

**From *Top of the Pops* to *Woodstock*  
Mediatizations of Rock Music Liveness  
1967-1973**

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## Abstract

This thesis identifies the emerging conventions of rock music liveness in the late-1960s and early-1970s, and discusses them across media (records, film and television), to argue that these modes of representation were informed by key changes in rock music culture of the period.

Using a cross-media, historical approach, supported by textual and contextual analysis, the thesis aims to move beyond discussions of liveness as myth, focusing instead on the ways in which it is constructed. To this end, the work analyses how producers navigated these attitude shifts and negotiated the specificities of each medium to convey liveness in a way that appealed to both rock fans and music critics. The work moreover identifies how this process established conventions of representing rock music liveness that continue to this day.

The thesis is structured in four chapters. The first of these identifies the key shifts in rock music culture (and associated liveness) in the late-1960s, setting the scene for the next three chapters, which detail how these shifts were articulated in different media. Through this approach, the thesis provides a comprehensive view of the meanings of liveness in rock music cultures, highlighting its historical and contemporaneous centrality and thus adding to debates around popular music and liveness.

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## Introduction

“I think I saw some of these same people at Woodstock.”

“Mulder, you weren’t at Woodstock.”

“I saw the movie.”

*The X-Files*, “Miracle Man”, 1994

The above quote is taken from a 1994 episode of *The X-Files*. Titled “Miracle Man,” it features Mulder and Scully investigating a faith healer, with the exchange spoken as they walk through the crowd camped outside his ministry. While these lines are deployed as a throwaway gag in the context of the episode, they are nonetheless telling of the complex relationship between liveness and mediatization. As Scully points out, Mulder was not at Woodstock. Indeed, the character, whose given birthdate in the show is October 1961, was only seven when the landmark music festival took place, and likely too young to attend. Yet, as his response reveals, Mulder had a sense of being at event that came from seeing the concert movie documenting it.

It is an experience that reflects the way *Woodstock: The Movie* (1970) was marketed upon its original release. The film was not sold as a documentary of the festival and instead it promised something experientially comparable to attending the original concert. “No one who was there will ever be the same... be there,” read the tagline emblazoned across the film’s posters.<sup>1</sup> Of course, what *Woodstock: The Movie* promised was, strictly speaking, impossible. The cinema audience could not “be there” in the sense that those who attended the original event were. Watching *Woodstock* in cinemas meant experiencing it eight months after the festival ended. The film did not transport viewers (literally at least) from the cinema to fields of Max Yasgur’s dairy farm in Bethel, New

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<sup>1</sup> “Woodstock (Movie Poster),” (1970).

York. And, though the Woodstock festival was a three-day event, the film version condensed its goings on into just over three hours.

To put it another way, *Woodstock: The Movie* was not live. Or rather, not live in the sense that liveness is classically understood: through “physical co-presence of performers and audience, temporal simultaneity of production and reception [and] experience in the moment.”<sup>2</sup> It was a recording, a mediatization that could not recreate a number of these characteristics. Yet, the producers of the film still sold it as live and, in our fictional example, Agent Fox Mulder was able to read it as live, so much so, that it gave him the semblance of having been there.

The manner in which Woodstock was sold to audiences some 45 years ago is not markedly dissimilar from how audiences are sold mediatizations of liveness today. In an advertisement for the BBC’s coverage of Glastonbury Festival in 2013, presenters Chris Evans and Jo Wiley invited viewers to “come with us to the greatest festival in the world... where music history is made.”<sup>3</sup> Evans and Wiley weren’t extending a literal invitation for viewers to carpool with them to Worthy Farm. They were, like the marketing of Woodstock, promising viewers that watching Glastonbury on television was experientially comparable to attending the festival. And, as with Woodstock, the notion of the televised Glastonbury being experientially comparable to the festival itself is inherently complicated, even if the specificities of television as a broadcast medium do promise the temporal simultaneity of production and reception.

These texts raise a number of central questions. How is it that texts such as these are marketed as live, and can be read as live, in spite of their mediatization? How are these texts able to convey liveness to the viewer, and where did these modes of representing liveness come from? It is these questions that this thesis seeks to answer. Before I can

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<sup>2</sup> Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 61.

<sup>3</sup> “Where Music History Is Made”: *Glastonbury 2013 (Television Commercial)*, (BBC, 2013).

elaborate further, however, it is necessary to establish some context: how notions of liveness have been understood, how they came to be, and the complexities raised by liveness' mediatization.

### **Liveness: Ontology and Epistemology**

Since the middle part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, notions of the live have become increasingly commonplace in discourses surrounding media. So much so, that the term liveness has been naturalized and passed into common sense. Traditional, unreflective assumptions of liveness have, as Auslander notes, yielded a binary opposition between what is live and what is mediatized.<sup>4</sup> Yet, in unpacking the term, we find that its meanings are far more complex than this binary might suggest. The notion of liveness has only come to exist in the media age, and its ontology and epistemology stem from responses to anxieties about emerging media technologies, and a perceived need to preserve traditional performance in their wake.

Andrew Crisell asserts that the antecedent of these anxieties is seen in human history, through reactions to both written and print communication.<sup>5</sup> Prior to the emergence of the written word, face-to-face interaction, requiring the spatial and temporal co-presence of two-or-more individuals, was the only form of engagement available between human beings. But, the advent of writing allowed for individuals to communicate without the need for these co-presences. It was only in response to this advent that the unique virtues of communicating face-to-face were extolled.

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<sup>4</sup> *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Andrew Crisell, *Liveness & Recording in the Media*, Key Concerns in Media Studies (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 8-12.

The ontology of liveness can be traced to the mid-1930s and is connected a crisis caused by the mass popularization of radio. As Auslander states, prior to radio, music was predominantly experienced through traditional performance.<sup>6</sup> Like face-to-face communication, this performance was characterized by spatial and temporal co-presence. In radio, however, that spatial proximity was removed, which created an anxiety for listeners. Without being able to see a performer, as they could at the site of traditional performance, it was impossible for audiences to tell whether musicians were performing music in temporal simultaneity to their reception of it (i.e.: 'live'), or whether what the broadcast they were hearing had been previously recorded. This led to the introduction of the term 'live' on radio, so that the listener was able to distinguish these two forms.

Like its ontology, the epistemology of liveness was first articulated in response to anxieties about a new media form. Sarah Thornton shows how the growing affordability of record players in the 1950s had a further impact on notions of liveness.<sup>7</sup> With the mass popularization of record players, the way that audiences experienced music changed. It was now the record, rather than the performance, by which music was predominantly heard, bringing into question the need for traditional performance altogether. Fearing for their continued livelihood in the record's wake, musicians responded by perpetuating the notion that the traditional performance was superior to recorded music. They did so by reinventing performance as 'live music' and emphasizing values that the mechanical and predictable record could not provide: spectacle, spontaneity and the amplification of personalities.<sup>8</sup> As a result of this distinction, "the

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<sup>6</sup> Philip Auslander, "Live from Cyberspace: Or, I Was Sitting at My Computer This Guy Appeared He Thought I Was a Bot," *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 24, no. 1 (2002): 16-17.

<sup>7</sup> Sarah Thornton, *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

expression 'live music' soaked up the aesthetic and ethical connotations of life versus death, human-versus-mechanical, creative-versus-imitative."<sup>9</sup>

In the articulation of live music as "human-versus-mechanical," comparisons can be drawn to Walter Benjamin's influential *The Work of Art in the Mechanical Age of Reproduction*. Like performing musicians of the mid-1950s, Benjamin articulated anxieties about the impact of the mechanical on art. He feared that the endless reproducibility of a given image - caused by burgeoning mechanical technologies - separated that unique work from the "fabric of tradition," inscribing in the original artwork an 'aura' that a mechanical copy could not replicate.<sup>10</sup> Significantly, as with live music, the auratic work was defined against the copy through temporal and spatial qualities:

Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be.<sup>11</sup>

While the rhetoric of performing musicians might evoke Benjamin, it is important to highlight that there were core distinctions between the nature of live music and the nature of a work of art. Firstly, though live music might have been defined against the mechanical, the mechanical almost always factored in its production. By the mid-1950s, one would expect vocals, and possibly instruments, to be electronically mediated at the site of traditional live performance. Audiences seldom heard sounds directly as they were carried electronically by microphones and public address systems. The popularization of rock 'n' roll during this time brought further mediation to live music. Rock 'n' roll was a form characterised by the advent of the electric guitar, an instrument

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>10</sup> Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Marxists.org, <https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm>.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

that required amplification to be heard, and whose sound was further modulated through the introduction of electronic effects units such as fuzz boxes and echo chambers.<sup>12</sup> Indeed, in a typical rock 'n' roll set-up of electric guitar, electric bass and drums, the drums were the only instrument that audiences heard unmediated.<sup>13</sup>

Secondly, in Benjamin's work, the auratic work was the 'original,' from which all copies were made. But, as Thornton's example shows, while live music made claims towards aura, the record was displacing its 'original' status, and in doing so, complicating the very notion of what the 'original' was. The dominance of the record meant that, for the first time, the recording was the first thing that audiences heard. As Roy Armes notes, rock 'n' roll "became the first form of popular music for which the record is the key element – the 'original' as it were."<sup>14</sup>

This re-articulation of the rock and roll record as the original also changed the relationship between performance and recording. In music forms that predated the birth of rock and roll – jazz, folk, classical – the function of the recording was to capture performance. These recordings, according to Crisell "could be multiply copied for commercial purposes or used for single broadcasts, but in a sense the uses to which they were put were secondary to the task of capture."<sup>15</sup> In rock 'n' roll, contrastingly, the aim of the recording was not to capture or promote a performance: it was to sell records.<sup>16</sup> As a result, the recording studio became integral to the *creation*, rather than just capture of music, a site at which songs were constructed before any public performance was heard. The result was an inversion of the relationship between live performance and recording.<sup>17</sup> Rather than records aspiring to the live, live performance in rock 'n' roll

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<sup>12</sup> Crisell, *Liveness & Recording in the Media*, 36-39.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Roy Armes, *On Video* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 81.

<sup>15</sup> Crisell, *Liveness & Recording in the Media*, 38.

<sup>16</sup> Armes, *On Video*, 81.

<sup>17</sup> Crisell, *Liveness & Recording in the Media*, 39.

aspired to the record<sup>18</sup>: to recreate 'live' the sounds that had been manufactured in the studio.<sup>19</sup>

### Mediatized Liveness

The notion of liveness in definition against the mechanical was inherently complicated by its mediation. And, further adding to this complication was that liveness, as well as being mediated, was increasingly mediatized. In Auslander's radio example, it is important to note that what was referred to as live was not 'live' in the traditional sense. Traditional liveness was characterized by the spatial and temporal co-presence of the audience and performer. The broadcast of liveness on radio, however, removed that spatial element. While the audience was ostensibly hearing the music in temporal simultaneity to its production, they could no longer *see* the performer as they had done at the site of traditional liveness. Not only did the mediatization of liveness complicate the emerging rhetoric that established liveness and mediatization as binary opposites, it changed the way that audiences experienced it. And, as mediatized liveness proliferated and developed across a number of platforms, these complications became more pronounced.

Moving away from popular music for a moment, work in the field of television studies has identified many of these complexities in great detail. Liveness is a central concept to television. Since its inception, rhetoric surrounding the medium has emphasized its ability to broadcast 'live,' in the sense that it can relay events to viewers temporally simultaneously to their occurrence. Yet, while television's value has been extolled on this ability, much of what we have seen on television since the late-1950s is not 'live' in

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 26.

that sense. One of the most important developments to the medium, as Stephanie Marriott asserts, was the introduction of AMPEX Video Recording equipment.<sup>20</sup> First used in the US in 1956 and adopted in the UK in 1958, AMPEX allowed for the pre-recording of television programmes to be broadcast at a later date. Previously, it was mostly films that were broadcast pre-recorded on television, with the majority of medium specific content broadcast live. AMPEX, however, presented a more cost effective method of television production, and the presentation of recorded television programming became increasingly common.

The pervasion of recording technology in television meant that, by the end of the twentieth century, most transmissions on most channels were not live.<sup>21</sup> Even in programmes advertised as 'live,' the use of recorded material became common, resulting in a patchwork of material "transmitted and received in the same moment as it is produced"<sup>22</sup> and pre-recorded inserts.<sup>23</sup> We see this in myriad programmes that are ostensibly live. The interspersing of pre-recorded, on-location footage into live news broadcasts is one example. The use of the live action replay in sporting coverage is another, with the seemingly unproblematic juxtaposition of 'live' and 'replay' (a word whose meaning is inherent to notions of mechanization and mediatization) evidencing just how complex the relationship between the live and the mediatized has become. Indeed, the use of pre-recorded material has become so standardized that extended periods of television broadcasting uninterrupted liveness have become largely anomalous.<sup>24,25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Stephanie Marriott, *Live Television: Time, Space and the Broadcast Event* (London and California: Sage, 2007), 41-42.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>22</sup> John Ellis, *Visible Fictions: Cinema, Television, Video*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1992), 132.

<sup>23</sup> Marriott, *Live Television: Time, Space and the Broadcast Event*, 42.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 45-47.

<sup>25</sup> As Marriott notes, September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 was one of the most remarkable days in recent US broadcasting because, in the immediate aftermath of the first plane hitting New York's Twin Towers at 8:48 am, the majority of American news channels broadcast entirely live footage. By 9:03am, however, replays were being shown.

While news and sports programmes at least partly comprise of footage broadcast live, other television programmes still make claims towards liveness in spite of being pre-recorded entirely. As Crisell notes, talk show hosts often use a direct address to the viewer, with commonly repeated phrases such as “on tonight’s show” or “coming up next” implying the temporal simultaneity of production and reception.<sup>26</sup> Yet, talk shows are typically pre-recorded days before they are broadcast, while interview segments are often edited to remove instances of repetition, or content not considered suitable for broadcast. It has been noted that programmes such as these, as well as programmes that do not attempt to mask being pre-recorded, could still make claims towards liveness due to the specificities of the television medium. As John Ellis notes, even pre-recorded television programmes are transmitted live, and therefore “able to claim the status of liveness for themselves simply because the act of transmission attaches them to a particular moment.”<sup>27</sup>

Outside of television, there are myriad examples of mediatizations pertaining to be live, whose specific characteristics and modes of representing liveness vary in great degrees. Alongside the live broadcast and the live transmission of pre-recorded material as identified in television, there are live recordings of sports events, theater performances and music concerts, typically experienced through LP, CD or DVD, and differing from the previously mentioned televised examples through their possibility of infinite repetition.<sup>28</sup> Writing on popular music, Paul Sanden has noted that:

The range of musical experiences in the early twenty-first century often includes (and often combines), among other categories, live performances, live

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<sup>26</sup> Crisell, *Liveness & Recording in the Media*, 85-90.

<sup>27</sup> John Ellis, *Seeing Things: Television in the Age of Uncertainty* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000), 31.

<sup>28</sup> Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 61.

broadcasts, live recordings, live performances of recordings, and live performances of electronically synthesized sound.<sup>29</sup>

Nick Couldry meanwhile has termed 'internet liveness,' which is defined by users of internet media's sense of co-presence among each other, and 'social liveness,' reflecting a sense of connection to others through mobile phones and instant messaging.<sup>30</sup> In these instances, communication is entirely mediated, with recipients often spatially and temporally distant. Yet, a sense of co-presence, and ergo, a sense of liveness persists.

The epistemology of liveness established in the 1950s was based on a binary opposition between that which was live and that which was mediatized. This notion of a binary, even at the time of its inception, was unstable. As time has gone on, it has elided further, to the point that much of what we experience live is mediatized and those claims towards liveness are inherently complicated when compared to earlier definitions. It is this changing nature of liveness that has led Auslander to assert that the term's meanings are not fixed and immutable, as that original binary might suggest, but historical and contingent.<sup>31</sup> Evidencing this contingency, there are forms labeled as 'live' in a contemporary context that would not have been defined as such even 20 years ago. Sanden notes that discourses around White Stripes studio albums, perpetuated by the music press and the band themselves, have often extolled the virtues of their liveness.<sup>32</sup> Here, the studio recording, the very thing that liveness was initially articulated against, is articulated as live.

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<sup>29</sup> Paul Sanden, *Liveness in Modern Music: Musicians, Technology, and the Perception of Performance*, Routledge Research in Music (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 4.

<sup>30</sup> Nick Couldry, "Liveness, "Reality," and Mediated Habitus from Television to the Mobile Phone," *The Communication Review*, no. 7 (2004).

<sup>31</sup> Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 8.

<sup>32</sup> Paul Sanden, "Reconsidering Fidelity: Authenticity, Historicism, and Liveness in the Music of the White Stripes " in *Liveness in Modern Music, Routledge Research in Music* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013).

These complexities are not only present in mediatizations pertaining to be live, but at the site of traditional liveness. According to Auslander, in the wake of the mediatization of liveness, the site of traditional liveness has been reshaped: both to conform to understandings perpetuated by mediatizations, and to allow for it to be mediatized:

Whatever distinction we may have supposed there to be between live and mediatized events is collapsing because live events are increasingly either made to be reproduced or are becoming ever more identical with mediatized ones.<sup>33</sup>

He argues that live performance now exists in reference to models presented by the mass media. Theater productions are informed by television, live performances of popular music exist in reference to studio recordings. Auslander speaks of “mediatized performance,”<sup>34</sup> a performance that is not just mediated through platforms such as film, television and record, but “depends on mediation for its significance.”<sup>35</sup> This leads Auslander to two conclusions. Firstly, that ontologically, traditional liveness can no longer be seen to exist because it has become mediatized. Secondly, that much of the epistemology of live performance has been drawn from mediatized forms of culture.

### Does liveness still exist?

Auslander’s intervention proves the ubiquitous mediatization of liveness. In doing so, it calls into question whether liveness is can be seen, in this age of ubiquitous mediatization, to still exist. But, what his work does not account for is how audiences are able to view texts as live, *in spite* of the inherent complexities and contradictions present in their mediatization. As Sanden notes, his hypothesis allows little room “for realizing

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<sup>33</sup> Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 8.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

the theoretical potential of understanding just *how* the concept of liveness itself is formed in all its flexibility and diversity.”<sup>36</sup> His discounting of audience’s common understandings of liveness as invalid, meanwhile, displays a fixation on the ontological encroachment of mediatization into liveness that fails to recognize “the still-vital conceptual differences apparent in comparisons of live performance and electronically mediated culture.”<sup>37</sup>

Reflecting Sanden’s deconstruction of Auslander, a number of academics have called for a greater understanding of *how* liveness can be read in texts, rather than assertions of whether or not a given text *is* live. Writing in 2007, for example, Simon Emmerson argued that the conceptualization of liveness is not a matter of “actuality,” but a matter of “perception.”<sup>38</sup> Similar sentiments are shared by Marriott, who gestures that the way out of the impasse of attempting to define a programme’s liveness in television studies is,

to think of liveness as a set of communicative mechanisms: as an effect, rather than a concrete question of time and space. Television, after all, frequently performs immediacy in ways which are not ontologically given but which have been devolved, rather from the communicative imperatives of the medium.<sup>39</sup>

Sanden himself has asserted that historical distinctions between liveness and mediatization must still exist on a conceptual, if not actual level and that if they did not, “the idea of liveness itself would have long since lost all cultural currency.”<sup>40</sup> He continues that the common understandings of liveness cited and discounted by

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<sup>36</sup> Sanden, *Liveness in Modern Music: Musicians, Technology, and the Perception of Performance*, 9.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Simon Emmerson, *Living Electronic Music* (Hampshire and Vermont: Ashgate, 2007), 93.

<sup>39</sup> Marriott, *Live Television: Time, Space and the Broadcast Event*, 52.

<sup>40</sup> Sanden, *Liveness in Modern Music: Musicians, Technology, and the Perception of Performance*, 6.

Auslander “constitute important aspects of a collective liveness concept.”<sup>41</sup> This concept, he defines, is “not shared by everyone in exactly the same way,” but “allows for a maximum diversity of experiences rather than one that disqualifies many of those experiences as invalid or misinformed.”<sup>42</sup>

## Intervention

I agree with Sanden that common understandings of liveness are important to liveness studies. For me, though, this intervention raises a pertinent question, and one that I feel has not been fully explored in the field. Assuming there are collective concepts of liveness as described by Sanden, then where did these collective concepts come from? How were texts read as live in spite of the myriad complexities inherent in their mediatization?

Liveness has been identified as historical and contingent, rather than fixed and immutable. It strikes me, by this reckoning, that there must be historical moments that have affected understandings of liveness in more significant ways, for example when the emergence of new social and technological factors have affected the way liveness was presented, and thus informed new understandings of the concept. Indeed, Crisell has gestured as much in relation to television studies, suggesting that to have a clear idea of the essential character of broadcasting requires asking historical questions. He points to potentially pivotal moments including the introductions of pre-recorded content, home recording technology, interactive television services and of broadcast content on

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

smartphones and computers, and suggests that understanding these moments is necessary for understanding the future of liveness in television.<sup>43</sup>

Key moments in the history of liveness have been identified in the field of popular music studies: Auslander has spoken of the moment in which the popularization of broadcast media necessitated the use of the term 'live,' while Thornton has written on the emergence of values of liveness in relation to the increased mediatization of popular music. Yet, the specific periods in which liveness became mediatized (i.e., historical moments) have seldom been discussed. Academics such as Auslander<sup>44</sup> and Marriott<sup>45</sup> have looked at liveness from a broadview perspective, covering several decades of mediatized live history in their respective works with an aim to contextualize the contemporary status of liveness.

Following Crisell's lead, I suggest that, to understand the contemporary character of liveness in popular music, we need to look, in greater detail, at the pivotal moments in its history. This means not only the moments in which the epistemology of liveness developed in different genres, but also those in which mediatizations of liveness emerged, and without forgetting the negotiations by which these mediatizations came to be accepted as live. In order to do this, therefore, this thesis proposes an historical analysis of mediatizations of rock music liveness across film, television and records that were produced during the late-1960s and early-1970s. The reasons for choosing this period, and for the focus on rock music are outlined below.

### Why the late-1960s to early-1970s?

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<sup>43</sup> Crisell, *Liveness & Recording in the Media*, 108.

<sup>44</sup> Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*.

<sup>45</sup> Marriott, *Live Television: Time, Space and the Broadcast Event*.

The period of transition from the late 1960s to the early 1970s is today remembered as one of the most pivotal points in modern history. As Nadya Zimmerman notes, it is recalled in popular imagination as a time of “widespread political upheaval and social unrest,” characterized by the civil rights movement, protests against the war in Vietnam and the emergence of a youth culture that “actively rebelled against fifties social norms that had seeped into every corner of human activity.”<sup>46</sup> This is an image propagated by a number of leading historians including Todd Gitlin,<sup>47</sup> Howard Zinn<sup>48</sup> and Gerald Howard,<sup>49</sup> who, as Zimmermann states, have defined the era “by laudable attempts at progressive social change in the face of a dominant oppressive system.”

As Zimmerman notes, and as Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle have echoed, this period is one that has, to an extent, been mythologized.<sup>50</sup> This, in particular is in relation to notions of the ‘counterculture,’ popularly characterized as “a generation of young people [that] rebelled against the old guard, expanded their minds, and lived outside the norms of society.”<sup>51</sup> Certainly, while the countercultural groups did emerge during this time, and while thinking deemed ‘countercultural’ did have an impact on youth culture more generally, it is important to remember that the late 1960s “was populated by various, heterogeneous groups, many of whom had nothing to do with one another, even within the smaller circles of the budding youth culture.”<sup>52</sup> And indeed, as Braunstein and Doyle note, the term ‘counterculture,’ when popularized in the late-

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<sup>46</sup>Nadya Zimmerman, *Counterculture Kaleidoscope: Musical and Cultural Perspective on Late Sixties San Francisco*(Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008), 2.

<sup>47</sup> Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage*(New York: Bantam Books, 1993).

<sup>48</sup> Howard Zinn, *The Twentieth Century: A People's History*(New York: Harper's Perennial, 1998).

<sup>49</sup> Gerald Howard, *The Sixties: The Art, Attitudes, Politics, and Media of Our Most Explosive Decade*, 2nd ed.(New York: Marlowe & Company, 1995).

<sup>50</sup> Zimmerman, *Counterculture Kaleidoscope: Musical and Cultural Perspective on Late Sixties San Francisco*, 3.

<sup>51</sup> Peter Braunstein; Michael William Doyle, "Historicizing the American Counterculture of the 1960s," in *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s*, ed. Peter Braunstein; Michael William Doyle(New York: Routledge, 2002), 6.

<sup>52</sup> Zimmerman, *Counterculture Kaleidoscope: Musical and Cultural Perspective on Late Sixties San Francisco*, 3.

1960s, quickly became one that referred “to all 1960s-era political, social or cultural dissent, encompassing any action from smoking pot at a rock concert to offing a cop.”<sup>53</sup>

Acknowledging the complexities of the counterculture, and not wishing to homogenize its disparate groups or oversimplify their myriad aims, it should be nonetheless noted that the pervasiveness of so-called ‘countercultural thinking’ had a massive impact on popular culture, resulting in “a momentous cultural epoch, comparable to “Jazz Age America or Weimar Germany.”<sup>54</sup> These attitudes “spawned the defining cultural products... that came to be associated with an entire era,” and often impacted the very means by which media was produced.<sup>55</sup> This can be seen in cinema, for example, with what is now referred to as the New Hollywood period that began in 1967. “A period of fundamental change in American film history,”<sup>56</sup> second only to the coming of sound in the 1920s, the era is now seen as “a vital period in the development of Hollywood.”<sup>57</sup> Its films, which moved away from the studio-generated epics, musicals and westerns of decades prior, became “director-centred,” with a self-consciously European aesthetic and an emphasis on anti-heroes and subversive sexual politics that “reflect[ed] the countercultural thirst for change at the end of a decade.”<sup>58</sup>

## Why rock music?

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<sup>53</sup> Doyle, "Historicizing the American Counterculture of the 1960s," 5.

<sup>54</sup> Morris Dickstein, *Gates of Eden: American Culture in the Sixties* (New York: Liveright, 2015).

<sup>55</sup> Zimmerman, *Counterculture Kaleidoscope: Musical and Cultural Perspective on Late Sixties San Francisco*, 3.

<sup>56</sup> Peter Kramer, *The New Hollywood: From Bonnie and Clyde to Star Wars*, Short Cuts (London and New York: Wallflower, 2005), 2.

<sup>57</sup> David A Cooke, *Lost Illusions: American Cinema in the Shadow of Watergate and Vietnam 1970-1979*, vol. 9, History of the American Cinema (California and London: University of California Press, 2000), 1.

<sup>58</sup> Mark Harris, *Scenes from a Revolution: The Birth of the New Hollywood* (London and New York: Canongate, 2008).

As with cinema, countercultural thinking had a transformative impact on popular music. Upon its emergence, rock was perceived by the dominant music industry as a youth fad. Yet, by the middle of the decade, rock musicians were increasingly rejecting this notion, distinguishing rock as an art form from rock as entertainment. In conceptualizing rock this way, musicians were influenced by a number of factors including traditional musics such as jazz, blues and folk, art school education that was common among rock's practitioners, as well as the aforementioned countercultural thinking that was increasingly pervasive in youth culture.<sup>59</sup> By 1967, musicians were expressing this ideology in explicitly anti-commercial terms, rejecting the show-biz values, ideas of rock as entertainment, singles and package tours that were characteristic of the dominant industry and "separating themselves, ideologically, from the circumstances in which their music was made."<sup>60</sup>

Rock was not the first popular music form to express itself in these terms, but the outcome of this expression was markedly different to earlier forms. Its antecedent, rock 'n' roll, had rejected the conventions of the dominant industry when it emerged in the early-1950s. Unlike the popular music stars of the day, rock a'n' roll musicians wrote their own hits and were responsible for the overall artistic interpretation of their music.<sup>61</sup> But, by the end of the decade however, the record industry reasserted its dominance over rock 'n' roll musicians and forced them to conform to dominant industry practices. Similarly, jazz performers of the late-1940s had renounced the danceable, commercial imperatives of swing in favor of the cerebral complexities of

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<sup>59</sup> Andrew James Kellett, "Fathers and Sons: American Blues and British Rock Music 1960-1970" (University of Maryland, 2008).

<sup>60</sup> Simon Frith, *The Sociology of Rock* (London: Constable and Company, 1978), 167.

<sup>61</sup> Paul Friedlander, *Rock and Roll: A Social History*, 2nd ed. (California: Westview Press, 2006), 68-69.

bop.<sup>62</sup> Yet, the rearticulating of jazz as art music turned it into a niche, rather than mainstream genre.<sup>63</sup>

Contrastingly, rock was able to express itself as self-consciously artistic while simultaneously finding favor with a mass audience. This occurred because rock's youth audience, like its practitioners, was informed by the pervasive countercultural discourses of the era. As a result, they supported rock musicians' ideology of artistic freedom, integrating it "into a general youth ideology of freedom and self-expression [in which] 'doing your own thing' became the operative phrase."<sup>64</sup> The result was "a unique (and temporary) situation in which art and commerce seemed complementary, not contradictory."<sup>65</sup>

Along with these ideological shifts, the late-1960s saw a rearticulating of the epistemology of liveness in rock. Liveness was a value that had little importance in dominant conventions of popular music, where the intention was to sell records rather than promote performances.<sup>66</sup> But, influenced by residual musics such as jazz and blues, where live performance was of primary significance, liveness became central to notions of authenticity in the burgeoning genre. And, the impact of liveness's emerging centrality resulted in a number of important developments, the influence of which continue to resonate.

This was a period that saw the manner of staging live performance in popular music overhauled. Package tours, the mode by which popular music live performance had been staged within the dominant industry for the past decade, soon became incongruous with these new values. In the package tour's stead, the notion of the dedicated rock 'club'

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<sup>62</sup> Bruce Johnson, "Jazz as Cultural Practice," in *The Cambridge Jazz Reader*, ed. David Horn Mervyn Cooke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 99.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Crisell, *Liveness & Recording in the Media*, 38.

emerged, epitomized in venues like San Francisco's Fillmore and London's Middle Earth. The music festival, a form hitherto associated with residual art musics like jazz, folk and classical, was reconfigured into the rock festival. Several of these resultant festivals, including Monterey Pop and Woodstock, are now recognized as landmark events, not just in popular music, but also in popular culture more generally. The myriad articles that continue to be written on these events, and continue to posit their immense cultural significance, evidence this.

An *Atlantic* retrospective on Monterey from 2011 referred to the festival as "a creative explosion," a cultural "revolution" and "true rock festival – progenitor of and template for every one that followed."<sup>67</sup> Similarly, a 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary feature on Woodstock published in *The Telegraph* in 2009, noted it a "cultural milestone" that has "fuelled every outdoor rock event since, from the Concert for Bangladesh... in 1971, to Live Aid (1985) and Live 8 (2005)."<sup>68</sup> In 1969, the Rolling Stones pioneered the arena tour, with their North American run retrospectively described as "history's first mythic rock and roll tour"<sup>69</sup> and one of the "benchmarks of an era."<sup>70</sup> The format was hugely influential and, decades later, is still the perennial mode by which fans experience live popular music performances. According to *Forbes*, the top 20 grossing tours of 2015 were exclusively arena runs.<sup>71</sup> There were also a number of technological developments in response to the changing values of liveness during this era, including the popularization of the Marshall stack amplifier, "a major shift in [rock] music's history" according to *The Atlantic*,<sup>72</sup> as well as the introduction of high-powered PA systems, designed by Meagher

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<sup>67</sup> Hampton Stevens, "From Monterey Pop to Bonnaroo, the Hippie Endures," *The Atlantic*, June 20 2011.

<sup>68</sup> Roya Nikkhah, "Woodstock 40 Years On: The Legend, the Legacy," *The Telegraph* 2009.

<sup>69</sup> Robert Christgau, "The Rolling Stones," in *The Rolling Stone History of Rock & Roll* (Random House, 1980), 198-99.

<sup>70</sup> Dave Marsh, *Glory Days: Bruce Springsteen in the 1980s* (Pantheon Books, 1987), 15.

<sup>71</sup> Hugh McIntyre, "The Highest-Grossing Tours of 2015," *Forbes*, January 12 2016.

<sup>72</sup> William Weir, "How the Marshall Amp Changed Rock - and the Meaning of 'Loud'," *The Atlantic*, April 11 2012.

electronics in San Francisco, that were “the progenitor of all the large-scale PAs that followed.”<sup>73</sup>

Finally, the burgeoning importance of liveness in rock music also saw the emergence of myriad new forms of mediatized liveness. The concert movie, the rock live album, as well as a new form of “serious” music television programming came to be during this time, all formed in response to the growing imperatives of liveness that occurred during this era. These formats have had a notable influence on mediatizations of liveness up to the present day. Testament to their impact is the extent to which examples of these forms are contemporarily referenced, both in the music press and in mainstream newspapers and culture magazines.

A recent feature in *Classic Rock* identified live albums released between 1968 and 1972 including Cream’s *Wheels of Fire* (1968), The Who’s *Live at Leeds* (1970), The Rolling Stones’ *Get Yer Ya-Ya’s Out* (1970) and Grand Funk’s *Live Album* (1970) as “the live albums that changed history.”<sup>74</sup> An extensive retrospective on *Get Yer Ya-Ya’s Out*, meanwhile, was also featured in *Classic Rock* recently, where it was cited as “the greatest live rock ‘n’ roll album of all time.”<sup>75</sup> Similarly, a feature on The Who’s *Live at Leeds* from *Record Collector* in 2010 declared it “as one of the first bona fide rock live albums” and, as with *Ya-Ya’s*, “the greatest live album of all time.”<sup>76</sup> The recognition of the albums extends beyond the music press, with *Ya-Ya’s* and *Live at Leeds* respectively voted as the

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<sup>73</sup> “Monterey International Pop Festival 1967,” <http://www.retrorebirth.com/monterey-international-pop-festival/monterey-international-pop-festival-1967-feature.php>.

<sup>74</sup> Classic Rock Staff, “The Live Albums That Changed History: 1968-1972,” *Classic Rock*, 29 June 2016.

<sup>75</sup> Kris Needs, “The Rolling Stones: Live'r Than You'll Ever Be,” *ibid.*, 20 Jun 2014.

<sup>76</sup> Dave Lewis, “The Who Live at Leeds!: The Greatest Live Rock and Roll Album Ever Made!,” *Record Collector*, July 2010, 53.

second greatest and greatest live albums of all time in a poll recently conducted by *The Telegraph*.<sup>77</sup>

The influence of concert movies from this era has similarly been noted. *Monterey Pop* (1968), for example, recently topped the BFI's 10 Greatest Concert Films feature, noted as a "landmark audiovisual record,"<sup>78</sup> while *Village Voice* have described *Woodstock* (1970) as "perhaps THE definitive film from the '60s" and "the essential document in rock history."<sup>79</sup> In a recent retrospective on *Old Grey Whistle Test*, meanwhile, *Classic Rock* described it as the programme that "redefined music TV," noting the continued impact of its "let-the-music-do-the-talking ethos" in contemporary programming.<sup>80</sup>

By demonstrating the ways in which mediatization of liveness occurred in the late-1960s and early-1970s, this thesis argues that the influence of rock music culture was, and remains central to cultural perceptions of liveness in popular music. In response to the emergence of liveness as a central concept in rock, this period saw the emergence of a number of new modes of representing liveness across media. A number of these modes would go on to become dominant forms by which mediatized liveness was experienced in rock, establishing several conventions of representing mediatized liveness in the process. This period in rock music history, therefore, is crucial not just to rock music culture, but also to cultural perceptions of liveness more generally in the 1960s and onwards to the present day.

## Methodology

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<sup>77</sup> Telegraph Staff, "The Ten Best Live Albums of All Time," *The Telegraph* 2016.

<sup>78</sup> Ashley Clark, "10 Great Concert Films," *BFI*, 24 April 2015.

<sup>79</sup> Daniel Kohn, "Top Ten Concert Films to See before You Die," *The Village Voice*, February 28 2013.

<sup>80</sup> Philip Wilding, "Lost in Time: Why the Old Grey Whistle Test Rocked," *Classic Rock*, 21 September 2016.

In order to achieve its goals, this thesis uses a mixed methodological approach, incorporating textual analysis and critical reception. I will outline my reasons for using this approach below.

At the heart of this work is close textual analysis, necessary, given the thesis's aim of identifying the conventions of representing liveness that became established across these media. The nature of the close textual analysis that is presented here varies in nature depending on the media that is being studied. In the case of television and film texts, the analysis draws on the specificities of these media, discussing mise-en-scene, lighting, camera movement and editing and the way that these are used to create a particular effect on the viewer that conveys a sense of liveness. While live albums are a primarily aural medium, there is also some aesthetic analysis featured in the chapter that addresses them, when I examine the ways in which these records' sleeves are used to convey liveness to the listener. There is also an aural element to the analyses performed across television, film and live album chapters. This provides an analysis of the non-musical sounds used to convey liveness that are present in these texts as well as a musicological analysis of the musical portion of these texts.

To qualify this analysis, I draw upon writing from *Rolling Stone* magazine produced during the late-1960s and early-1970s. The significance of rock magazines in shaping rock music culture in the late-1960s has been noted by a number of academics. Simon Frith states that what became the dominant ideology of rock was informed and developed by the creation of new specialist music magazines in America.<sup>81</sup> He points towards periodicals such as *Crawdaddy*, *Mojo Navigator* and *Creem*, all of which began publication between 1966 and 1968. These were publications that had in common "the serious treatment of rock as a cultural form" and drew connections between "rock and

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<sup>81</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 144.

[a countercultural] life-style."<sup>82</sup> As Simon Jones and Steve Featherly, note, these magazines were incredibly influential, with "the popular-music criticism of that era [shaping] a national consciousness, aesthetic and symbolic system that put in motion a dynamics of cultural consecration."<sup>83</sup>

While a number of magazines emerged in response to rock, Frith notes that *Rolling Stone* was "the most important of the new music papers."<sup>84</sup> Looking at rock within the context of the burgeoning youth culture, the magazine's aims were stated clearly from their first issue, where it was noted that "*Rolling Stone* is not just about music, but also about the things and attitudes that the music embraces."<sup>85</sup> Jones and Featherly have echoed the comments made by Frith, stating that *Rolling Stone*, of all the rock periodicals that emerged during the late-1960s, is the magazine most responsible for the cultural legitimization of rock music:

It is the popular-music periodical that seeks most clearly to legitimate specific musics and musicians. Of all periodicals, *Rolling Stone* has had the power to 'consecrate' popular music in Bourdieu's terms.<sup>86</sup>

Indeed, *Rolling Stone* was not only a self-proclaimed (and culturally confirmed) repository of rock music values, but also a gatekeeper of rock culture. In many ways, this is reminiscent to the role attributed by Barbara Klinger to film critics: that of "primary public tastemaker."<sup>87</sup> For Klinger and other scholars who have embraced the methods of critical reception, critics and their opinions are a valuable source, providing information "about how a particular [object] was received", but also "offer some insight into broader

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Steve Jones; Kevin Featherly, "Re-Viewing Rock Writing: Narratives of Popular Music Criticism," in *Pop Music and the Press*, ed. Steve Jones (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 36.

<sup>84</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 144.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Featherly, "Re-Viewing Rock Writing: Narratives of Popular Music Criticism," 20.

<sup>87</sup> Barbara Klinger, *Melodrama and Meaning History, Culture, and the Films of Douglas Sirk* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 70.

cultural attitudes” through their account of “the history of the interactions between real readers and texts, actual spectators and films.”<sup>88</sup>

Following these ideas, I draw upon concert movie reviews, live album reviews and concert reviews throughout this thesis. As well as this, I also make use of a number of sources from *Rolling Stone* that are not criticisms of a text or performance, but nonetheless useful for charting discourses surrounding liveness, including features and interviews. In order to choose the material that was most appropriate to use for this thesis, I sampled every issue of *Rolling Stone* that was released during my period of study, and am thus confident that the articles referred to are representative of discourses pervasive in the magazine. While *Rolling Stone* is the primary reception source of this thesis for the reasons previously outlined, there are instances where writing from other publications, where relevant, has been featured.

While this a mixed methodology of textual analysis and critical reception constitutes the main framework for this thesis, there are instances where other methodological approaches are drawn on during this thesis. This is most notable in the television chapter, where analysis of production notes and viewers’ responses pertaining to particular programmes is also used. Instances where distinct methodological approaches are used, along with the reasons for using them, will be highlighted in specific chapters where necessary.

## Chapter Breakdown

This thesis is composed of four chapters. The first chapter highlights the values that emerged around live rock performance while the subsequent three chapters each show

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

how producers interpreted these values in representations of liveness in a specific medium; records, film and television. In the chapters dealing with mediatizations of liveness, several case studies are included, and these have been chosen based on the texts' significance in informing what came to be the conventions of representing liveness in these media.

I have elected for a multi-media approach towards liveness, rather than a film, television, or record specific focus in this thesis. This is because the late-1960s to early-1970s was a period in which mediatizations of liveness came to exist contemporaneously. As such, they did not exist in a vacuum from one another and there are instances where modes of representation from one medium influenced another. There are also instances where producers attempted to use modes of representation from one form, but were unsuccessful because of medium specificity. Looking at liveness from this multi-media perspective therefore is useful, as it affords a greater understanding of how liveness is conveyed in all of its complexities.

Chapter 1 highlights the four key values that emerged around the site of rock music live performance in the late-1960s. It identifies where these values came from, as well as the complex and often contradictory manner in which they were articulated. By doing this, it establishes the debates around liveness that producers of mediatized liveness would need to engage with during the time period.

Chapter 2 concentrates on the emergence of the live rock album, showing how the form evolved from the late-1960s until the release of The Rolling Stones' *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out* in 1970, which is identified as the first conventional live rock album. As will be shown, it was the emergence of the Rolling Stones' *LIVEr Than You'll Ever Be* (1969), a highly influential bootleg album that established the live album as a commercially viable form and introduced a number of its conventions. However, while *LIVEr* was lauded for presenting liveness ostensibly unadulterated, the albums that followed featured a far

greater emphasis on studio post-production. As a result, live albums became a representation of the ultimate concert experience, rather than a strict documentation of liveness.

Chapter 3 focuses on the development of the concert movie. Using *Monterey Pop* (1968) and *Woodstock* (1970) as case studies, it demonstrates how the aesthetics and filmmaking methods of the direct cinema documentary movement were utilized create a sense of these films as authentic documents of rock music live performance. These films appeared as attempts at representing rock music liveness in a manner distinct from the practices of the dominant entertainment industry. However, as will be shown, these films were atypical from direct cinema documentary conventions in a number of respects, with producers drawing on techniques from forms such as the Hollywood musical to affirm, both the spectacle and artistry of the rock music performer.

Chapter 4 notes the distinctive ways in which television represented rock music liveness, and how these were informed by the specificities of the medium. While television was uniquely positioned in its ability to broadcast live, and had a history of presenting live concerts, attempts at presenting live rock performances in this way were unsuccessful. With rock, problems arose because television's need to court a mainstream audience at this time resulted in a compromising of rock's values that proved unpopular with fans. As will be shown, producers addressed these issues by representing rock live performance as 'staged liveness.' Staged liveness, as articulated in the early-to-mid-1960s, had previously proved antithetical to rock ideology. Responding to this ideology, however, producers developed a new form that featured signifiers of rock liveness, as well as a self-consciously non-mainstream address that found favor with rock's audience.

## Terminology

### Addressing livenesses

Throughout this thesis, the terms 'live' and 'liveness' are referred to in myriad contexts, often with a variety of prefixes and suffixes attached to denote a particular meaning. For the sake of clarity for the reader, I present here a glossary of the core liveness terms that are utilized throughout.

Several of the definitions featured here are based on those utilized by Philip Auslander.<sup>89</sup> Given the specific nature of this thesis, both in terms of time frame and its focus on rock music, it has been necessary to adapt a number of these definitions to suit the specific purpose. With this in mind, I have also added a number of new definitions to this list, whose necessity became apparent when analyzing a number of specific forms. Given the temporal focus of this thesis, a number of definitions featured by Auslander such as 'internet liveness,' or 'social liveness' (both drawn from the work of Nick Couldry) have been omitted, as they do not apply to the period of study.

### Classic Liveness

By Auslander's definition, 'classic liveness' is characterized by the physical co-presence of performers and audience: temporal and spatial simultaneity of production and reception and being experienced in the moment. Cultural forms in which it occurs are theatre, concerts, dance, sports etc. My definition of classic liveness is broadly similar to Auslander's, albeit with some modifications specific to rock music. Firstly, the site at which classic liveness is experienced here is specifically that of the concert. Under the banner term 'concert,' I am including a number of forms including small-scale club shows, theatre shows, large-scale arena shows and outdoor events as well as outdoor festivals. Secondly, a significant characteristic of classic liveness in rock music that

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<sup>89</sup> Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 61.

Auslander does not address is the production of music by the performer in the moment of performance. That is to say performers are creating music featured at the site of classic liveness 'live', rather than miming to a pre-recorded backing track.

### Staged Liveness

'Staged liveness' is a form of liveness that shares several of the aforementioned characteristics of classic liveness, but is distinct in being staged specifically for mediatization, typically for television. It should be noted that, while classic liveness was often recorded (and broadcast, albeit less frequently), this element of mediatization was typically agreed on well into the organization of classic liveness. As such, there was a sense of producers needing to work around the goings on at the site of classic liveness and for their attempts at mediatization to have limited impact on the staging of classic liveness. Contrastingly, staged liveness was organized co-operatively between performers and producers, with the intention to mediatize that performance agreed from the start. As such, producers of staged liveness were afforded a greater degree of control over events than producers of mediatizations recorded at the site of classic liveness.

The sites at which staged liveness took place were sometimes the same sites as classic liveness, although reasons of practicality typically dictated that they occurred in more intimate venues such as clubs and small theaters. Typically a televisual form, it was also common for instances of staged liveness to take place in television studios. The staging of liveness sometimes incorporated an audience in spatial proximity to the performer, although there are many instances where this audience is not present. As with classic liveness, staged liveness was also characterized by the 'live' creation of music, rather than the use of backing tracks.

### Mimed Liveness

'Mimed liveness' shared many of the characteristics of staged liveness. But, as the name suggests, was distinguished by the fact that the performance did not feature the exclusive creation of 'live' music. Mimed liveness varied from performances where vocals were recorded live but instruments were pre-recorded to performances where artists performed none of the sounds, vocal or musical, in the moment. Mimed liveness was typically presented with the pretence of music being produced 'live,' with it seldom acknowledged that performers were miming.

### Live Recording

Auslander defines the live recording as occurring in LPs and films (he also mentions CD and DVD but again, given the time frame of my project, I am discounting these) and being characterized by a temporal gap between production and reception and the possibility of infinite reception. To this, I would add that live recordings presented the listener or viewer with a recording of classic liveness. As a result of this, the sound/sight of audience that was physically co-present at the site of classic liveness was present. Also, the live recording presented the viewer/listener with music that was ostensibly produced by the performer in the moment of performance at the site of classic liveness. As I will show later in this thesis, while the music on these recordings was presented as being produced in the moment of classic liveness, the use of techniques such as overdubbing meant that this was not always strictly the case.

### Live Broadcast

By Auslander's definition, the 'live broadcast' occurs in television and radio (he also mentions the internet, but I have removed this from my definition due to the temporal specificity of my project) and is characterized by temporal simultaneity of production and reception and experience of the event by the television or radio audience as it

occurs. To this, I add that the live broadcast could present instances of classic, staged or mimed liveness.

### **Broadcast of live recording**

While broadcasts of live recordings shared several of characteristics with the live recording, there were a number of distinguishing factors. Firstly, the media by which it was conveyed were typically radio or television (or, in very rare occasions, a cinema simulcast). As a result, the broadcast of live recording did not share the infinite repeatability of the live recording, as devices for recording from television or radio were prohibitively expensive to most during the timeframe. Also, while there was a temporal gap between the production and reception of a broadcast of live recording, the television audience experienced the broadcast temporally simultaneously with each other (unlike, say, a live recording on LP, which was experienced by different people at different times). It should be noted that, while recorded, the temporal distance between production and reception in the broadcast of live recordings was not always apparent, and they were often presented as live broadcasts.

### **Defining rock, rock 'n' roll, and pop**

Throughout this thesis, I use the terms 'rock', 'rock 'n' roll' and 'pop' to refer to different forms of music. For the sake of clarity, I will define the use of those terms here. As will be noted, while I use these terms specifically in the thesis, they were often used interchangeably during the late-1960s to mid-1970s, the reasons for which I will address.

### **Rock or pop?**

The usage of the term 'rock' has long been the subject for debate in popular music studies. It has been noted that rock is not a form that can be defined in musical terms. According to Lawrence Grossberg "there are... no musical limits on what can or cannot

be rock... there is no sound that cannot become rock."<sup>90</sup> Following this, Roy Shuker states that the designation of rock music is a sociological one.<sup>91</sup>

Typically, rock music is a form that is understood in opposition to pop. Echoing Grossberg and Shuker's sentiments, Auslander notes the way that rock fans define the music is ideological, rather than stylistic:

The ideological distinction between rock and pop is precisely the distinction between the authentic and the inauthentic, the sincere and the cynical, the genuinely popular and the slickly commercial, the potentially resistant and the necessarily co-opted, art and entertainment.<sup>92</sup>

The emergence of these distinctions can be traced to the middle 1960s, a period in which, as Simon Frith notes, "rock musicians were developing an ideology which distinguished rock as art from rock as entertainment"<sup>93</sup>:

Rock was a complex musical form: it could not be constrained by the pop tradition of singles, package tours, and reproduced hits. Pop meant groups put together, like the Monkees, to satisfy a fad, anonymous players bought – their personalities and all – to meet a need.<sup>94</sup>

It was during this period that a rhetoric of appreciating music rather than consuming pop emerged and in which the burgeoning rock audience, like the musicians themselves, came to have contempt for the values and practices of pop: "for show-biz values, for [popular music] as entertainment, for singles, for package tours, and the rest."<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Lawrence Grossberg, *We Gotta Get out of This Place: Popular Conservatism and Postmodern Culture*(New York and London: Routledge, 1992), 131.

<sup>91</sup> Roy Shuker, *Understanding Popular Music*(London: Routledge, 1994), 215.

<sup>92</sup> Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 81.

<sup>93</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 166.

<sup>94</sup> *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure and the Politics of Rock*(London: Constable and Company, 1983), 73.

<sup>95</sup> *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

Yet, these distinctions, while becoming dominant by the mid-1970s, were still emergent in the late-1960s. And, as such, the binary opposition as identified by Grossberg and Shuker is not as clear-cut during this time period. This is evidenced by the fluidity with which the terms rock and pop are used, even in spaces heavily associated with what we would now regard as rock. In *Rolling Stone* articles of the late 1960s, for example, bands such as The Who, Cream, and the Doors are interchangeably described as both rock and pop, sometimes in the same article. Many of the major music festivals of the era are termed pop, such as Monterey Pop, Newport Pop and Texas Pop, yet feature bills of artists that today would likely be termed rock. Similarly, while its name suggests otherwise, BBC2 music programme *Colour Me Pop*, was envisaged as an outlet for distinctly non-pop acts; album oriented bands such as Frank Zappa, Fleetwood Mac<sup>96</sup> and Robert Fripp.

Acts such as the aforementioned Frank Zappa and Robert Fripp, whose music placed heavy emphasis on experimentation, improvisation and making full use of the album, rather than single format, can be seen as rock acts whose approach stood in opposition to the established conventions of pop. But it is important to note that there were also 'rock' acts during this period that crossed over into the pop market. The Rolling Stones, for example, had success with both singles and album sales during the late 1960s and 1970s, and would frequently appear in what were ostensibly rock media (*Rolling Stone* magazine, *Old Grey Whistle Test*), and pop media (*Top of the Pops*) during the same time period, in a manner that had seemingly little impact on their rock credentials.

Acknowledging these complexities, I define rock for the purposes of this thesis thusly.

Rock acts here are viewed as predominantly guitar based, performing their own instruments, and writing the majority of their own material. Furthermore, they are groups that came to exist without the input of record companies, contrasting the "pop

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<sup>96</sup> The earlier, Peter Green led incarnation of the band, rather than the version that would become phenomenally popular during the mid-1970s.

groups put together” such as the Monkees, as described by Frith.<sup>97</sup> Drawing again on Frith, I also note that these groups had histories as live performers, and had established reputations as live performers at a local level before finding national success.<sup>98</sup>

### Rock or rock ‘n’ roll?

As with rock and pop, the terms rock and rock and roll were also used interchangeably during the late-1960s and early-1970s. In the first issue of *Rolling Stone*, for example, Jann Wenner referred to the magazine as “reflecting... the changes in rock ‘n’ roll and the changes related to rock ‘n’ roll.”<sup>99</sup> The Rolling Stones, similarly, were introduced as “the world’s greatest rock ‘n’ roll band” during their 1969 tour.<sup>100</sup> The term rock ‘n’ roll was originally coined to refer to guitar-based acts of the 1950s, including Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry and Bill Haley and the Comets, and, given the influence of these artists on emergent bands such as the Beatles and the Rolling Stones in the early-1960s, it is perhaps unsurprising that the term once again came into use. For the sake of clarity, however, I take Paul Friedlander’s lead and use the term ‘rock ‘n’ roll’ to describe the guitar based-acts of the 1950s exclusively. Friedlander defines rock ‘n’ roll as beginning in the early-1950s and ending in the late-1950s, while stating that the rock period begins in the early-1960s, prompted by the emergence of so-called British invasion bands such as The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Kinks, The Who and The Animals.<sup>101</sup>

### Dominant, Residual, and Emergent

In conceptualizing the changes that occurred around rock music culture and rock music liveness in the late-1960s, this thesis draws upon Raymond Williams’ “Dominant, Residual, and Emergent” from *Marxism and Literature*. In this work, Williams characterized periods of historical change as being defined by conflicts and resistances

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<sup>97</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

<sup>98</sup> "Video Pop: Picking up the Pieces," in *Facing the Music: Essays on Pop, Rock and Culture*, ed. Simon Frith (New York: Pantheon, 1988).

<sup>99</sup> *The Sociology of Rock*, 144.

<sup>100</sup> Needs, "The Rolling Stones: Live'r Than You'll Ever Be."

<sup>101</sup> Friedlander, *Rock and Roll: A Social History*, 75.

between three ideologies<sup>102</sup>: Dominant ideologies held by the majority of society,<sup>103</sup> residual ideologies that were dominant in the past but have been replaced<sup>104</sup> and emergent ideologies, which are defined in opposition to dominant ideologies, either consciously or unconsciously.<sup>105</sup> As Williams notes, it is the interaction between the dominant and the emergent that leads to social change.<sup>106</sup> He states that while elements of the emergent ideology may become dominant, this is not the case of all emergent elements, some of which remain confined to the margins of society.<sup>107</sup>

In reference to this model, this thesis regards the dominant as the mainstream popular music industry of the 1960s, "in which songs were crafted by office-based professionals, recorded by seasoned studio musicians, and produced by major-label or big independent producers."<sup>108</sup> The residual here refers to traditional musics including jazz, blues and folk: forms that had once seen mainstream popularity, but had niche appeal by the 1960s. Finally, the emergent refers to rock music, a form whose burgeoning ideological imperatives, as I have already noted, were defined in stark, conscious opposition to the ideology of the dominant music establishment. As in Williams' model, this thesis will show that interactions between the dominant music establishment and the emergent rock did lead to social change. Further conforming to Williams' hypothesis, it is evidenced that not all of the elements of rock music culture, and, by extension, rock music liveness, became dominant, with some confined to the margins.

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<sup>102</sup> Raymond Williams, "Dominant, Residual, and Emergent," in *Marxism and Literature*(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 121.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>108</sup> Friedlander, *Rock and Roll: A Social History*, 68-69.

## Chapter 1

### “There’s something happening here”<sup>109</sup>: Emerging values of live performance

Between 1965 and 1970, the values around rock music underwent a significant reconfiguration. Distinguishing themselves from the dominant conventions of popular music, rock musicians increasingly articulated their artistic intentions and rejected the notion of rock as a purely commercial form and were supported by a new generation of music fans that shared these values.

The development of this ideology also led to significant changes around rock music live performances. Modes of staging live performances that reflected the overtly commercial imperatives of the dominant popular music industry were increasingly abandoned, with forms emerging that reflected rock’s newfound seriousness and anti-commercial aspirations. The nature of the performance changed, with musicians drawing from discourses of residual music cultures like jazz and blues, while expectations of performers and audiences, as well as the relationship between the two, were influenced by emergent countercultural thinking of the era.

However, these new values emerging around the live performance, like the new values emerging around rock music more generally, were complicated. A new form of staging rock music live performance did not emerge overnight and the complex, often contradictory imperatives of the various forms that influenced rock music. By the end of the decade, there was a conflict of ideals at the site of live performances, informed by discourses articulated by musicians, concert organizers, critics and commentators. The result was a pervading uncertainty about the value of the live performance in rock, as well as the direction that it should take.

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<sup>109</sup> Buffalo Springfield, *For What It’s Worth*(Atco, 1967).

The aim of this chapter is twofold. Firstly, it identifies what I regard as the four core debates that emerged around rock music live performance in the late-1960s; debates around musical improvisation, the spectacle of the rock performance, the role of commercialism in the staging of the live performance and the role of politics at the site of the live performance. Secondly, it illustrates the complex and contradictory ways in which these debates were articulated, as well as the tensions that abounded at the time.

This chapter lays the groundwork for the analyses of the various media representations of liveness that occur in subsequent chapters. The conventions of representing liveness that came to be by the early-1970s were not created in a vacuum. They were informed by the myriad discourses surrounding the rock live performance at the time of their creation and often an attempt by producers to negotiate the complexities of these discourses. Understanding the attitudes towards rock music liveness at the time allows us to better comprehend the decisions made by producers and gives necessary context for the creation of these texts.

### **“They’re just bloody tribal rituals”<sup>110</sup>: Package tours and the mid-‘60s live scene**

For the emergent rock acts of the early-1960s – so called ‘British invasion’ bands such as the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, the Who and the Kinks – live performance was core in shaping music. These groups were distinct from the dominant pop music of the day,

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<sup>110</sup> James Miller, *Almost Grown: The Rise of Rock* (London: William Heinemann, 1999), 229.

created in recording studios by businessmen “making teenage commodities” in that their sound was developed in front of live audiences<sup>111</sup>:

The creative power and integrity of beat groups like the Beatles and Stones were founded on their origins as club musicians, developing a rock form that was determined not by show-biz conventions but by the immediate demands of dedicated dancers.<sup>112</sup>

The music of these bands was conceived in the rehearsal room and then road tested and perfected on stage. Live performance played an important part in the creative process, while the purpose of the recording studio was simply to document the sounds created during said performances.

The Beatles' *Please Please Me*, for example, was described by producer George Martin as, "a straightforward performance of their stage repertoire - a broadcast, more or less."<sup>113</sup>

The recording sessions had seen the band run through their act song by song, cutting a varying number of takes for each track in a single day of recording<sup>114</sup> and selecting the best run-throughs for inclusion with minimal addition of overdubs.<sup>115</sup> Tellingly, *Please Please Me* was originally conceived as a live record to be cut at the band's native Cavern Club until time constraints intervened.<sup>116</sup> The debut, self-titled album from the Rolling Stones released in 1964 was recorded in a similar manner, although not as quickly as

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<sup>111</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> George Martin; William Pearson, *With a Little Help from My Friends* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1994), 77.

<sup>114</sup> Mark Lewisohn, *The Beatles Recording Sessions* (New York: Harmony Books, 1988), 24-26.

<sup>115</sup> Bill Harry, *The Ultimate Beatles Encyclopedia* (London: Virgin Books, 1992), 265.

<sup>116</sup> Mark Lewisohn, *The Beatles: All These Years Volume One - Tune In* (London: Crown Archetype, 2013), 766.

The Beatles; sessions for The Stones record lasted five days and featured the band “rushing through its stage repertoire of blues and R&B cover songs.”<sup>117</sup>

Live performance was initially integral to the creation of these bands’ music. But, as these emergent musicians rose to prominence and were subsumed into the dominant practices of the early-1960s music industry, the role of the live performance in the creative process was diminished. In large part, this was due to the nature of the package tour, the format by which live popular music was predominantly experienced. Reflecting the attitudes of the dominant music industry, package tours treated performers and their music as a pop commodity.<sup>118</sup> As has already been noted, in dominant pop industry at this time, the convention was that music originated in the recording studio.<sup>119</sup>

Consequently, the convention at these shows was not for artists to create and disseminate new music, but reproduce their latest hit singles, usually as part of a short (sub-30 minutes for headliners) and rigid set.<sup>120</sup>

Package tours did not allow the likes of the Beatles, the Stones and the Who to test out live music in front of audiences as they had done previously. Even if the format of these tours had permitted such creative experimentation, it is unlikely that the results would be heard. The venues of these shows were seldom chosen for their acoustic suitability, while sound equipment was notoriously substandard.<sup>121</sup> Perhaps because organizers did not perceive the teenage pop audience to be overly concerned with the quality of music on offer, P.A systems were often ad hoc, with bands forced to make do with whatever was available at a given venue.<sup>122</sup> Town halls and cinemas were common sites for these concerts; chosen for their ability to hold large numbers of people rather than their

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<sup>117</sup> Michael Gallucci, "The Story of the Rolling Stones' Debut U.S. Album," *Ultimate Classic Rock*, May 30 2015.

<sup>118</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

<sup>119</sup> Crisell, *Liveness & Recording in the Media*, 43.

<sup>120</sup> Paul Charles, *The Complete Guide to Playing Live*, Omnibus Press (2010), 12.

<sup>121</sup> Andy Reynolds, "Touring History," in *The Tour Book: How to Get Your Music on the Road* (Cengage Learning, 2013), 3.

<sup>122</sup> Charles, *The Complete Guide to Playing Live*, 12.

acoustic suitability.<sup>123</sup> Indeed, the inadequacies of live sound combined with the hysteria of the teen pop audience meant it unlikely that either band or crowd could hear themselves. Beatles drummer Ringo Starr recalls having to follow “the three wiggling backsides in front of the stage” in order to determine where the band was in the song because “the sound at [their] concerts was always bad.”<sup>124</sup>

### The emergence of “rock-as-art”

As a result of conforming to dominant industry practices surrounding live performance, the creative processes of these musicians began to change. Bands started to originate music in the studio, using the studio not just as a means to document their live sound, but also as a tool in the creative process.

As recording studios and devices got more sophisticated, as musicians had the time and money to indulge themselves, as the industry began to care about albums as a medium, musicians got a chance to experiment with their music away from the immediate relationship with an audience, away from the constant beat of dancing feet.<sup>125</sup>

Records such as The Beatles' *Revolver* (1966), The Rolling Stones' *Aftermath* (1966) and The Kinks' *Something Else By the Kinks* (1967) reflected this change. Making increasing use of studio techniques such as overdubbing, automatic double tracking and varispeeding, as well instruments not traditionally associated with rock music including sitars, harpsichords, marimbas and Appalachian dulcimers, these albums were realised in the studio with studio technology integral to their creation. Writing on *Revolver*,

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<sup>123</sup> Reynolds, "Touring History," 3.

<sup>124</sup> Jordan Runtagh, "Remembering the Beatles' Final Concert," *Rolling Stone*, August 29 2016.

<sup>125</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

Beatles historian Robert Rodriguez notes that the record marked the first time the group "deliberately incorporated" the studio into the "conception of the recordings they made", rather than using it "merely as a tool to capture performances."<sup>126</sup>

The increasing presence of the recording studio in the creation of new material coincided with the development of a new ideology surrounding rock music, one that further distinguished it from the commercial imperatives and show business of pop. Crucially, notions of artistic freedom were becoming central to the genre. The influence of residual genres such as blues and jazz, who had already gone through their own processes of artistic legitimation was a factor, as was the art school background from which many of these musicians came.<sup>127</sup>

These pre-existing imperatives in rock music were galvanized by musicians' allegiance with the pervasive alternative cultural thinking gaining momentum at the time, which emphasized a broad rejection of commercial attitudes and an individualist, "do your own thing" ideology.<sup>128</sup> This change was reflected in the music that appeared on these new albums. Drawing on influences from world music as well as the aforementioned jazz and blues, songs on these albums broke away from the musical conventions of the three-minute single, while lyrics deviated from the "nonsexual, romantically safe messages" of early-1960s pop.<sup>129</sup>

The nature of the studio recording changed dramatically in the mid-1960s, with these albums at the forefront of the burgeoning, self-consciously artistic, anti-commercial approach towards rock music. But, while these changes were noticeable at the site of the studio, live performances remained largely unchanged from the earlier part of the

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<sup>126</sup> Robert Rodriguez, *Revolver: How the Beatles Reimagined Rock 'N' Roll* (Milwaukee: Backbeat Books, 2012), xii.

<sup>127</sup> Kellett, "Fathers and Sons: American Blues and British Rock Music 1960-1970," 74.

<sup>128</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

<sup>129</sup> Friedlander, *Rock and Roll: A Social History*, 69.

decade; dominant attitudes of commercially minded, showbiz pop music and the package tour format pervaded.

### Frustrations of playing live

Increasingly, live performances were a source of tension for these bands, as they did not reflect the artistic intentions of their records. There was a growing disconnect between what bands were doing in the studio and their performances on stage. In part, this was due to these bands' recordings - in which the studio was as often as much an instrument in their creation as guitar, bass and drums - proving difficult to perform live.

On their 1966 world tour, for example, the Beatles did not play any tracks from *Revolver*, and only featured one song from its predecessor, *Rubber Soul*.<sup>130</sup> Their set list mostly comprised songs from their first three studio records: older records from a time in which a band's live performance directly informed what went on their albums.<sup>131</sup> As Chris Ingham notes, 1966 was the year in which 'Live Beatles' and 'Studio Beatles' "had become entirely different beasts."<sup>132</sup>

The disparity between live performance and studio recording aside, there were other frustrations. With the growing popularity of rock music, particularly bands like the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, package tour style shows were getting bigger. In the US, these groups were increasingly filling sports arenas and stadiums, rather than the town halls and cinemas of years prior. Shows like the Beatles' now landmark appearance at Shea Stadium in 1965 might have broken records in terms of attendance, but their large scale also fostered in the bands a sense of disconnect from their audience.

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<sup>130</sup> Runtagh, "Remembering the Beatles' Final Concert."

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>132</sup> Chris Ingham, *The Rough Guide to the Beatles* (London: Rough Guides, 2006), 44.

For the invasion bands, whose earliest music was realised through the feedback of the live audience, these frustrations were nothing new. The struggle to be heard was apparent from their earliest package tour days. In an interview conducted in the 1970s, for example, The Who's John Entwistle recalled the frustration of his band being denied the use of their own, purpose-built P.A system and being forced to use a "useless" in-house system, when playing at a cinema with the Beatles in 1964.<sup>133</sup> As Entwistle noted, John Lennon was so confident he couldn't be heard that he changed the lyrics of "A Hard Day's Night" to:

It's been a hard day's night and I've been *wanking* like a dog.<sup>134</sup>

When it came to the stadium shows of 1965 and 1966, though, this sense of disconnect was taken to a new, more literal level. At Shea, for example, the Beatles were positioned in the centre of the playing field, with the audience 100 feet away from them. The sound of the 50,000 crowd was so loud that, not only was the band barely audible to the audience, they couldn't hear themselves over the crowd noise.<sup>135</sup>

The Shea Stadium performance broke records in terms of attendance and was an affirmation of the Beatles' phenomenal popularity at the time. It also pointed towards the potential for large-scale rock music events, the kind of which had never been attempted previously. But for the band themselves, the experience was disheartening. Speaking with a reporter in 1965, John Lennon expressed the sense of disconnect he felt.

I reckon we could send out four waxwork dummies of ourselves... and that would satisfy the crowds. Beatles concerts are nothing to do with music anymore, they're just bloody tribal rituals.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Joe McMichael and 'Irish' Jack Lyons, *The Who Concert File* (London: Omnibus Press, 1997), 19.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> Runtagh, "Remembering the Beatles' Final Concert."

<sup>136</sup> Miller, *Almost Grown: The Rise of Rock*, 229.

The disconnect between live performance and studio recording, between bands and their audience, that was experienced in the mid-1960s, came to a head on August 29<sup>th</sup> 1966. On that date, the Beatles played their final show at San Francisco's Candlestick Park, announcing later that they had retired from live performance altogether to focus on a career as studio musicians.<sup>137</sup> The Rolling Stones would unofficially follow suit, going on a live performance hiatus that lasted from 1967 until 1969.<sup>138</sup>

### Live rock in crisis

By 1966 then, there were three central crises surrounding rock music live performance. Firstly, the dominant mode of staging live performance, the package tour, was increasingly incompatible with an emerging rock ideology that emphasized anti-commercialism and artistic freedom. Secondly, rock musicians felt increasingly disconnected from their audience, and were questioning the function of live performances if they could not be heard over the roar of the crowd. Finally, with the studio, rather than the live performance, now central to the creation of new material, the role of live performance in rock music was now unclear.

That the Beatles and the Rolling Stones became studio-only bands raised questions as to whether there even was a place for live performance in this new kind of rock music. Tellingly, when Stones frontman Mick Jagger was asked by *Rolling Stone* magazine if he was interested in doing live performances again in a 1968 interview, he responded that he would be, but not in the package tour format of previous years:

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<sup>137</sup> Runtagh, "Remembering the Beatles' Final Concert."

<sup>138</sup> Corbin Reiff, "That Time the Rolling Stones Played for 500,000 Fans at Hyde Park," *Ultimate Classic Rock*, July 5 2015.

I'd like to do them, but the thought of going onstage and playing "Satisfaction," "Paint it Black," "Jumpin' Jack Flash" and six others just doesn't appeal to me.<sup>139</sup>

Indeed, if live performance was to survive into the next decade, then three things needed to happen. A different mode of staging rock music live performance needed to be adopted, the relationship between audience and performers needed to be renegotiated and live performance needed to find what Sarah Thornton calls a new "raison d'être"; a function beyond the creation and dissemination of new music.<sup>140</sup> This chapter will now go on to identify the ways in which live rock music began to address these issues, as well as the complexities that came about as a result of addressing them.

### **"Starting on a blues and just seeing where it takes us"<sup>141</sup>: Improvisation and Spontaneity**

By the late-1960s, an increasing importance was being placed on values of improvisation and spontaneity at the site of rock music live performance. Marking a departure from the early part of the decade, in which live performances were characterised by the on-stage reproduction of recorded hits, the notion of free-form improvisation, or 'jamming' became central. The concept of improvisation came from pre-legitimated 'art' musics such as blues and jazz, in which a musician's improvisational and spontaneous abilities was seen as a measure of their artistry and musical mastery. However, the nature of the relationship between recording and performance in rock, as well as mixed attitudes towards rock as a virtuosic or 'art' music form, meant that the exact function of improvisation and spontaneity in rock music was unclear.

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<sup>139</sup> *The Rolling Stone Interviews: 1967-1980*, (London: Rolling Stone Press, 1981), 49.

<sup>140</sup> Thornton, *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital*, 77.

<sup>141</sup> *The Rolling Stone Interviews: 1967-1980*, 55.

### Spontaneity vs. reproduction

Before I explore notions of musical improvisation and spontaneity in rock music live performance, it is first necessary to identify how these characteristics were articulated around the genres of jazz and blues that came to prominence before rock. Jazz and blues had a noted impact on rock and many of the discourses surrounding improvisation and spontaneity in relation to rock music liveness that pervaded by the late 1960s were derived from these forms. Crucially, qualities of musical improvisation and spontaneity in jazz and blues were heavily associated with the artistic integrity and virtuosity of these music's proponents.

As Bruce Johnson has noted, jazz's transition from entertainment to art music in the mid-1940s was affected by the emergence of bop, a genre characterized by its apparently spontaneous attributes.<sup>142</sup> Unlike the predominant commercial swing of the era, the imperative of which was to be danced to, bop was characterized by cerebral complexity and improvisation.<sup>143</sup> The ability of bop players to improvise at the site of live performance led to their increasing valorisation, not as entertainers, but as virtuosos, driven outsiders, geniuses and artists.<sup>144</sup>

In a similar way, blues musicians would "improvise and vary their melodic lines, instrumental parts and lyrics... experiment with sound quality, using growling, screaming, wailing and falsetto singing" and "the muffling, snapping, sliding, and

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<sup>142</sup> Johnson, "Jazz as Cultural Practice," 99.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

bending of notes” to emphasize the impression of a performance’s spontaneity and uniqueness.<sup>145</sup> As David Evans states:

This spontaneous quality created the impression that the thoughts, feelings, and expressions of the moment were quite important, turning attention away from the song as a product of a deliberate and often quite arduous process of composition, toward the performance itself and the personality and uniqueness of the performer.<sup>146</sup>

In jazz, the value of improvisational and spontaneous qualities was such that it impacted the way the recording was regarded within the medium. As Sarah Thornton notes, jazz fans “valued discs as ‘records’ in the strict sense of the word, as transcriptions, accounts, replicas, reproductions of a unique jazz performance.”<sup>147</sup> In the case of jazz, a record was valued for representing spontaneity, moments of improvisation; effectively for catching a moment in time that was not intended to be imitated, other than on the record.

The “uniqueness” of the performance captured on record was frequently emphasized in said record’s packaging. Take Miles Davis’ *Kind of Blue* (1959) for example. In the album’s tracklisting, each track is ascribed a date and time, affirming it as a document of a one-of-a-kind live performance. The liner notes, written by Davis’ pianist Bill Evans also serve to emphasize the record’s “pure spontaneity”:

Miles conceived these settings only hours before the recording dates and arrived with sketches which indicated to the group what was to be played. Therefore, you will hear something close to pure spontaneity in these performances. The

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<sup>145</sup> David Evans, "The Development of Blues," in *The Cambridge Companion to Blues and Gospel Music*, ed. Allan Moore (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 22.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>147</sup> Thornton, *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital*, 67.

group had never played these pieces prior to the recordings and I think without exception the first complete performance of each was a "take."<sup>148</sup>

In blues, the idea of the record as capturing a "unique" performance was also present. Like *Kind of Blue*, the liner notes to posthumous Robert Johnson album *King of the Delta Blues Singers* (1961) feature the date, time and location of the recording sessions for individual tracks.

The flip side of the jazz record being upheld as a unique representation of a spontaneous live performance was that jazz musicians were not expected to replicate what was on record when performing to their audience. Live recordings of "So What" from *Kind of Blue* for example, show the song transformed almost beyond recognition from the recorded version. In the version from Davis' 1964 *Four & More* live LP, for instance, the tempo, phrasing and structure of the song are radically altered.

By contrast, improvisation and spontaneity were qualities seldom expressed at the site of rock music liveness in the early to mid-1960s. In large part, this was due to a different relationship between live performance and recording. In jazz and blues, the record was positioned as a document of a 'unique' performance, emphasizing the artistry of the musicians. This was not the case in rock. As Simon Frith has noted, the music of groups like the Beatles and the Stones was not made with the aspirations towards cerebral complexity of jazz musicians. These bands started off their careers club musicians, whose music was shaped by the immediate demands of dedicated dancers.<sup>149</sup> As such, these acts' sets were not free form or spontaneous, but rehearsed and reproduced.

The national popularity of groups like the Beatles and the Stones came from the dissemination of this music by record. But, unlike in jazz or blues, where the recording was regarded strictly as a document, the recording in rock was the original, the primary

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<sup>148</sup> Miles Davis, *Kind of Blue* (Columbia, 1959).

<sup>149</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

means by which the music was heard on vinyl, radio or television; where performances were often mimed to the recorded version.

When it came to live performance, therefore, the expectation was that audiences wanted to hear what was on record, as it was on record, and to hear whatever records were most popular. Bootleg recordings of live performances from this period that have emerged in subsequent years evidence this. A recording of The Rolling Stones' performance in Honolulu on June 28<sup>th</sup> 1966<sup>150</sup> finds the group performing renditions of tracks such as "Get Off of My Cloud," "Lady Jane," "19<sup>th</sup> Nervous Breakdown" and *Satisfaction*, not reworked to the point of near-unrecognizability as with Davis' "So What," but in the same arrangement as on the band's studio recordings. All of these songs were US top-ten hits for the band in the year before the show.<sup>151</sup>

### "Exploring, stretching and pushing"<sup>152</sup>

While rock performances of the early-1960s were characterised by repetition and reproduction of recorded hits, discourses surrounding live performance by the latter part of the decade were in marked contrast. As in blues and jazz, an increasing emphasis on live improvisation and spontaneity pervaded, as did a valorisation of rock musicians for their improvisational and spontaneous abilities. Given the burgeoning artistic intentions and ostensibly anti-commercial ideology that was increasingly articulated around rock by the middle-1960s, this is unsurprising. However, as I will show, the specific characteristics of rock meant that improvisation and spontaneity did not

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<sup>150</sup> The Rolling Stones, *The Rolling Stones in Action. Honolulu '66*(Italy: Inscet Records, 1991), CD Bootleg.

<sup>151</sup> "The Rolling Stones Chart History,"

<http://www.billboard.com/artist/419005/rolling-stones/chart?f=305>. "Rolling Stones | Artist | Official Chart,"

<http://www.officialcharts.com/artist/28195/rolling%20stones/>.

<sup>152</sup> Greil Marcus, "The Woodstock Festival," *Rolling Stone* 1969.

function as they did in jazz and blues, even if the rhetoric surrounding them suggested they did.

Listening to live recordings of rock performances from post-1967, a number of changes are present compared to recordings from the early-to-mid-1960s. There is a notable lengthening of bands' sets, contrasting the 20-30 minute headlining slots of the earlier part of the decade. Also apparent is a move away from the faithful-to-record reproduction of hits towards greater emphasis on re-arrangement and 'jamming'; passages of extended improvisation and apparently spontaneous playing that would often increase the duration of a number by several minutes.

Contrasting the record-faithful run-throughs heard on the Honolulu 1966 Rolling Stones recording, for example, is the version of "I'm Free" from the band's November 9<sup>th</sup> 1969 concert at the Oakland Coliseum.<sup>153</sup> The 2½-minute up-tempo arrangement of the studio version is transformed into a slow burning, near seven-minute version featuring several sections of extended guitar improvisation. The Stones' transformed version of "I'm Free" was hardly unique. Contemporaneous live recordings of The Who exhibit the band's 10+ minute blues infused version of "My Generation", the aptly titled "My Generation Blues."<sup>154</sup>

Not just demonstrated on stage, these bands themselves often articulated a preference for jamming and improvisation when speaking to the rock press, often in a way that made reference to blues and jazz traditions. In an interview with *Rolling Stone* magazine in 1969, Doors frontman Jim Morrison was asked about his approach to live performance. He responded by stating:

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<sup>153</sup> The Rolling Stones, *Liver Than You'll Ever Be*(Trade Mark Of Quality, 1969), LP Bootleg.

<sup>154</sup> The Who, *Live at the Isle of Wight Festival 1970*(Eagle Rock Entertainment, 1996), CD. *Live at Hull 1970*(Polydor/Universal, 2012), CD.

There are songs I enjoy doing more in person than others. I like singing blues – these free, long trips where there’s no specific beginning or end. It just gets into a groove, and I can just keep making up things. And everybody’s soloing. I like that kind of song rather than just a song. You know, just starting on a blues and just seeing where it takes us.<sup>155</sup>

Parallels can be drawn between Morrison’s rhetoric - “getting into a groove, making things up” and seeing where the song takes the band - and Dave Evans’ comments about the importance of spontaneity and the semblance of “expressions of the moment” in blues music.<sup>156</sup> That he refers to the band’s performance during these moments of spontaneity, as ‘blues’ is further indicative of the influences from the genre.

The increasing pervasiveness of improvisation and spontaneity as indicators of performers’ artistry was also reflected in critics’ responses to rock music live performance. Greil Marcus’ review of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young’s performance at the 1969 Woodstock festival in *Rolling Stone* magazine is exemplar. Marcus contrasts the band’s “perfect, but sterile” recordings with the live performance, which is imperfect, but “anything but sterile.”<sup>157</sup>

Describing a rendition of *Judy Blue Eyes* he notes that the band “stretch it out for a long time, exploring the figures of the song for the crowd” and “flashing grimaces at each other when something went wrong.”<sup>158</sup> An “extraordinary” version of “Mr Soul” features Steven Stills “pushing stinging blues out of his guitar.”<sup>159</sup>

Similarly, Marcus recounts David Crosby “aiming his electric twelve-string out over the edge of the stage, biting off his words and stretching them out” noting that he has “never

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<sup>155</sup> *The Rolling Stone Interviews: 1967-1980*, 55.

<sup>156</sup> Evans, “The Development of Blues,” 22.

<sup>157</sup> Marcus, “The Woodstock Festival,” 18.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*

seen a musician more involved in his music.”<sup>160</sup> Here, rhetoric of “exploring, stretching and pushing” is used to affirm the improvisational and spontaneous qualities of the performance, differentiates what Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young are doing on stage from the reproduction of hits common in earlier rock music and affirming their artistry through their abilities as improvisers.

**“It takes real musicianship to improvise melody”<sup>161</sup>**

As has been shown, a rhetoric emphasizing the jazz-and-blues-like improvisational qualities of the rock live performance was increasingly articulated by the late-1960s. Yet, comparisons between improvisation and spontaneity in these genres were not as straightforward as this rhetoric might suggest. Indeed, there was a pervading uncertainty about the nature of these values in rock music at this time, and how they related to previously established conventions of live performance.

Jazz and blues-like improvisation might have been employed as an affirmation of live rock music’s artistry. But, rock music was not jazz or blues music, and still owed a great deal to the repeated verse/chorus/verse structures of pop. As a result, there were those who struggled to reconcile the genre’s increasing propensity for jamming, questioning whether rock stars’ musicality could match cerebral complexity of their jazz or blues counterparts. Writing on the Grateful Dead’s performance at Monterey Pop, for example, Robert Christgau acknowledged the band’s blues-and-jazz-like aspirations before stating:

The problem is that rock is much easier to play than blues and blues is much easier to play than jazz. Anyone can pick up an electric guitar and sound a few

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Robert Christgau, "Anatomy of a Love Festival," *Esquire* 1968.

chords, but it takes real musicianship, not to mention a special kind of creative talent, to improvise melody.<sup>162</sup>

While doubts were sometimes raised about rock musicians' abilities as improvisational musicians, others questioned whether such virtuosity was a needed component of the rock live performance at all. Speaking to *Rolling Stone* magazine about the new kind of "receptive" rock audience in 1968, Rolling Stones frontman Mick Jagger questioned rock's burgeoning art music aspirations:

People say that audiences are listening now, but to what? Like the Rolling Stones on stage just isn't the Boston Pops Symphony Orchestra. It's a load of noise. On record it can be quite musical but when you get to the stage it's no virtuoso performance. It's a rock and roll act, a very good one, and nothing more.<sup>163</sup>

Going on to highlight his own limited musical ability, Jagger then contested whether rock's value should lie in the musicological ability of its practitioners in the first place:

I can't hardly sing, you know what I mean? I'm no Tom Jones, and I couldn't give a fuck. The whole thing is a performance of a very basic nature: it's exciting and that's what it should be.<sup>164</sup>

Further complicating Jagger's quote is that the Stones themselves would soon embrace improvisation - the signifier of musicians' virtuosity and cerebral complexity - in their live performances as shown in my previous analysis of the 1969 version of "I'm Free."

This seemingly contradictory approach towards improvisation can be partly explained rock's populist origins, and the expectation for rock musicians to connect with their audience in a different way to jazz and blues performers

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<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> *The Rolling Stone Interviews: 1967-1980*, 49.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

As Simon Frith notes, while rock musicians of the late-1960s developed a self-importance that matched jazz performers, “this elevation of rock to art did not seem to distance rock musicians from their audience in the way that it did jazzmen.”<sup>165</sup> While improvisation in jazz was introverted and cerebral practice, rock musicians were expected to share a connection with their audience. This dichotomy between artistic aspiration and audience connection is perhaps what informed the simultaneous embracing and downplaying of signifiers of virtuosity by the Stones.

There is a final complexity to be addressed surrounding the adoption of improvisation and spontaneity in rock music. This pertains to the relationship between live performance and studio recording in rock music. Unlike in jazz and blues, where the record was regarded as a document of a unique performance, inferior to the performance itself, the rock record was given primacy. As I have already noted, it was the studio recording at the forefront of rock’s burgeoning artistic aspirations. The album, became the original,<sup>166</sup> with the live performance performing an important, albeit secondary, authenticating function.<sup>167</sup>

With this in mind, one could argue that live performers of the late-1960s, while embracing improvisational and spontaneous values, were still expected to show a degree of deference to the studio record. To return to Greil Marcus’ comments about Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, his rhetoric of “exploring, stretching and pushing” suggests a limit to the improvisational nature of the rock performance. CSNY’s performance might have expanded upon the music featured on their records, but it did not upend them as with Miles Davis’ transformative, near unrecognizable performance of “So What” from *Four & More*. Indeed, while Marcus notes that the band’s Woodstock performance was not sterile like the studio recording, it was still “imperfect” compared

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<sup>165</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 168.

<sup>166</sup> Theodore Gracyk, *Rhythm and Noise: An Aesthetics of Rock* (London: I.B.Tauris, 1996), 74-75.

<sup>167</sup> Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 73-78.

to the original. Even for the Doors, whose propensity for extended jamming and improvisation was expressed by Jim Morrison, a certain deference to the studio recording remained. While the freeform middle-eight sections heard on various live recordings of tracks like “When The Music’s Over,” “The End” and “The Unknown Solider” recall of Morrison’s “long trips... where everybody’s soloing,” the verse and chorus sections either side of those improvisational sections remain recognizably similar to the studio versions of the songs. It is also worth noting that “Light My Fire” – arguably the band’s signature song – was performed at every show between 1967 and Jim Morrison’s death in 1971, incomplete shows and cancellations notwithstanding.<sup>168</sup>

### **“We do anything we feel like”<sup>169</sup>: Spectacle and Amplification of Personalities**

Visual spectacle and the amplification of personalities were nothing new to rock music live performance. Core components since the popularization of rock and roll in the mid-1950s, they were in part borne out of a necessity for grabbing the audience’s attention during a time period in which live performances were seen, if not always heard. Visual spectacle remained a core component of live rock as the genre evolved into a more self-consciously artistic form, with discourses around it reflecting this change. Far from being a form of crass, attention grabbing behaviour, the actions of the rock performer were articulated as legitimate artistic expressions, extensions of their own personalities. However, a number of critics struggled to reconcile such spectacle with rock’s aspirations towards legitimacy, with ambivalence often pervading.

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<sup>168</sup> “The Doors Setlists,”

<http://www.setlist.fm/search?query=the+doors&artist=bd6adba>.

<sup>169</sup> Steve Baker, “Interview with Jimi Hendrix,” *West One*1967.

### Introversion vs. exaggeration

Before I explore the discourses surrounding visual spectacle at the site of rock music liveness, I feel it necessary to highlight discourses that existed surrounding the visual aspect of live performance in jazz music. This is because articulations of the visual in jazz performance provide a useful counterpoint to articulations in early rock music liveness, and impacted the way that visual spectacle was read by rock music's critics in the latter part of the 1960s.

Discourses around jazz often fetishized the movements occurring at the site of performance; hands gliding across instruments, or faces contorting during sequences of complex improvisation became as much a signifier of the artists' tenacity as the music itself.<sup>170</sup> Of note here is that the visual spectacle of jazz liveness was regarded as a by-product of the musicians' artistry, rather than a conscious 'performance' for the audience. Their hand movements and facial contortions were not, ostensibly, an 'act,' but a necessary exertion in the process of making music.

By contrast, a more overt kind of performance was exhibited at the site of rock music liveness, not a by-product of the creation of music as in jazz, but an overt attempt at vying for the audience's attention that emphasized visual spectacle. Elvis Presley's infamous hip gyrations, Chuck Berry's 'duckwalk,' The Beatles' synchronised headshaking and Mick Jagger's exaggerated strutting and pouting were, unlike the comparatively introverted gestures of the likes of Miles Davis and John Coltrane in that they were clearly performed and explicitly intended to provoke a reaction from the audience.

In part, this style of performance was related to the new medium by which rock music was disseminated: television. Simon Frith states the uniqueness of rock as a genre

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<sup>170</sup> Johnson, "Jazz as Cultural Practice," 99.

whose rise in popularity coincided with the rise of television, and that the medium quickly became a vital platform for promoting the music.<sup>171</sup> Crucially, television was a primarily visual form, rather than audio one. It did not convey audio with the same fidelity as the radio or the gramophone, diminishing the sonic impact of rock.

As a result, television emphasised the visual qualities of the rock music performance, enhancing visual spectacle in the process. Through lighting, editing and camera work, television amplified the visuals of the performance: “the grimaces, grins and hand and shoulder movements of the musicians,” and led to the establishment of visual conventions of the rock performance. And, as bands used the medium to vie for the audience’s attention, their movements became more aggressive and unpredictable.<sup>172</sup>

Certainly, television’s visual emphasis carried over to the classic site of rock music live performance; the concert. Rock concerts of the early-1960s were seldom sold on the prospect of hearing the band, so much as witnessing them in the flesh. Take posters for early Beatles tours, where audiences were promised that they would “*see* [my emphasis] John, Paul & George”<sup>173</sup>... “in person!”<sup>174</sup> Given the often-inadequate amplification used at these concerts, it was indeed likely that the Fab Four would be seen rather than heard.

**“An incredible personal thing.”<sup>175</sup>**

As has already been noted, the mid-late 1960s saw a shifting ideology surrounding rock that emphasized the genre as an art, rather than entertainment form. With that shift, the

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<sup>171</sup> Simon Frith, “Look! Hear! The Uneasy Relationship of Music and Television,” *Popular Music* 21, no. 3 (2002): 277-90.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 285.

<sup>173</sup> “Beatles August 17 Maple Leaf Gardens: See John, Paul, George & Ringo (Concert Poster),” (1965).

<sup>174</sup> “In Person, George, Paul John and Ringo... The Beatles Show, July 4 Rizal Memorial Football Stadium (Concer Poster),” (1964).

<sup>175</sup> *The Rolling Stone Interviews: 1967-1980*, 34.

visual nature of the rock performance shifted as well. But, while one might expect that the artistically inclined rock artist to demonstrate a more restrained and introverted jazz-style display, this shift saw an increasing emphasis, rather than de-emphasis on the spectacular, performative aspects of live rock.

Some visual aspects of the jazz performance found their way into rock performance. Gestures that emphasized musicians' virtuosity and improvisational tenacity were increasingly common in the mid-to-late 1960s. Yet, they were exaggerated in a way that was distinct from jazz. Jimi Hendrix playing his guitar with his teeth or behind his head and The Who's Pete Townshend's windmill chord strike were not just displays of their guitar mastery – they were performances that *emphasized* it and *exaggerated* it. The back-arched, head thrown back, power-stances that guitarists such as Jimmy Page, increasingly adopted during sections of guitar improvisation (replete with an array of grimaces and facial contortions), were less overt exaggerations, but exaggerations nonetheless.<sup>176</sup>

Of course, notions of visual spectacle, of vying for the attention of the audience, had the potential to be construed as the kind of “rock-as-entertainment,” commercially-minded showbiz behaviour that was becoming antithetical to the genre's ideology.<sup>177</sup> However, a new rhetoric was emerging around these displays that distinguished them from the posturing of the preceding era. In keeping with notions of artistic freedom and a youth ideology geared towards “doing your own thing,”<sup>178</sup> the spectacular actions of musicians were articulated, not as a staged, rehearsed performance designed to provoke a reaction, but as spontaneous expressions of the artists' true personality.

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<sup>176</sup> Jerry Prochnicky; Ralph Hulett, *Led Zeppelin: Good Times Bad Times* (New York: Abrams, 2009), 169.

<sup>177</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*

This rhetoric is evidenced in the comments of a number of the era's high profile musicians regarding their onstage performance. Speaking with Rolling Stone in 1968, Mick Jagger, stated that "jumping about" and doing "his sexy thing" on stage was not an act, but as "a projection of [his] ego."<sup>179</sup> Pete Townshend expressed similar sentiments when interviewed by Rolling Stone after a 1968 Who show at the Fillmore. Describing his guitar smashing routine to the magazine as "an incredible personal thing" and saying, "the actual performance has always been bigger than my own patterns of thought," he deflects the idea of a conscious, staged act.<sup>180</sup> Instead, he presents his behaviour as intrinsic and personal. This rationale continues in his explanation as to why he didn't break his guitar on stage at the Fillmore that night:

Tonight, for some reason, I went on and I said "I'm not going to break it" and I didn't. And I don't know how. I don't really know why I didn't. But I didn't.<sup>181</sup>

Similarly when Jimi Hendrix was asked if The Experience would ever consider smashing their instruments on stage in the style of The Who, he responded:

We don't really break anything onstage – only a few strings. Actually, we do anything we feel like. If we wanted to break something up, we would do it.<sup>182</sup>

Hendrix's comment affirms the idea of the performance as a spontaneous form of expression. He continues:

There's a lot of times in the past I have felt like that too. But it isn't just for show, and I can't explain the feeling. It's just like you want to let loose and do exactly what you want if your parents weren't watching.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> *The Rolling Stone Interviews: 1967-1980*, 34.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>182</sup> Baker, "Interview with Jimi Hendrix."

Like Jagger and Townshend, he deflects the notion that the spectacular actions of musicians on stage are commercially motivated (“for show”). Instead, he expresses this behaviour as coming from a deep-seated need for personal expression that defies rationalization.

**“He's just doing what comes naturally.”<sup>184</sup>**

Musicians might have articulated ‘performance’ at the live concert as an expression of their true selves. But critics did not always share the sentiment. Throughout the late 1960s, there was a pervading ambivalence towards the spectacle of the rock music performance by the press. While some writers affirmed artists’ explanations of the performance as “natural” and coming from within, others expressed cynicism, seeing it as complicating rock music’s artistic credentials, particularly in relation to its jazz and blues influences.

In a 1968 review of The Doors in *Rolling Stone* for example, Jerry Hopkins regards Jim Morrison “making it with his microphone” as “the singer doing what comes naturally”<sup>185</sup>:

Many people don't care to see Jim Morrison making it with his microphone in the manner of Mick Jagger nor do they especially want to watch him writhing on the floor. If they don't, then they suggest he is selling out to commercialism, has an old-fashioned concept of rock and roll or something. However, what's actually taking place on stage, and what Morrison is doing, is about 3000-years old fashioned and very contemporary in approach. Music is very sensual and it is

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> Jerry Hopkins, "The Doors on Stage: Assaulting the Libido," *Rolling Stone*, 10 February 1968.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

particularly obvious in rock and roll. Morrison is just not making any bones about it. He's just doing what comes naturally.<sup>186</sup>

However, while examples like The Doors review affirm this idea, it is important to note that other writers were not as taken with the notion. That Hopkins deflects suggestions that Morrison's performance is "selling out to commercialism" is significant, as this was how a number of rock critics responded to such displays of visual spectacle.

In his review of Jimi Hendrix at Monterey Pop for *Esquire*, Robert Christgau was clearly unconvinced by Hendrix's claims that his flamboyant performance "wasn't for show." Describing the guitarist as "a psychedelic Uncle Tom," he suggested that Hendrix's hyper-sexualized performance, in which he "humped the amplifier and jacked the guitar around his midsection" was not an expression of the musician's inner self, but a caricature of black masculinity, tailored to the predominantly white audience's "mythic standards."<sup>187</sup>

The labelling of Hendrix as an "uncle Tom" is significant (as well as deeply problematic) because it puts him in the realms of mainstream American entertainment traditions (the uncle Tom caricature being a staple of representations of blackness in Hollywood cinema of the 1930s and 1940s) rather than 'serious' art music. As Nadya Zimmerman notes, Christgau's discomfort at Hendrix's performance, whether conscious or not, was arguably related to the fact that he was not "dignified" like a veteran blues musician.<sup>188</sup>

The notion of the visual spectacle complicating rock's art music credentials, particularly in relation to its blues heritage, was not unique to Christgau. Writing in *Rolling Stone*, Al Kooper was bemused by the Jeff Beck Group's "uncomfortably and biting over-

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Christgau, "Anatomy of a Love Festival."

<sup>188</sup> Zimmerman, *Counterculture Kaleidoscope: Musical and Cultural Perspective on Late Sixties San Francisco*, 17.

volumed” performance, which featured singer Rod Stewart “doing deep knee-bends holding the mike stand like a dumbbell (original, but so what.)”<sup>189</sup> While his review regarded the band’s *Truth* album favourably for its “fresh approach to the blues,” he stated that seeing the band live was “unnerving and that he “had to leave after three numbers.”<sup>190</sup> Contrasting the performance with the album, he noted “I wonder what is the truth: the record or what I saw that night? This remains to be seen.”<sup>191</sup> Kooper’s review positions the spectacle of the rock performance, both aural (the “biting” loudness) and visual (Rod Stewart’s “deep knee-bends”), as undermining his enjoyment of the Jeff Beck Group’s music.

### Communalism vs. Commercialism: Staging Rock Music Live Performance

It was not just the nature of the rock music live performance that changed in the late-1960s. The way in which the performance was staged also altered markedly. While the predominant early-1960s model for staging live performance - the package tour - operated on principles that predated the anti-commercial, rock-as-art ideology, the later decade saw the emergence modes of staging the live performance that reflected rock’s newfound seriousness and artistic aspirations.

Similar in their appreciation of rock music as art, where these modes fundamentally differed was their attitudes towards the commercial potential of live performance.

While one model operated under anti-business ethics and saw the staging of live rock as a form of not-for-profit community service, the other operated under an explicitly capitalistic principle, and saw facilitating high-quality rock performances as catering to the needs of a new cultural market. While the latter mode increasingly became the

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<sup>189</sup> Al Kooper, "Jeff Beck Truth," *Rolling Stone*, 28 September 1968.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

model by which rock music live performance was staged, tensions still abounded regarding capitalistic intentions at the site of the rock music live performance.

### The package tour

The package tour was the predominant mode by which audiences experienced rock music live performance in the-1950s and the early-1960s. But, by the middle decade, the format was format increasingly dated in light of the changes around rock music and the burgeoning new ideology associated with the genre.

As has been noted, package tours and reproduced hits were amongst the things rock began to definite itself against. Emerging rock artists still featured on package bills in the later-1960s – Jimi Hendrix’s first UK concert appearances were on a package tour bill supporting Englebert Humperdinck<sup>192</sup> – but they were increasingly incongruous with the artistic urges of rock musicians and the genre’s anti-commercial ethics.

Indeed, appearing on these tours by the late-1960s was increasingly damaging to the reputation of any artistically inclined rock acts. As Barry J. Faulk has noted, the Kinks’ 1968 package tour of cinemas in the North of England alongside ageing teen-beat group the Tremeloes did little to advance the art agenda pursued by frontman Ray Davies, nor enhance the ambivalent reception of the group by critics at the time.<sup>193</sup> As was previously stated, Mick Jagger, was dismissive of package tours when talking to *Rolling Stone* magazine in 1968, stating that they no longer appealed to him.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Martin Creasy, "The Walkers, Jimi, Cat and Engelbert Tour," in *Legends on Tour: The Pop Package Tours of the 1960s*(Great Britain: Tempus, 2007).

<sup>193</sup> Barry J. Faulk, "The Kinks Are the Village Green Preservation Society and the Making of the Rock Auteur," in *British Rock Modernism, 1967-1977: The Story of Music Hall in Rock*(London & New York: Routledge), 108.

<sup>194</sup> *The Rolling Stone Interviews: 1967-1980*.

**“Music for music’s sake”<sup>195</sup>**

Contrasting the pop-music-as-youth-entertainment approach of the package tour, the middle-1960s saw the beginnings of new modes of staging rock music that reflected the genre’s new ideology. Informed by the attitudes of its thriving counterculture, the city of San Francisco produced “one of the first functioning rock scenes in the contemporary sense of the term, in which local performers were supported by an infrastructure of radio stations and performance venues.”<sup>196</sup>

Distinctive to the San Francisco scene was the reverence placed on the quality of reproducing live music by concert organizers. Promoters like Bill Graham and Chet Helmes understood the imperatives of a new audience that wanted to “appreciate rock, rather than consume pop.”<sup>197</sup> Unlike package tour shows, San Francisco gigs utilized high-quality, high-wattage P.A systems to amplify sounds, while venues like the Fillmore and the Avalon Ballroom were, unlike cinemas and town halls, tailored for the presentation of live music. Alongside the audio, promoters were also concerned with the quality of the visual, investing in high-quality, dedicated lighting rigs.

San Francisco rock promoters were concerned with fostering “the right environment in which to experience music.”<sup>198</sup> While package tour shows reflected dominant attitudes that the pop music audience as unsophisticated or unconcerned with the quality of sound on offer, San Francisco organizers strove to facilitate an “attentive, tuned-in form of listening” that reflected the changing ideology in rock culture.<sup>199</sup> High-quality productions, these shows acknowledged the desire for rock music – and by extension, live rock music – to be appreciated as artistically significant.

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<sup>195</sup> Joel Selvin, *Summer of Love: The inside Story of Lsd, Rock & Roll, Free Love and High Times in the Wild West*(New York: Plume/Pengiuin, 1995), 53.

<sup>196</sup> Steve Waksman, *This Ain't the Summer of Love: Conflict and Crossover in Heavy Metal and Punk*(Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 2009), 29.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

While united in their intention to facilitate the increasingly attentive rock audience's appreciation of the music, Chet Helmes' and Bill Graham's approaches towards staging of rock music live performances differed in one key area: their commercial intentions. As Steve Waksman has noted, Helmes, along with a number of other promoters and musicians on the San Francisco scene, largely rejected the notion that the rock music live performance should be commercialized. Reflecting the communalistic attitudes of the city's hippie movement, they "[saw] themselves as providing a form of community service, which might also create a source of [self-sustaining] profit."<sup>200</sup> Helmes' free concerts and jam sessions with hippie collective The Family Dog with an attitude of "music-for-music's sake," and gigs at The Avalon, which operated under an ostensibly "anti-business" model are exemplar.<sup>201</sup>

Contrastingly, Bill Graham, who organized shows at San Francisco's Fillmore Auditorium, was an intensely capitalistic individual, differing from the likes of Helms and Family Dog in his "basic recognition that there was a new cultural audience waiting to be tapped."<sup>202</sup> Graham was driven to create "the most hospitable and most-sensory stimulating venue he could imagine" and to deliver "regular, high-quality rock entertainment night after night," not at as a community service, but as a commodity to an expanding market.<sup>203</sup> As rock journalist Mick Wall notes, it was Graham's knowledge of the marketplace, as well as his shrewd business mindedness, that led to the selling of bespoke concert posters and specifically tailored merchandise at his gigs, designed –

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Selvin, *Summer of Love: The inside Story of Lsd, Rock & Roll, Free Love and High Times in the Wild West*, 53.

<sup>202</sup> Waksman, *This Ain't the Summer of Love: Conflict and Crossover in Heavy Metal and Punk*, 29.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

somewhat ironically – to appeal to “the new, anti-materialistic generation of concert-goers.”<sup>204</sup>

### Communalism vs. Commercialism

Both Helmes and Graham were reverent towards the presentation of live rock music in a way that package tour promoters were not. They understood and responded to the urges of a new generation of music fans that wanted to appreciate its artistry. Yet, their motivations for staging live rock music were radically different. While Helmes disregarded live music as a profit-making form, and saw staging it as a form of community service, Graham treated live rock music as a business and saw the staging of quality live music as offering good service to his customers. In these contrasting approaches, a dichotomy was emerging at the site of rock music live performance, with commercial intentions and the youth market on one side and community service, anti-business ethics and music-for-music’s sake on other. As I will now show, the commercialism vs. communalism dichotomy evidenced in these contrasting approaches became central to debates surrounding the staging of rock music throughout the 1960s and was articulated by organizers, musicians and the music press.

Another product of the San Francisco scene, The Monterey International Pop Music Festival of 1967 epitomised the new attitudes, as well as tensions surrounding the presentation of live rock music. The brainchild of Mamas & the Papas producer Lou Adler and guitarist John Phillips, Monterey Pop reflected the San Francisco concerns of creating the right environment in which to appreciate live music. Retrospectively, Adler remembered that his and Phillips’ intentions were to,

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<sup>204</sup> Mick Wall, *When Giants Walked the Earth: A Biography of Led Zeppelin* (London: Orion, 2008), 116.

provide the best of everything - sound equipment, sleeping and eating accommodations, transportation - services that had never been provided for the artist before Monterey.<sup>205</sup>

He also stated that the decision to stage a rock music festival came from a desire to validate rock as art in the same way as jazz and folk music were regarded, a move affirmed by staging Monterey Pop at the site of the long-running Monterey Jazz Festival.<sup>206</sup> The event's sound system, designed by noted sound engineer Abe Jacob ensured that the tens of thousands in attendance could hear the music.<sup>207</sup>

However, when it came to aspects of commercialism, Monterey reflected a number of tensions and contradictions inherent around the San Francisco scene, and rock music more generally at the time. While Adler and Phillips originally intended for the festival to be a commercial venture in a manner evoking the approach of Bill Graham, they were met with opposition from San Francisco bands including the Grateful Dead, who refused to play unless admission was free. Ultimately, the promoters and protesting musicians reached a compromise and all artist fees and ticket sales were donated to local educational and music charities.<sup>208</sup>

The protests of San Francisco bands at Monterey epitomised the anti-commercial strand of thinking in the scene at the time. But, it is also worth noting that Monterey Pop was the site at which many of the major acts of the San Francisco scene began negotiations with record executives over major label deals. That Janis Joplin, the Jefferson Airplane - and the Grateful Dead - were protesting the rock festival as commercial venture while simultaneously pursuing these contracts is indicative of the complex and often

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<sup>205</sup> *The Travis Smiley Show: Interview with Lou Adler*, (PBS, 2007), Radio Programme.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>207</sup> "Monterey International Pop Festival 1967".

<sup>208</sup> Ellen Sander, *Trips: Rock Life in the Sixties*(Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), 93.

contradictory attitudes towards commercialism at the time.<sup>209</sup> In this respect, Monterey also feels significant as a moment in which this new rock music was becoming viable from a business perspective.

Pervading attitudes in the San Francisco scene forced Monterey's organizers to make the festival a not-for-profit event. But its success and attendant media coverage showcased the rock music festival's potential as a viable commercial form. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the American rock festival market boomed in its wake. A Newport Pop Festival was launched in 1968, reflecting Adler's approach of staging a rock concert that aped a well-known jazz event, while the Newport Jazz Festival proper of 1969 featured a number of rock acts including Jeff Beck, Led Zeppelin, Ten Years After and Jethro Tull.

By 1969, many similarly named festivals were staged in cities across America, including Miami Pop, Denver Pop, Seattle Pop and Texas International Pop. In the U.K. also, events such as the Isle of Wight Festival and the Bath Festival of Blues (which, despite its name, almost exclusively featured rock acts) were also emerging. Unlike Monterey, the commercial intentions of which were tempered by pervading anti-commercial attitudes of the San Francisco scene, these subsequent events were designed as profit making ventures in an explicit, capitalistic sense.

Similarly, the Bill Graham/Fillmore method of staging rock music was approximated by other promoters, both in the United States and in the U.K. Venues such as the Whiskey A Go-Go on the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles and The Middle Earth and The UFO in London aped the precedent set, while Graham himself opened a second Fillmore venue (the Fillmore East) in New York in 1968.

But, while the staging of live rock, reverent to the presentation of the music and with commercial intent, was increasingly viable for promoters, the response to the

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<sup>209</sup> Zimmerman, *Counterculture Kaleidoscope: Musical and Cultural Perspective on Late Sixties San Francisco*, 17.

increasingly capitalistic intentions of staging rock music events by critics was mixed.

The reception of the 1969 Woodstock Music & Art Fair in *Rolling Stone* in the three features published in the magazine's post-festival edition highlights the perceived tensions between capitalism and live rock music.

Often remembered as a free event, Woodstock was designed explicitly as a profit-making venture under the banner of Woodstock Ventures, Inc. The biggest rock music festival ever staged at the time, promoters charged \$18 in advance and \$24 at the gate for tickets.<sup>210</sup> Entry to the festival only became free when the venue's fencing was overwhelmed by numbers of attendees; while 200,000 people were expected based on 168,000 pre-sold tickets 500,000 showed up.<sup>211</sup>

Ambivalently received by the magazine, writers were unanimous in their praise of the audience - "the art of the Art and Music Fair" - and of the acts that they saw as embodying community ethics, but cynical towards the intentions of event's promoters.<sup>212</sup> Andrew Kopkind, for example, described organizers Michael Lang, John P. Roberts, Joel Rosenman and Artie Kornfeld as "beatniks out to make it rich," and stated that the festival was an "environment created by a couple of hip entrepreneurs to consolidate the cultural revolution and (in order?) extract the money of its troops."<sup>213</sup>

Jan Hoddenfield added that:

The festival wasn't produced as a spirit-expanding musical experience In the first place. With their heralded under-30 grooviness, the four men who put the

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<sup>210</sup> James E. Perone, *Woodstock: An Encyclopedia of the Music and Art Fair*(Connecticut & London: Greenwood Press, 2005), 23.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Andrew Kopkind, "Untitled," *Rolling Stone*, 20 September 1969, 28.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

fair together contented themselves with being promoters of certified record company stars and token new, and white, talent.<sup>214</sup>

It is significant to note that the rhetoric used by Andrew Kopkind and Jan Hoddenfield to describe the promoters of Woodstock is reflective of the anti-commercial ethos of the San Francisco scene, perhaps unsurprising given the magazine was based in the city at the time. Both writers equated the commercialization of the rock music festival with exploiting the audience, reflecting Chet Helmes' view that staging live rock should be a community service. The capitalistic intentions of the organizers and their overt business mindedness, – “promoters of certified record company stars” and “hip entrepreneurs” – were detrimental to the “spirit-expanding” potential of live rock.<sup>215</sup> Ultimately, both express disappointment at the commercial intentions of the promoters, and suggest that capitalistic drives tempered the quality of rock music presented.

### “The revolution’s here”<sup>216</sup>: rock concerts and politics

The burgeoning artistic seriousness of rock music in the late-1960s coincided with the growth of an anti-establishment culture phenomenon, often referred to as the counterculture. The late 1960s saw the rise of many movements concerned with issues ranging from African-American Civil Rights and the US government’s military intervention into Vietnam to human sexuality, women’s rights, experimentation with psychedelic drugs and the promotion of alternative lifestyles.

Given its ‘serious’ ethics, as well as its proximity to these countercultural movements, it is unsurprising that rock music of the late-1960s often reflected countercultural ideals, while rock music’s youth audience were also adopting values derived from

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<sup>214</sup> Jan Hoddenfield, "It Was Like Bawling for the First Time'," *ibid.*, 26.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>216</sup> Thunderclap Newman, *Something in the Air* (Track/Polydor, 1969), 7" single.

countercultural thinking. Consequently, rhetoric surrounding rock concerts by the decade was increasingly reflective of countercultural attitudes. Unlike the rock concerts of the early decade, which were sites of entertainment in the traditional show-business sense, discourses emerged that affirmed the political significance of rock concerts as articulations of protest or models for alternative living.

However, rock musicians' and their audience's relationship with the counterculture was inherently complicated. While both identified with and reflected the attitudes of countercultural thinking that was pervasive at the time, they were not necessarily a part of these countercultural movements. By extension, how exactly the rock concert could function as a site of countercultural activity was not always clear.

**"For the reality of what's happening today... we must go to rock 'n' roll"<sup>217</sup>**

It is not unreasonable to state that countercultural thinking, pervasive in the 1960s, had a notable impact on rock musicians. As Paul Friedlander states, many of the shifting attitudes around rock in the mid-1960s were in part inspired by acquaintances of these musicians that experimented with alternative cultural lifestyles.<sup>218</sup> By 1966, for example, John Lennon, Paul McCartney and Mick Jagger were regular customers of London counterculture hub The Indica Bookshop,<sup>219</sup> while works by countercultural thinkers such as Timothy Leary had a considerable impact on their music: Lennon wrote The Beatles' "Tomorrow Never Knows" after purchasing Leary's *The Psychedelic Experience* from the store.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Ralph J. Gleason, "Like a Rolling Stone," *The American Scholar*, Autumn 1967, 563.

<sup>218</sup> Friedlander, *Rock and Roll: A Social History*, 86.

<sup>219</sup> Terry Kirby, "Where John Met Yoko: The Gallery That Broke the Mould," *The Independent*, November 21 2006.

<sup>220</sup> Ian MacDonald, *Revolution in the Head: The Beatles' Records and the Sixties* 2nd ed. (London: Pimlico, 2005), 188.

As I have already asserted, the new rock music scene emerging from San Francisco, was heavily associated with the burgeoning countercultural movements in the city. Family Dog Jam Nights, through which the likes of Janis Joplin came to prominence, were based around the hippie commune of the same name.<sup>221</sup> Events like the Acid Tests and the Human Be-In saw rock acts billed alongside countercultural thinkers and speakers. Bands such as the Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead shared stages with Leary, beat poet Alan Ginsberg, civil rights activist Dick Gregory and social activist Abbie Hoffman.<sup>222</sup>

Given the close proximity of musicians to social activists and countercultural thinkers during this time, it is unsurprising that countercultural themes were increasingly articulated in rock music. Themes of revolution, youth rebellion and uprising were central to songs such as Buffalo Springfield's "For What It's Worth" (1967):

Young people speaking their minds  
Getting so much resistance from behind.

Rolling Stones' "Street Fighting Man" (1968):

Hey! Think the time is right for a palace revolution  
But where I live the game to play is compromise solution.

And Thunderclap Newman's "Something in the Air" (1969):

Hand out the arms and ammo  
We're going to blast our way through here  
We've got to get together sooner or later  
Because the revolution's here, and you know it's right.

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<sup>221</sup> Selvin, *Summer of Love: The inside Story of Lsd, Rock & Roll, Free Love and High Times in the Wild West*, 53.

<sup>222</sup> Zimmerman, *Counterculture Kaleidoscope: Musical and Cultural Prespective on Late Sixties San Francisco*, 7.

Rock music's countercultural value was also affirmed by a number of influential critics. Charles Reich's New York Times bestselling paean to the 1960s counterculture, the *Greening Of America* (1969), for example, stated rock was as important to a new way of thinking as hardcore alternative lifers and student protesters.<sup>223</sup> Similarly, Ralph J. Gleason, music critic for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and co-founder of *Rolling Stone*, posited rock's explicitly countercultural political significance in his writing.<sup>224</sup> In one famous piece in 1967 for the *American Scholar* titled *Like a Rolling Stone*, he penned:

"Form and rhythm in music are never changed without producing changes in the most important political forms and ways."

Plato said that.

"There something happenin' here. What it is ain't exactly clear. There's a man with a gun over there, telling me I've got to beware. I think it's time we STOP, children, what's that sound? Everybody look what's going down."

Buffalo Springfield said that.

"For the reality of politics, we must go to the poets, not the politicians."

Norman O Brown said that.

"For the reality of what's happening today in America, we must go to rock 'n' roll, to popular music."

I said that.<sup>225</sup>

The influence of countercultural thinking had on many bands also lead to the presence of countercultural themes in their live performances. During renditions of "Unknown Soldier," for example (a protest song against the Vietnam war), Doors guitarist Robbie

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<sup>223</sup> Charles A. Reich, *The Greening of America*(New York: Random House, 1969).

<sup>224</sup> John M. Orman, *The Politics of Rock Music*(Nelson-Hall, 1984), 35.

<sup>225</sup> Gleason, "Like a Rolling Stone," 563.

Krieger would mimic gunning down a blindfolded Jim Morrison with his guitar at the song's climax – a pantomime of an execution that reflected the song's themes of the waste of young lives and implicitly aligned the group with the number of anti-war movements in effect by the decade's end.<sup>226</sup> Similarly, Country Joe and the Fish frontman Country Joe McDonald would lead audiences in what was called the "fuck cheer" during live versions of "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-To-Die Rag" (like "Unknown Solider," an anti Vietnam number):

Gimme an F! Gimme a U! Gimme a C! Gimme a K! What's that spell? FUCK!

As James E. Perone notes, the song was read as a "rebellious counterculture political act demonstrating free speech rights in the mid-1960s."<sup>227</sup> Dave Saunders also asserts that Jimi Hendrix simulating sex with his amp during "Wild Thing" at Monterey was reflective of pervading countercultural values of free love and open sexuality.<sup>228</sup>

Not just reflected in the performance, countercultural discourses were also present surrounding the audience. In part, this was established in the rhetoric used to promote events on the San Francisco scene like acid tests (organized by countercultural novelist Ken Kesey) and the Human Be-In, which emphasized the audience as participants in a significant cultural event, rather than mere spectators. As Nadya Zimmerman notes, through the name of the Human Be-In,<sup>229</sup> the organizers were implicitly asking attendees "to be *in*, to be present in the moment, to be involved, to be individual now."<sup>230</sup> Similarly, posters and flyers for Kesey's acid test parties questioned: "can you pass the acid test?," suggesting that the experience of attending was not passive, but active,

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<sup>226</sup> Stephen Davis, *Jim Morrison: Life, Death, Legend* (London: Random House, 2004), 256.

<sup>227</sup> James E. Perone, *Songs of the Vietnam Conflict* (Greenwood Press, 2001), 40.

<sup>228</sup> Dave Saunders, *Direct Cinema: Observational Documentary and the Politics of the Sixties* (London & New York: Wallflower, 2007), 93-94.

<sup>229</sup> Itself a playful take on the sit-ins, love-ins and other events that had become synonymous with the student protest movement of the early-1960s

<sup>230</sup> Zimmerman, *Counterculture Kaleidoscope: Musical and Cultural Perspective on Late Sixties San Francisco*, 7.

participatory and potentially challenging for the audience, as well as establishing experimentation with psychedelic drugs as a key component of the event.<sup>231</sup>

### **“An artistic spin on the movement”<sup>232</sup>: complicating rock’s countercultural credentials**

While a link between rock, its audience and the various countercultural movements of the late-1960s was established, both through the music and the media, the extent to which the rock musicians and their fans embodied countercultural values is debatable. Firstly, one must acknowledge the wide-ranging use of the term ‘counterculture’ by the end of the decade. As Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle note, by the time it was popularised in Theodore Roszak’s 1968 book *The Making of a Counter Culture*,<sup>233</sup> it was already “well on its way to becoming a term referring to all 1960s-era political, social or cultural dissent, encompassing any action from smoking pot at a rock concert to offing a cop.”<sup>234</sup> Similarly, John Robert Greene is skeptical of the use of the term in regard to rock music. Asserting that the hardcore hippie movement, whose members dropped out of mainstream society by moving into self-sustaining communes, “was the true counterculture,” Greene notes that popular music, movies and fashion, *reflected* [my emphasis] the counterculture by placing their “own artistic spin on the movement.”<sup>235</sup>

This notion of rock music reflecting countercultural values but not necessarily being a part of the counterculture is a crucial distinction. The Rolling Stones wore long hair and

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<sup>231</sup> Edward Helmore, "How Ken Kesey's Lsd-Fuelled Bus Trip Created the Psychedelic 60s," *The Observer*, 6 August 2011.

<sup>232</sup> John Robert Greene, ""What It Is Ain't Exactly Clear" Sixties, Culture, Straight and Counter," in *America in the Sixties* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2010), 139.

<sup>233</sup> Theodor J Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and Its Youthful Opposition* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1968).

<sup>234</sup> Doyle, "Historicizing the American Counterculture of the 1960s," 5.

<sup>235</sup> Greene, ""What It Is Ain't Exactly Clear" Sixties, Culture, Straight and Counter," 139.

clothing symbolic of the hippie lifestyle and expressed solidarity for rioting Parisian students and radicals in "Street Fighting Man." But, Mick Jagger and Keith Richards did not live in a self-sustaining commune, and did not march with Abbie Hoffman at the Democratic National Convention in 1968. Nor, by extension, did much of the rock audience.

### **"That's the relationship between music and politics"<sup>236</sup>: Critics' responses to Woodstock**

Significantly, debates about the political significance of the rock concert were articulated in *Rolling Stone*, specifically in the magazine's coverage of the 1969 Woodstock Festival. Woodstock is popularly remembered as "one of the defining moments of the 1960s counterculture movement."<sup>237</sup> But, the magazine's writers were not in agreement on its countercultural relevance. Across the three accounts of the festival that ran in the special Woodstock edition of the magazine, two distinct viewpoints emerged. While writers Andrew Kopkind and Jan Hoddenfield saw the festival as a model for alternative living, and accrued the event a comparable significance to recent political demonstrations, Greil Marcus downplayed Woodstock's countercultural significance, regarding the concert as apolitical, escapist entertainment.

For Hoddenfield and Kopkind, the en masse gathering of fans at Woodstock was seen as an explicit act of opposition against hegemonic society. Hoddenfield described the crowd as "...an army of peaceful guerrillas," a designation that has obvious political connotations.<sup>238</sup> He went on to note that the crowd "showed itself imminently ready to turn back on the already ravaged cities and their inoperable "life styles" imminently prepared to move onto the mist-covered fields and into the cool, still woods," in a way

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<sup>236</sup> Hoddenfield, "'It Was Like Bawling for the First Time'," 24.

<sup>237</sup> David McCormack, "Woodstock Unseen," *The Daily Mail*, 23 June 2014.

<sup>238</sup> Hoddenfield, "'It Was Like Bawling for the First Time'," 1.

that drew parallels between the Woodstock audience and the back-to-the-land ethics and communal living of the hardcore hippie movement.<sup>239</sup>

Kopkind similarly articulated the idea of the Woodstock crowd embodying values – defined by behaviors such as naked swimming and promiscuous sex – the were distinct from the repressed mainstream and presented an alternative to hegemonic society:

No one in this country in this century had ever seen a ‘society’ so free of repression. Everyone swam nude in the lake, balling was easier than getting breakfast, and the “pigs” just smiled and passed out the oats.<sup>240</sup>

He used rhetoric that, similarly to Hoddenfield’s “guerilla” designation, suggested the audience’s behavior as active, militant and of countercultural significance. Comparing the “intense communitarian closeness” of the Woodstock crowd to that of “a militant struggle - People’s Park or Paris in the month of May or Cuba,” he asserted that, “for people who have never glimpsed [those events], Woodstock must always be their model of how good we will feel after the revolution.”<sup>241</sup>

The comparison of Woodstock with contemporaneous periods of civil unrest, in which capitalism, consumerism and traditional institutions, values and order were called into question, is used to evoke the behaviour of the crowd as revolutionary and as an explicit articulation against predominant societal values.

Greil Marcus, on the other hand, was not as willing to equate their behaviour with oppositional protest. Indeed, he read the drug use and promiscuity of the audience in a very different light:

At the festival thousands were able to do things that would ordinarily be considered rebellious, in terms of whatever current nonsensical sociological

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Andrew Kopkind, "Untitled," *ibid.*, 28.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*

theory one might want to embrace. Selling and using all kinds of dope, balling here, there and everywhere, swimming, canoeing or running around naked, and, believe it or not, staying up all night - one could do all of those things simply because they were fun to do, not because such acts represented scoring points against parents or Richard Nixon or Readers' Digest.<sup>242</sup>

He also expressed doubt over assertions about the notion of musicians as spokespersons of countercultural politics, ascribing a different value to their appeal to the audience:

Janis Joplin and Creedence Clearwater were more important than most would have guessed not because they could carry some arcane political message but because when people hear them they get excited and ecstatic and feel more alive.<sup>243</sup>

Unlike Hoddenfield and Kopkind, who politicize the behavior of the audience through references to the Paris Riots or the 1969 People's Park Demonstrations in Berkley, Marcus regards the site of the rock concert as apolitical: escapist rather than a model for alternative living. He downplays the political significance of musicians like Janis Joplin and equates their appeal with connecting to the audience on a more fundamental level. This is also affirmed through his statement that:

The kind of life one could live for a few days up in the Catskills is more attractive to huge numbers of kids and retreating adults than any other mode of existence.<sup>244</sup>

Referring to Woodstock as "the kind of life one could live *for a few days*," he implicitly rejects the notion of the festival as a model for alternative living as posited by

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<sup>242</sup> Greil Marcus, "The Woodstock Festival," *ibid.*, 18.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*

Hoddenfield and Kopkind. The use of the word “retreat” also contrasts the *audience as active militia* rhetoric of the other articles, while simultaneously connoting vacationing – a weekend retreat – in a manner that again affirms the concert as escapist.

Even in Hoddenfield’s piece, in which the idea of the rock concert as countercultural site is strongly articulated, there is acknowledgement of the complexities of this discourse. Writing about the Who’s performance, he recounts an incident in which Abbie Hoffman invaded the stage to announce that Woodstock was “meaningless as long as White Panther Party leader and MC-5 manager John Sinclair was rotting in prison.” He continues:

[Who guitarist] Peter Townshend then clubbed Hoffman off the stage with his guitar. That’s the relationship between music and politics. When a movie cameraman moved in on [Who singer] Roger Daltry [sic], Townshend then kicked the man square in the ass off the stage. There were no protests either time.<sup>245</sup>

Townshend’s apparent antagonism at Hoffman’s presence, as well as the line “that’s the relationship between music and politics” seems to acknowledge a tension between the two forms, contrasting the likes of Reich and Gleason who affirmed that rock was as politically significant as alternative lifestyle movements and anti-war protests. His acknowledgement that the audience didn’t protest also complicates their representation as a politically active part of the counterculture.

## Conclusion

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<sup>245</sup> Jan Hoddenfield, “It Was Like Bawling for the First Time,” *ibid.*, 20 September, 24.

The rearticulating of rock music live performance that occurred in the mid-late 1960s was informed by myriad influences. Aspirations towards artistry, expressed in the form of improvisation and spontaneity, came from the residual cultural forms of jazz and blues. Visual spectacle and the amplification of personalities came from the dominant culture of pop, but were imbued with new meaning by an emergent “do your own thing” ideology that came from countercultural thinking. The emergent countercultural thinking also informed expectations of performers and audiences, as well as the nature of staging of rock concerts, though the latter was tempered by dominant capitalistic attitudes.

Given the myriad influences on live performance during the era, it is unsurprising that an uncertainty pervaded as to how exactly the live rock performance was supposed to function. Rock music, and by extension live performance, drew on a number of influences – jazz, blues, pop, rock ‘n’ roll, countercultural thinking, folk culture, art – but it was also distinct from these forms. As a result, these emergent values were the subject of much debate, with their nuances remaining unclear. Critics, as well as artists themselves, often struggled to understand the emerging characteristics of live rock in relation to their influences.

Aspirations of artistry, of seriousness, of anti-commercialism and of countercultural significance were apparent in and around live performance. Certainly, these were the standards to which a number of critics held the form. But, at the same time, live rock was a form of entertainment and a form of escapism, as well as a burgeoning cultural market. The question remained as to how it could reconcile these seemingly oppositional characteristics.

By the late-1960s, there was not only a boom in the industry of staging live rock music performance, but also a proliferation in media representations of said live performances; live albums, concert movies and television programmes depicting live

performances followed in abundance. For producers of these media, the complex and often contradictory values surrounding live rock music were a minefield to be navigated, with the added complexity that many of these media were products intended for mass consumption.

Having identified the myriad complex values that were articulated around the live performance by the late-1960s, this thesis will now go on to explore how producers of live albums, concert movies and television programmes depicting live performance were able to negotiate these complexities and create media representations of liveness that appealed to both fans and critics. As subsequent chapters will show, it was the negotiation of these complexities that led to the establishment of a series of conventions of representing rock music liveness in the media and that these conventions, in turn, resolved a number of the debates surrounding the rock music live performance.

## Chapter 2

### “Crackling Noises O.K. Do Not Correct!”<sup>246</sup>:

#### Towards conventions of representation on the live rock album

By the late 1960s, notions of liveness in rock music had undergone significant transformation. While the early part of the decade saw the live concert regarded as a low standing, and purely commercial concern, emergent discourses saw it reconfigured as the ultimate expression of a musician’s artistry. The manner of staging concerts, the behavior of the audience and its socio-cultural implications also shifted during this time, creating a new version that was distinct from the earlier, previously dominant model.

Given the growing importance of liveness in rock music, it is unsurprising that the latter part of the decade also saw the emergence of the live rock album. Between 1968 and 1970, live albums were released by many of the era’s most popular bands, including The Rolling Stones, The Who, Jimi Hendrix, Cream, Pink Floyd, Jimi Hendrix, The Doors and Grand Funk Railroad. By the early 1970s, the live album was a form whose popularity with audiences was cemented, with records by noted acts routinely selling into the millions by the mid-decade.

Yet, the process of the live album’s ascent in popularity was by no means straightforward, as establishing the means of representing rock liveness on record was a process of complex negotiation. The live recording, as a medium, was not positioned to deliver many of the qualities of classic liveness that characterized the live concert: the temporal and spatial simultaneity of audience and performer, the experience in the moment.<sup>247</sup> Other than in the form of photography on covers and inner sleeves, it could not reproduce elements of visual spectacle.

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<sup>246</sup> The Who, *Live at Leeds*(Track/Polydor, 1970), LP.

<sup>247</sup> Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 61.

Reproducing liveness on record was by no means impossible. Live recordings were commonplace in genres such as jazz, opera and classical at the time, and had been for many years prior. But, while there were some commonalities between values of liveness in these forms, there were also distinctions. As has already been shown, there were an inherently complex series of ideological imperatives surrounding rock music liveness by the late 1960s, and the rock live album would need to successfully negotiate these in order to present a form of liveness that was palpable to the new rock audience.

Another of the issues faced for producers of live rock albums was restoring the reputation of the live album in rock, low standing at the time because the nature of the earliest live rock recordings. These records, produced during the era in which classic liveness was a purely commercial concern, were conceived as a stop-gap product, often of low quality, and disowned by the bands associated with them. To successfully represent liveness in a manner that appealed to the new values of rock then, producers would need to make records that were also distinctive from the albums that had come before them.

This chapter will show how a series of conventions of representing rock music liveness on record were established by the early 1970s. In its first section, it presents and analysis of Cream's *Wheels of Fire* and Pink Floyd's *Ummagumma* and demonstrates how these albums were constructed, both to emphasize the musical signifiers of rock liveness that could be conveyed on record, and to differentiate these albums from the earliest, poorly regarded live rock albums that had been released in the years prior. As is shown, critical reception of *Wheels of Fire* highlights that this was a significant moment in the development of the live rock album, identifying it as the first time liveness in rock had been effectively represented on record.

The second section of this chapter presents an analysis of The Rolling Stones' *LIVEr Than You'll Ever Be*: the first 'bootleg' recording of live rock. It illustrates how *LIVEr Than You'll Ever Be*'s modes of representation were distinct in a number of respects from *Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma*. These distinctive modes - the presence of extra-musical sounds such as crowd noise and performers addressing the audience, as well as the semblance of listening to an uncut recording of a live concert - were critically praised; regarded as offering a superior experience of liveness to earlier recordings. The record was also an unprecedented commercial success, prompting the legitimate record industry to respond in a number of ways.

The final section shows how the albums released by the legitimate record industry in the year following *LIVEr*'s release adopted many of the modes of representing liveness on the bootleg album. As is noted, a number of representational modes are common across records of this period, indicating that a series of conventions of representing rock liveness on record were emerging. However, records diverged in a key respect, with some adhering to the bootleg's presentation of an 'unadulterated' record of liveness, and others using post-production techniques such as overdubbing to create an idealised, concert experience. Critical responses to the Rolling Stones' *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out* - one of the highest profile live album releases of this period - show that responses to presenting the "ultimate concert" were mixed.

## Methodology

This chapter presents a textual analysis of a number of live albums from the late-1960s to early-1970s period. I have outlined my reasons for using textual analysis in the introduction of this thesis, so will not repeat these details here. Primarily, four texts are referred to in this chapter. Cream's *Wheels of Fire* (1968) and Pink Floyd's *Ummagumma*

in the first section, The Rolling Stones' *LIVEr Than You'll Ever Be* in the second section, and The Rolling Stones' *Get Your Ya-Ya's Out* in the final section.

These records were selected because they were highly significant in the development of the conventions of representing rock music liveness on record, the ways in which will be qualified at the beginning of each section. As well as these four records, I make peripheral reference to a number of other live albums released during this time period. The textual analysis offered in this chapter is also supported by a number of contextual sources. Critical reception of these albums that appeared in *Rolling Stone* magazine is frequently referenced. Again, as with the use of textual analysis, I have outlined the usefulness of *Rolling Stone* as a point of reference in the thesis introduction. Significant to this chapter, *Rolling Stone* featured a number of reviews of live albums during this period that, as will be shown, had significant influence on the production of live albums.

Reference will also be made of Clinton Heylin's book, *Bootleg! The Rise & Fall of the Secret Recording Industry*,<sup>248</sup> the early chapters of which offer a history of the late-1960s bootlegging scene. Given bootlegging's dubious legality, original sources relating to the practice are often hard to find, and Heylin's book (which features interviews with many of the key figures in early bootlegging) provides useful insight when referring to this area. While Heylin's book is non-academic, and his accounts of events are sometimes hyperbolic, his research is considerable, and it is this I have drawn upon here.

For production insights into these texts, I refer to several biographies of rock acts that chart the making of these albums. These sources were chosen based on their noted reputability, and cross-referenced with other sources to affirm the veracity of their claims. Further understanding of production was attained from a number of fan sites, whose analysis of these records determines from which shows individual material was

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<sup>248</sup> Clinton Heylin, *Bootleg! The Rise & Fall of the Secret Recording Industry* (London: Omnibus Press, 2003).

attained and where techniques such as overdubbing were utilized. The meticulous level of detail offered in these articles, as well as the comprehensive citation of sources used in the research, give me no doubt to the veracity of these fan sites' claims, which is why I include them here.

**“[It] at least proves that you can do an excellent live recording of a rock and roll group”<sup>249</sup>: Early live albums**

Released in 1968 and 1969, Cream's *Wheels of Fire* and Pink Floyd's *Ummagumma* represent significant developments in the live rock album. Uncommon in rock music in the years prior to the late 1960s, live albums, when released, were regarded as a secondary, stop-gap product by both artists and record companies. Evident in *Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma* is an attempt to restore the status of the live recording in rock, reflective of the growing importance of live concerts in the genre at the time. In order to do this, these albums needed to appear distinct from the earlier examples of live rock recordings, which had been produced in a manner that was, by the turn of the decade, antithetical to the ideology of rock. As this chapter will show, they attempted this in two ways. Firstly, the aural content of these records was chosen to emphasize emerging values of rock liveness: improvisation, artistry and virtuosity. Secondly, the manner in which these records were packaged affirmed that they were of primary artistic significance, rather than a secondary and purely commercial concern. As indicated by *Rolling Stone's* critical response to *Wheels of Fire*, these records signified a turning point for the live rock album, and they were regarded as the first time that live rock music had been represented effectively on record.

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<sup>249</sup> Jann Wenner, "Cream: Wheels of Fire," *Rolling Stone*, 20 July 1968.

*Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma* share a number of characteristics in regard to the audio content presented on them. Both records feature four tracks, two on each side. All tracks are heavy on improvisation, elongated from the versions that appeared on these bands' studio records through extended instrumental sections. Contrasting the six-minute version of Willie Dixon's "Spoonful" that appeared on Cream's *Fresh Cream* (1966) for example, the version of that appears on *Wheels of Fire*, is extended to seventeen minutes. While the studio version of the track featured a standard blues-rock arrangement, the version from the live album features a greater emphasis on loud-quiet dynamic interplay, and several extended sections of improvisation and soloing that emphasize the virtuosity of Jack Bruce, Eric Clapton and Ginger Baker. Similarly, the near 9-minute "Astronomy Domine" that opens the live disc of *Ummagumma* is more than double the length of the studio version from *Piper at the Gates of Dawn* (1967) through the addition of extended instrumental sections.

The inclusion of these songs is reflective of the burgeoning tendencies towards improvisation and spontaneity at the live concert (as identified in Chapter 1): values that were increasingly becoming markers of rock musicians' artistic prowess and virtuosity. Yet, it is important to note that the material appearing on these albums is not entirely representative of the ratio of heavily improvisational material in these bands' live sets at the time. Cream's 1968 setlists for example, featured numbers such as *Spoonful* and the extended version of *Toad* that also appears on *Wheels of Fire*, alongside renditions of tracks including "Sunshine of Your Love," "I Feel Free" and "Tales of Brave Ulysses" that, while still featuring instances of improvisation, were much closer in arrangement and duration to the studio versions.<sup>250</sup>

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<sup>250</sup> This can be heard on myriad unauthorized records of Cream from the era, which have been released in recent years as bootlegs. I will cite these recordings individually later in this section.

That songs that are heavily extended and improvisational in their nature are given preference on these albums is significant, as shows producers addressing one of the core challenges faced in presenting liveness via a recorded format. As Philip Auslander has noted, the listener experiences the live concert differently to liveness on a record. While the original concert is characterized by the “physical co-presence of performers and audience; the temporal simultaneity of production and reception [and] experience in the moment” (characteristics described by Auslander as ‘classic liveness’), in live recordings there exists a “temporal gap between production and reception,” as well as the “possibility of infinite repetition.”<sup>251</sup> The Live concert was experienced as a once in a lifetime event. The listener of a live LP experienced a representation of liveness that was endlessly repeatable, and mediated through the same hi-fi system that they used to listen to studio albums.

The direct comparison the live album facilitated between studio and live versions of the same song was an issue that earlier live albums faced. As has already been noted, while notions of musical improvisation and spontaneity became important to rock music in the late-1960s, acts were expected, in the early-to-middle part of the decade, to reproduce their hits as faithfully to the versions on their studio recordings as possible. This was also a period in which live concerts were seldom sold on, or emphatic of, their aural qualities. Tour posters from the era affirm this by routinely placing emphasis on “seeing” (rather than hearing) groups “in person.”<sup>252</sup> During this time, it was also the case that bands could seldom be heard, with the inadequate amplification provided making them barely audible over the sound of screaming audiences.<sup>253</sup>

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<sup>251</sup> Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 61.

<sup>252</sup> See the Visual Spectacle section in Chapter 1 for a complete analysis of these posters.

<sup>253</sup> Again, this is mentioned and cited in Chapter 1.

Live albums could not reproduce the visual, or experiential qualities that classic liveness was sold upon. With those qualities absent, what was left was musical content notably similar to that which had already appeared on a band's studio albums, now experienced in the same manner as those studio recordings. At best, this meant that the versions of songs that appeared on these live albums would be largely indistinguishable from the studio recordings, albeit with the added sound of audience noise. At worst, and what occurred in actuality, was that the versions of songs that appeared on these records were discernibly inferior to the studio versions. As has already been established, the inadequate amplification provided at rock shows of the early-mid 1960s often meant that audiences could barely hear what musicians were performing. It also meant that musicians could barely hear themselves, and their performances were negatively affected as a result. The Rolling Stones' *Got Live If You Want It* (1966) and *The Live Kinks* (1967) – two of the earliest examples of live rock albums – were criticized in the music press of the time for the “sloppy” renditions of tracks that they contained and for the inferiority of these tracks when compared to the studio versions.<sup>254</sup>

Through the exclusive inclusion of improvisation-heavy, extended performances, therefore, *Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma's* producers' intentions can be viewed threefold. Firstly, they sought to affirm these recordings' liveness by presenting qualities that were discernibly live though an audio-only recorded medium. Secondly, they sought to emphasize improvisation and spontaneity: the burgeoning aural qualities of that rock music liveness that were associated with musicians' artistry. Finally, the de-emphasis of any studio-similar live renditions distanced these albums from earlier live recordings, whose presentation of live versions that were inferior to studio recordings had contributed to the low standing reputation of the live album in rock.

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<sup>254</sup> Murry R. Nelson, *The Rolling Stones: A Musical Biography* (Santa Barbara, California: Greenwood, 2010), 47; Doug Hinman, *The Kinks: All Day and All of the Night* (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2004), 110.

Distinctive from earlier live albums in their presentation of musical elements, the manner in which non-musical aural elements featured on *Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma* is also notable. Significantly, compared to both *Got Live If You Want It* and *The Live Kinks*, there is a distinct lack of audience noise. On The Rolling Stones and Kinks records, the sound of the crowd is a constant presence, highly audible in the mix, heard between and during songs. On the Cream and Pink Floyd records, however, these sounds are barely present. Songs do not begin with applause, crowd noise cannot be heard during the quiet sections of songs, and the audience is only audible through a brief swell of applause at the end of each song, which quickly fades out.

In part, the relative silence of the audience on these albums compared to earlier albums can be seen as reflective of the changing attitude of the audience at the site of classic liveness. While earlier shows were often characterized by the kind of screaming audiences as captured on *Got Live If You Want It* and *The Live Kinks*, the burgeoning audience for the new kind of rock music that emerged in the late 1960s was more invested in the idea of appreciating music rather than consuming pop.<sup>255</sup> As Steve Waksman notes, it was during this era that concertgoers assumed a “more attentive, tuned-in form of listening” at the site of live concert, rather than the unrelenting hysteria of earlier package tour shows.<sup>256</sup>

However, it is important to note that largely absent audience noise on these recordings does not seem entirely faithful to the original concerts, suggesting that it has been deliberately edited out. Comparing the myriad recordings of Cream’s 1968 concerts that have surfaced since the release of *Wheels of Fire*, the audience is generally much more

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<sup>255</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

<sup>256</sup> Waksman, *This Ain't the Summer of Love: Conflict and Crossover in Heavy Metal and Punk*, 30.

vocal before, during and after songs.<sup>257</sup> Indeed, on an unedited recording of the 1968 Winterland show from which much of the material on *Wheels of Fire* was taken, there are discernible cheers and audience noises during songs that were excised from the official live album.<sup>258</sup>

While the apparent removal of audience noise from *Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma* seems strange in relation to these albums' attempts at representing liveness to the listener, it is understandable in relation to the criticism of earlier albums on which audience noise was overwhelmingly loud throughout. As has already been noted, both *Got Live If You Want It* and *The Live Kinks* feature constant audience sounds, which are often so loud that they drown out the sound of the music. On *Got Live If You Want It*, the crowd noise is higher in the mix than guitars, bass and drums, with only Mick Jagger's vocals cutting above the volume.<sup>259</sup> In the case of *The Live Kinks*, additional audience sounds were added to the live recording. This is evidenced by a distinctive whoop that is heard at regular intervals throughout the album, due to the clip being played on a loop.<sup>260</sup>

It is not known whether the loud and notable presence of these audience sounds was meant to in some way enhance these records' semblance of liveness, or an attempt to mask the notably low fidelity to which the music was recorded. Whatever the motivation, it was not well received by critics. In their negative review of *The Live Kinks*, the NME noted that they did not like the constant "backing of whistles and screams" and that they often could not hear the music above the audience noise.<sup>261</sup> Given the negative reaction to the overwhelming audience noise of previous albums, and its undermining of

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<sup>257</sup> Cream, *Live at the Grand Ballroom, Detroit, 10/15/1967*(Germany: The Swingin' Pig, 2010), CD Bootleg; *Silver Horses Running Moonbeams in Your Dark Eyes: Oakland, Ca, 10/04/1968*(Dandelion, 1999), CD Bootleg.

<sup>258</sup> *Wonder Winterland, San Francisco, Ca, 03/10/1968*(Japan: Hiwatt, 2000), CD Bootleg.

<sup>259</sup>Jann Richardsson, "Have You Seen Your Mother Live!,"

[http://www.stonesondecca.com/4A07\\_SKL4838\\_Have\\_You\\_Seen.html](http://www.stonesondecca.com/4A07_SKL4838_Have_You_Seen.html).

<sup>260</sup> Hinman, *The Kinks: All Day and All of the Night*, 110.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*

the ability to appreciate the music, the removal of audience on *Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma* can be read as a reaction to these earlier records.

*Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma* were distinctive from the live albums that had come before them in a number of aural respects. But also significant, and different from other records, was their packaging. Unlike earlier albums, *Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma* were double disc sets, featuring one disc of live material and one disc of studio material. As with many of the other production decisions on these albums, this can be understood as an attempt to restore the reputation of the live album from a poor quality, stopgap product.

This was a reputation that was particularly enforced by the release of The Rolling Stones' *Got Live If You Want It* in 1966. It is notable that *Got Live...* came to be not because the Rolling Stones wanted to release a live album but because London Records wanted a Stones product on the market in time for Christmas.<sup>262</sup> When it became apparent that the band's latest studio album, *Between the Buttons*, would not be ready by December, and with a Greatest Hits compilation – a typical music industry stopgap product - having already been released that year,<sup>263</sup> <sup>264</sup> London elected for a live record instead. The Stones themselves, not involved in the production of the album, were unhappy with the quality of the subsequent release.<sup>265</sup> While the record was a hit

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<sup>262</sup> Richie Unterberger and Bruce Ed, "All Music Guide: Rolling Stones, Got Live If You Want It," <http://www.allmusic.com/album/got-live-if-you-want-it-r16790/review>.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Notably, *Got Live...* was a US only release. This was because the *Big Hits...* compilation, which had been released in the US in March 1966, remained unreleased in the UK by the year's end. The band's UK label, Decca, released *Big Hits...* as their December market product. The album was briefly made available in the UK on import however, as *Have You Seen Your Mother... Live*.

<sup>265</sup> Though the band is credited as producers on the record sleeve, it is widely believed that Stones manager Andrew Loog Oldham was responsible for compiling the record while they completed sessions for *Between the Buttons*.

commercially, going gold in the US,<sup>266</sup> the band was vocal in their disapproval of it, publicly disowning the record when talking about it to the music press.<sup>267</sup>

The notion of an album as a stopgap was redolent of dominant industry attitudes, of rock music as a mass entertainment product rather than an artistic form. As has already been noted, these were the kind of practices against which musicians increasingly defined themselves, further evidenced by the Stones' open disapproval of the album. The release of *Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma* as live/studio double albums can be seen as a reaction to this, and an attempt to restore the reputation of the live album as a significant expression of a group's artistry. This manner of presentation affirmed that the live album was not a secondary product but something as artistically important to these bands as the studio record, ostensibly the ultimate site of creativity and artistic freedom for rock musicians at the time.

Notably, the manner in which these records are packaged does not treat the live albums as peripheral. They are not referred to as "bonus discs" or "free gifts." Instead, the presentation connotes that they are to be afforded the same attention by the listener as the studio discs. *Ummagumma* for example, is sequenced with the live album on sides one and two, suggesting that it is to be listened to before the studio disc. Including these live albums alongside studio recordings was also an affirmation that Cream and Pink Floyd, unlike the Stones, had sanctioned their release, further confirming their legitimacy.

*Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma*'s attempts at representing liveness in a manner distinctive from earlier live albums did not go unnoticed by critics. In his 1968 review of the Cream record, Rolling Stone editor Jann Wenner was overall favourable towards the live segment. Contrasting the earlier negative reception of *Got Live If You Want It* and

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<sup>266</sup> Nelson, *The Rolling Stones: A Musical Biography*, 47.

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid.*

*The Live Kinks*, Wenner's piece affirmed the record's success in presenting liveness to the listener in three significant ways. Firstly, Wenner asserted that the *Wheels of Fire* "at least proves that you can do an excellent live recording of a rock and roll group,"<sup>268</sup> suggesting that the improved fidelity and lack of overbearing crowd noise successfully differentiated it from the earlier albums. He also questioned why more rock groups weren't following the band's lead in releasing live recordings of *Wheels of Fire's* calibre,<sup>269</sup> indicating the potential appeal of the live rock album. Secondly, he noted that *Wheels of Fire* represented "the kind of thing that people who have seen Cream perform walk away raving about and it's good to at last have it on a record,"<sup>270</sup> attesting that the improvisational and extended qualities of the album were considered an effective documentation of the band's live sound. Finally, he noted that the extended version of *Toad* presented on the album "is much better than the previously recorded studio version,"<sup>271</sup> a comment that affirmed *Wheels of Fire* as distinct from earlier live albums, whose "sloppy" reproductions of studio hits were considered inferior.

*Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma* are significant as the first examples of live rock recordings that sought both to reflect the emerging discourses surrounding rock music liveness, and to elevate the status of the live rock album above the secondary status that they had previously been afforded. And, as Wenner's response to *Wheels of Fire* shows, these features did not go unnoticed. As will be shown in the next section of this chapter, several of the modes of representation utilized in these albums would continue to influence the production of live albums. However, the emergence of a distinct kind of live recording produced outside of the music industry would also have a profound impact on the live recording, and render some of these earlier modes of representation obsolete in the process.

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<sup>268</sup> Wenner, "Cream: Wheels of Fire."

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

“[It] is almost unbelievable. It captures every thrill of the Stones live on stage”<sup>272</sup>: The emergence of bootleg live recordings

By the late-1960s, with the release of *Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma*, a process of elevating the live album from its secondary, low-regarded status was beginning. But, it was the increasing prominence of a form produced outside of the mainstream record industry that would perhaps have the greatest impact on the format of live albums to come. 1969 saw the proliferation of bootleg live recordings. These were not authorised recordings produced by the bands or their record companies, but illegitimately produced albums based on recordings made by the audience at live concerts. As this section will show, bootlegging was a practice that was afforded significant coverage in *Rolling Stone* magazine. In particular, a recording made of the Rolling Stones’ 1969 tour called *Live’R Than You’ll Ever Be* garnered attention. While some of the modes of representing liveness on *Live’R Than You’ll Ever Be* are similar to those of previous live albums, others are unique. As will be evidenced, an influential piece written on the album by *Rolling Stone*’s Greil Marcus highlighted these unique characteristics as superior to the qualities of officially released live recordings and suggested a change in the modes of representing liveness on official records was necessary.

The practice of bootlegging in rock dates to 1969, with the releases of *Great White Wonder*, a compilation of unreleased Bob Dylan songs sourced from a fourteen song acetate of publishers’ demos, and *Kum Back*, an early mix of tracks from the Beatles’ then-unreleased *Let it Be* album.<sup>273</sup> Bootlegging in its earliest form, then, was dedicated to the pursuit of unreleased studio recordings, reflecting the dominance of the studio

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<sup>272</sup> Greil Marcus, "Liver Than You'll Ever Be," *ibid.*, 7 February 1970.

<sup>273</sup> Heylin, *Bootleg! The Rise & Fall of the Secret Recording Industry*, 32-48.

record in rock music at the time. However, as Clinton Heylin notes, there was only a finite amount of unreleased studio material that could be accessed by bootleggers, and their attention soon turned to recording live performances.<sup>274</sup>

Making recordings of live concerts was, by the late 1960s, a niche but burgeoning fan practice. Sparked by the growing importance of liveness in rock music, it was facilitated by the popularization of the portable tape recorder, which came to mass market in the mid-1960s.<sup>275</sup> Disseminated through tape trading, these recordings were notably lo-fi.<sup>276</sup> Bootleggers realized the potential of live recording, seeing it as “the next step” for the illicit industry, but they also recognized the limited sales possibilities of a poor-sounding product for a market that wanted to appreciate music rather than simply consume it.<sup>277</sup> Their response to this was inspired by jazz and classical music, genres in which the bootlegging of live concerts was already an established (if underground) practice, and where bootleggers used high quality recording equipment to make records that appealed to audiophile collectors.<sup>278</sup>

Recorded by a bootlegger known as “Dub” with a Sennheiser ‘shotgun’ microphone and Uher reel-to-reel tape recorder, *LIVEr Than You’ll Ever Be* documented the Rolling Stones’ November 18<sup>th</sup> show at California’s Oakland Coliseum to a higher fidelity than previous tapers had managed.<sup>279</sup> Sound was captured by pointing the microphone towards the PA system and the drum kit, a move intended to pick up the sound of the cymbals (usually lost in the mix on audience recordings) and to not overwhelm the recording with audience noise.<sup>280</sup> These recording techniques are demonstrative of

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<sup>274</sup> Ibid., 46.

<sup>275</sup> Phillips introduced the first cassette recorder in 1964.

<sup>276</sup> The quality of the microphone on early tape recorders was typically poor, resulting in a blown-out sound, while the battery packs generated high levels of background noise that was captured on the tape itself.

<sup>277</sup> Heylin, *Bootleg! The Rise & Fall of the Secret Recording Industry*, 47.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

Dub's understanding of not just the logistics of recording live performance, but also the want of rock's audience to hear the music without it being engulfed by crowd cheers as on *Got Live If You Want It*.

*LIVEr* shares some commonality with *Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma*, namely the inclusion of songs that emphasize liveness in relation to their studio counterparts through improvisation and spontaneity. The version of "Midnight Rambler" on side two of the album, for example, is two minutes longer than the 6-minute studio version that originally featured on *Let It Bleed* (1969). It features the Stones substituting the studio version's overdubbed slide guitar and harmonica parts for distorted electric guitar and introduces a dynamic, stop-start middle-eight section, punctuated by a driving bass drum pattern that ends in a cacophony of drum and guitar soloing. Similarly, an elongated version of "I'm Free" appears at double the length of the studio version and transformed from an up-tempo, R&B inspired number into a slow burning heavy blues jam with extended guitar solo spotlights for Keith Richards and Mick Taylor. Yet, not all tracks featured on *LIVEr* were as long or heavy on improvisation as those on the previous records. Versions of "Live With Me," "Honky Tonk Women" and "Street Fighting Man" are presented in similar arrangement to the studio versions, though with occasional improvisational flourishes, with a tighter performance and superior audio quality than the studio-faithful songs of *Got Live If You Want It*.

Where *LIVEr* also differed was through the manner in which it presented these tracks. Songs on *Wheels of Fire* and *Ummagumma* were separated by fades. On *LIVEr*, however, these are not present, and the music is instead bridged by extra-musical sounds: the audience cheering, Mick Jagger addressing the crowd and guitars being tuned. Further of note is that, unlike on *Wheels of Fire* or *Ummagumma*, the audience does not fall silent between songs on *LIVEr*. Audience sounds are not constant or overbearing as they were on *Got Live...* and *The Live Kinks* – Dub had deliberately made the recording in such a

way as to minimize this – but chatter is present between songs, while cheers and whoops are often audible during quiet sections of tracks like “Midnight Rambler,” often prompted by moments of musical tenacity.

While the isolation of individual tracks through fades on previous records affirmed that these were highlights of classic liveness, the uninterrupted sequencing and extra musical sounds of *LIVEr* suggested instead an uncut document. While the record did actually feature a number of cuts, necessary to condense the 70-minute Oakland tape onto a single 12” record, these were skillfully hidden, creating the illusion of continuity.<sup>281</sup> This is apparent when comparing the original *LIVEr Than You’ll Ever Be* vinyl to an uncut version of the Oakland tape that was released on bootleg CD in 2006.<sup>282</sup> Indeed, the record itself was cut without the customary grooves designating track separation, signifying it was to be listened to in one continuous session.

Released in December 1969, *LIVEr*’s impact on live recording was significant. Reviewed by Greil Marcus in the February 7 1970 issue of *Rolling Stone*, it was praised for its high fidelity. Correctly identifying that it wasn’t a typical audience tape - “From a little hideaway microphone in someone’s lap? Not too likely,” - he noted that:

The sound quality is superb, full of presence, picking up drums, bass, both guitars and the vocals beautifully. The LP is in stereo; while it doesn’t seem to be mixed, the balance is excellent.<sup>283</sup>

In the review, he went on to speculate that the recording may have been done on an eight-track machine, or that the tapes may have been “made on stage by someone involved in setting up the Stones’ on sound system.”<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> Notably, opening number *Jumping Jack Flash* was cut from the record because of a PA failure during the second half of the song. The bootleggers feared that the sound outage would be interpreted as a fault with the recording.

<sup>282</sup> The Rolling Stones, *The Complete Live Than You’ll Ever Be* (Singer’s Original, 2006), CD Bootleg.

<sup>283</sup> Marcus, “Liver Than You’ll Ever Be.”

Marcus continued that the recording “is almost unbelievable. It captures every thrill of the Stones live on stage, 1969, and in fact it offers more, in some ways, than the concerts did—because it sounds even better.”<sup>285</sup> His rhetoric is notably distinct from that of Jann Wenner reviewing Cream’s *Wheels of Fire* the year earlier. Wenner had acknowledged that it was “good at last to have a record” of Cream live affirmed the notion of the live album as an important, if secondary document.<sup>286</sup> It is in a manner reminiscent of the rhetoric surrounding jazz albums where records were regarded as documents in the strictest sense and ultimately inferior to witnessing a live performance.<sup>287</sup> For Marcus, however, the experience of listening to *LIVEr* was not inferior to a live Rolling Stones concert. “Every thrill” of the Stones live performance was captured on the record, implying that it supplied an experience much closer to the live concert than earlier records had. That *LIVEr* actually sounded better than concerts on the 1969 tour, according to Marcus, was also significant as it suggested that the live album could offer pleasures that were distinct from, rather than deferential to attending the original concert.

Marcus goes on to qualify this through his appraisal, not just of the musical elements - “the turn-around violence of their sound, the ripping hardness of the guitars, and the energy of the rhythm section is all here” - but of the extra musical elements; “the crowd howling in between the lines” is part of what makes “Midnight Rambler” “an epic on stage,” Jagger telling the audience “C’mon San Francisco, let’s see how you can shake yo’ ahsses! C’mon, let’s get it on!” a component in the band “simply outdoing themselves,” affirmed by the building cheers of the audience.<sup>288</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid.

<sup>286</sup> Jann Wenner, “Cream: Wheels of Fire,” *ibid.*, 20 July 1968.

<sup>287</sup> Thornton, *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital*, 67.

<sup>288</sup> Marcus, “Liver Than You’ll Ever Be.”

Also significant to Marcus's review is that it twice addresses the Stones themselves, challenging the band to "respond to what the public wants" by releasing "a similar LP that was even better."<sup>289</sup> He ends the article with the following message:

There is only one thing that could top it, and if that's to happen, the Stones will have to show they have the guts we've always given them credit for: issue, as an official album, an unedited tape of their performance at Altamont. Maybe they'll do it.<sup>290</sup>

Marcus's challenge to the Stones to issue, an official, unedited live album is particularly noteworthy as it suggests a shift in the values associated with the live recording by 1969. Clinton Heylin reasons "that the record companies could not begin to compete with live bootlegs [like *LIVEr*] until they recognized the nature of their appeal – they gave fans a live performance unadulterated and unexpurgated."<sup>291</sup> I do not entirely agree with Heylin's assessment here; as I have already noted, *LIVEr* was an edited and incomplete document of the Stones' Oakland performance. What appealed about *LIVEr* was that it presented the semblance of being unexpurgated to the listener and, in doing so, promised something more experientially comparable to attending a live concert than previous live recordings had.

Certainly, given the considerable popularity of *LIVEr*, record companies did feel the need to respond. By November 1970, the album, bolstered by positive critical reception and media coverage, had sold over 250,000 copies,<sup>292</sup> making it the first rock bootleg eligible of RIAA gold certification.<sup>293</sup> Meanwhile, other live bootlegs of acts such as Led Zeppelin

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<sup>289</sup> Ibid.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

<sup>291</sup> Heylin, *Bootleg! The Rise & Fall of the Secret Recording Industry*, 52.

<sup>292</sup> Ritchie Yorke, "Maple Leaf Rock," *Billboard*, 14 November 1970.

<sup>293</sup> Adam Clayson, *Keith Richards* (London: Sanctuary Publishing, Ltd., 2004), Biography, 111.

and Elton John were also hitting the market and proving popular with consumers.<sup>294</sup> Their reaction came in three forms. Firstly, the major labels attempted to dissuade consumers from purchasing bootlegs through media campaigns alleging (erroneously) that the thinness of the vinyl used on bootleg records meant they were only good for 20 plays.<sup>295</sup> Secondly, they began petitioning US Congress to pass a bill that would curtail the sale of bootleg albums.<sup>296</sup> Finally, they competed bootleggers by releasing live albums that utilized many of the modes of representation praised by Marcus in his review. As I will now show, it was through this wave of post *LIVEr* albums that the conventions of representing liveness on live albums were largely established.

**“This album is an actual live recording... to be played in sequence without interruption”:**<sup>297</sup> **Towards conventions of representation**

*LIVEr* had a clear and immediate impact on bands’ and the music industry’s perceptions of the value of live recordings. 1970 saw the release of rock live albums in far greater numbers than previously, as acts either attempted to compete with bootlegged product, or pre-empt bootleggers by releasing their own official albums. By the end of the year, officially released live records from artists including the Rolling Stones,<sup>298</sup> the Who,<sup>299</sup> Grand Funk Railroad,<sup>300</sup> The Doors,<sup>301</sup> Jimi Hendrix,<sup>302</sup> Joe Cocker,<sup>303</sup> and Eric Clapton,<sup>304</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> Heylin, *Bootleg! The Rise & Fall of the Secret Recording Industry*, 52, 60.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

<sup>297</sup> Grand Funk Railroad, *Live Album*(Capitol, 1970), LP.

<sup>298</sup> The Rolling Stones, *Get Yer Ya-Ya’s Out: The Rolling Stones in Concert*(ABKCO, 1970), LP.

<sup>299</sup> Who, *Live at Leeds*.

<sup>300</sup> Railroad, *Live Album*.

<sup>301</sup> The Doors, *Absolutely Live*(Elektra, 1970), LP.

<sup>302</sup> Jimi Hendrix, *Band of Gypsys*(Polydor, 1970), LP.

<sup>303</sup> Joe Cocker, *Mad Dogs and Englishmen*(A & M, 1970), LP.

were on the market. Notably, many of these albums represented liveness distinctly from earlier recordings, with both aural aspects and packaging clearly influenced by bootlegs. Yet, a number of these records were also distinct from bootlegs in some respects. In particular, Marcus's comment about producing "a similar LP that was even better"<sup>305</sup> seemed to resonate with producers, who increasingly strove to create albums that represented "the ultimate concert" experience, rather than a document of live performance.<sup>306</sup>

In this section, I will show this primarily through an analysis of The Rolling Stones' *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out* (1970). Released in response to the popularity of *LIVEr Than You'll Ever Be* and recorded on the same 1969 tour, it allows for direct comparisons with *LIVEr* as to effectively highlight the similarities, as well as distinctions between bootleg and official live albums. Given the press interest around *LIVEr*, and the Rolling Stones more generally at the time, the album was covered extensively by *Rolling Stone*, allowing for an effective analysis, not just of its textual qualities, but of critical reception as well. *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out* is also exemplar of many of the modes of representation that emerged in live albums of this era, making it a useful text for analysis. I will qualify this by highlighting its similarities to a number of other albums released during this period, as well as identifying relevant instances in which other records utilized distinct representational modes.

Released on September 4<sup>th</sup> 1970, *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out* was not, as Marcus had gestured, an unedited performance, nor was it a recording of the band's ill fated set at Altamont.<sup>307</sup>

Comprised of material recorded over two nights (March 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>) at New York's

Madison Square Garden, the album, was, like *LIVEr*, constructed to give the listener the

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<sup>304</sup> Delaney and Bonnie and Friends, *On Tour with Eric Clapton* (Atco Records, 1970), LP.

<sup>305</sup> Marcus, "Liver Than You'll Ever Be."

<sup>306</sup> Blair Jackson, "Bam Interview with Paul Rothchild," *BAM*, July 3 1981.

<sup>307</sup> There are a number of reasons why the band would not have considered releasing the Altamont tape as a live album by 1970. These are illustrated in Chapter 3 of this thesis, which in part analyses the 1970 Rolling Stones concert film *Gimme Shelter*.

semblance of experiencing uninterrupted liveness (although not entirely, as I will come on to state). Unlike *Wheels of Fire*, no fades are present between tracks, and, as with *LIVEr*, songs are bridged with addresses from Mick Jagger, sounds of the band tuning, and cheers, as well as chatter, from the audience. While the sound of cheering at the close of *Midnight Rambler* does fade out to signify the end of the record's first side, the last few seconds of cheering are repeated on the fade-in at the beginning of side two, as if to signify to the listener that what they are listening to is complete and unedited.

*Ya-Ya's* too is replete with a number of the signifiers of liveness that were established in earlier records. As with *LIVEr*, improvised and extended versions of Stones numbers are present. A showpiece version of *Midnight Rambler* once again appears, longer than the *LIVEr* version by a minute, and, as if reflecting Marcus' comment that the band's official album should be better than the bootleg, featuring an even more exaggerated stop-start middle-section dynamic than the *LIVEr* version. Similarly, an elongated rendition of *Sympathy for the Devil* features an extended guitar solo section - as a spotlight for then-new Stones lead guitarist Mick Taylor - that turns into a call-and-response breakdown with Mick Jagger, before building up to another Taylor guitar flourish at the song's end.

Alongside these showcase moments, the album also features several Stones numbers that, while proficiently performed and still featuring improvisational flourishes, are not as drastically altered from the studio versions including "Jumpin' Jack Flash," "Honky Tonk Women" and "Street Fighting Man." This is also characteristic of albums such as The Doors' *Absolutely Live* (1970), which features an extended, 16-minute version of *When the Music's Over* alongside performances of *Break on Through* and *Soul Kitchen* that are less improvisation heavy or The Who's *Live at Leeds*, on which a studio faithful run-through of "Substitute" appears, as well as a 14-minute improvisation heavy workout of "My Generation."

As I have already stated, *Ya-Ya's* also features non-musical interludes between songs that are similar to those present on *LIVEr*. What is significant about these instances on *Ya-Ya's* is that, much more so than on *LIVEr*, they appear to have been selected to affirm certain attributes of the Stones' liveness. In the gap between "Jumpin' Jack Flash" and "Carol," on side one, for example, Mick Jagger is heard to tell the audience:

Thank you kindly. I think I bust a button on my trousers. I hope they don't fall down... You wouldn't want my trousers to fall down now, would ya?

The "trousers" line is significant because it functions to amplify the kind of personality associated with Stones frontman Mick Jagger, both in the studio, and onstage. The provocative, sexually suggestive dialogue is reflective of the lyrical content of a number of the band's studio tracks, including "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction," "Honky Tonk Women" and "Stray Cat Blues" (the latter two included on the LP). Mick Jagger's sexually charged presence was a feature of the Stones' records that was also associated with the band's live performance. This is demonstrated in a 1968 interview with *Rolling Stone* magazine where reporter Jonathon Cott identifies Jagger's "sexy thing" stage presence as integral to the singer's appeal. The singer then responds by defining it as a component of his personal expression, contrasting his performance with that of pop singer Scott Walker, who "just stands there."<sup>308309</sup> Furthermore, the suggestion that Mick Jagger's trousers might have fallen down serves as a reminder of the unpredictability and spontaneity of the original live concert.

Jagger's second line of dialogue, in which he muses "Charlie's good tonight, isn't he?" to the audience (in reference to Charlie Watts, the band's drummer) also highlights this

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<sup>308</sup> *The Rolling Stone Interviews: 1967-1980*, 49.

<sup>309</sup> Jagger contrasting himself with Scott Walker is also significant because it makes a distinction between the attitudes of rock and the attitudes of pop. While Scott Walker would go on to become respected for his increasingly avant garde work during the 1970s, he was, at the time, known as a teen idol pop singer and the star of his own television show.

unpredictability. The inclusion of the “Charlie’s good” line, implies that the Stones’ performance standard did vary from night to night, the suggestion being that Charlie’s playing must have been inferior on another night of the tour in order for that comparison to be made. Therefore, it also alludes to *Ya-Ya’s* being a document of a superior Stones show, capturing one of the best performances of the 1969 North American leg (and, by proxy, implies that the performance on *Ya-Ya’s* is superior to that contained on *LIVEr Than You’ll Ever Be*).

Yet, this notion of *Ya-Ya’s* as a document that simply captures a superior Stones performance is complicated by a number of details. Firstly, as I have already noted, the album features recordings taken from not one, but two Rolling Stones concerts, edited into a sequence to give the semblance of one complete performance. This is alluded to through the liner notes, which state that the album was recorded on November 27<sup>th</sup> and November 28<sup>th</sup>, as well as at the start of the record, where the compere’s introductions for both Madison Square Garden concerts are heard simultaneously, highlighting to the listener that not all of the material they are listening to comes from the same performance.

While the producers acknowledge *Ya-Ya’s* being taken from two instances of live performance, it is not stated that some of the material heard on *Ya-Ya’s* does not originate from a recording of live performance at all. Far from an unedited tape of a Rolling Stones performance, the band added a number of studio overdubs after the concerts had taken place, fixing off-key vocals or any obvious instrumental flubs. Six of the ten songs on the record feature completely re-recorded vocals by Mick Jagger, and there are instances of Mick Taylor guitar overdubs in “Carol.” The fourth verse from “Sympathy for the Devil” was edited out, while a chorus and verse were taken out of

“Honky Tonk Women.” Much of Jagger’s on-stage dialogue is also edited to make it more concise, with lines spliced out and gaps between phrases removed.<sup>310</sup>

These features of *Ya-Ya’s* complicate earlier notions of the live recording as a document of classic liveness and of presenting liveness “unadulterated.” What is significant is that, in combining material from multiple shows and utilizing overdubbing to improve the quality of the liveness on offer, *Ya-Ya’s* is less a strict documentation of a live concert, and more an attempt to create an idealised version. This shift is significant, and highlights a divide present in many of the live albums released in 1970.

Other records, like The Who’s *Live at Leeds* and Grand Funk Railroad’s *Live Album*, were clearly influenced by the ethos of bootlegging, envisaging the live recording as a strict documentation. This is firstly evidenced by their packaging, which draws clear parallels to the bootleg form. *Live at Leeds* for example, comes housed in a paper sleeve with *The Who Live at Leeds* title stamped in the top right corner. The design, near identical to the *LIVEr Than You’ll Ever Be* sleeve was intended as a pastiche of the bootleg album’s distinctive, minimalist packaging.<sup>311</sup> Yet it was also an affirmation of the band’s approval of bootlegging as a practice and its values of representing liveness, as iterated by Pete Townshend in interviews at the time.<sup>312</sup>

Grand Funk’s *Live Album* also makes use of the bootleg stamp motif for band and album names on the front cover, along with a grainy monochrome photo of the group playing live that also seems to reference bootleg sleeves.<sup>313</sup> This is also present in the liner notes of the two albums. *Live Album*, for example, has the following disclaimer printed in bold lettering on the back cover:

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<sup>310</sup> "The Rolling Stones - Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out," <http://www.rollingstonesnet.com/yaya.htm>.

<sup>311</sup> Andy Neill; Matt Kent, *Anyway Anyhow Anywhere: The Complete Chronicle of the Who 1958-1978* (New York: Random House, 2011).

<sup>312</sup> Heylin, *Bootleg! The Rise & Fall of the Secret Recording Industry*, 51.

<sup>313</sup> The image is of a similar quality to a photo of Led Zeppelin that appeared on the cover of *On Blueberry Hill*.

In order to present a true historical documentation of this group in person, editing of any nature has been avoided. The musical content of all selections has been left totally unchanged from the original tapes. There has been no technical assistance added to this recording such as echo and all events are presented here exactly as they occurred.

This album is an actual live recording of Grand Funk Railroad in concert. It has been assembled to be played in sequence from side one to side four without interruption

Total playing time is one hour and twenty minutes.

The guarantee of the album as a “true historical documentation,” that editing and technical assistance have been avoided and that events are presented exactly as they occurred affirm that album’s veracity as a document of live performance in a manner reminiscent of bootlegging values. While less emphatically articulated in the liner notes of *The Who’s Live at Leeds*, an affirmation of a similar nature is also present, with the statement “Crackling noises OK. Do not correct!” appearing as a handwritten note on the disc’s label. Ostensibly written by Pete Townshend to the album’s engineer, the crackling noises in question were caused by John Entwistle’s faulty bass amp at the *Leeds* concert, and had been intermittent throughout the night.<sup>314</sup> The note about the crackling noises serves to affirm to the listener that those sounds – which are often audible on the record - were produced at the original concert and, reflecting *Live at Leeds’* veracity as a document of that concert, have not been fixed.

Notably, *The Doors’ Absolutely Live* features a disclaimer that is similar to the one on Grand Funk’s *Live Album*, though distinct in a key respect. Again printed on the inner gatefold sleeve, the note reads:

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<sup>314</sup> Lewis, “The Who Live at Leeds’: The Greatest Live Rock and Roll Album Ever Made!,” 53.

This album was compiled from live performances recorded in cities throughout the United States between August 1969 and June 1970. Aside from the editing necessary to assemble the music into album form, the recording is an organic documentary and absolutely live!

While the “organic documentary” wording reflects the “true historical documentation” of the Grand Funk album, the admittance of “the editing necessary to assemble the music into album form” varies from both Grand Funk and The Who’s promises that editing of any kind had been avoided. *Absolutely Live* producer Paul A. Rothchild has since revealed that the editing involved in “assembling the music into album form” was extensive, with sections from several versions of the same song sometimes spliced together to create the illusion of a single performance.<sup>315</sup> Rothchild alleges that there were thousands of cuts across the record<sup>316</sup> and that his intention, far from the “organic documentary” promised on the sleeve, was to present “the ultimate [Doors] concert” on record.<sup>317</sup>

The emergence and subsequent popularity of the bootleg live album in 1969 had a notable impact on the live rock recording. The importance of extra-musical elements of liveness, and the idea that a live recording should offer listeners the semblance of listening, not to selections of liveness, but of a full live show were recognized by producers of official live albums, and implemented across the majority of future releases. Yet, while a number of the conventions of representing liveness were established through the influence of bootlegs, they also created a rift in live album production.

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<sup>315</sup> Jackson, "Interview with Paul Rothchild."

<sup>316</sup> Rothchild’s comment about thousands of cuts is somewhat hyperbolic. Doors fans, comparing *Absolutely Live* to the myriad recordings now available from the 1969/1970 tours, have found that there are a number of splices, though nowhere near the amount the producer describes.

<sup>317</sup> Jackson, "Interview with Paul Rothchild."

On one side, records such as Grand Funk's *Live Album* and The Who's *Live at Leeds* were reverential to the bootleg ethos of presenting liveness "unadulterated and unexpurgated." On the other, The Doors' *Absolutely Live* and the Rolling Stones' *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out* did not maintain this veracity to the original concerts, and, as if reflecting Greil Marcus's comment that an official album should be "even better" than a bootleg, were constructed to create the semblance of an ideal, rather than 'real' performance.

*Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out* was a record that divided Rolling Stone's critics on release. Greil Marcus was unimpressed with the post-production fixes made to the album and maintained that *LIVEr Than You'll Ever Be* was a better and more authentic representation of the Stones live.<sup>318</sup> Contrastingly, Lester Bangs was effusive in his praise, regarding it as the "best rock concert ever put on record," stating that it may be the best Stones album ever released and affirming that there wasn't "a song on *Ya-Ya's* where the Stones didn't cut their original studio jobs."<sup>319</sup> Reflecting the sense of *Ya-Ya's* as offering an ideal experience of Stones liveness, he also stated: "More than just the soundtrack for a Rolling Stones concert, it's a truly inspired session, as intimate an experience as sitting in while the Stones jam for sheer joy in the basement."<sup>320</sup>

### Conclusion: "Crackling Noises Have Been Corrected."<sup>321</sup>

Between 1966 and 1970, both the status and the format of the live rock album underwent a significant change. A secondary, stopgap form in their earliest iteration, live albums were initially regarded as poor quality products whose live material proved inferior listening to the studio versions. Reflecting a change in attitudes towards

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<sup>318</sup>Greil Marcus (quoted by Richie Unterberger), "Liver Than You'll Ever Be," <http://www.allmusic.com/album/liver-than-youll-ever-be-mw0000952758>.

<sup>319</sup> Lester Bangs, "Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out," *Rolling Stone*, September 4 1970.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

<sup>321</sup> The Who, *Live at Leeds (Deluxe Edition)*(MCA, 2001), CD.

liveness in rock music, the late-1960s saw the emergence of a new kind of live recording that sought to better represent the burgeoning values of rock music liveness. The manner of representing liveness on these records was also informed by a need to distinguish them from the poorly regarded earlier offerings. As a result, these records were comprised of the most emphatically improvisational material that would be read as distinctly live from the studio recordings. Audience noise, overbearing and a point of contention on earlier records, was removed entirely, while the packaging of these albums alongside bands' latest studio recordings informed the consumer that they were an artist's authorized artistic statement, rather than a stopgap product released to satisfy a perceived market need.

While these earliest live albums were better received by critics than previous offerings and gestured towards a viable future for live recordings in rock, it was the release of the Rolling Stones bootleg *LIVEr Than You'll Ever Be* in 1969 that would most inform the conventions of representing liveness on record. While earlier records were focused almost exclusively on representing liveness through musical aspects, *LIVEr* established the importance of extra-musical notions of liveness; sounds of tuning, of singers talking to the audience, and of crowds cheering. Unlike the earliest, low regarded live albums, the bootleggers' knowledge of the burgeoning rock audience allowed them to present these forms in such a way as to not prove detrimental to the appreciation of music. This, combined with the sequencing of the album to give the semblance of uninterrupted liveness, established the notion that the live album could offer listeners the experience of a full live show, rather than the selected highlights of earlier records.

The success of *LIVEr* both critically and commercially, as well as the emergent bootleg form more generally, forced the legitimate record industry to take note. In the year that followed, a plethora of live albums were released, which utilized the modes of representing liveness established on the bootleg. The addition of audience noise, of

between-song chatter, of musicians' audience address and the structuring of a live album to give the semblance of uninterrupted liveness were all established as conventions of representing liveness on record during this time. Yet, while these features were a commonality across the majority of live albums, there was a key divide between records that sought to present an unaltered document of liveness, as per bootleg recordings, and those that used studio post-production in an attempt to represent the ultimate live concert. During this time, a critical uncertainty about whether the live album should function as a faithful document or an idealised recreation of liveness was apparent, evidenced through the mixed responses to the Rolling Stones' *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out* from *Rolling Stone's* critics.

Though critical responses to *Ya-Ya's* were mixed, the record was a huge commercial success. Going to Number 1 in the UK charts and Number 6 in the US, where it went platinum, the sales of *Ya-Ya's* were comparable to that of the past two Rolling Stones studio albums, *Beggars Banquet* (1968) and *Let It Bleed* (1969).<sup>322</sup> The sales of *Ya-Ya's* proved to the record industry that the live album was more than a stop-gap product, and that hearing the Stones "[cutting] their original studio jobs" live, as Bangs put it, was appealing to a generation of listeners that wanted to appreciate music rather than consume pop. Live albums soon became established as staple of rock music, selling in even greater numbers than the Stones record. Deep Purple's *Made in Japan*, released in 1972, for example, went platinum within two weeks of release, going on to sell over two million copies.<sup>323</sup>

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<sup>322</sup> "Rolling Stones | Artist | Official Chart"; "The Rolling Stones Chart History"; "Recording Industry Association of America Gold and Platinum Archive: The Rolling Stones," [http://www.riaa.com/gold-platinum/?tab\\_active=default-award&ar=The+Rolling+Stones&ti=#search\\_section](http://www.riaa.com/gold-platinum/?tab_active=default-award&ar=The+Rolling+Stones&ti=#search_section).

<sup>323</sup> "Recording Industry Association of America Gold and Platinum Archive: Deep Purple," [http://www.riaa.com/gold-platinum/?tab\\_active=default-award&ar=Deep+Purple&ti=Made+in+Japan#search\\_section](http://www.riaa.com/gold-platinum/?tab_active=default-award&ar=Deep+Purple&ti=Made+in+Japan#search_section).

Telling of the status to which live albums were elevated by the mid-1970s was frequency with which cult acts broke into mainstream success by releasing them. KISS,<sup>324</sup> Bob Seger<sup>325</sup> and Peter Frampton<sup>326</sup> were amongst the bands that went mainstream through the release of live records, with *Frampton Comes Alive!* staying at the top spot of the US charts for 10 weeks, selling over 6 million copies in 1976, and going on to be voted “album of the year” by Rolling Stone readers.<sup>327</sup> Indicative of the industry’s changed attitude towards live recordings in rock by this time, AC/DC were instructed by Atlantic records to release a live album in 1977, as it was thought to be the most effective way of breaking the band into the American market.<sup>328</sup> Contrasting the low standing reputation that live albums held in the mid-1960s, the live album was, by the late-1970s, one of the most commercially successful forms of representing rock music, as well as an affirmation of an established band’s musical tenacity, and the proof of an emerging act’s artistic worth.

While there was a division in opinion in 1970 about whether a live album should represent a real, or idealised version of rock music liveness, this debate was all but resolved by the latter part of the decade. This resolution can be attributed to the diminished presence of bootleg recordings following the release of *Ya-Ya’s*. In part, this was because the record companies were now preempting the release of bootlegs and killing their sales with officially released product.<sup>329</sup> As well as this, record labels’ lobbying of congress to ban bootlegs was achieved with the passing of the McClellan anti-piracy bill in 1971.<sup>330</sup> Clarifying the legal grey area in which bootlegs existed, it made the sale of unauthorized live recordings strictly illegal. Following the ruling, the

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<sup>324</sup> KISS, *Alive!*(Casablanca, 1975), LP.

<sup>325</sup> Bob Seger & The Silver Bullet Band, *Live Bullet*(Capitol, 1976), LP.

<sup>326</sup> Peter Frampton, *Frampton Comes Alive!*(A&M Records, 1976), LP.

<sup>327</sup> Peter Frampton “Comes Alive” 40th Anniversary, *In the Studio With Redbeard* (2016), Podcast.

<sup>328</sup> Mick Wall, *Ac/Dc: Hell Ain't a Bad Place to Be*(Orion, 2013).

<sup>329</sup> Heylin, *Bootleg! The Rise & Fall of the Secret Recording Industry*, 64.

<sup>330</sup> *Ibid.*

sale of bootlegs did continue, but as a more covert, underground practice, much less visible to the general record buying public and with units sold never again reaching the heights of than *LIVE'r Than You'll Ever Be*.<sup>331</sup>

1970 saw a confluence of ideals between bootlegs and official live recording, but the two forms took a notably distinctive path in the post McClellan climate. The reduced visibility of the bootleg meant that critics would no longer make the kind of direct comparisons between it and official live recordings that they had with *LIVEr* and *Ya-Ya's*. This resulted, by the late-1970s, in the representation of an idealised form of liveness – “the ultimate concert” enhanced by studio postproduction – becoming the norm. The level of overdubbing varies from album to album. Deep Purple's *Made in Japan*, for example, only features one overdub, part of the vocal in “Strange Kind of Woman,” missing during the original concert because singer Ian Gillan tripped over a microphone cable.<sup>332 333</sup> Peter Frampton has since revealed that guitar was redubbed on “Show Me the Way” from *Frampton Comes Alive!* due to an engineering issue on the night, while the first verse of “Something's Happening” and the intro piano of “I Wanna Go to the Sun” were also fixed in the studio.<sup>334</sup>

On KISS's *Alive!* and Thin Lizzy's *Live and Dangerous* (1978), meanwhile, overdubbing was much more extensive. In the case of *Alive!*, engineer Eddie Kramer has affirmed that the album was fixed in the studio so extensively that only Peter Criss's drum parts remain from the original source recording.<sup>335</sup> Similarly with *Live and Dangerous*, while Thin Lizzy frontman Phil Lynott stated that there were only minor overdubs as

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<sup>331</sup> Ibid.

<sup>332</sup> Simon Robinson, *Deep Purple - Live in Japan (Media Notes)*(EMI, 1993).

<sup>333</sup> While ‘Made in Japan’ is relatively overdub free compared to most live albums of the era, it should be noted that the record features tracks taken from three Deep Purple concerts, edited to give the semblance of a single show. Again, in this process of selection, there is an element here of presenting idealised, rather than documentary liveness.

<sup>334</sup> Peter Frampton *"Comes Alive" 40th Anniversary*.

<sup>335</sup> Nick DeRiso, "How Kiss Came 'Alive!' - by Using Some Studio Magic," <http://ultimateclassicrock.com/kiss-alive/>.

"anything else would have ruined the atmosphere on those recordings and made a mockery of putting out a live album,"<sup>336</sup> producer Tony Visconti has since claimed that the album was "75% recorded in the studio," with only drums and audience noise 'live.'<sup>337</sup>

In understanding the motivation behind these heavily overdubbed albums, the recent explanation offered by KISS frontman Paul Stanley is perhaps most telling:

Yes, we enhanced it – not to hide anything, not to fool anyone. But who wanted to hear a mistake repeated endlessly? Who wanted to hear an out-of-tune guitar? For what? Authenticity?<sup>338</sup>

Signifiers of authenticity and the veracity of the live album as a document in the late 1960s, mistakes, by the mid-1970s, were considered detrimental to the idealised version of liveness that these albums presented. Furthermore, while overdubs were myriad, the unavailability of bootlegs to the record buying public at large meant these fixes were not apparent to the majority of listeners and therefore did not complicate these records' representations of liveness.

For the now niche audience that still bought them, bootlegs were increasingly defined against official live recordings. Bootlegs' appeal, as Lee Marshall notes, became that they were something the official record industry would balk at releasing.<sup>339</sup> The version of liveness they presented, unlike the official live albums, was raw, unexpurgated, bum-notes and all. Indicative of this, a "culture of errors" became fostered amongst bootleg collectors, in which fans listened to multiple bootlegs in order to spot mistakes in a

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<sup>336</sup> "Live and Dangerous: Thin Lizzy," [http://www.metal-archives.com/reviews/Thin\\_Lizzy/Live\\_and\\_Dangerous/4448/](http://www.metal-archives.com/reviews/Thin_Lizzy/Live_and_Dangerous/4448/).

<sup>337</sup> Tony Visconti, "Live and Dangerous," <https://web.archive.org/web/20120309162225/http://www.tonyvisconti.com/artists/thinlizzy/live.htm>.

<sup>338</sup> DeRiso, "How Kiss Came 'Alive!' - by Using Some Studio Magic".

<sup>339</sup> Lee Marshall, "For and against the Record Industry: An Introduction to Bootleg Collectors and Tape Traders," *Popular Music* 22, no. 1 (2003): 60.

band's performance.<sup>340</sup> The value of the mistakes is that they make each of the band's shows a distinctive experience, distinguishing them from a band's official live albums, which were mistake free.

Of final note to this chapter, the pervasiveness of the live recording as an idealised version of liveness that began with *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out* is evidenced in the genesis of The Who's *Live at Leeds*. While the original 1970 version of the album was emphatic in its presentation of unadulterated liveness, subsequent reissues have seen it reconfigured in a manner reflective of the corrective practices that followed. The 1995 CD reissue of the album expanded the track listing, offering more music, onstage chatter and tuning sounds than the original album had done, suggesting the new version as an even more faithful document of the Leeds concert than the first issue.<sup>341</sup> However, for this version of *Live at Leeds* bassist John Entwistle re-recorded his lead and backing vocals in the studio, some 25 years after the original concert.<sup>342</sup> Another reissue – a 'Deluxe Edition' of the album from 2001 - contained what was ostensibly the entire Leeds concert tape presented across two CDs. Yet, as with the 1995 version, overdubs were included, with front man Roger Daltrey adding new vocals to two songs, 31 years later.<sup>343</sup> Most symbolic, though, of *Live at Leeds'* subsequent reconfiguration is that the crackling noises from by John Entwistle's bass amp – once a key and celebrated signifier of the album's authenticity as a live document – have been removed. So too has Townshend's handwritten note on the label, which is replaced with a new scrawl. It reads, "Crackling noises have been corrected."<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>340</sup> Ibid.

<sup>341</sup> The Who, *Live at Leeds (Reissue)*(MCA1995), CD.

<sup>342</sup> Lewis, "'The Who Live at Leeds': The Greatest Live Rock and Roll Album Ever Made!."

<sup>343</sup> Ibid.

<sup>344</sup> Who, *Live at Leeds (Deluxe Edition)*.

### Chapter 3

#### “Finally there is a movie about us”<sup>345</sup>:

#### The Emergence of the Concert Movie

With the emergence of a new, self consciously artistic form of rock music in the late-1960s, many of the dominant modes of representing the genre in the media needed reconfiguring. This was perhaps most dramatically realised in the case of film. Cinema’s relationship with popular music was longstanding by the time of rock’s emergence. But, the established conventions of representation were at odds with the genre’s burgeoning ideological imperatives.

Traditionally, representations of popular music were a product of the mainstream entertainment industry, and treated the music as a mainstream entertainment product. Performers were regarded as stars in the traditional show business sense, while films’ narratives were often celebrations of the industry’s star making system. Show business attitudes and the notion of music as entertainment, however, were the things that rock increasingly defined itself against, highlighting the incompatibility between the emergent genre and the dominant industry. As I have already identified, liveness was also a value that, by this period, was becoming intrinsically important to the emergent rock, something that the dominant industry had little precedent in representing.

As a new form of rock music emerged, so too did a new form of representing rock music in cinema. This chapter will show that the concert movie was distinct from its predecessors in a number of respects. It reflected the growing importance of liveness in rock music, treated the rock performer as artist, rather than show business entertainer, and gave greater regard to rock music’s audience than in previous texts. The concert movie was able to achieve this for two reasons. Firstly, it was produced outside of the

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<sup>345</sup> Mike Goodwin, "Woodstock (Film Review)," *Rolling Stone*, 30 April 1970.

dominant entertainment industry usually responsible for cinematic representations of rock music and, as such, its producers were not concerned with reproducing the dominant discourses of the industry. Secondly, concert movie producers were affiliated with the same countercultural thinking that had influenced the burgeoning ideology of rock music, and therefore understood the genre's new imperatives in a way that previous producers had not.

These films were produced outside of a mainstream context. But, as will also be shown, their success – particularly of *Woodstock* (1970) – was heavily influential on the production of films featuring rock music in the mainstream industry. While the dominant entertainment industry of the late-1960s had no precedent for representing the new ideology of rock music, or the emergent value of liveness associated with it, they were able to appropriate a number of the conventions of representation established in these independently produced concert movies, producing their own concert movies that appealed to the new rock audience in the process.

This chapter is structured in two sections. The first section presents a textual analysis of *Monterey Pop* (1968) and *Woodstock* (1970). These films have been chosen for analysis because, as the first two films based around representing live rock concerts rather than staged liveness, they are incredibly significant to the development of the concert movie genre. Through this analysis, I identify the conventions of representing liveness utilized in these films, and demonstrate how these conventions were informed by the filmmakers' understanding of the imperatives of rock music, as well as their affinity for the burgeoning counterculture.

In the second section, I show how, and why, Warner Bros. Pictures came to distribute the independently produced *Woodstock* and illustrate how the film's critical and commercial success established the idea of the concert movie within a mainstream context. I then show how *Gimme Shelter* (1970), another independently produced

concert movie, attempted to subvert the conventions established in *Monterey* and *Woodstock* to reflect the changing countercultural zeitgeist, and how the negative critical reception of the film informed wider notions of what a concert movie should, or should not be. Finally, I determine how the major studios' production of concert movies was informed, both by the responses to *Woodstock* and *Gimme Shelter*. In this, I indicate that they were able to negotiate these newly established conventions and create a version of the concert movie that conformed to rock's ideology, as well as their own commercial imperatives.

### **Rock on film before 1967**

Before I identify the conventions of representing rock music live performance that were established in the concert movies of the late 1960s, it is important to show how the concert movie, as a distinct form of representing popular music, came to exist in the first place. As I will demonstrate, there was tension between the imperatives of the emergent genre and the conventions of the mainstream entertainment industry in earlier cinematic representations of rock music, and that tension became irreconcilable as the genre articulated an explicitly anti-commercial ethos by the late 1960s. However, concert movie producers' independence from the mainstream and their proximity to American countercultural movements facilitated a new form of representation that reflected the genre's burgeoning ideological imperatives, as well as the growing importance of liveness.

### **Rock and roll at the movies**

The tension between rock music and cinema is evident from the emergence of rock and roll in the middle-1950s. The predominant popular music of the late-1940s and early-

1950s was “avowedly commercial,”<sup>346</sup> consolidated within four major record companies – RCA Victor, Columbia, Decca and Capitol – and written to formula; expressing a restricted range of conventionalized sentiments, that reflected prevailing conservatism of “white, reasonably affluent, urban America.”<sup>347</sup> The emergent rock ‘n’ roll music, contrastingly, came from independent record labels, was written by the musicians themselves, performed by their own bands, and encapsulated the angst of a burgeoning teenage audience that felt “increasingly alienated from the cultural experience of domestic suburban existence.”<sup>348</sup>

Rock ‘n’ roll, as an emergent cultural form, was markedly distinct from the dominant popular music of the era. Yet, the mainstream film industry’s treatment of the genre seldom reflected this distinction. As John Mundy notes, Hollywood’s response to rock and roll was to place its performers “within the commercial mainstream of show business” and “appeal to a discourse of stardom of the kind enshrined in the classical Hollywood musical,”<sup>349</sup> in the same way that they had with the likes of Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra and Dean Martin. Films such as the Bill Haley starring *Rock Around the Clock* and Elvis Presley vehicles like *Jailhouse Rock* (1957) “developed narrative structures which displaced ideological conflict with images of implied sociocultural resolution,” replacing the “oppositional resonance of the rock ‘n’ roll performer” with “images of normative characters ‘working’ within an [established mainstream] narrative.”<sup>350</sup>

It is also important to note that there was little precedent for representing liveness in these films. As a result, these performance sequences resemble those found in Hollywood musicals far more than the actual live performances that musicians gave at

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<sup>346</sup>John Mundy, *Popular Music on Screen: From Hollywood Musical to Music Video* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 79.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid., 105.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid., 110.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid.

the time. In *Jailhouse Rock* (1957), for example, Elvis Presley sings the title song during the film's finale, in a scene that takes the guise of a live television broadcast. Like a Hollywood musical number, the sequence is highly choreographed, with Presley backed by a troupe of dancers wearing prison uniforms on a set modelled as a highly impressionistic jail set. The scene bears little resemblance to a live Elvis performance from the era, which, as unearthed Super 8 footage shows, were choreographically much looser, and featured the singer backed only by his regular three-man, guitar, bass, drums group. Also, unlike the Super 8 footage, the performance is mimed to the studio version of the song.

Upon its emergence in mid-1950s, rock 'n' roll challenged the dominant practices of the popular music industry. Yet, the diminishing of the rock 'n' roll performer's "oppositional resonance" and positioning them within the commercial mainstream was part of the process through which the mainstream entertainment industry returned popular music to its show business roots. The subsuming of the emergent rock 'n' roll by the mainstream is perhaps most clearly evidenced in the figure of Elvis Presley. While Presley's initial popularity was as a rebellious, sneering rock 'n' roller, he had, by the time of fifth film *G.I. Blues* (1960) made the transition to a clean-cut "family entertainer" in the mainstream entertainment mould.<sup>351</sup>

### Gestures towards change: the emergence of rock

The emergence of rock as a distinct form from rock 'n' roll brought with it some challenges to the dominant system. As I have already asserted in the first chapter of this thesis, rock was a more self-consciously artistic form than its predecessor, with the art school background and jazz and blues influences of its performers representing a

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<sup>351</sup> James L. Neibaur, *The Elvis Movies* (London & New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), 62.

challenge to the dominant notion of popular music as mass entertainment. The Beatles' *A Hard Day's Night* (1964) is exemplar of this, with a narrative that challenges the valorization of show business values seen in previous films. Based on writer Alun Owen's experience of touring with the band, the film satirizes discourses of stardom, presenting the band as prisoners of their own fame, dogged by a punishing schedule and mobbed by unrelenting fans.<sup>352</sup> As well as in the narrative, the Beatles resisted mainstream entertainment conventions in the production of the film, refusing to have their distinctive Liverpool accents overdubbed by Midwestern American actors to appeal to the American marketplace. "Look, if we can understand a fucking cowboy talking Texan, they can understand us talking Liverpool," Paul McCartney is said to have angrily told producers.<sup>353</sup>

Its handheld, cinema-verite influenced aesthetic is also markedly different from the smooth, choreographed look of earlier films, while the final, three-song performance sequence, in the guise of a televised concert, is more faithful in recreating a Beatles live performance than the *Jailhouse Rock* scene was to Elvis. Filmed in front of a live audience at an actual live music venue (The Scala Theatre in London), rather than on a film studio soundstage, it made use of the band's actual, on-stage set-up, though the performance was still mimed to the pre-recorded studio versions of the songs.<sup>354</sup>

But, while the narrative, as well as the increasing deference to liveness in *Hard Day's Night* was indicative of the stirrings of a new ideology in rock music, it was still a film conceived as a product of the mainstream entertainment industry. As Stephen Glynn

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<sup>352</sup> Stephen Glynn, *A Hard Day's Night*, Turner Classic Movie British Film Guide (London: I.B. Tauris, 2005), 40.

<sup>353</sup> Bill Harry, "Beatles Browser," <http://triumphpc.com/mersey-beat/beatles/beatlesbrowser-four3.shtml>.

<sup>354</sup> Glynn, *A Hard Day's Night*, 26-27.

notes, United Artists ultimately regarded the project as "a low-budget exploitation movie to milk the latest brief musical craze for all it was worth."<sup>355</sup>

*T.A.M.I Show* (1964), like *A Hard Day's Night*, represented changes in the mode of representing rock music in some respects, while conforming to dominant industry conventions in others. Crucially, as David E. James notes, *T.A.M.I Show* marked the "first time that a live rock and roll concert became a feature length film."<sup>356</sup> Recorded at the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium on October 29 1964, the film did away with the fictional narrative events of earlier texts, "enlarging the spectacle of live performance "so that it all but totally occupied the film."<sup>357</sup> Notable of this emphasis on the spectacle of liveness, the line-up including The Beach Boys, Leslie Gore, Chuck Berry, James Brown and the Rolling Stones actually performed live for the recording, rather than miming. But, it is significant that *T.A.M.I Show* was not a live concert arranged independently and then filmed: it was staged and designed specifically for filming.<sup>358</sup> I return to a discussion of this in the next section of this chapter.

The filming of a performance in which music was played live, rather than mimed, was a new development in cinematic representations of rock music that gestured towards the future of the medium. However, *T.A.M.I* also exhibits a number of qualities, informed by dominant music industry conventions of the mid-1960s that would soon seem incompatible with the burgeoning ideological imperatives of rock. Clearly modelled on the package tours of the era, *T.A.M.I's* line-up homogenizes a number of disparate musical forms under the all-encompassing banner of 'pop' or, 'teenage music,' suggested by the film's acronym title, which stood for "teen-age music international."<sup>359</sup> Emergent

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<sup>355</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

<sup>356</sup> David E. James, *Rock 'N' Film: Cinema's Dance with Popular Music*(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 193.

<sup>357</sup> *Ibid.*, 191.

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

<sup>359</sup> Don Waller, *T.A.M.I Show Collector's Edition*(Shout Factory, 2009), DVD Liner Notes, 10.

rockers the Rolling Stones feature alongside mainstream pop acts like Leslie Gore and Jan and Dean, the kind of combination that became increasingly incongruous in the years that followed. And, while *T.A.M.I* was filmed live, this was a highly choreographed, staged form of liveness, replete with a cast of backing dancers, that is at points more reminiscent of *Jailhouse Rock* than indicative of the kind of film to come.

### Direct cinema Meets Rock

As I have shown, mainstream cinema exhibited several concessions to the changing imperatives of rock in films of the mid-1960s. But, with the dominant, entrenched conventions of the industry still presenting rock music as a primarily commercial product, rather than artistic form, mainstream cinema was ill prepared for the explicitly anti-commercial ideology that became associated with the genre by the latter part of the decade. By the late 1960s the conventions of representation of the mainstream entertainment industry and the ideals of rock music were incompatible. But, while there was a void left in mainstream cinematic representations of rock music, a new, independent form was emerging that was able to respond and engage with the new rock ideology, as well as the increasing importance of liveness in the genre. Filmmakers associated with the American documentary movement known as Direct cinema were, by the late 1960s, making films based around live rock performance that reflected this new ideology. As I will now show, they were two principal factors that led to Direct cinema's new partnership with rock music.

Direct cinema had, like rock music, rejected many of the conventions of a dominant industry for ideological reasons.<sup>360</sup> Direct cinema's practitioners were disenfranchised

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<sup>360</sup> Saunders, *Direct Cinema: Observational Documentary and the Politics of the Sixties*, 5-24.

with what they perceived as mainstream documentary cinema's tendency for reproducing hegemonic values.<sup>361</sup> They saw commonly used documentary techniques such as the use of voice-of-god narration and the restaging of events as reflective of this tendency, and a less intrusive, more observational style (making use of emerging, lightweight cameras) as a more truthful form of filmmaking.<sup>362</sup>

Initially working under major American journalism outlets such as Time-Life, direct cinema practitioners such as D.A Pennebaker, Richard Leacock and the Maysles Brothers found their efforts towards a new kind of filmmaking undermined. In response, they broke away from corporate control, forming their own independent companies by the mid-1960s.<sup>363</sup> It was a move that, as Dave Saunders notes, also impacted their filmmaking, which increasingly demonstrated "emerging ideological alignment with anti-establishment impetuses."<sup>364</sup> Pennebaker and Leacock Associates – the company formed in 1963 by the two filmmakers – became an explicitly not-for-profit organization, reflecting the anti-commercial ethos of the counterculture and of rock music.<sup>365</sup> In their approach to filmmaking as well, countercultural attitudes pervaded. "Shoot whatever turns you on,"<sup>366</sup> Michael Wadleigh is reportedly to have instructed the camera crew working on *Woodstock*, a reflection of a "do your own thing" ethos present in countercultural thinking.<sup>367</sup>

This is particularly evident in Pennebaker, whose films about LSD pioneer and countercultural thinker Timothy Leary – *You're Nobody Until Somebody Loves You* (1965), and folk singer and alternative culture figurehead Bob Dylan – *Dont Look Back* (1967) demonstrated a growing fascination with, and affinity for figures associated with

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<sup>361</sup> Ibid.

<sup>362</sup> Ibid.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid., 51-53.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid.

<sup>366</sup> James, *Rock 'N' Film: Cinema's Dance with Popular Music*, 230.

<sup>367</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

the counterculture.<sup>368</sup> Crucial in the approach to these movies, and with *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* that followed, was an understanding of the imperatives of the counterculture and, by extension, the ideology of rock music. And, because of the lack of outside commercial influence, there was no need to temper these countercultural representations based on dominant notions of perceived marketability. As James has noted of both *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock*, part of their distinction from earlier films featuring rock music is that they reflected “the counterculture’s own perception of itself, rather than the cultural industry’s sense of it or its most profitable exploitation.”<sup>369</sup>

Direct cinema was also uniquely positioned to represent rock music in that it, unlike the mainstream entertainment industry, had the means of recording classic liveness. As I have already noted, the mainstream entertainment industry, for whom records were the product, perceived there to be little value in representations of live concerts and had never needed to invest in the technologies for its presentation. This perhaps explains why, in *T.A.M.I Show* and *A Hard Day’s Night*, the versions of liveness presented are staged and mimed respectively. Which is to suggest that, given the lack of technology and experience the mainstream had in representing liveness, there was simply not the precedent for documenting liveness without these concessions, nor the considered need for representing live concerts.

Contrastingly, direct cinema was founded on the principle of capturing actuality, rather than restaging events. Direct cinema’s practitioners utilized emergent lightweight camera technology that allowed them to access spaces and locations that traditional, bulky, multi-person operated cameras could not. Recording audio ‘in the field’ was also something that filmmakers had experience with. Indeed, the ability of direct cinema filmmakers to document live concerts was already in evidence by the late-1960s. There

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<sup>368</sup> Saunders, *Direct Cinema: Observational Documentary and the Politics of the Sixties*, 48-59.

<sup>369</sup> James, *Rock 'N' Film: Cinema's Dance with Popular Music*, 243.

was an established connection between documentary and genres such as blues, jazz and folk: forms that were crucial in influencing rock's artistic notions in particular relation to liveness. This is evidenced in proto-Direct cinema documentary *Jazz on a Summer's Day*, (1958) filmed at the 1958 Newport Jazz Festival by photographer Bert Stern, and *Festival!*, (1967) Murray Lerner's document of the 1962, 1963 and 1964 Newport Folk Festivals.

### **Representing Live Performance in *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock***

As I have already established, there was, by the late-1960s, an anxiety surrounding spectacle in live rock performance. Unlike in jazz or blues, where the visual spectacle of the performance was regarded as by-product of the act of playing music, rock musicians amplified spectacle in their performances. Exaggerating their movements to emphasize their tenacity and virtuosity, they asserted the authenticity of these performances by affirming them as an extension of their true personalities or inner selves, rather than a conscious, deliberately staged attempt to evoke an audience response.

For a number of critics, however, these exaggerated displays of spectacle were difficult to reconcile with the genre's burgeoning aspirations towards artistic legitimacy. In large part, this was because these performances did not adhere to the conventions established in already legitimated 'art' musics such as jazz or blues. In these genres, a precedent was established for more cerebral, introverted performance style, in which musicians were consumed by their music rather than consciously 'playing' to an audience. Critics remained unconvinced by claims of the performance as an extent of the

musician's true self, asserting they were inauthentic to their blues and jazz influences and that they undermined their claims of artistic integrity.<sup>370</sup>

In both *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock*, however, the filmmakers represent the performance in a manner that does not reflect this anxiety, instead affirming the spectacular nature of rock music liveness as a component in its artistry. They did this in two ways. Firstly, they used direct cinema's aesthetics of immediacy to emphasize the authenticity of live performance. Connoting the direct cinema movement's claims towards truthfulness and objectivity, these conventions distinguished the performance sequences in these films from earlier presentations of rock music performance, whose deliberately staged aesthetic had been informed by the conventions of mainstream show business.

Secondly, they combined these aesthetics of immediacy with an editing style that both emphasized the spectacle of the performance and affirmed its authenticity. Breaking from the tradition of observational documentary, whose characteristic long takes were intended to give the viewer no obvious angle on which to guide their response,<sup>371</sup> Pennebaker and Wadleigh used edited to guide the viewer towards a particular meaning. Rhythmic editing techniques reminiscent of those from Hollywood musicals were utilized, to not just present, but emphasise the spectacle in these performance scenes, while shots of entranced crowd members responding with awe to these displays were used to emphasize the legitimacy of this spectacle.

### Documentary Aesthetics and Liveness

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<sup>370</sup> This is discussed in the *Visual Spectacle* section of Chapter 1.

<sup>371</sup> Richard Kilborn and John Izod, "Shaping the Real: Modes of Documentary," in *An Introduction to Television Documentary: Confronting Reality* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), 68.

Both *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* are imbued with what Kilborn and Izod describe as a “rough aesthetic of immediacy.”<sup>372</sup> Characteristic of documentary films of the 1960s, Killborn and Izod identify this aesthetic in qualities such as reframing, focus pulling and partially obscured images.<sup>373</sup> During Simon and Garfunkel’s performance of *Positively 4th Street* in *Monterey Pop* for example, the red hue of the spotlights creates an image that is largely over-saturated, particularly apparent on the close-ups of the singers. As Pete Townshend and Jimi Hendrix smash their respective guitars, the image pulls frantically in and out of focus as the cameramen attempt to reframe on the imminent destruction.

*Woodstock* features a performance by Canned Heat in which the stage-side camera has to rapidly reposition in order to capture footage of an audience member who has unexpectedly jumped on stage to embrace front man Bob Hite. Similarly, a medium-close up shot on Ritchie Havens during the singer’s performance is partially obscured by the edge of the stage, which blocks out the bottom fifth of the screen. As is characteristic of direct cinema documentaries, the position of “ideal observer” is apparently sacrificed in this footage, in favour of the opportunity to look in on ‘real’ life.<sup>374</sup>

These qualities are significant to the presentation of these performance scenes for a number of reasons. In the first instance, they differentiate these performance scenes from those in earlier films by emphasizing that these events on screen occurred spontaneously and were not staged by the filmmakers. The rough aesthetic of immediacy affirms that these films were faithful documents of live performance. Through the presence of focus pulls, or the reframing and repositioning of the cameras to capture the action, the filmmakers signify that what was filmed at these festivals had

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<sup>372</sup> *Ibid.*, 66.

<sup>373</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>374</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

unfolded with minimal interference; that they had captured, rather than staged the event.<sup>375</sup>

This approach stands in marked contrast to the staged liveness of *T.A.M.I Show*. While *T.A.M.I* had captured a live performance, it had been extensively choreographed with the specific intention of being filmed. The set of *T.A.M.I* was lit for the benefit of the cameras, rather than for the benefit of the studio audience watching the live performance. All acts ran through a number of dress rehearsals the day before the filming so that cameraman could pre-empt what the performers were going to do, synchronizing their camera movements with those of the musicians.<sup>376</sup> *T.A.M.I Show's* producers still utilized devices to signify its liveness to the viewer; having every act come up on stage to perform the finale was a device intended to show the viewer that all the bands had, in fact, been present at the show at the same time.<sup>377</sup> But, this was a liveness informed by the conventions of pop music in the early-1960s, where choreography and the reproduction of recorded hits was commonplace.<sup>378</sup> Contrastingly, the use of direct cinema's aesthetics of immediacy affirmed to the viewer that the filmmakers were deferent to the new, emerging values of liveness; spontaneity, improvisation and "doing your own thing" as an expression of the artist's true self.

Direct cinema's aesthetics of immediacy affirmed that *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* were authentic representations of live rock performance, showing deference to emerging values of liveness. But, it is important to note that both films are also distinct the conventions of previous documentary representations of live performance in a key respect. One of the core characteristics of earlier representations such as *Festival, Jazz on a Summer's Day* and the concert sequences in Pennebaker's own *Dont Look Back* was the utilization of long, unbroken shots. Presenting footage in this way was meant to give

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<sup>375</sup> Ibid.

<sup>376</sup> Waller, *T.A.M.I Show Collector's Edition*, 10.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid.

<sup>378</sup> This is discussed in the *Package Tours* section of Chapter 1.

the audience a sense of watching the action as it unfolded. This characteristic directly related to affirming these films as representations of actuality.

Characteristic long takes were present in earlier direct cinema documentaries featuring scenes of live music performance. *Festival* features live performances presented in single, unbroken takes filmed in medium close-up. *Dont Look Back*, Pennebaker's film of Bob Dylan's 1964 UK tour, does the same. In both instances, the technique is arguably used to affirm direct cinema's claims towards objectivity and that the viewer is watching an unedited document that preserves the liveness of the performance. Indeed, comparisons can be drawn between the conventions of representing liveness here, and the conventions of representing liveness on jazz records, whose liner notes made similar claims towards the objectivity of the album as a documentation of actuality.<sup>379</sup> In the live performance scenes of *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock*, however, unbroken long takes are absent. Instead, these films feature heavily edited sequences, composed of shots taken from multiple camera vantages. Unlike direct cinema documentaries, which typically made use of no more than two cameras, these films made use of four-to-six person camera crews.

Keith Beattie has drawn a comparison between D.A Pennebaker's editing of live sequences in *Monterey Pop* and the construction of the climactic 15-minute ballet sequence in Powell and Pressburger's *The Red Shoes* (1948).<sup>380</sup> This comparison is a significant one. Much like Powell and Pressburger, both Pennebaker and Wadleigh inform the audience's reading of the sequence through techniques of cinematic manipulation: editing and framing are deliberately utilized to create meaning. The effect of this is to "take depictions of the real beyond the frame established by documentary

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<sup>379</sup> This is discussed in the *Improvisation and Spontaneity* section of Chapter 1

<sup>380</sup> Keith Beattie, *D.A. Pennebaker*, ed. James Naremore, *Contemporary Film Directors* (Chicago: University of Illinois, 2011), 22.

representation.”<sup>381</sup>While *Festival* or *Dont Look Back* sought to preserve liveness by presenting it as close to unmediated and as close to objectivity as possible through long, unbroken shots, both *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* use editing to guide the viewer’s response. Sequences in these films are constructed to *enhance* the spectacle of the performances while simultaneously highlighting elements that affirm their artistic legitimacy.

In the sequence of The Who performing “My Generation” in *Monterey Pop* for example, editing of is used to enhance the power of the performance. The 33 cuts during the track’s 3 minute duration are timed to coincide with Keith Moon’s driving bass drum, the synchronicity between music and editing enhancing impact of the drum hits and affirming the tightness, power and intensity of that performance.<sup>382</sup>As the song reaches its frenetic end and Pete Townshend smashes his guitar, the spontaneous chaos is affirmed by the editing, which falls out of the rhythm established by the bass drum as the cameras reframe to capture the destruction.

Editing in time with the music to affirm a particular reading of a performance is also seen in *Woodstock*, with the nature of presentation changing depending on the nature of the performance. During Joan Baez’s a cappella rendition of “Swing Low Sweet Chariot,” the pacing of the editing is much slower than in The Who performance, with a series of sustained, long takes of Baez, alone on stage and framed by a sole spotlight in a wide-angle shot. While the relentless pace of the editing in “My Generation” was used to affirm the relentlessness of The Who’s performance, the composition of this sequence is used to enhance both the power of the singer’s sustained falsetto notes and to iterate the starkness of the song’s arrangement.

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<sup>381</sup> Ibid.

<sup>382</sup> The impact of this driving bass-drum was also enhanced by the fact that *Monterey Pop* featured a soundtrack that had been mixed by noted rock engineer Eddie Kramer, unlike earlier direct-cinema documentaries which had captured a rough, often muddy audio source using a shotgun microphone.

Alongside the utilization of editing techniques that enhanced the dynamics of the performance, the composition of these scenes was characterized by an almost fetishistic preoccupation with the body in performance. As has already been noted, the physical contortions of musicians while performing had long been established a signifier of artistry in genres like jazz, and was something that was exaggerated in rock performance. The framing of shots in these sequences serves to enhance the spectacle of the performing body even further, further affirming the artistry of the performance. Cuts between close-ups of Keith Moon's hands tightly wrapped around his drumsticks as he hits cymbals, and of his face contorting with effort during musically impressive drum fills in The Who sequence are positioned to affirm the drummer's tenacity. The medium close-up of Pete Townshend during the guitar solo shows the guitarist's frenetically moving fingers, while the worm's-eye-view angle of the camera gives the impression of his powerful presence, both physically and musically.

During other performance scenes in *Monterey Pop*, cutaways to shots that emphasize the spectacle of the performer in motion are often utilized. The extreme close-up of Janis Joplin's feet stamping in time with the kick drum in the stop-start chorus of "Ball and Chain" affirms the performer's nervous energy while the spastically flailing hands and rocking torso of Jimi Hendrix as he sets fire to his guitar during "Wild Thing" evidences the guitarist's wild-man persona and the do-your-own-thing attitude that he had expressed as a component of his creativity in interviews.<sup>383</sup> In *Woodstock*, likewise, shots from the front-of-stage camera that frantically pan from Richie Havens' stamping foot to the hand sliding up the fret board of his guitar are intercut with extreme close-ups of the sweat across his brow and the protruding veins on his neck, emphasizing the physical exertion of his playing and singing and connoting his artistry.

As well as editing and an emphasis on the performing body, there is a final device used by both Pennebaker and Wadleigh in affirming the exceptional qualities of the

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<sup>383</sup> Baker, "Interview with Jimi Hendrix."

performance. Shots of audience members reacting to performances are frequently utilized as part of these films, iterating both the virtuosity and the spectacle of the scenes presented. The utilization of these audience shots is distinctive from previous films featuring scenes of live performance. In *Jazz on a Summer's Day* for example, Bert Stern is preoccupied with the audience, but in a way that is disconnected from the events on stage. One assumes that the audience scenes in Stern's movie were shot separately from the music as the viewer observes the crowd napping, talking and reading. The resultant impression is one of a-synchronicity between the audience and the performer.

In Pennebaker's *Don't Look Back*, meanwhile, the audience is heard, but seldom seen during the performance. Their presence identified by the swells of applause that punctuate the beginning or ending of a given number, they are only visible as occasional silhouettes obscuring shots of Dylan, while they are obscured by darkness in a panning shot of the Royal Albert Hall near the film's end.

Contrasting the disconnect in *Jazz on a Summer's Day*, audience cutaways in both *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* are timed to coincide with events in the performance, and show the audience reacting to a particular event. As Townshend smashes his guitar during *Monterey's* "My Generation" sequence, for example, the camera cuts to a group of male, late teenaged fans intently staring - wide-eyed, mouths open - in awe at the destruction unfolding. As the act reaches its climax, they are shown bursting into rapturous applause. During an anguished sustained falsetto wail in Janis Joplin's "Ball and Chain," the footage cuts to Mama Cass of the Mamas and the Papas observing the singer, similarly wide-eyed, mouthing the words "wow" in apparent response to the power of the performance.<sup>384</sup> These kinds of scenes punctuate both films with regularity.

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<sup>384</sup> Cass's presence here is also significant, and I return to this in the next section.

The inclusion of these scenes of audience response to the performance creates what Keith Beattie has described as “an affective and emotional identification between the audience at a live event and the spectator who watches the recorded concert.”<sup>385</sup> The concert audience’s positive reaction to the performance is meant to guide the response of the cinema audience who is positioned to identify with them. Scenes such as these highlight the contrast between the approach of the filmmakers in representing live rock performance and the responses of many of rock music’s critics toward live performance at the time. As has already been noted in this thesis, critics of the late-1960s struggled to reconcile rock musicians’ overt displays of spectacle with their claims towards artistic legitimacy, believing that the former undermined the latter. However, there is no such ambivalence in Pennabaker and Wadleigh’s films.

Had the filmmakers cut away to audience members disconnected from the action onstage, as in *Jazz on a Summer’s Day*, cut away to members of the audience that offered an oppositional response to the action onstage (boredom, displeasure, mockery etc.) or avoided audience shots altogether, the performance footage in these films might have reflected said critics’ ambivalence. Instead, the scenes of exclusively positive responses to these performances, of awe and jubilation, are used to cement what the use of editing, framing and soundtrack in these had suggested: that rock performances were spectacular, and that musicians’ displays of spectacle were a component of their artistry.

### **Representing the concert audience**

While significant parts of both *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* were devoted to scenes of performance, they were not performance movies alone. In each film, there is an approximately 50 percent split between live performance sequences and scenes depicting the various extra-musical activities of these festivals. Some of these scenes

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<sup>385</sup> Beattie, *D.A. Pennabaker*, 29.

show organizational and logistical concerns, some are of reactions to the festival and its attendees by citizens of Monterey and Bethel respectively. But, for the most part, these sequences feature attendees of these festivals in the milieu of the respective festival sites.

The decisions of D.A. Pennebaker and Michael Wadleigh to devote near-equal time to non-musical scenes in their films can be accounted to the filmmakers' attempts to represent "the counterculture's own perception of itself, rather than the cultural industry's sense of it or its most profitable exploitation."<sup>386</sup> For the mainstream entertainment industry, the most profitable exploitation would have been the music and the performer. Yet, reflecting the counterculture's perception of itself, both Pennebaker and Wadleigh documentation of these events reflects a more egalitarian approach towards audience and performer. This was, in itself, a characteristic of the emergent music, particularly in San Francisco, the scene from which many of rock's new ideological imperatives were spawned, evidenced in the Family Dog jam nights discussed in chapter one, which broke down the distinction between musician and audience by letting anyone in attendance play.

Not just apparent in the equal distribution of musical and non-musical scenes, there are also a number of sequences in *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* that evidence the egalitarian ethos in effect during the festival. Pennebaker fixates on a number of well-known musicians in the festival site during *Monterey*, wandering through the crowd and interacting with fans. The sight of Brian Jones of the Rolling Stones, resplendent in hippie regalia, blending in with the crowd around him was markedly different to the scenes of the Beatles being mobbed by hysterical fans that punctuated *A Hard Day's Night* and indicative of a differing ideology. So too is the aforementioned shot of Mama Cass, sitting amongst the Monterey Pop audience, reacting in awe to Janis Joplin's "Ball

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<sup>386</sup> James, *Rock 'N' Film: Cinema's Dance with Popular Music*, 243.

and Chain." *Woodstock* also affirms this ideal through early on, during a performance sequence featuring Canned Heat. In the segment, a fan jumps onto the stage and embraces frontman Bob Hite. Rather than ejecting the man from the stage, Hite reciprocates, continuing the embrace for the remainder of the song, offering him the vocal microphone at various points and allowing him to take a cigarette from his pocket.

### "Gentle People"<sup>387</sup>

Further emphasizing the notion of *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* reflecting countercultural attitudes are Pennebaker and Wadleigh's representations of these festivals' audiences. Significant to both films are recurring images of particular kinds of persons that embody an idealised vision of the rock music audience.

D.A Pennebaker's introduction of the Monterey audience to the film audience in *Monterey Pop*, significantly, is through a montage cut to Scott McKenzie's "San Francisco (Be Sure To Wear Some Flowers In Your Hair)" (1967). Seemingly circumventing observational documentary's tendency to offer "no obvious angle" on the footage presented "which viewers can use to guide their response,"<sup>388</sup> Pennebaker uses the lyrics of San Francisco to affirm to the viewer certain meanings about the Monterey Pop crowd, which are supported through the visuals. The lyrics of McKenzie's romanticised ode to the San Francisco hippie scene that describe "gentle people with flowers in their hair" are wholly adhered to by Pennebaker, who cuts the sequence exclusively with shots of young, attractive "people in motion", wandering carefree through the milieu of the festival site. Some of the filmmaker's subjects are even wearing flowers in their hair.

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<sup>387</sup> Scott McKenzie, *San Francisco (Be Sure to Wear Flowers in Your Hair)*(Columbia, 1967), 7" Single.

<sup>388</sup> Kilborn and Izod, "Shaping the Real: Modes of Documentary," 68.

It is images such as these that the filmmaker returns to throughout *Monterey*, with similar sequences interspersed with the film's scenes of performance.

As Dave Saunders notes, "Pennebaker repeatedly incorporates stylistic elements associated with the hippie movement's iconography" into *Monterey Pop*, the effect of which is to locate the film "in the bounds of a generic visual scheme."<sup>389</sup> And, as Saunders also asserts, Pennebaker's literal illustrations of *Monterey Pop*'s hippie crowd are "uncritical" and "sometimes unreservedly favourable."<sup>390</sup> Similarly to *Monterey Pop*, the audience of *Woodstock* are characterized by "effervescent expressions, whimsical behavior" and scenes of "naive youth in happy abandon."<sup>391</sup> Like Pennebaker, Wadleigh makes use of repeated visual elements associated with hippiedom, as well as scenes of young, beautiful nude revellers. The repeated shots of audience members comfortable in their nakedness adds to *Woodstock*'s presentation of the festival as utopian site, something which I return to later in this section.

*Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock*'s positive attribution of the festival audience is also informed though the juxtaposition of the ideals of the festival goers with the attitudes of figures who are positioned as representatives of mainstream society. Immediately following the "San Francisco" montage sequence of *Monterey Pop*, for example, the film cuts to a sequence of police officers dressed in full riot gear, holding guns, walking into the venue. There is then a jump cut to the chief of police, staring directly into the camera and apparently answering a question posed by the cameraman:

I've got to protect myself, uh, there's a lot of talk of the hippies coming... not the hippies but the Hell's Angels coming down, there's some talk about the Black Panthers coming down. If we do get 50 - 55,000 people, we're going to have a lot

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<sup>389</sup> Saunders, *Direct Cinema: Observational Documentary and the Politics of the Sixties*, 90.

<sup>390</sup> *Ibid.*, 96.

<sup>391</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

of problems. Where are you gonna feed these people? They'll eat all of the food we have in town in one day.

As if in direct response to the police chief's question, the filmmakers then cut back to scenes of hippies in the milieu of the festival site, sharing crackers and eating bread, before cutting to another montage of hippies harmoniously wandering around the festival grounds, often arm-in-arm. The effect of the juxtaposition is to contrast 'real-world' fears of the police chief: of food shortages and of conflict, with the peaceful, co-operative attitude of the attendees of *Monterey Pop*, whose sharing of food can be seen a reflection of the communal ethos of the San Francisco hippie culture.

In *Woodstock*, a sequence featuring the townspeople of Bethel (the nearest town to the Woodstock festival) works to similar effect. The audience is a group of predominantly middle aged and conservatively attired townspeople of discussing their fears about teenaged festival goers being unaccompanied by adults - "A fifteen-year-old girl sleeping in a tent? Are you out of your mind?" - and taking drugs. The film then uses split screen editing to introduce scenes of a picturesque lake, zooming in on some nude bathers enjoying what Dave Saunders notes is "a conversely serene experience."<sup>392</sup> The camera then cuts to interviews with some of the skinny dippers shown in the previous wide shot who explain their actions to the cameraman. The comments of one girl in particular are utilized to emphasize the behaviors of the skinny-dippers in the frame as natural versus the behaviors of mainstream society:

I think skinny-dipping's just beautiful. If you wanna do it; you can do it. Some people can't because their environment made them feel that it's wrong, even though they know in their subconscious that it's right, good and normal and natural.

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<sup>392</sup> Ibid.

### *Monterey Pop and Woodstock as countercultural utopias*

It is significant that the scenes of audiences arriving at the concert site in *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* are cut to songs that are used to inform the meanings of the images on screen. As has been mentioned previously, *Monterey Pop*'s opening montage of hippies arriving at the festival is soundtracked by Scott McKenzie's "San Francisco (Be Sure To Wear Some Flowers In Your Hair)." In *Woodstock*, the scenes of festival goers arriving at Max Yasgur's farm are cut in a sequence that features two songs; "Long Time Gone" (1969) by Crosby, Stills and Nash and Canned Heat's "Going Up the Country" (1968). I have already shown in the previous section that Scott McKenzie's "San Francisco" is utilized to aid Pennebaker's idealised narrative of the hippie audience, but it is also important to note that McKenzie's song also positions San Francisco as a kind of hippie Mecca, promising that:

If you come to San Francisco, Summertime will be a love-in there

If you come to San Francisco, Summertime will be a loving day.

Although Monterey is actually a town eighty miles south of San Francisco, the effect of the utilization of the song by Pennebaker is to draw a parallel between the utopian vision of the late 1960s San Francisco scene (articulated through the lyrics of Scott McKenzie) and the Monterey Pop festival. As Dave Saunders notes, the combination of the song and the images of young, beautiful and carefree hippies on the screen positions the festival as a "New Age Tir nan-Og," the earthly paradise of eternal youth and beauty from Irish folklore.<sup>393</sup>

The opening scenes of *Woodstock* cut images of workers preparing Max Yasgur's farm for the festival to "Long Time Coming" by Crosby Stills and Nash before segueing into scenes of arriving festival goers and Canned Heat's "Going Up the Country." While

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<sup>393</sup>Ibid., 86.

utilized in a notably different manner to the sequence in *Monterey Pop*, the effect is nonetheless to affirm the *Woodstock* festival site and the hippie culture more generally as offering a utopian alternative to the turmoil of late 1960s America. “Long Time Gone,” unlike “San Francisco,” is a song lamenting the state of the contemporary political climate. Written by David Crosby after hearing about the assassination of Robert Kennedy in 1968, “Long Time Gone” presents a hopeless vision, offering no foreseeable end to political unrest and reflecting a disenfranchisement from the political system more generally<sup>394</sup>:

It's been a long time comin', It's goin' to be a long time gone.

And it appears to be a long... long time before the dawn.

Speak out, you got to speak out against the madness,

You got to speak your mind, if you dare.

But don't no don't now try to get yourself elected,

If you do you had better cut your hair.<sup>395</sup>

“Long Time Gone” is a song written in response to the political unrest at the end of the 1960s that casts the America of that time in an almost dystopian manner. It is significant then, that the song is immediately juxtaposed with Canned Heat’s “Going Up the Country” as the scene changes to shots of festivalgoers arriving at Woodstock. Tonally, “Going Up the Country” is markedly different from the melancholic reflections of David Crosby, with an upbeat tempo and lyrics that speak of escaping the violent cities into rural idyll:

I'm going up the country, babe don't you wanna go

I'm going to some place where I've never been before

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<sup>394</sup> Robert Dimery Johnny Rogan, *The Complete Guide to the Music of Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young*, The Complete Guide to the Music Of (London: Omnibus Press, 1998).

<sup>395</sup> Stills & Nash Crosby, *Long Time Gone, Crosby, Stills & Nash* (Atlantic, 1969), LP.

I'm gonna leave this city, got to get away

All this fussing and fighting, man, you know I sure can't stay<sup>396</sup>

That "Going Up the Country" promises an escape from the turbulent climate of late 1960s America is significant given that the song is cut together with footage of audience members arriving at the festival. Much like in *Monterey Pop*, the audience members here are represented via the generic hippie visual scheme. The effect of this sequence is to affirm the *Woodstock* festival specifically, and the hippie culture more generally, as offering "a pre-industrial, pastoral ideal," that is a utopian alternative to the political unrest of the decade's end.<sup>397</sup>

### **"That's the relationship between music and politics"<sup>398</sup>: Removal of malignant elements**

Both Monterey Pop and Woodstock are affirmations of the kind of idealised hippiedom as referenced in Scott McKenzie's "San Francisco," and position the hippie counterculture – of which the music festival is taken as a microcosm - as a viable, and utopian alternative to mainstream society. Yet, in the process of affirming this ideal, it is important to note that both filmmakers maligned representations of elements that complicated it. As Dave Saunders states:

Pennebaker's spellbound diminution of inconvenient, malignant or troublesome factors (the attendant Hell's Angels, Black Panthers and every politically dissenting performance) keeps the pro-filmic whimsy of *Monterey* safely away

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<sup>396</sup> Canned Heat, *Goin' up the Country* (Liberty, 1968), 7" Single.

<sup>397</sup> Saunders, *Direct Cinema: Observational Documentary and the Politics of the Sixties*, 102.

<sup>398</sup> Hoddenfield, "'It Was Like Bawling for the First Time'," 24.

from its putative shadow: the ‘unquietness’ that my pierce the air at any moment.<sup>399</sup>

It is also worth noting that the complex articulations of anti-commercialism that occurred at the Monterey Pop festival are also entirely absent from Pennebaker’s film. As noted in the first chapter, the festival had initially been intended as a for-profit event until the counter culturally minded bands from the San Francisco scene protested, resulting in all artist fees and ticket sales being donated to charity. However, many of San Francisco bands used Monterey as a site for negotiating major record label contracts, contradicting their seemingly anti-commercial ideals. Whether Pennebaker and his crew were privy to these scenes remains unknown, but it still bears stating that any narrative surrounding the tensions between counterculture and commercialism that Monterey arguably epitomized is altogether absent from the movie.

Unlike *Monterey Pop*, *Woodstock* does feature articulations of political dissent, and an acknowledgement of the turbulent political climate of the late 1960s. I have already mentioned the inclusion of Crosby Stills and Nash’s “Long Time Coming” as foregrounding this. There are also a number of allusions to the conflict in Vietnam during the film, through the inclusion of politically dissenting performances such as Country Joe’s “Fixin’-to-Die-Rag,” as well as Joan Baez’s speech about her partner, David Harris, who was imprisoned at the time of the festival for not following his Vietnam draft notice. An interview with the port-o-san man, who is hired to clean the portable toilets at the event, begins as what seems as a moment of filmic whimsy. But, his revelation about having two sons – one at Woodstock and one “over there” (Vietnam) is once again a reminder of the political turbulence existing outside of *Woodstock’s* utopian frame.

Yet, while *Woodstock* is more conscious of external politics affecting youth than *Monterey Pop*, the film also diminishes elements that temper its idealised notion of the

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<sup>399</sup> Saunders, *Direct Cinema: Observational Documentary and the Politics of the Sixties*, 97.

counterculture. As with *Monterey*, more militant elements of the counterculture such as the Black Panthers, or those such as the Hell's Angels, whose lifestyle did not conform to the peaceful, gentle schema, are altogether absent from the picture. As are any suggestions of a clash between performers and countercultural figures, or performers and the audience. In their ambivalent coverage of the festival, *Rolling Stone* noted an incident in which Pete Townshend, armed with a Gibson SG, batted Abbie Hoffman, protesting the imprisonment of MC5 manager John Sinclair, from the stage.<sup>400</sup> However, the scene of the Yippie leader's aggressive ejection, which would have diminished the film's established egalitarian narrative, is absent from the film. So too is the instance of Grace Slick, dressed in "spotless white" drinking champagne and grapes backstage while dehydrated audience members sit cramped in the mud.<sup>401</sup> Woodstock's organizers, who were extensively referred to in the *Rolling Stone* coverage as and "extract[ing] the money" of the "troops" of the "cultural revolution" are seldom present in the film, approached largely a critically during the scenes in which they appear.<sup>402</sup>

### Critics' responses to *Woodstock*

In the early-to-mid 1960s, films depicting rock music liveness were few and far between. When they did appear, they portrayed said liveness through the conventions of the dominant, pop music oriented industry. *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* represented a new approach. As independent documentarians making counterculturally slanted films for a youth audience, D.A. Pennebaker and Michael Wadleigh were uninterested appealing to the dominant pop music market, nor in offering a critique of rock music liveness for a non-rock music audience. In the case of *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock*, this meant affirming the spectacular virtuosity of the rock performer, celebrating the gentle,

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<sup>400</sup> Hoddenfield, "'It Was Like Bawling for the First Time'," 24.

<sup>401</sup> Ibid.

<sup>402</sup> Andrew Kopkind, "Untitled," *ibid.*, 28.

peaceful nature of the rock music audience and presenting the festival site as a utopian alternative to the turbulent America of the late-1960s.

For D.A Pennebaker and Pennebaker-Leacock Associates, independent production resulted in limited distribution. In its first year, *Monterey Pop* played only on one screen – a porn house on San Francisco’s Lower East side.<sup>403</sup> As a result, the film’s initial audience was the San Franciscan counterculture it represented. But, while *Monterey* played almost exclusively to a niche upon its initial release, *Woodstock* brought the notion of the rock “concert film” to American national consciousness.

Like *Monterey*, *Woodstock* was an independent production, but distribution rights were acquired by major Hollywood studio Warner Bros. Hollywood’s interest in the American youth market had been burgeoning since the late-1960s, with a downturn in cinema revenue resulting in the targeting of niche, rather than broader demographics<sup>404</sup>. The Columbia-distributed *Easy Rider*, with its hippie protagonists, drug use, allusions to communal living and rock music soundtrack, had shown the market potential of the countercultural audience, with a \$19.2 million domestic return from a \$375,000 budget.<sup>405</sup> That, combined with *Woodstock*’s landmark attendance and extensive national media coverage no doubt made the feature film (and attendant soundtrack rights) an appealing proposition to Warner Bros.

The result, as James notes was a film whose production was “posited on community self-representation and propagation” being appropriated by a film industry that it was conceived outside of.<sup>406</sup> Warners’ involvement brought things that the independents could not. The studio undertook a major, prolonged hip, “portentous and ‘with-it” marketing campaign that was rolled out at a number of different sites, from rock music

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<sup>403</sup> James, *Rock 'N' Film: Cinema's Dance with Popular Music*, 243.

<sup>404</sup> Cooke, *Lost Illusions: American Cinema in the Shadow of Watergate and Vietnam 1970-1979*, 9, 71.

<sup>405</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>406</sup> James, *Rock 'N' Film: Cinema's Dance with Popular Music*, 243.

magazines like *Rolling Stone*, to national newspapers such as the *New York Times*.<sup>407</sup>

Unlike *Monterey Pop*'s single screen exhibition in a San Francisco flea-pit, *Woodstock* opened nationally.<sup>408</sup>

A critical success across the national American press, the film was met with adulation from the likes of *Time* ("far more than a sound-and-light souvenir of a long weekend concert... it is one of the finest documentaries ever made in the US<sup>409</sup>."), and *Chicago Sun Times*' Roger Ebert ("In terms of evoking the style and feel of a mass historical event, *Woodstock* may be the best documentary ever made in America<sup>410</sup>"). Elsewhere, *New York Times* critic Vincent Canby was dismissive of the film's countercultural politics – ["it] could become the totem for the benign collectivists who want to save America's soul before worrying about the garbage gap" – but still praised it as an "entertainment film" with "stunning good humor," as well as its "beautiful" treatments of performances by Joan Baez and Jimi Hendrix.<sup>411</sup> *Woodstock* was also a hit commercially, earning Warner Bros. \$16.4 million and saving the studio from bankruptcy, while the attendant soundtrack album sold two million copies that year.<sup>412</sup>

While *Monterey Pop* had been an underground attraction, it was *Woodstock* that put the idea of the rock music concert movie into mainstream consciousness. As a relatively inexpensive production, its critical and commercial success had shown Hollywood the commercial viability of presenting live rock music on the big screen. Perhaps unsurprisingly though, given the pre-standing relationship between rock and the counterculture, as well as the anti-commercial ethics associated with the music more generally and the Woodstock festival specifically, this pushing of *Woodstock* into the

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<sup>407</sup> Cooke, *Lost Illusions: American Cinema in the Shadow of Watergate and Vietnam 1970-1979*, 9, 168.

<sup>408</sup> James, *Rock 'N' Film: Cinema's Dance with Popular Music*, 243.

<sup>409</sup> Time Staff, "Hold on to Your Neighbor," *Time*, 13 April 1970.

<sup>410</sup> Roger Ebert, "Woodstock (Film Review)," *Chicago Sun Times*, May 3 1970.

<sup>411</sup> Vincent Canby, "Woodstock (Film Review)," *The New York Times*, March 27 1970.

<sup>412</sup> James, *Rock 'N' Film: Cinema's Dance with Popular Music*, 243.

mainstream was not positively received by all. The Yippies staged boycotts in a number of cities, protesting the high admission prices charged by Warners.<sup>413</sup> At \$5 a ticket, seeing the film cost almost as much as the \$7 entry to the actual festival; a festival that most people had entered for free anyway.<sup>414</sup> With Woodstock regarded by many as a free festival, there were those who thought *Woodstock: The Movie* should follow suit.

Yippie leader Abbie Hoffman was also critical of the film, describing it as a product of the “pig empire” that “purged” the Woodstock Nation from the Woodstock movie.<sup>415</sup>

Hoffman was evidently unaware that Michael Wadleigh had completed editing on the film before Warners became involved with distribution, but his comments nonetheless highlight the tensions felt in *Woodstock's* ascent to the mainstream. Still, Hoffman and the Yippies' dissenting voice was not enough to derail the film's momentum, being lost amongst the critical acclaim and commercial success that Woodstock continued to receive as it went on to become the fifth-highest grossing film of 1970 (the only time that a documentary has broken the US yearly top-ten).<sup>416</sup>

Even *Rolling Stone*, a magazine that ostensibly reported on and reflected the values of the counterculture, were effusive in their praise. While its writers were largely ambivalent towards the festival itself, highlighting its many contradictions and complexities in their coverage, their response to the film was much more definitive: “Woodstock works because it makes you part of the trip... finally, there is a movie about us.”<sup>417</sup>

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<sup>413</sup> Aniko Bodroghkozy, "Reel Revolutionaries: An Examination of Hollywood's Cycle of 1960s Youth Rebellion Films," *Cinema Journal* 41, no. 3 (2002): 52.

<sup>414</sup> Ibid.

<sup>415</sup> Joel Makower, *Woodstock: The Oral History* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2009), 318.

<sup>416</sup> Kramer, *The New Hollywood: From Bonnie and Clyde to Star Wars*, 107.

<sup>417</sup> Goodwin, "Woodstock (Film Review)."

### “Rape, murder, is just a shot away”<sup>418</sup>: The Altamont Free Concert

When released to cinemas in March 1970, *Woodstock* presented mass audiences with a countercultural ideal of the harmonious and utopian rock festival. The music was spectacular, while the communal, egalitarian ethos of the hippie movement was held up as a guiding light against the turbulent political climate of late-1960s America. But, by the time of *Woodstock*'s release, a number of significant events had taken place in rock music, and in youth culture that challenged this unity.

Taking place a week before Woodstock on August 9 1969, but with details only fully coming to light in the weeks after the festival, the murder of Sharon Tate by the Manson Family was arguably the first of these high profile instances. The Mansons' quasi-communal living arrangement, the distinctive regalia worn by the group and leader Charles Manson and their use of recreational drugs were characteristic of hippie culture. But their actions represented a dark side of hippiedom that contrasted the peaceful, communal attitudes expressed in *Monterey* or *Woodstock*.<sup>419</sup> In a post-Woodstock festival America, the US government also took a more hardline approach to countercultural activity, particularly in response to dissenting political groups. In December 1969, a number of Black Panther party members were shot dead while they slept in a police raid on a Chicago apartment,<sup>420</sup> while on May 4 1970, four were killed and a further nine injured when police opened fire on anti-Vietnam demonstrators at Kent State University in Ohio.<sup>421</sup> Rock music was also hit by the deaths of two of its leading figures: Jimi Hendrix from alcohol poisoning in August 1970, Janis Joplin of a heroin overdose three weeks later.

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<sup>418</sup> The Rolling Stones, *Gimme Shelter, Let it Bleed* (Decca, 1969), LP.

<sup>419</sup> Edward J. Reilly, *The 1960s: American Popular Culture through History* (Greenwood, 2003), 34.

<sup>420</sup> Joshua Bloom; Waldo E. Martin Jr., *History against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party* (California: University of California Press, 2016), 233-37.

<sup>421</sup> James Albert Michener, *Kent State: What Happened and Why* (New York: Fawcett Crest, 1971).

Perhaps the most direct challenge to the ideals of Woodstock, though, was the Altamont Free Festival of December 1969. While Woodstock came to represent the peak of the youth movement, giving coinage to the phrase "Woodstock Nation" in the process, Altamont is popularly remembered as the counterculture's nadir.<sup>422</sup> Organized by the Rolling Stones, the concert was partly meant to assuage the criticism that the group had faced over high-ticket prices on their 1969 North American tour.<sup>423</sup> With bands like Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead on the bill, and the added cache of being in proximity of San Francisco, arguably the countercultural hub of America, the festival was meant to top Woodstock as the defining rock concert event of the decade.<sup>424</sup>

Certainly, the 300,000 attendees of the event put it on scale of Woodstock in terms of turnout. However, the show was beset with numerous issues even before it started. Logistical problems meant that the concert was vastly under-facilitated with toilets and food and drinks vendors, while organizational issues led to the Altamont Speedway being confirmed as the site of the concert just 48 hours before it was scheduled to begin. Security for the event was provided by the Hell's Angels, who were paid with \$500 worth of beer for their services.<sup>425</sup> As the day went on, the Angels became intoxicated and numerous fights erupted between the crowd and the bike gang, who were armed with sawed-off pool cues and motorcycle chains.<sup>426</sup> An Angel knocked guitarist Marty Balin unconscious during the Jefferson Airplane's performance, reportedly after the gang became agitated when the crowd toppled one of their motorcycles, and the

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<sup>422</sup> Joel Selvin, "Darkest Day in Rock History: How Violence at Rolling Stones' Altamont Festival Went Beyond Hell's Angels Murder," *The Mirror*, 29 August 2016.

<sup>423</sup> Altamont: The Rolling Stones, the Hells Angels, and the inside Story of Rock's Darkest Day, (London: Harper Collins, 2016). eBook.

<sup>424</sup> Ibid.

<sup>425</sup> Ibid.

<sup>426</sup> Ibid.

Grateful Dead ultimately refused to perform and left the venue, citing the quickly deteriorating security situation.<sup>427</sup>

When the Rolling Stones arrived (belatedly) for their headline performance, the situation escalated further, as around 5000 people swarmed towards the Angels-perimetered stage.<sup>428</sup> Growing violence caused the band to repeatedly pause their set to make calls for order, with several fights breaking out in the crowd. In one such incident during a performance of "Under My Thumb," 18-year-old Meredith Hunter, who was reportedly so high on methamphetamine that he could barely walk, brandished a .22 calibre revolver from his jacket following an altercation with the Angels. Seeing Hunter draw the pistol, Hell's Angel Alan Passaro drew a knife from his belt and stabbed him twice in the side of the neck, killing him. By Altamont's end, two more had been killed in a hit-and-run incident, another had drowned, and 850 had been injured.<sup>429</sup>

Initial reports of Altamont, filed by journalists who had left the site before the Stones came on, presented it as a peace-and-love festival in much the same vein as Woodstock. But, in the weeks and months that followed, a very different narrative emerged. In a 14-page, 11-author article published on the event in their January 21, 1970 issue titled "The Rolling Stones Disaster at Altamont: Let it Bleed,"<sup>430</sup> *Rolling Stone* magazine were highly critical of the event's organizers, as well as the Rolling Stones themselves for the events that transpired, stating that,

Altamont was the product of diabolical egotism, hype, ineptitude, money manipulation, and, at base, a fundamental lack of concern for humanity.<sup>431</sup>

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<sup>427</sup> Ibid.

<sup>428</sup> Ibid.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid.

<sup>430</sup> Rolling Stone Staff, "The Rolling Stones Disaster at Altamont: Let It Bleed," *Rolling Stone* 1970.

<sup>431</sup> Ibid.

Other critics contrasted Altamont with Woodstock and, as Mark Hamilton Lytle notes, it soon became, “whether fairly or not, a symbol for the death of the Woodstock Nation.”<sup>432</sup>In an article written for *Esquire* in August 1970 titled “Aquarius Wept,”<sup>433</sup> Ralph J Gleason asserted, “the event challenged the basic ‘do-your-own-thing’ ethic on which the whole of San Francisco music and hip culture had been based.”<sup>434</sup> He went on to note that it represented the end of the phase of youth culture that had begun with Woodstock several months earlier:

The day the Rolling Stones played there, the name [Altamont] became etched in the minds of millions of people who love pop music and who hate it as well. If the name ‘Woodstock’ has come to denote the flowering of one phase of the youth culture, ‘Altamont’ has come to mean the end of it.<sup>435</sup>

As with the *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* festivals, Altamont was captured on camera by filmmakers associated with the American direct cinema movement. Brothers Albert and David Maysles had initially been commissioned to document the Rolling Stones’ two shows at Madison Square Garden in August 1969.<sup>436</sup> Impressed by the band’s performance and establishing a rapport with front man Mick Jagger, they negotiated to film the rest of their North American tour. But while the film might have been originally intended “as an endorsement of Jagger and company’s showmanship,” the events of Altamont made it apparent that it could not be a film that represented the live concert in the spectacular, utopian manner of *Monterey Pop* or *Woodstock*.<sup>437</sup>

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<sup>432</sup> Mark Hamilton Lytle, *America's Uncivil Wars: The Sixties Era from Elvis to the Fall of Richard Nixon* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 336.

<sup>433</sup> A reference to Woodstock festival being marketed as ‘an Aquarian exposition.’

<sup>434</sup> Ralph J Gleason, “Aquarius Wept,” *Esquire*, August 1970.

<sup>435</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>436</sup> Selvin, *Altamont: The Rolling Stones, the Hells Angels, and the inside Story of Rock's Darkest Day*.

<sup>437</sup> Saunders, *Direct Cinema: Observational Documentary and the Politics of the Sixties*, 126.

**“I pray that it’s alright”<sup>438</sup>: *Gimme Shelter***

The resultant film, *Gimme Shelter* (1970) is perhaps unsurprisingly of a different tone to its concert movie predecessors, though there are some stylistic similarities. The pre-Altamont performance footage from the North American tour is shot in much the same style as that of *Monterey* or *Woodstock*. Editing on musical cues, framing camera shots to exaggerate the exertions of the musicians on stage: the intention appears, as with the previous films, to affirm the spectacular artistry of the band. But, the audience’s “awful foreknowledge” of the immense tragedy of Altamont tempers the effervescence of the performance, instead imbuing the footage with a disturbing quality.<sup>439</sup> Indeed, the events to come are foreshadowed from the film’s start. Over *Gimme Shelter*’s pre-title screen, a radio journalist is heard reporting:

There were four births, four deaths, and an awful lot of scuffles reported. We received word that someone was stabbed to death in front of the stage by a member of the Hell’s Angels. We want to know what you saw. What was the Altamont free concert like?

When the filmmakers reach the Altamont concert itself in the film’s second half, that question is answered. The scenes presented to the viewer are markedly different to those of *Monterey Pop* or *Woodstock*. Unlike the lush, green, pastoral opening scenes of Max Yasgur’s farm in *Woodstock*, the Altamont Speedway appears barren, desert and almost apocalyptic in the opening shots. This image is contrasted by Stage manager Sam Cutler’s claim that “this could be the greatest party of 1969,” accompanied by footage of gleeful, arriving hippies as in previous concert films. But, these are crosscut with scenes showing the arrival of the Hell’s Angels, who cut through the revellers on their bikes,

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<sup>438</sup> The Rolling Stones, *Under My Thumb*(Decca, 1966), LP.

<sup>439</sup> Saunders, *Direct Cinema: Observational Documentary and the Politics of the Sixties*, 130.

foreshadowing the trouble to come. Scenes of disharmony amongst audience, performer and Angels then become increasingly present. Mick Jagger is punched in the face by a fan as soon as he disembarks from a helicopter onto the festival site, while the Angels are shown to aggressively eject dancing black youths from the stage and beat other audience members with their pool cues during the Jefferson Airplane's set.

The knockout hit on Marty Balin is also captured, as are Grace Slick's futile pleas for the Angels to "keep your bodies off each other unless you intend to love" and "not bust people in the head for nothing." As Saunders states, while the platitudes of her sentiments might have been celebrated in *Woodstock*, here, she comes across as a "pathetic, incongruous mediator" and an ineffectual "hippie mother hen."<sup>440</sup> The ineffectiveness of her speech is further conveyed as the camera cuts to the Angels, still fighting members of the audience with pool cues in hand.

As the Stones themselves take to the stage, the conventions of representing the live performance established in previous concert movies are further subverted. Jagger, like Slick is shown to ineffectually sermonize, his calls for the "brothers and sisters" to "just cool out" lost on the crowd. During "Sympathy for the Devil," the Maysles utilize the convention of informing meaning through audience reactions but to very different effect. The shot of a Hell's Angel glaring at Jagger with a seemingly murderous intent emphasizes not the artistry and virtuosity of the performance, but the rupture in harmony between audience and performer and the breakdown of the egalitarian, communal ethos that characterized earlier events. In another cutaway, an overweight, and obviously high woman makes a maniacal rush for the stage, apparently gunning for the band. Both her physicality and demeanour are a distortion of the peaceful, beautiful nude revellers that featured in Wadleigh's visual schema and were symbolic of the

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<sup>440</sup> Ibid., 132.

“Woodstock Nation.” She is subdued, and then brutally beaten back by the Angels, once again emphasizing the violent chaos of the event.

At the climax of the *Gimme Shelter* is the fateful performance of “Under My Thumb,” and it is perhaps the sequence that most defines the tone of the film. The camera begins on a medium shot of Jagger shot from stage rear, calling for the audience to “come together as one” the crowd in front of him are cramped, squashed up against the stage, and, but for one raise fist and a shout of “preach it brother,” barely respond to his message. Sam Cutler then comes to talk to the singer, at which point, the camera cuts to medium close-up from stage right, with a number of Hell’s Angels patrolling the stage to his rear.

Prompted by Cutler, the singer then meekly calls for an ambulance and a doctor to go to the scaffold, his voice cracking as he does so. His posture is limp and defeated, contrasting his confident and self-assured presence in the earlier concert sequences. “I don’t know what we’re going to do” he is heard to mutter as the band starts playing the song, affirming the confusion and desperation of the situation. The camera then cuts to a panning shot, first of the back of a Hell’s Angel jacket, then in close-up on the cramped, and weary looking audience members in front of the stage.

Later in the sequence, the camera fixes on a close-up of a fan standing to the right of the stage. The longhaired, bearded and denim-jacketed man contorts his face dementedly, and is seen clenching and unclenching his fists before placing his head in his hands and apparently tearing his hair out. Jagger then steps into the shot, out of focus, revealing his proximity to the unhinged man, who bears more than a passing resemblance to Charles Manson. The man then begins to undress, and is promptly bum-rushed by the Angels, who then throw him off into the crowd with a now familiar aggression. As the song reaches its end, with a medium close-up of Jagger wearily singing the line “I pray that it’s alright.” The line proves ominous, as the camera then cuts to a medium shot of the audience showing a green-suited Meredith Hunter lunging at Alan Passaro, and

Passaro's subsequent stabbing of Hunter. Maintaining the shot as Hunter and Passaro disappear off-screen, the concert then descends into chaos amid more failed attempts from Jagger to restore order.

It is at this point that a non-synchronous voice is heard: "can you roll back on that David?" The camera cuts away from the concert to Mick Jagger and David Maysles in the editing suite, watching the "Under My Thumb" performance. The Hunter sequence is then played on screen again, the sound faded out and replaced with Maysles' commentary as he speeds up and slows down the footage. "There's the Angel right there with the knife," he says, freezing on an image of a poised Passaro about to stab Hunter. "That's so horrible," Jagger states as the knife plunges into Hunter's shoulder, affirming that which the audience already knows. There is then a cut to Jagger in close-up, stunned into silence and apparently close to tears.

As the shot freezes on his face, the camera cuts to Hunter's body being taken away on a stretcher by an ambulance, while the police question witnesses. In the following shot, an unknown man is embracing Hunter's hysterical girlfriend. "Don't let him die," she says, "they can't hear his heart." There is then a brief cut to the Stones, ironically performing "Street Fighting Man," apparently oblivious to the event that has unfolded. Then, to a close-up of the band and their entourage frantically exiting the venue via helicopter; retreating from the scene "as if they had been rescued from an ambush in Vietnam."<sup>441</sup> The final shot of fans wearily leaving the desolate festival site the next morning rolls. Like the band, they are also retreating. The chorus to the Stones' "Gimme Shelter" (1969) – the song for which the film is named – plays over the footage, the lyrics of, "war, children, is just a shot away; rape and murder is just a shot away" a final affirmation of end of Woodstock-era optimism and the horror of the events that unfolded.

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<sup>441</sup> James, *Rock 'N' Film: Cinema's Dance with Popular Music*, 296.

**“It is not a concert film like *Woodstock*. It is more an end-of-the-world film”<sup>442</sup>: Critics responses to *Gimme Shelter***

Released on December 6 1970 by 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, *Gimme Shelter* was a film that in many ways reflected the post-Woodstock zeitgeist. The naïve optimism and communal sentiments of the Woodstock Nation had been shaken by the end of the decade, while the deaths of both Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin – two of the musical figures that had come to embody the Woodstock ethos – in the months before the film’s release were allegorical of the scene’s demise. In their review of the film, *The Hollywood Reporter* praised *Gimme Shelter* as “a devastating testimony to a bummer of an event which went berserk... one of the year’s most important films - a chilling victory for the documentary field and a major social document.”<sup>443</sup>

Yet, the Hollywood Reporter’s praise for the film was largely anomalous, as the majority of critical responses to the movie were resoundingly negative. As Michael Sargow reported in a 2000 retrospective on *Gimme Shelter* for *Salon*, the critical backlash towards the film was largely inspired by *Rolling Stone*’s 14-page article on the Altamont disaster, which had erroneously stated that the concert was staged deliberately to be filmed, referred to the audience as “unpaid extras in a movie set” and placed blame for the disaster, alongside the Stones and the organizers, on the making of the movie.<sup>444</sup>

In her column for *The New Yorker*, Pauline Kael was perhaps the most damning in her criticism. Accusing the Maysles of creating a “cinema viriti spectacular” snuff movie, her review essentially stated “the filmmakers were complicit in the murder by having

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<sup>442</sup> Vincent Canby, "Making Murder Pay: Gimme Shelter," *The New York Times*, 7 December 1970.

<sup>443</sup> Hollywood Reporter Staff, "Gimme Shelter (Film Review)," *The Hollywood Reporter*, December 1970.

<sup>444</sup> Michael Sragow, "'Gimme Shelter' the True Story," *Salon*, 10 August 2000.

photographed it and subsequently profited from its theatrical release.”<sup>445</sup> Both Arthur Scheslinger Jr. of *Vogue* and Albert Goldman Jr. in the *New York Times* accused the Maysles and Zwerin of being “unduly protective” of the Rolling Stones and “whitewashing” them of responsibility for the disaster.<sup>446</sup> Also writing in the *New York Times*, Vincent Canby took a similar line to Kael, with an article titled *Making Murder Pay*. Criticizing the “cold...unsympathetic” attitude of the filmmakers in portraying the killing, Canby went on to offer a closing comment on *Gimme Shelter* that I find telling:

It is not a concert film like *Woodstock*. It is more an end-of-the-world film, and I found it very depressing.<sup>447</sup>

The comment is significant for two reasons. In the first instance, it makes use of the term “concert film,” rather than ‘documentary’: the term by which these films were commonly identified in earlier reviews. This suggests that films like *Monterey Pop*, *Woodstock*, and *Gimme Shelter* were recognized as a new, distinctive genre by the end of 1970. Secondly, he uses *Woodstock* as the concert film’s exemplar model, implying that the affirmation of the spectacular artistry of the performer and the communal, utopian vibes of the concert were considered characteristic of this new form. Supporting this claim, he reasons that *Gimme Shelter* is not a concert film because of its “depressing... end-of-the-world” narrative.<sup>448</sup>

Contemporary critics have re-evaluated *Gimme Shelter*’s vision of Altamont as the apocalyptic end to the Woodstock Nation. Today, it is remembered amongst the greatest concert movies of all time.<sup>449</sup> But the negative response the film received from critics of the 1970s had a notable, and immediate impact on concert film production. Telling of

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<sup>445</sup> Pauline Kael, "Gimme Shelter (Film Review)," *The New Yorker*, 19 December 1970; Sragow, ""Gimme Shelter" the True Story."

<sup>446</sup> ""Gimme Shelter" the True Story."

<sup>447</sup> Canby, "Making Murder Pay: Gimme Shelter."

<sup>448</sup> Sragow, ""Gimme Shelter" the True Story."

<sup>449</sup> Kohn, "Top Ten Concert Films to See before You Die."; Clark, "10 Great Concert Films."

this is *Message to Love*, a film of the 1970 Isle of Wight festival made by American documentarian Murray Lerner.

Taking place on August 26<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup> 1970, Isle of Wight had, like Altamont, been marred by dissent and violence. But it was hardly the disaster of the former, with the chief of the local constabulary citing the festival's overall peacefulness and testifying in favour of future events in a report submitted to a 1971 parliamentary committee.<sup>450</sup> Yet, as James notes, "Lerner suppressed these aspects, presenting the festival as an unmitigated catastrophe and constructing his film as a point-by-point refutation of *Woodstock*."<sup>451</sup> Lerner's narrative might have reflected the post-Altamont countercultural zeitgeist, but it did not resonate with financial backers. Unlike *Woodstock*, which had "concealed [the] commodity relations beneath the festival,"<sup>452</sup> *Message to Love* made visible the intently capitalistic business operations behind Isle of Wight and used them as part of its attack. Backers, as well as festival organizers, were uncomfortable and Lerner's funding was pulled.<sup>453</sup> As a result, the film did not see a release until 1997.<sup>454</sup>

In the wake of the Altamont disaster, there was, perhaps unsurprisingly, a marked decline in the American festival market. A tightening of state legislatures<sup>455</sup> across the US in Altamont's wake made it much more difficult for such events to occur. Scheduled events, such as the Power Ridge Rock Festival in Middlefield, Connecticut of August 1970, were cancelled after local residents secured injunctions against them.<sup>456</sup> Of the 48 major festival events scheduled for 1970, 30 were cancelled.<sup>457</sup>

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<sup>450</sup> James, *Rock 'N' Film: Cinema's Dance with Popular Music*, 251.

<sup>451</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>452</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>453</sup> Vice Staff, "An Essay About Message to Love," *Vice*, 31 August 2010.

<sup>454</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>455</sup> James Greene Jr., "Power Ridge: The Rock Festival That Could Be Stopped," *Crawdaddy!* 2008.

<sup>456</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>457</sup> *Ibid.*

In the wake of the festival market's collapse and the decline of the American counterculture, a further shift is noted in the production of films depicting classic liveness. While movies like *Woodstock* and *Gimme Shelter* were made by independent filmmakers and then bought for distribution by major studios, many of the post-*Gimme Shelter* pictures were movies were conceived and produced the majors. What is distinctive about these films is the re-centralization of a performer-based narrative, with a shift away from representations of the concert audience. This shift is perhaps unsurprising. For record labels, as well as major studio/label conglomerates like Warner Bros. and Universal, it was the performers that were the product. And, given the toxic reception of *Gimme Shelter* by the press, mediations on the state of the counterculture were perhaps thought too risqué.

Produced by A&M Records and distributed by MGM in 1971, *Mad Dogs & Englishmen* is a film that documents the 1970 Fillmore East stop on Joe Cocker's 1970 tour of the same name. Comprised exclusively of in-concert sequences, *Mad Dogs...* utilizes the cinematic conventions of *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* to emphasize the spectacle, artistry and virtuosity of Cocker and his band's performances. With the performance scenes comprising the entirety of the film, the presence of the audience is restricted to awe-affirming crowd cutaways. While the *Mad Dogs & Englishmen* tour had been a critical and commercial success, Joe Cocker biographer Julian P. Bean notes that the pace of the jaunt was exhausting for the singer, who became depressed and started drinking excessively on the road. Following family concerns about his deteriorating physical and mental health, the singer effectively retired from music for two years following the experience.<sup>458</sup> Yet, the filmmakers, as Pennebaker with *Monterey* and Wadleigh with *Woodstock*, suppress these malignant elements, presenting a film that affirms the spectacular and jubilant nature of Cocker's performance.

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<sup>458</sup> Julian P. Bean, *Joe Cocker: The Authorised Biography* (London: Virgin Books, 2003), 70.

1973's *A Film About Jimi Hendrix* from Warner Bros. and 1974's *Janis: The Way She Was* from Universal are similarly jubilant in their nature, affirming the greatness of the performers while skirting over any troublesome aspects. The drinking and drugging that led to both Jimi and Janis' demise and the lacklustre performances that plagued that former's latter performing career are avoided, as are any attempts at allegorizing their deaths with the apparent death of the Woodstock Nation. Instead, both films eulogize their performers through what is effectively a series of greatest live hits vignettes.

Highlight performances from *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* are repurposed, alongside new footage from these concerts, as well as then-unseen footage from other gigs.<sup>459</sup>

This footage is interspersed with extracts from television interviews in which the performers' vitality and charisma is affirmed, as well as their onstage presence coming from a deep-seated need for personal expression that defies rationalization. "It's real, it's not just a veneer or a performance. It's a moment when you get inside yourself. I'm just trying to feel and not bullshit myself," Janis is at one point heard to say. In *A Film About Jimi Hendrix*, the late guitarist's brilliance is expressed through taking-head interviews conducted after his death with a number of his peers. Pete Townshend, Mick Jagger and Eric Clapton all speak to the guitarist's virtuosity, charisma and artistry at various points in the movie, further affirming to the audience the spectacular nature of the performance sequences.

## Conclusion

The emergence of a new, ideologically motivated form of rock music in the late-1960s caused a significant amount of rupture to the mainstream entertainment industry. Never before had a mass-market form so self-consciously rejected the industry's dominant practices, while simultaneously appealing to a large audience. While the industry had

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<sup>459</sup> Including, in the case of *A Film About Jimi Hendrix*, footage from the then unreleased *Message to Love*, repurposed for a very different narrative from that of Lerner's original film.

long-established, tried-and-tested conventions of representing popular music, rock was a product that now at odds with those established norms of representation and, for a brief period, it was questionable whether a relationship between the two could continue.

Yet, by the mid-1970s, cinematic representations of rock music were once again a product of the mainstream, with a new series of conventions established that reflected the ideological imperatives of rock music, as well as those of its emergent youth audience. The mainstream appropriated the techniques of emergent producers – direct cinema documentarians – whose films were informed by the same countercultural imperatives of the music. Gone were the affirmations of the show business industry and the highly choreographed, staged performances that had characterised films of the past decades. In their place came assertions of musicians’ artistry, expressions of “true selves,” and the affirmation of live performance as a primary site of authenticity in rock.

In the process of this appropriation, though, some conventions were lost. Expressions of egalitarianism, of equality between audience and performer and of the counterculture as a viable alternative to hegemonic society as seen in *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* were a reflection of the counterculture’s sense of itself, rather than of its most profitable exploitation. But, unlike counter-culturally minded direct cinema documentarians, the majors were in the business of making a profit, and performers were their product. Furthermore, in the wake of the Altamont disaster, the perhaps naïve optimism had characterised the late-1960s countercultural thinking was on the decline. With the critical scorn directed at *Gimme Shelter*, the documentary of Altamont that had attempted to reflect the countercultural zeitgeist, the notion of the concert movie as mediation on rock culture more generally was lost.

The establishment of these conventions, and the further influence that they had on the concert movie genre can be seen, not just in the films that immediately followed

*Woodstock*, but also in the years and decades afterwards. *Ladies and Gentlemen: The Rolling Stones* (1974), *The Song Remains the Same* (1976), *The Last Waltz* (1978), *Stop Making Sense* (1984) and *Sign o' the Times* (1987) are all heavily indebted to the concert movies of the late-1960s and early-1970s. There are, of course, some distinctions. *The Song Remains the Same* merged fiction with documentary, adding fantasy sequences, ostensibly meant to represent Led Zeppelin's innermost thoughts and feelings while performing. *Stop Making Sense* abandoned what the extreme close-ups and audience reaction shots that Talking Heads and director Jonathan Demme viewed as cliché. And, many of the performance sequences *Sign o the Times* presented as live were actually shot on a soundstage at Prince's Paisley Park recording complex, reflecting a less spontaneous approach than in previous films. Yet, even if the specifics of these films were different from their predecessors, the intentions remained the same: to affirm the artistry and integrity of the rock performer by demonstrating their tenacity for live performance.

**Chapter Four**  
**“There is more to pop music than  
 just long-haired, money making thicks”<sup>460</sup>:**  
**Representing rock liveness on television**

As this thesis has already shown, the growing importance of liveness in rock by the late-1960s saw the emergence of new forms of mediatized liveness in both film and on record. Television also reflected these changes, but, as this chapter will show, it did so in a markedly different way to other media. It should be noted that television, as a broadcast medium, made unique claims towards liveness compared to film and record. Unlike the aforementioned, it could present images to viewers in temporal simultaneity to their occurrence, allowing the experience of liveness in the moment. Indeed, it was these unique qualities on which television was sold, and, as several scholars have noted, the medium has often been emphatic of its liveness since its inception.<sup>461</sup>

Yet, in spite of its established status as a live medium, televised representations of rock music liveness proved problematic. This was in large part related to television's intended audience address. While filmmakers and record producers created mediatizations that appealed specifically to “a new rock audience... which wanted to ‘appreciate’ music rather than to consume pop, which had the same contempt for show-biz values, for rock as entertainment, for singles, for package tours, and the rest,”<sup>462</sup> the economics of television typically determined that a given programme reach as many audiences as possible. This need to reach multiple audiences meant that the way these programmes presented rock music liveness was often problematic in relation to rock ideology, while there were a number of technical challenges to filming live rock concerts

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<sup>460</sup> Tony Palmer, "Onimbus: Cream Farewell Concert Press Release," news release, 29 November, 1968.

<sup>461</sup> Crisell, *Liveness & Recording in the Media*; Marriott, *Live Television: Time, Space and the Broadcast Event*.

<sup>462</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

for television in the late-1960s. As this chapter will show, conventions of representing rock liveness on television did ultimately emerge by the late-1960s. But, the specificities of television meant that these conventions were often distinct from those established in other media.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first details established popular music programming of the late 1960s such as *Top of the Pops* (1964-2002) and *American Bandstand* (1957-1989). It shows how these programmes' formatting and address were reflective of dominant music industry conventions and how these conventions were increasingly incongruous with rock music, particularly in relation to notions of liveness. In the second section, an analysis is provided of *The Stones in the Park* (1969) and *Cream Farewell Concert* (1969); two documentaries produced for British television that are amongst the earliest attempts of representing the rock concert on television. As will be demonstrated however, the non-rock audience address of these texts, combined with television practitioners' relative inexperience at filming live rock resulted in representations of liveness that were often at odds with rock's burgeoning ideological imperatives, as well as representations of liveness in other media. The final section details *Colour Me Pop* (1968-1969). As it shows, the programme's positioning on an emergent minority remit channel, combined with its producers' knowledge of rock music and the specificities of filming rock liveness for television resulted in a new format that would prove influential in the future representations of live rock on television.

## Methodology

Previous chapters of this thesis have prominently utilized critical reception based largely around the American rock magazine *Rolling Stone*. For this chapter, however, a

different approach is used that is necessitated by the specificities of the medium. In large part, this is because, unlike with concert films and live albums, *Rolling Stone*, and other contemporary rock publications, did not cover televised mediatizations of liveness. I suspect the lack of mention of television programmes in these publications can be attributed to television as a broadcast medium. In the late-1960s and 1970s, television programmes, unless re-run, were only experienced at the moment of broadcast and it was perhaps this temporal quality that precluded their coverage in these publications.

Broader discourses of liveness articulated in *Rolling Stone* are referenced in this chapter, and indeed, as will be shown, publications like *Rolling Stone* had a notable impact on representations of rock liveness on television. To enrich the contextualization of the analytical work undertaken in this chapter though, material obtained from the BBC written archive has been used, largely comprising correspondences relating to the production of *Cream Farewell Concert*, the promotion of that programme, as well as audience responses to it in the form of letters sent to the producers. This material offers unique insight into the production and reception of this text, which, in turn, allows for a richer understanding of the specific challenges facing producers of televised rock liveness at the time.

The final section of this chapter features an analysis of the BBC programme *Colour Me Pop*. Yet, while the programme is of central importance to establishing conventions of representing rock music liveness on television, analyzing it at a textual level presents a number of issues. Only six of the 53 editions of the show are known to exist, with the rest having been wiped by the BBC in the mid-1970s. In order to offer a more thorough account of *Colour Me Pop*, this chapter draws on the work of Jason Jacobs. In his account of early British television drama, Jacobs uses production materials such as “programme and policy information, studio plans and memos” from the BBC written archives to

“reconstruct” lost texts.<sup>463</sup> While I unfortunately found that the BBC written archives did not hold a great deal of material on *Colour Me Pop*, I was able to find production scripts, stills, clips and audio tracks from lost editions through Wiped News<sup>464</sup> - a website dedicated to the collation of materials related to missing television, film and radio texts - as well as the Steve Hoffman<sup>465</sup> and Missing Episodes forums.<sup>466</sup>

### Pop programming in the 1960s

By the time of the emergence of a distinctive rock ideology, formats for representing popular music performance on television were well established. Yet, these formats, informed by the dominant conventions of the popular music industry, proved increasingly at odds with rock ideology by the late-1960s. As will be shown, the formatting of programmes such as *Top of the Pops* and *American Bandstand* became incongruous with the emergent imperatives of rock for a number of reasons. These included their utilization of a show-business rhetoric of ‘hitmakers’ and ‘stars’ and the convention of artists reproducing singles through mimed, rather than live performances. As well as this, there was the issue of television’s mainstream, mass audience address, necessitating the removal of countercultural or subversive aspects of rock music performance. It will be demonstrated that these aspects created tension between rock performers and the producers of these formats, suggesting the need for a new format of representing rock music on television.

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<sup>463</sup> Jason Jacobs, *The Intimate Screen: Early British Television Drama* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), 4.

<sup>464</sup> Anthony Harvison, "Wiped News," <https://wipednews.com/about/>.

<sup>465</sup> Steve Hoffman, "Steve Hoffman Forums," <http://forums.stevhoffman.tv/>.

<sup>466</sup> "Missing Episodes Forums," <http://missingepisodes.proboards.com/>.

### Singles, miming, and family audiences

Popular music programmes established by the late-1960s adhered to the conventions of the mainstream record industry, dominant since the beginning of the decade. This was apparent in their formatting, designed to reflect the singles charts around which the industry was based. Emerging in the UK in 1964, *Top of the Pops* was a singles countdown show, with a week's given performers appearing in ascending order based on their position in the charts. Its ethos was that "quantity of sales equal[ed] the quality" of a given artist, and as such only featured acts going up, rather than down the charts.<sup>467</sup> *American Bandstand*, introduced in the USA in 1957, was not a countdown show like *TotP*, but performers that appeared on the show were notably successful in terms of their singles sales. The rhetoric of *Bandstand* host Dick Clark, which routinely referred to acts in terms of their abilities as "hitmakers" emphasized this.<sup>468</sup>

The emphasis on the single as product was also reflected in the manner in which these programmes staged live performance. Popular music's distinction from traditional forms of music during this era was that records were not used as a promotional tool to sell live performance, but were themselves product.<sup>469</sup> Conventionally, popular music during this time was crafted in the studio "by office-based professionals, recorded by seasoned studio musicians, and produced by major-label or big independent producers," meaning there was no live performance on which it was based.<sup>470</sup>

As such, with the popular music industry's interest in selling records rather than live performances, the convention was for artists appearing on *Top of the Pops*, *American*

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<sup>467</sup> Paul Fryer, "'Everybody's on Top of the Pops': Popular Music on British Television 1960-1985," *Popular Music and Society* 21, no. 2 (1997): 84.

<sup>468</sup> In researching this chapter, I watched a number of episodes of *American Bandstand* that were produced from the early-to-late 1960s and Clark's use of the word "hitmaker" is ubiquitous. It appeared at least once in every episode sampled.

<sup>469</sup> Crisell, *Liveness & Recording in the Media*, 39.

<sup>470</sup> Friedlander, *Rock and Roll: A Social History*, 68-69.

*Bandstand*, and other contemporaneous music programmes to mime to the single recording. It should be noted that the miming of these performances was not something that these programmes made an attempt to disguise. The BBC, for example, was open about the use of audio playback in performances on *Top of the Pops*. As Paul Fryer notes, ahead of the programme's debut in 1964, a press release published in the *Radio Times* informed viewers that artists would mime their songs "because the purpose of the programme is to let you hear the discs exactly as recorded, though within the setting of a television programme."<sup>471</sup>

Given this emphasis on miming, rather than live performance, it is perhaps unsurprising that the aesthetic of these programmes did not reflect that of a live concert. As Jeremy Gilbert and Ewan Pearson note, the look of *Top of the Pops* was not dictated by the aesthetics of live performance, but by the aesthetics of disco halls, the site as which popular music fans gathered en masse to listen to records.<sup>472</sup> The heavy lighting gave the show a faux-nightclub aesthetic,<sup>473</sup> while signifiers of live performance such as amplifiers and guitar leads were absent, unnecessary for a format where miming was commonplace.

Also notable about the dominant popular music programming of the 1960s was its intended audience address. The economic specificities of television during a limited channel era meant that, unlike in cinema or records, an address specifically targeting popular music's youth market was not possible. As John Fisk states, these specificities demanded that television reached a mass audience, with a given programme having broad, rather than niche appeal.<sup>474</sup> The result of this was that popular music

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<sup>471</sup> Fryer, "'Everybody's on Top of the Pops': Popular Music on British Television 1960-1985," 85.

<sup>472</sup> Jeremy Gilbert; Ewan Pearson, "Metal Machine Musics: Technology, Subjectivity and Reception," in *Discographies: Dance, Music, Culture and the Politics of Sound* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 114.

<sup>473</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>474</sup> John Fiske, *Television Culture* (London: Methuen, 1987), 37.

programming of this era had “to make an allowance for the domestic or familial context in which it was received and hence the more heterogeneous nature of its audience.”<sup>475</sup> Or, as Simon Frith puts it, these shows framed popular music within a family narrative that was “also meant to appeal to parents.”<sup>476</sup>

Part of this meant making popular music uncontroversial to the older generation. This was, in itself, a process that the popular music industry had itself undertaken by the early-1960s. While rock and roll, whose emergence in the 1950s caught the mainstream industry off guard, had articulated themes of angst and sexuality that were controversial with parents, the industry’s reassertion of dominance brought a safer, more conservative form of pop.<sup>477</sup> As Friedlander notes, the industry’s new breed of “teen idols,” mostly “cute and nattily attired young men” whose music contained “a multitude of nonsexual romantically safe messages” were a self-conscious departure from the aesthetics of rock and roll.<sup>478</sup>

*American Bandstand’s* and *Top of the Pops’* presentation of popular music were, in many respects, a reflection of this. On *American Bandstand*, audiences and performers adhered to a conservative dress code and behavior policy intended to affirm the music as non-threatening to parents.<sup>479</sup> Indeed, as Friedlander notes, host Dick Clark “sold America the well-dressed, well-behaved side of rock music.”<sup>480</sup> On *Top of the Pops* meanwhile, producers aimed to present music as “safe and deodorized” and harmless to the viewer,<sup>481</sup> with pop stars cast as “family entertainers.”<sup>482</sup> The non-threatening presentation of popular music, according to Frith, was also meant to allow for an

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<sup>475</sup> John Hill, “Television and Pop. The Case of the 1950s,” in *Popular Television in Britain* ed. John Corner, *Studies in Cultural History* (London: BFI, 1991).

<sup>476</sup> Frith, “Look! Hear! The Uneasy Relationship of Music and Television,” 283.

<sup>477</sup> Mundy, *Popular Music on Screen: From Hollywood Musical to Music Video*, 98-99.

<sup>478</sup> Friedlander, *Rock and Roll: A Social History*, 69.

<sup>479</sup> Frith, “Look! Hear! The Uneasy Relationship of Music and Television,” 283.

<sup>480</sup> Friedlander, *Rock and Roll: A Social History*, 69.

<sup>481</sup> Fryer, ““Everybody’s on Top of the Pops”: Popular Music on British Television 1960-1985,” 84.

<sup>482</sup> Frith, “Look! Hear! The Uneasy Relationship of Music and Television,” 283.

oppositional reading of pop by parents: “youth music provided a bit of a laugh for grown-ups.”<sup>483</sup>

### Emerging tensions between rock and television

Upon the initial emergence of rock music in the early-1960s, performers appeared on these shows and adhered to the conventions that they set. But, the development of a distinctive rock ideology by the late-1960s created a number of tensions between musicians’ urges and the format of representing popular music on television. These tensions can be attributed to three factors: rock’s self-conscious rejection of dominant industry practices and “show-business” values, the growing importance of live performance in rock music, and the influence of countercultural attitudes on its music and its ideology.

As has already been noted several times now in this thesis, a core component of the development of rock ideology in the late-1960s was the separation of rock from the dominant popular music industry and the growing distinction made between rock and pop. Problematically though, the conventions of popular music programming were entirely informed by dominant attitudes towards pop. The treatment of popular music as light entertainment, its performers as family entertainers and as providing amusement for parents was at odds with the artistic self-importance increasingly held by rock musicians. A rhetoric of ‘hitmaking’ and show business meanwhile, implied an overtly capitalistic approach towards music making that stood in opposition to rock musicians’ progressively anti-commercial attitudes.

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<sup>483</sup> Ibid.

The format of popular music programming was based around the presentation of singles. Yet, the single was increasingly displaced in rock in favor of the long-form album, with a general lengthening of the rock song beyond the three-minute standard single time also occurring. It should be noted that a number of rock acts did continue to release singles throughout this era, and continued to have success in the singles charts, including The Rolling Stones, The Doors and The Who. But, many other rock bands such as Led Zeppelin and Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention were not releasing singles by the late-1960s, and, in spite of impressive album sales, were not eligible to appear on these programmes given the specificities of their formats.

Also of issue in relation to rock's burgeoning ideology was the precedent for miming to pre-recorded singles. Liveness was of central importance to rock by the late-1960s, with the idea of the rock musician as live performer integral to notions of authenticity. To be seen to be overtly miming was an affront to this, and something that threatened rock musicians' semblance of artistic integrity. As the decade wore on, and notions of artistic integrity became more pronounced, there were increasing resistances from rock acts towards the practice. When Pink Floyd performed "Apples and Oranges" on American Bandstand in 1967, for example, front man Syd Barrett would repeatedly stop miming vocals during the through the song during recording, forcing the producers to use shots of Roger Waters, Nick Mason and Rick Wright for the remainder of the performance.<sup>484</sup>

As well as it showing a lack of deference to live performance, miming was also increasingly incongruous with rock music because it restricted musicians' freedom of self-expression. By insisting on artists miming, producers maintained control of the show, restricting the possible occurrence of "physical or lyrical spontaneity."<sup>485</sup>

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<sup>484</sup> Michael Shore (with Dick Clark), *The History of American Bandstand: It's Got a Great Beat and You Can Dance to It* (New York: Balantine Books, 1985), 110. Nick Mason, *Inside Out: A Personal History of Pink Floyd* (London: Orion, 2004), 101-02.

<sup>485</sup> Fryer, "'Everybody's on Top of the Pops': Popular Music on British Television 1960-1985," 84.

Effectively, having performers miming was a means of ensuring that the content of popular music programmes did not deviate from what was considered family entertainment. This was unproblematic in relation to the teen idol music of the early-1960s, whose romantically safe, nonsexual messages had been crafted to conform to mainstream, conservative values.<sup>486</sup> But rock music's lyrics were increasingly informed by alternative, countercultural thinking. References to sexual freedom and drug experimentation were increasingly common, and problematized the positioning of rock music in a show designed for a family audience.

Producers of programmes featuring pop music responded to these lyrical issues by censoring them to make them suitable for the mainstream. When the Rolling Stones appeared on *The Ed Sullivan Show* in 1967, for example, the band was asked to change the chorus lyrics of the sexually suggestive "Let's Spend the Night Together" to the less explicit "Let's Spend Some Time Together." The Stones reportedly protested, but eventually caved to pressure from producer Bob Precht.<sup>487</sup> During the broadcast, however, Mick Jagger rolled his eyes every time the line was sung, gesturing his disapproval at the lyric change. Later in the year, a similar request was made of The Doors, who were asked by Precht to change the line "girl we couldn't get much higher" in "Light My Fire" to "girl we couldn't get much better," because of concerns over connotations of drug use. While the band agreed, singer Jim Morrison was reportedly angered by the demand for censorship and sang the original line twice during the performance, with The Doors banned from the show as a result.<sup>488</sup>

As well as issues with censorship during performance, there was a growing incongruity between the attitudes of musicians and the ways in which they were framed on these programmes. In particular, there emerged a rift between the address of presenters,

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<sup>486</sup> Friedlander, *Rock and Roll: A Social History*, 69.

<sup>487</sup> Dave Swanson, "That Time the Rolling Stones Were Forced to 'Spend Some Time' with Ed Sullivan," *Ultimate Classic Rock*, 15 January 2016.

<sup>488</sup> Davis, *Jim Morrison: Life, Death, Legend*, 204.

informed by conventions of show business and the dominant music industry, and the increasingly countercultural rhetoric of rock acts. Jefferson Airplane's appearance on *American Bandstand* is exemplar of this. The band, born of the San Francisco scene to which countercultural attitudes were intrinsically linked, performed the LSD referencing "White Rabbit" on the show in 1967. Introducing them, Dick Clark seemingly acknowledged their links to alternative cultural attitudes by noting that they were "a little controversial," but was quick to reassure viewers that the band were "excellent hitmakers," an attempt to frame them within the dominant conventions of the music industry.

The performance itself saw the Airplane, a band whose history and reputation was based almost entirely around their live performances, awkwardly miming to the track, with front woman Grace Slick dressed in a nun's habit<sup>489</sup> and "giving her most piercing, blasé stare – feigning the energy [she] would exhibit had they actually been playing."<sup>490</sup> Following the performance, Dick Clark conducted a customary interview with the group, but the band's responses once again exhibited a clash between the emergent attitudes of rock, and the dominant attitudes of the popular music industry. Briefly asking Slick how music such as theirs came out of San Francisco ("the promoters gave us the freedom to write our own material" she responded, distinguishing the Airplane's creative approach from that of the dominant industry), he then turned to guitarist Paul Kantner, posing the question:

Older people worry; they hear your music; they see the way you're dressed. Do parents have anything to worry about?

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<sup>489</sup> I wonder whether Slick's choice of attire was intended as a critique on the conservative dress code of the studio audience mandated by *Bandstand*. Indeed, the Airplane, in their hippie regalia typical of the San Francisco scene, stand in marked contrast to Clark and the audience, who are attired exclusively in formal wear: shirts, ties and blazers for men, conservative dresses for women.

<sup>490</sup> Jeff Tamarkin, *Got a Revolution! The Turbulent Flight of Jefferson Airplane* (New York: Atria Books, 2003), 129.

In keeping with *American Bandstand's* presentation of the well-behaved side of rock music, the host perhaps expected Kantner to respond with something to assuage that concern, affirming then-dominant notions of pop as safe and acceptable for a family audience. Instead however, the guitarist told Clark:

I think so. Their children are doing things they didn't do and they don't understand.

Before Kantner could continue, and with the comments generating an awkward murmur from the studio audience, Clark interjected: "alright, that's a square answer," before quickly moving onto bassist Jack Casaday.

By the late-1960s then, there was a growing tension between rock musicians and the dominant modes of representing popular music on television. Programmes like *Top of the Pops* and *American Bandstand* were realized around notions of popular music as a mainstream entertainment product, driven by the singles market, and affirming of discourses of stardom and hitmaking; notions against which rock music was increasingly defined against. Miming, the dominant practice of popular music television, meanwhile, was anathema to the burgeoning importance of live performance in rock. Producers and presenters were used to performers conforming to the dominant conventions of the industry. But, the notions of artistic freedom and the countercultural values that informed rock meant that performers were less willing to adhere to the established rules. Instances like Jefferson Airplane's interview responses or Jim Morrison's offending lyrics representing a loss of control that the producers of these programmes sought to maintain.

It should be stated that rock musicians arguably had an interest in being seen to break the rules at this time. Rock was increasingly defined in opposition to pop, informed by

countercultural influences that rejected the conventions of hegemonic society more generally. To its youth audience that shared these values, instances of rock musicians challenging the dominant system were affirmations of their authenticity. But, these challenges could result in their censure, as was the case with The Doors on Sullivan. And, while rock's ideology might have been intrinsically anti-television, it was ultimately a commercial form.<sup>491</sup> Television, with its ability to reach millions of people, was an essential tool in rock music's promotion. But, the with established pop television formats and rock becoming increasingly incongruous, a new mode of representing rock music would be needed if it was to have a continued presence in the medium.

### Rock concerts on television

As this thesis has already shown, the shifting imperatives of rock music in the late-1960s saw a proliferation of mediatizations of the rock concert. It is unsurprising, therefore, that such mediatizations also emerged on television around this time. Yet, representing rock concerts on television produced unique issues that were not felt in other media. As identified in the previous section, the economic imperatives of television were based on programmes reaching a mass, rather than niche audience. This meant that, unlike mediatizations of rock music liveness in film or on record, which specifically targeted rock's youth demographic, mediatizations on television would need to reach multiple audiences. There was also the matter of the technical specificities of filming live rock music for television, something that was largely unprecedented in the medium. Through analyses of two programmes, BBC's *Cream Farewell Concert* (1969) and ITV's *The Stones in the Park* (1969), the section shows how these specificities of late-1960s television made mediatizing live rock concerts problematic.

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<sup>491</sup> Frith, "Look! Hear! The Uneasy Relationship of Music and Television," 282.

Before presenting this analysis, television's unique positioning as a broadcast medium should be highlighted. Unlike film or records, television had the ability to broadcast live, for sound and images to be received temporally simultaneously to their production and reception with the viewer's "experience of event as it occurs."<sup>492</sup> While this feature of television presented distinct possibilities for the mediatization of live rock concerts, however, the live broadcast of rock concerts on television did not occur during the late-1960s and early-1970s. In part, this can be understood through television's economic imperatives. As Stephanie Marriott notes, while television was a broadcast medium, the broadcasting of live programmes was costly, and the introduction of recording technology in the 1950s saw the majority of television programming pre-recorded by the end of the decade.<sup>493</sup> Liveness, as Marriott states, would increasingly become a "genre and niche-dependent phenomenon" associated with breaking news broadcasting, but also with forms such as "ceremonial occasions, sporting matches, catastrophes, and one-off spectacles."<sup>494</sup>

Certainly, "one-off-spectacular" is a descriptor that could be applied to a number of rock events during the late-1960s. This was the era that saw the birth of the rock music festival, with events like *Monterey Pop*, *Woodstock* and the free Hyde Park concerts of 1969 featuring rock performances posited on spectacle and drawing unprecedented crowds. Yet, as Dayan and Katz have noted, characteristic of these kinds of televised "media events" was that they stood for "consensual values."<sup>495</sup> Again, this can be seen as reflective of the economics of television, particularly in relation to the expense of a live broadcast, where large audiences needed to be reached. Significantly, Dayan and Katz note that Woodstock, "the landmark celebration of protesting youth in the sixties," could

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<sup>492</sup> Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 61.

<sup>493</sup> Marriott, *Live Television: Time, Space and the Broadcast Event*, 41-42.

<sup>494</sup> Ibid.

<sup>495</sup> Daniel Dayan and Elihu Katz, "Defining Media Events," in *Media Events: The Live Broadcasting of History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), 6.

never have been a “live television event.”<sup>496</sup> Certainly, instances included in *Woodstock: The Movie* such as Country Joe’s “fuck” chant and scenes of skinny-dipping revelers could not be considered “consensual” in the late-1960s context. Given this, it is unsurprising that the televisual representations of live rock concerts that emerged during the late-1960s were pre-recorded documentaries, affording a greater deal of control to producers in the suitability of content shown.

As well as considerations of suitability of content, economic imperatives of mainstream audience appeal also needed to be considered. This is apparent in Granada’s decision to produce *The Stones in the Park* a 50-minute documentary of the Rolling Stones’ performance in Hyde Park on 5 July 1969. While the Rolling Stones were undeniably a rock act at this time, their presence in mainstream public consciousness was unlike that of the majority of their peers (the Beatles notwithstanding). The Stones released albums, but still had substantial success through singles sales. There was interest in front man Mick Jagger, meanwhile that extended beyond his music. His relationship with singer Marianne Faithful was much publicized in the media, and “kept the tabloids busy throughout... the ‘60s.”<sup>497</sup> Indeed, it is telling that the programme, while based on what was an all-day music festival, only features the Stones’ performance. Other bands who featured on the bill, including progressive rock acts King Crimson and Family and “founding father of British Blues” Alexis Korner, did not share the crossover appeal of the Stones, a likely reason for their exclusion.<sup>498</sup>

Unlike with the Rolling Stones, the decision for the BBC to make a programme about Cream was not motivated by their perceived appeal to a mainstream audience. The group did not share the Stones’ singles success, being much more album orientated, and

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<sup>496</sup> Ibid.

<sup>497</sup> "Marianne Faithfull," in *The Rough Guide to Rock*, ed. Peter Buckley (London: Penguin, 2003), 356.

<sup>498</sup> Terry Rawlings, *Then, Now and Rare: British Beat 1960-1969* (London: Omnibus Press, 2002), 115.

were not afforded the same kind of public scrutiny outside of the specialist rock press. The BBC however, was a public service broadcaster with a different set of imperatives to the commercial ITV, and a different attitude towards popular music. As Crisell notes, since its emergence as the British public service broadcaster in the 1920s, the BBC's cultural values were informed by the view that "the best' works were the classical ones," particularly in relation to classical music.<sup>499</sup> Evidence of this, "its Musical Department dealt only with classical music, while popular music was seen merely as an adjunct of popular entertainment and consigned to the variety department."<sup>500</sup>

In practice, the BBC responded more to mass tastes than its valuation of popular music would suggest. In 1934, when the corporation was still an exclusively radio broadcaster, for example, "it produced nearly three times as much dance and light music as 'serious' music."<sup>501</sup> The introduction of commercial competitor ITV in 1955 further impacted the BBC's production of populist programming, a change to which the emergence of shows like *Top of the Pops* can be partly attributed. However, the BBC's commitment to the broadcasting of the arts was still a strong component of their identity by the late-1960s. In 1967, the channel introduced *Omnibus*, a new flagship arts-based series that replaced the long-running *Monitor*. In the programmes produced for *Omnibus*' first season, the BBC's preference for classical music was apparent: *Benjamin Britten And His Festival* (1967) was a documentary about a concert hosted by the composer in his native Suffolk; *Rubenstein in Conversation With Bernard Levin* (1968), saw the noted arts critic Levin interview the concert pianist, while *Song Of Summer* (1968) was a Ken Russell directed dramatization of Eric Fenby's memoirs of working with composer Fredrick Delius.

While the BBC might have held the view that classical works were superior to popular ones, there were programme makers who noted rock music's self-consciously artistic

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<sup>499</sup> Andrew Crisell, "The Cultural Values of the Bbc," in *An Introductory History of British Broadcasting* (London: Routledge, 2001), 34.

<sup>500</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>501</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

aspirations by the late-1960s. Documentarian Tony Palmer, who had made the Benjamin Britten documentary for *Omnibus* in 1967 began pitching a programme that would be “part musicological explanation, part performance” about Cream for the series in 1968, informing producing Barrie Gavin that the band was “the most musicianly of pop groups.”<sup>502</sup> As the director later noted, his motivation for doing so came from a recognition that shows like *Top of the Pops* could not afford groups like Jimi Hendrix and Pink Floyd the “serious coverage” that reflected their music.<sup>503</sup>

Yet, the placing of *Cream Farewell Concert* within the context of a pre-existing series meant that it would, like *The Stones in the Park*, also have to appeal to a demographic outside of the core audience for rock music. In this case, that audience was the existing viewers of BBC *Omnibus*: fans of classical music that, it was perceived, had the same cultural values as the BBC. This was evidenced in the press release for the programme put out by the BBC, in which Tony Palmer asserted that *Cream Farewell Concert* would “prove once and for all that there is more to pop music than just long haired, money making thicks.”<sup>504</sup> Certainly, this comment was not likely aimed at rock fans, whose support of the self-consciously artistic aspirations of rock was well established.

### Representing live performance

The first concert from the Rolling Stones since their self-imposed live hiatus in 1967, the band debuted a new set at Hyde Park that reflected burgeoning attitudes around live rock performance. Speaking with Jonathan Cott for *Rolling Stone* in 1968, Jagger stated that the band would not return to live performance if it meant reproducing their hit

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<sup>502</sup> Tony Palmer, Telegram to Mr. Barrie Gavin, 20 June 1968.

<sup>503</sup> Phelim O'Neill, "Tony Palmer: He's with the Band," *The Guardian*, 28 July 2013.

<sup>504</sup> Palmer, "Omnibus: Cream Farewell Concert Press Release."

singles as they had done during the package tour era.<sup>505</sup> Reflecting this, the Hyde Park set was light on hits, with a heavy emphasis on album tracks from *Beggar's Banquet* (1968) and their soon to be released *Let it Bleed* album, as well as improvisation heavy blues covers. Only three singles – "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction," "Jumpin' Jack Flash" and "Honky Tonk Women" – were featured amongst the fourteen songs the band performed at the show.<sup>506</sup>

But, while the concert itself was reflective of emergent attitudes towards rock live performance, the selection of musical material for *The Stones in the Park* television programme reflected the dominant attitudes of pop. Of the six complete songs featured in the television broadcast, three were singles, a ratio disproportionate to the number performed at the original show. The emphasis on singles reflects the approach of dominant programmes like *Top of the Pops* where the number of singles sold equated to a track's given quality. Further evidence of this is that "Satisfaction," the band's highest performing single at the time, is positioned out of sequence from the original concert set list. "Satisfaction" was the tenth song performed at Hyde Park, but is the first full song featured in the programme.<sup>507</sup> There is a notable contrast between this approach to musical selection and the approach on the Rolling Stones' official live album *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out* (1970), of which the band had creative control. On *Ya-Ya's* the running order of the album was faithful to the original Madison Square Garden concerts, as was the ratio of album tracks, covers and singles featured.<sup>508</sup>

Deference to dominant pop music conventions, rather than emergent live rock ideology, is further evidenced in *The Stones at the Park's* representation of musical improvisation.

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<sup>505</sup> *The Rolling Stone Interviews: 1967-1980*, 49.

<sup>506</sup> "Rolling Stones 1969 Setlists," (SetlistFM).

<sup>507</sup> That the song appears out of sequence is evident upon viewing due to Mick Jagger's changing state of dress. The singer began the Hyde Park show wearing a white lace blouse and adorned with jewelry, but had, by the middle of the set, stripped down to a pink vest and trousers. The changing of the running order means that Jagger starts the show in a state of undress, is suddenly dressed, and then becomes undressed again.

<sup>508</sup> "Rolling Stones 1969 Setlists."

The increased prominence of improvisation and spontaneity in live rock music was a signifier of artists' musical tenacity and featured heavily in the Stones' Hyde Park set. As on the US tour that followed later in the year, Hyde Park featured versions of "Midnight Rambler" and "I'm Free" extended by improvisational midsections. But, while both tracks feature in *The Stones in the Park*, they are significantly truncated, with these improvisational segments removed. "Midnight Rambler," for example, cuts in at the climax of the improvisational mid-section as it builds back into the verse, resulting in a version of the song that is just over three minutes long, rather than the nine minute showpiece that featured in the band's concerts (that again, was included on the band's *Get Yer Ya-Ya's Out* LP).

In the case of "I'm Free," meanwhile, both sound and visual of the performance fade out as it reaches Keith Richard and Mick Taylor's extended solo section, replaced with a shot of the audience in the festival milieu, before fading back in as the band hits the chorus. As a result, the song that ran to over five minutes in concert (as evidenced by the version included on the *LIVEr Than You'll Ever Be* bootleg) is here presented as a truncated, two-and-a-half minute version. While improvisation was a value integral to rock ideology, it did not reflect the reproduced hits of pop, which accounts for its removal here. Further emphasizing this is that both "Midnight Rambler" and "I'm Free" were cut down to three-minute lengths, conventional of the pop single rather than the elongated tracks of the rock album.

*Cream Farewell Concert* shows a greater deference to the presentation of musical improvisation than *The Stones in the Park*, reflecting its acknowledgement of rock's artistic aspirations. While it should be noted that the programme also alters the running order of the concert to emphasize hit singles, moments of musical improvisation were

not excised as they were in the Stones programme.<sup>509</sup> However, the presentation of these moments in *Farewell Concert* was not unexpurgated, as on live albums. Notably, scenes of improvisation were accompanied by voice-of-God narration. Reflecting Palmer's assertion that the programme would be a "musicological explanation" of the band, the dialogue contextualizes the footage in musicological terms.<sup>510</sup> Over the mid-section of "Politician" for example, the following is heard:

Once a basic harmonic and rhythmic pattern is established, the melody is one of free improvisation. It often goes on for 20 or 30 minutes, but is held together by [Jack] Bruce's flowing, spontaneous bass line. Bruce is also an expert on Indian music and considers the influence of Indian music, its melodic freedom, its drones, its rhythmic complexity, to be rock's most substantial contribution to Western music. Just as in Indian music the Tabla player or drummer will talk to the sitar player with recognizable sound patterns. So rock music like the Cream's developed similar patterns.

The use of voice-of-God narration to contextualize musical performance in this way was a common attribute of BBC *Omnibus* programming at this time. In *Benjamin Britten and His Festival* (1967), for example, voice-of-God narration over a performance of the composer's "The Golden Valley" informs the audience that the piece "is typical of its composer: practical, for children, of the sea. Moral in feeling, intense as drama, prolifically inventive as music, with a cold edge of terror, darkening the innocent surface."<sup>511</sup>

Typical of the BBC's presentation of art music, the use of voice-of-God narration in this way was reflective of the broadcaster's commitment to "inform, educate and entertain"

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<sup>509</sup> Opening the *Farewell Concert* programme, "Sunshine of Your Love" was actually the encore at the Albert Hall Concert.

<sup>510</sup> Palmer.

<sup>511</sup> "Benjamin Britten and His Festival," in *Omnibus* (BBC, 1967).

through its programmes.<sup>512</sup>And, as Kilborn and Izod note, the effect of such narration was to give authority, as well as anchoring certain meanings in relation to what was being shown:

...It usually presents information in a rhetorical style designed to impress the listener with the thought that the commentator is offering the only reasonable way of looking at the topic under consideration.<sup>513</sup>

While the affirmation of Cream's musical virtuosity through their improvisational ability was in keeping with burgeoning attitudes towards rock music liveness, the use of voice-of-God narration to emphasize this was not. In the first instance, talking over the performance was a rejection of the value of representing live performance "unadulterated" that was emergent in other mediatizations of liveness at the time.<sup>514</sup> Secondly, this analytical approach towards performance in this way, while perhaps appropriate to classical music, was at odds with the attitudes of rock, implicit in which was a rejection of this kind of performance analysis. As has already been noted in this thesis, improvisation and spontaneity in rock was informed by blues, where it was utilized to "turn attention away from the song as a product of a deliberate and often quite arduous process of composition," emphasizing the impression of thoughts and feelings being expressed in the moment.<sup>515</sup> Rock, in turn had developed attitudes towards live performance that saw it as coming from a deep-seated need for personal expression that defied explanation, something reflected in rock criticism which often contextualized performers actions as "doing what comes naturally."<sup>516</sup>

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<sup>512</sup> Crisell, "The Cultural Values of the Bbc," 27-30.

<sup>513</sup> Kilborn and Izod, "Shaping the Real: Modes of Documentary," 58.

<sup>514</sup> Heylin, *Bootleg! The Rise & Fall of the Secret Recording Industry*, 52.

<sup>515</sup> Evans, "The Development of Blues," 22.

<sup>516</sup> Hopkins, "The Doors on Stage: Assaulting the Libido."

### Technological limitations

So far, this section has addressed issues in representing live rock performance on television in relation to notions of audience address. But, it should also be noted that there were a number of issues faced by producers in the making of these programmes were practical. Problematically, there was little established precedent for the filming of rock music live performance in television, a factor exacerbated by the difficulties of filming at rock concerts using television cameras.

By the late-1960s, there were established precedents for filming concerts on television, but the nature of performances filmed were distinct from those in rock music. Variety programmes such as *The London Palladium Show* (1966-1969, ITV) and *The Hollywood Palace* (1964-1970, ABC) represented live performances of music, comedy, dance, and magic, but these shows were produced with the specific intention of being filmed. Performances were pre-rehearsed, choreographed and staged to consider the placement of cameras.<sup>517</sup> The BBC, meanwhile, was well versed in the filming of concerts. As Keith Negus notes, the corporation published an Engineering Monograph titled *The Broadcasting of Music on Television* in 1962, summarizing the technical and aesthetic principles that had been developed since the 1930s.<sup>518</sup> Yet, reflecting the BBC's emphasis on the form, these techniques were almost exclusively geared towards the filming of classical music, offering guidance on the filming of orchestral ensembles, concert pianists and the like.<sup>519</sup> Crucially, classical was a form in which, unlike rock music, performers were typically static and seated.

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<sup>517</sup> "Variety Shows," <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/pioneers-of-television/pioneering-programs/variety-shows/>.

<sup>518</sup> Keith Negus, "Musicians on Television: Visible, Audible and Ignored," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 131, no. 2 (2006): 319-20.

<sup>519</sup> *Ibid.*

Problematically though, rock music performances were neither static, nor choreographed in a manner that considered them being filmed. As has already been stated in the introduction, visual spectacle was a burgeoning component of rock music artistry by the late-1960s, with an emphasis on gestures of spontaneity that reflected the idea of rock performance as instinctual self-expression. Part of the reason that direct cinema practitioners established a successful precedent in documenting rock performers in the late-1960s was that their filming technology was well positioned to document these spontaneous displays. Its filmmakers shot on lightweight 16mm handhelds with zoom lenses. This allowed for the rapid reframing of shots in response to the action occurring on stage and an unprecedented emphasis on the "individual; moving freely in his or her *own milieu*."<sup>520</sup> Unlike the 16mm handheld cameras used by direct cinema practitioners, however, commonly used television cameras in the 1960s such as the RCA TK-40/41 and the EMI 2001 were incredibly bulky.<sup>521</sup> Typically weighing over 300lbs, they could not be operated by hand and were mounted on fixed position tripods. Handheld colour cameras would not come into general use in television until the early 1970s.<sup>522</sup>

The limitations of television cameras in filming rock music live performance were felt in both *Cream Farewell Concert* and *The Stones in the Park*. In the case of *Farewell Concert*, which was shot on four mounted broadcast cameras positioned around the venue, there were repeated issues with cameramen reframing to capture the onstage action. While reframing of shots in response to performers' movements was not an issue for direct cinema filmmakers, the mounted television cameras could not be moved quickly enough to capture the action. As a result, there are myriad instances in the programme where images on screen do not correspond to the music heard.

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<sup>520</sup> Kilborn and Izod, "Shaping the Real: Modes of Documentary," 66.

<sup>521</sup> Bobby Ellerbee, "Eyes of a Generation (Television Camera History Archive)," <http://eyesofageneration.com/home.php>.

Ibid.

<sup>522</sup> Ibid.

In *The Broadcasting of Music on Television* monograph, the importance of the musically motivated close-up was emphasized.<sup>523</sup> And indeed, this was also a characteristic of direct cinema concert movies, which cut to lead guitarists during guitar solos, or drummers performing fills. Musically motivated close-ups in both *Farewell Concert* and *Stones in the Park*, however, are sporadic due to the limited coverage available. Shots of Eric Clapton and Keith Richards are seldom used during guitar solos, and when they do appear, they are often shot in close-up on their faces, cutting their guitars out of the frame. Awkwardly framed shots of musicians' backs and shoulders are also commonplace, reflecting the fixed movement that television cameras afforded.

This limited coverage also resulted in filmmakers utilizing footage shot asynchronously from the audio. In both *Cream Farewell Concert* and *The Stones in the Park*, there are several instances of scenes from other parts of the concerts being interspersed to patch the limited footage available. Scenes of Jack Bruce's bass playing or Mick Jagger's vocal performance intermittently being out of synch with the audio evidence this. These instances are perhaps most apparent during Ginger Baker's scenes in *Farewell Concert*, where the drummer's outfit changes between shots when footage from earlier in the show is interspersed.

### Responses to *Cream Farewell Concert*

As has been shown, while television responded to changes in rock music by representing live performance at the site of the live concert, the specificities of television production meant that these programmes needed to address audiences distinct from rock's core, youth fan base. Problematically though, doing so meant that modes of

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<sup>523</sup> Negus, "Musicians on Television: Visible, Audible and Ignored," 320.

representation utilized in these texts were often at odds with the burgeoning rock ideology, while television's unfamiliarity with filming live rock music and the limitations of heavy television cameras created further issues. That the presentation of liveness in these texts did not appeal to rock fans is evidenced by the myriad letters of complaint received by the BBC in relation to *Cream Farwell Concert*. Regarded as "the worst TV show of the decade," the problems highlighted by these fans reflect the incongruities in the programme's address in relation to emerging values around rock live performance.<sup>524</sup>

Firstly, there were multiple complaints about the truncation of live performance in the programme, as well as the changing of the set order. The treatment of the performance was considered a "massacre" by one correspondent, who criticized the producers for not having "respect for Cream and the fans" by giving them what they wanted – a presentation of the "full complete concert... in the correct order, without other film, comments and without commentary (sic), because this was not needed." It was also noted "the running order was most strange, having one of the last songs on first, the first song in the middle and a middle song on the end!"<sup>525</sup> Reflected in these comments is a frustration in the programme not retaining fidelity to the original concert: a core concern in the mediatization of rock liveness. Notably, in the months that followed *Cream Farwell Concert's* release, bootleg live recordings would find favor with rock fans and critics because of their semblance in representing live rock "unadulterated and unexpurgated,"<sup>526</sup> contrasting the mode of representation in the Cream programme.

Surely the high-point of Cream is the atmosphere that develops up through the act until it reaches an intensity that makes you feel like jumping on stage and joining in, yet on Omnibus, we saw "Sunshine of Your Love" which if I am not

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<sup>524</sup> D Leather, Letter to Tony Palmer, 6 January 1969.

<sup>525</sup> Lynn Best, Letter to Tony Palmer, 6 January 1969.

<sup>526</sup> Heylin, *Bootleg! The Rise & Fall of the Secret Recording Industry*, 52.

wrong was the first encore, played first.<sup>527</sup>

The sense of *Cream Farewell Concert* as an ineffective representation of liveness was further noted in criticisms of the filming. Viewers criticized the visuals of the programme for “bearing no relation to the rhythm of their music,”<sup>528</sup> featuring “ridiculously close-up shots,”<sup>529</sup> and the absence of “views of each performer either full or half-length”<sup>530</sup> as well as the lack of shots of all three group members.<sup>531</sup> “So please no more rubbish just a good picture of a group and one member alone if it is a solo,” one commentator stated, reflecting the aforementioned absence of shots of Eric Clapton during lead guitar sections.<sup>532</sup> Significant to these comments is that they reflect the growing imperatives of a rock audience “that wanted to appreciate music rather than consume pop.”<sup>533</sup> One comment in particular articulates this, stating that the overall effect of the programme “made it difficult to listen to the music, or rather to concentrate on it.”<sup>534</sup>

The commentary track in *Cream Farewell Concert*, characteristic of the BBC *Omnibus* format, was also negatively described as a “load of waffle.”<sup>535</sup> Significantly, these letters of complaint articulated a desire for an alternative approach from the intellectualization of rock music as seen in the film: one that emphasized letting people “form their own opinions”:

This was more or less unbearably bad rubbish, and I think people have long been fed up of given this sort of pre-digested, spoon fed, condensed instant pseudo-psychological potted explanations of, in this case, the Cream’s

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<sup>527</sup> Ian Wallace, Letter to Tony Palmer, 13 January 1969.

<sup>528</sup> PD. Creiss, Letter to Tony Palmer, 7 January 1969.

<sup>529</sup> S Wemsley, Letter to Tony Palmer, 7th January 1969.

<sup>530</sup> Leather.

<sup>531</sup> Wemsley.

<sup>532</sup> Ibid.

<sup>533</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

<sup>534</sup> Leather.

<sup>535</sup> Creiss.

popularity. People are intelligent enough to form their own opinions... by all means provoke people into thinking, but there is no one in the world capable of doing peoples' thinking for them.<sup>536</sup>

These words are reflective of the “do-your-own thing” ideology pervasive in rock at the time,<sup>537</sup> as well as highlighting the issues in positioning rock music within the existing *Omnibus* format. Rock fans did not want rock music to be treated as a mainstream entertainment product in the dominant industry sense. But, while they wanted mode of representations that acknowledged its artistry, and by extension, the artistry of its live performance, these modes needed to do so in a way that reflected rock's emerging values, rather than dominant notions pertaining to art and culture. Indeed, as one letter signed off, “maybe one day, you might learn that what we want and what you think we want are two very different things.”<sup>538</sup>

### *Colour Me Pop*

Mediatizations of live concerts became the standard way of representing rock music liveness in film and on record. But, in the case of television, economic and technical specificities made such mediatizations problematic. By the turn of the decade though, a format more successful its representation of rock music liveness would emerge, featuring a number of modes that would go on to become conventions by the early-1970s. This final section presents an analysis of *Colour Me Pop*, a studio-based music programme produced for BBC2 between 1968 and 1969 that was, distinctively from *Top of the Pops* and *American Bandstand*, geared to a rock audience. As is shown, the address of *Colour Me Pop* was facilitated by BBC2's unique remit to cater to minority tastes at the time. And, while it was studio based, its producers' familiarity with the burgeoning rock

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<sup>536</sup> Leather.

<sup>537</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 167.

<sup>538</sup> Best.

ideology resulted in values of rock music liveness being affirmed through the show's format and aesthetic.

As has already been shown, there were, during the 1960s, two dominant notions surrounding the production of television content. On the one hand, commercial broadcasters regarded television as a mass-entertainment medium, with economic imperatives that required programmes to cater to as many demographics as possible. On the other, notions of quality television, "associated with values borrowed from the arts" pervaded in public broadcasting.<sup>539</sup> However, representing rock music, and in particular rock music liveness, within either of these frameworks was problematic. Rock's self consciously artistic imperatives were increasingly at odds with notions of mass-entertainment: pop music programming, reflecting the imperatives of the dominant industry, made little concession to the burgeoning importance of live performance in the genre. And, while a programme like *Cream Farwell Concert* did acknowledge rock's artistic aspirations, its intellectual, analytical approach reflected classical music discourses that contradicted rock ideals.

It was in the late-1960s that a format reflecting the burgeoning ideals of rock music began to emerge on television. Notably, its arrival was facilitated by the introduction of a third British broadcast channel, the imperatives of which were distinct to those of BBC1 and ITV. The Pilkington Report, published in Great Britain in 1962, had raised concerns over the increasing populism of British television since the introduction of ITV as a commercial competitor to the BBC.<sup>540</sup> Its response had been to award the BBC a new channel, BBC2, "whose brief was to make programming for minority tastes which were

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<sup>539</sup> John Ellis, "Channel 4: From Offer-Led to Demand-Led Television," in *Seeing Things: Television in the Age of Uncertainty* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2000), 149.

<sup>540</sup> Paddy Scannell, "Public Service Broadcasting: The History of a Concept," in *Understanding Television*, ed. Andrew Goodwin; Garry Whannel (London: Routledge, 1990), 18.

being badly catered for by BBC1 and ITV."<sup>541</sup> In part, this remit included the expansion of TV coverage of arts and culture.<sup>542</sup>

BBC2's remit would come to be informed, by the mid-1970s, through longstanding BBC distinctions regarding culture, with its programming characterized by "quality television" staples such as "costume drama, expensive documentaries and intellectual conversation."<sup>543</sup> But, its interpretation of this in the mid-to-late-1960s was somewhat more radical, and arguably reflective of the pluralistic nature of thinking pervasive in the era. Exemplar of this was its flagship arts programme *Late Night Line-Up* (1964-1972). As Peter Mills notes, *Late Night Line-Up*'s chief characteristic was "the undivided nature of its representation: a single edition might include Ivor Culter, Leo McKern, Jimi Hendrix and Pierre Schoenderffer."<sup>544</sup> The programme also recognized the changing imperatives of rock music in the late 1960s, viewing it as "something worthy of extended scrutiny," leading to the introduction of *Colour Me Pop* as part of its schedule.<sup>545</sup>

Both *Late Night Line-Up* and *Colour Me Pop* were produced by Michael Appleton, a figure of central importance to the development of a format for rock music on television.

Appleton had an enthusiasm for rock, and his desire to produce a show for rock music on television was informed by what he would later describe as "the tremendous wastage of good music going on" through the singles focus of programmes like *Top of the Pops*.<sup>546</sup>

Appleton was not the only producer at the BBC with an enthusiasm for rock music. So too was Tony Palmer, who made the *Cream Farewell Concert* programme for *Omnibus*.

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<sup>541</sup> Ellis, "Channel 4: From Offer-Led to Demand-Led Television," 160.

<sup>542</sup> Peter Mills, "Stone Fox Chase: The Old Grey Whistle Test and the Rise of High Pop Television," in *Popular Music and Television in Britain*, ed. Ian Inglis (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 56.

<sup>543</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>544</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>545</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>546</sup> Michael Appleton, *Commentary Track: The Old Grey Whistle Test 30th Anniversary Dvd* (BBC, 2001).

But, unlike Palmer, he did not need to make his programme fit to the imperatives of an established format and to address an established audience. As well as this, Appleton's enthusiasm for rock music was matched by his understanding of rock music culture.

Aware of the changes in rock ideology through a familiarity with emerging US rock magazines such as *Rolling Stone*, the manner in which *Colour Me Pop* was formatted was reflective of these changes.<sup>547</sup>

### A rock-friendly format

*Colour Me Pop* shared a genus with programmes like *Top of the Pops* in that it was studio-based, rather than filmed at the site of the live concert, a decision likely informed by the programme's limited budget, as well as the aforementioned technical issues with filming live rock concerts for television in the late-1960s. Yet, the studio location notwithstanding, the format was markedly different from that of *Top of the Pops*, reflecting its specific articulation towards the rock demographic. Unlike *Top of the Pops* or *American Bandstand*, which featured multiple performers during a given episode, each edition of *Colour Me Pop* was a thirty-minute showcase for a single act, reflecting the conventions of an album oriented, rather than singles oriented genre. Telling of this distinctive rock emphasis was the number of album oriented rock bands including Fleetwood Mac, Robert Fripp and Family that made their British television debuts on the programme, with the latter two acts both notably absent from the *Stones in the Park* documentary.

Not driven by the reproduction of hit singles, *Colour Me Pop's* format was notably indebted to the conventions of rock live performance. Bands were effectively given a

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<sup>547</sup> Mills, "Stone Fox Chase: The Old Grey Whistle Test and the Rise of High Pop Television," 58.

half-hour set to perform material of their choosing, with a relative freedom afforded as to what they played, a reflection of the “do-your-own-thing” ideology prevalent in rock.<sup>548</sup> Pop programmes, required the performance of three minute hit singles. But, the 30-minute slot of *Colour Me Pop* reflected the duration of the burgeoning album format in rock, as well as the increasing importance of extending numbers through improvisation and spontaneity during live performance. The impact of this new format was evidenced in the way a number of artists used their appearances on the programme. During the Small Faces’ appearance on the show in June 1968, for example, 25 of their 30 minutes were given over to a rendition of “Happiness Stan”: the conceptual B-side of their *Ogdens’ Nut Gone Flake* album.<sup>549</sup> When they played on the show in October of that year, Frank Zappa and the Mothers of Invention opened with a two-and-a-half minute version of “Oh in the Sky” before devoting the remainder of their set to a 23-minute extended and heavily improvised run-through of instrumental track “King Kong” from the band’s *Uncle Meat* record.<sup>550</sup> Significantly, Zappa prefaced the performance with an announcement to camera, acknowledging the distinction between the approach of *Colour Me Pop* and that of dominant pop music television:

I’d like to thank the people at the BBC for giving us a chance to do some of the things on television here that they would never let us do in the United States.

Adding to this distinction was the minimal presence of the presenter in *Colour Me Pop*. Unlike established pop programming where the presenter featured heavily, introducing acts, interviewing them and linking segments, the function of the host in *Colour Me Pop* was much more perfunctory. Presenter Mike Dean appears at the beginning of the Small Faces episode to briefly introduce the band, before the performance of “Happiness Stan” to inform the viewer that the piece is taken from the *Ogdens’ Nut Gone Flake* album, and

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<sup>548</sup> Frith, *The Sociology of Rock*, 168.

<sup>549</sup> “The Small Faces,” in *Colour Me Pop*, ed. Steve Turner (BBC, 1968).

<sup>550</sup> Steve Turner, “The Mothers of Invention,” *ibid.*

at the end of the band's performance to close the programme. Figures like Ed Sullivan and Dick Clark were gatekeepers of pop music as mass entertainment, affirming performers' status as stars or hitmakers. Peter Drummond's narration on *Cream Farewell Concert* attempted to ascribe live rock the same intellectual scrutiny as classical music. But, the sparse commentary of *Colour Me Pop* reflected the notion of live performance as a form of personal expression, defying rationalization. Indeed, later episodes, such as those featuring *The Move* and *The Moody Blues* from 1969, would see the figure of the presenter dropped altogether, beginning with the *Colour Me Pop* title card followed immediately by the start of the performance. While *Cream Farewell Concert* was criticized for its "pseudo-psychological potted explanations" of the band's performance, *Colour Me Pop* responded to the rock music value of letting the music doing the talking.

That *Colour Me Pop* was geared to specifically address the rock demographic was also affirmed by its scheduling. Programmes like *Top of the Pops* and *American Banstand* were presented as family viewing, a fact emphasized by their positioning in the "tea-time" slot of the television schedule. *Colour Me Pop*, contrastingly was part of the late night line-up on a minority remit channel.<sup>551</sup> The show was broadcast at 11.25pm, the last show on BBC2 before the channel closed down.<sup>552</sup> Positioning *Colour Me Pop* in this way distanced the programme from the familial and domestic context of earlier pop shows and was emphatic of the non-mainstream status of rock music. Furthermore, the scheduling of *Colour Me Pop* as the final show of the evening reflected values of rock liveness. In keeping with the improvisational and spontaneous tendencies of rock musicians, it implied that performers had leeway to overrun without fears of interrupting scheduled broadcasting.

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<sup>551</sup> Hill, "Television and Pop. The Case of the 1950s," 94.

<sup>552</sup> BBC Genome, "Colour Me Pop Listings 1968-1969," in *Radio Times*.

### Aesthetics of liveness

As well as through its format, *Colour Me Pop* was emphatic in its adherence to values of rock liveness through its aesthetic. While based in a studio like *Top of the Pops*, *Ed Sullivan* and *American Bandstand*, its look was markedly distinct from that of established pop music programming. On *Top of the Pops*, sets had been dressed to give the impression of music being performed in a discotheque, replete with an audience of modish dancing teenagers, adhering to conventions of pop.<sup>553</sup> *Colour Me Pop*, however, featured no set dressing, and no studio audience, with artists performing in front of bare studio walls. Mills notes that this aesthetic choice was likely informed by the show's limited budget,<sup>554</sup> but it should be stated it was entirely appropriate to representing rock music in a manner that appealed specifically to rock fans. Its minimalist aesthetic represented a literal stripping back of the artifice of pop, appealing to rock fans that wanted to concentrate on the performance. Indeed, as Mills states of *The Old Grey Whistle Test*, the successor to *Colour Me Pop*, which presented performance in a near-identical manner, the effect was "to show what 'authentic musicians' looked like, positioned in the reality of a genuine musical performance."<sup>555</sup>

While the studio of *Colour Me Pop* did not feature the customary dressing of pop music programming, it should be noted that it was not completely bare. Bands' live equipment was set up in the studio, as it would be at the site of live performance. Amplifiers, guitar pedals, microphones and other paraphernalia used in the generation of sound in rock music were on full display. Wide shots showed cables littering the floor, and the framing of shots made no attempt to hide Marshall stacks or effects units in the background.

Lingering close-up on guitars, meanwhile, were framed to show that leads were plugged

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<sup>553</sup> Pearson, "Metal Machine Musics: Technology, Subjectivity and Reception," 114.

<sup>554</sup> Mills, "Stone Fox Chase: The Old Grey Whistle Test and the Rise of High Pop Television," 63.

<sup>555</sup> *Ibid.*

in. Amplifiers were never featured on *Top of the Pops* and singers only intermittently used microphones while performing. This was because the programme, whose format was based around the reproduction of hit singles, had little interest in its performers appearing to play live.<sup>556</sup> Even on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, where bands occasionally did perform live, equipment was hidden behind set dressing, maintaining the show-business aesthetic. Contrastingly the prominence of this equipment in *Colour Me Pop* served as an emphatic signifier of liveness, an affirmation to the viewer that what they were watching was not mimed, but authentically live and in keeping with the values of rock.

### Miming liveness

The effect of the combination of these aesthetic and format elements in *Colour Me Pop* was the presentation of rock music liveness in a manner that reflected values of rock music liveness, but in a manner distinctive from other mediatizations. Through their rapid editing, reframing and positioning of awe-filled audience responses, concert movies attempted to convey the power and spectacle of a rock concert to the viewer. Live albums, meanwhile, were constructed to give the listener the impression of “the ultimate concert” experience.<sup>557</sup> *Colour Me Pop*, however, was not. Rather than replicating a live concert, the effect of the absent audience and the small size of the studio gave the impression of watching a band in a rehearsal room. The filming and editing style of the programme further enhanced this. Television cameras lacked the reframing speed of the 16mm cameras used in *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock*, their bulkiness making their movements comparatively show. Shots lingered for much longer

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<sup>556</sup> Fryer, ““Everybody’s on Top of the Pops”: Popular Music on British Television 1960-1985,” 85.

<sup>557</sup> Jackson, “Interview with Paul Rothchild.”

in *Colour Me Pop* while the small space of the studios meant an almost exclusive use of medium and close-up framing. Certainly, the unique appeals of the intimacy of *Colour Me Pop*'s set-up recognized by producers. By the time its successor, *Old Grey Whistle Test*, was launched in 1971, Appleton and his team were encouraging bands to treat the studio like it was a rehearsal space, rather than a live concert.<sup>558</sup>

*Colour Me Pop*, then, offered unique appeals in representing liveness compared to other mediatizations of liveness. Its format and aesthetic presented an intimate glimpse into a rehearsal room, with the direct address of presenters and bands giving the viewer the impression of the performance occurring in temporal simultaneity to its reception.<sup>559</sup>

Yet, it should be noted that *Colour Me Pop* was not a live broadcast, nor were performers always live. While the direct address gave the impression of liveness, the show was actually pre-recorded, likely a reflection of budgetary imperatives, but also giving bands and producers a greater control over the final product. And, while some performances such as Frank Zappa's and Fleetwood Mac's were totally live, others were mimed to varying degrees.<sup>560</sup>

During the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band<sup>561</sup> and The Moody Blues<sup>562</sup> performances for example, some songs were live, others featured live vocals to a pre-recorded backing track, while others were mimed altogether. As with the show being pre-recorded, the decision was likely part informed by budget. Mills notes of successor *Old Grey Whistle Test*, which also featured miming in its early episodes, that the primitive eight-track

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<sup>558</sup> Mills, "Stone Fox Chase: The Old Grey Whistle Test and the Rise of High Pop Television," 63.

<sup>559</sup> Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 61.

<sup>560</sup> As evidenced by an audio track of the Fleetwood Mac performance, recorded from the television onto a portable cassette recorder, that has emerged online.

<sup>561</sup> "Colour Me Pop Production Script: Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band ", <https://web.archive.org/web/20050207212743/corpses.comedynetuk.com/update1/bonzodog.html>.

<sup>562</sup> Steve Turner, "The Moody Blues," in *Colour Me Pop*(BBC, 1968).

mixer afforded by the programme's budget necessitated the practice.<sup>563</sup> Indeed, the Bonzo Dog Doo-Dah Band, Move<sup>564</sup> and Moody Blues episodes suggest this was also the case for *Colour Me Pop*, as it is the more sparsely instrumented acoustic numbers that are typically performed live.<sup>565</sup> However, while *Colour Me Pop's* claims towards liveness were not always straightforward, its aesthetic and format signifiers nonetheless created the semblance that what the viewer experienced was directly live, in a manner conforming to rock ideology.<sup>566</sup>

## Conclusion

As this chapter has shown, the process by which modes of representing rock music liveness were established in television was distinct from other media. Unlike film and albums, television was a medium with an established precedent in live broadcasting. But, economic specificities meant that presenting rock music liveness in this way was not viable. Dominant forms of popular music programming in the 1960s proved to be incompatible with rock music both because of the genre's rejection of mainstream entertainment principles and these established programmes' lack of precedent for representing liveness. While the end of the decade saw some attempts at mediatizing

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<sup>563</sup> Mills, "Stone Fox Chase: The Old Grey Whistle Test and the Rise of High Pop Television," 63.

<sup>564</sup> "The Move," in *Colour Me Pop*, ed. Steve Turner (BBC, 1969).

<sup>565</sup> It should also be stated that some mimed performances might have been down to bands not wanting to play live in the first place. The Small Faces' "Happiness Stan" for example, which featured live vocals over a pre-recorded backing track, had never been attempted in concert at the time of the *Colour Me Pop* performance.

<sup>566</sup> Telling of the extent to which *Colour Me Pop* was successful in its presentation of liveness, a thread on the Steve Hoffman forum titled *Lip Synced (Sic) Performances on TV - Did People Know?* features ongoing debate from fans as to which *Colour Me Pop* and early *Old Grey Whistle Test* performances were live and which were mimed. Many users also state that, unlike on *Top of the Pops*, they fully believed the *Colour Me Pop* performances were live when they originally aired.

the live concert on television – an approach that had been successful both in film and records – there were again issues of dominant ideals' incompatibility with the emergent rock. The mainstream address of *The Stones in the Park* resulted in the removal of elements significant to values of rock liveness, and while *Cream Farewell Concert* recognized rock's aspirations towards artistry through live performance, its contextualization of this artistry through dominant classical discourses did not find favor with rock music fans. Furthermore, the technological limitations of television equipment in the late-1960s made the filming of live concerts for the medium logistically difficult.

*Colour Me Pop* ultimately succeeded in representing rock music liveness on television for two reasons. Firstly, because alternative remit of the then-new BBC2 channel gave the programme makers the freedom to create a format that appealed specifically to rock fans, rather than needing to make concessions to different audiences. Secondly, producer Michael Appleton, knowledgeable of the burgeoning ideological imperatives of rock music and, by extension, rock music liveness, conceived a format that both appealed to these values, and was able to work within the limitations of the medium.

*Colour Me Pop's* representations of rock music liveness were distinct from those in other media in a number of respects. They were not based around the site of the rock concert, there was no audience spatially co-present to the musicians at the time of the performance, and many editions of the show were actually mimed. But, it was through the producers' recognition of the values of rock that *Colour Me Pop* was discernibly live *in spite* of these complicating factors.

And, the emergence of the programme marked the emergence of a new kind of rock television, with many of its modes of representation utilized in texts that followed, both in the UK and the United States. While Frank Zappa might have stated that his band's performance on *Colour Me Pop* was something US television "would never let [them]

do,” shifts in US television regulations by the late-1960s would, as with the introduction of BBC2, facilitate different kinds of programming. As Anthony Smith notes, the Public Service Broadcasting Act of 1967 resulted in an increase in funds, and change in remit for the country’s many regional public service stations. A shift away from an educational emphasis to a more “open and discretionary” public remit occurred, with larger stations better resourced to pursue different kinds of programming.<sup>567</sup> Perhaps unsurprisingly given the city’s noted music scene, the KQED network in San Francisco was, by 1969, developing its own rock music programming. *Celebration* featured performances from bands like Pink Floyd and the Grateful Dead, with a studio based-aesthetic and format that shared many similarities with *Colour Me Pop*.<sup>568</sup>

*Colour Me Pop* ran until 1969, and was replaced by *Disco 2* – another Michael Appleton production – in 1970. *Disco 2* shared the aesthetic and formal qualities of its predecessor in representations of live performance, as well as its late night scheduling, but added a number of “magazine” elements such as interviews, album and film reviews that reflected Appleton’s knowledge of the burgeoning rock press. *Disco 2*, in turn, became *The Old Grey Whistle Test*, the BBC’s flagship rock programme, which ran from 1971 until 1987. Unlike *Colour Me Pop*, a single, 45-minute episode of *Whistle Test* featured two performers alongside magazine elements. But, allowances were still made for the improvisational and spontaneous characteristics of rock music liveness.<sup>569</sup> The show also reintroduced the figure of the host, but in a manner reflective of rock ideology. Rather than gatekeepers of pop, show business and family values like Ed Sullivan and

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<sup>567</sup> Anthony Smith, "Television as a Public Service Medium," in *Television: An International History*, ed. Anthony Smith; Richard Paterson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 90.

<sup>568</sup> Though unlike *Colour Me Pop*, performances on *Celebration* appear to have been exclusively live, rather than mimed. I suspect that the pervading ethos of the San Francisco scene, as well as the more abundant access to live equipment it provided, might be accountable for this distinction.

<sup>569</sup> For evidence of this, see the near 10-minute instrumental version of *Frankenstein* by the Edgar Winter Band that featured on the programme in 1973, or the Sensational Alex Harvey Band’s seven-minute run-through of *Give My Compliments to the Chef* in 1975.

Dick Clark, the programme sought “journalists, who knew their subject matter, and who were going to be doing presentation on TV as a hobby rather than as a career, so they never became bigger than the programme.”<sup>570</sup>

*Melody Maker* deputy editor Richard Williams, hosted the programme for the first season, before being replaced by *Time Out* co-founder Bob Harris, who became synonymous with the show. Their positioning was markedly different from that of the narrator in *Cream Farewell Concert*. As Mills notes, they “were required to be critical and knowledgeable, as befitting the distance that now separated ‘rock’ from ‘pop’” in a manner that “flatter[ed], direct[ed] and reflect[ed] the interests of [the programme’s] intended audience.”<sup>571</sup> And, while *Whistle Test*, like *Colour Me Pop*, initially featured miming due to economic necessity, the programme’s growing popularity facilitated an almost exclusive shift to live performance by 1973.<sup>572</sup> This burgeoning audience appeal also resulted in the broadcast of special episodes of the programme, representing artists outside of the studio, at the site of the live concert. Crucially though, these concerts, unlike with the Stones and Cream documentaries, were staged with the intention of being filmed, taking place in small venues such as The Rainbow<sup>573</sup> or the Hammersmith Odeon<sup>574</sup> that made better allowances for television coverage.

In the United States also, a new kind of programming reflecting shifts in rock ideology emerged, with many characteristics similar to those of *Colour Me Pop*, *Old Grey Whistle Test* and *Celebration*. Produced by Burt Sugarman for NBC, *The Midnight Special* (1972-1981), like *Colour Me Pop* was emphatic of its late night, non-mainstream status, as suggested by the title. Broadcast from 1.00am to 2.30am, after the three main American networks usually signed off, the programme featured acts performing live in front of a

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<sup>570</sup> Appleton, *Commentary Track: The Old Grey Whistle Test 30th Anniversary Dvd*.

<sup>571</sup> Mills, "Stone Fox Chase: The Old Grey Whistle Test and the Rise of High Pop Television," 49-50.

<sup>572</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>573</sup> "Yes at the Rainbow Theatre," in *Old Grey Whistle Test*(BBC, 1973).

<sup>574</sup> "Queen at the Hammersmith Odeon," in *Old Grey Whistle Test*(1975).

studio audience, with a set replete with stage lighting and amplifiers that had a live concert aesthetic distinct from shows like *American Bandstand*. *Don Kirshner's Rock Concert* (1973-1981) was syndicated to American television stations the following year, sharing *Midnight Special's* late nighttime slot and look.

## Conclusion

In this thesis, I have identified the late-1960s to early-1970s as a key historical moment in the development of mediatized liveness. Focusing on rock music, I have shown how the influence of residual music such as jazz, blues and rock 'n' roll, as well as burgeoning cultural and social changes in the late-1960s led to the emergence of new values at the site of live performance. These burgeoning values in turn informed the nature of mediatizations of rock music liveness produced between the late-1960s and early-1970s. Examining records, film and television, I have shown how producers negotiated these emergent values, as well as the specificities of these media, to create mediatizations of rock music liveness that adhered to the genre's flourishing sensibilities. Through this period of negotiation, a number of new formats of mediatized liveness emerged, and these formats established a number of conventions of representing rock music liveness in the media.

The shifts that occurred in rock music during the mid-1960s were significant. Rock musicians, informed by their own art school education and discourses surrounding art music such as jazz and blues, began to regard their work as artistically legitimate in a way that their predecessors had not. These changes in thinking, galvanized by the pervasive countercultural thinking of the era, created rupture. The dominant music industry, which regarded popular music as a teenage commodity, was ill-prepared for rock's self-consciously artistic sensibilities. And, while the popular music business, whose economic structure was based around the sale of records, had little interest in live concerts, such performances, as in jazz and blues, became central to rock's perception of itself.

As a result, the nature of live performance fundamentally changed during this time, with values of improvisation and spontaneity, visual spectacle, anti-commercialism and

counterculturalism coming to the fore. A recognition of the burgeoning importance of live performance in rock led to the proliferation of mediatizations of performance. Yet, in mediatizing liveness, producers were faced with a challenge. Liveness, after all, was a notion defined in opposition to mediatization. As well as this, there were also the myriad burgeoning values associated with live performance, in all of their complexities and contradictions, that producers would need to navigate to create products that appealed to rock fans.

In the case of records, producers initially responded to the improvisational and spontaneous tendencies of rock music by creating live albums exclusively featuring performances that were emphatic of these values. But, while these texts were afforded some recognition by critics, it was the emergence of the bootleg album, produced outside of the dominant record industry that had the most notable impact on live album production. Its unexpurgated representation of rock music live performance, featuring audience and band interaction and the semblance of listening to a complete rock concert, found favor with both critics and fans. The industry took note, resulting in a boom in live album production the following year. While a number of these records reflected the unexpurgated nature of bootlegs and were presented as faithful documents of liveness, others employed the use of studio-post production to create idealised recreations of the “ultimate” live experience. It was ultimately this interpretation of the live album that would become conventional by the middle of the 1970s.

Filmic representations of rock music liveness, like those on live albums, exhibited tendencies that blurred the lines between faithful documentation and idealised recreation. Earlier films featuring popular music performance had been staged, with music often mimed. But, the rough aesthetic of immediacy in the concert movies that emerged in the late-1960s was emphatic of capturing live performance in the raw, rather than framing it for the camera. Made by practitioners of the direct cinema

documentary movement, the aesthetic of *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* recalled earlier films such as *Jazz on a Summer's Day*, *Festival* and *Dont Look Back*, where these qualities affirmed these films' veracity as documentations of liveness. Yet, the filmmakers of *Monterey Pop* and *Woodstock* also broke away from direct cinema traditions in a number of respects. The characteristic long, unbroken takes of observational documentary, the sense of no obvious angle on which a viewer could guide their response, were absent from these films. Instead, rapid, rhythmic editing from multiple camera sources was utilized, much like in the Hollywood musical, to affirm and enhance the sense of spectacle to the viewer.

Finally, televised mediatizations of liveness were distinct from those in film and records because they moved away from representing live concerts. While television was a medium uniquely positioned to broadcast liveness, its economic imperatives combined with live rock music's association with non-consensual values made this an impossibility in the late-1960s and early-1970s. Attempts were made at recording live concerts for television during this time, but the need for these programmes to address a mass audience, combined with technical limitations in filming concerts with television cameras resulted in mediatizations that did not reflect values associated with live performance.

Ultimately, televised mediatizations of liveness became studio-based, rather than filmed at the site of the live concert, as necessitated by the technical and budgetary specificities of the medium. But, these programmes employed a distinct aesthetic and address to the dominant studio-based pop music programming of the era that was reflective of the producers' knowledge of the burgeoning ideological imperatives of rock. By imbuing these programmes with aesthetic signifiers of liveness such as amplifiers, microphones and cables, utilizing a format that ostensibly allowed for live rock's spontaneous and improvisational tendencies and scheduling them in a manner that emphasized their

non-mainstream status, producers were able to represent liveness in a manner that navigated the limitations of television and appealed to the values of rock.

Common across mediatizations of liveness in the late-1960s was a need, not just to reflect the emergent values around live performance in rock, but also to navigate the specificities of a given medium in order to present these mediatizations as live. The emergence of these texts also marked a significant development in notions of liveness and mediatization particularly in relation to previously established distinctions between liveness and recording. In jazz, records pertained to the live. They were “transcriptions, accounts, replicas, reproductions of a unique jazz performance,” faithful documents that were ultimately secondary to the classic liveness experienced at the site of the concert.<sup>575</sup> Mediatizations of liveness in rock also pertained to the live, but by the mid-1970s, this did not mean faithfully transcribing a performance. In all media, post-production techniques such as editing and overdubbing were used to enhance the semblance of liveness, not positioning these texts as secondary documents, but offering, as Paul Rothchild put it, the “ultimate” concert experience to the listener.<sup>576</sup>

This thesis has explored an influential moment in the history of mediatized liveness, but it is worth stating that this is by no means the only influential moment. Further research in this field might look to other time periods, as well as other forms of music, and how their unique ideological imperatives impacted both their relationship with liveness, and the way said liveness was represented in various media. The emergence of punk, for example, marked a change in the relationship between liveness and recording established in rock. The genre, which as Dave Laing notes, was a new music that “emerged by the mingling of elements old and new,” was, like jazz and blues, a form that

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<sup>575</sup> Thornton, *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital*, 67.

<sup>576</sup> Jackson, "Interview with Paul Rothchild."

strove to “maintain a fidelity to the live context within the recorded one.”<sup>577</sup> As Laing states, this occurred at the site of the studio, where manipulations such as editing and double tracking were avoided, and the ‘positioning’ of instruments and voices were set up to mimic that of the group on stage.<sup>578</sup> Yet, in spite of punk’s apparent attempts at veracity towards liveness in its studio recordings, live albums were a rarity in the genre, with the live side of Sham 69’s *Tell Us The Truth* an anomaly in that respect.<sup>579</sup> So too were concert movies, while punk never found a perennial TV format in the same way that *The Old Grey Whistle Test* was to rock.<sup>580</sup> Punk was a genre in which liveness was of central importance – nearly all of its bands established their identities and reputations through their live shows – but mediatizations of said live shows were not. As with the emergence of rock, this strikes me a significant moment in the development of the relationship between liveness and mediatization and one that warrants further study.

It should also be noted that while this thesis has identified how the conventions of representing liveness across media were informed by live performances, it has not addressed the implications of these mediatizations on performance. Both Auslander<sup>581</sup> and Crisell<sup>582</sup> have talked about the centrality of the studio recording in rock and how, unlike in jazz and blues, the live performance in rock inevitably pertains to the record. Yet, at several points during the writing of this thesis, I have wondered whether it the case that the live performance in rock now pertains as much to the live recording.

Watching a video bootleg of Metallica from 1994 recently, I was struck by a moment in which frontman James Hetfield encouraged the audience to replicate the crowd

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<sup>577</sup> Dave Laing, *One Chord Wonders: Power and Meaning in Punk Rock*, 2nd ed. (Oakland: PM Press, 2015), 69.

<sup>578</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>579</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>580</sup> While ITV’s *Revolver*, launched in 1978, can be seen as an attempt at this, the programme was ultimately ill-fated, lasting only one season of eight episodes.

<sup>581</sup> Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*, 26.

<sup>582</sup> Crisell, *Liveness & Recording in the Media*, 39.

participation moments on the song "Harvester of Sorrow" that featured on the band's live album, *Live Shit: Binge and Purge* (1993):

We've got some non-stop fuckin' music and hope you can handle it. Everybody's studied the live album, and knows exactly when to fuckin' sing, right?<sup>583</sup>

Significant here is that Hetfield assumes the audience's familiarity with Metallica's live performance through the live record. Indeed, the version of "Harvester of Sorrow" that the band then performs seems to owe, as much to the version from *Live Shit* as the studio track from *...And Justice For All* (1988); Hetfield's vocal adlibs are verbatim to those of the live recording, as are Jason Newsted's call and response moments with the audience.

In the recent controversy regarding Roger Waters' lip-synching during live performances of *The Wall*, notions of live performance pertaining to mediatized liveness can also be seen.<sup>584</sup> While accounts vary, it is believed that the majority, if not all of Waters' vocals were on pre-recorded on the tour, which took place from 2010-2013. The practice, reminiscent of the kind of miming seen on *Top of the Pops* might imply deference to the original studio recording. Indeed, critics attributed Waters' decision to use backing tracks to his ailing voice being incapable of reproducing the sounds heard on the 1979 Pink Floyd record.<sup>585</sup>

However, from my own experiences of seeing Waters perform *The Wall* live, and after listening to myriad bootleg recordings from the tour, I found that the pre-recorded vocal tracks were less attempts to recreate his voice from the studio album. Rather, the vocal inflections, changed lyrics and improvised passages that featured were mimetic of those

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<sup>583</sup> Metallica, *Middletown, Ny, USA [1994.06.17] Full Concert - 4 Cam Mix*(FullConcerts1001994).

<sup>584</sup> Jeff Hahne, "Live Review: Roger Waters, Time Warner Cable Arena, 7/10/2012," *Vibes: The Music Blog*, 10 July 2012; Justin Gerber, "An Open Letter to Roger Waters..." *Consequence of Sound*, 5 May 2010.

<sup>585</sup> "An Open Letter to Roger Waters..."

that appeared on the two commercially released live albums featuring performances of the album: Pink Floyd's *Is There Anybody Out There? The Wall Live* (2000) and Waters' own *The Wall – Live in Berlin* (1990). Notably, solos and extended sections of improvisation that featured during the concerts were similarly based around those that appeared on the live records. The extent to which rock concerts are informed, not just by studio recordings, but mediatized liveness is also an important area for study to which the findings of this thesis gesture.

Finally, the work in this thesis forms a useful basis for discussions of mediatizations of rock liveness in a contemporary context. In particular, this work is relevant in relation to the resurgence of bootlegs as a legitimately released, artist-sanctioned product. In the conclusion of Chapter 2, I noted that the passing of the McClellan anti-piracy bill in 1972 turned bootlegs into a niche, underground product.<sup>586</sup> However, the past fifteen years has seen the birth of what I would term the 'legitimate' bootleg. Noted rock acts including Metallica, Pearl Jam and Bruce Springsteen have begun selling soundboard recordings of entire tours direct to fans through their websites, presented in a manner that pertains to the ethos of bootlegging. These recordings contain full shows, and do not feature the overdubbing customary of live albums. Mistakes, technical errors and the like are left in, giving the listener the sense of liveness unexpurgated as the original bootlegs did. Emphatic of this, the CDs are even sent in plain cardboard sleeves reminiscent of the packaging of *LIVEr Than You'll Ever Be*.

On one hand, the releasing of live recordings in this way can be seen as a reversion to residual practices of representing liveness, to the value of liveness unadulterated that bootlegs had originally emphasized. However, it is important to note that these bands do not release "legitimate" bootleg recordings exclusively: they release them simultaneously with mediatizations of liveness that, like Rothchild's *Doors* album,

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<sup>586</sup> Heylin, *Bootleg! The Rise & Fall of the Secret Recording Industry*, 64.

pertain to the “ultimate” concert experience. Metallica, for example, have put out three live album/concert DVD packages in recent times – *Français Pour Une Nuit* (2009), *Orgullo, Pasión, y Gloria: Tres Noches en la Ciudad de México* (2009) and *Quebec Magnetic* (2012) – which feature recordings of shows that are also available as bootlegs from Metallica’s website. The legitimate bootlegs evidence mistakes which have been fixed on the live album/concert DVDs, as well as musical details that have been added in, including double bass drum parts that Lars Ulrich did not play at the original concerts.<sup>587</sup> As this thesis has shown, the fixing of live recordings is nothing new, but what makes this distinct is the tacit admission of said fixing through the concurrent, authorized release of the unedited recordings by the band.

This thesis has identified the late-1960s and early-1970s as a significant moment in the development of mediatized liveness. It was during this era that producers, reacting to the emerging values surrounding live performance in rock music, developed new forms of representing liveness in the media. Distinct from earlier forms, they did not strictly adhere to conventions of transcribing liveness, so much as enhancing the semblance of liveness they presented.

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<sup>587</sup> This observation is based on my own analysis, comparing *Français Pour Une Nuit* to the “legitimate” *July 7, 2009 Nimes FRA* bootleg – both are mediatizations of the same show.

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