# SHIFTING FORTUNES: JAZZ IN (POST)APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

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Since the demise of apartheid, jazz has been welcomed into prestigious domains previously reserved for western art music. Between 1990 and 1995 the number of South African university music departments offering jazz grew from one (with one jazz lecturer) to five (with a total of fifteen fulltime staff). Presently there are ten such institutions with around 25 fulltime staff. Since 1991, the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) local and overseas scholarships programmes have included a jazz/popular music category: to date millions of rand have been disbursed to classical *and* jazz students. Grahamstown's annual National Youth Jazz Festival (NYJF) began in 1992 as a teaching workshop with three teachers and 43 students. Fully sponsored by Standard Bank since 1998, and incorporated within the Standard Bank Jazz Festival at the National Arts Festival, the NYJF presently attracts over 300 school and university students who receive instruction from an international faculty of jazz experts. Standard Bank also sponsors a "Jazz Artist of the Year" award as well as various major jazz events in Gauteng. The Cape Town International Jazz Festival has been a major fixture on the national music scene since 2000. Featuring artists of the calibre of Ron Carter and George Benson, the two-day Festival has a direct economic impact of R74.3 million per annum on the economy of the Western Cape (Saayman and Roussow 2010).

This article investigates the increasing prestige accorded to jazz in post-apartheid South Africa. My discussion consists of two parts. First, drawing on Robin Bernstein's (2009) work, I characterise the discourses of Apartheid, the Rainbow Nation and the African Renaissance as "scripts". In my discussion I explore how these scripts have significantly determined jazz's shifting fortunes during South Africa's transition period, and the first decade of the post-apartheid era. Thereafter, I use Pierre Bourdieu's (1984) work on social and cultural capital to show how jazz can function as a form of capital. I argue that thinking about jazz in this way makes visible the political agendas that enable and constrain its production and reception.

In my analysis I make particular reference to an ethnographic history of the institutionalization of jazz at the University of Natal. I also refer to ethnographic interviews I conducted with jazz musicians, critics, and audience-members present on the jazz scenes of Durban in the mid-1990s and early 2000s, and Johannesburg in the early 2000s (Ramanna 2005).[1]

## SCRIPTS

Cultural historian Robin Bernstein describes scripts as "the evocative primary substance from which actors, directors, and designers build complex, variable performances that occupy real time and space" (Bernstein 2009, 68). Combining

[1] In this PhD study, I presented thick descriptions of the music played by three bands at eight concerts held in Durban and Johannesburg. The selected bands were Counterculture and Mosaic, who were based in Durban, and The Prisoners of Strange who were based in Johannesburg. I conducted a total of 25 (45-90 minute-long) interviews with thirteen of the performing musicians and twelve audience members present at the concerts.

"properties of resilience and elasticity" (Ibid., 69) scripts do not rigidly dictate performed action but rather involve "a necessary openness to resistance, interpretation, and improvisation" (Ibid.).

Understood more metaphorically and in broader sociological terms, scripts are central to the enactment of power relations. Largely privileging the interests of elite social groupings, scripts are the systems of predispositions that legitimate, and thus help perpetuate, societies' unequal distributions of physical and symbolic capital. Representing the ideational level of power's operations, scripts are primarily 'authored' within domains such as national governments, the World Bank, or the Vatican, that enjoy vast holdings of political and economic capital. Faithfully or flexibly enforced on subsidiary stages such as cities, schools and parishes, scripts often result in the imposition of violent hierarchies and same-other polarities (black and white, west and rest, saved and heathen) that rationalise the subjugation of the weak (women, the poor, Iraqi children) by the powerful (men, trans-national corporations, US military).

Apartheid was a 'model' script in this sense. Involving a violent hierarchy that entrenched white, male capital at its apex, apartheid advanced the needs of a migrant labour system which absolved capitalist interests of social wage costs, and ultimately cannibalised the reproductive labour of rural black women. A ubiquitous presence, apartheid has found expression and continues to find expression in the form of various dramas of acquiescence and resistance that take place on innumerable South African stages. In the 1980s and early 1990s The University of Natal's Music Department was one such stage. In the discussion that follows, I consider how a (mostly) resistive enactment of the apartheid script on that relatively privileged stage variously enabled and constrained jazz's status as a form of cultural capital.

### *The apartheid script*

Musicologist Christopher Ballantine helped found the University of Natal's Music Department in the early 1970s. Like many senior 'New Left' intellectuals, he cites the events of May/June 1968 as a central influence on his scholarly work:

> 1968 was a brilliant time, brilliant, brilliant. To be a student in the northern hemisphere then was just thrilling; to have *lived* through May/June '68 was really a life-changing experience: it was then that I started to get very seriously interested in Marxism … I encountered the Frankfurt school and Adorno, and ate and breathed and slept this stuff. (Ballantine 2003)

After completing his postgraduate studies at Cambridge, Ballantine returned to South Africa in 1972 to take up a lectureship at the University of Natal's newly established music department:

> My commitment was going to be to try to find a way to make music in a South African context participate in the struggle. I understood that to be partly through the writing that I was doing and also partly through being in on the ground floor of what was going to be a new musical institution; it wasn't shaped … there was nothing to fight against, except what I wanted to engage with, which was a capitalist world and race capitalism. (Ballantine 2003)

Although there were no significant institutional hurdles to overcome, the politically oppressive climate that pervaded the country as a whole was inescapable:

> In 1972 you didn't want to go around calling yourself a Marxist. I'd smuggled *some* books back from Cambridge. You had to declare every book you were bringing back and there were some books that I couldn't get into the country – didn't want to even try, because you then get on the security branch watch-list. But there were some books I'd managed to get in – and I can remember in 1972 or 73 – getting *so* nervous about what I had that I actually had a book-burning. I was keeping a whole lot of books in the ceiling of the house that I was living in. (Ballantine 2003)

Even close friendships were not exempt from the tight grip of state repression:

> My closest friend on campus at that stage was Raymond Sutner. A senior lecturer in law, he was, at that stage, working underground for the ANC although I didn't know it; I only discovered that later. He [later] went to prison for ten years. (Ballantine 2003)

Other individuals within the university community, like political scientist Rick Turner, also contested the prevailing politics, both in their intellectual and private lives:

> Rick Turner was clearly talking Marxism, unashamedly – well carefully – and living in a very alternative way. Rick was living with Fozia, breaking the Immorality Act.[2] He was constantly raided by the security police, so they had to have all sorts of ruses in their house about which room she slept in. (Ballantine 2003)

In the early 1980s, as audience-member and linguist Ralph Adendorff explains, the Linguistics Department at the University of Natal tried to challenge the racial status quo by exploiting fissures in the apartheid edifice:

> Professor Chick wanted to introduce [a course] in linguistics at the post-grad level [for] practicing teachers as a response to what was happening politically. I recall him explaining to me a loophole in the system by which you could get black, Indian, and coloured teachers in to do postgraduate course[s]: partly, you had to argue upon the grounds of there not being a comparable course offered in the surrounding ethnic universities. (Adendorff 2002)

Although this was not the music department's primary intention, its decision to include ethnomusicology and jazz in its curriculum in the early 1980s had a similar effect. Christopher Ballantine explains:

> We were considered to be out on a limb [because] of things that we were doing here: introducing a degree in ethnomusicology; appointing the first black lecturer in a South African music department; introducing jazz.
>
> It was framed not in terms of a recruiting ploy, because in those days [when] black students came to study here permission had to be sought. Of course if you were offering something that was not on offer somewhere else, that was the only ground on which exemption would be granted. So it did work as a recruiting thing. But it was more that we needed to start taking seriously the local cultures. We had to wisen up to where we were [and] that wisening up was part of the greater political shift that was to take place.

[2] The Immorality Act of 1950 forbade sexual relations between whites and 'non-whites'.

> That for me was very conscious. I couldn't have felt that I should be here if I didn't have the sense that I was at least trying, in those ways, to make that political engagement. I was trying to make it all the way through from my research and writing, through to the way the Department of Music was being structured, the staff we were appointing, to kinds of courses we were designing, to my own teaching, and, beyond that, to entrance criteria, and so on. To try and think about this in a new way: as an anti-apartheid enterprise. (Ballantine 2003)

Nevertheless, the university was constrained by the larger racial politics of the country, and inadvertently replicated it in certain respects. Thus students of colour, like Melvin Peters who began his BMus studies in 1981, were only ever a tiny minority. Moreover, as a racial 'other' on a white-dominated stage, Peters was burdened with having to 'prove' his equality:

> Being the only Indian in class, it was a bit strange but … once they saw that I was pretty much on a par with them, it was fine. (Peters 2003)

Peters was "on a par" with his white peers because he had been trained in classical music, and his knowledge of western classical music constituted, within the Music Department, a fund of cultural capital that underwrote his 'parity' with white students. When the Music Department began teaching jazz, however, the micro-politics of positionality and cultural capital shifted significantly. Because "the University of Natal has been associated as *the* institution for intellectuals in Natal" (Van Schalkwyk 2003), jazz's formal recognition by the university did much to enhance its status as capital:

> Jazz became academically respectable at that time, in the sense that it figured in the prospectus: you could do a [degree] in jazz. (Adendorff 2002)

This in turn positively affected the portfolio of capital held by jazz students. As Melvin Peters explains, people would say:

> "There's Melvin Peters: he's studying with Darius [Brubeck]", and it would lead to a gig. There were a lot of spin-offs because I'd started off so early with Darius. (Peters 2003)

The department's introduction of a jazz degree was of even greater significance as an anti-apartheid gesture. Jazz was enormously popular in apartheid South Africa's black townships. Bassist Lex Futshane explains:

> We grew up listening to jazz: jazz was like what Kwaito is today; popular, popular. It's like you didn't really need to buy records because (whether consciously or unconsciously) there was a communal listening thing in New Brighton. A guy would be cutting the grass at his home; he would take out the speaker, put it outside, and play jazz (the Blue Note label was very, very popular). So you could be walking down the road, going to a shop or something, and you would have listened to a whole range of jazz. And it was 'Jazz'. (Futshane 2003)

Being proficient in a musical discourse recognized as capital by the university, jazz musicians from township communities were consequently able to study on campus (if they could find the money) and thereby increased their holdings of cultural and social capital by virtue of their links with the institution.

For some members of the university community, like Ralph Adendorff, jazz's presence on campus constituted a utopian prefiguring of a post-racial future:

> [In the mid to late 1980s,] you didn't see students of different racial backgrounds together other than in classrooms. But jazz, it seems, was a kind of opportunity for more normal mixing, and less self-conscious mixing. I think it's something inherent in the nature of jazz. It has a 'non-white', glorious past as it were that acts as a backdrop to whatever is happening now. The key figures were for the most part, 'non-white'. (Adendorff 2002)

While the opportunities for meaningful interracial interaction opened up by jazz's presence on campus are valuable and significant, the introduction of jazz studies was not without its problems and contradictions. For example, many black students felt that jazz's marginal position in the curriculum replicated apartheid hierarchies and inequalities:

> The only thing that was jazz when we got there was jazz workshop:[3] that was the only time you'd do anything that had to do with jazz … [Within] the first few months, we realised, "Ah man, this is not what we thought it was. This is not what we wanted." So we were disillusioned … Our point was, to put it bluntly, if you were black, you would come out of Natal University not good enough a jazz musician and of course, you wouldn't be good enough to be a classical musician because you didn't grow up with that [music]. The people that really benefited were white students because that was their gig. (Futshane 2003)

It is unlikely that the almost exclusively white staff of the music department will have foreseen this contradiction, but this is because, as a script,

> the operations of whiteness have historically produced dispersed regularities with no identifiable point of origin whose absence allows white people to deny even the existence of the regularities, let alone that of any intentionality that might inform them. By disarticulating each power effect from the others and isolating it into an individual 'problem' (if it is noticed at all), white people can deny regularity and thus the systematicity of their own whiteness. The net effect of such strategic denial is to produce the truth that whiteness as an informing regularity of the micro-physics of power, does not exist. (Smith and Fiske 2000, 609)

Moreover, the legitimating power and hegemonic force of these scripts is such that they not only 'buy in' those who benefit from their operations but often co-opt those whose interests they hurt. Despite apartheid's obviously negative impact on people of colour, many South Africans of Indian origin, as pianist Neil Gonsalves' comments reveal, were remarkably un-politicised:

> I had a cousin [on campus] who was much more [politically] conscious and connected with people who used to attend these SASCO meetings. I used to hang out with her, and she would take me to the meetings, actually dragging me. I remember [having] a sense of dread – I suppose, the same kinds of dread that a Catholic has attending a revivalist meeting where people stand up and shout, and you just want to sit down and say your "Hail Mary"s or something. This political meeting invariably would end up with people singing "Nkosi

[3] A jazz ensemble class.

> Sikelela", picking fists in the air, and going, "Viva!" These things I'd never done: when I was in school, and people went out to boycott, I was always on the fence and ultimately didn't go out; I was one of the guys that stayed in the classroom …I didn't go to the meetings in terms of standing up for anything; I went because I was hanging out with [my cousin]. (Gonsalves 2003)

By contrast, the micro-politics of music, positionality, and capital that surrounded Gonsalves as a music student were to have a much greater impact on his consciousness of race and power than the more formal kinds of anti-apartheid protest he had previously encountered:

> I started to wake up when I saw the black students' perspective[s]; it came from hanging out with them. They would describe something and how they saw it suddenly opened my eyes to different things, for example the fact that we (as jazz musicians) *had* to study European classical music. I could never conceive of any racial slant on that [until] these guys [articulated] it. I started seeing the department as a microcosm of something much bigger. (Gonsalves 2003)

Ultimately, as Christopher Ballantine implies in his reference to race capitalism, apartheid is itself a microcosm of something much bigger, a "chapter" within "the great surging narrative" of global capitalism (Crehan 1997, 9). Because of its geographical position and its distinctive mix of natural and human resources, South Africa has, since the seventeenth century, been conscripted into key dramas on the global capitalist stage. During the spice trade, it functioned – for one of the leading trans-national corporations of the seventeenth century, the Dutch East India Company – as a geopolitically crucial halfway post between Europe and the East. Later, as a repository of vast mineral wealth and cheap (i.e., subjugated, black) labour, the region was, between the 1880s and late 1960s, a space of rapid but criminally asymmetrical economic development. Again, international capitalist interests benefited enormously, and it is not insignificant that South Africa's biggest conglomerate, Anglo American plc, takes its name from the world's earliest and largest capitalist economies. Finally, in the 1980s, as the last remaining 'western' polity in sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa was pertinent (albeit peripherally and problematically) to the power dynamics of a Cold War world.

### *Post-apartheid scripts: The Rainbow Nation*

Coinciding with the 'triumph' of capitalism and the end of the Cold War, the post-apartheid era 'began' with Nelson Mandela's release from prison in February 1990, and was formally inaugurated with his installation as president following the nation's first democratic elections on 27 April 1994. Dubbed "the Rainbow Nation" by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the emerging New South Africa was, at least for its more privileged citizens, a space of elation.

In the 1990s, I co-led a band called Mosaic that was very much a product of this euphoria. Founded by Stacey van Schalkwyk and myself in 1991, Mosaic consisted of students at the University of Natal's and the University of Durban-Westville's music departments. In 1995, the members were Stacey van Schalkwyk (flute); Mageshen Naidoo (guitar); Bongani Sokhela (bass guitar); Bhisham Bridglall, and, later, Magandiren Moodley (*tabla*); I was the group's pianist. Because of its unusual instrumentation, Mosaic's composite sound was atypical for jazz, and often featured rather light, transparent sonorities. Drawing on aspects of jazz, township jazz, western

classical, and Indian classical musics, Mosaic played a self-described 'Indo-Afro-jazz' style.[4]

Mosaic constituted a repository of cultural capital because it gave musical expression to a multiculturalism that was gaining currency at the time. In *In the time of Cannibals* David Coplan remarks that "in its condensed and virtual landscape, art orders the world as we would do if we could" (1994, 202). In this sense Mosaic musically presented an ideal description of a non-racial and democratic post-apartheid South Africa, in which people of different racial and cultural backgrounds were seen and heard interacting as equals. For this reason, the group received significant media coverage, mostly by local print media but, also, occasionally, national coverage on radio and television.

Both musically and in public descriptions of our Indo-Afro-Jazz project, Mosaic endorsed and actively sought to write itself into the Rainbow Nation script. For example, in a press release advertising our very first gig at Durban's Le Plaza Hotel on 5 April 1991, we wrote that "much of our inspiration comes from the rich network of each member's culture and our experience of cross-cultural music." The *Daily News Tonight* printed the statement (almost verbatim except for a change of pronouns) on 4 April 1991, along with a picture of the tri-racial band. In another press release, we wrote that Mosaic "has been applauded by jazz and classical critics alike for the aesthetic depth and integrity with which it articulates the spirit of the emerging post-apartheid South Africa." This found its way onto the pages of *The Sunday Tribune* on 29 October 1995.

Around the same time, when we were fundraising to take up an invitation to perform at the 1996 International Association of Jazz Educators Conference in Atlanta, I wrote: "the politics of the Rainbow Nation are not just the macro-politics of the Mandelas and De Klerks or World Cup Rugby, but equally, the micro-politics of drawing together within the visual arts, literature, drama or music, the historically disparate strands of the 'rainbow' into a whole we can proudly call truly South African." However, what I failed to recognise in my giddy blending of nationalistic and academic rhetoric, is that the Rainbow Nation script, for all its colourful pluralism, promotes an idealised description of the nation that ignores its inequalities, and ultimately serves elite interests (Habib 1997; Baines 1998; Barnett 1999; Gqola 2001).

Between 1990 and 1994, 14 000 people died in South Africa as a result of political violence, while some 22 000 people were injured. (Pieterse and van Donk 2002, 6). The violence was mostly confined to poor black areas; residents of privileged areas were seldom affected directly. In this context Mosaic's celebration of the Rainbow Nation enacted a politics of amnesia, rationalising the pleasures that accompany middle-class privilege while ignoring the life-and-death struggles of an economically disempowered majority:

> As far as I'm concerned, there's nothing like a Rainbow Nation; that's all a farce: it's a big, big, big joke. I mean look, you Indian, I'm Xhosa, we Africans and that is white, and that is black, and that is that. If we accept each other at that level, I think we're addressing the real issues. Now if we are going to want to accept each other on superficial, fake platforms, then we're

[4] For an example of how the band looked and sounded in one of its earlier incarnations, please refer to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ARpyPPrBtLE

> not addressing the grass-root issues, and we will always have problems, which is why there *are* problems. (Futshane 2003)

Audience-member Kerryn Scott agrees:

> The Rainbow Nation is a government-imposed … strategy for creating a harmonious populace … it's a top-down thing: this is the policy; this is the propaganda; this is what we must do … The idea of a Rainbow Nation is daft. (Scott 2003)

Nevertheless, as ideas go, the Rainbow Nation has been a best-seller. As journalist Gisele Turner explains, this is precisely why there has been a significant increase in media coverage of jazz in Durban since the mid 1990s:

> There was growing interest in [jazz], and [media professionals] started to recognize that they were accessing a middle-class black market with jazz. Jazz didn't seem to have too much of a generational thing: you could still access youngish people, quite a lot of Coloured and Indian people, and even some white people, as well as a large [number] of black people. Suddenly it seemed as though jazz could be the universal language of Durban: especially as jazz is such a *broad* term for such a *lot* of different music, it seemed to cover the bases. People were getting excited about that because it was the potential to make money ... and access the correct clients. (Turner 2003)

Proficient in what had become a prestigious, and 'high-capital' musical discourse, some of Durban's jazz musicians in turn became financial beneficiaries of this process:

> The corporate world is borrowing from the fact that people are more interested in jazz. There's a sense in the corporate world that they have to 'go African' because so many of their clients are African … PR people (who are very quick to catch onto what is trendy so that they can look good in the eyes of their clients and their bosses) will hook into jazz, especially Afro-jazz, so people can go: "Oh we had *Afro-jazz* at *our* function." And they pay; that's where the money is. If there's been any real spin-off in terms of money for musicians, it's been that the corporates are climbing onto the jazz bandwagon. (Ibid.)

However, as I explain elsewhere (Ramanna 2004, 122-123) jazz's tighter integration into the Durban economy meant that many musicians increasingly played background music gigs where their creative freedoms were curtailed and they were restricted to the more accessible and even Muzak-like spectra of the jazz rainbow.

### *Post-apartheid scripts: The African Renaissance*

The other prominent post-apartheid script is Thabo Mbeki's "African Renaissance", which posits a locally driven, socio-cultural, political, and economic rejuvenation of Africa that transcends the continent's long history of colonialist and imperialist subjugation. In 2001 David Coplan suggested that the African Renaissance could be construed as an improvement on the Rainbow Nation narratives it supplanted:

> If indeed the Rainbow Nation offered nothing more by way of economic advancement to the majority of dispossessed black people than the rueful sight of a small number of their more fortunate brothers and sisters enjoying economic privilege, then the African Renaissance could still serve as an

> ideological weapon in the struggle to extend benefits and opportunities more broadly. (2001, 117)

Kerryn Scott disagrees vehemently. For her, the African Renaissance, like the Rainbow Nation, is an elitist fantasy, fatally out-of-step with the lived realities of the nation's and continent's inhabitants:

> We forget that half the continent speaks French as their first language, and like how much xenophobia is there in South Africa? How much do we hate foreigners, black foreigners, particularly? You know, "All Nigerians are drug-lords"; "All Cameroonians are here to steal our women." This idea that "we are Africans; *sesonke*, we are one" is crap, because it does not happen on the ground. The levels of xenophobia in post-apartheid South Africa are unprecedented: we don't see ourselves as one with the rest of the African continent. [Mbeki's] got a very imperialistic notion of his role in Africa: because we're the most technologically advanced, and the most industrialised, and this, that and the other, all the businesses go out and then they do all of these things… it's not a humanitarian dream; it's an imperialistic dream. (Scott 2003)

Likewise, numerous scholars argue that post-apartheid South Africa functions as a sub-imperial power and that its neoliberal economic policies serve the interests of trans-national capital, exacerbate class inequality, and undermine the nation's aspirations to race and gender equality (Beall, Crankshaw, and Parnell 2002; Hart 2002; Beavon 2004; Bond 2004; Guy 2004; Fine 2009). As with apartheid, the neoliberal script plays out on innumerable stages including the contemporary jazz scene.

Drummer Lulu Gontsana has noted that township students at the Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Festival often do not progress as rapidly as their middle class peers because, outside of the Festival, they lack access to instruments, practice spaces, and trained music teachers (Ansell 2004, 266). Similar disparities resulted in the exclusion of township jazz musicians from Durban's lucrative live circuit in the early 2000s. Hampered by unreliable transport and poor equipment, township bands lost ground to a handful of better-resourced middle class musicians (Ramanna 2004, 123-125). The R4700 spent by the average attendee at the Cape Town International Jazz Festival is three times the monthly income of a South African farm worker (Saayman and Roussow 2010; Mywage.co.za n.d.).

The creation of gentrified spots like the Newtown Cultural Precinct in Johannesburg, where corporate-sponsored jazz events take place, has involved the forced removal of poor people to peri-urban areas where their livelihood prospects are severely diminished:

> Johannesburg definitely needs urban renewal, and to attract everyone back to the city centre, but not at the expense of chucking people off to Diepsloot. It's a particular *kind* of vision of urban renewal that they're imposing on groups of people who live in the city centre who themselves are not consulted. It's a bourgeois notion of urban renewal, and if you're a hawker or somebody living in one of those high-rise buildings, where you actually live every day of your life, you're not part and parcel of this renewal strategy; you're extraneous to it; they want to get rid of you. That is very, very, very problematic … it's not done in consultation and that's why it's not really legitimate. (Scott 2003)

The Johannesburg Joy of Jazz Festival includes a “developmental” stage where younger, historically disadvantaged musicians can showcase their talents. (Dancer 2008, 46-47). But beyond affording such bands performance slots in spaces that are ultimately “not ideal for performance” (Ibid.), the Festival does little to facilitate these musicians’ musical and career development (Masemola 2011, 51). Established South African jazz musicians who perform at the festival seem resigned to the second-class treatment they receive in comparison to the international musicians who headline the Festival (Ibid., 60). Thus, even elite musicians who have mostly benefited from the jazz renaissance, have expressed ambivalence about the impacts of corporate involvement in jazz (Ramanna 2004, 119; Ansell 2004, 267-8 and 278; Coplan 2008, 364). As Zim Ngqawana recognized, corporate patronage ultimately serves corporate interests:

> The industry, sponsors, financial institutions, liquor companies, record companies have ganged up against serious musicians to turn them into marketing tools for their companies. They have no regard for the musicians … they are trying to reduce him now to a liquor salesman (Ansell 2004, 279)

The process by which jazz musicians are thus conscripted or “interpellated” (Althusser 1971, 162-5) by corporate interests depends significantly on constituting jazz as a form of capital. In the discussion that follows, I briefly clarify the notions of music as capital that have underpinned my discussion of jazz’s growing prestige and its concomitant entanglement with elite interests.

## JAZZ AS CAPITAL

Although ‘capital’ typically refers to resources such as money or property, the descriptive scope of the term has broadened significantly following Bourdieu’s (1984) introduction of the concepts ‘cultural capital’ and ‘social capital’ into the cultural studies lexicon (Thornton 1995, 10). Thornton emphasises that ultimately the defining characteristic of any non-monetary form of capital is its “convertibility into economic capital” (Ibid.).

In his work on race, class, and musical nationalism in Zimbabwe, Thomas Turino (2000, 556) offers a similarly fluid conceptualisation of capital:

> Within the social system as a whole, economic and political capital usually have the greatest importance, whereas more leeway may be granted to subordinate groups in regard to access to types of capital deemed less consequential (e.g., cultural capital) within the overall social system … [however], this can misfire because, as Bourdieu has shown, one type of capital can be used to secure another.

In short, as Anwar Shaikh emphasises in an essay on Marxian economics, “*Capital is not a thing, but rather a definite set of social relations*” (1990, 73).

As an affective medium, music is a valuable resource in that it has the capacity to shape individual and social perceptions of the environments within which it is heard (Erlmann 1996, 186; Pratt 1990, 22; Shepherd 1991, 159). When music is construed to address the needs or political agendas of a particular domain (guiding worship in a church, providing the right ambience in a restaurant, production of knowledge in a university, generating profit for a record company, inspiring national pride) it

becomes a "factor of production" (Edgar & Sedgwick 1999, 52)[5] and functions as a form of capital. Like money (albeit more complicatedly and unreliably) music may accrue exchange value and function as currency, and its status as capital waxes and wanes in relation to the moods of the politico-economic environments in which it 'trades'.

David Coplan (1994, 247) has argued that "the power relations in which performance is embedded and out of which it emerges are crucial to its analysis". Because power is a pervasive presence, it permeates the "situational and the structural" (Shepherd 2003, 77) and points to "the continuity of the so-called microsocial and macrosocial" (Berger 1999, 278). Treating power as pivotal to musical analyses is thus a useful way to address the structure-agency problematic that John Shepherd posits as a central concern for music research:

> If there is a new, emergent paradigm for the cultural study of music, then it may be important to ensure that the situational and the structural, in both life and music, do not get obscured from view. (Shepherd 2003, 77-78)

In a similar vein anthropologist Kate Crehan has argued that,

> We need a mapping that pays attention both to the minutiae of daily life and to the larger structures of relations underpinning the surface diversity of individual and unique lives. This mapping needs also to move continually back and forth between them. Without this kind of nuanced mapping our analyses are unlikely to tell us much about just *how* the great surging narrative of contemporary capitalism translates into real power relations among real people in real places. (1997, 8-9)

Thinking about contemporary South African jazz as a form of capital allows us to make sense of some of the messy structure-agency dialectics that define its politics. It would be unreasonable to insist that all research on South African jazz does this. For example there is very little analytical work that considers South African jazz's poetics, of the kind that has been done on American improvisers like Charlie Parker and Bill Evans. But if we, as music scholars, never interrogate the power structures that underpin our country's unconscionable inequalities—and the possibility of our own complicity in those structures—then we stand open to the band Killdozer's (1984) accusation that *Intellectuals Are the Shoeshine Boys of the Ruling Elite*.

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[5] Edgar and Sedgwick define a factor of production as a "resource that is valued, not for its own sake, but for its function in the production of other goods or services that are of intrinsic value" (Ibid.)

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