structured. I had a series of key issues about performance which I wanted to explore and each could be extended to fit the time the musician was able to give me. Interviews sometimes lasted for nearly three hours, although the majority were between one and a half and two hours with two being one hour only. The interviews were tape recorded, and later transcribed for analysis and although they did not yield 'hard' data, each provided me with greater insight into the trials and tribulations of live performance. I used them as 'sensitising' devices to help my approach to observation and to construct my notion of aesthetic ideologies discussed in Chapter Eight.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter One: The Research

1. e.g. Hanslick 1891; Stravinsky 1947; Langer 1942; Meyer 1956, 1973.
2. Possibly the 'grandest' of all Grand Theorists was Theodor Adorno whose high theoretical level has been continued by John Shepherd 1977.
3. The explanation for the term 'logonomic' is given in Hodge and Kress 1988:4 as follows: 'We will call this higher-level control mechanism a logonomic system from the Greek logos, which means a thought or system of thought, and also the words or discourse through which the thought is presented, and nomos, a control or ordering mechanism.'
4. The terms 'fixity' and 'flexibility' are taken from the study of Indian music by Bonnie Wade (1976).
5. The personal contact basis of employment, results in musicians being supportive to each other when confronted by someone from outside the profession. A musician will seldom give an opinion on the work of another if they are in the same job 'catchment level'. Nevertheless some underlying personality tensions were apparent and it was interesting to note the names which were mentioned in a complementary way and those omitted. All the musicians interviewed expressed a need for confidentiality over the more personal and possibly contentious opinions that were explored in interview.

Chapter Two: The Classical Tradition

1 For a fuller account of the concept of ritual see Chapter Four. Also McLaren (1986) Chapter 1 gives a summary of the controversies surrounding the application of ritual studies to post-industrial societies.

2 The term 'realisation' is used here in preference to 'performance' which will usually only be applied to live contexts. 'Realisation' draws atention to the mediation of music through technological processes such as record and cassette production which require mechanical devices for the realisation of the sound from magnetic or similar traces.

3 Composition classes and examinations in music colleges are generally concerned solely with 'paper' exercises. Some contemporary composers reject the constraint on their efforts from the necessity for a musician to play the work either by arguing that musicians should be told to play what they are given, or maintaining a radical autonomy for the composer role arguing that a work does not need a performance to exist. For a performing musician's viewpoint, Andre Previn has said in a television interview that as a rule of thumb when considering new works sent to him, he looks carefully at the score and if the instructions for interpreting the notation are longer than the work itself he

automatically rejects the piece without bothering to proceed further! However Charles Ives is reputed to have regarded the fact that musicians found his compositions unplayable as liberating him from the necessity to confine his music writing to the limits of performance practice. (Becker 1982:34)

Chapter Three: The Jazz Tradition

1. LeRoi Jones later changed his name to Amiri Baraka as a personal celebration of African roots.

2. Traditional African music has no harmony in the European sense and therefore it seems at first sight obvious that jazz harmony must be derived from the European tradition. However, as Schuller points out, what is interesting is what parts of the European harmonic tradition were most easily assimilated by the newly imported slaves. Although African and European musics are based on totally different conceptions there are 'coincidental, superficial similarities which made the transition (in terms of harmonic practices) from Africa to the Southern United States virtually unbroken.' (Schuller 1986:42) See also A.M.Jones (1959).

3. The idea that jazz was born in New Orleans is part of the great mythology of jazz although there is some evidence that jazz music developed in many parts of the U.S.A. at about the turn of the century. Nevertheless New Orleans does have particular features which made it a city especially suited to the emergence of early jazz. It was (and is), a multi-cultural city with a polyglot population. French owned Louisiana was the deportation destination for some of the least desirable elements of the French underworld. Situated so close to Texas and the Mexican border, there is a clear Spanish influence also. The descendants of the slaves brought in vast numbers from West Africa provided the other vital ingredient for the development of new cultural forms.

4. Strictly speaking Creole meant 'not-of-African-origin' in the New Orleans of the late C19th. 'Creoles of Color' were persons with 'mixed' Spanish-French-West African ancestry, typically mothered by a freed slave and fathered by a white aristocrat and often freed from slavery under the Manumission Code of 1724. See Ostransky (1978:15-17) and Jones (1963:76). They separated themselves from the darker skinned groups in as many ways as possible. However Code 111 of 1894 declared that 'Creoles of Color' were negroes under the law which subjected them to a dramatic increase in racial discrimination and forced the two groups together. For musicians this meant having to take negro jobs. LeRoi Jones (1963) quotes the Creole violinist Paul Domingues: "See, us Downtown people, we didn't think so much of this rough Uptown jazz until we couldn't make a living otherwise ... I don't know how they do it. But goddam, they'll do it. Can't tell you what's there on the paper, but just play the hell out of it." (Jones 1963:79)

5. For an account of the famous New Orleans funeral parade see Franklin (1967:13).

6. Spencer Williams, songwriter, who considered himself Lulu White's

adopted son remembers: "Those places were really something to see - those sportin' houses. They had the most beautiful parlors, with cut glass, and draperies, and rugs, and expensive furniture. They were just like millionaires' houses." (Shapiro and Hentoff 1955:11) And Clarence Williams reinforces this image: "And the girls would come down dressed in the finest evening gowns, just like they were going to the opera. Places like that were for rich people mostly white." (Shapiro and Hentoff 1955)

7. Quoted in Ostransky 1978:79

8. An interesting racial development became apparent at this time. For an account of the 'young Chicagoans' - Mezz Mezzrow, Eddie Condon, Red McKenzie, Dave Tough, Pee Wee Russell and Bix Beiderbecke, who came from Davenport, Iowa, - see Ostransky (1978:116) Mezzrow was the model for Norman Mailer's phrase 'the white negro'. Generally the black jazz players were not very interested in the young Chicagoans with the exception of Benny Goodman whose schooled tone, technique, general spirited playing and seriousness of purpose they recognised as similar to their own.

9. Ross Russell's biography of Charlie Parker Bird Lives! New York: Charterhouse gives examples of the use of this sanction against jazz musicians thought 'undesirable' by the civic authorities.

10. The Cotton Club's own racial segregation is of interest. The performers were black, the audience all white.

11. The record album usually thought to be Miles Davis's breakthrough into electronic enhancement is 'Bitches Brew'.

12. For an account of the development of 'free jazz' in Britain see Ian Carr (1973) Music Outside London: Latimer New Dimensions.

Chapter Four: The Survey of the Literature

1. Grahame Thompson's (1985) definition is very general: '... we can say that 'performance' is the mode of assessment of the 'textual/character/actor' interaction. Performance is interestingly placed at the intersection of the text, the actor/character and the audience. Or so it seems at first glance.' (Thompson 1985:78) This definition operates in 'relational' terms, but for the purposes of this chapter requires the inclusion of an 'origin', a composer in the case of music.

2. There is a distinction between those which are primarily collective practices like film and drama, and those which are largely concerned with individual production like poetry and the novel. Similarly there are those which conventionally involve collective sites of consumption and those which are solitary. Where the 'performance arts' are distinct is in their requirement for particular levels and forms of social cooperation and mediation between conception and reception which are not required by other arts. (But cf, Williams 1973 & Ch. 4.2)

3. See for example the debate between Hirsch and Gadamer described in Wolff 1981 Ch 5.

4. An effect of recording technology has been to enable consumers to

17. The situation was not dissimilar from that of the sociology of education before the 'New Directions' debate in the early nineteen seventies and the rise of the sociology of knowledge (Young 1971).

18. Adorno's marxism enables him to evaluate developments as either progressive and therefore leading eventually to human freedom, or regressive and leading to enslavement. One measure of the direction of change is given by the relationship between the audience and the musician.

19. The move from aristocratic patronage e.g. Haydn and Mozart to performing for a paying audience in a 'market place' marked the rise of the 'autonomous artist'. Later, in the early twentieth century, such artists were again forced back into patronage, this time from government or industrial sponsorship accelerating the demise of autonomous art.

20. As Attali puts it: 'But at the same time as music appears as having a value outside exchange, at the same time as it announces exchange as the transformation of value into money, it designates this standard as indefensible, because music is outside all measure, irreducible to the time spent producing it. The impossibility of comparing two exchange-values on the basis of the labour of the composers and performers announces the impossibility of a differential pricing of music, but also of the impossibility of relegating the production of signs in representation to labour-value.(Attali 1985:58-59)

21. As Shepherd describes it: 'The aim of the project .... is to supply independently derived information on the way in which cultural self-identities, as ranged along lines of class, gender, age and ethnicity, are both experienced and expressed through patterns of popular music consumption. The purpose ... is to throw light on the relationship between social structures and cultural realities, the mediating influence of the music industry on the musical presentation of those structures and realities, and the cultural and social messages both discerned and created in popular musics by consumers'. (Shepherd 1986:305)

22. Before outlining the way in which various theorists have addressed this issue, it is important to emphasise that if music is a language then there are many of them! A cluster of socio-economic, technological and aesthetic factors have led to a proliferation of musical languages. This divergence had its origins well before the nineteenth century, but technological innovation during the the twentieth resulted in dramatic acceleration. This multiplicity of forms demands a recognition of the way in which cultural divergence may parallel divergent social relations.

23. The most denotative signs are iconic, have high representational value, are strongly motivated and weakly conventional. They derive their meaning from close resemblance. Iconic sounds tend to be used in programme music, but generally musical signs are very arbitrary in their relationship between the signifier and the signified.

24. Tagg's detailed methodology is described in Tagg (1982) which also includes an account of his various 'musics' mentioned earlier.

25. Information theory is derived from what is at source a mathematical model of message analysis developed by cyberneticists (Middleton 1981), a message is said to carry 'information' commensurate with the amount of 'originality' in the text. The basic measure is the ratio of 'originality' to 'redundancy'. Most popular music is high in redundancy, which of course parallels Adorno's criticism of commodity music as 'standardized'. Information theory has little to say about 'meaning', only the 'density' of any available meaning.

26. A semiotic approach which applies the methods of linguistics to non-linguistic texts has a number of useful distinctions. The 'langue/parole' dimension is relevant in detecting the amount of variation operating within traditions or genres. When 'langue' is dominant the tradition is highly 'visible': the blues is an example of this degree of 'over-coding' as Eco (1977) would call it. Such genres are also said to be 'grammar orientated'. Many new works in the nineteenth and twentieth century 'classical' tradition could be said to show a predominance of parole over langue and be 'text-orientated'. For an interesting attempt to combine textual analysis with performance context, see Barbara Bradby's (1987) study of Peruvian music.

27. In the work of Bowles & Gintis (1976) the social relations of the classroom and the school are said to 'correspond' to the social relations of the work place. Criticisms of their approach came from many directions but most effectively from Gramscian inspired scholars like Henry Giroux (1981).

28. Willis (1978) explicitly attempts to incorporate both a quantitative and a historical dimension into his other wise interpretative ethnography.

29. For example, black music has moved from non-functional tonality e.g. the country blues, to a more visible Western harmonic structure in the 12-bar blues chord sequence as black groups became a more secure section of the general culture.

30. But many hippies did dance in the late 1960s and early 1970s. If the music was 'free-floating' so was the dancing! A regular beat is not essential.

Chapter Five: The Comparative Frame

1. See Mary Douglas (1966) Purity and Danger London, where the inability to classify material substances results in 'dirt', and Jacques Attali (1985) Noise Manchester, where unclassified sound becomes 'noise'.

2. There are numerous instances of music performance events that have occasioned radical realignments of definition. The movement of jazz into the concert-hall is a good example. Benny Goodman's Carnegie Hall concert in New York is usually cited as the first time this occurred. When Bunk Johnson, the New Orleans trumpet player of an earlier age, played two major concerts in New York in 1945-46, he caused a sensation by exhorting the audience to 'git up an' dance' - in a concert hall! Many jazz critics who had insisted on the sufficiency of musical analysis as a basis for

aesthetic judgement and were in the business of promoting jazz as 'art music', had great difficulty in adjusting to Bunk Johnson's statement that he and his band would play better if the audience danced. In essence Bunk was suggesting that 'swing' in jazz is not produced by the musicians alone but is a result of the interaction between them and the audience as coproducers of the event. (Squibb 1983) Other examples might be the inclusion of a rock group, the Soft Machine in the programme of the Promenade Concerts in the early 1970's. Challenges to behaviour considered inappropriate at particular occasions can be resisted in many ways, from total exclusion from the premises to 'shushing' by members of the audience (cf, Chapter Seven).

3. For a description of the careful and deliberate use of props in a musical performance see Jan Fairley (1988) 'Karaxu: Music of the Chilean Resistance' unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Edinburgh.

4. Debates about venue distribution constantly appear in the literature on arts administration and funding (cf, Arts Council of Great Britain 1984). Why are certain venues clustered in 'culture complexes' like London's South Bank area for example? How far does the availability of suitable places for performance effect the ability of London based orchestras, opera, dance and ballet companies to tour the provinces? What principles govern the distribution of money for arts subsidy throughout the U.K.? Associated with the geographical is the economic. Consideration of the distribution of venues inevitably raises economic questions of market availability and associated issues related to funding, whether from private sponsorship or state subsidy.

5. All the jazz musicians interviewed expressed a preference for particular venue designs, although not all preferred the same kind.

6. The possibility of contradiction between levels of social analysis has long been recognised in sociological theory. Robert Merton's (1957) distinction between manifest and latent functions allows for this possibility within functionalist theory, as does the concept of relative autonomy within contemporary marxist theory. The term 'strategy' when used by some current interactionists such as Andy Hargreaves within the sociology of the school, and Paul Willis in his studies of youth culture also recognises this tension although the term has been criticised for its 'voluntarist' associations.

7. Even organisations which are financed by public subsidy will probably use a measure of 'takings' as an index of popularity or of 'serving a useful need' and this puts such organisations into a 'double bind' situation. If they are used frequently and can demonstrate this by reference to takings, they may lose their subsidy, if not, the organisatio may be thought to be irrelevant to peoples needs and hence also lose its subsidy.

8.. This is the usual method of programming used by small groups or visiting soloists at the Bull's Head at Barnes.

9. See Ian Carr (1982) for an analysis of this in the work of Miles Davis.

10. This second tendency took a different form in the late 1950's with

the rise of the black consciousness movement leading towards the often agressive incorporation of supposedly African influences in a strand of contemporary jazz. Examples include Archie Shepp, The Art Ensemble of Chicago. (cf.Leroi Jones 1963, Wilmer 1977)

11. For Schutzian phenomenology this essential experience holds good no matter what concrete form the relationship between the audience and performer takes. Whether the music is live or in recorded form makes no difference, the sharing of mutual inner time is fundamental.

12. In fact an argument could be made that absorption into inner time makes the exercising of critical faculties impossible and since certain theories of aesthetics, Adorno's for example, require the use of critical faculties for the serious appreciation of the art work, such abdication of the rational self might be seen as destructive (cf, Adorno 1978).

Chapter Seven: The Royal Festival Hall

1. The Queen's Hall was built in 1893 and seated 2,420. It was bombed 10th May 1941. The conductor of the last concert was Sir Malcolm Sargent who was later to be the musical adviser to the architects of the new concert hall.

2. It should be remembered that Herbert Morrison had for many years been leader of the London County Council and was able to facilitate procedures.

3. Ownership of the South Bank Estate was vested in the Arts Council of Great Britain on 1st April 1986 under the 1985 local Government Act. The South Bank Board runs, on behalf of the Arts Council, the South Bank's three concert halls (the Royal Festival Hall, the Queen Elizabeth Hall and the Purcell Room), the Craft Centre and from April 1987 the Hayward Gallery. The most recent depreciated replacement cost assessment of land and buildings, was made in February 1988 and amounted to £25,175,000. The operating allocation from the A.C.G.B. in 1989 was £10,347,000. Comparative funding figures for the National Theatre Board, the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, and English National Opera all based in London within about one and a half square miles are £7,917,000, £6,492,635 and £6,917,000 respectively. (Arts Council of Great Britain: 44th Annual Report and Accounts, 1989) In short the Royal Festival Hall seating 3,165 plus 200 standing, is the major music performance venue in a complex commanding massive funding from Central Government. In 1989 the full-time permanent staff was 310 excluding the many contract workers covering security, catering, cleaning, stewarding and programme selling who are hired according to the changing demands of the booking schedule. It ranks in the top flight of international concert halls.

4. The Royal Festival Hall is situated on the South Bank of the Thames on a convex bend of the River between the Hungerford and Waterloo Bridges. The view of the North Bank from the terraces and the pedestrian levels is of some of the most spectacular architecture in London: the Houses of Parliament, two road bridges,

a railway bridge, Somerset House, the spires of a number of Wren Churches, and St.Paul's Cathedral. The Royal Festival Hall is lit not only from within but from numerous floodlights and is a landmark for both residents and visitors to London alike.

5. W. A. Allen of the Building Research Station was a close associate of Hope Bagenal and had made extensive studies of the problems of sound insulation and acoustics.

6. An early complaint that the double basses could not be heard in the Festival Hall came from Leopold Stokowski and others. (Cited in Beranek 1962). Stokowski also asked for the organ to be screened because he claimed that sound from the orchestra reflected from the pipes with a particular 'metallic' timbre.

7. Allen and Parkin point to the confusion over levels of R.T. thought desirable. That favoured in the U.S.A. - the Knudsen level - is 1.7secs, and that in Great Britain - the Bagenal level - is 2.2secs. Eastwick-Field and Stillman (1951) point out that music generally requires a long R.T. and speech a short R.T. This of course, immediately causes difficulty for a hall designed for multiple purposes. However the designers of the Royal Festival Hall decided to aim for a level between the Knudsen and the Bagenal.

8. Because of low frequency absorption, resonance was assisted up to 300 c.p.s. using microphones and speakers at 4 c.p.s. intervals. Critical response to this was good and after technical alterations the system was made permanent for the frequency range 58-700 Hz. The effective R.T. was thereby increased in the 125 Hz octave band from 1.4 to 2.5 sec. In their final report published by the Building Research Station in 1971, Parkin and Morgan after a highly technical account of the electronic and acoustic principles involved in the new system say, 'We described in the previous paper the favourable reactions to the original installation. Since then, the policy has been to keep discussion about the system to a minimum, because of the passions likely to be aroused in some breasts by the thought of loudspeakers in the RFH, however unlike the conventional use of loudspeakers the assisted resonance system may be...Complaints in the press about the "dry" acoustics of the RFH have almost - if not completely - stopped. The most recent (and most important) comment from a musician was at the end of the 1968/1969 season, when Herbert von Karajan, after conducting two concerts with the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, said that he thought that the acoustics of the Royal Festival Hall were probably now the finest in the world. He, and several members of the Orchestra, were interested to know what had been done to the Hall since they last performed in it two years previously. (Parkin and Morgan 1971:1033/4).

9. There is no doubt that this is the prime purpose for which the auditorium was built. Certain extra facilities can be 'bolted on' to the main platform - there is a raised stage which can be fitted in four hours, and a proscenium arch which can be erected for the performance of ballet - but these are attempts to make this purpose built concert hall able to be used for other purposes when necessary. They do not signify a hall designed as a multi-purpose space.

10. Musicians sometimes leave the name of someone they wish to see with the attendant who will allow admission.

11. Almost the only situation where the more expensive tickets are at the back is in the cinema, where it is significant that the auditorium is usually entered from the rear. Again the cheapest seats have further to walk, although in this case it is usually downhill!

12. Social analysis of the phenomenon of live concert performance can take different routes. Benjamin's discussion of the effects of mechanical reproduction on the work of art emphasised the loss of 'aura' - the unique individual quality of a piece of creation. With the rise of mass techniques of reproduction the symbolic importance of a work changed dramatically. It is not just that thousands of reproductions of the Mona Lisa are no substitute for the original, or that Bach becomes intimately associated with a brand of cigar. It is that our perception of the original radically alters as a result of our encounters with the thousands of reproductions and that the original's uniqueness raises its market value. The recognition of uniqueness in the age of mechanical reproduction subverts the autonomous aesthetic, converting it also into a commodity. The application of this notion to concert performance is more complex however. Despite the relatively 'tight' defining quality of a musical score coupled with traditions of performance practice, there is still scope for the creative intervention of an interpreting conductor. There are also the changing trends in music scholarship to take into account. Historical investigation reveals hitherto undiscovered copies of scores and manuscripts, 'layers' of alterations and editorial interventions can be peeled away and even more dramatically, fashions of performance practice change producing different emphases on instrumentation, dynamics and balance. Gramophone records are highly constructed versions of a work, 'authenticated' by a famous conductor or record producer. It is doubtful if they could be 'reproduced' live (even though they are projected as being themselves a 'reproduction'). The concert hall provides the setting for a unique event and it is the experience of this that is being purchased.

13. The other common type of orchestral concert which Small (1987) describes - the lower status 'lollipops' programme - is entirely made up of short equally stressed items like Strauss waltzs. Participants do not need to know the code which structures the programme or understand the more complex rituals involved in participating in a symphony concert - not clapping between movements for example. Because the individual items are short, it is easy to arrange intervals and the temporal organisation of the whole concert is considerably more flexible.

14. One central reason for this is the role of 'going out for the evening' within our general culture. People 'go out' for a variety of purposes and seldom for one single one. Concert-going may be the prime purpose, but the majority of tickets are purchased in pairs which suggests that the pleasure of 'companionship' - in whatever form - may be a close rival.

15. Overture Don Giovanni K527 (Mozart); Horn Concerto No.1 in E Flat (Strauss); Pelleas and Melisande (Arnold Schoenberg)

16. Elgar Howarth, Amy Siddall and David Pyatt respectively.

17. There is a parallel here with Weber's concept of bureaucratic organisation in which the clarity of the structure of responsibility, both vertically and horizontally is revealed. The complexity of the final product, not only of its inner structure but also of its size, seems to demand the bureaucratic form of organisation. Some radical commentators who emphsise the link between a capitalist mode of production and the bureaucratic form of organisation have argued that both the inner harmonic structure of classical music (particularly nineteenth century music) and its mode of realisation in performance are ideological manifestations of bourgeois capitalism (Adorno 1976, Attali 1985, Shepherd et al. 1977, Small 1977).

18. The rigid conventions of interpersonal behaviour which seem necessary to support the autonomous music aesthetic and enable the musicians to play their re-creative role: to offer the potential 'sharing of inner-time' between the audience and a composer of a previous century, cannot be sustained perpetually. Christopher Small (1987) refers to Alejo Carpentier's novel 'The Lost Steps' when he says that musicians 'carry out, under the direction of the man Carpentier calls the Measurer of the Passing of Time, the instructions of long-dead humans, to produce sounds these humans had imagined in their heads and to give them life.' (Small 1987:13)

Chapter Eight: Aesthetic Ideologies

1. Or as Althusser (1971)would say, how their subjectivities should be interpellated.

2. The ideological critique of aesthetics can become particularly intense when aesthetic evaluation effects the distribution of scarce funding. The buying policy of the Tate Gallery gained notoriety with the purchase of Carl Andre's 'Bricks', and funding decisions by the Arts Council are frequently challenged within and outside the art community.

3. The institutional theory of art defines art by reference to those objects and practices which are given the status of art by the society in which they exist.

4. This syntactical view, based on an analysis of functional tonality takes Meyer (1973) into the complex world of inner organisational levels where 'tidiness' of structure seems to be paramount. Every lower-level musical element becomes subsumed under higher level structures.

5. Shepherd says:'Meyer's attitude ... is that all music should conform to a straight line sequence aimed at an emotional climax or culmination. Lee (1970:142) has already indicated ... that this outlook on life is specific to modern Western man. Since music encodes and creatively articulates the structure of life and meaning for all men (sic), ... it is hardly surprising that, viewed through the criteria appropriate to tonality, pre-literate music

appears somehow inferior. For it is tonality, and only tonality, that encodes Western man's specialised notion to time.' (Shepherd 1977:50-51)

6. Possibly musics which are said to be more heavily dependent on rhythm than harmony might be classified by Meyer as 'primitive' and it is interesting to speculate whether rhythm can be used to increase and decrease gratification in the way harmonic progressions are said to in functional tonality. If this is the case, can rhythm encode a world view, the African for example?

7. Essentially the arguement runs as follows:industrial societies are partly characterised by a hierarchical class system, and it may be assumed that cultural symbols (including music) are both generated by, and unevenly distributed to different social classes. The distribution of these symbols is both symptomatic of, and reinforcement for, the class structuring of relevancies and relationships. As in Bernstein's work the polar extremes exhibit symbolic structuring of high mediation, explicitness, linear structure and low predictability at one end (the elaborated code), and more immediacy, implicitness and circularity giving rise to high conventional predictability at the other (the restricted code). These are distributed unevenly through the class cystem, with those groups dispossessed of cultural and social power tending to be confined to use of the 'restricted' code and higher status, culturally powerful groups having access to both 'elaborated' and 'restricted' symbolic systems. Virden and Wishart relate this model of symbol structure to music.

8. However, in some cultures the composing function may be taken by a rigid musical tradition which does not produce a written notation but nevertheless exercises very firm constraint over the performer's production process e.g. The Gamelin Orchestra.

9. For example, a contemporary controversy concerns the degree to which performers should be 'authentic', that is to say use original instruments, or reproductions of original instruments, and be concerned with the intentions of the composer, or conversely see music as able to be interpreted according to contemporary situations, needs and tastes, using current instrument technology.

10. Audiences are important for the performers, but only in so far as they legitimate funding or provide an income of some sort, and provide a sense of being appreciated.

11. See Rosing (1984) and Wolff (1987) for brief accounts of the rise of the aesthetic ideology of 'autonomous art'. Despite the almost infinite variety of possible contexts of reception, recordings of classical music strive to adhere as closely as possible to an idealised construction of 'The Concert-Hall'. In other words live performance permeates the aesthetic code of classical recording companies. The proportion of the classical repertoire composed for live performance is almost total, with only the avant-garde and electronic music composers creating music directly for the recording studio. If recording has left the performance dimension relatively unchanged, the separation of the aural from the need to be personally present at its performance means that music can be consumed in arbitrarily interchangeable contexts for arbitrarily

interchangeable purposes and with sophisticated reproducing equipment e.g. graphic equalisers, tonal qualities can be altered at the point consumption.

12. Another effect of the conversion of process into product has been the incorporation of particular spontaneous improvisations, into the standard repertoire of phrases, licks and even whole choruses used by an improvising jazz musician e.g. the clarinet solo in 'High Society' is now obligatory and regarded as a part of the original tune! A modern saxophonist must have studied Parker and Coltrane phrases. An extensive library of jazz records is therefore a 'must' for jazz musicians. However the jazz performer's improvisation must be a unique process at the time of performance even though his/her background training has used the products of previous performances. A pejorative term in jazz criticism is 'derivative', with the suggestion that the performer has 'not yet found his/her own voice'.

13. The difficulties encountered in Bourdieu's (1980(a), 1980(b), 1984) work on the social distribution of French culture and styles is an illustration of this complexity.

14. The urban centres, often with cathedrals providing the major focus for choral composition, schooling and performance, and capital cities with their court orchestras and singers provided a contrast with rural folk music and rustic customs. The rapid development of towns in the nineteenth century, coupled with the rise of the industrial working class developing its own work-based folk music produced a parallel distinction within urban communities.

15. For a discussion of classification and framing of educational knowledge see Bernstein (1971, 1977), and Young (1971).

16. The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra is reputed to have had difficulty in finding a permanent home for concert performances because of its popular music work.

17. Basin Street's Mahogany Hall had four stories, five grand parlours on the ground floor and a pianist (The Professor earning as much as \$15-\$18 a night). It also had fifteen bedrooms each with its private bath on the upper floors. The cheapest end of the market were the 'shabby cribs' of the street prostitutes (Williams 1967 p.15). The whole red-light district, Storeyville, contained about 2,000 registered prostitutes in 38 blocks and 230 'sporting houses'. Band musicians in the cabarets were paid from \$1-2½. Less dramatic but similar situations were to be found in most large cities all over the United States but they had particular salience for the development of jazz in Chicago, Kansas City and New York (Cf: Ostransky 1978).

18. 'During the revival of jazz and "swing" in 1935-1940, similar objections were voiced by Negro spokesmen. In 1939 the Pittsburgh Courier, a Negro paper, received many letters protesting the "swinging" of Negro spirituals. The secretary of the Antioch Missionary Baptist Association wrote from Natchez, Mississippi: "We...protest this insidious evil. Music as it is now sung, in gin shops, dance halls, on records, by orchestras, black and white, is truly a disgrace to the entire race." (Berger 1972:15)

19. The tenor player, Tommy Smith is reputed to have sparked off this debate with his complaint about the behaviour of some customers.

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