

Beyond Mastery: Jazz, Gender and Power in Post-apartheid South Africa

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Declaration of authorship

I, Ulagh Williams, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ulagh Williams', with a stylized, cursive script.

20 August 2023

Abstract

This dissertation studies the musical lives of seven South African women who have built high-profile national and international careers as jazz musicians. Empirically it records self-reported experiences and actions that they have identified as relevant to their success within a notoriously patriarchal field. Drawing on feminist research methods and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis the dissertation strives to develop an empathic yet critical epistemological framework attuned to the complexities of their lived experiences as women and as jazz musicians. Theoretically it investigates the power relations at play in the myriad ways they negotiate or have been impelled to negotiate gender and patriarchy as musicians. Chapter one draws attention to the ubiquity of patriarchy in South African and international jazz culture, and highlights the research participants' numerous successes to date as performers, educators, composers, and bandleaders. Chapter two positions this study in relation to cognate work in South African jazz studies, international feminist jazz studies and feminist phenomenology. Chapters three to five successively consider the participants' early enculturation as musical and gendered subjects, their agentic responses to structures of patriarchy and/or race as emerging and established professionals, and the ways these experiences have found expression in some of their musical utterances as performers and composers. Fusing art and activism, the participants challenge and transcend masculinist discourses of mastery that still dominate South African jazz as a field of production and aesthetic practice.

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my daughter Myla, for the thousands of hours spent looking over my shoulder as I worked, the laughs, the millions of questions, and the love.

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1. Introduction

Despite significant social and cultural shifts since the demise of formal apartheid, South African women continue to be materially and discursively excluded from the field of professional jazz in many different ways. As elsewhere, jazz in South Africa is historically framed by discourses of maleness while professional excellence and visibility are inextricably linked to gendered views of “mastery”. Nevertheless, some women¹ have built (and continue to sustain) high-profile national and international careers as jazz musicians. This study is a response to this anomaly rather than a “corrective” project aimed at making women more visible within a notoriously patriarchal field. The question posed by this research is: how do contemporary, working jazzwomen experience, navigate, and make sense of the “complex and multiple valences of gender and power”² in South African jazz culture?

Empirically, this thesis is based on the testimony of seven South African women currently working in the field of professional jazz and records self-reported experiences and actions that they have identified as relevant to their success. Drawing on feminist research methods and phenomenology, the study seeks to develop a methodological approach that is uniquely attuned to the complexities of the participating women’s lived experiences as jazz musicians. Theoretically it highlights the power relations at play in the myriad ways the participants negotiate or have been impelled to negotiate gender and patriarchy as musicians. In addition the study draws inspiration from feminist postcolonial scholar Julietta Singh’s notion of “unthinking mastery”³ to analyse how the participants have come to operate beyond the master narratives that define jazz culture.

1. In the interest of unbiased and gender-sensitive writing, I have taken care not to conflate the terms “gender” and “sex” in this study. The seven participants in this study all identify as cisgender women and did not request the use of alternative designations at any time during the research process. This should by no means be viewed as cisgenderism (the belief that being cisgender is normative or the assumption that they are cisgender unless otherwise specified). The focus of this study is on the participants’ experiences as women working as jazz musicians; although brief discussions about sexual attraction and intimate relationships occasionally arose within the wider context of their interviews, closer attention to the complexities of sexual orientation falls outside the scope of this study. The participants are widely referred to as women/her/she in scholarly literature and the media, refer to themselves as women, and will be referred to as such throughout this study.

2. Sherrie Tucker, personal correspondence (Examiner’s Report, 2023).

3. Julietta Singh, *Unthinking Mastery: Dehumanism and Decolonial Entanglement* (Duke University Press, 2018).

Patriarchy in South African jazz culture

Despite the relatively strong presence of women students in South African tertiary jazz education programmes, their presence on the professional jazz scene remains small.⁴ Although women have comprised 30% to 60% of the cohort of jazz students at six South African universities⁵ over the past half-decade, local jazz stages remain male-dominated. Reflecting wider patterns of gender stereotyping,⁶ the majority of women jazz students are vocalists and only a small minority plays instruments traditionally coded as masculine.⁷ Whereas relatively equal numbers of boys and girls study jazz at school, very few women go on to perform professionally. The respective gender composition of student ensembles and professional bands at two prominent South African jazz festivals highlights this problem. Commenting on the 2014 Cape Town International Jazz Festival (CTIJF), Stefanie Jason writes:

Despite the balanced ratio of girl instrumentalists to boys at the school concert rehearsal, looking at the line-up for the jazz festival says something different about the continuation or longevity of women jazz musicians in a male-dominated genre.⁸

The annual Standard Bank Jazz Festival (SBJF) is a prestigious event that draws international performers and audiences. On average 34% of participants in the Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Festival (SBNYJF) are women, but only 10% to 15% of the SBJF professional line-

4. See Ceri Moelwyn-Hughes, 'Women, gender and identity in popular music-making in Gauteng, 1994-2012' (Masters thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 2013), 28-30 and Marc Rönts, 'Disruption: Gender, Jazz and the Lady Day Big Band', *South African Music Studies*, 40 (2020), 471-472, 478.

5. These estimates were obtained via personal correspondence with Rudi Bower (2022) at Nelson Mandela University, Chris Thorpe (2020) at Rhodes University, Amanda Tiffin (2022) at the University of Cape Town, Thuli Zama (2020) and Debbie Mari (2022) at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Mageshen Naidoo (2020) at the University of Pretoria, and André Petersen (2020) at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). The statistics in this chapter are averages, aimed at providing context. A comprehensive, quantitative report on gender inequality in contemporary South African jazz falls outside the scope of this study.

6. In 1978, a groundbreaking study by Harold Abeles and Susan Porter explored how the gender-stereotyping of musical instruments limits musicians regardless of their gender. Over the past four decades their article has sparked numerous studies on the coding of musical instruments as "masculine" (e.g. drums, guitar, trumpet) or "feminine" (e.g. piano, flute, violin). See Harold F. Abeles and Susan Yank Porter, 'The gender-stereotyping of musical instruments', *Journal of Research in Music Education*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (1978), 65-75; Hal Abeles, 'Are Musical Instrument Gender Associations Changing?', *Journal of Research in Music Education*, Vol. 57, No. 2 (2009), 127-139; Elizabeth R. Wrape, Alexandra L. Dittloff, and Jennifer L. Callahan, 'Gender and Musical Instrument Stereotypes in Middle School Children: Have Trends Changed?', *National Association for Music Education*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (2016), 40-47.

7. By way of example, women enrolled for jazz courses at Nelson Mandela University (2017-2022) have been vastly outnumbered in instrumental studies, making up 5% of jazz guitar students, 20% of drum kit students, 15% of bass students and 10% of jazz piano students. In stark contrast, women accounted for 81% of jazz vocal majors at the institution despite making up 50% of enrollments for theoretical jazz modules. Estimates were obtained via personal correspondence with Rudi Bower, Andrew Warneke and John Edwards in 2022.

8. Stefanie Jason, 'CTIJF: Reflecting a nation in pro/regress', *Mail & Guardian*, 27 March 2014, accessed 10 November 2020, <https://mg.co.za/article/2014-03-27-ctijf-closing-the-gap-on-gender-inequality/>

up typically features women.⁹ Not surprisingly, the coveted Standard Bank Young Artist for Jazz title has only been awarded to five women¹⁰ since its inception in 2004. Providing a rough analysis of the situation, festival director Alan Webster has noted:

The number of females at university declines substantially, but even more dramatically in the professional arena. My thumb-suck for female numbers is 40% of total students playing jazz at school; 20% at university; 5% professional.¹¹

In 2019, *The Citizen* described the SBNYJF as a “launch pad” for jazz musicians and a space where young talents are discovered and mentored. However, it failed to mention that there were no women among the youth alumni returning as professional headliners in that year:

Reading the biographies of artists on the main bill – such as Bokani Dyer, Mandisi Dyantyi, Shane Cooper and Justin Sasman – it is evident it was in the Youth Jazz Festival and School’s Band where many of them gained the recognition and nurturing they needed to forge a career in music.¹²

When considering these statistics and types of reporting, it becomes clear that the “recognition and nurturing” required to break into the professional scene is not a given for female participants in the festival. Gwen Ansell refers to the “naturalization” of local jazz as a male domain:

What we see and hear most frequently, we think of as “natural”, whether that is actually the case or not. For most media commentators on the Standard Bank Young Artist awards during the past decade, gender has been invisible. Male talent and leadership have been naturalized.¹³

The UNISA (University of South Africa) Jazz Festival, headlined by the UNISA Big Band, provides another example of the ways gender stereotypes are perpetuated in the country’s foremost educational spaces. The festival lineup has been noticeably male-dominated and the Big Band has yet to include female instrumentalists. It is worth noting that the only women featured thus far since the festival’s inception in 2018 were vocalists Zoë Modiga (2018) and

9. Statistics (2004-2019) obtained via personal correspondence with Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Festival director Alan Webster (2020).

10. Tutu Puoane (vocals, 2004), Shannon Mowday (woodwinds, 2007), Melanie Scholtz (vocals, 2010), Siya Makuzeni (trombone and vocals, 2016), Thandi Ntuli (piano and vocals, 2018)

11. Moelwyn-Hughes, ‘Women, gender and identity’, 28.

12. *The Citizen*, ‘How the National Arts Festival is a launchpad for SA’s young artists’, 13 June 2019, accessed 6 July 2019, <https://www.citizen.co.za/entertainment/arts-and-books/2142702/how-the-national-arts-festival-is-a-launchpad-for-sas-young-artists/>

13. Gwen Ansell, ‘Siya Makuzeni: A Standard Bank Young Artist we’ve all been waiting for’, *Sisgwenjazz*, 1 November 2015, accessed 6 July 2019, <https://sisgwenjazz.wordpress.com/2015/11/01/siya-makuzeni-a-standard-bank-young-artist-for-jazz-weve-all-been-waiting-for/>

Gloria Bosman (2019, 2022).¹⁴ To date, there are no South African studies dedicated to women's representation in jazz education spaces or the professional jazz scene. Karendra Devroop and Chats Devroop offer a rare quantitative study on the employment prospects of South African tertiary jazz graduates.¹⁵ The study includes respondents from South African universities offering jazz degrees, with data gathered in 2005. Though outdated, the study is valuable to current researchers interested in the demographics of the local jazz scene and the inequality that persists within tertiary programmes in terms of race and gender. Devroop and Devroop do not explicitly focus on the impact gender has on students' career expectations, but they do report a higher percentage of male respondents (71%) compared to female respondents (29%) overall. In addition, they report that 80% of their respondents were instrumental majors, with vocal majors at 20%. Although they do not comment on this anomaly, the correlation between percentages of male-versus-female respondents and of instrumentalists-versus-vocalists is evident. Even more telling is their observation of "statistically significant differences...in expected income between males and females with males expecting higher incomes than their counterparts".¹⁶

Women are similarly under-represented in the jazz academy and in most instances are employed as vocal teachers. Currently, only one out of eleven tertiary jazz programmes in the country, is headed by a woman.¹⁷ Ansell highlights how – alongside intersections of class, race, religion and gender – South African tertiary institutions remain exclusionary spaces for women:

Where students of colour experience alienation, exclusion and racism, female jazz students experience alienation, exclusion and sexism. Aspiring black female jazz scholars encounter both.¹⁸

14. The 2020 UNISA Jazz Festival was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic and in 2021 the festival was presented virtually; neither featured women in the lineup. The 2022 festival was similarly male-dominated, featuring one woman (Gloria Bosman) as vocalist.

15. Karendra Devroop and Chats Devroop, 'The career expectations of students majoring in jazz in South Africa: Analysis of performance expectations, income and career plans', *Muziki*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (2010), 31-40.

16. Devroop and Devroop, 'Career expectations', 35.

17. Amanda Tiffin was appointed as Head of Jazz Studies at the South African College of Music (University of Cape Town) in 2019. Between 2017 and 2022, women were employed solely as vocal lecturers within jazz programmes at the University of Cape Town, Rhodes University, and Tshwane University of Technology. One exception is the University of the Witwatersrand where Chantal Willie-Petersen lectures in jazz voice and double bass. Since the inception of the jazz programme at Nelson Mandela University in 1994, only one woman has been employed to teach jazz (a part-time vocal lecturing position between 2014 and 2018). Information obtained via personal correspondence with Amanda Tiffin (2022) and Charlie Valló (2020).

18. Gwen Ansell, 'Who should teach jazz in South Africa?', *Sisgwenjazz*, 8 August 2016, accessed 23 October 2019, <https://sisgwenjazz.wordpress.com/2016/08/08/who-should-teach-jazz-in-south-africa/>

Ansell refers to the ingrained homophily in universities and argues that singing is an “over-represented” profession for women in South African jazz:

Look at the personnel of South African jazz departments however, and another characteristic quickly becomes apparent. Not only are the faces predominantly white, they are equally predominantly male – even more heavily so when vocal practice lecturers are removed. We still suffer the continuing – and international – assumption that women instrumentalists... still have to prove that they have the “balls” to be authentic jazzmakers. Oh, there are interesting features, sometimes sections, in jazz magazines on women in jazz, but the attitude is often that of *noblesse oblige*, like making sure there are enough blacks on television sitcoms.¹⁹

Women are also under-represented outside of academic spaces. Whereas vocalists enjoy a degree of visibility as guest performers or featured artists in (all-male) bands, instrumentalists continue to be overlooked. With the exception of specially curated “all-women” jazz festivals and projects women remain outnumbered as headline performers and bandleaders.²⁰ Especially concerning is the knock-on effect of patriarchy on the music industry: according to Nicholas Maweni, “Patriarchy in the music industry has cheated female artists of their royalties.” As chairperson of the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO), Maweni reveals that less than 20% of members are women and that less than 8% of the organisation’s revenue distributed as royalties is paid to women. He voices particular concerns about women’s place as composers, authors and publishers, acknowledging that, “many women have been shortchanged” as a result of their work being “credited to their male counterparts.”²¹ Like their international counterparts, South African women who manage to gain access to the boys’ club of jazz experience a range of obstacles. Some are directly related to their gender such as sexual assault, motherhood, instrument stereotyping and the masculine use of language in jazz spaces.

19. Ansell, ‘Who should teach’, 2016.

20. See Sbusiso Shongwe, ‘Mazwai assembles unique band’, *Sowetan Live*, 15 August 2012, accessed 10 February 2021, <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/entertainment/2012-08-15-mazwai-assembles-unique-band/>; Kamcilla Pillay, ‘iMbokodo Jazz Festival rocks Durban’, *Independent Online*, 13 August 2017, accessed 30 September 2020, <https://www.iol.co.za/news/south-africa/kwazulu-natal/gallery-imbokodo-jazz-festival-rocks-durban-10772116>; Harold Kapindu, ‘xJazz attracts young musicians for a residency program’, *Nyasa Times*, 17 September 2018, accessed 3 September 2019, https://www.nyasatimes.com/xjazz-attracts-young-musicians-for-a-residency-program/#google_vignette; Patience Bambalele, ‘All-female band closes off jazz festival with a bang’, *Sowetan Live*, 29 September 2019, accessed 10 February 2021, <https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/entertainment/2019-09-29-all-female-band-closes-off-jazz-festival-with-a-bang/>; Helen Swinger, ‘It’s become like group therapy for women in jazz: On the legacy of all-women bands’, *News 24*, 26 August 2021, accessed 1 November 2021, <https://www.news24.com/arts/music/its-become-like-group-therapy-for-women-in-jazz-on-the-legacy-of-all-women-bands-20210826>

21. Nicholas Maweni, ‘Patriarchy in the music industry has cheated female artists of their royalties’, *Independent Online*, 2 August 2020, accessed 3 November 2021, <https://www.iol.co.za/news/opinion/patriarchy-in-the-music-industry-has-cheated-female-artists-of-their-royalties-98f71128-6b93-439a-b26e-9fdfae282184>

More insidious constraints such as exclusion from professional networks, tokenism and ingrained beliefs about jazz authenticity are equally hard to overcome.

There are, however, pockets of empowerment where women and non-binary musicians subvert the status quo. These include the band Basadi Women of Jazz²² (formed in the 1990s) and the mentorship organization, Jazz Camp for Female Instrumentalists Mamelodi (JCFI),²³ founded in 2009. More prominently, South African platinum crossover artist Thandiswa Mazwai assembled an all-women band in 2012 to “challenge the marginalisation of women in music” and “acknowledge that women can do more than sing”.²⁴ The Lady Day Big Band was established in Cape Town in 2018 “after numerous discussions about the lack of representation of women in the music scene on a professional level.”²⁵ In a recent paper about the band, Marc Röntsch describes how sexual objectification and women musicians’ “diminished expectations” contribute to the “construct of the jazz musician as male, informed by and perpetuating a hyper-masculine ego that leaves little to no room for women beyond positions of fandom and sexual conquest.”²⁶ Röntsch quotes the band’s musical director and conductor, Amanda Tiffin:

...people don’t see us [women] as leaders, so you’re booked in supporting roles all the time. You’re second alto, you’re second tenor, you’re second trombone.²⁷

Trombonist Kelly Bell refers to the paucity of female jazz instrumentalists in Cape Town, a phenomenon that has persisted for decades:

Around Cape Town for many years, if it wasn’t myself or Shannon Mowday, either one of us in the band or both of us, there were no other female instrumentalists in any of the other bands you saw.²⁸

Lead vocalist Lana Crowster argues that powerful (male) gatekeepers have forced women to “go along with what they say or do” in order to join the professional jazz scene [in Cape Town]. Amanda Tiffin echoes this sentiment, saying, “...all of us who have operated in the

22. Basadi Women of Jazz is an all-women jazz band that has toured internationally and shared the stage with jazz luminaries like Hugh Masekela, Miriam Makeba, Brenda Fassie and Caiphus Semenya (see basadiwomenofjazz.co.za).

23. See <https://www.facebook.com/JCFIMamelodiJazz/>

24. Shongwe, ‘Mazwai assembles unique band’

25. Venecia Valentine, ‘All-girl band of note’, *Daily Voice*, 10 May 2018, accessed 3 September 2019, <https://www.dailyvoice.co.za/lifestyle-entertainment/entertainment/all-girl-band-of-note-14878663>

26. Röntsch, ‘Disruption’, 472.

27. Ibid, 468.

28. Ibid, 471.

professional scene, have just learned to shut our mouths.”²⁹ As a social construct, the male gaze reduces women to passive non-actors secondary to active male characters, but also defines them as something to “watch, conquer and possess.”³⁰ In the rare instances that women gain access to male-dominated jazz spaces, they are treated like outsiders and often objectified. In a response to the #MeToo movement,³¹ Ansell exposes the pervasiveness of sexual misconduct perpetrated against women musicians in South Africa. She provides examples of iconic singers from three different generations (Thandie Klaasen, Mercy Pakela and Jennifer Ferguson) who have suffered sexual violence and highlights the “casting couch” tradition that continues to plague women from the classroom to the stage:

Versions of the so-called “casting couch” are rife in music, beginning with “Let’s see you from the back”, “Come to the audition in a short dress”, and “Can I buy you dinner later?” and extending to far, far worse. Colleagues researching women in music here regularly hear the horror stories, from assault on tour buses to male stage and sound personnel forcefully demanding sexual favours in return for simply doing what they’re paid for. Sometimes it starts earlier: that music teacher who stands far too close behind and just has to reach over to turn the page; that music prof who has an “affair” (power imbalances render the term absurd) with a different student every year; that other one who keeps porn visibly playing on his computer during tutorials.³²

A number of similar articles were published as a direct (or indirect) response to #MeToo³³ including Ansell’s piece on the Women’s Music Collective (WMC), recently established by South African composer Clare Loveday³⁴ as a space where women could “bounce ideas around, try new things and be [themselves] without male instruction.” Again quoting Loveday, Ansell writes:

29. Ibid, 478.

30. Sarah Vanbuskirk, ‘What is the male gaze?’, *Very Well Mind*, 14 November 2022, accessed 30 November 2022, <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-the-male-gaze-5118422>

31. The viral #MeToo movement of 2017 was sparked by the highly publicised sexual abuse allegations against Hollywood film producer Harvey Weinstein, prompting women across the world to call out sexual assault and harassment in the workplace. The phrase, coined by American activist Tarana Burke in 2006, served to empower survivors of abuse and build solidarity among vulnerable women on the receiving end of predatory sexual behaviour (see <https://metoomvmt.org/get-to-know-us/tarana-burke-founder/>).

32. Gwen Ansell, ‘South African music: time for our very own Weinstein moment?’, *Sisgwenjazz*, 24 October 2017, accessed 5 April 2019, <https://sisgwenjazz.wordpress.com/2017/10/24/south-african-music-time-for-our-very-own-weinstein-moment/>

33. See Gwen Ansell, ‘All the things we don’t know about South African jazz’, *Sisgwenjazz*, 6 May 2018, accessed 5 April 2019, <https://sisgwenjazz.wordpress.com/2018/05/06/all-the-things-we-dont-know-about-south-african-jazz/>; Gwen Ansell, ‘Women create safe spaces to free their creativity’, *New Frame*, 4 December 2018, accessed 10 May 2019, <https://www.newframe.com/women-create-safe-spaces-free-their-creativity/>

34. Clare Loveday (1967-) is a South African composer, academic, educator and activist. She is the founder of the Women’s Music Collective (WMC) and the creator/curator of the website, Women in Music SA (<https://womeninmusic.co.za>).

And that's often what it's like in music schools. The Big Men love to instruct young women, but really don't like it when the women become 'big' themselves...³⁵

Loveday sought partners for the collective³⁶ in 2018, motivated by “one too many experiences of absolutely horrifying sexism...that all-too-familiar barking order in the pack; dismissive and woman-blaming comments about sexual abuse” she had experienced at a composers’ meeting.³⁷ Journalists have called out patriarchy in South African jazz long before #MeToo. Lloyd Gedye refers to the jazz scene as “a testosterone driven, chin-stroking landscape” and argues that the Standard Bank Jazz Festival operates on a set of double standards allowing men to become headline artists sooner than their female counterparts. Referring to Siya Makuzeni’s relatively late ascension to the festival stage as bandleader, Gedye writes:

As great as the show was, one had to wonder why it had taken the festival so long to give Makuzeni an opportunity to lead her own band. In the meantime many young male jazz musicians have been given these opportunities.³⁸

In a later article, Gedye adds that there are only a “handful of progressive bandleaders who give opportunities to women.”³⁹ Sibongakonke Mama’s interview with award winning jazz artists Siya Makuzeni, Thandi Ntuli and Spha Mdlalose highlights how South African women continue to be excluded from the music industry and that “patriarchy expects women to show permission slips to be great.” Quoting Makuzeni, Mama writes:

We are dealing with a social system still generally entrenched in patriarchy. Young women in jazz are still up against a male-dominated environment, especially as instrumentalists.⁴⁰

Mdlalose believes that, “though some progress has been made, girls and women have been taught that their role in jazz is that of the vocalist and nothing else.”⁴¹ Pianist, vocalist, bandleader, composer and jazz educator Nomfundo Xaluva has also spoken out against

35. Ansell, ‘Safe spaces’, 2018.

36. Not to be confused with the recently launched Women in Music – South Africa (<https://www.womeninmusic.org/southafrica>), a chapter of the international organization Women in Music (<https://www.womeninmusic.org>).

37. Ansell, ‘Safe spaces’, 2018.

38. Lloyd Gedye, ‘Grahamstown shows its jazz hands’, *The Con*, 7 July 2015, accessed 11 August 2019, <https://www.theconmag.co.za/2015/07/07/grahamstown-shows-its-jazz-hands/>

39. Lloyd Gedye, ‘South African jazz and the patriarchy’, *City Press*, 28 February 2016, accessed 25 July 2021, <https://www.news24.com/citypress/trending/south-african-jazz-and-the-patriarchy-20160228>

40. Sibongakonke Mama, ‘Women’s blues hit The Road’, *Mail & Guardian*, 18 September 2015, accessed 1 August 2019, <https://mg.co.za/article/2015-09-17-womens-blues-hit-the-road/>

41. Mama, ‘Women’s blues’, 2015.

stereotypes that paint women as little more than “eye candy” in seductive dresses, hugging a microphone:

A lot of the time, women in jazz are expected to be vocalists who have to look pretty and have to be the eye candy of the band and I think we are trying to change that. Our artistry and skill goes beyond how we look... People revere jazz singers but in terms of them taking jazz vocalists seriously, we still have a long way to go before that perception is completely transformed.⁴²

Kgomotso Moncho-Maripane quotes Durban jazz pianist Lindi Ngonelo:

There’s an unpleasant stereotype that groups females into the vocal section of being a jazz musician. It’s also not fair that gender has to come into it. I have to work twice as hard as a male to prove myself. To be booked, people need a point of reference first, like whom I have worked with. I wish more females were exposed to the possibilities of being an instrumentalist than just a vocalist. You’re more in charge when you have an instrument.⁴³

Pianist-vocalist, composer and bandleader Thandi Ntuli adds:

The negative is in the condescending air regarding my ability to “do the job” and when I do it’s often under the shadow of how I compare to my male counterparts, i.e. “Wow you play well for a girl” or “Wow you are powerful, you play just like a man” both of which are comments I have actually heard.⁴⁴

She believes that the constant focus on her gender prevents writers and interviewers from paying real attention to her music:

“You play so well for a girl” – perhaps if people thought about saying, “You play so well for a black person”, they’d realise what the problem is, even if they intend it as a compliment.⁴⁵

In an online interview with Zamindlela Zama, bassist Romy Brauteseth acknowledges the gender stereotyping of instruments in the South African jazz scene:

Many of the comments I received were around how unusual is it, and how extraordinary is it for a female to be playing an instrument that requires such strength and stability... I still get comments about the fact that I am a female bass player. I have come to realize that this is not about what people think that men or

42. Katlego Mkhwanazi, ‘Nomfundo Xaluva shrugging off jazz stereotypes’, *Mail & Guardian*, 27 November 2014, accessed 2 June 2021, <https://mg.co.za/article/2014-11-27-nomfundo-xaluva-shrugging-off-jazz-stereotypes/>

43. Kgomotso Moncho-Maripane, ‘Five South African female jazz instrumentalists you should know’, *ATI*, 2 September 2016, accessed 12 March 2020, <http://www.atl.tv/post/five-south-african-female-jazz-instrumentalists-you-should-know.html>

44. Moncho-Maripane, ‘Five South African female jazz instrumentalists’, 2016.

45. Gwen Ansell, ‘SBYA Thandi Ntuli: messenger of cosmic light’, *Sisgwenjazz*, 8 November 2017, accessed 10 October 2020, <https://sisgwenjazz.wordpress.com/2017/11/08/sbya-thandi-ntuli-messenger-of-cosmic-light/>

women are capable of, as much as it is just people having preconceived ideas based on what they know or have seen.⁴⁶

The stereotyping of women is further compounded by their sexualised representation in the media. Tsepang Tutu Molefe's article about "Jazz in the Native Yards" provides a striking example.⁴⁷ Molefe reviews a performance by Feya Faku (trumpet), Kesivan Naidoo (drums), Nduduzo Makhathini (piano), Reza Khota (guitar) and Romy Brauteseth (bass), pointing out their respective qualities of mastery. His descriptions of the men evoke images of prowess, virility and virtuosity; Faku is pictured as a celestial, elevated figure, with a "halo" above his grey vintage cap and that, "...every time he blew into the horn, it glittered." In turn, Khota's instrument is likened to a weapon as he "held a guitar as if it were a bazooka... The man was in a war, and the throbbing chords invited the audience's ears to go with him." Naidoo's snare drum is "bouncing against the walls of [the author's] senses." In a nod to his masculinity and physical stature, Makhathini sports a "huge beard, a beard the size of a biblical prophet's." In contrast, Brauteseth – the only woman in the band – is dubbed "The Upright Bass Lover":

The upright bass stood against a woman in jeans. She held the instrument close. She didn't play it, she made love to it. When she did a solo, the upright groaned from deep in its belly.⁴⁸

Molefe describes "Jazz in the Native Yards" as "an initiative intent on preserving a great South African legacy", referring to the origins of South African jazz and its role in the struggle against oppression, yet he inadvertently preserves a darker legacy in the country's jazz history: the objectification of women. More recently, a review of James Morrison's⁴⁹ performance at the 2017 Standard Bank Jazz Festival reveals the not-too-subtle objectification of Morrison's long-time musical colleague, acclaimed South African-born woodwind player Shannon Mowday.⁵⁰ Morrison and the rest of the (male) band members are lauded for their technical virtuosity whereas Mowday is reduced to her physical attributes:

46. Zamindlela Zama, 'Romy's two careers are intertwined', *Jazz It Out*, 21 August 2020, accessed 11 February 2021, <https://www.jazzitout.com/2020/08/21/romys-two-careers-are-intertwined/>

47. Tsepang Tutu Molefe, 'Musicians rally to preserve the soul of South African jazz', *Sunday Times*, 12 March 2017, accessed 1 September 2019, <https://www.timeslive.co.za/sunday-times/lifestyle/2017-03-12-musicians-rally-to-preserve-the-soul-of-south-african-jazz/>

48. Molefe, 'Musicians rally', 2017.

49. James Morrison (1962-) is an acclaimed Australian jazz composer, multi-instrumentalist, bandleader and youth mentor (see <https://www.jamesmorrison.com>).

50. Morrison appeared as guest artist on Shannon Mowday's album *African Eyes* (Shannon Mowday, *African Eyes*, recorded 2007, Jassics, B000NDJSCC, 2007, compact disc).

Shannon Mowday was simply gorgeous. Her ripped shoulders and hourglass shimmying figure created a marvelous visual offset against the coolest-of-cool bassist, Benjamin Jephtha, whose dreads were frozen in hipster pose while his fingers sprinted over the strings. Mowday's love of performance lit up the night, her hand punching out a note, a little lift of the knee, and did I say, that awesome shimmy 'n shake? The audience screamed as if singed by the devil's bellows and you could feel the stolid walls of DSG's old Lila Strong hall wake, move and grind its hips.⁵¹

These and other pervasive narratives of masculine power/mastery and feminine submission not only dominate bandstands and educational institutions locally, but also internationally. Below, I provide a comparative overview of patriarchy in international jazz culture, drawing on scholarly literature and media reporting from the USA, Canada, Australia and the UK.⁵²

Patriarchy in international jazz culture

Chelsea Wahl and Stephen Ellingson argue that the field of professional jazz is organised by two contradictory cultures:

Historically, the jazz art world has followed norms of meritocracy, which promote equality across boundaries of race and class. At the same time a culture of exclusivity, anchored in gendered essentialism, has severely limited female participation.⁵³

Chris Robinson similarly describes jazz as a male domain:

Jazz critics, journalists, and editors are overwhelmingly male, as are university jazz professors and the ensembles they direct. The music's gatekeepers are, and have always been, disproportionately male. As such, jazz has been shaped by gendered attitudes and privileged those qualities and characteristics conceptualized as masculine.⁵⁴

Jayne Caudwell writes:

Women did contribute to the early formation of jazz genre: for instance, women singing the blues crafted a sensory mode of expression that was rich and deep in gendered meaning. However, women

51. Steve Kretzmann, 'James Morrison and Funk! Straight on or funk'd up – they hollered just as loud', *The Critter*, 6 July 2017, accessed 14 July 2021, <http://thecritter.co.za/?p=2263>

52. A thorough account of patriarchy in international jazz culture falls beyond the scope of the present study. Most of the English-language scholarly and journalistic writings I was able to access focus on the USA, UK, Canada, and Australia, and I build my account of patriarchy in 'international' jazz culture around this work.

53. Chelsea Wahl and Stephen Ellingson, 'Almost Like a Real Band: Navigating a Gendered Jazz Art World', *Qualitative Sociology*, Vol.41, No. 3 (2018), 445.

54. Chris Robinson, 'A Brief History of the Origins of Jazz's Sexism', *Medium*, 9 March 2019, accessed 10 June 2020, <https://medium.com/@CRMusWriter/a-brief-history-of-the-origins-of-jazzs-sexism-3ee4278bceff0>

instrumentalists, specifically “horn” players (saxophones, trumpets, and trombone) often go unheard and unknown. They have been made invisible.⁵⁵

Lara Pelegrinelli in turn explains how jazz historiography has confined singers “to an inferior social space or simply erases singing from cultural memory” beyond the origins of jazz, thereby instigating the lingering perception that jazz singers are inferior to instrumentalists:

The parentage of jazz, therefore, can be read as symbolically gendered: the blues is feminine, a natural product of the untrained voice associated with the body and the sexuality of its performers, whereas ragtime is masculine, associated with instruments as tools and technical skill.⁵⁶

Women singers played a vital role in the formation of jazz as a genre, yet “[aside] from the grudging nods afforded a few Swing Era ‘canaries’, ones so prominent that they would be difficult to ignore”⁵⁷ (like Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday), they were relegated to obscurity. Women have traditionally been limited to the role of “garnish”, employed to “beautify and embellish the band but not the music.”⁵⁸ One exception was playing the piano, a more “ladylike” choice of instrument. Ajay Heble writes that Victorian notions of “bourgeois domesticity and femininity” limited women to singing and playing the piano, activities that reinforced their “relation to the domestic sphere.”⁵⁹ Whereas early American jazz offered black men and women a “site of social resistance to mainstream culture”, the consolidation of jazz discourse as a “male preserve” has prevented women from engaging in political resistance.⁶⁰

Sarah Caissie Provost argues that women’s bodies were largely obscured by the piano, allowing men “to accept the male language of jazz emanating from the piano”, but that horn players were “unable to hide their feminine bodies yet spoke the male language of jazz, thus confounding the male gaze.”⁶¹ If they wanted to be accepted into “physically and musically homosocial spaces”, women instrumentalists had to “play like a man” and/or underplay their gender; yet when they played “like a man” or mimicked masculine traits, they were seen as

55. Jayne Caudwell, ‘Jazzwomen: music, sound, gender and sexuality’, *Annals of Leisure Research*, Vol.15, No. 4 (2012), 390.

56. Lara Pelegrinelli, ‘Separated at “birth”: Singing and the History of Jazz’, in *Big Ears: Listening for Gender in Jazz Studies*, eds. Nichole T. Rustin and Sherrie Tucker (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 34.

57. Ibid, 32.

58. Caudwell, ‘Jazzwomen’, 392.

59. Ajay Heble, *Landing on the Wrong Note: Jazz, dissonance, and critical practice* (New York and London: Routledge, 2000), 148.

60. Heble, *Landing on the Wrong Note*, 150.

61. Sarah Caissie Provost, ‘Bringing Something New: Female Jazz Instrumentalists’ Use of Imitation and Masculinity’, *Jazz Perspectives*, Vol.10, No. 2-3 (2017), 148.

imitators (of men) rather than innovators. For some women, using mimicry and associating with powerful male musicians to gain access to jazz spaces were strategic recipes for success. Trumpeter Valaida Snow actively marketed herself as “Little Louis”, a title she claimed was bestowed upon her by Louis Armstrong.⁶² Snow crafted her own public image by strategically “assembling a series of self-perpetuated myths” while Mary Lou Williams (known for playing “like a man”) and Lil Hardin (known as the “hard” pianist) used “men’s own tools” to succeed in the professional arena.⁶³

The Swing era provided women a small window of opportunity to work in spaces traditionally reserved for men. During World War II, all-women big bands toured the United States while the men were at war;⁶⁴ women composers, bandleaders and arrangers didn’t simply fill the void left by male musicians, but they flourished.⁶⁵ The end of World War II signaled a renewed emphasis on the traditional family unit; men earned, innovated and created, and women were relegated to domestic roles. According to Angela Smith, American women were expected to conform to the nuclear, “father knows best” family model that was instated to ensure “domestic security and protect the American way of life from nuclear threat and a Communist takeover.”⁶⁶ Men were once again “masters” of the house and the bandstand, and many women were reluctant to relinquish their seats and return to more traditional arenas. Despite women’s successful – albeit short-lived – occupation of wartime bandstands, jazz reporters had not

62. Ibid, 150-151.

63. Ibid, 156.

64. Sherrie Tucker’s multiple studies of all-women big bands and trailblazing jazzwomen in early American jazz culture have greatly informed this study: Sherrie Tucker, “‘And, Fellas, They’re American Girls!’: On the Road with the Sharon Rogers All-Girl Band”, *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2/3, *Gender, Nations, and Nationalisms* (1996), 128-160; Sherrie Tucker, ‘Telling Performances: Jazz History Remembered and Remade by the Women in the Band’, *Oral History Review*, 26/1 (1999), 67-84; Sherrie Tucker, *Swing Shift: ‘All-Girl’ Bands of the 1940s* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000); Sherrie Tucker, ‘Big Ears: Listening for Gender in Jazz Studies’, *Current Musicology* 71 (2001/2002), 375-408; Sherrie Tucker, ‘Uplifts and Downbeats: What if Jazz History Included the Prairie View Co-eds?’, *Journal of Texas Music History*, Vol. 2, Issue 2, Article 3 (2002), accessed 20 June 2020, <http://ecommons.txstate.edu/jtmh/vol2/iss2/4>; Sherrie Tucker, ‘Bordering on Community: Improvising Women Improvising Women-in- Jazz’, Eds. D. Fischlin and A. Heble, *The Other Side of Nowhere: Jazz, Improvisation and Communities in Dialogue*, (2004), 244-267; Sherrie Tucker, ‘A Feminist Perspective on New Orleans Jazzwomen’, New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park Research Study, September 30, 2004; Sherrie Tucker, ‘Beyond the Brass Ceiling: Dolly Jones Trumpets Modernity in Oscar Micheaux’s *Swing!*’, *Jazz Perspectives*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (April 2009), 3-34. See also Monica Hairston O’Connell and Sherrie Tucker, ‘Not One to Toot Her Own Horn (?): Melba Liston’s Aural Histories and Classroom Presentations’, *Black Music Research Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 1 (2014), Center for Black Music Research – Columbia College Chicago and University of Illinois Press, 121-158.

65. See *The Girls in the Band*, directed by Judy Chaikin (2011; Yleisradio (YSL)), film. For a scholarly review of the film, see Kristin McGee, ‘The Girls in the Band’, *Jazz Perspectives*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (2015), 95-101.

66. Angela Smith, *Women Drummers: A History from Rock and Jazz to Blues and Country* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), 141-142.

warmed to the idea of gender equality on stage. Mike Hennessey writes that even iconic publications such as *DownBeat* have been complicit in perpetuating sexual discrimination and that “like the profession of jazz musician itself, writing about jazz has long been a predominantly male preserve”.⁶⁷ In 1938, an unsigned article, “Why Women Musicians Are Inferior”, proclaims, “the woman musician never was born capable of sending anyone further than the nearest exit.”⁶⁸ In a 1941 issue, Marvin Freedman declares:

Good jazz is hard masculine music with a whip to it. Women like violins, and jazz deals with drums and trumpets.⁶⁹

As late as 1967, George T. Simon⁷⁰ claimed, “Only God can make a tree...and only men can play good jazz.”⁷¹ The misogynistic writing of yesteryear may have been tempered in recent decades, but women’s representation (in mainstream discourse and on the bandstand) has not improved significantly. *Grammy*-nominated saxophonist Tia Fuller recently remarked:

The historic underrepresentation of women in jazz means the very landscape of jazz has been shaped by his-story. For the most part, it is men who have told the story of jazz music, and men who have decided which players represent the genre publicly.⁷²

Even women at the top of their game receive backhanded compliments and fall prey to careless reporting that perpetuates their otherness. In the June 2012 issue of *DownBeat*, Hailey Niswanger is hailed as powerful enough to become “one of the best female alto saxophonists in the country, if not the world.” The slight may have been unintentional, but introducing Niswanger as an outstanding *female* saxophonist implies that “the highest level of achievement she could reach is predicted, circumscribed, and limited by her gender”.⁷³ Vibraphonist Sasha Berliner’s controversial open letter to jazz pianist and writer Ethan Iverson “and the rest of jazz patriarchy”⁷⁴ is a powerful response to Iverson’s recent interview with jazz luminary Robert

67. Mike Hennessey, ‘The Prejudice Against Women in Jazz’, *International Jazz Archives Journal*, Vol. 3, No.1 (2006/2007), 24.

68. *DownBeat*, ‘Why Women Musicians Are Inferior’, February 1938, 4.

69. Marvin Freedman, ‘Here’s the Lowdown on “Two Kinds of Women”’, *DownBeat*, 1 February 1941, 9.

70. Prolific jazz writer and critic, George T. Simon (1912-2001) appeared as a drummer on early recordings of the Glenn Miller Orchestra, but made his mark as editor-in-chief of *Metronome* magazine (1939-1955) and as an author.

71. George T. Simon, *The Big Bands* (London: Macmillan, 1967), 26.

72. Tia Fuller, ‘2019 Grammy Awards: Why I’m using my nomination to speak out about sexism in the world of jazz’, *NBC News*, 10 February 2019, accessed 5 December 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/2019-grammy-awards-why-i-m-using-my-nomination-speak-ncna969741>

73. Robinson, ‘A Brief History’, 2019.

74. See also Jose Dias, ‘Women jazz musicians are using #metoo and taking a stand against sexism’, *The Conversation*, 12 January 2018, accessed 20 March 2022, <https://theconversation.com/women-jazz-musicians-are-using-metoo-and-taking-a-stand-against-sexism-89663>

Glasper.⁷⁵ Glasper lauds Iverson for providing “young, fine, Euro chicks” an “entrance to jazz”, upon which Iverson replies, “I guess that’s one of the reasons to play, really.” Glasper proceeds to say that women relate (and respond) to music on a sexual, rather than a musical level:

Getting back to women: women love that. They don’t love a whole lot of soloing. When you hit that one groove and stay there, it’s like musical clitoris. You’re there, you stay on that groove, and the women’s eyes close and they start to sway, going into a trance.⁷⁶

Kimberly Hannon Teal explains that the interview:

...made the homosocial masculine culture of the music so starkly visible, opening a conversation between the two men into a broad, mix-gendered discursive space...The fact that explicitly gendered comments constituted one brief moment in an otherwise unmarked musical conversation does not make it less significant. Rather, it emphasizes the degree to which heteronormative masculinity and jazz musicianship are culturally linked. The artists involved are not just talking about women in isolation, they are talking about women in relationship to how they perceive their own musicianship.⁷⁷

Kathleen McKeage investigates the relationship between gender and participation in high school and college jazz ensembles, and states that women “may not be able to connect participation in jazz ensemble with career possibilities.”⁷⁸ Ariel Alexander similarly explores the under-representation of female instrumentalists in academic spaces and the “factors that deter” their participation, such as instrument stereotyping, sexism, inappropriate sexual behaviour and sexual discrimination.⁷⁹ 52,8% of respondents in Alexander’s study believed their “choices on classes, combos, private teachers [and] advisors” were limited by discrimination inside university spaces. After graduating, 56,7% reported further discrimination in the professional jazz world.⁸⁰

Wahl and Ellingson further explore the dynamics that contribute to the attrition rate of women in jazz programmes; they argue that the “relative sterility of academic admissions procedures

75. Sasha Berliner, ‘An open letter to Ethan Iverson (and the rest of jazz patriarchy)’, *Sasha Berliner Music*, 21 September 2017, accessed 11 February 2020, <https://www.sashaberlinermusic.com/sociopoliticalcommentary-1/2017/9/21/an-open-letter-to-ethan-iverson-and-the-rest-of-jazz-patriarchy>

76. Berliner, ‘Open Letter’, 2017.

77. Kimberly Hannon Teal, ‘Mary Lou Williams as Apology: Jazz, History, and Institutional Sexism in the Twenty-First Century’, *Jazz & Culture*, Vol. 2 (2019), 14.

78. Kathleen McKeage, ‘Gender and Participation in High School and College Jazz Ensembles’, *Journal of Research in Music Education*, Vol. 52, No. 4, (2004), 354.

79. Ariel Ann Alexander, ‘Where are the Girls? A look at the factors that limit female participation in instrumental jazz’ (DMA Thesis, University of Southern California, 2011), 3.

80. Alexander, ‘Where are the Girls?’, 40-44.

has changed the way young musicians enter the jazz art world. However, the degree to which these programs actually increase opportunities for women is unclear.”⁸¹ Moreover, the “mechanisms of opportunity are still primarily place-based...tied to the club scenes in urban spaces, rather than educational”.⁸² Out of nearly two thousand respondents in a recent survey by Berklee College of Music, around half believed that they “should be farther ahead in their careers than they are” while 78% reported “different” treatment because of their gender.⁸³ Robin Desmeules explores the link between patriarchy in the Toronto jazz scene and the ingrained gender inequality in educational spaces:

While it is doubtless a sign of change that there are more women coming through the ranks, this increase in numbers may not point to an actual change in attitudes towards women making jazz. Examinations of the spaces that these young women occupy in post-secondary jazz programs point to many structural aspects of the institutionalisation of jazz as being gendered (and misogynistic).⁸⁴

Desmeules’ fellow Canadian, Eric Teichman, writes:

As a musical genre, jazz’s history of encouraging or discouraging participation based on heteronormative stereotypes is as old as its existence...Formal education as a social institution has also legitimated and perpetuated heteronormativity by first binarizing gender for participants in its discourse, then placing them in relation to one another, and normalising the type of permissible relationships.⁸⁵

In Australia, Cat Hope writes that women are “disturbingly under-represented” in the jazz industry and on tertiary faculties (less than 10% of jazz academics are women) and that “while many girls study music, not many go on to professional careers.”⁸⁶ According to Hope, less than 10% of Australian jazz academics are women and whilst around 50% of music students are female, only 20% of artists registered to receive Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) royalties are women. Joanna Crothers explains that the music industry doesn’t sufficiently champion women jazz artists, resulting in a “lower commercial profile than their male counterparts.”⁸⁷ A recent study by Dawn Bennett et al. explores how women composers

81. Wahl and Ellingson, ‘Almost Like a Real Band’, 464.

82. Ibid.

83. Becky Prior, Erin Barra and Sharon Kramer, ‘Women in the U.S. Music Industry: Obstacles and Opportunities’, Report: *Berklee Institute for Creative Entrepreneurship*, March 2019, accessed 10 April 2021, <https://college.berklee.edu/sites/default/files/d7/bcm/Women%20in%20the%20U.S.%20Music%20Industry%20Report.pdf>

84. Robin E. Desmeules, ‘(Re)Gendering Jazz: Women Instrumentalists in Toronto’ (Masters Thesis, Carleton University, 2010), 42.

85. Eric Teichman, ‘Pedagogy of discrimination: instrumental jazz education’, *Music Education Research*, Vol. 22, No.2 (2020), 203-204.

86. Cat Hope, ‘Why is there so little space for women in jazz music?’, *The Conversation*, 25 June 2017, accessed 7 July 2019, <https://theconversation.com/why-is-there-so-little-space-for-women-in-jazz-music-79181>

87. Joanna Crothers, ‘Melbourne International Jazz Festival: Women musicians seek to change the jazz world’s boys club’, *ABC News*, 1 June 2018, accessed 28 October 2018, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2018-06-02/changing-the-jazz-worlds-boys-club/9826392>

in Australia manage their ‘stigmatized’ gender identities;⁸⁸ in this sphere, women are not only in the minority, but their work is less likely to be “commissioned, performed, recorded and recognized”.⁸⁹

In the UK, scholars have similarly investigated how entrenched patriarchy and systemic bias in educational spaces may limit women’s career prospects as musicians. According to Helen Julia Minors et al., the link is clear:

Students enter the academy having already been exposed to messages about their gender from their parents, schooling and wider society. People are affected by a wide range of gender messages: these run the gamut from positive and empowering through to inhibiting and undermining.⁹⁰

Lola Grieve highlights female under-representation in the Oxford University Jazz Orchestra and the surrounding jazz scene, citing “pretty bleak” statistics that reveal “deeply entrenched sexism in the music industry.”⁹¹ Grieve argues that although the field of classical music has its own gender inequality issues, it is still more likely to see a woman lead an orchestra than a jazz band. Emily Sarsam provides similarly bleak statistics: at six out of the seven conservatories in the UK, only eight out of two hundred jazz instrumental professorial seats were held by women. Less than 6% of instrumental jazz students at the same conservatories were women. Sarsam also reveals that, outside the academy, only 5% of professional jazz instrumentalists in the UK identified as women.⁹² Vick Bain goes on to identify twelve barriers to women’s success in the UK music industry and writes that, despite near-equal numbers in tertiary music programmes, women only make up 8% of jazz groups signed to UK record labels.⁹³ Although not discussed here, scholars have painted similar pictures of jazz culture as a patriarchal field

88. Dawn Bennett, Sophie Hennekam, Sally Macarthur, Cat Hope, Talisha Goh, ‘Hiding Gender: How female composers manage gender identity’, *Journal of Vocational Behaviour* 113 (2019), 20-32.

89. Bennett et al., ‘Hiding Gender’, 20.

90. Helen Julia Minors, Pamela Burnard, Charles Wiffen, Zaina Shihabi, J. Simon van der Walt, ‘Mapping trends and framing issues in higher music education: Changing minds/changing practices’, *London Review of Education*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (2017), 465.

91. Lola Grieve, ‘Sexism in Jazz’, *Cherwell*, 16 June 2018, accessed 13 February 2021, <https://cherwell.org/2018/06/16/sexism-in-jazz/>

92. Emily Sarsam, ‘Women on the London Jazz Scene: Inspiring a generation of female jazz musicians’, July 2018, accessed 13 February 2021,

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328031439_Women_on_the_London_Jazz_Scene_Inspiring_a_generation_of_female_jazz_musicians

93. Vick Bain, ‘Counting the Music Industry: The Gender Gap’, October 2019, accessed 15 February 2021,

https://www.academia.edu/40898607/Counting_the_Music_Industry_The_Gender_Gap_A_study_of_gender_inequality_in_the_UK_Music_Industry?email_work_card=view-paper

in countries such as Austria,⁹⁴ Turkey,⁹⁵ Sweden,⁹⁶ the Balkans,⁹⁷ and Portugal⁹⁸ to name a few.

The studies and statistics above suggest that, despite the presence of various organisations and initiatives (both internationally and in South Africa) that advocate for greater gender equality in jazz, women remain under-represented on stage, in the academy, the wider music industry, and mainstream jazz discourse. Also evident is the fact that discriminatory, biased and misogynistic jazz writing and reporting remains widespread. Finally – and most pertinent to this study – it can be argued that gendered narratives of “mastery” in educational spaces (schools, universities, festival development programmes, etc.) directly impact women’s decision to pursue, sustain or abandon professional jazz careers.

“Mastery” is a term that hides in plain sight. We master riding a bike, work as *bandmasters* or *concertmasters* and receive Masters degrees. In these seemingly innocuous settings mastery equals proficiency, command and excellence. In classical music, it may have become more common to see women play “masculine” instruments like the timpani or the trumpet in orchestras, but the position of “maestro” (conductor) remains a male domain. Werner et al. argue that, “...music culture itself is formed within uneven differentials of power”.⁹⁹ This is particularly true of jazz culture in South Africa (and internationally): the mastery of jazz requires conquering more than the musical aesthetic or the technical; it requires careful navigation of the genre as a field of power relations. Within the context of jazz, “mastery” is linked to domination, superiority and conquest. For women, the “mastery” of jazz is a more precarious task, one that requires them to prove their worth repeatedly even when they have achieved the highest of jazz accolades. For some, “mastery” equates to overcoming and surviving the *culture* of jazz, rather than the musical skill required to earn a seat on the

94. Christa Bruckner-Haring, ‘Women in Contemporary Austrian Jazz’, in *Jazz, Gender, Authenticity*, Proceedings of the 10th Nordic Jazz Research Conference Stockholm, ed. Alf Arvidsson (2012), 127-143.

95. Deniz Ilbi and Esra Karaol, “Women Jazz Instrumentalists in Turkey within the Context of Gender”, *Musicologist*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (2020), 34-55.

96. Cecilia Björck and Cecilia and Åsa Bergman, ‘Making Women in Jazz Visible: Negotiating Discourses of Unity and Diversity in Sweden and the US’, *Journal of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music*, Vol.8, No.1 (2018), 42- 58.

97. Jasna Jovičević, ‘Gender Perspectives of Instrumental Jazz Performers in Southeastern Europe’, *Musicology* 30 (2021), 149-164.

98. Teresa Maria Marques de Matos Ferreira (Teresa Gentil), ‘More than Singers: Biography, Gender and Agency in the Voices of Four Women Singer-songwriters in Contemporary Portugal’ (Masters thesis, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2017).

99. Ann Werner, Tami Gadir and Sam De Boise, ‘Broadening research in gender and music practice’, *Popular Music*, Vol. 39, No. 3/4 (2020), 637.

bandstand. Once attuned to the complexities of the term “mastery” it becomes harder to unsee and un-hear them. Derived from the Latin adverb *magis* (meaning “more”), the term has been used in the English language for over a millennium, referring to people with “authority over others, whether as rulers, employers, teachers or fathers”.¹⁰⁰ It has become a contentious word in the USA due to its associations with slavery,¹⁰¹ and in the art world similar debates rage about the term “Old Masters”, and the perpetuation of the “implicit assumption that authority and achievement pertain to men”.¹⁰²

Drawing on his own lived experiences, jazz pianist Kenny Werner’s critically acclaimed book¹⁰³ explores some of the “barriers to creativity and mastery of music”, arguing that, “Mastery is available to everyone”.¹⁰⁴ More recently, jazz pianist Richie Beirach published a more concise manual¹⁰⁵ about the processes, habits and steps involved in becoming a master of one’s art. Beirach’s book cover features original Renaissance Man and “master” artist/scientist Leonardo Da Vinci’s “Vitruvian Man” (drawn circa 1490), a nude depiction of the ideal (male) human form in two different positions and inscribed within a circle and a square. Whether Beirach purposefully selected such an iconic and graphic representation of maleness to represent the notion of jazz mastery is unclear, but it certainly perpetuates the narrative of jazz as a male domain. These books inadvertently confirm that jazz can be mastered by anyone provided they have the necessary technical, creative and theoretical tools. The studies and statistics discussed earlier however indicate that this process is less “effortless” for women than Werner and Beirach would suggest. Women are impelled to wade through a century of masculine “backstory” before they even pick up their instruments (or their microphones). Perhaps for this reason, studies that focus exclusively on their compositions and performance skills are notably absent from mainstream jazz discourse.

100. Melissa Mohr, ‘As English evolves, so too does the word “master”’, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 28 June 2021, accessed 10 January 2023, <https://www.csmonitor.com/The-Culture/In-a-Word/2021/0628/As-English-evolves-so-too-does-the-word-master>

101. Ibid.

102. Jonathan Evens, ‘Has The Word Master Reached Its Sell-By Date?’, *Artlyst*, 8 July 2020, accessed 10 January 2023, <https://artlyst.com/news/word-master-reached-sell-date-revd-jonathan-evens/>

103. See Kenny Werner, *Effortless Mastery: Liberating the Master Musician Within* (Jamey Aebersold Jazz, 1996).

104. See <https://kennywerner.com/effortless-mastery>

105. See Richie Beirach, *A Framework for Jazz Mastery* (Intellectual Asset Management, 2021).

Research participants

Given the bleak dynamics outlined thus far in this chapter, the success of women like Amanda Tiffin, Shannon Mowday, Chantal Willie-Petersen, Siya Makuzeni, Nomfundo Xaluva, Thandi Ntuli and Romy Brauteseth working at the highest levels of the South African jazz industry is noteworthy. Below, I briefly profile each of these participants and list some of their professional achievements.¹⁰⁶ Indicators of their professional success highlighted below include but are not limited to:

- a) Participation in major South African jazz festivals such as the Standard Bank Joy of Jazz Festival and Cape Town International Jazz Festival;
- b) Appearing on professional recordings as leaders and/or collaborators;
- c) Prominent representation in the media and/or local scholarly studies;
- d) Professional jazz awards and accolades;
- e) An international performance profile.

Amanda Tiffin (b. 1972)



Fig. 1. Amanda Tiffin (Photo: Colette Yslie Benjamin)

106. These biographies are abridged and serve to introduce the participants rather than provide comprehensive accounts of their musical careers. The reasons for selecting these particular women – and not others who are also prominent in contemporary jazz – are discussed in the next chapter.

Pianist, vocalist, bandleader, composer, arranger and educator Amanda Tiffin¹⁰⁷ was born in Bulawayo (Rhodesia) but has worked in the South African jazz and popular music industries since relocating to Cape Town the early 1990s. She holds a Masters degree in jazz performance and composition from the South African College of Music (SACM) at the University of Cape Town where she is currently the Head of Jazz Studies. Amanda is a sought-after performer, panelist, facilitator and mentor at leading jazz festivals in South Africa, including the Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Festival and the Cape Town Youth Jazz Festival. She regularly acts as musical director and curator at jazz festivals, including the Artscape Jazz Masters Concert Series and the Artscape Youth Jazz Festival. Amanda has performed internationally, including stints in Taiwan, Japan, France, Italy and the UK and has worked across a multitude of genres including musical theatre, jazz, popular music and choral music. In 2018 she was the director of the Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Band and co-founded the all-women Lady Day Big Band with vocalist Lana Crowster and trombonist Kelly Bell.¹⁰⁸



Fig. 2. The Lady Day Big Band (Photo: Zhann Solomon)

Amanda's albums reflect her versatility and showcase her vast experience in composing and arranging. Her recordings include straight-ahead/traditional jazz, contemporary jazz-fusion,

107. See <http://amandatiffin.com>

108. The Lady Day Big Band, 'Ayo Ayo', *YouTube* video, posted by 'The Lady Day Big Band' on 12 March 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOzvfhdnW1c>

crossover/popular music, pop-rock, African pop/jazz fusion, and improvisational music. She has a particular affinity for vocal arranging that is foregrounded in her compositions and, inspired by the *chimurenga* music of her childhood in Bulawayo, she draws on aspects of Shona music. As leader, she has appeared on (and produced) three albums¹⁰⁹ and as collaborator she has released material with the Asian-based A.S.K. Trio¹¹⁰ and the award-winning *a cappella* group, Not The Midnight Mass.¹¹¹ Most recently, she collaborated with Guilherme Ribeiro (Brazil), David Leadbetter (SA/UK) and Hein van de Geyn (Netherlands).¹¹²

Shannon Mowday (b. 1975)



Fig. 3. Shannon Mowday (Photo: Helge Lien)

Internationally renowned woodwind performer, composer, bandleader, arranger and educator Shannon Mowday¹¹³ was born in Cape Town and has graced some of the world's most prestigious festival stages. In South Africa, Shannon has performed as headline artist at the Standard Bank Joy of Jazz Festival, the Standard Bank Jazz Festival and the Cape Town International Jazz Festival. Internationally, she has performed at the Silda Jazz Festival (Norway), Leipzig Jazz Festival (Germany), Genting Jazz Festival (Turkey) and the Borneo

109. Amanda Tiffin, *Who Am I?*, recorded 2005, Amanda Tiffin, AJT01, 2005, compact disc; Amanda Tiffin, *A Woman Like Me*, recorded 2007, Amanda Tiffin, AJT002, 2007, compact disc; Amanda Tiffin, *Consideration*, recorded 2015, Amanda Tiffin, AJT003, 2015, compact disc.

110. A.S.K. Trio feat. Fabio Bottazzo, *Welcoming The Day*, recorded 2014, Shikiori Recordings (Fukuoka, Japan), SKOR1002, 2014, compact disc.

111. Not the Midnight Mass, *Hot Cross Nuns*, recorded 2011, Sound and Motion Studios (Cape Town), NTMM6, 2011, compact disc.

112. Amanda Tiffin, Guilherme Ribeiro, David Leadbetter and Hein van de Geyn, *Facing South*, Amjati Music 2019, iTunes.

113. See <http://shannonmowday.musicaneo.com>

Jazz Festival, among others. Shannon received the coveted Standard Bank Young Artist for Jazz award in 2007 and was granted a distinguished talent visa for residence in Australia in the same year. Her teaching background includes stints in Australia, Europe and at the University of California (UCLA). Shannon holds a Masters degree in Improvised Music from the Norwegian Academy of Music in Oslo. Since relocating to Norway in 2009, she has taught at the Nørges Musikhøgskole and has facilitated Scandinavian/South African youth collaborations in South Africa (2013, 2017, 2019). In 2018, she received the Norsk jazzforum Storband Prize. She is a member of acclaimed Norwegian jazz ensembles, the Nils Landgren Big Band and Ensemble Denada, and has shared the stage with the Trondheim Jazz Orchestra, JazzBaltica “All Stars” Big Band¹¹⁴ and the NDR Big Band. She has performed with South African jazz luminaries Sibongile Khumalo, Dizu Plaatjies, Concord Nkabinde and Jonathan Butler among others, and has performed as soloist with all the major orchestras in South Africa. Internationally, she has performed with Oliver Mtukudzi (Zimbabwe), Maria Schneider (USA), Danilo Perez (Panama) and Jeroen van Vliet (Netherlands) to name a few.

As a composer, Shannon draws on her rich musical background, combining traditional big band elements with African and Scandinavian folk music. She has appeared in television programmes including South African musical game show *Liriekerai*¹¹⁵ and performed on the soundtrack of the 2003 television series, *Song vir Katryn*.¹¹⁶ Her more recent work includes leading the ensemble CHI/Qi featuring musicians from the Netherlands, Iceland and Norway (2019), and LILA, featuring Norwegian colleagues Helge Lien (piano), Johannes Eick (bass) and Erik Nylander (drums). As leader, Shannon has released four albums¹¹⁷ and a series of singles with Det Nye Norske Storband¹¹⁸ (Norway).

114. See JazzBaltica All Star Band, *YouTube* video, posted by ‘JazzBaltica’ on 5 August 2016,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IwP2afSqlps>

115. Afrikaans for “guess the lyrics”; *Liriekerai* was launched on South African satellite television channel, *kykNet*, in 2000.

116. Valiant Swart, *Song vir Katryn*, recorded 2003, Rhythm Records, SWART 007, 2003, compact disc.

117. Shannon Mowday, *Tussen Jou En My*, recorded 2004, Trio Records, 803680670606, 2001, compact disc; Shannon Mowday, *African Eyes*, recorded 2007, Jassics, B000NDJSKC, 2007, compact disc; Shannon Mowday and AOJO, *Oasis of Bad Vibes*, Østnorsk jazzsenter 2019, Amazon Music; Shannon Mowday and LILA, *The Land In-Between*, recorded 2019, Jazzland Records, 377 930 4, 2020, compact disc.

118. Shannon Mowday & Det Nye Norske Storband, *Come On, Play Like A Boy!* (feat. Olav A. Abildgaard), Shannon Mowday 2021, *iTunes*; Shannon Mowday & Det Nye Norske Storband, *Who’s Your Daddy?* (feat. Olav A. Abildgaard), Shannon Mowday 2021, *iTunes*; Shannon Mowday & Det Nye Norske Storband, *Find Your Way* (feat. Olav A. Abildgaard), Shannon Mowday 2022, *iTunes*.

As collaborator, she has appeared on recordings (albums and compilations) featuring South African jazz/fusion,¹¹⁹ Scandinavian big band projects and improvisational music.¹²⁰ Her composition, “Woza Waltz” was recently included in Volume One of the *South African Jazz Real Book*,¹²¹ released in 2021. In the same year, “Woza Waltz” and “African Eyes” (the title track of her 2007 debut album as leader) were included in the *South African Jazz Collection: Original tunes by South African Composers*, a compilation of compositions, biographical data and photographs of prolific South African jazz composers.¹²²

Chantal Willie-Petersen (b. 1978)



Fig. 4. Chantal Willie-Petersen (Photo: Hasani Calvin)

Cape Town-born bassist, vocalist, composer, arranger and educator Chantal Willie-Petersen¹²³ graduated cum laude with a double Masters degree in jazz voice and double bass from the Royal Conservatory of Music in Antwerp (Belgium) and the LUCA School of Arts (Belgium). Between 2003 and 2007, Chantal was a member of Belgium-based group Zap Mama.¹²⁴ The

119. Various Artists, *Jazz Rendesvous Vol. 1*, Silversongs 2005, Amazon Music; Schalk Joubert, *Kayamandi*, recorded 2007, Mountain Records, CD MOU 4494, 2007, compact disc; Amanda Tiffin, *Consideration*, recorded 2015, Amanda Tiffin, AJT003, 2015, compact disc.

120. Trondheim Jazz Orkester, *EKKO*, recorded 2011 and 2013, MNJ Records, mnjcd015, 2014, compact disc; Ski Storband feat. Shannon Mowday & Frode Kjekstad, *Gone Skiing*, Lydmuren 2017, Amazon Music; Ensemble Denada, Torun Eriksen & Erlend Skomsvoll, *Live in Bremen*, recorded 2017, Jazzland Recordings, 377 910 6, 2019, compact disc; Bafana Nhlapo, *Ngikhumbule Khaya*, recorded 2016, Jazzland Recordings, 377 918 5, 2017, compact disc.

121. Jannie van Tonder and George Werner, *The South African Jazz Real Book: Vol. 1*, Sheet Music SA, 2021.

122. Colin Miller, *South African Jazz Collection: Original tunes by South African Composers* (Colin Miller and PR/INS, 2021, e-book).

123. See <https://chantalwillie-petersen.com>

124. See https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Zap_Mama

group, founded by Belgian-Congolese singer Marie Daulne in the early 1990s, performs polyphonic and afro-pop with elements of African vocal techniques, urban, hip hop, nu-soul and jazz. Chantal toured extensively with the group as well as with her own band and shared the stage with artists like Stevie Wonder, Erykah Badu and Toots Thielemans. In 2007 she appeared in the French film *Essaye-moi*¹²⁵ alongside Grammy-award winning American jazz and gospel singer, Lizz Wright.

Chantal has performed at the North Sea Jazz Festival (Netherlands, 2004), Red Sea Jazz Festival (2005), Montreaux Jazz Festival (2005), the Hollywood Bowl (2004-2006), Webster Hall (New York City, 2004-2006), The Blue Note (Japan, 2004), Blue Note Festival (Belgium, 2005), Molde Jazz Festival (Norway, 2004, 2006, 2009), WOMAD (2004-2006), Cape Town International Jazz Festival (2006, 2007, 2012), Standard Bank Joy of Jazz (2006), Standard Bank Jazz Festival (2006) and the Imbokodo Jazz Festival (2017) among others. She has shared the stage with Grammy award-winning artists Stevie Wonder and Erykah Badu, and also with the Roots, Dianne Reeves, Salif Keita and Angelique Kidjo. She has toured with the Feya Faku Quintet (2007, 2013) and has performed with a range of South Africa's top jazz artists, including saxophonist Winston "Mankunku" Ngozi, Robbie Jansen, Taliep Petersen and indigenous music icons Dizu Plaatjies and Madosini.

Her teaching and mentoring work includes stints at the University of Cape Town and the University of Stellenbosch, and she has presented lectures and courses for the International Network for Female Instrumentalists Jazz Camp in Norway (2009), the Cape Jazz Legends Project (2005-2007) and the Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Festival (2007). She is currently lecturing in jazz voice and double bass at the University of the Witwatersrand. In 2019, Chantal performed in the Englewood-Soweto Exchange, a USA/South Africa jazz collaboration led by American saxophonist and composer Ernest Dawkins. As composer, Chantal's work has been featured in two seasons of the Cape Town Goema Orchestra¹²⁶ (2011-

125. *Essaye-moi*, directed by Pierre-François Martin-Laval (2006; ARP Sélection France, Melimedias Belgium), film.

126. The Cape Town Goema Orchestra, founded by composer-performer Mac McKenzie in 2010, has showcased compositions by McKenzie and other South African jazz composers, including Chantal Willie-Petersen, Keenan Ahrends and Mandla Mlangeni. *Goema* is a Cape Town creole musical style developed during the colonial period, still actively performed in the city's annual New Year's minstrel carnival (Kaapse Klopse). Named after a type of hand drum, *goema* is a blend of distinctly syncopated rhythms (played on said drums, banjos and guitars), marching band elements (brass), folk and hymn-like tunes, and elements of township jazz. For recent scholarly studies around *goema*, see Jonathan Gregory, 'A musical ethnography of the Kaapse Klopse carnival in Cape Town, South Africa' (PhD Thesis, Queen's University Belfast, 2018) and Valmont Layne, 'Goema's Refrain: Sonic Anticipation and the Musicking Cape' (PhD Thesis, University of the Western Cape, 2019).

2013) and, more recently, in the Wits Jazz Cosmology Festival. In 2020, Chantal was co-editor of the SAMRO Archives of South African Indigenous Music. In 2022, she was appointed as the President of the South African Association for Jazz Educators (SAJE). Chantal has appeared as collaborator on recordings with South African jazz artists¹²⁷ and various European acts,¹²⁸ most notably the all-women group Zap Mama.¹²⁹

Siya Makuzeni (b. 1982)



Fig. 5. Siya Makuzeni (Photo: Olafemi Chauke)

Trombonist, vocalist, composer, bandleader, arranger, festival curator, actress/voiceover artist and brand ambassador Siya Makuzeni was born in Mdantsane in the Eastern Cape. Siya briefly studied jazz at Rhodes University and at the erstwhile Pretoria Technikon¹³⁰ before pursuing a professional career in Johannesburg. Here, she shared the stage with a range of South African

127. Lisa Bauer Quartet, *Finding a New Way*, Lisa Bauer, 2010, *Amazon Music*; Lisa Bauer, *A Life That's Lead*, Lisa Bauer, 2015, *Amazon Music*; Rus Nerwich, *Under The Poetree*, recorded 2008, Tones of Note Music, 2008, compact disc.

128. Jazz Ladies, *Swingende Kerstongs*, recorded 2002, Impuls International, IMP 20022635, 2002, compact disc; Billie King, *There You Go, My Love*, recorded 2006, Play Out!, POMCD005, 2006, compact disc; The Rhythm Junks, *Pop Off*, recorded 2007, Petrol, 0783084, 2007, compact disc; Mo & Grazz, *Fallin' Upon DefEars*, recorded 2006, Draaischijf, 011, 2006, compact disc.

129. Zap Mama, *Ancestry in Progress*, recorded 2004, Luaka Bop, VVR1027512, 2004, compact disc; Zap Mama, *Supermoon*, recorded 2007, Concord Records, 0888072304291, 2007, compact disc.

130. Now the Tshwane University of Technology.

jazz luminaries including Themba Mkhize, Carlo Mombelli, Marcus Wyatt, Feya Faku, Khaya Mahlangu and Sibongile Khumalo and formed the band IppyFuze.¹³¹

Siya has performed at the Cape Town International Jazz Festival (2017, 2019), Standard Bank Jazz Festival (2015, 2016), and at the Standard Bank Joy of Jazz Festival (2016, 2022). She received the iMbokodo Award for Women in Jazz (2013), and in 2015 it was announced that she would hold the title of Standard Bank Young Artist for Jazz 2016. She has also performed at the Safaricom International Jazz Festival in Kenya, the Stockholm Jazz Festival and, more recently, at the Johannesburg edition of Jazzfest Berlin (2021). Other international performances include tours to Vienna, Paris, Mauritius, London, Dakar, Harare, Brisbane, Venice, and Basel. In 2015, Siya performed with Benin-born Lionel Loueke at the Standard Bank National Jazz Festival and has featured in performances led by *Grammy* award-winning artists David Murray and Branford Marsalis (2016, 2017). She has performed with South African jazz outfits Language 12, the ZAR Jazz Orchestra, Carlo Mombelli's Prisoners of Strange and The Blue Notes Tribute Orchestra, Mac McKenzie & The Goema Captains and Tumi Molekane (Tumi & The Volume) to name a few. More recently, Siya has shared the stage with the colourful Afro-Balkan jazz/ska/afro/rap/dance ensemble, Bombshelter Beast.¹³² In 2021, Siya headlined at the Jazz Foundation International Big Band Jazz Festival in Johannesburg, leading the Siya Makuzeni Big Band Orchestra featuring top South African jazz performers in a programme showcasing her original compositions. In 2018, she was a British Council Commissioned Composer.

As a composer, Siya has contributed to a diverse range of projects, including creating music for the 2007 Italian film, *Forse Dio e Malato*¹³³ and performing and composing music for the television series, *The Road*.¹³⁴ Siya has continued to hone her craft as an innovator, and has become known for her high-energy onstage performances and mind-bending vocal loop artistry. In *Rain in the Sun*¹³⁵ (a short performance film) Siya showcases the digitally manipulated vocal lines and trombone parts that have become her unique trademark sound (see

131. IppyFuze was founded by Siya Makuzeni and incorporates elements of rock, jazz, drum and bass, hip-hop, African rhythms, traditional Xhosa singing and electronic looping (see chapter five).

132. See Bombshelter Beast (feat. Siya Makuzeni), 'My Boyfriend is a Hustla, live @ The Orbit', *YouTube* video, posted by 'Bombshelter Beast' on 6 January 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AYoltx5eskY>

133. *Forse Dio e Malato* (Original Soundtrack), recorded 2008, Hermanos, 728185, 2008, compact disc.

134. *The Road*, directed by Emile Smith and John Barker (2015; Mzansi Magic), television series.

135. Siya Makuzeni, 'Rain in the Sun', *YouTube* video, posted by Siya Makuzeni on 7 May 2019, <https://youtu.be/CrSEpwIo0bI>

chapter five). In a nod to her ever-evolving sound and creative determination, Siya was selected as a brand ambassador for the 2019 *Johnny Walker* “Keep Walking South Africa” campaign featuring successful and inspirational young South Africans from diverse fields. Siya also works as a voiceover artist and recently performed a cameo role as a jazz performer in the Netflix film, *I Am All Girls*.¹³⁶ Siya has released three albums as leader,¹³⁷ and has appeared on numerous albums across a range of genres.¹³⁸

Nomfundo Xaluva (b.1984)



Fig. 6. Nomfundo Xaluva (Photo: Zukiswa Minyi)

Pianist, vocalist, composer, bandleader and educator Nomfundo Xaluva was born in Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth). She holds a Masters degree in Jazz Studies from the University of Cape Town focusing on the music of Miriam Makeba. She has penned media articles¹³⁹ about

136. *I Am All Girls*, directed by Donovan Marsh (2021; Netflix), film.

137. IppyFuze, *Amakhentsha – EP*, Siya Makuzeni, 2014, *iTunes*; Siya Makuzeni Sextet, *Out Of This World*, Siya Makuzeni, 2016, *iTunes*; Siya Makuzeni, *Thixo Somandla*, Siya Makuzeni 2019, *iTunes*.

138. Carlo Mombelli, *When Serious Babies Dance*, recorded 2002, Instinct Africaine, INS 004, 2003, compact disc; Levi Pon The Mic, *Heavy Mind*, recorded 2006, 340ml Music, LEVICD 001, 2006, compact disc; Carlo Mombelli, *I Stared Into My Head*, Carlo Mombelli 2007, *iTunes*; Mpemba Effect, *Ambient Afrique*, African Cream Music 2007, *iTunes*; SWR Big Band – Themba Mkhize, *Shosholozza* recorded 2010, Skip Records, SKP 9096-2, 2010, compact disc; Marcus Wyatt & Language 12, *Maji Maji In The Land Of Milk And Honey*, recorded 2014, Language 12, LAN12CD 004, 2014, compact disc; Marcus Wyatt and the ZAR Jazz Orchestra, *One Night in the Sun*, Language 12, 2015, *Bandcamp*; Card On Spokes, *As We Surface*, Shane Cooper Music 2016, *iTunes*; Bombshelter Beast, *Dance of the Chicken*, Language 12 2017, *iTunes*; Dominic Egli's PLURISM, *Azania In Mind*, Dominic Egli's PLURISM 2018, *iTunes*; The Mill, *When The Wind Blows*, Mandla Mlangeni Music (Pty) Ltd 2019, *iTunes*; Various, *New Horizons: Young Stars of South African Jazz*, recorded 2020, Afrosynth Records, AFS049, 2020, vinyl LP; On Our Own Clock, *On Our Own Clock*, Mushroom Hour Half Hour & Total Refreshment Centre 2021, *iTunes*.

139. Nomfundo Xaluva, 'The Portfolio: The Piano offers Nomfundo Xaluva place to dream and become', *Mail & Guardian*, 20 April 2021, accessed 31 May 2021, <https://mg.co.za/friday/2021-04-20-the-portfolio-the-piano-offers-nomfundo-xaluva-place-to-dream-and-become/>; Nomfundo Xaluva, 'The legacy of iconic singer Miriam Makeba and her art of activism', *The Conversation*, 2 March 2022, accessed 1 July

her own musical career, her research on Miriam Makeba, and the legacy of her mentor and colleague, the late Sibongile Khumalo. She has acted as a vocal mentor at the Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Festival and is a former vice-chairperson of the South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) Foundation Board. Early career highlights include performing as opening act for *Grammy* award-winning vocalist Dianne Reeves in 2011 and the release of her debut album *Kusile*,¹⁴⁰ for which she received a Metro FM Music Award for Best Urban Jazz Album. Her second album *From.Now.On*¹⁴¹ received the same award in 2015. Nomfundo is the recipient of the Arts and Culture Trust Award (2014) and the Wawela Music Award for Best Female Artist/Composer (2015). Other nominations include the iMbokodo Awards for Women in Jazz (2015) and a South African Afro Music Award for Best Jazz Album (2015). In 2022 she released the extended play album, *Jazz for Lovers*.¹⁴²

Nomfundo has performed as headline artist at the Cape Town International Jazz Festival (2017), Standard Bank Joy of Jazz (2016, 2019), Durban Jazz Festival, iMbokodo Jazz Festival (2017, 2018) and Joburg Arts Alive (2015) among others. In 2019 she was an artist-in-residence at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music. In 2021, she headlined the Market Theatre Women's Month Series,¹⁴³ curated towards honouring leading black women in South African jazz, Afro-soul and R&B, along with Siya Makuzeni and jazz/R&B crossover artist Ami Faku. In addition to her own albums as leader, Nomfundo has appeared on various recordings including compilation albums.¹⁴⁴

2022, <https://theconversation.com/the-legacy-of-iconic-singer-miriam-makeba-and-her-art-of-activism-178230> ; Nomfundo Xaluva, 'The deep humanity of Sibongile Khumalo, South Africa's iconic vocalist and mentor', *City Press*, 9 February 2021, accessed on 5 March 2022, <https://www.news24.com/citypress/trending/the-deep-humanity-of-sibongile-khumalo-south-africas-iconic-vocalist-and-mentor-20210209>

140. Nomfundo Xaluva, *Kusile*, recorded 2012, Universal Music Group, CDRBL 640 133, 2012, compact disc.

141. Nomfundo Xaluva, *From.Now.On*, recorded 2015, Universal Music South Africa, CDRBL 800, 2015, compact disc.

142. Nomfundo Xaluva, *Jazz For Lovers – EP*, UMG Recordings, Inc. FP 2022, *iTunes*.

143. *City Life Arts*, 'Jazz pianist Nomfundo Xaluva headlines the Market Theatre Women's Month series', 27 July 2021, accessed 1 October 2021, <https://citylifearts.co.za/jazz-pianist-nomfundo-xaluva-headlines-the-market-theatre-womens-month-series/>

144. Various, *Mzansi Women's Month Essentials*, UMG Recordings, Inc. FP 2021, *iTunes*; Various, *Best International Women's Month Hits* 2022, UMG Recordings, Inc. FP 2022, *iTunes*; Various, *Tunes to Celebrate Imbokodo on Women's Month*, UMG Recordings, Inc. FP 2021, *iTunes*; Various, *In My Feels: Vol.3*, UMG Recordings, Inc. FP 2022, *iTunes*; Various, *African Jazz For The Soul: Vol. 1*, UMG Recordings, Inc. FP 2022, *iTunes*; Ivan Mazuze, *Maganda*, recorded 2009, Imazuze Music, IMCD001, 2009, compact disc.

Thandi Ntuli (b. 1987)



Fig. 7. Thandi Ntuli (Photo: Victor Dlamini)

Pianist, vocalist, composer, arranger and bandleader Thandi Ntuli¹⁴⁵ was born in Shoshanguve near Pretoria and holds a Bachelors degree in Jazz Performance from the University of Cape Town. Some of her professional accolades include an iMbokodo Award for Women in Jazz (2015), an Arts & Culture Trust Impact Award (2016), South African Music Awards nominations (2019, 2020) and the country's most coveted jazz award, the Standard Bank Young Artist for Jazz (2018). In 2019, she received a Pro Helvetia studio residency in Basel, Switzerland. She is a regular headline performer on South African stages at the Standard Bank Joy of Jazz Festival, Standard Bank Jazz Festival and Cape Town International Jazz Festival, and has also performed at the Calabar Jazz Festival (Nigeria) and Safaricom (Kenya). She contributed two songs to the soundtrack of *She's Gotta Have It*,¹⁴⁶ a Netflix series by director Spike Lee based on his 1986 film of the same title. In 2019, Thandi and Siya Makuzeni headlined '[UP]Rising: An Afro-Future Her-Story' at the Ford Theatre in Hollywood. Billed

145. See <https://www.thandintuli.com>

146. *She's Gotta Have It*, directed by Spike Lee (2017-2019; Netflix), series.

as an evening of post-modern South African music, the concert was her first in the USA and was co-hosted by American actor and activist Don Cheadle. In September 2019, she was among six South African jazz musicians invited to perform with Wynton Marsalis and Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra in 'The South African Songbook', celebrating twenty-five years of democracy in South Africa.

Her debut album *The Offering*¹⁴⁷ received a Metro FM Awards nomination in 2015 and earned her the Arts & Culture Trust Impact Award in 2016. Her album *Exiled*¹⁴⁸ was nominated in the Best Jazz Album category at the 2019 South African Music Awards. In 2019, she released *Thandi Ntuli Live at Jazzwerkstatt*,¹⁴⁹ recorded in Berne (Switzerland) with a 14-piece ensemble comprising Swiss musicians and including award-winning South African bassist Shane Cooper.¹⁵⁰ She has released various other recordings as leader¹⁵¹ and has recorded as collaborator with a range of local and international artists.¹⁵² In 2020 she appeared as a featured artist in the Goethe Institut Johannesburg-funded online film series 'House on the Hill',¹⁵³ produced by leading South African jazz musicians Marcus Wyatt and Romy Brauteseth.¹⁵⁴ In 2021 she acted as co-curator and creative producer for *Indaba Is*, an album showcasing the vibrant contemporary Johannesburg jazz scene.¹⁵⁵

147. Thandi Ntuli, *The Offering*, Thandi Ntuli 2014, *iTunes*; see Thandi Ntuli, 'The Offering' EPK, *YouTube* video, posted by 'Corporate Nemesis' on 19 November 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xbh5uYJ3Ggc>

148. Thandi Ntuli, *Exiled*, Thandi Ntuli 2018, *iTunes*; see Thandi Ntuli, 'Exiled' EPK, *YouTube* video, posted by 'Thandi Ntuli' on 31 January 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKWHCJwSWQY>

149. Thandi Ntuli, *Thandi Ntuli (Live at Jazzwerkstatt)*, Thandi Ntuli 2020, *iTunes*; see Thandi Ntuli, 'New Way (Live at Jazzwerkstatt)', *YouTube* video, posted by 'Thandi Ntuli' on 31 March 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pquueFbolyc>

150. Shane Cooper is a South African bassist, composer and producer (see <http://www.shanecoopermusic.com>). He is the recipient of the 2013 Standard Bank Young Artist for Jazz award.

151. Thandi Ntuli, *Cosmic Light – Single*, Thandi Ntuli 2016, *iTunes*; Thandi Ntuli, *Dikeledi - Single*, Brownswood Recordings 2021, *iTunes*; Thandi Ntuli, *Inkululeko – Single*, Ndelela Music under exclusive license to Next Music 2022, *iTunes*; Thandi Ntuli, *Blk Elijah & The Children of Meroë*, Ndelela Music under exclusive license to Next Music 2022, *iTunes*.

152. Benedikt Reising, Thandi Ntuli, Shane Cooper, Paul Amereller, *A Million O Clock*, Benedikt Reising 2021, *iTunes*; Sir LSG, *Moving Circle*, GOGO Music 2017, *iTunes*; Jazzuelle, *Circles*, Get Physical Music GmbH 2017, *iTunes*; Various, *New Horizons Vol. 2*, recorded 2021, Afrosynth Records, AFS051, 2021, vinyl LP; Shabaka And The Ancestors, *We Are Sent Here By History*, recorded 2020, Impulse!, B0031632-02, 2020, vinyl LP.

153. 'House on the Hill' is a 24-part South African jazz online showcase, with performances filmed and produced by Romy Brauteseth and Marcus Wyatt (see <https://www.youtube.com/@houseonthehill3880>).

154. Thandi Ntuli, 'Thandi Ntuli in concert @House on the Hill', *YouTube* video, posted by 'House on the Hill' on 10 December 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZtia8iRYuA>.

155. Various, *Indaba Is*, recorded 2021, Brownswood Recordings, BWOOD0236CD, 2021, compact disc.

Romy Brauteseth (b. 1989)



Fig. 8. Romy Brauteseth (Photo: Hyde & Seek Pictures)

Romy Brauteseth was born in Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth) and is one of South Africa's busiest professional bass players. Largely self-taught, she regularly performs on international tours with award-winning South African jazz artists like pianist Bokani Dyer and vocalist Tutu Puoane. She has performed at the Standard Bank Jazz Festival, the Standard Bank Joy of Jazz Festival, and the Cape Town International Jazz Festival, sharing the stage with various groups including Marcus Wyatt & ZAR Jazz Orchestra, the Andre Petersen Quartet, the Keenan Ahrends Trio and vocalists Zoë Modiga and Zenzi Makeba Lee among others. In 2016, she performed at Bird's Eye Jazz Club in Basel (Switzerland) with SA/Belgian collaboration Small World¹⁵⁶ where she has since become a regular attraction. She has performed at the Safaricom International Jazz festival in Kenya, and has performed in Germany with Indian artist Deepak Pandit. In 2017 she performed in Paris with the Keenan Ahrends Quintet for the Festival St. Denis. As member of the Bokani Dyer Trio¹⁵⁷ she has performed at London's Vortex Jazz Club (2017), legendary Ronnie Scott's (2019) and B-Flat in Berlin (2019). In 2019, she formed part of a collaborative concert between Marcus Wyatt's ZAR Jazz Orchestra and Wynton Marsalis' Jazz at Lincoln Center at the Standard Bank Joy of Jazz Festival. Romy has appeared as bassist

156. See 'Small World – A South African/Belgian collaboration', *YouTube* video, posted by Marcus Wyatt on 3 March 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NoazgL1pMcs>

157. See Bokani Dyer Trio, 'Kgalagadi', *YouTube* video, posted by Bokani Dyer on 9 February 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKcyHxhA-ec>

on numerous albums by South African¹⁵⁸ and European¹⁵⁹ jazz artists, and has appeared on various compilation/collaborative albums. Recent collaborative work includes the digital project, ‘OUTOFTHELOOP’, for the Standard Bank Jazz Festival in 2021.¹⁶⁰

Romy also works as a graphic designer, fine artist and photographer. Her artistic careers converge in creative ways such as the digital jazz concert series, ‘House on the Hill’,¹⁶¹ for which she is credited as videographer, photographer, graphic designer and occasional featured performer. She also creates artwork and does videography for the Afro-Balkan fusion band, Bombshelter Beast¹⁶² for which she is the bassist. Romy has played bass and created album artwork for Language 12,¹⁶³ the Keenan Ahrends Trio,¹⁶⁴ Bokani Dyer, and the SA/Belgian project, Small World.¹⁶⁵ In addition, she has created cover art for South African jazz contemporaries including Zoë Modiga, Tutu Puoane, Skyjack and Mabuta.¹⁶⁶

Chapter outline

Drawing largely on primary sources but also some secondary academic sources, the present chapter has provided a snapshot of the pervasiveness of patriarchy in South African and international jazz culture. It has also highlighted an anomaly; given the repeated patterns of exclusion and discourses of mastery in this field, pockets of empowerment do exist. It is here

158. Marcus Wyatt and Language 12, *Maji Maji in the Land Of Milk And Honey*, recorded 2014, Language 12, LAN12CD 004, 2014, compact disc; Shout, *Serenading Ghosts*, recorded 2012, Daniel Shout, SMC002, 2012, compact disc; Steve Dyer, *Genesis of a Different World*, Dyertribe Music 2019, *Amazon Music*; Various, *New Horizons: Vol. 2*, recorded 2021, Afrosynth Records, AFS051, 2021, vinyl LP.

159. Andreas Loven, *District Six*, recorded 2016, Losen Records, LOS 152-2, 2016, compact disc.

160. See Marcus Wyatt & Romy Brauteseth ‘IN DUO @ House on the Hill’, *YouTube* video, posted by ‘Marcus Wyatt’ on 11 April 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWMkaEC5V18>; and Marcus Wyatt & Romy Brauteseth ‘OUTOFTHELOOP – Standard Bank Jazz Festival 2021, Makhanda Online’, *YouTube* video, posted by National Jazz Festival, Makhanda on 26 November 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K4PZ3O6ayHA>

161. See ‘House on the Hill – South African Jazz Community Showcase’, *YouTube* channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@houseonthehill3880>

162. Bombshelter Beast, *Dance of the Chicken*, Language 12 2017, *iTunes*; Bombshelter Beast, *Taka Takata (Radio Mix) feat. Pitch Black Afro & Mapaputsi*, Language 12 2018, *iTunes*; Bombshelter Beast, *Madam Bliss (Radio Edit) feat. Zolani Mahola & Pitch Black Afro*, Language 12 2018, *iTunes*.

163. Marcus Wyatt and the ZAR Jazz Orchestra, *One Night in the Sun*, Language 12 2015, *iTunes*.

164. Keenan Ahrends Trio, *Narrative*, recorded 2017, Keenan Ahrends, KACD001, 2017, compact disc.

165. Marcus Wyatt and Language 12, *Maji Maji in the Land Of Milk And Honey*, recorded 2014, Language 12, LAN12CD 004, 2014, compact disc; Bokani Dyer, *Neo Native*, recorded 2018, Dyertribe, DYCD008, 2018, compact disc; Small World, *Small World Live at The Bird’s Eye*, recorded 2018, SoulFactory, SFR-CD011, 2018, compact disc.

166. Rebirth:Collective feat, Tutu Puoane, *It Might As Well Swing*, recorded 2021, SoulFactory, SFR-CD018, 2021, compact disc; Skyjack, *The Hunter*, recorded 2019, Yellowbird, YEB-7791, 2019, compact disc; Mabuta, *Welcome To This World*, recorded 2018, Kujua Records, 2018, compact disc; Zoë Modiga, *Yellow: The Novel*, Yelloewax Pty (Ltd) 2019, *Amazon Music*.

that the study participants operate as successful jazz performers, educators, composers, bandleaders and activists.

Chapter two positions this study within its wider scholarly contexts. It provides a review of local and international literature drawing on theoretical and methodological insights from scholarship in three key areas: (a) South African jazz scholarship that considers the experiences of women musicians; (b) international feminist scholarship focusing on jazz culture (and occasionally music more generally); (c) (feminist) scholarship on phenomenological methodologies and the work of key figures in the phenomenological tradition.

Chapter three focuses on the participants' formative years and explores their distinctive enculturation as musical and gendered subjects in their family homes, places of worship, and schools. This chapter provides a starting point towards analysing how the participants understood and responded to structures of power, and how these dynamics shaped their musical lives in later years.

Chapter four explores the participants' experiences as emerging and established professionals. It considers the role of tertiary education, informal professional networks and mentors in their musical identity formation and explores the strategies they developed to subvert and/or move beyond patriarchal forces at various stages of their careers.

Chapter five explores how some of the participants' experiences as gendered actors find expression in their music. Various modes of analysis are used to examine selected musical works and performances, including an exploration of the visual representation of their work and their own physical appearance as it speaks to important themes in their testimony.

Chapter six provides a summary of the study and reflects on the theoretical and methodological approaches used to analyse the diverse ways the participants have moved "beyond mastery" as they navigate jazz, gender and power in post-apartheid South Africa.

2. Scholarly Contexts

This dissertation analyses the personal accounts of seven South African women who have built successful careers as professional jazz musicians. The present chapter positions this analysis in relation to writings from three scholarly fields:

- a) South African jazz scholarship that considers the experiences of women musicians;
- b) international feminist scholarship focusing on jazz culture (and occasionally music more generally);
- c) (feminist) scholarship on phenomenological methodologies and the work of key figures in the phenomenological tradition

A significant challenge in undertaking this study was the absence of a synopsis of available literature that considers gender and power in South African jazz. The literature review below offers a broad overview of the work that shaped my thinking for this study and serves as a starting point for future research.

Women in/and South African jazz scholarship

Traditional narratives of gendered mastery

Women have played an important role in the history of South African jazz, but their stories have, until recent years, been told from a perspective of oppression and exclusion. Mary Rörich offers the first scholarly exploration that focuses specifically on the ways jazzwomen responded to patriarchal forces in South Africa's townships of the 1920s to 1960s. Her study of *shebeen queens*¹ and black women musicians in Sophiatown acknowledges the numerous constraints they endured, but also pays close attention to women who acted as “cultural heroes and innovators...who plotted a route for black female emancipation”, first as event organisers and “cultural brokers” and later as musical performers.² She describes the empowered woman of 1940s and early 1950s Sophiatown as “an important cultural hero and role model, albeit

1. In South Africa, the term *shebeen* refers to an informal (typically disreputable) unlicensed drinking establishment, traditionally run by women. The 1927 Liquor Act prohibited African people from obtaining liquor licenses or frequenting licensed premises, yet enterprising women turned their generations-old rural beer brewing tradition into business opportunities, thereby catering for migrant workers in urban areas and providing them with places of entertainment.

2. Mary Rörich, 1989. ‘Shebeens, Slumyards and Sophiatown. Black Women, Music and Cultural Change in Urban South Africa c. 1920-1960’, *The World of Music*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (1989), 79-80, 95.

within a male-dominated entertainment industry”.³ Mirroring 1950s American jazz culture, the South African jazz scene saw a sharp curtailment of the burgeoning respect accorded to women jazz artists in earlier decades. Although women’s stage careers were viewed as “morally corruptive and in direct conflict with the home-making role of a woman”, some women “survived the hazards of the entertainment world to become the real cultural heroes and innovators of the Sophiatown era”.⁴ Whilst their careers often ended in tragedy and obscurity, Rörich argues that these women set the scene for later, more empowered generations of black South African women.⁵

Christopher Ballantine also refers to the presence of black women musicians who “remarkably, managed to establish an – albeit tentative – gender-based position”⁶ between the 1920s and 1940s in particular. Typecast as wives, daughters, parents and “mothers of the nation”, women had little access to “sinful” and “inherently corrupting” jazz, dance and vaudeville spaces. Although the black press, schools and churches prescribed more “proper” roles for women, the rise of a secular show business culture meant that women could earn money as performers, and this allowed them to begin tentatively to undermine, or at least extend, the rigid conventions of socially acceptable roles and behaviour.⁷ Ballantine explains how a growing *petty bourgeoisie* “foregrounded the position of women as the wives and mothers of the nation, the selfless nurturers and noble protectors of home and realm, and the guardians of civilised society”; women (especially single women) were positioned in two “contradictory locations: at one moment as helpless victims of jazz and ragtime, and at the next as responsible actors who should have known better”.⁸ Concerns about women’s virtue – modeled on Edwardian thought imposed by English missionaries – further restricted their movement (and involvement in musical culture). Women were “cheapened” when attending dance halls, and guidelines to appropriate behaviour for young, single women abounded in the media and in the commentary of concerned (male) citizens.⁹

3. Rörich, ‘Shebeen Queens’, 88.

4. Ibid, 92.

5. Ibid, 95.

6. Christopher Ballantine, *Marabi Nights: Early South African Jazz and Vaudeville* (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1993), 46.

7. Ibid, 46-47.

8. Ibid, 82.

9. Ibid, 83.

In later work, Ballantine describes how all-women music groups during the 1920s and 1930s inhabited the same spaces and were as celebrated as their male counterparts. All-women and mixed-gender groups continued to flourish throughout the 1940s, and “women and men participated if not on a basis of full equality, then at least on the assumption of significant parity – a real continuum that enabled women and men in principle to take part in the same kinds of ways”.¹⁰ One such act was The Merry Makers, an all-women touring vaudeville group, led and managed by Johanna “Giddy” Phahlane, better known as “Lady Porcupine”. In addition to staging rousing performances, Phahlane, through her column in the publication *Bantu World* during the 1930s,¹¹ promoted the idea of music as a powerful tool for women’s emancipation.¹² Whilst only a few pages of *Bantu World* were dedicated to women’s activities, Phahlane’s writing contributed to a growing body of alternative discourses about women’s representation and “gendered modernity”¹³ during a volatile period in local history. Although the normative framework of the publication painted women as submissive domestic figures¹⁴, their lived experiences as shared by Phahlane and others “brings into question the narrative that women have been erased and silenced” as they were “inadvertently written into history” in publications such as *Bantu World*.¹⁵

This glimmer of women’s empowerment gradually faded from discourse – and the bandstand – during the 1940s and 1950s; Ballantine writes that women were “useful for the allure of sexual frisson they could bring to a (male) group’s public image and performance style – provided this sexuality was kept in check through tactics of disablement and infantilization”.¹⁶ Their onstage sex appeal helped (men) to sell merchandise such as beauty products sporting their images, and proved highly profitable to record companies who cashed in on sexually desirable women recording artists. Ballantine goes on to discuss the representation of women

10. Christopher Ballantine, ‘Gender, Migrancy, and South African Popular Music in the Late 1940s and the 1950s’, *Ethnomusicology*, Vol. 44, No. 3 (2000), 378.

11. *Bantu World* was a weekly newspaper (1932-1955) aimed at keeping the black South African elite abreast of news and various other community topics.

12. Christopher Ballantine, *Marabi Nights: Jazz, ‘Race’ and Society in Early Apartheid South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg: UKZN Press, 2012), 65-66, 147-148.

13. Corinne Sandwith, ‘Reading and Roaming the Racial City: R.R.R. Dhlomo and The Bantu World’, *English in Africa*, Vol. 45, No. 3 (2018), 21-22.

14. See Athambile Masola, “‘Bantu women on the move’: Black women and the politics of mobility in *The Bantu World*”, *Historia*, Vol. 63, No. 1 (2018), 96.

15. Masola, “Bantu women on the move”, 100.

16. Ballantine, ‘Gender, Migrancy’, 385.

musicians in the media, in particular their depiction as “queens”, “babies” and “birds”¹⁷ by *Drum* magazine writer Todd Matshikiza.¹⁸ Ballantine adds that the gender dynamic on music stages evolved “in ways that continued to bolster masculine power, and place women ever more in the role of weak, passive victims”.¹⁹ Engaging with the same period, Gary Baines provides a rare snapshot of early South African jazz culture beyond Gauteng.²⁰ Baines’ paper on the Grahamstown (now Makhanda) jazz scene of the 1950s and 1960s includes a few passing references to women musicians, inadvertently providing very telling evidence of patriarchy and sexism. Aside from a 1959 photograph of the renowned group The Diamond Blacks, and a brief mention of woman vocalist Pearl Memani, the only other mention of women’s musicking is a brief reference to the more socially acceptable, feminine-coded *manyano*²¹ groups. In an ironic twist, the Diamond Blacks – known for their clean-cut image as “moral guardians” and for their upmarket audiences comprising of “respectables”²² – were also directly responsible for the objectification of women musicians:

One of the DB’s projects to allow Grahamstown’s African women to showcase their talents proved short-lived. Imitating the example of Ken Tsotsobe’s group Barnacle Bills in Port Elizabeth, the DBs staged their first ‘Sax and Sex Show’ in Grahamstown in 1958. This involved taking a band consisting mainly of women under its wing and training them to play their instruments... The band was apparently a popular attraction in Grahamstown and also staged shows in East London and Port Elizabeth. However, for reasons which are unclear, this women’s band retired from showbiz within the space of a year.²³

Baines’ neutral prose unintentionally highlights mainstream jazz historiography’s tone-deafness to women’s experiences. Reading the above passage in the 2020s, it is glaringly obvious why the women of the ‘Sax and Sex Show’ would retire from showbiz within a year; their objectification on stage would almost certainly have impacted their lives off-stage where

17. Ibid, 379.

18. *Drum* was founded in 1951 and became a symbol of black urban culture. Hugely popular, the magazine covered politics, social commentary and the arts, in particular the township jazz scene. For examples of scholarly works exploring the patriarchal writing of Todd Matshikiza in *Drum*, see Lara Allen, ‘Representation, Gender and Women in Black South African Popular Music, 1948-1960’ (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Cambridge, 2000), 95-118; Christopher Ballantine, *Marabi Nights*, 147-151; Mary Rörich, ‘Shebeen Queens’, 89-91; Brett Pyper, ‘To hell with home and shame!’ in *Gender and sexuality in South African music*, eds. Chris Walton and Stephanus Muller (African Sun Media, 2005), 19-26.

19. Ballantine, ‘Gender, Migrancy’, 380.

20. Gary Baines, ‘The Little Jazz Town: The Social History and Musical Styles of Black Grahamstown in the 1950s and 1960s’, paper presented at the Symposium on Ethnomusicology, ILAM, Grahamstown (1996), 1-15.

21. *Manyano* refers to women’s activities (or women’s association) in various South African churches; it is derived from the Xhosa word *ukumanya* meaning to join or to unite.

22. Baines, ‘The Little Jazz Town’, 10.

23. Ibid, 11.

they would have been expected to fulfill traditional, ‘respectable’ societal roles as wives and mothers.²⁴

Although Rörich, Ballantine, and Baines do not explicitly engage with power as an analytical category, their concentration on the subjugation of women in jazz culture implicitly draws on a conception of power as constraint, within a deeply colonialist (and therefore racist and sexist) regime. In part this is because South African music studies before the later 1990s tended to conceptualize gender as a binary. Moreover, the township cultures of the 1920s to 1960s these scholars describe were overwhelmingly patriarchal, even in comparison to indigenous pre-colonial social worlds.²⁵ Sekibakiba Peter Lekgoathi writes that:

...it is often asserted that the oppression of women was a perennial feature of precolonial African societies; that women had no decision-making powers and were completely subordinate to their menfolk and treated as perpetual minors. Despite the abundance of historical evidence to the contrary, both beliefs still command a great deal of influence and attract many disciples among broad sections of South African society today.²⁶

In earlier South African jazz studies, gender dynamics are only cursorily considered, whilst the main lenses for studying jazz culture are race and class.²⁷ As Nishlyn Ramanna writes:

If social history is the predominant mode of South African jazz studies, it is because the dynamics of race, colonialism and capitalism have shaped South African society and cultural production so starkly and deeply.²⁸

24. Also see Allen, ‘Representation, Gender and Women’, 154-160.

25. Black South African women played a highly visible role in vaudeville during the late 1800s, decades before their heyday in the all-women groups of the 1930s (Ballantine, ‘Gender, Migrancy’, 378). Women in other musical genres were similarly empowered despite patriarchal constraints; for example choral singer, educator and activist Charlotte Manye (Maxeke) became the first black South African woman to graduate with a university degree (see Veit Erlmann, *Music, Modernity, and the Global Imagination* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 11-14, and Thozama April, ‘Chapter Four Charlotte Maxeke: A Celebrated and Neglected Figure in History’, in *One Hundred Years of the ANC: Debating liberation histories today*, eds. Arianna Lissoni, Jon Soske, Natasha Erlank, Noor Nieftagodien and Omar Badsha (NYU Press, 2012)). Norah Hashim Msuya refers to patriarchy in South Africa as a Western-imposed value, enforced by colonial regimes. These regimes upended cultural traditions in which women possessed power and played important roles as teachers, farmers and ‘[promoters of] African culture through dance, music, art and clothing’ (Norah Hashim Msuya, ‘Advocating positive traditional culture to eradicate harmful aspects of traditional culture for gender equality in South Africa’, *Obiter*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (2020), 50).

26. Sekibakiba Peter Lekgoathi, ‘Ethnicity and Gender in Pre-Colonial Ndebele Societies in South Africa’, in *Papers from the Pre-Colonial Catalytic Project*, Vol. 1, eds. Lungisile Ntsebeza and Chris Saunders (Cape Town: Centre for African Studies, 2014), 48.

27. Earlier South African jazz scholarship focusing on women’s invisibility and oppression in jazz culture falls into categories of emancipatory research, or what American feminist jazz historians refer to as ‘compensatory histories’ or ‘recovery work’ (see Tucker, ‘Telling Performances’, 73 and Provost, ‘Bringing Something New’, 8). These histories, modeled on master narratives of marginalisation and resistance, have largely made way for jazz scholarship that eschews binary constructs of power, gender and sexuality.

28. Nishlyn Ramanna, ‘Introduction: Discursive Flows in South African Jazz Studies – Texts, Contexts, and Subtexts’, *The World of Music*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (2016), 8.

Scholarly shifts: from resistance to resilience

In line with more recent international, feminist scholarly traditions, the studies discussed below demonstrate a distinct move toward the deconstruction of power as a fixed, oppressive force. Much of this work draws on Michel Foucault's conception of power as being simultaneously repressive and productive; in recognising a "microphysics of power" rather than focusing on grand, universal strategies and structures of power, it becomes possible to explore a "multitude of loci of power spread throughout a society: families, workplaces, everyday practices, and marginal institutions".²⁹ I will return to Foucault in greater detail later in this chapter, but his notion of power as mobile and capillary is implicitly recognised by Lara Allen, whose watershed study breaks with the (largely Marxist) tradition of earlier South African music studies. Allen's interrogation of the accepted "boundaries of men's authority and women's power"³⁰ aligns with Foucault's recognition that power can act both as constraint *and* as capacity,³¹ a scholarly turn that allows her to pay attention to stories of subversion and oppression as they play out on a continuum of constantly shifting power relations:

Through their participation in professional music, women manipulated, circumvented, co-opted, contested and changed established rules of gender relations. But they also acquiesced to, and worked within, male-defined roles; reproducing gender stereotypes, even encouraging and colluding with gender oppression.³²

Theoretically and methodologically, Allen takes an interdisciplinary approach drawing on ethnomusicology, anthropology, cultural studies and popular music studies.³³ As the first South African jazz scholar to actively engage feminist research practices inspired by the work of Lila Abu-Lughod,³⁴ Gayatri Spivak³⁵ and Ellen Koskoff,³⁶ Allen is dedicated to self-reflexivity

29. Gary Gutting and Johanna Oksala, 'Michel Foucault', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, eds. Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2022/entries/foucault/>. For feminist music studies drawing on elements of Foucauldian conceptions of power, see Cecilia Björck, 'Claiming Space: Discourses on Gender, Popular Music, and Social Change' (PhD Thesis, University of Gothenburg, 2011) and Cecilia Björck and Åsa Bergman, 'Making Women in Jazz Visible: Negotiating Discourses of Unity and Diversity in Sweden and the US', *Journal of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music*, Vol.8, No. 1 (2018), 42- 58.

30. Allen, 'Representation, Gender and Women', 210.

31. Foucault 'conceptualizes both freedom and resistance as immanent to power relations; they are both necessary for power relations, and cannot exist outside such relations' (Cecilia Björck, 'Claiming Space', 14).

32. Allen, 'Representation, Gender and Women', 210.

33. Ibid, 32.

34. Lila Abu-Lughod, 'Can there be a feminist ethnography?', *Women & Performance: a journal of feminist theory*, Vol.5, No. 1 (1990), 7-27.

35. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (New York: Methuen, 1987).

36. Ellen Koskoff, 'An Introduction to Women, Music, and Culture', in *Women and Music in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, ed. E. Koskoff (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 1-24.

throughout the study (in particular her position as a white woman), and makes room for her study participants to contribute to the “theoretical and interpretative framework of ethnographies written about them”.³⁷ Instead of simply writing *about* the (largely negative) effects of patriarchy on the lives of the participating women as they played out between 1948 and 1960, Allen acknowledges their agency and resilience in the face of oppression, and methodologically effects a power shift:

However, although I recoup stories untold within the academic domain, I do not claim to give voice to the voiceless; I tell a story about women who powerfully and effectively use their own voices, and who already address (or have addressed) a large public.³⁸

Instead of simply filling a void or “recouping” the contributions of women in mainstream discourse, Allen offers a different view of township culture as told by women themselves. She expands significantly on the work of Rörich and Ballantine by delving deeper into the representation of women musicians in the media and other discursive spaces. Rather than focusing solely on the ways “social, political, cultural and gender-driven pressures affected their personal and professional lives”,³⁹ Allen refers to the paradox of “women’s simultaneous rebellion against and submission to, rejection and upholding of, their subordinate position in society”.⁴⁰

Gwen Ansell traces the impact of political forces on South African jazz and popular from the late 1800s to the early 2000s. Like Ballantine, she provides rich descriptions of the interaction between segregation politics and musical culture. Based on the interview testimony of over fifty individuals (of which only eight are women), Ansell – like earlier scholars – focuses on narratives of resistance, racial oppression and exile during the height of apartheid. Ansell is, however, attuned to issues of women’s agency that becomes the focus of much of her later writing (see chapter one). This shift towards focusing on resilience is briefly foreshadowed in chapter eight⁴¹ where she quotes contemporary jazz icon and vocalist Gloria Bosman:⁴²

It’s mostly men in jazz, and they’re controlling it; they’re in charge. So you feel like you just have to be a voice, come there, look smart, put on a bit of makeup; smile a lot and say [in a little quiet voice], ‘Um,

37. Lara Allen, ‘Representation, Gender and Women’, 14.

38. Ibid, 6.

39. Ibid, 2.

40. Ibid, 210.

41. Gwen Ansell, *Soweto Blues: Jazz, Popular Music, and Politics in South Africa* (New York: Continuum, 2004), 261-303.

42. Gloria Bosman (1973 - 2023) was a Soweto-born vocalist, producer, vocal coach and composer. She released six albums as leader and was named the Standard Bank Young Artist (Music) in 2000.

please how should I do this song?’ And then everybody’s happy...[But] I feel that if you’re a woman and feel jazz is your thing, get in and be in charge. Start your own band if you have to; be part of the whole production process that goes on on-stage. Know what’s happening. Ask why are they playing this song instead of that one...come up with your own repertoire. When somebody plays a line over your voice and you don’t like it, tell them so. Jazz is about the people that do it, so the respect must go both ways: males and females.⁴³

A more recent study focusing explicitly on the gendered experiences of South African women working as professional musicians is Ceri Moelwyn-Hughes’ ethnography based on the interview testimony of twenty-eight participants from the greater Gauteng area (1994-2012). Like Allen, Moelwyn-Hughes explores narratives of exclusion, exploitation, stereotyping and oppression in various music industry spaces. Also prominent are candid descriptions of sexual harassment and assault in the workplace. These self-reported experiences strongly resonate with the testimony of Allen’s participants of yesteryear, and highlight the ways patriarchal repression persists in contemporary South Africa.

In line with feminist scholars’ critique of dominant knowledge systems and hierarchical research models, Moelwyn-Hughes discusses how gendered stereotypes not only impact the music scene itself, but also inflect scholarly discourse on South African popular music and jazz.⁴⁴ She notes that, unlike Ballantine who carefully avoids using “diminishing metaphors” when describing women,⁴⁵ David Coplan’s careless use of language and reference to women as “songbirds” and “jazz divas” perpetuates the othering of women musicians.⁴⁶ Moelwyn-Hughes also critiques the “male gaze” and “spectatorial approach” in Coplan’s descriptions of women musicians’ sex appeal and dress sense. Coplan very briefly explores some of the challenges women have faced in South African jazz (such as being typecast as vocalists or escaping patriarchal dynamics by joining all-women groups), yet he positions high-profile artists Sibongile Khumalo, Thandiswa Mazwai and Judith Sephuma in relation to their musically acclaimed fathers or husbands. Coplan thereby inadvertently implies that their success was at least partly facilitated by male mentors. This may have been an unintentional

43. Ansell, *Soweto Blues*, 294.

44. Moelwyn-Hughes, ‘Women, gender and identity’, 118-125.

45. Ballantine, *Marabi Nights: Jazz, ‘Race’ and Society*, 150-151.

46. David Coplan, *In Township Tonight! South Africa’s Black City Music and Theatre*, 2nd Edition (Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 2008), 347.

slight, but demonstrates the ingrained assumptions about the ways women gain access to a male-dominated field where they are seldom lauded as agents of their own success.⁴⁷

Whilst Moelwyn-Hughes focuses on exclusion as the dominant experience shared by her study participants, she considers the impact of “power, representation and discourse on subject formation” as introduced by Foucault⁴⁸ and acknowledges that the participants function in “a culture that is not stable but informed by a dense network of evolving and often contradictory social forces”.⁴⁹

Nishlyn Ramanna explicitly engages with power as a category of analysis and can be considered a transitionary figure in South African jazz scholarship that considers gender dynamics in the field of professional jazz. Drawing on binary narratives of the exclusion and othering of women, Ramanna highlights gender discrimination in the Johannesburg and Durban jazz scenes between 1994 and 2003, and explores how the “ubiquity of gender inequality, patriarchy (or resistance to it) finds expression in music in numerous ways”.⁵⁰ Ramanna’s approach (also evident in an earlier study⁵¹) is male-centric, but he (inadvertently) opens up conceptions of South African jazz as a gendered discourse as a result of powerful interview testimony by women research participants. Recognising the ways “rare” women like Siya Makuzeni contest male domination in jazz, Ramanna acknowledges that “there *are* exceptions to [the] dystopian situation”⁵² in local jazz culture and that rare moments of agency become visible in patriarchal spaces when looking at them from a woman’s perspective.

Building on the work of Moelwyn-Hughes and Ramanna, Keamogetswe Mosiane explores the careers of three contemporary South African women working as professional bass players.⁵³

47. Chelsea Wahl and Stephen Ellingson refer to the ‘coattails’ phenomenon, the ‘undeniable, systemic advantage of being tied to high-status male musicians’. This phenomenon was particularly rife during the Swing era, but Wahl and Ellingson argue that it remains a strategy that women employ to gain access to the jazz world. While some women have deliberately ‘[hooked] their wagon onto an accomplished mentor’, others resent the assumption that their visibility is linked to high-profile male musicians - mostly family members and romantic partners (Wahl and Ellingson, ‘Almost Like a Real Band’, 460-462).

48. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981).

49. Moelwyn-Hughes, ‘Women, gender and identity’, 14.

50. Nishlyn Ramanna, ‘Experiences of Belonging and Exclusion in the Production and Reception of Some Contemporary South African Jazz: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, *SAMUS*, Vol. 34/35 (2015), 273.

51. Nishlyn Ramanna, ‘Jazz as discourse: A contextualised account of contemporary jazz in post-apartheid Durban and Johannesburg’ (PhD Thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2005).

52. Ramanna, ‘Experiences of Belonging and Exclusion’, 279.

53. Keamogetswe K. Mosiane, ‘Finding her place: An intersectional perspective on the experiences of three professional South African women bass players’ (Honours Thesis, Rhodes University, 2015).

Mosiane acknowledges some of the patriarchal dynamics that negatively impact their careers but also draws attention to the positive influence of women as musical role models, the value of supportive learning spaces and interactions with supportive male colleagues. In line with more recent feminist scholarship, Mosiane considers the complex intersectionality of race, space, gender and sexuality.⁵⁴

A more recent insider-ethnography by Aimée George explores dynamics of gender, sexuality and power in the Cape Town jazz scene and focuses on gender stereotyping, “violent displays of misogyny”⁵⁵ and women’s “repeated displays of subordination”⁵⁶ in a hostile and patriarchal arena. Through the personal interview testimony of eight anonymous women currently working as jazz musicians in Cape Town, George aims to contribute to more gender-sensitive discourse in South African jazz literature. However, she acknowledges that the study “solely speaks of the problematic and patriarchal power dynamics between men and women”,⁵⁷ thereby reinforcing the very binary concepts of gender and sexuality that feminist scholarship aims to dismantle.

Allen and Moelwyn-Hughes engage with power in a more Foucauldian (i.e., less binary and more fluid) way than Ramanna, Mosiane and George, but their studies ultimately still concentrate on power as a constraint. The success stories of the women in this study suggest that the South African jazz scene may be evolving into a more inclusive space. However, they continue to be exceptions to the rule, rare figures whose achievements allow them to inhabit highly patriarchal territory.

54. The term “intersectionality” was first used by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989; originally intended as an analytical framework to understand different modes of discrimination and privilege, intersectionality became compatible with the work of feminist scholars across disciplines interested in individuals’ unique experiences of discrimination and oppression. Crenshaw explains, ‘It’s basically a lens, a prism, for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other. We tend to talk about race inequality as separate from inequality based on gender, class, sexuality or immigrant status. What’s often missing is how some people are subject to all of these, and the experience is not just the sum of its parts’ (Kathy Steinmetz, ‘She coined the term “intersectionality” over 30 years ago. Here’s what it means to her today’, *Time*, 20 February 2020, accessed on 10 March 2021, <https://time.com/5786710/kimberle-crenshaw-intersectionality/>

55. Aimée George, ‘An exploration of the gender and sexual dynamics for women performers in the Cape Town jazz community’ (Masters dissertation, University of Cape Town, 2020), iv.

56. George, ‘An exploration of the gender and sexual dynamics for women performers’, 21.

57. Ibid, 63.

To date, the most comprehensive South African study of an agentic woman jazz musician is *Musical Echoes: South African Women Thinking in Jazz*,⁵⁸ co-written by ethnomusicologist Carol Ann Muller and jazz vocalist, composer and record company owner Sathima Bea Benjamin. The latter is also the subject of this richly empirical and theoretical scholarly and autobiographical work. Expanding on Allen's feminist practice of women musicians telling their own stories, Muller deliberately flattens the power dynamic between researcher and researched by sharing authorship with Benjamin. The book is structured around a set of autobiographical "calls" (Benjamin's personal recollections) and scholarly responses (Muller's interpretations and theoretical analyses of Benjamin's experiences). Responding to Paul Berliner's *Thinking in Jazz*,⁵⁹ Muller considers "what the contours of thinking in jazz might look like in a more intentionally woman-centered account" that moves "beyond the focus on improvisation and the mostly male musicians Berliner interviewed".⁶⁰ Muller does not explicitly draw on any particular feminist theoretical framework, but focuses on the experiences and agency of a gendered musical subject in a male-dominated arena. Muller draws parallels between Benjamin and her American counterparts to "locate [her] narrative in a body of experiences held in common by a wide range of women jazz musicians",⁶¹ but focuses on Benjamin's unique musical identity by drawing on personal biographical data in a manner deeply attuned to Benjamin's views and expressions as a woman:

...Sathima speaks in her own words to tell how she has shaped the discourse of jazz to her own purposes, thereby placing herself firmly into its community or performers and composers.⁶²

The book highlights the gendered dynamics both overtly and covertly at play throughout Benjamin's career, starting with the social expectations foisted upon her as a young, single woman in terms of career choice and lifestyle. By way of illustration, Muller argues that Benjamin's brave decision to abandon a promising teaching career⁶³ to work as a jazz singer

58. Carol Ann Muller and Sathima Bea Benjamin, *Musical Echoes: South African Women Thinking in Jazz* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011).

59. Paul Berliner, *Thinking in jazz: The Infinite Art of Improvisation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

60. Muller and Benjamin, *Musical Echoes*, 218.

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid, 219.

63. In a distinct reversal of societal norms, Benjamin's savings from her former job as a teacher helped to set up her future life partner's (short-lived) Dollar Brand School of Music in District Six, foreshadowing her significant role in the establishment of her spouse's stellar career in later years. Dollar Brand (b.1934), later known as Abdullah Ibrahim, is a world-renowned jazz pianist and composer best known for his iconic recording 'Mannenberg' (1974), featuring saxophonist Basil Coetzee. The song became an anthem of the anti-apartheid struggle. Brand married Sathima Bea Benjamin in 1965.

during the 1950s “cost her financially and socially”.⁶⁴ Her “dual occupations – teacher of the young, which required a morally upright young woman, and singer of jazz in nightclubs, hanging out with the socially and politically transgressive” were deemed a problematic combination.⁶⁵

Despite Benjamin’s bold move to abandon teaching and pursue a singing career, the “profound masculinization” of the 1950s Johannesburg music scene was mirrored in Cape Town, threatening to derail her fledgling career.⁶⁶ After rejecting the advances of pianist Arthur Gillies of the Golden City Dixies,⁶⁷ Gillies humiliated Sathima at a subsequent performance by playing in a key in which she couldn’t sing, prompting her to abandon public performance altogether. Ironically, a subsequent meeting with another pianist, Dollar Brand, sparked a professional partnership that later became a romantic partnership.

Over the following decades, Benjamin took several calculated risks to secure and maintain her and Brand’s careers. Her daring move to facilitate a meeting between Brand and Duke Ellington in 1963 effectively launched the Dollar Brand Trio onto the international jazz circuit.⁶⁸ Despite being the catalyst for their new, high-profile lifestyle, Benjamin’s own recordings with Duke Ellington (1963) were never released and she remained in the proverbial shadows, raising two children and volunteering as an activist for the African National Congress whilst living in exile in New York City.⁶⁹ Brand later changed his name to Abdullah Ibrahim and his performance career soared. In contrast, prior to 1977, Benjamin’s performance career hinged on occasionally being “allowed to perform” with her husband and waiting for invitations from Duke Ellington, despite having handled Ibrahim’s schedule for years.⁷⁰ In another bold move, Benjamin decided to present her own show but Ibrahim refused to play piano, prompting her to find her own musicians for the project. Inspired by American jazz artist

64. Muller and Benjamin, *Musical Echoes*, 83.

65. Ibid, 82.

66. Ballantine, *Marabi Nights: Jazz, 'Race' and Society*, 158.

67. The Golden City Dixies (based in Cape Town) toured England, Ireland and Sweden in 1959. Pianist Arthur Gillies and other members of the band subsequently sought asylum in Sweden to escape the apartheid regime; Gillies later settled in Norway (see Warren Ludski, ‘Touring Dixies paved way 60 years ago – and some never came back’, *Warren Ludski Music Scene*, 23 December 2019, accessed 10 January 2022, <https://warrenludskimusicscene.com/interviews-3/touring-dixies-paved-way-60-years-ago-and-some-never-came-back/>)

68. Muller and Benjamin, *Musical Echoes*, 128-140.

69. Ibid, 190-197.

70. Ibid, 197-198.

Betty Carter's Bet-Car record label, Benjamin decided to take matters into her own hands rather than rely on the men around her for professional opportunities:

...like me, she had problems too with nobody wanting to record her...She wrote her own stuff, she put the whole thing together herself. Her independence told me I could be independent.⁷¹

Starting the record label Ekapa in 1979 allowed Benjamin to reinvent herself as a jazz musician.⁷² She continued to manage Ibrahim's travel schedules in exchange for funding to record her first self-produced album, *Sathima Sings Ellington*⁷³ in New York. Benjamin sent the album to critics herself, hoping for a positive response:

In retrospect I realize that I set up Ekapa because I didn't want to lose my freedom – if you go with the big companies you are going to be controlled. I have a lot of freedom with Ekapa. I choose my musicians, my titles, my songs, my engineer. And when I am finished producing the recording, I get a larger company to distribute it for me. I always say I have this little record company. I'm the President; I'm the musician; I'm the messenger; I go to the post office; I pay the taxes. I do absolutely everything.⁷⁴

In 1997, Benjamin released the long-lost tracks she recorded with Duke Ellington in 1963 on the album *A Morning in Paris*,⁷⁵ finally cementing her place as a significant jazz musician in her own right. In this study, I hope to build on Muller and Benjamin's inspiring project of "South African women thinking in jazz", drawing on the experiences of a later generation (aged thirty to fifty) of women currently active as professional jazz musicians. Sherrie Tucker explains that, "one of the difficulties faced by researchers of contemporary jazzwomen has been the risks of speaking out that could impact networks crucial to continuing to work".⁷⁶ For this reason, there were "more forthcoming narratives" from older women whilst younger (currently working) women seldom delved into these topics during interviews.⁷⁷ The participants in this study were willing to speak candidly and all agreed to be named, despite the possibility of professional risk that typically deters women from publicly sharing their experiences of "hot" topics (to be discussed later). However – as will be revealed in their

71. Ibid, 159.

72. Ibid, 199-206.

73. Benjamin, *Sathima Sings Ellington*, recorded 1979, Ekapa, EK-001, 1979, vinyl LP.

74. Muller and Benjamin, *Musical Echoes*, 206.

75. Sathima Bea Benjamin, *A Morning In Paris*, recorded 1963, Enja Records, ENJ-9309 2, 1997, compact disc.

76. Sherrie Tucker, personal correspondence (Examiner's report, 2023).

77. An exception is Ceri Moelwyn-Hughes' 2013 study in which the participants – all working as professional musicians at the time – shared their experiences of sexual harassment, exclusion and other sensitive topics using their own names (Moelwyn-Hughes, 'Women, gender and identity').

testimony in chapters three to five – there is a distinct difference between the levels of openness of the established artists versus the younger participants.

International feminist (jazz) scholarship

In the 1980s and 1990s, critical theory was widely adopted by feminist scholars, in particular those focusing on emancipatory research and reparation work that advocated for the inclusion of women in the musical canon and historiography. Sally Placksin⁷⁸ is widely acknowledged as one of the earliest authors to tackle patriarchy in jazz culture and “finding women in jazz that masculinist histories...have omitted”.⁷⁹ Sherrie Tucker refers to “the meticulous, groundbreaking work” of writers like Placksin, who were “devoted to uncovering the histories of women in jazz” and acknowledges their contribution to “compensatory” histories.⁸⁰ Lewis Porter explores the jazz careers of women between 1910 and the early 1980s and, like Placksin, argues that women actively shaped jazz culture despite their omission from mainstream history. Porter refers to several key figures who were instrumental in the careers of their male counterparts and who deserve “more recognition than the usual token nod”.⁸¹ The study provides rich biographical detail but also highlights their technical excellence as improvisers, composers, and innovators.

Linda Dahl describes how patriarchal forces have historically excluded women from professional jazz spaces:

Still, the male jazz musician accepts and takes for granted that at every step he'll be dealing with other men — from club owners to booking agents to bandleaders, fellow players, reviewers and writers in the press: a male-dominated profession. The language that describes jazz, and jazz musicians, reflects this reality. . . The actor in this world of music is with good reason commonly called the ‘jazzman’.⁸²

Although Dahl’s work followed the tradition of compensatory histories, it also foreshadows the work of later scholars: as she notes in the preface to *Stormy Weather*, Dahl “wanted not only to fill in the blanks of history by citing their [women jazz musicians’] achievements, but also to capture some of the vividness of their lives, because these are real foremothers, taboo-

78. Sally Placksin, *American Women in Jazz, 1900 to the Present: their words, lives and music* (New York: Seaview Books, 1982).

79. Robin E. Desmeules, ‘(Re)Gendering Jazz: Women Instrumentalists in Toronto’ (Masters thesis, Carleton University 2010), 2.

80. Tucker, ‘Telling Performances’, 73-74.

81. Lewis Porter, ‘She Wiped All the Men Out: Jazzwomen Part I’, *Music Educators Journal*, Vol. 71, No. 1 (1984), 45.

82. Linda Dahl, *Stormy Weather: The Music and Lives of a Century of Jazzwomen* (New York: Limelight Editions, 1996 [1984]), 9-10.

breakers, independent ‘mamas’”.⁸³ Robin Desmeules lauds Dahl’s work as being ahead of its time:

Dahl presents a feminist analysis of issues women faced socially and historically in musical practice several years before the larger scale feminist musicological writings on this subject came into view.⁸⁴

Leslie Gourse profiles successful American jazzwomen between the 1970s and the early 1990s and explores some of the strategies they have employed to survive in a highly patriarchal field: these include the “extreme determination” of Big Band leader Kit McClure,⁸⁵ “working on (your) own voice and (your) own thing” like Maria Schneider,⁸⁶ and using “(your) gifts, supported by technique” to assert your individualism like Joanne Brackeen.⁸⁷

Tracing the emergence of feminist musicology, Kimberly Reitsma explores the contribution of feminist scholars who have “guided the musicological world into [the] direction of feminist musicology”⁸⁸ and were instrumental in challenging the patriarchal ideologies and attitudes that have “concealed most women’s music for centuries”.⁸⁹ Reitsma quotes Jane M. Bowers, who sums up the phenomenon of women’s invisibility as composers and performers as follows:

We have observed that no matter what kind of musical activities women have engaged in, and no matter how vital or distinguished those activities might be, a historical process of making those activities invisible has nevertheless been at work.⁹⁰

Reitsma counts Susan McClary and Marcia Citron among the leading scholars to “discover, analyze, discuss, and promote the representation of women and the “feminine” essence in various disciplines of music”.⁹¹ Their work signals a moment in feminist musicology that inspired researchers to move beyond inclusion and recovery work. McClary⁹² inspired numerous jazz scholars to interrogate the absence of women from the jazz canon and dominant

83. Linda Dahl, *Stormy Weather: The Music and Lives of a Century of Jazzwomen* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 11.

84. Desmeules, ‘(Re)Gendering Jazz’: Women Instrumentalists in Toronto’, 3.

85. Leslie Gourse, *Madame Jazz: Contemporary Women Instrumentalists* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 75.

86. Ibid, 169.

87. Ibid, 182.

88. Kimberly Reitsma, ‘A New Approach: Feminist Musicology Studies of Susan McClary and Marcia J. Citron’, *Musical Offerings*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Article 3 (2014), 37.

89. Reitsma, ‘A New Approach’, 38.

90. Jane M. Bowers, ‘Feminist Scholarship and the Field of Musicology: I’, *College Music Symposium* 29 (1989), 87.

91. Reitsma, ‘A New Approach’, abstract.

92. Susan McClary, *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2nd edition, 2002 [1991]). See also Susan McClary, ‘Of Patriarchs...and Matriarchs, Too: Susan McClary Assesses the Challenges and Contributions of Feminist Musicology’, *The Musical Times* 135, No. 1816 (1994), 362- 369.

discourse in an attempt to counter their invisibility.⁹³ McClary asks, “[what] would a feminist criticism of music look like? What issues would it raise, and how would it ground its arguments theoretically?”⁹⁴ In later work, McClary refers to the “exceptional tenacity demanded of women who attempted to participate in public arenas of music making”.⁹⁵ Marcia J. Citron⁹⁶ identifies various factors influencing the formation of a male dominated musical canon and, like McClary, considers the impact of gender on all aspects of musical culture.⁹⁷ Whereas McClary focuses on how masculinity and femininity are expressed within music itself, Citron argues that music is created out of specific social contexts; these social contexts impact how women function as musicians, and give rise to gendered stereotypes that silence women’s creativity.

In 1999, Sherrie Tucker called for jazz scholars to critically examine the gender constructions that “dominated jazz journalism, recording, marketing, and historiography”.⁹⁸ Tucker herself has written prolifically on American all-girl bands and the gendered experiences of women in early jazz culture and, like McClary, refers to the “exceptional woman” who “survives and earns a place in the historical narrative”.⁹⁹ However, moving beyond a compensatory ethos, Tucker resists grouping women together as a sisterhood with universal experiences and truths,¹⁰⁰ and argues that “adding women into” jazz history or creating separate “women-in-jazz” histories prevent the development of new frameworks of feminist jazz scholarship.¹⁰¹ In a landmark article in *Current Musicology* titled “Big Ears: Listening for Gender in Jazz Studies” (not to be confused with the 2008 anthology with the same name co-edited with Nichole Rustin),¹⁰² Tucker writes that jazz scholars have actively engaged theories of “race and ethnicity as crucial components of jazz studies”, but are “stubbornly out of the theoretical loop in its sluggishness to incorporate theories about gender, particularly those that may be

93. See Tucker, ‘Telling Performances’, 67-84; Caudwell, ‘Jazzwomen’, 390-392, 396, 400; Teal, ‘Mary Lou Williams as Apology’, 400-422.

94. McClary, *Feminine Endings*, 7.

95. Susan McClary, ‘Women and Music on the Verge of the New Millennium’, *Signs*, Vol. 25, No. 4, *Feminisms at a Millennium* (Summer, 2000), University of Chicago Press, 1283.

96. Marcia J. Citron, *Gender and the Musical Canon* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000).

97. Reitsma, ‘A New Approach’, 50.

98. Tucker, ‘Telling Performances’, 69.

99. Tucker, ‘Big Ears’, 384.

100. Tucker, ‘Bordering on Community’, 246.

101. Tucker, ‘Telling Performances’, 68.

102. Rustin, Nichole T. and Sherrie Tucker, eds., *Big Ears: Listening for Gender in Jazz Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

considered feminist”.¹⁰³ She argues that listening for gender may help to “develop more complex frameworks for addressing the histories, sounds, functions, and meanings” of jazz.¹⁰⁴ Simply including “exceptional” or “emerging” women in the dominant jazz discourse does not automatically change the existing discourse.¹⁰⁵ As Tucker explains:

Anyone interested in a more complete account of jazz history, as well as in a more egalitarian jazz future, would do well to listen to jazzwomen’s ‘telling performances.’ Such stories should be studied carefully for women musicians’ myriad tactics for asserting and maintaining identities as jazz musicians: in the business, on the bandstand, and in their memories.¹⁰⁶

Building on these ideas in her 2002 article, Tucker articulates a vital theoretical insight that I return to repeatedly in the chapters that follow:

Usually, when I tell people that I’m interested in gender and jazz, they think that means that I am interested in reclaiming the ‘lost’ histories of women who played jazz. And I am. Or in exposing the ways that sexism affects women who play jazz today. And I am. But in addition to these interests, and in part because of them, I am interested in gender as an analytic category for understanding how power is organized, maintained, and challenged, and how change occurs.¹⁰⁷

Recognising historian Joan Scott’s assertion that gender is a primary field “within which and by means of which power is articulated”,¹⁰⁸ Tucker writes:

My stakes in wanting to study jazz on a field of gender, as well as on other fields where power is articulated (such as race, class, nation, sexuality, etc.), are grounded in wanting to know more about how power and struggle operate in jazz settings.¹⁰⁹

Daniele Lorenzini explores the circularity that Foucault establishes between power and *knowledge* and how truth is “produced, sustained, valorized and regulated by a series of mechanisms, techniques and procedures that are ‘political’...politics has to do not only with institutions, but with the complex and constitutive field of power relations within which we ordinarily live”.¹¹⁰ Lorenzini defines the Foucauldian notion of a “regime of truth” as:

103. Tucker, ‘Big Ears’, 382-3.

104. Ibid, 377.

105. In an analysis of a recent Sweden-USA jazz project aimed at ‘making women visible’ in mainstream jazz culture, Björck and Bergman (cited in chapter one) challenge ‘women-in-jazz’ initiatives through non-binary and intersectional critique by resisting generalizations based on gender - much like Tucker did almost two decades earlier (Björck and Bergman, ‘Making Women in Jazz Visible’, 42-58).

106. Tucker, ‘Telling Performances’, 84.

107. Tucker, ‘Big Ears’, 386.

108. Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), 45.

109. Tucker, ‘Big Ears’, 387.

110. Daniele Lorenzini, ‘What is a “Regime of Truth”’, in *Le Foucauldien*, 1/1 (2015), DOI: 10.16995/lefou.2

...the strategic field within which truth is produced and becomes a tactical element in the functioning of a certain number of power relations.¹¹¹

Building on Foucauldian conceptions of power, knowledge and truth, scholars like Scott paved the way for scholarship that deals in pluralities rather than universalities and provides new ways to “think about, and act upon, gender without simply reversing or confirming old hierarchies”.¹¹² Scott argues that contemporary feminism has appropriated the post-structuralist term of “difference” to address the diversities in feminist scholarship,¹¹³ a term at the centre of ongoing “equality versus difference” debates.¹¹⁴ In this sense, Scott prefigures Judith Butler’s¹¹⁵ description of post-structuralism as a rejection of totality, universality and “the presumption of binary structural oppositions”.¹¹⁶

Later scholars have built on this notion, developing feminist approaches that “[break] with theoretical frameworks in which gender and sexuality are understood as inevitable”.¹¹⁷ Tucker’s work (discussed earlier) links to a later generation of feminist jazz scholarship that draws on elements of post-structuralism, in particular Judith Butler’s concept of gender performativity (gender as “enacted in repeated cultural performances”), to be discussed below.¹¹⁸ Butler’s notion of the *heterosexual matrix*¹¹⁹ can be understood as a fixed structure that organises gender as a binary construct (i.e., men are powerful/dominant and women are gentle/subordinate) and continues to perpetuate universal “truths” about the masculinity or femininity of certain attributes and behaviours that individuals “perform” in social settings.

In jazz culture, master narratives of women’s subalternity are perpetuated as truth, not only as a result of their under-representation in professional spaces, but in their near-absence from the jazz canon. The gradual shift in focus from resistance to resilience in feminist scholarship has challenged previously accepted truths and master narratives around gender, allowing scholars

111. Ibid.

112. Joan W. Scott, ‘Deconstructing Equality-Versus-Difference: Or, the Uses of Post-structuralist Theory for Feminism’, *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Spring 1988), 33.

113. Scott, ‘Deconstructing Equality-Versus-Difference’, 34.

114. Ibid, 38.

115. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999 [1990]).

116. Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 40, cited in Bernard Harcourt, ‘An Answer to the Question: “What Is Poststructuralism?”’ University of Chicago Public Law & Legal Theory Working Paper No. 156 (2007), 2.

117. Bronwyn Davies and Susanne Gannon, ‘Feminism/Post-structuralism’, in *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*, Eds. B. Somekh and C. Lewin (2005), 313.

118. Anthony Elliott, *Contemporary Social Theory: An Introduction*, 2nd edition (New York and London: Routledge, 2014), 237.

119. Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 9.

like Ellen Koskoff to consider how the eschewal of binary constructs may contribute to feminist ethnomusicology and musicology overall. As Koskoff explains, performativity moves beyond conceptions of gender as a set of attributes and considers gender as a “doing” in a “continuous negotiation between an individual body and the personal, social, and cultural forces that establish and regulate it”.¹²⁰ Jane W. Davidson asserts that the Butlerian notion of gender performativity “has developed complex semantic shades, and is becoming increasingly varied owing to the broadening of its disciplinary adoptions...[stretching] across to the ever-growing field of performance studies”.¹²¹

Focusing on jazz and blues, Caudwell uses Butler’s work to study ways in which jazzwomen are discursively materialised within jazz culture.¹²² She explores how “jamming and improvisation as well as producing sound(s) in leisure places and spaces function to reproduce male entitlement to jazz”.¹²³ Paying specific attention to women horn players, Caudwell writes:

Women’s active involvement in jazz, music, and culture is complex and must be understood in relation to the histories of jazz and how jazz instrumentation has been, and continues to be, performed and embodied. The musical culture is heavily male-dominated. Gender and sexuality, in relation to men, masculinity, and virility, all play their part in defining normative productions of musical style and sound.¹²⁴

Caudwell adds that jazz has a reputation for “being subversive both musically...and in relation to a politics of masculinity and ‘race’... [but that] the significance of gender and sexuality and the contribution of jazzwomen, especially women who play ‘horn’ instruments, has gone largely untheorized”.¹²⁵ Like Caudwell, Yoko Suzuki roots her study in Butler’s notion of gender as a social construct. Suzuki explores how thirteen New York-based professional women jazz saxophonists perform and understand gender. She posits that jazzwomen perform gender in multiple ways that are highly changeable across various times, places and contexts. Suzuki also pays attention to intersectionality and explores how some of the women, “consciously or unconsciously, are conforming to and reinforcing dominant norms in

120. Ellen Koskoff, 2005. ‘(Left Out in) Left (the Field): The Effects of Post-Postmodern Scholarship on Feminist and Gender Studies in Musicology and Ethnomusicology, 1990-2000’, in *Women and Music: A Journal of Gender and Culture*, Vol. 9 (2005), 93.

121. Jane Davidson, ‘Introducing the Issue of Performativity in Music’, *Musicology Australia*, Vol. 36, No.2 (2014), 179.

122. Caudwell, ‘Jazzwomen’, 398.

123. Ibid, 389.

124. Ibid, 398.

125. Ibid, 401.

jazz...with regard to gender, race and age”.¹²⁶ Suzuki writes that a “wide array of views were captured in the ways [her participants] talked about gender and race”, raising more questions than answers regarding “race, gender, intersectionality, and the performance of identity in jazz”.¹²⁷ Suzuki explains:

Rather than seeking to answer such questions definitively, I have chosen to allow my informants to speak for themselves and to privilege their voices over those of the analyst or cultural interpreter.¹²⁸

In a later study, Suzuki reiterates how gender performances “vary in contexts and change in time”¹²⁹ and suggests that recognising and critiquing gender norms “help to deconstruct the separate category of women-in-jazz”.¹³⁰ Drawing on the statements of high-profile women jazz instrumentalists like Terri-Lyne Carrington and Tia Fuller, and of around thirty women she personally interviewed, Suzuki illustrates that women’s gender performances are “diverse, and [that] their intentions can vary”.¹³¹ Arguing for a common ground between women who overtly perform gender in jazz, and those who deliberately disassociate with issues of gender, Suzuki suggests that:

...recognizing and critically examining gender norms instead of ignoring them can help to deconstruct the separate category of “women in jazz” as well as gender norms in the jazz world.¹³²

Focusing on contemporary jazz musicians from two different generations, Dutch saxophonist Candy Dulfer (best known for her work with Prince in the 1990s) and Esperanza Spalding (*Grammy* award-winning bassist and vocalist), Kristin McGee and Valerie Simuro respectively explore how women can be virtuoso performers of the musical and the social in the ways they play music and present themselves on stage and in the public eye. Drawing on Butler’s work, McGee explores how Dulfer “both participated in and disrupted the feminized and sexualized associations of smooth jazz”.¹³³ McGee describes how Dulfer’s deliberately constructed “pin-

126. Yoko Suzuki, ‘Two Strikes and the Double Negative: The Intersections of Gender and Race in the Cases of Female Jazz Saxophonists’, *Black Music Research Journal*, Vol. 33, No. 2, (Fall 2013), 212.

127. Suzuki, ‘Two Strikes’, 210.

128. *Ibid.*

129. Yoko Suzuki, “‘None Of Us Think About Being A Woman’: Performing Gender Without Norms”, *GEMS (Gender, Education, Music & Society)*, Vol. 7, No. 2, (February 2014), 8-9.

130. Suzuki, ‘None Of Us Think About Being A Woman’, 10.

131. *Ibid.*, 9.

132. *Ibid.*, 10.

133. Kristin McGee, ‘Promoting Affect and Desire in the International Industrial World of Smooth Jazz: The Case of Candy Dulfer’, *Jazz Perspectives*, Vol. 7, No.3 (2013), 255.

up persona” empowered her in a “potent conflation of sexuality with musical agency as a clever business model”.¹³⁴ In simultaneously performing various gendered (and other) roles, Dulfer’s complex self-representation challenges universal gender binaries and narratives about the exploitation of women or their status as passive victims of patriarchy.¹³⁵ Valerie Simuro’s research on Esperanza Spalding similarly draws on Butler’s theory of performativity as she maps the social construction of Spalding’s identity as a woman jazz instrumentalist and explores the ways Spalding subverts “society’s views of gender roles” in jazz.¹³⁶ Simuro highlights the “features of femininity Spalding chooses to depict” in order to balance commercial success and feminist ideals.¹³⁷

To date, South(ern) African scholars have not explicitly theorised the complex, gendered power relations that shape post-apartheid jazz culture. However, some scholars have drawn on elements of international postmodern (and post-structuralist) notions of difference and plurality discussed above as it speaks to South African women composing and performing in Western Classical, African and popular music genres. An early example is Marie Jorritsma’s study of three women composers who have left their own “song print” on South African musical life. Jorritsma adopts a “postmodern spirit of multiplicity” to frame their musical lives against the backdrop of postcolonial South Africa.¹³⁸ More recently, Martina Viljoen has explored difference as a “source of power, which can function in musically nuanced ways as a form of public struggle against male domination”.¹³⁹ Viljoen explores how women’s performances of musical texts in diverse genres of popular music (jazz, popular music and hip hop) may enable “moments of resistance and subversion”.¹⁴⁰ Agnella Viriri’s ethnographic study of Zimbabwean popular musicians Edith Weutonga and Sandra Ndebele challenges the historical representation of women as victims of patriarchy and traces “female successes in the popular music industry”.¹⁴¹ Viriri highlights the rising number of women in traditionally “male

134. McGee, ‘Promoting Affect and Desire’, 281.

135. Ibid, 285.

136. Valerie T. Simuro, ‘A Woman’s Place in Jazz in the 21st Century’ (Masters thesis, University of South Florida, 2018), 12.

137. Ibid, 4.

138. Marie Rosalie Jorritsma, ‘South African “Songprints”: The Lives and Works of Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph, Princess Constance Magogo, and Rosa Nepgen’ (Masters Thesis, Rice University, 2001), 2.

139. Martina Viljoen, ‘Representations of women in music: what difference does difference make?’, *Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa*, Vol. 11, No.1 (2014), 73.

140. Martina Viljoen, ‘Representations of women in music’, 85.

141. Agnella Viriri, ‘Female Participation in the Post-Independence Zimbabwean Popular Music Industry: A Case Study of Edith Katiji (Weutonga) and Sandra Ndebele’ (Masters’ thesis, University of the Witwatersrand, 2014), iii.

domains” such as instrument playing and band leading in Zimbabwean popular music.¹⁴² Lamenting the scarcity of studies acknowledging women’s successes, Viriri seeks to create a counter-narrative “that celebrate(s) women’s resiliency and resistance in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges”.¹⁴³ Viriri draws on postmodern feminism¹⁴⁴ as a theoretical framework for studying difference instead of equality, in an attempt to counter patriarchy.¹⁴⁵ Drawing on Butler’s theory of performativity, Viriri describes the various ways in which the participants perform gender: these include Ndebele’s controversial stage persona and “suggestive” dance moves¹⁴⁶ and Weutonga’s deliberate decision to play the bass, an instrument traditionally reserved for men.¹⁴⁷ Much like Muller and Benjamin, Viriri highlights the multiple roles performed by both women: mother, wife, self-managed performer,¹⁴⁸ recording studio owner¹⁴⁹ and mentor for young, upcoming talent.¹⁵⁰ Taking inspiration from the work of Rosemarie Tong,¹⁵¹ Viriri argues that women can use the “otherness” of being marginalized to their advantage as “a way of existing that would allow for change and difference”.¹⁵²

Building on the work of the authors cited above, I aim to analyse how the participants in this study have responded to various power structures and narratives of gendered mastery in South African jazz culture. Through their actions, it can be argued that power is not only restrictive, but in catalysing resistance can ironically inspire agency and success.

Methods: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis and Feminist Phenomenology

David Smilde and Rebecca Hanson explain that qualitative research methods are well suited to “unpacking the ‘how’ of gender and sexualities – the layers of practices, discourses, histories,

142. Viriri, ‘Female Participation in the Post-Independence Zimbabwean Popular Music Industry’, 115-116.

143. Ibid, 6.

144. Postmodern feminism shares notable similarities with feminist post-structuralism, such as the eschewal of accepted, universal narratives around socially constructed gender binaries (Julia Donnelly, ‘Addressing the Problem of Criticism in Feminist Musicology (1979-2015) or, Why We Shouldn’t Raise the White Flag Yet’, *Sydney Undergraduate Journal of Musicology*, Vol.6, (December 2016), 11.

145. Viriri, ‘Female Participation in the Post-Independence Zimbabwean Popular Music Industry’, 25.

146. Ibid, 63, 75-76.

147. Ibid, 43.

148. Ibid, 82-83.

149. Ibid, 56.

150. Ibid, 113.

151. Tong, P. Rosemarie. *Feminist Thought: A more Comprehensive Introduction*, 2nd edition (Colorado: West View Press, 1988).

152. Viriri, ‘Female Participation in the Post-Independence Zimbabwean Popular Music Industry’, 25.

and identities that constitute and are constituted by them”.¹⁵³ These methods lend themselves to “studying the building blocks of gender expression and sexual identities – the interactional, the discursive, and the performative – and how these buttress systems of inequalities”.¹⁵⁴ In tune with Crenshaw’s concept of intersectionality,¹⁵⁵ Smilde and Hanson highlight how qualitative methods enable the capturing of “interactions between distinct yet interconnected systems of discrimination (class, race, ethnicity, and so on) that produce inequalities within gender categories as well as between them”.¹⁵⁶ They add that:

[Qualitative methods]...show us how people resist, remake or reify these categories, challenging or reproducing the inequalities that structure them. Qualitative methods can reveal the complicated and reciprocal processes through which assumptions about gender and sexuality guide interactions, become embedded in institutions, and differentially affect life chances.¹⁵⁷

As this is a study about women, written by a woman (and *with* women), the chosen research practices can be described as feminist for several reasons. Eva-Maria Simms and Beata Stawarska write that feminist researchers “are critical of the power structures inherent in academic disciplines and try to develop alternate forms of generating data and interacting with research participants”.¹⁵⁸ In this study, I explore different ways of thinking and writing about South African jazzwomen’s experiences of gender and power. Traditionally, researchers have spoken *for* or spoken *about* participants, unilaterally determining the content most relevant to their research. Unlike traditional, hierarchical models of scholarship, feminist research practices allow participants to co-create knowledge and be in a shared position of power. The feminist researcher not only carefully considers how the research will affect the participants, but displays reflexivity and an acute awareness of their own prejudices throughout the research process.¹⁵⁹

As a South African woman performing, teaching and studying jazz, I inhabit many of the same spaces as the participants and have worked with some of them, both as colleagues in academic

153. David Smilde and Rebecca Hanson, ‘Studying Gender and Sexualities with Qualitative Methods’, *Qualitative Sociology*, 41 (2018) 333.

154. Smilde and Hanson, ‘Studying Gender and Sexualities’, 333.

155. Kimberle Crenshaw, ‘Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics’, *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, Vol. 1989, Issue 1, Article 8 (1989), 139-167.

156. Smilde and Hanson, ‘Studying Gender and Sexualities’, 334.

157. Ibid, 333.

158. Eva-Maria Simms and Beata Stawarska, ‘Introduction: Concepts and Methods in Interdisciplinary Feminist Phenomenology’, in *Interdisciplinary Feminist Phenomenology*, eds. Eva-Maria Simms and Beata Stawarska, *Janus Head* (Pittsburgh, Trivium Publications, 2013), 12.

159. Simms and Stawarska, ‘Introduction: Concepts and Methods’, 12.

spaces and on the bandstand. My unique vantage point is supported by the feminist notion that researcher positionality or “entanglement” should be viewed as something that could enhance the research experience for both parties, rather than a hindrance:

The entanglement is not something that needs to be erased; we only have to recognize it. Our inter-subjectivity, our *Ineinander*, our co-existentiality can function as a tool for hearing the voice of the other more genuinely.¹⁶⁰

Shannon N. Davis and Angela Hattery suggest that feminist epistemologies advocate for “including people – both researchers and participants – from a wide range of social locations and experiences in the knowledge production process so that subsequent data tells a more inclusive story”.¹⁶¹ Drawing on their notion of “choosing methods to answer research questions, rather than choosing research questions that default to specific methods”,¹⁶² the present study is participant-centered and iterative. Cued by Sharon M. Ravitch and Nicole Mittenfelner Carl, I aim to “push against...research design and data analysis that assume the researcher is the knower or lone interpreter of reality (hers and others)”. This approach aligns with critical qualitative research design that:

...encompasses an intentionality and a criticality about doing justice to participants’ experiences (and society more broadly) through a methodology that is person centered, humanizing, and attentive to “critical” or social equity issues...¹⁶³

This study draws on elements of two mutually compatible qualitative approaches: interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) as described by Jonathan A. Smith, Paul Flowers and Michael Larkin, and feminist phenomenology as described by Simms and Stawarska, and Silvia Stoller. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is a research method that emerged in psychology during the mid-1990s that allows researchers to explore and make sense of the lived experiences of participants:

People are physical and psychological entities. They do things in the world, they reflect on what they do, and those actions have meaningful, existential consequences.¹⁶⁴

160. Ibid, 13.

161. Shannon N. Davis and Angela Hattery, ‘Teaching Feminist Research Methods: A Comment and an Evaluation’, *Journal of Feminist Scholarship*, 15 (Fall 2018), 51.

162. Davis and Hattery, ‘Teaching Feminist Research Methods’, 55.

163. Sharon M. Ravitch and Nicole C. Mittenfelner Carl, *Qualitative Research: Bridging the Conceptual, Theoretical, and Methodological* (SAGE Publications Inc., 2016), e-publication, 298.

164. Jonathan A. Smith, Paul Flowers and Michael Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research* (London:

Smith et al. describe IPA as an approach to doing research rather than a prescribed set of methods and argue that researchers should be creative in their application of methods.¹⁶⁵

Michael Larkin, Simon Watts and Elizabeth Clifton state that:

...it may be more appropriate to understand IPA as a “stance” or perspective from which to approach the task of qualitative data analysis, rather than as a distinct “method”.¹⁶⁶

In a similar vein, Abayomi Alase writes:

The key, however, to appreciating IPA as a qualitative research approach and what it can do is to appreciate its spirit and sensibility toward its desire to incorporate other knowledge and expand its own knowledge base.¹⁶⁷

Jonathan A. Smith and Pnina Shinebourne argue that IPA is well suited to exploring new topics, particularly in areas that are “inherently complex or ambiguous”.¹⁶⁸ IPA does not explicitly foreground gender in the way feminist phenomenology does, but is commonly chosen to study women’s lived experiences.¹⁶⁹ According to Smith et al., IPA has been widely adopted to study sex and sexuality, “perhaps as a direct result of the sensitive nature of the subjects involved”. The method is well positioned to “challenge understandings which are based around ‘othering’ of people...” and engaging with topics involving “hot cognition” that are of existential import to the participants.¹⁷⁰ As a qualitative research method, IPA is concerned with meaning: the ways individuals make sense of their world, how they experience events, and what meanings they attribute to certain phenomena.¹⁷¹ Alase writes:

Sage, 2009), 34.

165. Smith, Flowers and Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*, 40.

166. Michael Larkin, Simon Watts and Elizabeth Clifton, ‘Giving voice and making sense in interpretative phenomenological analysis’, *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (2006), 104.

167. Abayomi Alase, ‘The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA): A Guide to a Good Qualitative Research Approach’, *International Journal of Education & Literacy Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (2017), 11.

168. Jonathan A. Smith and Pnina Shinebourne, ‘Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, in *APA Handbook of Research Methods in Psychology: Vol. 2. Research Designs*, ed. H. Cooper (2012), 74.

169. IPA has been used across a range of disciplines as a method for studying women’s experiences; for an example of an IPA study focusing on the experiences of women musicians, see Noola K. Griffiths, ‘The fabric of performance: values and social practices of classical music expressed through concert dress choice’, *Music Performance Research*, Manchester Vol. 4 (2011), 30-48. Griffiths uses IPA to examine the processes involved in women’s selection of concert attire, paying particular attention to the specific challenges women soloists face in terms of the display aspects of their appearance on stage.

170. Smith, Flowers and Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*, 143.

171. See Igor Pietkiewicz and Jonathan A. Smith, ‘A practical guide to using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis in qualitative research psychology’, *Psychological Journal*, Vol. 18, No.2 (2012), 361-369, translated from Polish (Igor Pietkiewicz & Jonathan A. Smith,

IPA aims at giving evidence of the participants' making sense of phenomena under investigation, and at the same time document the researcher's sense making.¹⁷²

The "double hermeneutics" involved in IPA research requires the researcher to make sense of the participants' sense making of their lived experiences. Nevertheless, it is important to note that:

...the researcher is not the participant, she/he only has access to the participant's experience through what the participant reports about it, and is also seeing this through the researcher's own, experientially-informed lens.¹⁷³

IPA enables researchers to combine a "hermeneutic of empathy with a hermeneutic of questioning";¹⁷⁴ whilst the researcher attempts to adopt an inside perspective of the participant's views, he/she also has to stand alongside/outside in order to do interpretative work:

Successful IPA research combines both stances – it is empathic and questioning, and the simple word "understanding" captures this neatly. We are attempting to understand, both in the sense of "trying to see what it is like for someone" and in the sense of "analysing, illuminating and making sense of something".¹⁷⁵

IPA draws on three theoretical principles: (a) idiography; (b) phenomenology; and (c) hermeneutics.¹⁷⁶

Idiography

Idiography refers to the in-depth analysis of individual cases, i.e., the individual perspectives of participants within their unique and situated contexts. Pietkiewicz and Smith describe the idiographic element of IPA as exploring each individual case, before finding similarities or patterns, and focusing on the "particular rather than the universal".¹⁷⁷ Generalisations about participants' shared experiences or viewpoints can therefore only be made once each case has been carefully analysed. IPA studies usually involve a small sample, with each individual case

'Praktyczny przewodnik interpretacyjnej analizy fenomenologicznej w badaniach jakościowych w psychologii', *Czasopismo Psychologiczne*, Vol. 18, No.2 (2012), 361-369).

172. Alase, 'The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis', 11.

173. Smith, Flowers and Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*, 36.

174. Ibid, 36.

175. Ibid, 37.

176. The brief descriptions of idiography and hermeneutics provided here serve only to provide a broad overview of the terms in their capacity as theoretical underpinnings of IPA. Aspects of phenomenology, in particular the rise of feminist phenomenology, are discussed in more depth.

177. Pietkiewicz and Smith, 'A practical guide to using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis', 363.

analysed separately. Thereafter, the researcher looks for patterns (convergences and divergences) across the various cases, but retains “individual detail and nuance”.¹⁷⁸ Pnina Shinebourne writes that IPA’s idiographic focus provides a “microscopic lens” that allows for “detailed examination of unique individual lives”.¹⁷⁹ In short, whereas traditional phenomenological approaches “prioritize the similarities in the phenomena of interest over individual accounts, analyzing and generalizing across cases concurrently”, IPA researchers conduct “a detailed single-case analysis for each participant before comparing patterns across cases”.¹⁸⁰

Phenomenology

Phenomenology was first conceptualised and theorised as a way to understand the lived experiences of individuals and the meaning of their experiences.¹⁸¹ It is, however, not a cut-and-dried approach to understanding the complexities of lived experience; Simms and Stawarska describe phenomenology as a “limited and flawed enterprise” that teaches us to “pay close attention, to describe well, to understand phenomena within their larger context, and to reflect on our own limitations as researchers, thinkers and fellow human beings”.¹⁸² Below, I provide an overview of some key figures in phenomenology, focusing on specific elements of their work as relevant to this study. As this study relies heavily on the participants’ personal interview testimony, it was important to glean a thorough understanding of what *experience* and the *interpretation* of human experience might entail – not only for the participants, but also for myself as researcher.

Commonly referred to as the founder of phenomenology, Edmund Husserl’s concept of *lifeworld* explores how people are “influenced, and limited by, [their] temporal and spatial environment”.¹⁸³ Simms and Stawarska describe Husserl’s approach as a method that provides “a deeper access to the fullness of phenomena as they present themselves to human

178. Smith and Shinebourne, ‘Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 73.

179. Pnina Shinebourne, ‘The Theoretical Underpinnings of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)’, *Existential Analysis*, Vol. 22, No. 1 (2011), 24.

180. Raissa M. Miller, Christian D. Chan, and Laura B. Farmer, ‘Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: A Contemporary Qualitative Approach’, *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 57, No. 4 (2018), 243.

181. Alase, ‘The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 10.

182. Simms and Stawarska, ‘Introduction: Concepts and Methods’, 11.

183. Rita A. Gardiner, ‘Hannah and her sisters: Theorizing gender and leadership through the lens of feminist phenomenology’, *Leadership*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (2018), 293.

consciousness”.¹⁸⁴ Husserl was critical of “science’s privileged knowledge claims” and saw it as a “second-order knowledge system”, dependent on “first-order personal experience”.¹⁸⁵ In order to uncover the rich layers of a phenomenon, Husserl argued that researchers should suspend their own preconceptions and judgments; the “bracketing off” of these beliefs allows for phenomena to “appear as they are”.¹⁸⁶ Husserl’s “phenomenological attitude” involves “turning one’s gaze towards how the object appears to consciousness” rather than being “unreflectively immersed in the taken-for-granted world”.¹⁸⁷ In terms of IPA, Pietkiewicz and Smith write:

Phenomenological studies will thus focus on how people perceive and talk about objects and events, rather than describing phenomena according to a predetermined categorical system, conceptual and scientific criteria. This involves “bracketing” one’s preconceptions and allowing phenomena to speak for themselves.¹⁸⁸

Husserl’s successor, Martin Heidegger, in turn argued that it is impossible to entirely bracket off one’s prejudices because they influence our perception of the world, including the ways we engage in research. Heidegger believed that, when conducting a hermeneutical phenomenological inquiry, the researcher must be able to “intuitively” grasp the meaning of a phenomenon.¹⁸⁹ Shinebourne cites Heidegger¹⁹⁰ as saying “interpretation is grounded in something we have in advance – in a fore-having”.¹⁹¹ According to Heidegger, our priority should be the new object, rather than our own preconceptions thereof, and that it may not be possible to know in advance which part of one’s fore-structure is relevant.¹⁹² Drawing on Heidegger’s view that hermeneutics is a prerequisite to phenomenology, IPA considers phenomenology as an interpretative process that reveals and manifests what may be hidden.¹⁹³ The aim is to realise that preconceptions may only be revealed once the interpretation process is underway, and that these are constantly open to revision. Shinebourne describes the process

184. Simms and Stawarska, ‘Introduction: Concepts and Methods’, 9.

185. Smith, Flowers and Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*, 15.

186. Gardiner, ‘Hannah and her sisters’, 293.

187. Shinebourne, ‘The Theoretical Underpinnings’, 17.

188. Pietkiewicz and Smith, ‘A practical guide to using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 362.

189. Gardiner, ‘Hannah and her sisters’, 293.

190. Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), 191.

191. Shinebourne, ‘The Theoretical Underpinnings’, 19.

192. Jonathan A. Smith, ‘Hermeneutics, human sciences and health: linking theory and practice’, *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Well-being*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (2007), 6.

193. Shinebourne, ‘The Theoretical Underpinnings’, 18-19.

of interpretation as “dynamic and iterative”; quoting Smith et al.,¹⁹⁴ she explains that the “complex and dynamic notion of fore-understanding and of the relationship between the researcher and the data calls for a ‘more enlivened form of bracketing as both a cyclical process and as something which can be only partially achieved’”.¹⁹⁵ According to Simms and Stawarska, bracketing for today’s phenomenologists entails being “suspicious of our own cultural prejudices and [accepting] that we will never be able to perform a complete reduction and see phenomena in their transcendental purity”.¹⁹⁶ IPA researchers may share a common humanity with a participant yet simultaneously remain different from the participant.¹⁹⁷ More importantly, the researcher is only privy to the participant’s experiences through the access provided by the participant – it is never entirely possible to “stand in the shoes of the subject”.¹⁹⁸ According to Pietkiewicz and Smith:

[IPA] synthesizes ideas from phenomenology and hermeneutics resulting in a method which is descriptive because it is concerned with how things appear and letting things speak for themselves, and interpretative because it recognizes there is no such thing as an uninterpreted phenomenon.¹⁹⁹

Whilst Heidegger was concerned with how human experience occurs and is “made sense of within a situated context”, Merleau-Ponty focused on “the importance of our bodies in enabling experience”.²⁰⁰ He refers to the “*lived* or *own* body and *lived* space in order to emphasize, from a first-person perspective, the co-penetration that exists between subject and world”.²⁰¹ For Merleau-Ponty, there is no hard separation between “bodily conduct and intelligent conduct; rather there is a unity of behaviour that expresses the intentionality and hence the meaning of this conduct”.²⁰² Gardiner explains how Merleau-Ponty fuses phenomenology and existentialism:

Through the connection between our body and space, we obtain knowledge of the world. That knowledge is not only unique to each of us, because of our specific experiences, but knowledge is also embodied.

194. Smith, Flowers and Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*, 25.

195. Shinebourne, ‘The Theoretical Underpinnings’, 21.

196. Simms and Stawarska, ‘Introduction: Concepts and Methods’, 11.

197. Smith and Shinebourne, ‘Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 73.

198. Pietkiewicz and Smith, ‘A practical guide to using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 362.

199. Ibid, 363.

200. Smith and Shinebourne, ‘Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 73.

201. Patricia Moya. ‘Habit and embodiment in Merleau-Ponty’, *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, Vol. 8, Article 542 (2014), 1.

202. Ibid.

This is why, for Merleau-Ponty, it is vital to attend to how embodied existence influences understanding.²⁰³

Merleau-Ponty wrote about various art forms including music, film, visual art, poetry and literature. Carolynne Quinn writes, “For Merleau-Ponty, ‘perception’ is an expressive and creative instance intimately linked with artistic practice...”²⁰⁴ According to Merleau-Ponty, painting “may be described as the amplification of perception, in that it is not just a re-creation of what occurs in acts of perceiving, but rather a transcending and extending of it”.²⁰⁵ I return to this idea in chapter five where I explore improvisation/performance as an amplification of the participants’ perception of the field of professional jazz.

Merleau-Ponty has been criticised by scholars like Simone de Beauvoir²⁰⁶ and Luce Irigaray²⁰⁷ for universalizing the body. Silvia Stoller cites Shannon Sullivan’s²⁰⁸ argument that Merleau-Ponty overlooks the particularities of bodies as provided by “gender, sexuality, class, race, age, culture, nationality, individual experiences and upbringing”.²⁰⁹ Similar criticisms were directed at Merleau-Ponty’s predecessors, phenomenologists Husserl and Heidegger; Gardiner argues that Husserl and Heidegger largely overlooked how gender may influence an individual’s “being-in-the-world”²¹⁰ whilst in more recent work, Juliana Oliveira Missagia argues that “it is due time to accept the limitations in the works of traditional [phenomenological] authors such as Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, who have failed to recognize how gender roles can be crucial when it comes to understanding subjectivity”.²¹¹

Recent scholars like Anya Daly argue that Merleau-Ponty’s “pivotal philosophical notions lend themselves to feminist interpretations” and that some insights from his work can be viewed as

203. Gardiner, ‘Hannah and her sisters’, 293.

204. Carolynne Quinn, ‘Perception and Painting in Merleau-Ponty’s Thought’, in *Perspectives*, Vol.2, *International Postgraduate Journal of Philosophy* (Autumn 2009), 38.

205. Quinn, ‘Perception and Painting’, 52.

206. Simone De Beauvoir, ‘Revue de La Phénoménologie de la Perception de Maurice Merleau-Ponty’, *Les Temps Modernes* 1 (1945), 363-367.

207. Luce Irigaray, ‘The Invisible of the Flesh: A Reading of Merleau-Ponty, The Visible and the Invisible’, *The Intertwining – The Chiasm*, in *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, ed. Luce Irigaray, translated by Carolyn Burke and Gillian C. Gill (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), 151-184.

208. Shannon Sullivan, ‘Domination and dialogue in Merleau-Ponty’s Phenomenology of perception’, *Hypatia*, Vol. 12, No.1 (1997), 1-19.

209. Silvia Stoller, ‘Reflections on Feminist Merleau-Ponty Skepticism’, *Hypatia*, Vol. 15, No.1 (Winter 2000), 175.

210. Gardiner, ‘Hannah and her sisters’, 294.

211. Juliana Oliveira Missagia, ‘In Defense of Feminist Phenomenology: Lived Body, Facticity and the Problem of Essentialism’, *Revista Ideação*, No. 42 (2020), 284.

“relevant to a feminist ethics”.²¹² Daly writes that, “the same feminist philosophers who are critical of Merleau-Ponty, either explicitly or implicitly, acknowledge the pertinence of many of his analyses”.²¹³ One such scholar is Judith Butler who is both “critical and appreciative” of elements of Merleau-Ponty’s work.²¹⁴ Butler takes issue with Merleau-Ponty’s “tacit normative assumptions about the heterosexual character of sexuality”, but acknowledges his notion that the body is termed a “historical idea rather than a ‘natural species’”.²¹⁵ Butler highlights how, for Merleau-Ponty, “the body cannot be conceived of as a static or univocal fact of existence, but, rather, as a modality of existence, the ‘place’ in which possibilities are realized and dramatized, the individualized appropriation of a more general historical experience”.²¹⁶

Jean-Paul Sartre is a pivotal, albeit complex, figure for feminist scholarship. Building on the work of Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, Sartre greatly developed the field of existential phenomenology “in response to the threat posed by Nazism, and [the] recognition that each of us is responsible for our actions”.²¹⁷ Sartre identifies two modes of being: “being-in-itself” and “being-for-itself”. The first refers to “material entities”, or non-conscious bodies that are unchangeable (i.e. inanimate objects). The latter is consciousness, “lacking in a definitive nature and lacking in self-identity”.²¹⁸ Shereen H. Shaw simplifies it as follows:

...when a human is born, he is a being in-itself, a human body, an object. This body can create and re-create itself in the world, becoming something else, actuating its own being as an object for-itself.²¹⁹

Smith et al.²²⁰ write that Sartre indicates we are always “becoming ourselves” and that we are an “ongoing project”.²²¹ Shaw further explains this with reference to gender:

212. Anya Daly, ‘A Phenomenological Grounding of Feminist Ethics’, *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, Vol. 50, No.1 (2019), 7.

213. Ibid, 6.

214. Ibid, 3.

215. Judith Butler, ‘Sexual Ideology and Phenomenological Description: A Feminist Critique of Merleau-Ponty’s Phenomenology of Perception’, in *Feminist Philosophy Of Mind*, eds. Keya Maitra and Jennifer McWeeny (Oxford University Press, 2022), 176.

216. Ibid.

217. Gardiner, ‘Hannah and her sisters’, 293.

218. Ibid.

219. Shereen H. Shaw, ‘An Existential State of “Being”: Gender Crisis, Conflict, and Struggles’, *British Mensa’s: Androgyny*, Vol. 3, Issue 1 (2019), 29.

220. Smith, Flowers and Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*, 19.

221. This strongly resonates with Simone de Beauvoir’s widely cited claim that “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman” (Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, translated by H.M Parshley (New York: Vintage, 1989), Original work published in 1949.

At a stage in life, a key turning point, a young woman or a young man, begins to express their identity in a different manner, one that conflicts with the social norms and traditions, where conflicts and struggles emerge. This new identity, for a female, for example, may mean pleading for parity with men, politically, economically and socially. What seemed like a perfectly well constructed upbringing suddenly becomes a detraction from ‘*being*’ and, perhaps also, from being young.²²²

Thomas R. Flynn writes that Sartre believed that we can transcend the “given” facticities in our lives (such as our language, our environment and our previous choices) and that we are always more than our situation and always in the process of becoming.²²³ Simone de Beauvoir²²⁴ however finds Sartre’s existentialist notion that anyone can transcend or overcome their situation to be problematic:

As existentialism takes the essence of human being to be *becoming* – becoming itself, through its continual transcendence of its situation – Beauvoir’s observation that many, if not all, women fail to become themselves by *being women* poses a serious challenge for existentialism.²²⁵

Beauvoir argues that women are disposed to assume the role of “the Other” rather than becoming *themselves*. The question of “why they consent to this role” drives her analysis in *The Second Sex*.²²⁶ Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* has been described as “an argument against femininity understood not as what pertains to women, but as a certain stylization of gender and around values of weakness, vulnerability, childlikeness, incompetence, narcissism, dissimulation, self-sacrifice, parasitic existential dependence on masculine judgment, and material dependence on men’s money”.²²⁷ Beauvoir’s concern is therefore not sexual difference, but rather “sexual difference as it is constituted through injustice”.²²⁸ For Beauvoir, women’s transcendence (of their situation) depends on their social standing and their relations with others.²²⁹ Beauvoir is regarded as a key figure in the emergence of feminist

222. Shaw, ‘An Existential State of Being’, 30.

223. Thomas R. Flynn, ‘Jean-Paul Sartre’, in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2013 [2004]), ed. Edward N. Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/sartre/>

224. Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986) was a French existentialist philosopher, writer and feminist activist. A belatedly acknowledged philosopher in her own right, Beauvoir viewed herself as an author and ‘midwife of Sartre’s existential ethics’. See Debra Bergoffen and Megan Burke, ‘Simone de Beauvoir’, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (2022), eds. Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2022/entries/beauvoir/>

225. Mary Edwards, ‘Sartre and Beauvoir on Women’s Psychological Oppression’, *Sartre Studies International*, Vol. 27, Issue 1 (2021), 54-55.

226. Edwards, ‘Sartre and Beauvoir’, 55.

227. Bonnie Mann, ‘The Difference of Feminist Phenomenology: The Case of Shame’, *Puncta*, Vol. 1 (2018), 53.

228. Mann, ‘The Difference of Feminist Phenomenology’, 55.

229. Edwards, ‘Sartre and Beauvoir’, 58

phenomenology and scholars in this field have drawn substantially on her work.²³⁰ Stoller credits *The Second Sex* as a seminal work, arguing that Beauvoir was “doing” feminist phenomenology before it was named as such.²³¹ Simms and Stawarska in turn refer to the book as a founding text in the feminist phenomenological tradition due to its “admixture of narrative accounts of women’s lived experience with a global outlook on women’s subordination in society”.²³² At the time of writing *The Second Sex*, Beauvoir did not consider herself to be either a feminist or a phenomenologist despite her integration of phenomenology with feminist theory.²³³ Beauvoir’s work highlights how “women’s lives have often been regarded as less valuable than their male counterparts” and that their “situation and potential is affected negatively by gender hierarchy”.²³⁴ Her adaptation of Merleau-Ponty’s concept of the (neutral, embodied) phenomenal body allowed scholars to focus on the situated, gendered, and embodied experiences of women.²³⁵ Gardiner writes that Beauvoir:

...pursues the theme of gender constraints, arguing that freedom is at odds with marriage and the family. Conservative family values, Beauvoir states, work to restrict women’s lives, as they are taught to put family before self, which in turn limits their sense of possibility.²³⁶

According to Beauvoir, freedom is not to be contemplated in an abstract way; instead, the “concrete conditions that create oppression” should be considered before we can transcend “oppressive social systems such as racism and sexism”.²³⁷ Feminist phenomenology as understood by the scholars above continues to evolve and Beauvoir’s work (and how it contributed to the emergence of feminist phenomenology) remains relevant today. Finding one single definition for feminist phenomenology proved to be a challenge, prompting a deeper look at its origins and various appropriations. Missagia refers to the complexities that comprise the relation between phenomenology and feminism:

230. Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex* is strongly influenced by phenomenology, but wasn’t declared as feminist phenomenology by the author. Whilst the work of early authors like Beauvoir, Hannah Arendt and Edith Stein reveal an overlap between phenomenology and ‘themes related to the condition of women’, this overlap only became a fully-fledged research topic in the 1990s. Feminist phenomenology as a discipline only emerged in recent years (Missagia, ‘In Defense of Feminist Phenomenology’, 275).

231. Silvia Stoller, ‘What is Feminist Phenomenology? Looking Backward and Into the Future’, in *Feminist Phenomenology Futures*, eds. Helen A. Fielding and Dorothea E. Olkowski (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 330.

232. Simms and Stawarska, ‘Introduction: Concepts and Methods’, 7.

233. Stoller, ‘What is Feminist Phenomenology?’, 330.

234. Gardiner, ‘Hannah and her sisters’, 292.

235. Ibid, 297.

236. Ibid, 297.

237. Ibid, 298.

...“phenomenology” and “feminism” can each be as complex a theme as its respective definitions can be elusive. Such difficulties are mostly the result of the labels themselves having been used and incorporated to disparate discourses and in a variety of ways.²³⁸

Just as phenomenology has undergone changes and has been appropriated in many ways, feminism, “whether taken as a political movement or theoretical endeavor, encompasses multiple interpretive venues”.²³⁹ Missagia adds that recent works in the field are:

...as much about critically revisiting phenomenology's classics from a feminist perspective as they are about applying phenomenology's distinctive methodology and analyses to feminist studies.²⁴⁰

In an interview with Emma Ryman, Alia Al-Saji provides valuable insights into two strands of feminist phenomenology. The first is rooted in feminist critique of phenomenologists like Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger and Husserl who assume a neutral, universal (white, male) subject, and “overlook” gender when considering experience. The second strand comprises feminist thinkers reinterpreting phenomenological texts and methods, and those using phenomenology for feminist projects. Scholars often take up both approaches and will engage with phenomenology in different ways. Al Saji argues that, for a long time, feminist phenomenology centered around understanding experience as embodied:

Traditionally, the male-female dichotomy was mapped onto the mind-body dichotomy. Women were associated with their bodies and men were associated with their minds – or, at least, if men were associated with bodies, their bodies were seen as seamless instruments for action in the world, not as obstacles to that action.²⁴¹

Al Saji explains that the work of Heidegger, Husserl and especially Merleau-Ponty should be considered as helpful to feminism as feminist phenomenologists expand on these works by giving “nuanced accounts of experiences of embodiment and to investigate how difference arises in embodied ways”. Al Saji concludes that the field of feminist phenomenology is still open and lends itself to interdisciplinarity.²⁴² Simms and Stawarska similarly concur that the strength of phenomenological thinking lies in its interdisciplinary appeal.²⁴³ More importantly,

238. Missagia, ‘In Defense of Feminist Phenomenology’, 274.

239. Ibid.

240. Ibid, 276.

241. Emma Ryman, ‘Feminist Phenomenology, Race, and Perception: An Interview with Alia Al-Saji’, *Rotman Institute of Philosophy*, 19 June 2013, accessed 8 January 2022, <https://www.rotman.uwo.ca/what-is-feminist-phenomenology/>

242. Ibid.

243. Simms and Stawarska, ‘Introduction: Concepts and Methods’, 9.

it enables phenomenology and feminist theory “to interrelate in multiple ways”.²⁴⁴ For Stoller, feminist phenomenology allows phenomenology and feminist theory to “enter into a constructive relationship.”²⁴⁵ She continues:

Although initially phenomenology and post-structuralism seemed to be irreconcilable antagonists, contemporary gender research shows that the two in fact meaningfully complement each other.²⁴⁶

For Bonnie Mann, feminist phenomenology does not provide a “set of principles in advance”. Rather, “the nature of the inquiry is constituted substantially by the nature of its object”.²⁴⁷ As a method, this research deals in “first person descriptions about specific human experiences and attempts to illuminate the complexity of the research participants’ worlds”; the focus is therefore to aim for depth and understanding of specific experiences, “rather than statistical validity”.²⁴⁸ Simms and Stawarska explain:

Feminist phenomenology is, by definition, a *critical* phenomenology. Feminist thinkers find themselves thinking within a long tradition of concepts created by males who have taken the male world-experience as the norm and as the foundation for their epistemological practices.²⁴⁹

Phenomenology can be thus be applied in ways that serve feminist agendas of empowerment:

[Feminist] phenomenologists are also faithful in their attempts to describe and conceptualize gendered existence and to allow for a clearing where women’s voices can be heard. Feminist phenomenology finds itself having to balance the hermeneutic discipline of suspicion (of existing discourse structures) with a hermeneutic discipline of affirmation and empowerment (of the complexity of individual, situated, gendered life experiences) in order to find a place for ethical, non-patriarchal political action on behalf of women, men, and children.²⁵⁰

Helen Fielding describes feminist phenomenology as “bringing into appearance phenomena that have previously been passed over, silenced, or made invisible within imposed discursive and meaning-making structures”.²⁵¹ Fielding adds that:

Humans, as phenomenal subjects, make sense of the world they encounter, and in so doing they have the potential to enact change... In contrast, although postmodern approaches are able to explain how subjects

244. Gardiner, ‘Hannah and her sisters’, 295.

245. Stoller, ‘What is Feminist Phenomenology?’, 342.

246. Ibid, 336.

247. Mann, ‘The Difference of Feminist Phenomenology’, 50.

248. Simms and Stawarska, ‘Introduction: Concepts and Methods’, 9.

249. Ibid, 11.

250. Ibid.

251. Helen A. Fielding, ‘Open Future, Regaining Possibility’, in *Feminist Phenomenology Futures*, ed. Helen A. Fielding and Dorothea E. Olkowski (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), 105.

are shaped by formal structures of culture and language, they are not able to account for the meaningful ways particular embodied subjects take up the world.²⁵²

Iris Marion Young (one of the most influential scholars to build on the work of Beauvoir) not only critiques Merleau-Ponty for “taking the male body as the norm”, but also his notion of the lived body as “pure fluid action”.²⁵³ Young argues that women do not encounter the world in this way; instead of operating with “open intentionality”, women exhibit an “inhibited intentionality”.²⁵⁴ For Missagia, this inhibited intentionality “inculcates in [women] a disposition that has us locked out of our won physical abilities and potentialities.”²⁵⁵ Young acknowledges the contradiction between women’s lived experience and their ability to transcend their situation resulting from patriarchal limitations imposed upon them. These limitations affect bodily comportment, motility and spaciality.²⁵⁶ Young argues that women living in a patriarchal society “live a contradiction”:

as human she is a free subject who participates in transcendence, but her situation as a woman denies her that subjectivity and transcendence”.²⁵⁷

Young “combines the insights of the theory of the lived body as expressed by Merleau-Ponty and the theory of the situation of women as developed by Beauvoir”²⁵⁸ and argues that women’s “different” bodily comportment (such as when throwing a ball or, in this thesis, play an instrument) is not biological, but the result of “unequal gender relations where women experience their bodies both as objects and subjects”.²⁵⁹ Women’s talents are commonly underestimated because of social conditioning and in turn, girls learn to view themselves as fragile, preventing them from acting confidently. However, when a woman opens “her body in free, active, open extension and bold outward directedness”, she risks being sexually objectified.²⁶⁰ Sara Ahmed’s engagement with Merleau-Ponty’s notion of the neutral subject is particularly useful when exploring how women “claim space” in territory perceived “as

252. Helen A. Fielding, ‘Open Future, Regaining Possibility’, 91.

253. Gardiner, ‘Hannah and her sisters’, 298-299.

254. Ibid.

255. Missagia, ‘In Defense of Feminist Phenomenology’, 276.

256. Gardiner, ‘Hannah and her sisters’, 299.

257. Iris Marion Young, ‘Throwing Like a Girl: A Phenomenology of Feminine Body Comportment, Motility and Spatiality’, *Human Studies* 3 (1980), 141. This paper was later published in Iris Marion Young, *On Female Body Experience: ‘Throwing Like a Girl’ and Other Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

258. Stoller, ‘What is Feminist Phenomenology?’, 331-332.

259. Ibid.

260. Gardiner, ‘Hannah and her sisters’, 299.

belonging to someone else”.²⁶¹ Bringing together phenomenology and queer theory, Ahmed troubles the notion of heterosexuality as the accepted “background”²⁶² within the spaces we inhabit, arguing that our spatial surroundings are not “neutral” but rather shaped by our understanding and interpretation of gender norms.

Much of the recent literature (in music and feminist scholarship more generally) reviewed earlier in this chapter draws on postmodern and post-structural theory rather than phenomenology. Whilst these frameworks provide exciting new ways to engage discursively with women’s multiple and situated experiences, it cannot be denied that the participants in this study have – at least at certain times in their careers – *felt* othered, excluded and constrained. These experiences cannot always be explained or neatly theorised. Missagia writes:

... feminist theory, to this day, is given a distinctive poststructuralist emphasis, which frequently causes it to view the relevant phenomena under an excessively linguistic and discursive light – thereby making it prone to forget that, beyond the landmarks of language and discourse, women's experience is also a corporeal one: we feel *in our bones* what it is like to be a woman.²⁶³

All the participants in this study have transcended (or attempted to transcend) some of the given facticities (gender, cultural traditions, race, language, educational background etc.) in their lives. These facticities, and the specific ways they transcend them (or not), deserve to be explored. Missagia writes that the concept of facticity:

...sheds light on the fact that the multiple female experiences – though each experience can be expected to vary immensely from one woman to the next – share certain features which are themselves something describable. For instance, when women, by sharing their own stories with one another, are able to learn to what extent the fear of being sexually assaulted gets to be part of their everyday lived experiences, or how being discriminated and denied a say in nearly every matter are forms of abuse lurking both in the workplace and at home, those facts belong to their concrete, factic experience; that is, they are not points to be merely explained through linguistic analysis, much less are they issues that can be put to rest by someone’s claiming that women are unstable or essentially this way or that.²⁶⁴

Missagia concludes by responding to Laura Downs’ article “If ‘Woman’ Is Just an Empty Category, Then Why Am I Afraid to Walk Alone at Night?”²⁶⁵ Stoller offers a similar view:

261. Björck, ‘Claiming Space’, 180.

262. Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 87.

263. Missagia, ‘In Defense of Feminist Phenomenology’, 282.

264. Ibid, 283.

265. Laura Downs, ‘If “Woman” Is Just an Empty Category, Then Why Am I Afraid to Walk Alone at Night?’ Identity Politics Meets the Postmodern Subject’, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 35, No. 2 (1993), 414-437.

If many women are scared to walk alone at night for fear of male violence, the poststructuralist rejoinder that this fear is either abetted by or the mere product of discourses of fear does not bring us very far in terms of a philosophical understanding of this very real perception of fear. It may be correct that discourses of fear can intensify or even produce feelings of fear, but this does not tell us anything about fear as it is experienced by a given subject. At that poststructuralist limit, phenomenology offers a method for analysing fear as a concrete experience that includes, in particular, how fear is experienced by individual subjects and/ or how fear manifests itself in the concrete experience of fear. In this context, it is irrelevant whether or not the fear is justified or based on an illusion or produced by discourses; the causes of the fear are not at issue here. A phenomenological examination of fear is, instead, interested in analysing experience as a phenomenon; or, in the case of fear, in describing how fear manifests itself to the subject experiencing it.²⁶⁶

Drawing on elements of phenomenology and feminist phenomenology and exploring how they may productively be brought into counterpoint with feminist jazz scholarship rooted in postmodernism and post-structuralism,²⁶⁷ I hope to arrive at empathic and critical understandings of the participants' experiences, using IPA as my principal methodology.

Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics is a qualitative research approach that focuses on interpretation, initially of theological and later other kinds of texts, and more recently of experience. Theodore George writes that hermeneutics opposes a “vertical” picture of knowledge and focuses instead on the “circularity” of understanding. The much-debated *hermeneutic circle* broadly signifies that,

in interpretive experience, a new understanding is achieved not on the basis of already securely founded beliefs. Instead, a new understanding is achieved through renewed interpretive attention to further possible meanings of those presuppositions which, sometimes tacitly, inform the understanding that we already have.²⁶⁸

Smith and Shinebourne explain that, “in the movement of the hermeneutic circle, the part is interpreted in relation to the whole and the whole is interpreted in relation to the part”.²⁶⁹ In the context of IPA, the process of interpretation is dynamic and iterative: not only are there multiple

266. Silvia Stoller, ‘Phenomenology and the Poststructural Critique of Experience’, *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, Vol. 17, No.5 (2009), 721.

267. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, it is worth noting that even Judith Butler, arguably one of the most prominent figures in post-structural theory has, at times, defended elements of the work of phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty (see Judith Butler, ‘Sexual Difference as a question of Ethics: Alterities of the Flesh in Irigaray and Merleau-Ponty’, in *Feminist Interpretations of Maurice Merleau-Ponty*, eds. Dorothea Olkowski and Gail Weiss (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), 107-125). Silvia Stoller views Butler’s early work as “eminently important” in the field of feminist phenomenology, in particular her reference to a “phenomenological feminism”, that Butler marks as “a feminist theory that makes use of Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology, expanding it around the central aspect of gender categories” (See Stoller, ‘What is Feminist Phenomenology?’, 330).

268. Theodore George, ‘Hermeneutics’, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2021), ed. Edward N. Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2021/entries/hermeneutics/>

269. Smith and Shinebourne, ‘Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 77.

ways to interpret a phenomenon, but the researcher's preconceptions may also change during the process of interpretation. As mentioned earlier, IPA involves a *double hermeneutics*, whereby the researcher makes (secondary) sense of the ways the participants make sense of their (primary) experiences. At this secondary hermeneutic level, using the concept of "stages" in chapters three and four allows me to frame the participants' actions and the various power relations that either constrained them, or motivated them to disrupt gendered narratives of mastery. Temporally, I explore their musical lives in terms of *stages of succession* (e.g., their early musical enculturation, formal music education and other periods of professional development). These stages are fluid, often overlap, and are punctuated (or concluded) by certain tipping points or milestones. Spatially, *physical stages* can be understood as scenes of action or sites of performance. Jazz stages are widely regarded as arenas where musicians compete and perform certain roles: men are generally cast in leading roles whilst women have historically been relegated to the wings. Women in professional jazz careers have long been understudies for their male counterparts and have occasionally been recognised for their "supporting role" status. Moreover, women's access to professional stages does not imply that they will necessarily be afforded a leading role or be viewed as "masters" of the genre. To achieve such rare status, women continually have to adapt the ways they perform gender in various settings, just as they reimagine and reinterpret scripted chords or melodies whilst improvising. My conception of stages also draws on Michel de De Certeau's notion of space as a practiced place: spaces are constituted by the people or activities within them and, in turn, individuals' actions and behaviours respond to and are shaped by the spaces they occupy.²⁷⁰ Paying close attention to gender, Doreen Massey in turn emphasises that spaces are not only gendered themselves but also "reflect and affect the ways in which gender is constructed and understood".²⁷¹ Taking inspiration from De Certeau and Massey, Nishlyn Ramanna explores the intersection of space and power in South African jazz culture and considers how "theatres", or "physical sites of social action" can exercise power in granting access to some actors and refusing entry to others. These theatres include certain pecking orders that position actors in a variety of relations to each other, whilst "pre-scripting" certain behaviours and performances.

270. Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, translated by Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

271. Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 179.

²⁷² Such theatres partially predetermine actors' power, by variously aggravating or alleviating practices of exclusion and stratification such as sexism or racism:

Musicking individuals' experiences of power are not just a function of the subject positions they occupy, but are also complexly inflected by the physical spaces in which those experiences transpire.²⁷³

In chapters three, four, and five, I explore how the participants' musical lives were initially shaped by the spaces they inhabited and, later, how their responses to various master narratives allowed them to alter power dynamics within existing spaces or to create their own musical spaces. The participants' personal testimonies in the following chapters provide rich insights into their understanding and navigation of power on a micro-level, but also opened up windows onto wider social histories that impacted their musical lives. Given that this study focuses on South African jazz, the participants are not only gendered actors but also complexly "classed" and "raced" in ways reflecting the country's tortured histories of colonialism and apartheid. The "rainbowism" that South Africans eagerly anticipated after the end of apartheid in 1994 is still to be realised; Ballantine explains that, "within the anti-apartheid struggle itself the concept of 'race', though nothing other than a social invention, was never deconstructed. 'Races' were assumed to be real, natural entities; thus race-thinking remained entrenched..."²⁷⁴ Dominic Griffiths and Maria Prozesky write:

The history of South Africa is often told as a story in two colors, but this story rather simplifies and exaggerates the shades of the real world.²⁷⁵

It is within these shaded areas that I hope to illuminate the participants' stories. Race and class remain intricately interwoven in South African culture and there are myriad ways the participants operate in, across and around their "assigned" (and sometimes assumed) positions in society and in the field of jazz. To quote Ballantine, "No one today is purely one thing".²⁷⁶ Before attempting to understand or analyse the experiences of the participants, it is important to consider my own positioning as a white woman, born during apartheid and with Afrikaans

272. Nishlyn Ramanna, 'Jazz, space and power in apartheid South Africa: The army and the church', *Situating popular musics: IASPM 16th International Conference Proceedings*, International Association for the Study of Popular Music (2011), 218.

273. Ramanna, 'Jazz, space and power', 221.

274. Christopher Ballantine, 'Re-Thinking "Whiteness?" Identity, Change and "White" Popular Music in Post-Apartheid South Africa', *Popular Music*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (2004), 106.

275. Dominic Griffiths and Maria L.C. Prozesky, 'The Politics of Dwelling: Being White/Being South African', *Africa Today*, Vol. 56, No. 4 (2010), 24.

276. Ballantine, 'Re-Thinking "Whiteness"', 105.

as mother tongue. My interpretation of the participants' testimony will therefore always be an approximation, filtered by my own way of thinking, feeling and being in the world. Acknowledging how these dynamics may affect the research process and my interpretation of the data is crucial.

Methodologically, IPA and feminist phenomenology both advocate for the centralising of participants' wellbeing during – and as a result of – the research process. It also calls for reflexivity and the careful consideration of how the participants may be affected by some of the questions. My interview schedule did not include explicit questions about race or class; having mutually agreed to discuss gender, it would have been inappropriate to force the participants into such discussions. Had these dynamics been the primary theoretical focus of this study, the African and coloured²⁷⁷ participants may have been more reluctant to openly discuss certain topics with a white interviewer. This would have required a different methodological approach overall.²⁷⁸ By way of example, Amanda and Shannon (who, like me, are white women born in the 1970s) respectively volunteered a significant amount of information on their childhood experiences during the Rhodesian War and apartheid (see chapter three). I recognised many parallels with my own upbringing during apartheid and, in many instances, specific experiences and memories they shared weren't explained to me in great detail, likely because it was assumed that I could relate to them on a personal level. Chantal's testimony references some of the same historic events and dynamics that impacted Shannon's life in Cape Town during the 1980s in particular. Chantal's references to politics, racism and oppression are brief yet very telling; as a coloured South African, her experience of being on the receiving end of public violence and race/class stratification (rather than being a

277. During apartheid, South African citizens were classified into four 'population groups' (White, Coloured, Indian and African). Each group had its own designated residential areas, educational systems and set of civil rights; in addition, public spaces, schools and universities were racially segregated. In South Africa, the term 'coloured' is used to describe a 'phenotypically diverse group of people descended largely from Cape slaves, the indigenous Khoisan population and other people of African and Asian descent who had been assimilated into Cape colonial society by the late nineteenth century. Being also partly descended from European settlers, coloured people have popularly been regarded as being of "mixed race" and have held an intermediate status in the South African racial hierarchy, distinct from the historically dominant white minority and the numerically preponderant African population' (Mohamed Adhikari, 'Hope, fear, shame, frustration: Continuity and change in the expression of coloured identity in white supremacist South Africa, 1910–1994', *Journal of Southern African Studies* Vol. 32, No. 3 (2006), 468–469). The term is a stubborn remnant of the apartheid era and is still widely used in South Africa.

278. Megan R. Yost and Jennifer F. Chmielewski refer to the hierarchy that exists between researcher and participant 'where the researcher is the "expert" who has control over the study and analyses whereas the participant does not...The researcher may also have other privileged identities in relation to the participant, as is the case when men study women, or White researchers study People of Color' (Megan R. Yost and Jennifer F. Chmielewski, 'Blurring the Line Between Researcher and Researched in Interview Studies: A Feminist Practice?', *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (2012), 246).

critical spectator like Shannon) meant that, as a researcher, I needed to pay close attention to what was *not* being said.

Looking at Cape Town in particular, the effects of the Group Areas Act are starkly visible when comparing Shannon and Chantal's testimonies. Social/class stratification in the city (and indeed the country as a whole) remains inextricably linked to race; during the apartheid era, coloured and African Group Areas had their own local authorities, "separate schools, healthcare and public transport systems" that were inferior to those in white areas.²⁷⁹ During the 1970s and 1980s, white families like Shannon's could expect to live in standalone homes with several bedrooms, a yard and possibly a swimming pool, especially in the Southern suburbs. Conversely, homes in areas designated as coloured such as Charlesville, Bonteheuwel and Athlone on the nearby Cape Flats were small; the neighbourhoods were densely populated and had poor infrastructure.

279. Ivan Turok, Justin Visagie, and Andreas Scheba, 'Social Inequality and Spatial Segregation in Cape Town', in *Urban Socio-Economic Segregation and Income Inequality: A Global Perspective*, Eds. Maarten van Ham, Tiit Tammaru, Rūta Ubarevičienė, and Heleen Janssen, (Springer, 2021), e-book, 74.

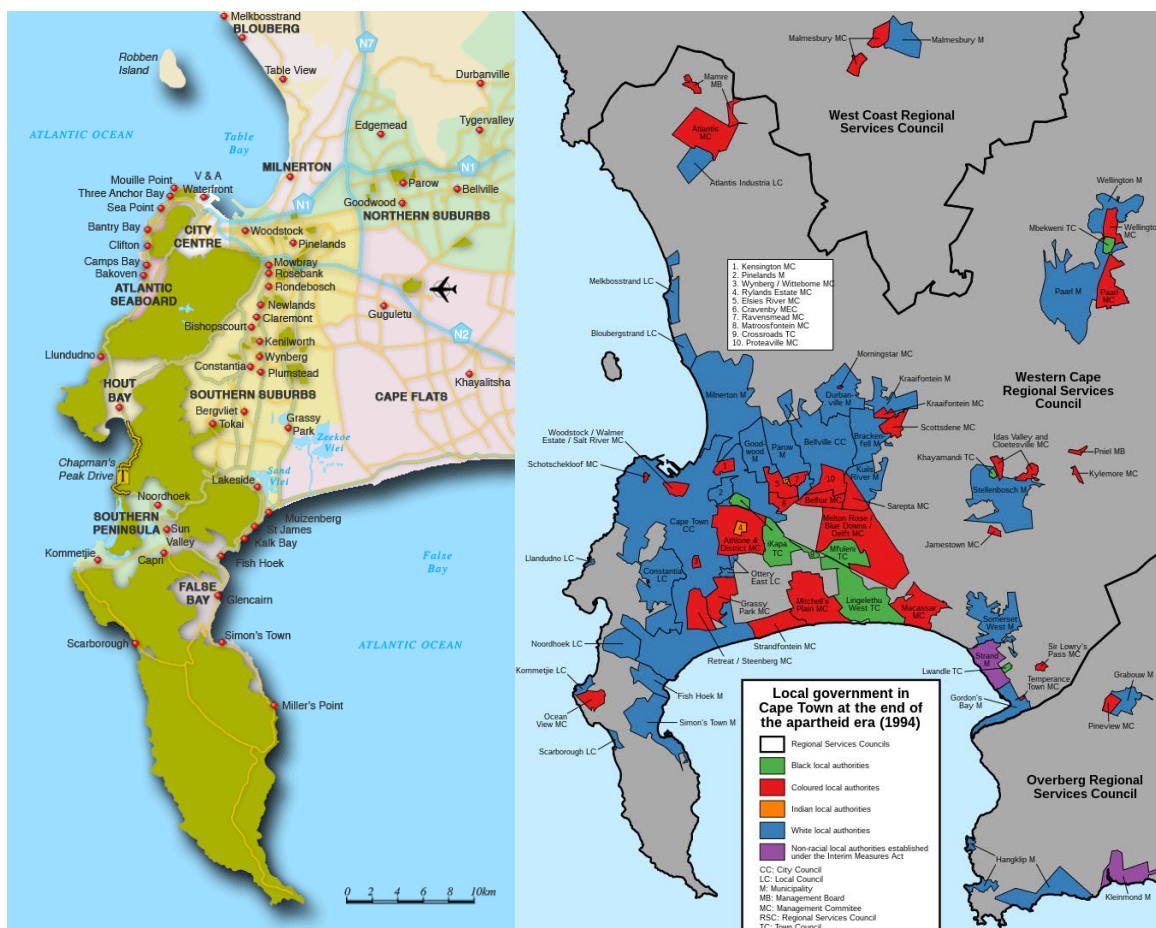


Fig. 9 (above left) Cape Town southern suburbs and the adjacent Cape Flats (Image: Rooms For Africa)

Fig. 10 (above right) Map of local government in Cape Town at the end of apartheid, 1994 (Image: Wikimedia Commons)



Fig. 11 (above left) Cape Town Southern suburbs (Photo: SA Venues)



Fig. 12 (above right) Manenberg, Cape Flats (Image: The Institute of Justice and Reconciliation)

These images reflect the typical pattern of inequality as seen across South Africa. Johnny Miller's drone photography project, 'Unequal Scenes'²⁸⁰ was initiated in 2016 as a visual representation of "liminal space existing as a space of violence".²⁸¹ Miller's stark images of post-apartheid South African cities reveal how these spaces are separated by buffer zones that "can be brick, electric fence, and concrete in a physical barrier", or "subtle in context and nuance". Perhaps one of the most striking images from Miller's project is that of Masiphumelele (about 20km from the centre of Cape Town), "sandwiched" within a cluster of "idyllic, picturesque" seaside suburbs and closely bordering the upmarket, gated community of Lake Michelle where properties fetch millions of South African Rands.²⁸²

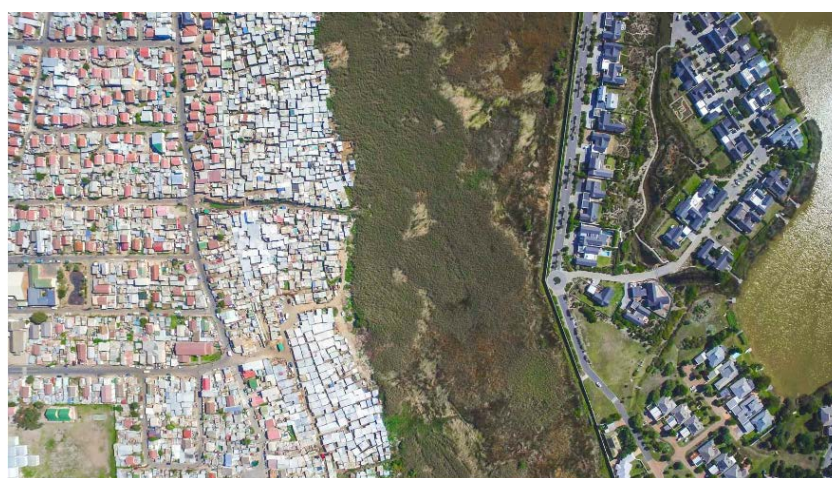


Fig. 13. Masiphumelele/Lake Michelle (Photo: Johnny Miller)

Like Cape Town, the city of East London remains as stratified along lines of class and race today as it was during the apartheid era. In the historically white city itself, tree-lined avenues are dotted with large homes and prestigious schools (some dating back to colonial times), and around the green arteries of the Gonubie and Nahoon rivers, sprawling residential properties are a stone's throw from the Indian Ocean. In stark contrast, Mdantsane (where Siya was born) and nearby Duncan Village are densely populated with high unemployment rates, poor service delivery and high levels of crime.

280. See Johnny Miller, 'Unequal Scenes', <https://unequalscenes.com/south-africa>

281. Miller, 'Unequal Scenes'

282. Ibid.



Fig. 14 (above left) Homes along the Nahoon River, East London (Photo: South African Tourism)

Fig. 15 (above right) Mdantsane (Photo: Andrea Juergen)

Residential Pretoria and adjacent Shoshanguve (where Thandi grew up) remain similarly stratified:



Fig. 16. Suburban Pretoria (Photo: Magda Ehlers)



Fig. 17. Shoshanguve (Photo: 5-five-5)

Participants Romy and Nomfundo were both born and raised in Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth) in the Eastern Cape. Here, too, apartheid design remains starkly visible; Nomfundo hails from the sprawling township of New Brighton on the outskirts of the city where industrial and residential buildings clamour for space. Only a few kilometres away, the upmarket beachside suburb of Summerstrand (and location of the Nelson Mandela University) was Romy's home from her birth until her early twenties.



Fig. 18 (above left) New Brighton (Photo: Noero)



Fig. 19 (above right) Aerial view of Summerstrand (Photo: Dirk Moggee)

Social stratification was similarly linked to language during apartheid. English and Afrikaans – when spoken by whites – were associated with power. While Afrikaans was the enforced official first language across the country, ironically, when spoken by coloured South Africans, the language carried connotations of “illegitimacy and social disempowerment”, as described by Rachel Calcott:

Under apartheid conditions, the only options presented to Coloured people were the acceptance of subjugated racial status or a chameleon-like transition to another racial category by leveraging the English language, a “good” accent, and anglicized appearance – to the loss of one’s ethnic roots.²⁸³

In 1980 when Chantal was a young child, 83.3% percent of the coloured community (including the Muslim community) in Cape Town reported that Afrikaans was their home language, with only 10.3% claiming English as their home language.²⁸⁴ Ingrained stereotypes around languages and their associated racial groups – amplified during apartheid – persist in South African culture to this day. Even though all my correspondence with Chantal was conducted in

283. Rachel Calcott, ‘Lost and Found in Cape Town: The Linguistic Construction of Coloured Identity’, *The Yale Review of International Studies*, January 2021, Accessed 10 September 2022, http://yris.yira.org/winter-issue/4645#_ftn12

284. *World Culture Encyclopedia*, ‘Cape Coloureds – Orientation’, webpage, accessed on 3 August 2022, <https://www.everyculture.com/Africa-Middle-East/Cape-Coloureds-Orientation.html#ixzz7g0Gzc7e1>

English, I assumed that Afrikaans had to be her mother tongue, especially as she hails from Cape Town.²⁸⁵ However, her family's first language is English, either a conscious and calculated choice (as described by Calcott) or partly because her family spent long stints abroad during which the children were schooled in English.

Siya did not initially make explicit reference to racialised experiences and may have decided to 'bracket off' this topic in her testimony. This silence likely points to an under-acknowledged racial tension that persists in South Africa whereby people from different racial groups rarely speak to one other openly and unreservedly about racialisation in their lives unless they are very familiar with one another.²⁸⁶ For the younger participants, Thandi and Nomfundo, dynamics of race and class were alluded to more subtly via references to Sophiatown, New Brighton and Mdantsane, places known throughout South Africa as historically vibrant centres of urban black culture, and significant sites of resistance against apartheid repression.

Younger still, Romy did not explicitly refer to race, class or politics as these forces would have had a much less significant impact on her as someone who didn't personally experience institutionalised segregation. Sally Matthews writes that:

The end of apartheid means that explicit segregationist white supremacist orders are now extinct. However, this does not mean the end of forms of white domination and so it is necessary to think carefully about the similarities and differences between past and present forms of white domination.²⁸⁷

These dynamics come to the fore in chapter three where I examine various aspects of the participants' musical education. In order to explore the ways they operated within educational spaces, it was important to gain an understanding of the educational landscape in South Africa and how it was impacted by apartheid. Taking into consideration these dynamics, had all the participants been of the same age, a very different story would have emerged here. For example, had the participants all been born during the early 1970s, it would have been exceedingly likely that only Amanda, Shannon and Romy would have had access to music lessons and/or a quality education. The Bantu Education Act (1953), the Coloured Persons Education Act (1963) and

285. For an overview of the urban geolinguistics of Cape Town pre-1994, see IJ Van der Merwe, 'The Urban Geolinguistics of Cape Town', *GeoJournal*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (1993), 409-417.

286. Race is more likely to be a topic of discussion between South Africans of the same race; for example, it is Ramanna's fellow Indian interviewees in particular that are most candid about their racialised experiences in his study of South African jazz as discourse (Ramanna, 'Jazz as discourse', 211-212, 230-232, 244-250).

287. Sally Matthews, 'White Anti-Racism in Post-Apartheid South Africa', *Politikon*, Vol. 39, No.2 (2012), 172.

the Indian Education Act (1964) were all formed to regulate the educational systems of separate population groups as designated by the apartheid government. Walter Morrow writes:

Apart from a few “mixed” private schools for the four “population groups”, it is illegal for a person to attend a state school designated for a “population group” other than to which she has officially been assigned, or for a school to admit as a pupil someone from the “wrong population group”.²⁸⁸

Morrow highlights the “glaring inequities” between the four schooling systems, in terms of “teacher qualifications, teacher-pupil ratios, per capita funding, building, equipment, facilities, books, stationery” and so on.²⁸⁹ White schools were at the top end of the spectrum, followed by Indian and coloured schools. Black schooling was not only inferior, but also not compulsory (as was the case in white, Indian and coloured schools). During apartheid, black schools were viewed as “site[s] of struggle”, often under surveillance by “security forces”.²⁹⁰ The constant physical presence of these forces – as described by Chantal – meant that students and teachers were “frequently detained – often without being charged – and threatened, restricted and harassed in other ways”.²⁹¹ In contrast, children attending schools in white areas had access to attractive sporting facilities and cultural programmes, and could move about freely within safe surroundings. In 1982, the government spent an average of \$65.24 on education for each white child, versus around \$7.87 for each black child.²⁹² Not only were the majority of resources reserved for white children, black teachers were insufficiently qualified. During the 1980s, around a third of white teachers held university degrees, versus only 2.3% of black teachers. 82% of black teachers had not formally graduated high school.²⁹³ Apartheid funding allowed for an average teacher-to-pupil ratio of 1:18 in white schools, followed by 1:24 in Asian schools and 1:27 in coloured schools. In black schools, the ratio was on average 1:39.²⁹⁴ Matthew McKeever writes:

288. Walter Eugene Morrow, ‘Aims of Education in South Africa’, *International Review of Education*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (1990), 174.

289. Morrow, ‘Aims of Education’, 174.

290. Ibid, 175.

291. Ibid.

292. Alistair Boddy-Evans, ‘School Enrollment in Apartheid Era South Africa’, *ThoughtCo*, 3 April 2020, accessed 20 August 2022, <https://www.thoughtco.com/school-enrollment-in-apartheid-south-africa-43437>

293. Boddy-Evans, ‘School Enrollment in Apartheid Era South Africa’.

294. Maria Lizet Ocampo, ‘A Brief History of Educational Inequality from Apartheid to the Present’, Leland Stanford Junior University: *Global Perspectives on Human Language: The South African Context*, 19 September 2004, accessed on 20 August 2022, https://web.stanford.edu/~jbaugh/saw/Lizet_Education_Inequity.html

White schools emphasized more academic subjects, while schools for Africans had much lower academic expectations, and emphasized more “practical” subjects that prepared their pupils for blue-collar work futures.²⁹⁵

When I set out to undertake this study I did not anticipate the level to which I would need to interrogate – and own – my privilege. Not only did the idiographic approach of this study reveal many unexpected narratives that arose during the participants’ interviews, but it also revealed a need for me as researcher to address the proverbial (white) elephant in the room. Matthews explains how engaging with anti-racist work (in this instance, my attempt to understand the important ways race and class inflect the participants’ testimony) “may actually result in the perpetuation rather than the erosion of white privilege”.²⁹⁶ The “stickiness” of white privilege makes it difficult to recognise one’s own “deeply ingrained ways of seeing and being in the world” even when it is not one’s “obvious and conscious intent”.²⁹⁷ Like Amanda and Shannon, I too have been eager to espouse an anti-racist ethos and emphasise my abhorrence of apartheid, because to remain tacit on the subject can imply complicity, or at the very least, indifference. Matthews explains:

Whenever white people are involved in any kind of anti-racist work, we can rightly be concerned that rather than principally being interested in redressing injustices, white people may principally be interested in alleviating their consciences or in trying to distance themselves from ‘bad racist white people’.²⁹⁸

This study does not claim to do anti-racist work, but glossing over the significance of these dynamics would undermine my commitment not to do violence to the participants’ stories. Their willingness to consciously and/or unconsciously share moments of great existential vulnerability during their interviews requires me to display the same degree of openness and a willingness to confront uncomfortable truths head-on. Matthews writes:

If a white person tries to unlearn whitely habits and better understand the experiences of black people through reading literature and watching films by black people and through careful reflection, some of the dangers of imagining the experiences of the other are opened up. Although reading a book or watching a film (unlike just imagining the experiences of others) may well cause one to be confronted by images that are “recalcitrant, resistant or unwanted”, when reading a book, watching a film or reflecting on one’s experiences one is ultimately in control of how to relate to these images.... Personal engagement with

295. Matthew McKeever, ‘Educational Inequality in Apartheid South Africa’, *American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 61, No. 1 (2017), 119.

296. Matthews, ‘White Anti-Racism in Post-Apartheid South Africa’, 2012.

297. Ibid, 173.

298. Ibid, 184-185.

real people is different. In such an engagement, other people can insist upon points one would rather ignore and can reiterate points one wishes to de-emphasise.²⁹⁹

Race, class and generational dynamics add further layers of social complexity to this study, and they are inextricably linked to the ways the participants – and I as researcher – make sense of our lived experiences as women jazz musicians. Ultimately, a rich and focused exploration of the impact of these dynamics on the participants’ musical lives is likely to prove a productive line of inquiry for a future study.

Research Design

Participant Selection

Researchers commonly conduct IPA studies with a small sample of participants due to the depth and nuance of the investigation and the time-consuming, elaborate analysis of data. This allows for detailed case-by-case analysis, concentrating on the depth, rather than the breadth of a study. Smith et al. advise that a reasonable sample size for IPA research is approximately three to eight participants and that exploring a phenomenon from multiple perspectives can provide a “more detailed and multifaceted account” of that phenomenon.³⁰⁰ It is recommended that a “fairly homogenous sample” be selected in order to offer particular perspectives on the phenomena being researched.³⁰¹

For the purposes of this study, I was interested in women who currently occupy *multiple* creative and leadership roles in jazz (i.e. education, composing, performing and producing). To this end, I selected seven participants who have been active for over a decade and are well established in various fields of South African jazz culture. There are of course many other women whose work as jazz performers deserves to be documented, such as Judith Sephuma, Gloria Bosman, Natalie Rungan and Tutu Puoane whose careers span more than two decades. Similarly, a younger generation of artists like Zoë Modiga, Amanda Black and Msaki has achieved great commercial success as jazz/crossover vocalists in recent years, but are primarily known as performing artists.³⁰² As a woman who has worked as a jazz performer, teacher,

299. Ibid, 183.

300. Smith, Flowers and Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*, 52.

301. Smith and Shinebourne, ‘Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 75.

302. Other established jazz/crossover vocalists whose significant contribution to the genre falls outside the scope of this study include Judith Sephuma, Lira, Gloria Bosman, Natalie Rungan and Tutu Puoane.

bandleader and arranger for over two decades, I purposefully selected other women who also wear many proverbial hats within the professional music scene.

Whereas every effort was made to include participants from diverse cultural, geographical and musical backgrounds and to include a balance of instrumental and vocal performers, certain regions of South Africa (notably KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State) are not represented due to the unavailability of certain participants identified as contributors to the study. The unique jazz scenes in these regions warrant their own studies, as do the women who operate within them.

Selection criteria

- a) Women between the ages of thirty and fifty, currently active as jazz musicians in South Africa;³⁰³
- b) Women with a local and/or international profile as jazz musicians (e.g. recordings, a significant media presence, awards);
- c) Women active across a range of professional jazz careers (e.g. jazz educators, composers, performers and bandleaders);
- d) Women who have performed or acted as mentors/facilitators at one or more prominent South African jazz festivals (e.g. the Cape Town International Jazz Festival, Standard Bank Joy of Jazz, Standard Bank Jazz Festival and Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Festival).

Total Participants:	7
Instrumentalists	2
Vocalist-Instrumentalists	5
Educators	4
Composers	6
Bandleaders	6
Recording Artists	7
Tertiary Music Graduates	5

Data collection and storage

IPA allows for an open inductive approach to data collection and analysis and aims to generate detailed descriptions of a certain phenomenon as experienced by the participants. Smith et al. refer to the interview process as “a conversation with a purpose”, one that facilitates an

303. All the participants were born in South Africa, with the exception of Amanda Tiffin who was born in Rhodesia/Zimbabwe.

interaction that permits participants to “tell their own stories, in their own words”.³⁰⁴ This approach is highly compatible with the feminist research practices described earlier. In an IPA study, the participant is the “experiential expert on the topic in hand” and should have some leeway as to how the interview unfolds. The researcher however, will have a prepared interview schedule with topics of interest in order to be a more engaged, responsive interviewer.³⁰⁵ The interviews must allow for real time dialogue based on these prompts. Smith and Shinebourne suggest the use of broad, open research questions that allow participants to share their experiences from their own unique perspectives.³⁰⁶

Alase suggests interviews of between sixty and ninety minutes, during which the researcher should be “committed to a degree of open-mindedness”.³⁰⁷ For the purposes of this study, I conducted semi-structured, one-on-one interviews with each participant. Due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions during the main data-gathering period (2020-2021), the envisioned in-person interviews were conducted via online/virtual platforms. One of the challenges that arose from this interview format was the inability to interact with the participants in their own spaces where they would be most comfortable. The disconnectedness of talking about often-sensitive issues via video call had to be mitigated by ensuring a high level of trust, transparency and mutual sharing. As per Alase, all “devices, techniques and strategies”³⁰⁸ were used with the full consent and approval of the participants. The video interviews were recorded with the participants’ permission and securely stored for transcription. All recorded interview data (video and audio) resides in password-protected digital storage.

The interviews were between sixty to ninety minutes long with the interview questions varying in order, depending on the individual conversation. In some interviews, the participants discussed additional topics pertinent to their story, but not necessarily relevant to this study, such as their teaching approaches, research projects or unrelated work outside of musical performance. These discussions were allowed to run their natural course, and often segued into dialogues during which both parties shared their experiences and views in a relaxed and open manner. In certain instances, the participants chose to discuss specific experiences off the

304. Smith, Flowers and Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*, 57.

305. *Ibid*, 58.

306. Smith and Shinebourne, ‘Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 75.

307. Alase, ‘The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 15.

308. *Ibid*, 15.

record; these segments of the interviews were not transcribed and, in line with the participants' wishes, omitted from the thesis. Although the vast majority of their experiences were shared openly with reference to time and place, the names of certain individuals or institutions were occasionally omitted for reasons of privacy, or because of their sensitive or controversial nature. Because potentially sensitive issues may arise during the interview process, it is important to monitor how the participant is being affected during an interview. Alase writes:

As an interpretative and "participant-oriented" research approach, IPA research studies should endeavor to do everything within its power to protect the rights, dignities, and privacies of the research participants.³⁰⁹

This notwithstanding, I chose not to make use of pseudonyms and instead used the participants' own names. Although qualitative researchers commonly employ aliases to protect the identity of their participants, the women participating in this study granted permission for their real names to be used. Each participant was willing to share important and sensitive information towards initiating wider conversations on the topics explored in this study. As feminist research practices aim to amplify women's voices, it was not only important to let the participants tell their own stories, but also to allow them the opportunity to filter and revise their interview testimony. Each interview was recorded and then transcribed verbatim. The participants were able to remove (or revise) content from the transcriptions to ensure they were comfortable with the primary data being shared in the final publication.

Secondary data gathering included sources in the public domain, for example:

- a) Scholarly articles and theses;
- b) Media reviews;
- c) Blogs and websites;
- d) Promotional material pertaining to the participants' professional careers;
- e) Press releases and news articles (print and digital media);
- f) Videos and digital audio recordings.

309. Ibid, 17.

Analysis and writing up of data

According to Smith and Shinebourne it is important to allow for new themes to emerge with each reading of the interview transcript.³¹⁰ During the interview transcription process, it became evident that there may be various ways to interpret some of the participants' shared experiences. Careful re-reading of certain sections was required, and in some cases follow-up interviews or informal follow-up enquiries were necessary to ensure that the participants' experiences were accurately represented. To date, some of the experiences they shared have not been documented anywhere else, in particular around their childhood musical enculturation (chapter three) and their experiences of tertiary jazz programmes (chapter four). It was important to regard the participants' personal testimony as the primary – and expert – source of information. In some cases, participants did not clearly recall statements attributed to them in media interviews and more often than not, the older participants revealed the radical ways their views on certain phenomena had changed over time. For some, this study provided a space to set the proverbial record straight or to address certain assumptions about their professional careers.

Simms and Stawarska refer to the importance of “double book-keeping” during a feminist phenomenological investigation. This entails taking note of what the participant says (during an interview), but also what she “does not or cannot say [but that] structures her discourse”.³¹¹ When engaging with topics of great significance to the participants, Smith and Shinebourne believe that:

...one can often hear, during an interview, the participant wrestling in real time with something important that is happening to them.³¹²

In several instances during the interviews, participants overtly struggled to tell a story; some became emotional, others were visibly angry or frustrated. Even when they did not explain their feelings verbally, other cues (such as their tone of voice or facial expressions) enabled nuanced readings of their sense-making process. I could personally relate to certain universally gendered experiences such as being told to “play like a man”, being “played over” during a solo, or avoiding taking solos altogether. There were, however, experiences I could not assume

310. Smith and Shinebourne, ‘Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 79.

311. Simms and Stawarska, ‘Introduction: Concepts and Methods’, 12.

312. Smith and Shinebourne, ‘Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 74.

to understand or relate to because of their situation in specific social, temporal and cultural contexts. As a white woman growing up during apartheid, I started my university career around the time of the country's first democratic elections and my formal music education was rooted in Western classical programmes from the Global North. I am acutely aware of my privileged status and cannot claim to understand or adequately express the experiences of women musicians of colour. With this in mind, I recognise that my interpretations of their experiences are, at best, approximate versions of their own truths.³¹³ Smith et al. refer to Heidegger's belief that "our interpretations of experience are always shaped, limited *and* enabled by, language".³¹⁴ Shinebourne cites Eatough and Smith:³¹⁵

IPA gives a central place to experience while acknowledging the multiple influences on it; its historical and cultural situatedness including language and social norms and practices.³¹⁶

Shinebourne also considers whether a researcher's style of writing can accurately capture the quality of the participants' experiences and stresses the importance of including the emotional and expressive dimensions of the participants' testimony.³¹⁷ Max van Manen writes:

The phenomenological method consists of the ability, or rather the art of being sensitive - sensitive to the subtle undertones of language, to the way language speaks when it allows the things themselves to speak. This means that an authentic speaker must be a true listener, able to attune to the deep tonalities of language that normally fall out of our accustomed range of hearing, able to listen to the way the things of the world speak to us.³¹⁸

In addition, it is important to note that:

...experiential accounts or lived-experience descriptions – whether caught in oral or in written discourse – are never identical to lived experience itself. All recollections of experiences, reflections on

313. Gayatri Spivak refers to the 'epistemic violence' that constitutes the colonial subject as 'Other' (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in *Marxism and The Interpretation of Culture*, Eds. C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 271-313. Spivak argues that marginalised or oppressed individuals do not require researchers to speak on their behalf, or 'give voice' to them. The notion of giving voice 'suggests a dependence upon Western intellectuals to "speak for" the subaltern condition rather than allowing them to speak for themselves' (Sarah Bracke, 'Is the subaltern resilient? Notes on agency and neoliberal subjects', *Cultural Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 5 (2016), 848).

314. Smith and Shinebourne, 'Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis', 194.

315. Virginia Eatough and Jonathan A. Smith, 'I feel like a scrambled egg in my head: An idiographic case study of meaning making and anger using interpretative phenomenological analysis', *Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice*, Vol. 79, No. 1 (2006), 119.

316. Shinebourne, 'The Theoretical Underpinnings', 26.

317. Ibid, 24-25.

318. Max van Manen, *Researching Lived Experience: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy*, 2nd Edition (New York: Routledge, 2016), 111.

experiences, descriptions of experiences, taped interviews about experiences, or transcribed conversations about experiences are already transformations of those experiences.³¹⁹

According to Saifaddin Galal the most commonly spoken languages in South Africa since 2018 are isiZulu (25,3%), isiXhosa (14,8%) and Afrikaans (12,2%). English is the sixth most commonly spoken language (8,1%) but is the “second-most prevalent language spoken outside of homes, at 16,6%”.³²⁰ My first language is Afrikaans, and the participants’ first languages are as follows:

Total Participants:	7
isiZulu	1
isiXhosa	2
English	4

All the interviews were conducted wholly in English, interspersed with occasional “South Africanisms” that may grant South African readers an advantageous view of the participants’ expressions and personalities. The participants made use of international jazz jargon and terminology, as well as terms and phrases unique to the South African jazz scene. For some of the participants, the latter are loaded with negative connotations, coined by individuals in positions of power. In some instances, these phrases triggered powerful responses linked to specific experiences, spaces and individuals.

Ethical Considerations

According to Alase, “It is anticipated that participation in any IPA study will be strictly voluntarily based and [that] the risks to the participants should be very minimal”.³²¹ As the participants are all professional performing artists who regularly share their creative outputs in the public domain, they are accustomed to publicly expressing aspects of their inner lives and experiences. No gatekeeper permission (e.g., via third parties such as managers or agents) was required to access online information or arrange personal interviews with the participants. With the exception of selected musical compositions and performances analysed with the participants’ permission (chapter five), this study does not contain any content that constitutes

319. Van Manen, *Researching Lived Experience*, 54.

320. Saifaddin Galal, ‘Distribution of languages spoken by individuals inside and outside of households in South Africa 2018’, *Statista*, 15 June 2022, accessed 1 August 2022, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1114302/distribution-of-languages-spoken-inside-and-outside-of-households-in-south-africa/>

321. Alase, ‘The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 17-18.

the intellectual property of the participants. The participants signed official consent forms and were free to withdraw from the research project at any time. To my knowledge, there was no legal reason why any of the participants could not grant informed consent to participate in this study. The participants did not receive any payment, honorarium or reimbursement of costs incurred in participating in the study.

The starting point for any IPA research should be the avoidance of harm – in this instance, talking about sensitive issues might constitute “harm”.³²² It was therefore important to assess the possible effects that the interviews may have on the participants and to be reflexive during all phases of the research process. A list of interview questions was supplied to all the participants in advance and only one participant opted out of the study due to professional constraints. The participants were offered the opportunity to remove or amend any content from their interview transcriptions so as to retain control of their individual narratives as contributors in the research process. Clear and regular feedback was provided throughout the research process and, where necessary, follow-up discussions were scheduled to ensure that the text accurately reflects the participants’ testimony. Smith et al. argue that a “rich, transparent and contextualized analysis of the accounts of the participants” can enable the target audience(s) to “evaluate its transferability to persons in contexts which are more, or less, similar”.³²³ The majority of participants were eager to contribute to the empowerment of women in various arenas of professional jazz culture by sharing their own experiences; some were particularly committed to fighting entrenched patriarchy in tertiary institutions.³²⁴

This chapter has sought to situate the present study within its wider scholarly contexts. It has argued that a lacuna exists in contemporary South African jazz scholarship as it speaks to the complexities of gender and power and has identified significant local studies that paved the way for a new generation of gender-sensitive jazz discourse. Building on the work of international feminist scholars, I aim to interrogate the impact of gender and power during various stages of their musical lives and the ways they act upon patriarchal forces that simultaneously constrain and/or empower them. Drawing on feminist phenomenology and

322. Smith, Flowers and Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*, 53.

323. Ibid, 51.

324. Whilst an in-depth project on possible strategies for the dismantling of patriarchy in South African tertiary jazz programmes falls outside the scope of this study, I hope to initiate further work that focuses on jazz, gender and power in the country’s educational spaces.

IPA, the following chapters will explore the lived experiences that shaped their musical enculturation and professional career trajectories.

In writing up this dissertation, I took my cue from landmark jazz narratives by Paul Berliner³²⁵ and Ingrid Monson³²⁶, making use of a more generally accessible style that is in line with my own thinking and that of the participants' testimonies. I also drew inspiration from the twofold (call-and-response) writing style seen in Muller and Benjamin³²⁷ by foregrounding the participants' own telling of their stories, interspersed with my own analytical responses. Through the theoretical frameworks and (feminist) phenomenological methods described above, I hope to offer an alternative to binary master narratives in South African jazz scholarship by highlighting the multiple ways in which the participants have negotiated gender and power in their professional careers and everyday lives.

325. Berliner, *Thinking in jazz*.

326. Ingrid Monson, *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

327. Muller and Benjamin, *Musical Echoes*.

3. Formative Stages

This chapter explores some of the musicking¹ experiences and wider societal dynamics that shaped the participants' early musical enculturation across three inter-penetrating fields of gendered power relations: home, school and church. Tracing their stories chronologically, it analyses some of the unique and shared ways in which these environments and key players within them facilitated (a) their access to forms of cultural/educational/social capital and (b) the development of dispositions and attitudes that would later empower them to build successful careers as professional jazz musicians. Gwen Ansell writes:

When we focus only on studying the stars, we forget the music communities, networks and relationships that shaped them. When we ignore backstage and home lives, we submit to the paradigm of a deeply gendered historiography that backgrounds and diminishes what are seen as female spheres of activity. Yet information about those spheres contributes to a 360-degree understanding of cultural milieus and all their protagonists, female and male; without it, we simply know and understand less.²

Although received notions of gender invariably acted on and constrained the participants to varying degrees, they (and their families) didn't necessarily capitulate to these master narratives. Instead, each participant consciously and/or intuitively responded to gendered societal forces, as they found expression in their particular environments, in their own ways.

“Music was all around”: early musical enculturation at home and in church

Paul Berliner writes that jazz musicians acquire their “initial base of musical knowledge” through absorbing and participating in various musical and social activities in a form of musical “osmosis”;³ family record collections and exposure to music in various social settings often serve as inspiration to take up music.⁴ Lucy Green similarly writes that “musical enculturation” takes place through “immersion in the everyday music and musical practices of one's social

1. The term “musicking” refers to all forms of musical activity including performing, composing, listening, or dancing (Christopher Small, *Musicking: the meanings of performing and listening* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England/Wesleyan University Press, 1998). Small's use of the word as a verb (i.e., “to music”) centralises the social act of participation in musical activity rather than musical works themselves (Christopher Small, ‘Musicking – the meanings of performing and listening’, Lecture, *Music Education Research*, Vol. 1, No.1 (1999), 9). The meaning of musicking “lies in the relationships that are established between the participants by the performance” and it takes place “whether active or passive, whether we like the way it is done or not, [or] whether we consider it constructive or destructive, sympathetic or antipathetic” (12).

2. Gwen Ansell, ‘All the things we don't know about South African jazz’.

3. Berliner, *Thinking in jazz*, 22.

4. Berliner, *Thinking in jazz*, 23-24.

context”⁵ and highlights the profound impact of parental encouragement.⁶ Numerous other authors emphasise the importance of early musicking experiences within the family home in the development of those who pursue professional careers in music.⁷

The children of professional musicians are exposed to a particularly intense level of musical performance⁸ and quite often, iconic jazz musicians tend to be the children of professional musicians. This is especially true of some of today’s most celebrated women jazz musicians. For Terri Lyne Carrington, things were “normally pretty musical around the house”.⁹ Carrington’s mother (a classical pianist) and father (a saxophonist and president of the Boston Jazz Society) entertained numerous professional musicians in their home. Some of these guests were colleagues of her grandfather who was Fats Waller’s drummer. For Carrington, playing jazz was all consuming and her dedication culminated in a full scholarship to Berklee College of Music at age eleven. Other prolific jazz musicians like Marian McPartland, Clora Bryant and Dottie Dodgion may not have played professionally as children, but regularly meeting professional recording artists at family dinner parties and having access to music lessons sparked their musical ambitions at a young age.¹⁰

Close access to professional mentors may be highly advantageous, but in some cases innate interest and parental support are enough to steer aspiring young musicians toward musical careers. Pianist Geri Allen spent her childhood “imbibing inspiration” in different ways; she attended concerts with her parents, took classical piano lessons and became immersed in her parents’ collection of bebop and Motown records.¹¹ More recently, *Grammy* award-winner Esperanza Spalding taught herself how to play the violin at age four after seeing acclaimed cellist Yo-Yo Ma performing on children’s television.¹² Her mother, a single parent, recognised

5. Lucy Green, *How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for Music Education* (Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2002), 22.

6. Ibid, 24.

7. See Stephanie Pitts, ‘Roots and routes in adult musical participation: investigating the impact of home and school on lifelong musical interest and involvement’, *British Journal of Music Education*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (2009), 241-256; Beatriz Ilari & Claudia Gluschkoff, ‘Music in the early years: research, theory and practice’, *Early Child Development and Care*, Vol. 179, No. 6 (2009), 685-693; Graham F. Welch and Gary E. McPherson, ‘Introduction and Commentary: Music Education and the Role of Music in People’s Lives’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Education*, Vol. 1, eds. Gary E. McPherson and Graham F. Welch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1-17.

8. Berliner, *Thinking in jazz*, 22.

9. Gourse, *Madame Jazz*, 131-132.

10. Wayne Enstice and Janis Stockhouse, *Jazzwomen Speak: Interviews with Six Musicians*, INshort e-book (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2013).

11. Gourse, *Madame Jazz*, 35.

12. See <http://www.esperanzaspalding.com>

her potential and enrolled her in community music programmes and jazz summer camps that culminated in a scholarship to Berklee.¹³

Regardless of the level of musical performance to which these artists were exposed as children, the common denominators in their decision to become professional musicians are parental support and a music-rich home environment. Children who grow up in families that are actively involved in church music are similarly empowered to take up music. They not only observe (and absorb) the performances of others in church, but it is often where their own musical debuts take place. Places of worship can serve as safe, “family-centered” spaces for musical learning and many professional jazz musicians view their early experiences in church as a springboard for their musical careers.¹⁴ Church musicking allows children “who grow up around improvisers [to] regard improvisation as a skill within the realm of their own possible development” thereby providing a solid foundation for composing and performing jazz.¹⁵ Dizzy Gillespie affirms this insight:

Like most black musicians...much of my early inspiration, especially with rhythm and harmonies, came from the church.¹⁶

Trombonist Melba Liston similarly made her musical debut in church,¹⁷ as did Ella Fitzgerald. Stuart Nicholson explores how the church provided Fitzgerald with her “first active participation in formal music-making”, and adds:

Indeed, it is impossible to overstate the role the Church has played, and continues to play, in establishing and shaping a sound musical foundation for young children. The Church has been a training ground for some of jazz’s most important vocalists, such as Ethel Waters, Sarah Vaughan, and Dinah Washington, and some of soul music’s most vibrant singers, including Sam Cooke, Aretha Franklin, Patti LaBelle, and Whitney Houston.¹⁸

Although places of worship can empower and inspire young musicians they may also reinforce social stereotypes. Historically, women musicians have enjoyed a relative degree of inclusion in more “respectable” performance spaces such as churches and schools. Earlier generations of South African women were excluded from “male” music domains like clubs and bars, but their

13. Simuro, ‘A Woman’s Place’, 2-3.

14. Pitts, ‘Roots and routes’, 253.

15. Berliner, *Thinking in Jazz*, 31.

16. Ibid, 29.

17. Ibid, 79.

18. Stuart Nicholson, *Ella Fitzgerald: The Complete Biography* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), 7.

musicking was deemed socially acceptable “when connected with church activities”.¹⁹ Likewise, in contemporary Zimbabwe places of worship remain the most socially appropriate musical arenas for African women:

The acceptance of Gospel musicians is also high because they come from churches with a ready-made following, unlike other genres where women are performing in spaces in which they are not accepted.²⁰

Below I explore the participants’ reflections on their early enculturation as gendered and musicking beings. I consider the impact of family musical traditions (or the lack thereof) and their participation in extended music-making spaces their families inhabited, paying close attention to the ways these activities affirmed and/or contradicted prevailing gender norms in their wider social contexts. Some of the participants were “expected” to pursue professional careers from a young age, but for the majority, an active musical life within their family homes, communities and churches was not considered to be a natural precursor to a musical career. Despite these diversities, most of the participants’ early enculturation enhanced their musical proclivities and they recall positive episodic memories of pivotal childhood experiences involving supportive and inspiring role models. For others, negative experiences during their formative years have had lasting effects on their feelings of musical competence and their sense of belonging in various spaces. Drawing loosely on the theories of Michel De Certeau, Pierre Bourdieu and Paul Rimmer (to be discussed below), I consider how inherited beliefs and attributes have proved foundational to the participants’ present musical and social identities.

Amanda Tiffin

Amanda was born in Zimbabwe (or The Republic of Rhodesia²¹ as it was then known) in 1972 and moved to South Africa in her late teens. Of British descent, her parents were also born in Rhodesia. Like other white-dominated settler colonies in Africa, Rhodesia at the time had much in common with South Africa in terms of racial segregation and social inequality. Amanda grew up in the country’s second city, Bulawayo, a bustling southwestern hub of industry:

19. Allen, ‘Representation, Gender and Women’, 212.

20. Viriri, ‘Female Participation in the Post-Independence Zimbabwean Popular Music Industry’, 8.

21. An internationally unrecognized state, the Republic of Rhodesia (1970-1979) was the successor state to the British Crown Colony of Southern Rhodesia (1923-1970). Ending the white minority rule that had been in place since Cecil John Rhodes’ demarcation of the territory in 1890, Zimbabwe gained formal independence in 1980, following a 15-year-long civil war known variously as the Rhodesian Bush War, the Second Chimurenga, and the Zimbabwean War of Liberation.

We were city folk ... but we had really good family friends who had a fairly big farm about half an hour outside of Bulawayo. We grew up with their kids and we spent a lot of weekends with them.²²

It was on this farm that she encountered one of her earliest role models, the family's widowed grandmother who single-handedly managed the farm:

She had really prized dairy cows; she was a legend in the farming world. Amazing. She was elderly, but a powerhouse...this tiny little British woman on her own, with her kids. Her husband had passed when [her] kids were teenagers. She always employed a farm manager but she was full on involved, getting stuck in. Running the dairy every day... Like, there's this woman running a farm by herself basically... She's the *boss*. That was a reference for me, growing up.²³

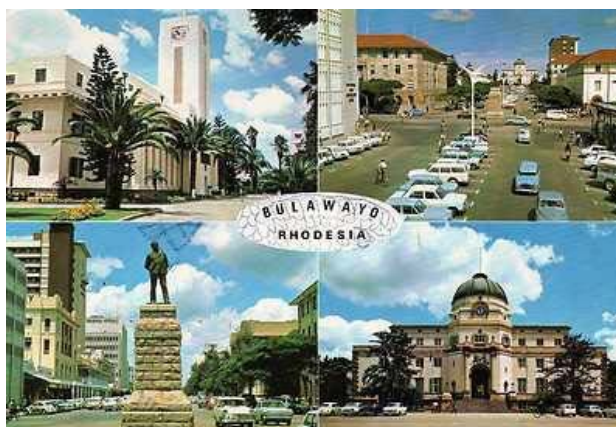


Fig. 20. Postcard of “white” Bulawayo, Rhodesia in 1972 (Image: Big Game Photography)

City life was tightly policed, and white citizens were safely ensconced within suburbs inhabited by other whites. Life on the farm played out differently; unlike the pseudo-utopian existence led in colonial Bulawayo, farmers were directly exposed to the threat of violence. Too young to understand the political climate at the time, Amanda nevertheless remembers the extreme safety measures in place during her farm visits:

Independence came to Zimbabwe when I was eight. It was 1980. So that period, pre-1980, was pretty rough...I was too young to know, but I do have memories of riding around in their farm *bakkie*²⁴, going off to do cattle feeding or whatever, with two armed guards with AK-47s at all times. And they had these big, sand-filled things in the house that they would wheel in front of the windows – sandbags – to catch bullets. I didn't even realise, until those things had gone some years later, why they were there.²⁵

22. Amanda Tiffin, interview with author, No. 3, 12 May 2022.

23. Ibid.

24. *Bakkie* is the South African term for a pickup truck or utility vehicle.

25. Tiffin, No. 3.

The constant anticipation of violence even found its way into the children's games, a disturbing indicator of how normalised it had become:

We used to play "roadblocks". That was one of our favourite games with the [farmer's] daughters (laughs). We'd get our bikes and two people had to be the police and two people had to be the people who'd come to the roadblock, and they'd check your vehicle. That was one of our games, setting up roadblocks on the driveway. And I do remember having a fear around the guns...a fear about being shot in the knee, for some reason. I had a recurring dream about that. My father was shot in the war. He was originally a policeman...so [after he was shot] he ended up in the army, doing army training. So, he was very involved in the whole thing. He wasn't very present in my life after my parents' divorce when I was five, so he wasn't really around much after that...I remember going to visit him on the barracks when I was little – me and my sister – after they were divorced. He took us on an outing and we shot at targets. Five years old, and my father's letting us shoot at targets. To me, that's just so abhorrent now as an adult. I would never do that to a child, but [at the time] it was just so *normal*.²⁶

Amanda grew up in a sheltered and conservative household where traditions and "systems" – like her mother's insistence that she take music lessons – were upheld:

My mom could play piano, but she didn't play for enjoyment. She was forced as a child to play piano. My grandparents were quite regimented, so she was *required* to learn the piano. It wasn't a fun thing for her, but she could play pretty well. At one point when I was little, she had a job as a nursery school teacher. She was teaching kindergarten, so she would play for the kids, play nursery rhymes and the kids would sing. I'd always beg her to play for me and she'd play these really simple pieces that she had books for. I'd ask her to play them and I would dance around the room. And then [some time later], she just stopped playing... I asked her once why she [stopped] and she said, "Well, you got better than me, so I didn't want to play anymore" (laughs). She just didn't play anymore, but she could.²⁷

Her mother was not only the first musical figure in her life, but also a powerful example of women's agency and determination:

When my parents divorced, my mom was on her own with two kids for a long time. For the latter part of her working life, before she retired, she was the boss of a pretty major confederation of Zimbabwean industries...she ran the local office. She was on all kinds of boards and committees and she was just this...*boss woman*, you know? So, she was a really strong female leader and role model for me as well.²⁸

Amanda's parents listened to a range of music at home, mostly popular music from the 1960s and 1970s:

My mom loved the Carpenters. And ABBA. My father loved the crooners and my mom liked singers like Andy Williams and Matt Monro and those crooning kind of stuff...it wasn't jazz, but it was the *crooning* thing. They loved that stuff!²⁹

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid.

During her teenage years, Amanda expanded her musical palate and was inspired by iconic artists and bands, in particular British singer-songwriter Nik Kershaw:

[I was] *obsessed!* It's interesting when I listen to it now – I mean, I know all the words and all the songs. It was really, *really* good pop songwriting. And he ended up writing a lot of songs for other people that were hit songs... really melodic... strong melodic pop. I think that was also what attracted me to Paul Simon, which was like, a little more sophisticated. I also loved Simon and Garfunkel and the Beatles' stuff. My cousin introduced me to the Beatles, whom I didn't know, because my mom didn't like the Beatles! She was obsessed with Cliff Richard. Paul Simon's *Graceland* was a big one. Nik Kershaw, Simon and Garfunkel and the Beatles. The Beatles' *White Album* was a big one for me, and Prince, actually. [I'd listen to] *Sign O' The Times* and [the song] "Purple Rain" over and over... I was *really* into pop and pop-rock stuff.³⁰

She also recalls listening to Zimbabwean popular music that would inspire some of her own compositions in later years:

*Chimurenga*³¹ music ... was everywhere: it was playing on the radio, playing on TV. There were all these music programmes where you'd see guys playing in these bands. It was everywhere. Even though the racial divide was so prevalent – even post-independence – the music was all around. I was never directly exposed to it; I didn't go and watch bands, but it was on the radio. A lot of white folk, especially the young people, were listening to the pop music of America or the UK or Europe, or whatever. Zimbabwean popular music wasn't something where I'd go and buy a record, but it was still in my ears, still around.³²

In Amanda's experience white, "educated" citizens widely regarded the music as a lesser art form. During her teenage years, she became increasingly aware of the deep racial divide in the country and of her privileged status:

I was such a fish out of water while I was growing up there...it wasn't really...I suppose being a white Zimbabwean...there was quite a pervasive culture that didn't really *sit* with me, I guess. It's quite racist, to be honest. Very *separate*...I never felt really comfortable.³³

30. Amanda Tiffin, interview with author, No.1, 27 May 2021.

31. Thomas Mapfumo was a key figure in introducing *Chimurenga* music in Zimbabwe during the 1970s. The word "chimurenga" means "struggle" or "liberation" in Shona. The style originated during the Second Chimurenga (1964-1979). It is based on traditional Shona *mbira* music, and fused with international popular music styles and instruments. The lyrics commonly include social and political commentary.

32. Tiffin, No. 3.

33. Ibid.

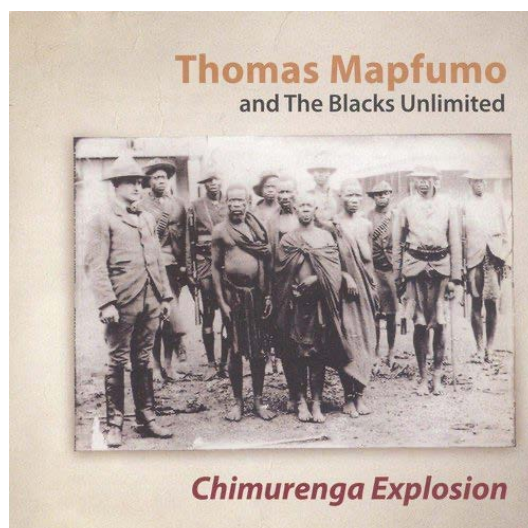


Fig. 21. Thomas Mapfumo, *Chimurenga Explosion*³⁴ (album cover)

When she developed an interest in jazz during her teenage years, Amanda was unable to explore the genre beyond listening to recordings, save for her mother's attempts to find a suitable teacher:

I was starting to explore the possibilities of jazz and – bless her – my mom said, “We have to find you a jazz piano teacher.” She found some lady who could kind of improvise and played like a “Mrs. Mills”³⁵ type of stride piano, but she said, “Look, I can’t teach you, because I don’t really know what I’m doing. I’m just doing it by ear.” Meanwhile, there was quite a thriving little jazz club at one of the hotels and there was a guy – I met him later when I was studying at university, through a mutual friend in the music world in Zimbabwe. He was an older guy, a trumpet player, but he would teach the guys in his band. So, he’d make them do theory and reading...but he also made them learn Charlie Parker stuff. So, if I had maybe connected [with them]...but it just wasn’t in the realm of possibility in my mom’s purview. You just couldn’t *do* that...I didn’t have the sense of, “You can’t do this because you’re a girl.” It was more like, “You can’t go to the jazz club because it’s inappropriate”. It wasn’t just because I was female. It just wasn’t appropriate for a young *person*. I didn’t really have an awareness of being limited because of my gender, definitely not. It was never like, there are certain types of things that girls do or that boys do. And because I was into music, it was fine, you know?³⁶

The phrase, “because I was into music, it was fine”, is in itself telling; her interest in the piano (and singing) was accepted as a suitable, “feminine” and safe pastime. Had Amanda been into woodwork, rap music or skateboarding, she may have been more constrained by societal and familial constructs. Whereas jazz and *Chimurenga* performances (and the spaces that housed them) were off-limits, Amanda was encouraged to attend live orchestral concerts hosted by the Bulawayo Philharmonic Orchestra:

34. Thomas Mapfumo and The Blacks Unlimited, *Chimurenga Explosion*, Anonymous Web Productions, ANON 0743, 2000, compact disc.

35. Gladys Mills (1918-1978), widely known as “Mrs. Mills” was a jovial and matronly British pianist, famous for her stride piano technique and recordings of popular songs and party favourites. She released various albums during the 1960s and 1970s.

36. Tiffin, No.3

They were mostly hobby players, but there was a powerhouse conductor that ran the local music academy who would conduct the orchestra and they'd have guest performers and all kinds of things. My stepdad's company had a season ticket. They bought season tickets to the orchestra and he would give them to me, because I was about sixteen. You could get your driver's license at sixteen in Zim. I had another friend who was involved in music so the two of us would go...it would be our little adventure outing, going to watch the orchestra! So, I had a nice orchestral exposure...I had no idea if they were any good, but it didn't matter! It sounded beautiful to me. So that was really nice.³⁷

Amanda didn't grow up in a particularly musical household and wasn't involved in church musicking until her late teens, at the request of her piano teacher, a Catholic nun:

We were Catholic, but not very diligent ones. We were Easter and Christmas Catholics, pretty much (laughs). And we did the big confirmation and first communion and those types of rituals, but we were not in church every Sunday. Then as I got older, I was "asked" by my music teacher...she said they needed an organist for the ten o'clock mass in the cathedral. So, then I *was* going every Sunday, but only to play the organ and to secretly meet the head altar boy as well (laughs)!³⁸

Living in a British colony meant that Amanda's family enjoyed privileges the country's black population were denied: freedom of movement, well-paying jobs, modern infrastructure, access to British schooling and systems of colonial government that ensured white minority rule. The violence required to maintain this supremacy engendered an ultra-masculine and militarized environment that in turn normalized the presence of armed guards or sandbags protecting windows from bullets. Amanda's preschool experience of target shooting with her father and her childhood games reflected this wider sociopolitical narrative: one party was in a position of power while the other had to submit or risk punishment. Ultimately however Amanda's nightmares about being shot reflect an intuitive understanding that things were anything but normal. Moreover, she intuited from a young age that power came in different forms, not only in the shape of men with guns.

Amanda's testimony offers multiple examples of power as a capillary force that responds to wider societal forces in highly complex ways. On the one hand a war that pit colonialist aggressors against postcolonial resisters created a rigidly racist and classist social order. On the other hand, as was common during World War II,³⁹ gender roles were reconfigured as women

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. In chapter two I briefly refer to this phenomenon as it speaks to women who worked as jazz musicians during WWII, filling positions traditionally held by men. For short overviews of general wartime reconfiguring of gender roles in America and Britain, see *The National WWII Museum New Orleans*, 'Gender on the Home Front', webpage accessed 29 September 2022, <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/gender-home-front> and *Striking Women*, 'The impact of WWII on women's work', webpage accessed 5 October 2022, <https://www.striking-women.org/module/women-and-work/world-war-ii-1939-1945>

filled civilian roles vacated by men. This similarly impacted the status of married, white women in Rhodesia.⁴⁰ The resultant world allowed for the existence of relatively empowered single moms and “powerhouse” and “boss” women. In part due to this distinctive set of wider societal circumstances, Amanda grew up in the presence of two strong, resilient women who took on roles traditionally held by men, both in the farming and the corporate world. Both women raised their children alone, worked full-time and held positions of power. She admired their independence and the qualities that allowed each woman to be a “boss lady”, in charge of her own welfare and that of her staff and family.

Amanda’s mother was also her primary musical role model, and a firm supporter of her musical endeavours. As a young child, singing and dancing to her mother’s occasional (albeit limited) piano repertoire at home was a source of joy, as was the family’s record collection. Her parents listened to conservative popular music from the 1960s and 1970s. During this time, the British popular music scene was dominated by the likes of Queen, David Bowie, the Rolling Stones and The Who. Across the pond, Motown, disco, folk and glam rock were but a few of the genres defining American culture. Amanda’s parents, however, preferred more genteel favourites like the Carpenters, ABBA, Simon and Garfunkel and old-school crooners; music they could enjoy with their children without risking corrupting their morals or taste in “good” music. Her mother “didn’t like” the Beatles despite being from the same generation as the band, yet loved balladeer and wholesome sing-along king, Cliff Richard, suggesting that her musical tastes were rather old fashioned and “safe”. The decision to find Amanda a very British “Mrs. Mills” jazz piano teacher comes as no surprise then, as this style of piano playing – parlour music with some improvisation yet still “proper” – was possibly the only reference her mother and those in her social circles had at the time. Learning light music and party favourites from an elderly Englishwoman was undoubtedly a better option than learning jazz from male musicians (possibly of colour) in more unsavoury spaces frequented by lower class citizens. These political and social forces not only restricted her movements and dictated with whom she could “mix” socially but also limited her access to musical styles that she found interesting. *Chimurenga* music with its liberation narratives was “everywhere”, yet ghettoized and viewed

40. Ushewedu Kufakurinani and Pius Nyambara critique the assumption that married women’s ‘roles and status’ were widely derived from those of their husbands, arguing that not all women were passive and ‘incorporated’ wives. Despite the colonial scripts that confined them to the domestic sphere, women had increasing agency as they became valued members of the country’s workforce (Ushewedu Kufakurinani and Pius Nyambara, ‘Reconfiguring domesticity? White women and the Second World War in Southern Rhodesia’, *Historia* 60, No. 2 (2015), 135.)

as inferior in white circles. In contrast, more respectable and socially elevated events like orchestra concerts were regarded as safe – albeit male-dominated – spaces; Amanda was allowed to drive herself and a friend to concerts in town, led by a “powerhouse” British conductor who was also the head of the local music academy.

Amanda’s family members were not involved in music making, but had very clear beliefs about what constituted appropriate musical pastimes, informed by traditions rooted in conservative British culture. These ingrained social structures and hierarchies were also evident in her family’s tradition of attending church on special occasions despite not being overly religious. Amanda similarly felt obliged to accept the “request” to accompany church services. In short, it was in line with what was expected of her, socially. An early deviation from this conservative musical habitus is reflected in her admiration of Prince, an artist known for his flamboyant, sexually-charged and gender fluid performances, topped with suggestive lyrics.

Shannon Mowday

For Zimbabwe, the 1980s signaled the end of white minority rule and the beginning of an era of liberation. Immediately south of its borders, South Africa during this time entered a particularly volatile phase of the struggle against apartheid. Born in Cape Town in 1975, Shannon’s childhood musicking memories include powerful imagery reflecting the wider institutionalised racial, cultural and political forces that restricted – and dictated – the everyday lives of South Africans. She grew up in Plumstead, a leafy southern suburb adjacent to hyper-elite Constantia⁴¹ and the world-renowned botanical gardens at Kirstenbosch. Shannon was raised in a musical household; her British-born father, an accomplished bandleader, was her first music teacher and introduced her to the clarinet and saxophone at a young age. Surrounded by musicians at home and at her father’s gigs, performing was a natural extension of Shannon’s family life rather than a choice:

Music was part of my life...it wasn’t something I chose to do. It was just *there*.⁴²

At the age of ten, Shannon and her older brother Hylton already played professionally alongside their father in the band, Family Affair. As a young girl, she honed her reading, doubling and

41. Constantia is a residential area situated at the foot of Table Mountain. In 1961 it was zoned as a White Group Area and all coloured and African citizens were forcibly removed and relocated to the Cape Flats.

42. Shannon Mowday, interview with author, No. 1, 23 April 2021.

soloing skills in the family band and soon became a sought-after woodwind player; at the age of twelve, Shannon joined the Cape Jazz Orchestra, followed by the Clive Sharrock Big Band and the South African Navy Band. She joined the professional musical theatre circuit at the age of thirteen, playing in “pit bands” across the city. During the 1990s, legendary broadcaster Henry Holloway referred to the powerhouse Mowday trio as “South Africa’s super saxophone family”.⁴³ Shannon regards her father and brother as her first musical heroes, yet playing in the family band was not without its challenges. When Shannon and her brother both excelled at saxophone, her father realised the “possible hazardous results of two siblings playing the same instrument [saxophone] in a band, two strong personalities and two natural leaders”.⁴⁴ Instead of pitting the siblings against each other, Shannon’s father encouraged her to develop a “specialist interest” in the baritone sax despite her diminutive stature. Before long, she was known primarily as a baritone player. Under typical circumstances, gender stereotyping would have dictated that she specialised in a more “feminine” instrument, but within the context of a “Family Affair” such gendered associations were neutralised.

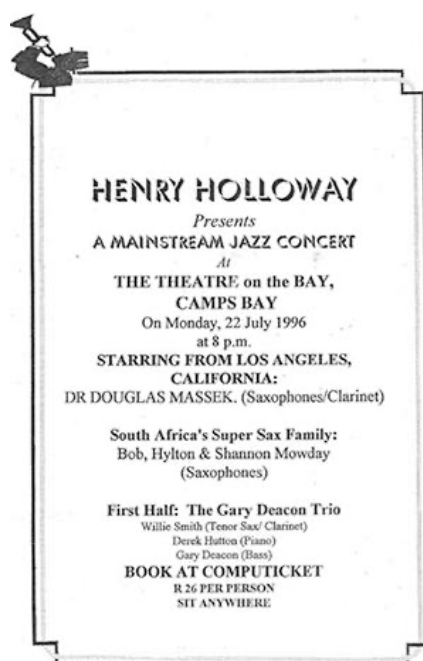


Fig. 22. A typical event hosted by jazz aficionado and broadcaster, Henry Holloway.

At school Shannon studied piano and flute, two more traditional choices for young girls: playing the piano (or the flute/clarinet) in a classical recital or orchestra would have required

43. Henry Holloway, *Swing, Sing and All That Jazz: The Autobiography of Henry Holloway* (Trafford Publishing, 2015), e-book.

44. Bazil Raubach, ‘Shannon Mowday’, *flickr* post, by ‘Bazil Raubach’, on 9 July 2009, accessed 8 July 2021, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/zilba/3988117088>

her to perform gender in a very specific way, as dictated by the particular traditions and power dynamics within those spaces. In the same way, playing the baritone sax in an all-male big band would have required a very different set of skills and behaviours. Shannon developed a plethora of musical identities, each with its own set of rules. She was able to sustain this with the support of her mother, who played a vital role in Shannon's musical development albeit off-stage:

Mom was a musician in her youth but didn't play anymore...she basically ran our lives and chaperoned [and] drove us around otherwise we would never have managed. It wasn't very fair to her.⁴⁵

It wasn't until her teenage years that being "the only girl in the band" became problematic.⁴⁶ Jamming with her brother and his friends was increasingly fraught with tension and frustration, and despite her playing ability and stage experience Shannon noticed subtle differences between her musical development and that of her brother:

My brother was my idol. He was, you know, my big brother. So, of course the age thing [was an issue] as well... the whole family placement of the older brother and what have you. He had friends and they'd hang out and play, and it was always... there was another *side* [to it]. If I tried to do the same thing I would get this, uh . . . a different reaction. For instance, my brother's friends would have a crush on me and that would totally mess everything up, because they would never see me as a *musician*. Even though I was playing [professionally] and what have you, certainly [with] the jazz thing, it was very hard for me to... find friends to play with. There were, as I said...there were no girls around at that stage who weren't singers or piano players and, you know, no instrumentalists that I could kind of hang out and play with.⁴⁷

Whereas her brother and his friends learned from each other and built a strong camaraderie, Shannon became increasingly isolated:

I had always been an extremely good reader and technically very able but for me, improvising was a mystery. In our late teens my brother played a lot with one friend in particular. They literally learned together and played constantly. I often played gigs with them but I was always on the "outside" of this improvising secret they shared. For some reason, they could just do it and I had no clue. How did they just know what to do? Years later, I realised they didn't always know what to do, but because they did it together, it was easier.⁴⁸

Despite ready access to some of her musical heroes at the time, she believes she missed out on mentorship opportunities because of her gender; "hanging" and musically experimenting with

45. Shannon Mowday, E-mail correspondence, 6 September 2022.

46. Erin Wehr-Flowers argues that 'the issue of girls' and women's participation in jazz might not be one of ability, skills, or talent but rather one based in social psychology' (see Erin Wehr-Flowers, 'Differences between Male and Female Students' Confidence, Anxiety, and Attitude toward Learning Jazz Improvisation', *Journal of Research in Music Education*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (2006), 338.

47. Mowday, No. 1.

48. Ibid.

older men would have been inappropriate for a young girl whereas her brother never needed to consider such dynamics:

I was always looking up to them, but I never felt *part* of what they were doing. My brother did. They took him under their wing... I didn't feel that I could.⁴⁹

Shannon may have been the envy of many aspiring musicians (male or female) for playing alongside some of Cape Town's finest jazz artists, but she had no desire to follow in her father's footsteps at first:

Even though I didn't maybe at that point know whether I wanted to go into music, it wasn't because I wasn't *interested* in music. It was because I didn't *like* the scene.⁵⁰

She may have struggled to find her place among the men who dominated the jazz scene, but felt a strong sense of belonging in spaces not traditionally inhabited by young, white girls during the politically turbulent 1980s. Shannon's father taught music at the School for the Blind in Athlone,⁵¹ one of the few racially integrated schools in 1980s Cape Town. As a result, her family formed personal and professional relationships that were frowned upon by the apartheid government. This also meant playing gigs in so-called "non-white" venues:

Because of my father's work with the school, my brother and I were very fortunate to be playing in so many environments across the "colour" board, across *everything*, where we were, for instance, locked in venues because we were the only white people.⁵²

The intense political and social climate meant that racially integrated bands like Mango Groove⁵³ and Juluka⁵⁴ (and indeed the various pop and jazz bands Shannon and her family played in) were few and far between until the early 1990s. South Africans from all racial backgrounds enjoyed their music, yet not many musicians were willing to risk similar ventures and face the subsequent political fallout. Ansell describes this unprecedented vibrancy and hybridisation in 1980s South African popular music with punchy economy: "What the censors

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. Athlone is a suburb on the Cape Flats, a large, desolate and sandy stretch of land on the outskirts of the city of Cape Town. In the wake of the Group Areas Act (1950), various Cape Flats suburbs like Athlone, Bonteheuwel, Mitchells Plain and Manenberg were designated as "coloured" areas while adjacent Nyanga, Langa and Khayelitsha were designated black (African) townships.

52. Mowday, No. 1.

53. See <https://www.mangogroove.co.za>

54. See <https://www.johnnyclegg.com>

barred, the people created”.⁵⁵ For Shannon’s family, sidestepping the restricting grasp of apartheid was the norm; her parents were both adjudicators for the Christmas choirs and bands, a Cape Town institution dating back to the early 1940s.⁵⁶ This vibrant, annual display of marching bands, Malay choirs and *Klopse* (carnival troupes) celebrating the Christmas and New Year holidays remains an important part of the city’s musical culture and can be traced back to Dutch and British colonial periods and the slavery that characterized the early history of the Cape Colony:

My dad being English... when he came to South Africa, you know, he didn't see the same things that many people who grew up in South Africa saw. He couldn't speak Afrikaans, but there he was, [teaching] at this school and having to speak Afrikaans. So, that was the environment we grew up in. We grew up with this very broad spectrum...it was a *very* different music scene to what it is today. I think it was far more vibrant, because everybody was, kind of, fighting to play together.⁵⁷

The Jazz Workshop, a Cape Town jazz institution founded in 1965 by former Rhodesian Merton Barrow⁵⁸ and his wife Cynthia, was a controversial but popular hive for jazz during the apartheid years. The Mowday family regularly participated in racially integrated big band sessions at the venue and it was not uncommon for rehearsals to be interrupted by members of the police. Shannon and her family also played in smaller jazz combos, sharing the stage with legendary Cape jazz saxophonist Robbie Jansen⁵⁹ and the Moses brothers⁶⁰ among others:

We played in the church bands [on Sundays]... and we used to do a gig at the Voortrekker Hotel on a Saturday afternoon with my dad, and that was with the Moses brothers. We were really diverse in whom we played with.⁶¹

55. Ansell, *Soweto Blues*, 200.

56. See Sylvia Bruinders, “‘This is our sport!’ Christmas band competitions and the enactment of an ideal community”, *SAMUS: South African Music Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 1 (2006), 110-126; Sylvia Bruinders, *Parading respectability: An ethnography of the Christmas bands movement in the Western Cape, South Africa* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois, 2011); Michelle Smith, 2010. ‘Reconstructing Malay and Coloured Identity: reimagining pasts and presents through the Cape Malay choirs and the New Years Carnival’ (PhD Thesis, University of Fort Hare, 2010); Francesca Inglese, ‘Choreographing Cape Town through Goema Music and Dance’, *Journal of International Library of African Music*, Vol. 9, No. 4 (2014), 123-145.

57. Mowday, No. 1.

58. Merton Barrow (1935-) is regarded as one of the most influential jazz musicians in the Western Cape. To date, he still arranges music for big band and teaches at Jazz Workshop in Cape Town.

59. See Robin Denselow, ‘Robbie Jansen obituary’, *The Guardian*, 6 August 2010, accessed 20 March 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2010/aug/06/robbie-jansen-obituary>

60. See Warren Ludski, ‘Cliffie Moses...Jazz Singer, Guitarist and (Coon) Trouper from the Start’, *Music Legends of Cape Town*, 11 June 2016, accessed 10 June 2021, <https://warrenludskimusicscene.com/interviews-3/cliffie-moses-jazz-singer-guitarist-and-coon-trouper-from-the-start/>

61. Mowday, No. 1.

Unlike Amanda, who had restricted access to musicking spaces as a teenager, Shannon performed in churches, at hotels, jazz clubs and in theatres alike:

I remember being very young, thirteen or – no, maybe fourteen or fifteen – playing one of the clubs...[with] my brother and father...my family were the only people not of colour. And, somebody said to us afterwards at some point – it was in Manenberg⁶² – and my uncle saw a documentary about Manenberg and said, “How can you take the kids to these places? So, we were very protected as young musicians. But that’s not something that, for instance, musicians today know *anything* about. They didn’t experience the stuff we experienced at that age, certainly.”⁶³

Shannon’s nontraditional musical upbringing allowed her to navigate spaces regarded as off-limits to young (white) girls throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. Whereas Amanda’s testimony paints a clear picture of social and musical apartness, Shannon’s narrative is all about “mixing” (racially, and in terms of musical genre).

South Africa in the 1980s was a virtual police state and the Mowday family’s regular interaction with musicians of colour, and in “non-white” spaces was particularly unusual. It would be highly irregular for a white, South African-born father during the 1980s to take the same risks, accompanied by his children. The Defense Amendment Bill of 1967 required that all young, healthy white men had to complete compulsory military service;⁶⁴ conscripts had to join the army (or the police) to play their part in keeping the communist threat (*rooi gevaar*, meaning “red danger”) and apartheid activists at bay. Those who tried to evade service were jailed. Nevertheless, while the family may have risked “mixing”, they were still able to return to their sheltered suburban home while fellow band members (of colour) faced curfews and roadblocks that held ordinary citizens hostage within their racially designated areas.

Shannon’s mother had also been a musician, but gave up performing after having children. Shannon acknowledges that their burgeoning careers and her father’s busy schedule would have been impossible to sustain without her mother’s support. Shannon’s proximity to musical instruments at home and her father’s cultural capital allowed her to gain access to the local

62. Manenberg emerged as a low-income coloured township in the 1960s to house residents forcibly removed from areas newly designated as white by the apartheid government. Its famed Club Montreal was a hive of jazz activity. The volatile, yet legendary neighbourhood also inspired the composition of “Mannenberg - Is Where It’s Happening”, recorded by Dollar Brand in 1974. The song became an anthem for the anti-apartheid movement and remains one of the most recognised South African jazz compositions.

63. Mowday, No. 1.

64. For valuable insights into the musical lives of South African conscripts from the late 1960s to the early 1990s, see Catherine Anne Morrow, ‘Selling the War, Surviving the War: The Use Of Music During the Border War’ (Masters thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2009); Ramanna, ‘Jazz, space and power’, 217-222; Martha Susanna de Jongh, ‘Music and Militarisation during the period of the South African Border War (1966-1989): Perspectives from *Paratus*’ (PhD thesis, Stellenbosch University, 2020).

music scene at a much younger age than most musicians. In her family, gender was not considered a barrier to a musical career and playing the saxophone was the norm. It was only once she had to negotiate the complexities of pervasive gendered social dynamics as a teenager – and without the protective presence of her family members – that she came to view herself as an outsider. Similarly, each musical space Shannon’s family inhabited had its own unique demographic “blend”: the Mowdays formed part of the all-white Clive Sharrock Big Band, an American-style big band that played upmarket venues like the Mount Nelson Hotel Ballroom and the Rotunda Supper Club in Camps Bay; these high-profile performances predominantly catered for white audiences that included politicians, (local and international), celebrities, and members of the wider business and entertainment fraternity.⁶⁵ With the exclusively white South African Navy Band (also directed by Sharrock), Shannon performed at a range of festivals, and often televised parades, military and government events. These bands performed in spaces where access was determined by social connections, wealth and political power: at the time, the Mount Nelson Hotel and the Rotunda in Camps Bay would have been whites-only spaces, whilst the Navy Band was a sonic vehicle for the government’s public displays of power. In both bands, she was the only girl.

When the University of Cape Town’s jazz programme was launched, it was a similarly exclusive space in terms of race, class, and gender; Shannon refers to the growing divide between “educated” jazz musicians and self-taught community musicians who had been at the heart of Cape jazz. At the time, it would have been extremely rare to see players of colour in the upmarket (reading) big bands discussed above; this can be ascribed to a lack of access to formal music education and being physically barred from “white” venues and events during apartheid. Conversely, the Christmas bands and Malay choir traditions in which her parents were active, would have comprised of coloured musicians from the Cape Flats and the Bo-Kaap,⁶⁶ as would the bands the Mowdays played with in areas like Manenberg. Big band sessions at the Jazz Workshop were representative of a much wider demographic, including musicians from all racial groups and musical backgrounds. Her presence – as a girl – in these spaces was less problematic as women made up at least part of the power structure (i.e. Jazz

65. Holloway, *Autobiography*, e-book.

66. The Bo-Kaap (meaning “upper Cape” or “above the Cape”) is situated above the Cape Town city centre. Under the Group Areas Act (1950), the area was declared as an exclusively Muslim residential area. The majority of residents’ ancestors were East African and South East Asian slaves who arrived at the Cape from 1658. Once known as the Malay Quarter, the Bo-Kaap boasts the oldest mosque (Auwal Masjid, built in 1794) in the country.

Workshop’s co-founder Cynthia Barrow, and Shannon’s mother’s role as an adjudicator in the Christmas bands and Malay choirs) and the cultural capital held by her family members. Shannon’s eclectic musical upbringing would come to define her music in later years, such as her penchant for mixing genres and challenging accepted musical “rules”.



Fig. 23. Manenberg, Cape Flats (Photo: SA Venues)

Chantal Willie-Petersen

Chantal was born in Cape Town in 1978 and her early childhood was spent in Charlesville on the outskirts of the Cape Flats. Like Shannon’s father, Chantal’s father also taught on the Cape Flats, in the suburb of Bonteheuwel. In the 1960s, the area was zoned to house coloured families forcibly removed from District Six,⁶⁷ and it was a hotspot for anti-apartheid activism during the 1970s and 1980s. Chantal was no stranger to political unrest and regularly witnessed riots and clashes with police and military forces in her neighbourhood. Whereas Shannon’s British father – and by extension, Shannon and her brother – openly subverted oppressive political forces by playing in jazz clubs and underground venues occasionally raided by police, Chantal’s family musicking activities took place within the more moderate surroundings of home and church. She grew up in a very different environment – geographically and socially – compared to Shannon:

I knew struggle, I knew the violence when I went to primary school. I saw the *Casspirs*... I had to run home to my gran...⁶⁸

67. District Six was a vibrant, racially integrated community before the advent of apartheid. On 11 February 1966, it was declared a white residential zone under the Group Areas Act of 1950. In excess of 60 000 residents were forcibly removed and relocated to the Cape Flats.

68. Chantal Willie-Petersen, interview with author, No.1, 30 April 2021.

Casspirs (Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected infantry vehicles or MRAPs) are large, hulking, armoured vehicles used by the South African National Defense Force and South African Police forces since the 1980s to control and intimidate crowds, protesters, those who broke curfew and anyone else deemed as insurgent. *Casspirs*, manned by armed soldiers, were often deployed in “non-white” civilian spaces such as townships and at universities, striking fear into ordinary citizens like Chantal and her family members.



Fig. 24. Police officers exiting a Casspir, Cape Town, 1985 (Photo: Bosman)

Despite these vivid recollections of terror and upheaval, Chantal remembers her early childhood as a happy and music-rich time, spent within a close-knit family:

From both sides of the family, we have very musical individuals and we also have very tone-deaf individuals (laughs)! [My] genes landed in the right place...honestly. I used to think it was really my father only [who made music], but there were other, equally gifted musicians and people with strong artistic flow. So it came from both sides of the family, the musicality...the love for music. My uncles used to attend these karaoke sessions, you know? So that was *their* thing. My dad plays the guitar; he is self-taught. So, definitely...music has always been a *part* of things.⁶⁹

Her first musical performances took place in church alongside her twin sister, Denay. Chantal realised early on that musical performances could be used to convey specific messages and beliefs:

Since I can remember, my sister and I were singing in church and singing in a *cappella* groups...from a very young age, I understood that music *communicated*.⁷⁰

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid.

For Chantal's family, music was a vehicle for religious expression. Unlike Shannon whose family participated in casual jam sessions at home, in music venues and at social gatherings, Chantal's family musicking was limited to church services and important family occasions:

It was more formalised. So, we'd have it at church or when there was a birthday and there was an item that needed to be put together.⁷¹

Chantal's father studied to become a draftsman and her mother was a secretary before they chose to pursue Bible studies in Texas (USA) and do missionary work full-time as members of the Church of Christ:

They both applied to study in the States in 1980, until about 1983. While they studied in Texas, we primarily lived in that part of the States. With apartheid, during those years, it was something they decided to do to further their education, but also because their hearts were very much in church work. On our return, my father and mother were very...they always wanted to give our family the best and made the most of every opportunity for their children. When the Group Areas Act ended in 1990 and the elections moving towards democracy in South Africa had taken place, they wanted to move towards economic growth as a family, and so we were given the choice to attend Model-C⁷² schools which my sister and I elected to do, and my brothers did at a later point. My parents looked at areas where we could live that had better facilities, better housing...in areas that had other cultures, other peoples. That's how they found a home in Rondebosch and we moved there in 1991.⁷³

Her parents' missionary work required the family to travel abroad on a regular basis. Although Cape Town and the USA were worlds apart in terms of culture and politics, one constant was making music with family and members of the church community:

We would sing gospel or four-part harmony – not the liturgies, but hymns and soulful Motown-type harmonies, blended in with gospel lyrics and so on.⁷⁴

Chantal's father regularly hosted church elders from the USA, often accompanied by professional vocal groups eager to visit South Africa:

My dad had these elders from the States come and they would bring really tremendous [singers]...there was a singing group called *Straight Company A Cappella* – [they were] recording artists – and another group called *A Cappella*, also quite a big recording group in the States. As a matter of fact, when I was

71. Ibid.

72. "Model-C" refers to a semi-private school structure, introduced by the apartheid government around 1991; the schools were state-subsidised but largely administrated and funded by a parent governing body. Whilst the term is now defunct, it is still commonly used to describe formerly all-white schools.

73. Chantal Willie-Petersen, interview with author, No. 2, 22 June 2022.

74. Willie-Petersen, No.1.

in high school, I came down to Port Elizabeth to tour with them. We had our own vocal quartet with my sister and two other singers and we wrote our own material, so that was our first tour.⁷⁵

Founding member of the crossover vocal group Straight Company A Cappella, Essej Murrah, explains the name of the group: “You’re in the company of people on the straight and narrow way. You’re in Straight Company”.⁷⁶ The group performed “soul music in every sense of the word. Certainly it carries a direct and uplifting spiritual message. But it also carries an undeniable groove, a sense of rhythm and melody rooted in the classic soul and R&B of the ‘60s and ‘70s, updated but not sterilized”.⁷⁷ Whereas Shannon was schooled in traditional (instrumental) jazz from a young age, Chantal had indirect access to vocal jazz via related African-American music styles such as gospel, soul and Motown. Moreover, she inherited the necessary musical capital and resources required to share tour stages with her American mentors.



Fig. 25. Straight Company A Cappella (Photo: Louisville Music News)

For Chantal, music was “always a *part* of things”, whether in the form of self-taught family members (including her father who played the guitar) or as part of church activities. Singing was the dominant musical activity during her childhood and she was exposed to various levels

75. Ibid.

76. Allen Howie, ‘Straight Company’, *Louisville Music News*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (February 1994), accessed 3 September 2022,

http://www.louisvillemusicnews.net/webmanager/index.php?WEB_CAT_ID=50&storyid=12534&headline=Straight_Company&issueid=60

77. Ibid.

of musicianship, ranging from communal singing at church to sharing the stage with professional performers from the USA. These musical activities were an extension of her home life, and through her parents' church connections, she could hone her skills in safe spaces where she was unlikely to be objectified or othered. Surrounded by supportive, adult musical role models, Chantal and her sister began writing and performing their own vocal music during their teenage years. Chantal's interaction with international musicians, both in Cape Town and abroad, reveals her parents' commitment to providing their children with opportunities beyond the enforced isolation of racial segregation. During their visits to South Africa, her father's church colleagues from the USA would have been deeply aware that the situation on the ground was dangerous. During a time of intense censorship and distrust of outsiders, Chantal's family – unlike Shannon's – may have been partially shielded from scrutiny and clashes with law enforcement because their activities were church-related.

Her parents' calculated decision to study in the USA enabled them to receive an education unconstrained by apartheid policy and to gain greater financial security. This enabled a move to Rondebosch⁷⁸ (an affluent southern suburb), worlds removed from the impoverished Cape Flats where she ran from urban assault vehicles as a small child. Here, as a teenager, Chantal was finally able to live in an integrated neighbourhood in her country of birth. Her reference to the move as an opportunity to live alongside "other cultures, other peoples", illustrates just how deeply the racial-spatial divide impacted citizens of colour in terms of where they could live, work and study.

Siya Makuzeni

Siya was born in 1982 in Mdantsane in the Eastern Cape. Like the previous three participants, her childhood was underscored by racial and political turmoil. Mdantsane, created in 1962, is a large township around 15km outside the coastal city of East London.⁷⁹ It formed part of the former homeland⁸⁰ of the Ciskei and was essentially created as a dormitory township (as

78. Rondebosch (meaning "round bush/tree") was established in 1652 by Dutch settlers, but only officially recognised as a suburb of Cape Town in the 1830s under British rule. It is the location of the University of Cape Town (South Africa's oldest university) and is one of the city's most exclusive suburbs boasting wooded areas, prestigious schools and the controversial Rhodes Memorial, completed in 1912 in honour of British politician and prime minister of the Cape Colony, Cecil John Rhodes.

79. East London (built around the mouth of the Buffalo River on the southeast coast of South Africa) is a British settler outpost founded in 1847. It is the only river port in the country, and was originally called Port Rex.

80. In very broad terms, the Natives Land Act (1913) was a pivotal act of legislation that enabled the engineering of a racially and spatially segregated South Africa. African people were dispossessed of land they had inhabited for centuries, and were prohibited from buying, renting

distinct from the self-sufficient “satellite” city the apartheid government *claimed* to have built) as housing for the African workforce employed in East London:

Where a Homeland lay adjacent to a “white” city, the African populace was relocated across the hypothetically “international” border into dormitory townships...[the residents] have, in essence, become “frontier commuters”, living and working in two totally different areas.⁸¹

During the apartheid era, Mdantsane was a hotbed of political resistance and the site of violent protests. Chris Webb argues that apartheid violence is embedded in the South African landscape as well as in its music. Webb describes the song “Mdantsane (Mud Coloured Dusty Blood)”, penned by anthropologist and international music icon Johnny Clegg in 1984, writing that Clegg not only captures the natural beauty of the landscape, but the “violent colonial histories that lurk beneath rolling hills and open veldt”:

**Why don’t you sing about the African moon?
Why don’t you sing about the leaves and the dreams?
Why don’t you sing about the rain and the birds?**

In the next verse, [Clegg] answers. Because, while on the road to the township of Mdantsane, he saw, “mud coloured dusty blood/bare feet on a burning bus/broken teeth and rifle butt”.⁸²

Growing up amidst this widespread public violence and systemic racial oppression, Siya was nevertheless exposed to rich pre-colonial musical practices that thrived in the township and surrounding rural villages. In Xhosa culture, music and dancing are important and purposeful social activities within which men and women have clearly demarcated roles. A range of traditional songs and dances – each linked to a particular occasion or activity – are learnt throughout childhood to allow participation in cultural rites and ceremonies. This process

or occupying white-owned land; 93% of the land in South Africa was allocated to whites. In 1936, the percentage of black-owned land increased marginally to 13.5%. Much of the land allocated to African people was not suitable for agriculture, leading to widespread poverty that was compounded by the passing of equally devastating legislation during the 1950s (see Leepo Modise and Ndikho Mtshiselwa, ‘The Natives Land Act of 1913 engineered the poverty of Black South Africans: a historico-ecclesiastical perspective’, conference paper, *Theological Society of South Africa (TSSA)*, June 2013, accessed 10 January 2022, <http://www.scielo.org.za/pdf/she/v39n2/20.pdf>, 2013.) The “racially based reallocation of space” (Etienne Louis Nel, Mdantsane, ‘East London’s Homeland Township: Municipal Neglect and Apartheid Planning 1949-1988’, *GeoJournal*, Vol. 22, No. 3, *A New South Africa – A New South African Geography?* (1990), 305) as a result of the Group Areas Act (passed in 1950) was further exacerbated in 1959 by the Promotion of Bantu Self Government Act, aimed at creating self-governing “homelands” for Africans. These were in reality “labour reservoirs for adjacent centers of capitalist enterprise” (Nel, ‘Mdantsane’, 306). Mdantsane was one such reserve and formed part of the Ciskei (a former Xhosa homeland) until 1994, when it was reincorporated into South Africa.

81. Nel, ‘Mdantsane’, 305.

82. Chris Webb, ‘Apartheid, anthropology and Johnny Clegg’, *Africa Is A Country*, 19 July 2019, accessed 14 September 2022, <https://africasacountry.com/2019/07/apartheid-anthropology-and-johnny-clegg> (bold font and quotation marks Webb’s own).

occurs through “observing, paying attention, developing music memory, practicing, and learning rhythms from others”.⁸³ These traditions – passed down through generations of rural Xhosa women – sparked Siya’s initial interest in music and from a young age, she was actively involved in community musicking:

For me, what mostly comes to mind is a lot of family ceremonial proceedings that are always infused with music – to such a degree that it becomes second [nature]. You get there and there are certain songs that, at a certain point, you should have learnt, you know? So I think that was it! It’s not to say that at that time it necessarily *inspired* me, but I think it was definitely something that *drew* me.⁸⁴

Siya’s mother was a teacher and choral conductor. As the region has long been associated with choirs – a remnant of missionary⁸⁵ schools and churches – my initial assumption was that Siya’s mother conducted a church choir. This was however not the case:

She didn’t work with church choirs *per se*, but because she was a teacher in primary school she would periodically put girls forward for competitions. I think she actually won quite a number of the regional legs of these choral competitions in the Eastern Cape for a good few consecutive years. I’m not sure which schools the kids went to actually as they were out in the outlying areas of East London...[and she

83. Benjamin Izu and Alethea de Villiers, ‘A Review of the Sociocultural Roles of Traditional Musical Arts in Xhosa Society’, *ADRRJ Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, Vol. 18, No. 2(6) (2021), 153.

84. Siya Makuzeni, interview with author, No. 2, 26 May 2021.

85. The Eastern Cape is renowned for its choral culture. By way of example, the groundbreaking African Jubilee Choir (consisting of singers from mission stations and church choirs across the Eastern Cape) traveled to England in 1891 and performed for large audiences, and Queen Victoria, to great acclaim. Their repertoire included English Christian hymns, classical music, traditional African hymns, and pieces by early South African choral composers from the Eastern Cape like John Knox Bokwe. Choir members Charlotte Manye Maxeke, Kate Makanya and Eleanor Xiniwe went on to become iconic women’s rights activists and anti-apartheid figures (Sarah Stacke, “A Buried Colonial-Era African Choir, Revived in Images and Sound”, *PDN Photo of the Day*, 16 March 2018, accessed 17 December 2021, <https://potd.pdnonline.com/2018/03/16/51582/>). *Amakwaya* (South African choral performance practice), stemming from 19th century mission schools and churches, remains an important part of Eastern Cape culture and across the country. Numerous choral festivals and competitions are held annually, hosted by regional and national government entities, choral associations and music guilds; see Markus Detterbeck, ‘South African Choral Music (Amakwaya): Song, Contest and the Formation of Identity’ (PhD thesis, University of Natal, 2002).

also did] a stint in Duncan Village⁸⁶...children who were in those situations, like...in underdeveloped areas.⁸⁷

Siya's parents had very eclectic tastes outside of their more traditional musicking pastimes. Her father's record collection not only broadened Siya's understanding of music as an art form, but was instrumental in shaping her own genre-defying musical identity in later years:

When I was growing up, my dad had a whole big collection of music and it was all sorts of everything... he listened to Queen, the Rolling Stones, Iron Maiden...to the country stuff, to Neil Diamond and Ladysmith [Black Mambazo]. Everybody you can imagine. The plethora was absolutely *incredible*. I remember my years between six and ten . . . one of my pastimes would be to come back from school and just dive into his collection of records. I think that you can get lost in it because of the covers and the way that music is presented to you.⁸⁸

The record collection introduced her to controversial and unorthodox musical icons, both male and female. Not surprisingly, Siya was keen to share her voracious appetite for pop, rock and myriad other musical styles. Outside the family home, however, she was expected to conform to traditional cultural norms. From her pre-school years, Siya challenged these norms and expressed her creativity in "untraditional" ways. Without access to musical instruments, dancing provided an outlet:

I was just so helter-skelter! The thing that I wanted to do was...pretty much *everything*. My early years in Mdantsane...I was kind of a loose cannon (laughs). My father was like, "What do I *do* with this kid?" I remember I'd been running around with my brother's friends for close to six months learning breakdancing. And this was something that really perturbed my dad. He was like, "No, she's a girl! What is she doing?"⁸⁹

86. Duncan Village, named after the Governor-General of the Union of South Africa, Sir Patrick Duncan, is a large township in East London, created during the late 1930s and early 1940s. It was at the heart of the Defiance Campaign launched by the African National Congress (ANC) in 1952 and was the site of two of the country's most violent political uprisings. 'Bloody Sunday' (9 November 1952) saw between 80 and 200 deaths after protesters clashed with police. Despite exceeding the death toll of the infamous Sharpeville massacre in 1960, the massacre in Duncan Village received less media coverage and subsequently less historical attention. On 11 August 1985, the township was again the site of a violent massacre in which 32 people reportedly died after clashing with police after the funeral of Victoria Mxenge, a victim of police brutality. Since its inception, Duncan Village has been a poverty-stricken, densely populated township with minimal infrastructure, poor service delivery and a high incidence of unemployment. Between 1964 and 1979, large numbers of its inhabitants were forcefully removed, some to nearby Mdantsane (see Marianne Thamm, 'Sunday bloody Sunday: South Africa's devastating and tragic secret massacre', *Daily Maverick*, 22 May 2021, accessed 15 September 2022, <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2021-05-22-sunday-bloody-sunday-south-africas-devastating-and-tragic-secret-massacre/>). For another insightful piece on the violent riots and bloodshed that took place in East London's Duncan Village and in Port Elizabeth during flashpoints of the Defiance Campaign, see Leslie J. Bank and Benedict Carton, 'Forgetting Apartheid: History, Culture and the Body of a Nun', *Africa*, Vol. 86, Issue 3 (2016), 472-503.

87. Siya Makuzeni, via *WhatsApp* voice note, 15 September 2022.

88. Siya Makuzeni, interview with author, No. 1, 20 January 2020.

89. *Ibid.*

She was banned from breakdancing, but steered towards attending leisure activities more aligned to traditional gender norms in her community. These activities were not only more conservative, but were accompanied by more “appropriate” music:

[When] I came across Ballroom and Latin dancing, also through my siblings - it was the *exact* same thing. [Watching] their rehearsals for competitions, you know, there was this background music you had to go along with. It's very technical. If you miss a beat, you lose the music. I found that very, very interesting.⁹⁰

Fascinated by the intricacies of moving to different styles of music – and not satisfied with watching from the sidelines – Siya continued to find new ways to express herself through song and dance:

I had a little choreography dance group I went around with that would fill up half my time...I think it was just one of those things...you couldn't escape it within that environment.⁹¹

Siya's mother not only empowered young girls from dire socio-economic situations through music, but also served as a strong, female role model for Siya, both musically and in terms of social activism. Her family was able to send her older siblings to ballroom dancing lessons and owned an extensive record collection, connecting them to the artistic world beyond the forced limitations of township life. Siya was born on the cusp of a new generation of young South Africans, old enough to remember living under apartheid rule, but young enough to spend their later adolescence in more privileged, desegregating spaces – such as formerly white schools – and with greater access to music tuition.

Nomfundo Xaluva

Like Siya, Nomfundo grew up in a Xhosa-speaking household in the Eastern Cape. Born in 1984 in the coastal city of Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth),⁹² Nomfundo's early musical enculturation was nevertheless significantly different from that of Siya. Port Elizabeth, like East London, is an industrial harbour city with a storied colonial past. Nomfundo was raised

90. Ibid.

91. Ibid.

92. Port Elizabeth has a colonial history dating back centuries; in the 15th century, the area was a significant stop on the routes of Portuguese explorers Bartholomeu Dias and Vasco Da Gama, after which it fell under the auspices of the Dutch East India Company from 1652 until British occupation in 1820. Named after the wife of Sir Rufane Donkin (the British governor of the city in 1820), Port Elizabeth is a harbour city overlooking Algoa Bay and is the largest city in the Eastern Cape province.

by her maternal grandparents in New Brighton,⁹³ a large township on the outskirts of the city. First established in 1903, New Brighton has been “a hotbed of jazz performance” since the 1940s, with “music in the air, in the streets, in the township halls and in the shebeens”.⁹⁴ The Group Areas Act of 1950 severely impacted the vibrant jazz scene in New Brighton and led to a mass exodus of talented artists who pursued careers in exile. For those who stayed behind, “pass laws, Special Force raids of shows and musicians’ homes, arrests and incarcerations and on-going harassment” became a daily reality.⁹⁵ As elsewhere in the country, the 1970s to early 1990s were turbulent times during which New Brighton experienced its share of “urban terrorist” bombings and the assassination of apartheid activists by security police forces.⁹⁶

Diane Thram describes how the rich musical heritage of the Eastern Cape contributed to South African jazz culture:

It was in the Eastern Cape that jazz first started to take on a distinctly South African character, possibly because the British Missionary Society school system in the Eastern Cape, and the exposure to European hymnody and Western classical music it afforded, produced a black elite class that included capable musicians who embraced the new art form called jazz.⁹⁷

This allowed citizens in urban areas the opportunity to use jazz – infused with unique traditional African sounds – as a vehicle for “musical and social equality”.⁹⁸ Like Siya’s parents, Nomfundo’s grandparents also owned a record collection including many jazz albums. Neither participant mentioned that their family members attended live jazz performances, but both New Brighton and Mdantsane had a vibrant jazz culture during the 1980s and beyond. It was commonplace for music venues and artists to be under surveillance (and raided) by apartheid forces, and it is likely that Siya and Nomfundo’s older family members would have experienced public violence/unrest in these settings. Whereas Siya was exposed to (and participated in) various musicking traditions as a child, Nomfundo’s family was not actively involved in music

93. Some of South Africa’s foremost jazz musicians were born in New Brighton, such as saxophonist Zim Ngqawana (1959-2011), trumpeter Feya Faku (1962-) and prolific guitarist and producer Lawrence Matshiza (1961-2021). During the 1960s and 1970s, New Brighton was home to the iconic band Soul Jazzmen. The township is also known for producing some of the country’s leading theatrical and fine art icons, including actor John Kani and artist George Pemba.

94. Diane Thram, ‘Jazz in Service of the Struggle: The New Brighton Story’, *African Music: Journal of International Library of African Music*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (2018) 68.

95. Ibid, 68.

96. See Janet Cherry, ‘No Easy Road to Truth: The TRC in the Eastern Cape’, paper presented at the *Wits History Workshop: the TRC; Commissioning the Past*, 11-14 June 1999, <http://hdl.handle.net/10539/7742>

97. Thram, ‘Jazz in Service of the Struggle’, 72.

98. Ibid, 73.

making. Nomfundo describes her early musical life as “untraditional” in terms of commonly held stereotypes:

I’ve had the experience where people look at me as a black woman in music and naturally assume that I started music in church. You know? That I sang in the church choir or that I used to sing in a church or that kind of thing . . . and it’s really quite far from that, actually.⁹⁹

Like Siya, Nomfundo did not have access to music lessons or instruments, but her grandparents were music lovers:

My grandfather had this incredible collection of jazz records that he played all the time. That was the music that was always playing on the record player but then, juxtaposed with that, was my grandmother’s love of choral music on a Sunday on the radio, right? I don’t think I necessarily ingested the sound of jazz from listening to my grandfather’s [records]. I don’t think I consciously ingested it, but when I look back, I realise that just having the music played so often, you do actually absorb it in one way or another. Kind of . . . it sinks into your . . . (gestures and laughs) sort of . . . audio subconscious! I didn’t have an *awareness* of it; I just knew it was something called “jazz” and that my grandfather was incredibly in love with it. And then the choral music was also one of the big things that would play on a Sunday, on the radio. So that was the music I was exposed to at a young age and even now . . . sometimes if I’m driving on a Sunday afternoon, I put on Umhlobo Wenene¹⁰⁰ and just listen to choral music. And now, in *my* home, my grandfather’s records are here and I look through them and I think, “What an incredibly prized possession!” because you don’t really get these anymore.¹⁰¹

In a recent self-penned article, she describes her first encounter with a piano:

I remember vividly the first time I laid my eyes on a piano in real life. I was eight or nine years old visiting my best friend for a play date. As she showed me around her home, we walked into a room wherein stood a black, shiny upright piano with an open lid. I had only ever seen one played by white people on television. In that moment, I was entranced by its majestic appearance and its aesthetic quality, which had been inadequately captured by a television screen. I knew then and there that I wanted to play the piano. Forever.¹⁰²

The opportunity to take up piano lessons would only present itself a few years later when her grandparents sent her to nearby Makhanda (formerly Grahamstown) to attend boarding school (to be discussed later). Up until the age of eleven, Nomfundo – like the vast majority of children in South African townships – believed that playing a musical instrument was for the more privileged:

99. Nomfundo Xaluva, interview with author, No. 1, 27 August 2021.

100. Umhlobo Wenene is a Xhosa radio station of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), based in Gqeberha, Eastern Cape.

101. Xaluva, No. 1.

102. Xaluva, ‘The Portfolio’.

I suspect that in my young impressionable mind, I saw the piano as a totem of aspiration, a window into a world of sophistication not designed for a little black girl growing up in the vibrant township of New Brighton in Gqeberha.¹⁰³

When her grandparents eventually rewarded her with a piano of her own, she was able to share her talent with loved ones:

[They] surprised me with a secondhand Zimmermann piano, which took pride of place in our home, occasionally turning our lounge into an intimate concert venue at the arrival of visitors... With both my grandparents now deceased, the piano at home stands as a landmark of my childhood memories. It reminds me that although I did not grow up rich, I most certainly grew up privileged.¹⁰⁴

Nomfundo's testimony highlights how wider social and cultural dynamics influence individuals' musical trajectories in very different ways. Like Siya, Nomfundo grew up in a Xhosa family and without early access to musical instruments or lessons. For Nomfundo and her grandparents, the piano was a powerful symbol of cultural capital; until the age of nine she had only seen it played on television and by white people, demonstrating just how rare it was to find instruments in township homes, even in the vibrant musical hub of New Brighton. Both participants' families instilled a love for music and introduced them to jazz, albeit in an informal way. In both families, music formed part of shared rituals; for Siya, this took place in the form of traditional Xhosa ceremonies, whereas for Nomfundo, her grandmother's Sunday morning radio programmes were a constant presence and a ritual she herself adopted in later years. These similarities aside, there are notable differences between the two participants. Siya expressed herself musically (mainly through dance) from a young age. Her confidence and refusal to be constrained by gendered and cultural rules allowed her to start "performing" and creating long before she had access to formal music education. The medium or genre was not important and, despite a lack of resources, she didn't believe that performing (musically or otherwise) was off limits. Conversely, Nomfundo believed that playing the piano was not an attainable goal for "a little black girl" and that a formal music education was the only means of gaining access to "a world of sophistication".¹⁰⁵

103. Ibid.

104. Ibid.

105. Ibid.

Thandi Ntuli

For Thandi, exposure to diverse musical traditions, inherited cultural capital, and a changing political landscape meant that she had greater access to a formal musical education than Siya and Nomfundo. Thandi was born in Shoshanguve¹⁰⁶ near Pretoria in 1987 and grew up in a Zulu household. Her family boasts an impressive musical heritage spanning several generations and musical genres. Thandi was raised in the Catholic faith and was constantly surrounded by choral and religious music:

For as long as I can remember, there has always been a culture of music at home. My father grew up in Sophiatown before their family was moved to Meadowlands. He talks about how his father, my grandfather [choral composer Levi Gottilph Ntuli], also came from a very musical family. My dad's grandfather was a pastor, so he had that kind of culture with his kids. That was then passed on when my grandfather was raising *his* kids. He used to write songs. Some of them – because he was a schoolteacher and principal – were little, innocent tunes that he'd teach the kids at school. Others were more extensive compositions, like choral pieces. That tradition was passed down to my dad, and he then raised us and [we] continued that tradition.¹⁰⁷

Sophiatown was a “racial anomaly”, much like Cape Town's District Six.¹⁰⁸ It was a vibrant, racially integrated suburb where black, coloured, Indian and Chinese residents lived and worked together in perfect opposition to apartheid doctrine. John Edwin Mason writes:

It was a center of political resistance to apartheid and overwhelmingly the home of a new, cosmopolitan African urban culture that emerged in defiance of and in opposition to the culture of white supremacy.¹⁰⁹

It was also the birthplace of South African jazz styles *kwela*, *marabi* and *mbaqanga*. Between 1955 and the early 1960s, the government systematically destroyed the suburb, bulldozing an entire community and forcibly removing around 60 000 residents. The inhabitants of Sophiatown were “resettled” in the shantytown, Meadowlands. The area was rezoned as a white working-class development and named Triomf¹¹⁰ (Afrikaans for “triumph”). Thandi's father

106. The name Shoshanguve is an acronym for four indigenous South African languages, Sotho, Shangaan, Nguni and Venda. Its multi-ethnic heritage is the result of its (rare during apartheid) design to house four diverse cultural groups instead of only one, e.g., designated Xhosa townships Mdantsane and New Brighton, discussed earlier.

107. Thandi Ntuli, interview with author, No. 2, 30 April 2022.

108. John Edwin Mason, ‘The Destruction of Sophiatown: Rare Colour Photos, 1959’, blog post, *John Edwin Mason: Documentary, Motorsports, Photo History*, 18 December 2010, accessed 3 September 2022, https://johnedwinmason.typepad.com/john_edwin_mason_photogra/2010/12/sophiatown-rare-color-photos.html

109. Ibid.

110. In 2006, Triomf was renamed Sophiatown.

and grandfather continued their long-standing tradition of music making as they built new lives in the aftermath of the removals.



Fig. 26 (above left) Sophiatown after the forced removals, 1959 (Photo: Elisofon)

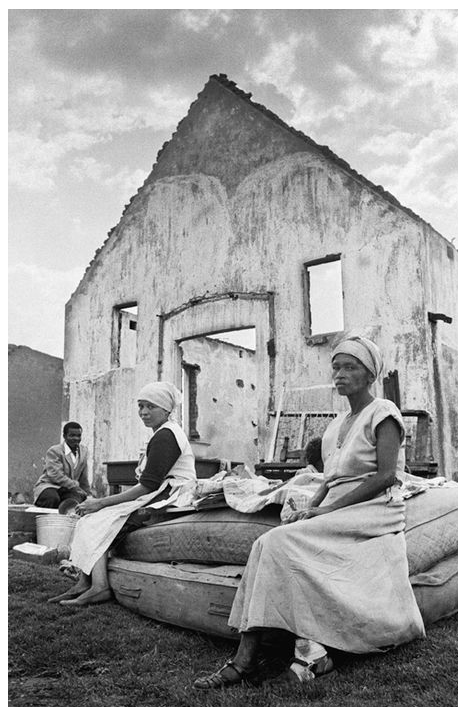


Fig. 27 (above right) Waiting for removal trucks, Sophiatown, 1959 (Photo: Schadeberg)

In Shoshanguve, the family was widely recognised for its musical pedigree and its involvement in community work. Choral singing was an integral part of this work, and Thandi recalls attending gatherings with extended family and community members:

In our house, we'd always sing, because my dad was also very involved with choral music. He used to volunteer in Ga-Rankuwa,¹¹¹ at a centre for the blind. He was put in touch with them through the church and they asked him to help out. So he started a choir there. It was an amazing choir. We grew up with the choir...often coming to sing around the house. So there was a huge love for music. Singing hymns while we were praying, but also singing my grandfather's music when we had family gatherings.¹¹²

Her grandfather insisted that all his children “do something musical”, whether in church or in various professional spaces:

These days, it's strange that people ask me, “What did your parents say when you wanted to be a musician?” But my grandfather really wanted people to be musically involved, and even his sister - who

111. Ga-Rankuwa is a township northwest of Pretoria. During apartheid, it formed part of the erstwhile homeland of Bophuthatswana and was a hotspot for anti-apartheid activism in the 1970s.

112. Ntuli, No. 2.

I am named after - was a singer. Apparently she was an incredible soprano who used to sing a lot of duets with Mam' Sibongile Khumalo.¹¹³ So it was really that love of music that my grandfather got from *his* father, and then passed along to his own kids.¹¹⁴

In an online interview with *Northglen News* she describes the vibrancy of their musical gatherings:

I remember every year-end my father used to bring his choir that he conducted to a thanksgiving party we would have. We invited the neighbours and friends, had a priest come over to say mass and then partied the night away...no deejay, just a choir singing all night.¹¹⁵

Singing was an important part of Thandi's childhood and her first experience of communal musicking, both at home and in church. When she turned four, her mother enrolled her for formal piano lessons with Pretoria-based pedagogue Ada Lefkowitz, a decision that would change Thandi's musical trajectory and the way she understood music. In an online interview with Lloyd Gedy, Thandi says:

My mom loves the piano, so she tried to get all three of my older siblings to play, but she started quite late with them. I was the last-born and someone told her you have to start young – so she decided that this one ... this one is going to do it.¹¹⁶

She initially attended her lessons under duress:

The fact that my mother put me into piano lessons without me having asked for it or anything . . . I really credit a lot to her and for *sticking* with it, because, I mean, I don't imagine it's easy to keep taking a child to piano lessons who doesn't necessarily [want to be there].¹¹⁷

Thandi participated in music competitions from a young age, but wasn't always a confident performer. She recalls holding onto her mother's dress while being coaxed to go on stage:

I don't know if it's my first musical memory, but one of the early ones was when I was young and playing piano in competitions. I was always afraid to go on stage...I started playing piano at the age of four, but these memories are from when I was six or seven.¹¹⁸

113. Dr Sibongile Khumalo (1957-2021) was a South African singer and composer, equally renowned as a classical/opera and jazz singer.

114. Ntuli, No. 2.

115. *Northglen News*, 'Jazz pianist Thandi Ntuli asks, So what's your question?', 15 June 2017, accessed 23 May 2020, <https://northglennews.co.za/110776/jazz-vocalist-thandi-ntuli-asks-whats-question/>

116. Gedy, 'South African jazz and the patriarchy'.

117. Thandi Ntuli, interview with author, No. 1, 10 February 2021.

118. Ibid.

Thandi was also exposed to jazz and popular music as a child. Her uncle, Selby Ntuli, was a founding member of the acclaimed 1970s fusion band Harari, alongside South African music icon Sipho “Hotstix” Mabuse.¹¹⁹ Thandi never met him (he passed away in 1978 at the age of twenty-eight), but describes the impact his death had on her family:

There had been a series of tragic family deaths... and growing up I saw how much it had hurt the family. After that, it became painful for everybody to talk about him, despite his achievements.¹²⁰

Thandi’s father introduced her to a wide range of music and she recalls listening to the likes of Stevie Wonder, bands like Earth, Wind and Fire, and “a lot of jazz”, including Abdullah Ibrahim:

If I go through his record collection, even now, there is a lot of music I don’t necessarily remember hearing while I was growing up...but it was there.¹²¹



Fig. 28. South African jazz luminaries Kippie Moeketsi (back left), Rashid Vally (left), Pat Matshikiza and Basil Coetzee (with sax), with Harari members Sipho Mabuse (second from right), Om Alec Khaoli (far right) and Selby Ntuli at the piano (Photo: Vally)

Although she would only formally explore the genre in her late teens, jazz was a constant in her life:

119. Multi-instrumentalist Sipho ‘Hotstix’ Mabuse (1951-) is a household name in South African popular music and started his performing career over five decades ago. He is best known for his 1987 song, ‘Burn Out’, a major crossover hit that sold over half a million copies and remains popular with fans and musicians alike.

120. Gwen Ansell, ‘Harari: a union of music, defiant politics and African pride’, *Mail & Guardian*, 20 March 2021, accessed 18 May 2021, <https://mg.co.za/friday/2021-03-20-harari-a-union-of-music-defiant-politics-and-african-pride/>

121. Ntuli, No. 2.

The relationship with jazz, I think, subconsciously was the parents. I didn't actually realize that I was listening to jazz when I grew up. And of course there's always that neighbour who, on every Sunday, blasts his music; sounds of trumpets and saxophones.¹²²

Thandi grew up in a conservative Catholic family and her childhood musicking activities were largely typical in terms of gender (choral singing and piano). Whereas Siya's artistic pastimes were limited because of gendered and societal norms, at least one woman in Thandi's family – her great aunt – was actively involved in professional music making. Whereas Siya and Nomfundo were the first in their families to pursue musical careers, Thandi's family had been involved in musical performance for several generations. She grew up with strong – yet not oppressive – patriarchal figures who were either teachers and/or pastors, and who expected that the family's musical traditions were upheld regardless of gender or generational differences. Through her father's volunteer work and community engagement, Thandi “grew up with the choir”; singing was a way of practicing their faith, but also to interact with various communities, and it formed the backbone of family celebrations and holidays. Choral singing was an extension of her home life and was a joyful, communal part of her childhood. This resonates with Chantal's testimony; both women grew up with strong, yet supportive, (male) musical figures, dedicated to service through teaching, ministering and musicking. Whereas Chantal's public performances were largely rooted in gospel and a *cappella* vocal traditions and she moved seamlessly between church stages to public/professional stages as a teenager, Thandi's first performances outside the church were completely unrelated to her musical world at home and in church.

By 1990, significant political and social changes had taken place that set in motion the dismantling of apartheid; Nelson Mandela was released after twenty-seven years in prison, political opposition parties like the African National Congress (ANC) and the South African Communist Party (SACP) were unbanned, and the State of Emergency (declared in 1985) was lifted. Unlike her father, who had personally experienced the forced removals from Sophiatown, Thandi was born at a time when her family would have gained greater freedom of movement, including the option of enrolling her in an upmarket, formerly all-white girls' school (to be discussed later). Musically, this opened up new avenues for learning that introduced Thandi to a very different musical world. At her mother's insistence, Thandi took up

122. Tseliso Monaheng, 'Exiled/A Call For Healing. Travelling with the music of Thandi Ntuli', *Medium*, 19 April 2018, accessed 3 March 2020, <https://medium.com/@nemesisisinc/exiled-a-call-for-healing-6548869e9d21>

classical piano lessons and after only two or three years began to participate in music competitions.

Unlike Siya, who also grew up in a black township and is only five years older, Thandi had ready access to a piano at home and to music lessons in nearby Pretoria. Her mother was a pivotal, supportive figure who quite literally cheered her on from the wings as she reluctantly ventured onto stage. Playing in competitions at such a young age not only speaks to Thandi's talent and potential; it indicates that she was already immersed within the structures of formal music education where capital is gained through rigorous public displays of technical mastery. Being "accepted into" lessons with a white piano teacher in 1990 reveals much about Thandi's mother as a facilitator, but also about her teacher, who operated outside the dominant power structures that denied countless other young, black township girls (including Nomfundo) a musical education. Thandi simultaneously inhabited informal (home and church) and formal (classical piano) learning environments. At the same time, she was informally exposed to jazz, pop and other contemporary music styles: her late uncle's band had worked with some of South Africa's most widely recognised jazz/fusion icons, including Sipho "Hotstix" Mabuse, Kippie Moeketsi and Hugh Masekela. However, Thandi's diverse musical worlds would not converge until her late teens, when she would finally reconcile her rich musical heritage with her identity as a classical pianist. Whereas Thandi and the other participants discussed above viewed formal music lessons as important musical (and, by extension, social) currency, Romy Brauteseth's testimony below reveals that unconventional musical beginnings can lead to equally successful jazz careers.

Romy Brauteseth

Romy was born in Gqeberha (formerly Port Elizabeth) in the Eastern Cape in 1989. She grew up in Summerstrand, an upmarket neighbourhood with scenic Blue Flag beaches and prestigious schools. Before 1994, the suburb was almost exclusively white, and is still known as one of the city's most exclusive residential enclaves. It is also the location of the largest university in the Eastern Cape, Nelson Mandela University.¹²³ As one of the city's youngest suburbs, Summerstrand is a major tourist destination and is the city's surfing and watersport

123. Originally known as the University of Port Elizabeth and later as Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, the institution was renamed as Nelson Mandela University in 2017.

hub. It boasts modern infrastructure, large homes and numerous hotels and guesthouses, and is adjacent to an expansive nature and marine conservation area.

Romy was born into a new South African era: the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990 and the country's first democratic elections in 1994 meant that she grew up with a greater sense of normality in terms of racial integration. Her primary musical enculturation can best be described as family-oriented and non-competitive. As the youngest of three siblings, Romy was surrounded by family members who, despite not pursuing professional music careers themselves, had a great deal of "raw talent and (an) inherent talent to pick up instruments and find their way around".¹²⁴ As she explains to Zamindlela Zama:

My family is incredibly musical. It makes a huge impact when one grows up in an environment where music has a daily importance. I guess as far back as I can remember, someone in my home was always playing an instrument so it was only natural that I picked up the instruments that were played in the house.¹²⁵

Her father was a pastor in a small charismatic church and the family was actively involved in its musical programme:

My family was always playing in church, from as young as I can remember... it was one of those churches with quite big worship teams... lots of people singing, nothing really formal. If you could kind of play, you could [get in].¹²⁶

Romy's instrument choices and musical pastimes were never dictated by stereotypical gender norms. Her earliest musical role model was her mother, a high school teacher, who played the bass guitar in their church:

To me, bass was not a male-dominated instrument, because my primary view of it was a female.¹²⁷

Her father similarly dismissed societal roles that limited young girls to more delicate, "feminine" pastimes:

124. Zama, 'Romy's two careers are intertwined'.

125. Ibid.

126. Romy Brauteseth, interview with author, No. 2, 8 October 2021.

127. Romy Brauteseth, interview with author, No. 1, 4 December 2020.

I was different in the sense that my dad was so heavy (laughs). My dad was hardcore. He had me using drill presses and shit when I was little, you know, and it was never . . . it *never* had anything to do with gender. It was just like . . . “Oh, you wanna do *this*? Okay... then do it!”¹²⁸

Romy had little interest in taking up formal piano and flute lessons like her older sister; instead, she looked towards her older brother, who taught her to play her first chords on the guitar:

My brother is six or seven years older than me. I remember my mom [also] played guitar very well and I remember my brother and his little group of friends – maybe three or four of them – sitting in the lounge, with my mom teaching them songs that she had figured out... like Oasis or Eric Clapton, for example. She would figure out these songs and then teach it to them. I was always around that, so I wasn’t *on* the guitar yet at that point, but I was *around* that kind of thing happening. My mom taught my brother the guitar and bass, and then he was playing a lot. He actually taught me quite a few songs on guitar... and by the time he’d taught me a few songs... by the time I could play a few songs, I knew all the chords, you know?¹²⁹

When Romy was eleven, her father suddenly and tragically passed away. It was in the traumatic aftermath of his passing that she first started performing in public:

I think I only picked up an instrument once my dad had passed away. I remember... because that was something you would *remember*. And my mom said to me, “Oh, it’s a pity that Dad never saw you play in church or saw you perform, or play bass”.¹³⁰

The family continued to be active in the church band, and Romy soon joined her mother and sister in accompanying worship songs on the guitar:

I started playing guitar in church. That was the first thing [I did]. My mom moved from bass to guitar at one stage, and then it became like a family affair (laughs) and I just joined in on guitar. My sister was on piano and was singing a bit, and my mom might have been singing a bit. I can’t recall my brother being in there at all, but I’d say I began playing in church around eleven or twelve. And [when I was] around thirteen, the bass player didn’t show up. There was a bass [guitar] there and my sister was like, “Look, it’s only four strings (laughs). You can manage”.¹³¹

For Romy, taking up music was “only natural” considering that it formed a part of her family members’ daily lives, albeit in different ways. Romy had ready access to a range of musical instruments at home and recalls that someone was “always playing an instrument” when she was growing up. As had been customary in her family, Romy learnt to play by ear, observing and emulating her mother and older brother play the guitar and the bass. Her mother’s bass playing was unusual in itself: during the 1980s and 1990s, it would have been rare to encounter

128. Ibid.

129. Brauteseth, No. 2.

130. Ibid.

131. Brauteseth, No. 1.

a bass-playing pastor's wife who taught her children to play blues, rock and pop. Her mother – a teacher – was not only an informal musical mentor to Romy and her siblings, but also to their friends. Unlike Shannon, who was excluded from “boys only” jam sessions at home, Romy was treated as a musical equal and was encouraged to participate. She had access to a strong and supportive network of musicians who were eager to share their experience in an informal and non-intimidating setting.

Lucy Green refers to peer-directed learning and group learning as important practices in popular music:

...solitary learning practices are accompanied by other equally significant practices which take place through interaction with friends, siblings and other peers. These practices include *peer-directed learning* and *group learning*. Peer-directed learning involves the explicit teaching of one or more persons by a peer; group learning occurs as a result of peer interaction but in the absence of any teaching. Either type of learning may take place between only two people or in groups of more than two; it can arise in casual encounters or organized sessions; it can occur separately from music-making activities or during rehearsals and jam sessions. The different settings in which such learning takes place are liable to flow into each other.¹³²

Romy's mother facilitated her (and her siblings') musical learning at home and at church, linking the two spaces and providing her with the basic tools required to make music. Like Chantal and Thandi, Romy's earliest structured musical performances took place in church, but except for a cursory reference to her mother and sister “singing a bit”, singing did not play a significant role in her childhood musical enculturation. Instead of choral or *a cappella* music Romy's introduction to church music was rooted in elements of contemporary pop and rock styles. Whereas Chantal was regularly exposed to professional musicians (vocalists) via her father's church connections, the worship band at Romy's church didn't require aspiring band members to have a high level of playing ability. The church band provided a safe space where, alongside family members and as the pastor's daughter, she could hone her musical skills without being othered or objectified. Romy's father was a vital role model who nurtured her strong sense of non-conformity in terms of gender roles and never steered her away from tomboyish pastimes. After his untimely death, Romy became more actively involved in playing music. Her mother may have included Romy in the church band as a way to ensure she remained connected to her father in a more direct way, but this also provided an opportunity for Romy to communicate and interact through music. Stepping in to

132. Green, *How Popular Musicians Learn*, 76-77.

substitute a no-show bassist – and with her sister’s reassurance that she was capable of the task – opened up new musical possibilities and strengthened her confidence on stage.

Romy’s testimony offers the most explicit example of a musical childhood unconstrained by dominant narratives of power, gender, race and class. Unlike the other participants, Romy made no explicit references to racial or political dynamics. This could be ascribed to the new post-apartheid culture of “rainbowism” into which she was born, but is more likely the result of growing up in a sheltered suburb that was still overwhelmingly white and inhabited by higher-income families. Of course, this does not imply that Romy didn’t have an awareness or understanding of such issues as a child, but rather suggests that she doesn’t view these factors as having had a substantial impact on her early musical life.

When compared to the older participants, Nomfundo and Thandi similarly grew up with a greater sense of “normality” in terms of race, class and access to musical activities. Nevertheless, Thandi and Nomfundo made brief references to wider South African historical narratives that directly and indirectly inflected their musical journeys. Although she had ready access to a music education post-1990, Thandi understood the significance of her father’s connection to Sophiatown and was aware of her uncle’s legacy as a rule-breaking, controversial musician during the apartheid era. In contrast, Nomfundo did not volunteer any information about the racialised experiences her older family members undoubtedly navigated during apartheid. Nomfundo, Thandi and Romy were also differently affected by the gendered stereotypes that limited the musical lives of an earlier generation of participants.

As a result of colonial societal norms, Amanda was the most constrained in terms of available musical options and opportunities to exercise agency. Chantal grew up within a largely insular space with limited musical options outside of the traditional role of gospel vocalist, yet was not considered as “other” within the church or at home. She had a degree of access to male mentors in the form of musical church elders and as her father was both a teacher and a church leader, she largely inhabited spaces inscribed by propriety and inclusion. Shannon, as a (mainly jazz) saxophonist, inhabited a “man’s world” during the 1980s and early 1990s, yet was denied the perks afforded to male members of the club. Moreover, she grew up believing that the widespread misogyny and inappropriate sexual dynamics she experienced as a young girl were normal, unavoidable aspects of the professional music scene. Siya’s musical development was initially constrained by gender norms within her immediate family and community, yet her mother was an agentic figure who used choral music as a means to empower disadvantaged

girls. Interestingly, despite belonging to a later generation and having wider access to a range of musical instrument choices, Nomfundo and Thandi played the piano, a symbol of prestige.

An important common denominator in the participants' respective testimonies thus far is the presence of parental support and the importance of musical role models during childhood. Typically, these family members were educators and/or church leaders. To better understand these dynamics in the participants' early musical lives, I draw on various theoretical frameworks. As discussed earlier, Michel De Certeau's theoretical model of space as a "practiced place",¹³³ is useful when exploring how spaces shape what/who we become and how we operate in the world. When thought of as "practiced places", it becomes clear how home, church and school can function as spaces where dominant gender (and other) narratives are variously perpetuated, rewritten, or negated. The participants' testimonies reveal the impact of the various spaces they inhabited as children in terms of gender but also other power dynamics. As mentioned in chapter two, the shifting political landscape in South Africa played a significant role in the participants' musical lives. To recap: whereas Shannon's participation in interracial musicking during the 1980s and early 1990s represented a form of political transgression, Romy's musical activities with multi-racial peers were the norm during the early 2000s. The participants' testimonies also reflect shifting beliefs about the gendering of musical spaces. Amanda's "good Catholic girl" status required her to conform to wider social rules within a nascent postcolonial environment and Chantal was initially confined to more traditional, "feminine" musicking activities within church culture. As a young child, Siya was forbidden from engaging in dancing activities associated with boys, yet the more heteronormative pastime of ballroom dancing was an acceptable choice. The younger participants in turn inhabited significantly changed versions of the musical and social spaces described by their older counterparts.

Alongside De Certeau's conceptions of space as performatively actuated, Pierre Bourdieu's notions of habitus and capital offer useful frameworks for understanding the processes involved in musical identity formation.¹³⁴ Nick Prior helpfully summarizes Bourdieu's concept of habitus as a "system of unconscious dispositions which shape the broad behavioural trajectories and life chances of individuals" and "comprises a deeply internalized set of 'master patterns'

133. De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 117.

134. Pierre Bourdieu, 'Structures and the Habitus', chapter in *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, translated by Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

or ‘mental habits’ that individuals resort to as part of the social conditions in which they find themselves”.¹³⁵ Music scholars have appropriated Bourdieu’s work to explore phenomena such as music consumption and taste,¹³⁶ the social practices of jazz musicians,¹³⁷ and music education.¹³⁸ In his conceptual extension of Bourdieu’s habitus, Mark Rimmer identifies the family home as the site of primary musical socialisation. Focusing on musical preference in particular, Rimmer argues that, despite “the sometimes serendipitous and unexpected nature of actors’ engagements with music”, the musical habitus never allows individuals to “drift completely beyond the limits of reasonable expectation”.¹³⁹ I argue that the participants in this study did indeed “drift beyond the limits of reasonable expectation”; Siya and Romy, for example, already displayed outlier¹⁴⁰ traits as young children by refusing to conform to gendered master narratives around instrument choice and/or social activities. Similarly, as a young girl, Shannon was an anomaly within various musical spaces in terms of gender, race and class.

These examples disrupt Bourdieu’s tidy early model of the habitus, in particular his early work in which gender is not specifically considered. Despite an unpublished paper from 1989¹⁴¹ that reveals Bourdieu’s attempts to extend his concepts beyond class and towards the social construction of gender, Toril Moi that argues that for Bourdieu, “the traditional relationship between the sexes is structured by a habitus which makes male power appear legitimate even

135. Nick Prior, ‘Bourdieu and the Sociology of Music Consumption: A Critical Assessment of Recent Developments’, *Sociology Compass*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (2013), 183.

136. Mark Rimmer, ‘Beyond Omnivores and Univores: The Promise of a Concept of Musical Habitus’, *Cultural Sociology*, Vol. 6, No.3 (2012), 299-318.

137. Mark Banks, ‘MacIntyre, Bourdieu and the practice of jazz’, *Popular Music*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (2012), 69-86.

138. Douglas Lonie and Luke Dickens, ‘Becoming musicians: situating young people’s experiences of musical learning between formal, informal and non-formal spheres’, *Cultural Geographies*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (2016), 87-101.

139. Rimmer, ‘Beyond Omnivores’, 308.

140. ‘Outliers’ are individuals who ‘stand apart from others in their group’ and whose abilities and achievements fall outside the range of statistical probability (<http://www.dictionary.com>). Their ‘difference’ prevents the drawing of general conclusions as they live outside the ‘comfort zone’ of their collective group (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/outlier>). Synonyms for ‘outlier’ include ‘nonconformist’, ‘maverick’, ‘original’, ‘dissident’, ‘heretic’ and ‘outsider’. In the context of this study, the term is used to describe a woman who transcends the status quo in professional jazz by being widely acknowledged for excelling at her craft and claiming space in a male-dominated field.

141. Pierre Bourdieu, ‘La Construction sociale du sexe’ (Unpublished manuscript, 1989).

to women”.¹⁴² This essentialist sexual division of men and women can “*predict and...control* the behaviour of every member of a given social group”.¹⁴³

This resonates with Simone De Beauvoir’s view of male domination as a “universally existing social phenomenon”.¹⁴⁴ From a Bourdieusian perspective, gender is always a “socially *variable* entity, one which carries different amounts of symbolic capital in different contexts”.¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, Bourdieu’s concepts are well suited to exploring power dynamics in everyday life by linking the “humdrum details of everyday life” to social analyses of power.¹⁴⁶ Likewise, Nick Prior writes that Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus, field and cultural capital provide “the most elegant and fertile conceptual scheme to make sense of how music mediates, intersects with and expresses power relations.”¹⁴⁷ That being said, Bourdieu’s concentration on *structures* leaves little theoretical room for explorations of *agency* at the fine-grained level of individual experience and behaviours. Prior admits that Bourdieu’s “overly rigid” framework lacks “a convincing account of technology and creative agency”¹⁴⁸ and that music “and our encounters with it are far more complex than can be conveyed through the idea of social origins, let alone statistical data sets and genre categorisations”.¹⁴⁹ For this reason, “contemporary commentators have attempted to reformulate the relationship between habitus and field so that it is imagined as less tightly deterministic and rigidly presumed, emphasizing more the scope for improvisation and degrees of inventiveness alongside the structural and shaping qualities of the habitus...”¹⁵⁰ It can be argued that all the participants grew up within environments that predisposed them to having musical careers; inhabiting these spaces set them up with the types of capital needed to become jazz musicians. However, the presence of strong role models *within* those spaces is more significant; these range from empowered women within their

142. Toril Moi, ‘Appropriating Bourdieu: Feminist Theory and Pierre Bourdieu’s Sociology of Culture’, *New Literary History*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (1991), 1029.

143. *Ibid.*, 1030.

144. *Ibid.*, 1032.

145. *Ibid.*, 1036.

146. *Ibid.*, 1020.

147. Prior, ‘Bourdieu and the Sociology of Music Consumption’, 191.

148. *Ibid.*, 185.

149. *Ibid.*, 189.

150. Julie McLeod, ‘Feminists re-reading Bourdieu: Old debates and new questions about gender habitus and gender change’, *Theory and Research in Education*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2005), 17. See also Lois McNay, ‘Gender, Habitus and the Field: Pierre Bourdieu and the Limits of Reflexivity’, *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 16, No. 1 (1999), 95-117.

families to supportive male figures that did not subscribe to patriarchal conceptions of musicking.

The phenomenologically rich and idiographic nature of the interview data in this study requires a theoretical framing that can accommodate the plurality and fluidity of everyday life. All the participants, at some point during their musical enculturation/identity formation, developed unique responses to the dominant societal structures. For the majority, school music activities provided fertile ground for their burgeoning agency. Rafael Valenzuela and Nuria Codina argue that young children from musically active families inherit a “familiarity with musical practice” that increases their likelihood of participating (and excelling) in formal music activities at school.¹⁵¹ Building on Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital, they explore how inherited “family musical cultural capital” may urge children to participate in school music activities and to “obtain greater optimal experience” from them.¹⁵² Below I explore the subtle ways “pupils and teachers collude with each other in the perpetuation of the gender politics of music”¹⁵³ and the ways the introduction of new role players in educational spaces reinforced or disrupted the participants’ early musical enculturation.

“There’s always a teacher”: educational structures and the musical habitus

Lucy Green refers to the music classroom a “microcosmic version of the wider society” and a site of “gendered ideology” and writes that educational spaces not only reinforce gender norms and structures but also have the power to “legitimize and establish them as truth”.¹⁵⁴ She notes how “both genders are restricted in their freedom to cross a divide”.¹⁵⁵ When boys participate in “vocal or orchestral music, ‘slow’ music or music that is associated with the classical style in school — to join a choir, to play a flute”, they are risking their symbolic masculinity. Moreover, “for a girl to sing popular music in a microphone, to play drums or electric bass, involves taking a risk with the delineations of her reputation, or invoking an interrupted display of her femininity”.¹⁵⁶ Conversely, though more rarely, music classrooms can act as sites where

151. Rafael Valenzuela and Nuria Codina, ‘Habitus and flow in primary school musical practice: relations between family musical cultural capital, optimal experience and music participation’, *Music Education Research*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (2014), 505.

152. Valenzuela and Codina, ‘Habitus and flow in primary school musical practice’, 506.

153. Lucy Green, *Music, Gender, Education* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), 186.

154. *Ibid.*, 166.

155. *Ibid.*, 185.

156. *Ibid.*

received truths about gender are challenged and even subverted. For example, Katherine Sinsabaugh explores how students who “cross over” gender stereotypes when selecting musical instruments rely on the presence of “music teachers, general teachers, parents, and friends who were supportive” of their selection.¹⁵⁷ As expected, and with the exception of Romy, the participants did not overtly stray too far from the gendered blueprints at home and in church as children. Most of them took piano lessons and/or participated in singing activities, especially those who attended all-girls’ schools.

Green argues that girls “symbolically affirm their femininity through singing, playing classical music and working in ways which conform to the schools’ norms and standards”.¹⁵⁸ She explains that, “for girls, by contrast with boys, being ‘good’ at music within the school walls usually means being conformist”. More importantly, a disruptive girl “cannot at the same time cope with being ‘good’ at instrumental performance, because at the moment that she is good at the performance, she denies either her deviance or her femininity. Whereas for boys deviance can contribute to the similitude of genius, for girls it blocks them from instrumental performance at all.”¹⁵⁹

Moi views educational systems as a pivotal factor in the construction of habitus and argues that habitus may be compared to what educational scholars refer to as the “silent curriculum”, i.e., the “norms and values that are inculcated through the very forms of classroom interaction” rather than the content being taught.¹⁶⁰ Being successful within the school setting therefore relies heavily on a child’s existing cultural capital. In the absence of such capital, however, schools may provide fertile ground for the discovery of new interests and the development of agency, and teachers may foster “new musical cultural capital...and autonomous engagement in musical practice”.¹⁶¹ Supportive music teachers function as a bridge between music in the home and at school, especially when these spaces have little in common in terms of what constitutes cultural capital. Pitts writes that musical interest “can be sustained even when school circumstances are less than ideal...the ‘added value’ to a school of an enthusiastic music

157. Katherine Sinsabaugh, ‘Music Partnerships – The Face of Music in Modern Education’, *Teaching Artist Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (2006), 182.

158. Green, *Music, Gender, Education*, 163.

159. *Ibid*, 191.

160. Toril Moi, ‘Appropriating Bourdieu: Feminist Theory and Pierre Bourdieu’s Sociology of Culture’, *New Literary History*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (1991), 1022.

161. Valenzuela and Codina, ‘Habitus and flow in primary school musical practice’, 519.

teacher and a flourishing musical community is limitless”.¹⁶² Schools typically provide a “greater range of actors and factors” that contributes to individuals’ secondary musical socialization.¹⁶³ It is, however, the participants’ responses to their school musicking environment that indicates their growing agency. Especially significant is the fact that all the participants were fortunate to attend secondary schools with vibrant music programmes. With the exception of Amanda, they all attended high schools that were previously designated as “white”, regardless of their diverse cultural backgrounds. To this end, they were afforded relatively equal opportunities to acquire similar levels of educational and musical capital. Within these (by South African standards) immensely privileged educational spaces, the presence of skilled, generally progressive, and encouraging teachers was even more important.

Amanda Tiffin

Unlike in South Africa, Rhodesian schools were not officially segregated. Nevertheless, musical activity was clearly stratified based on race and class. Growing up in Bulawayo during the 1980s, Amanda’s musical options at school were more limited than most of the other participants in this study. Despite not being raised in a musically active household, she was expected to follow a long-standing family tradition passed down from her mother’s British ancestors:

I went to a convent school from grade three onwards and my mom had this system. She loved *systems* (laughs). She had this thing where you did certain things at certain ages. I had an older sister and [my mom] decided that when you are eight, you must take music lessons. She had a deal with us that you would take lessons for a year and you’d keep going for a year. After a year, if you didn’t like it, you could quit. So, my sister had started lessons - she’s two years older than me - and she *hated* it, because the Academy of Music in Bulawayo made her learn recorder and she hated it (laughs). So that was that! But, lucky for me, we changed schools and music was offered at [the new] school...and we had a piano at home. So, I started piano lessons with Sister Engelberta who was an elderly German nun and very tall, and everyone was very scared of her! But she was really encouraging, you know? She was my teacher from the age of eight to the age of eighteen... I think there was a period when I was a teenager when I wanted to quit because it was taking up a lot of time, but I just couldn’t bring myself to quit. And, thank God (laughs)! I was doing A-levels, so when I was in the lower sixth form I was practicing four to five hours a day on piano, because it was an escape for me, a *big* escape. I would eat my lunch and then practice until my mom picked us up at five o’clock. Then I’d do my homework when I got home. It was an escape, because when you play music you are in the moment. You don’t think about the environment, the past or the future. You’re just in the present and I think that was very therapeutic for a teenager with all [that] teenage *angst and stuff*. It was a really good place to be. It was a safe space for me.¹⁶⁴

162. Pitts, ‘Roots and routes’, 254.

163. Rimmer, ‘Beyond Omnivores’, 309.

164. Amanda Tiffin, interview with author, No. 2, 27 May 2021.

The school only offered classical music, but Amanda used her newly acquired skills to teach herself how to sing and play popular music at home:

I just played lots of classical piano and then I used to transcribe pop songs from the radio. I used to learn the songs and sing them with a friend and play the chords and stuff like that.¹⁶⁵

She rarely found an opportunity to combine her love for popular music with the regimented music programme at school, but showed strong leadership qualities and musical confidence from an early age:

I suppose the [only time my musical worlds] “mixed” was when I’d accompany other kids at school during assembly or something. When they did a pop song, I would be the piano player. I was already a musical director in those days (laughs)!¹⁶⁶

Amanda believes that there were some “gaps” in her musical education, but acknowledges the benefits of having had a steady, supportive music teacher throughout her school career:

The thing that she did well, was (that) she just let me do what I wanted to do and encouraged me to play, and she was just *there*, you know? She wasn’t overbearing, she didn’t force me to do anything...she encouraged me. She had like a “disappointed” thing when you didn’t practice enough (laughs), but other than that, she just encouraged me to do the exams. And she would take an *interest* [in me]. So, I kept going.¹⁶⁷

Not all her music teachers instilled the same love for music. Amanda excelled at the piano, but decided at a young age not to participate in choral singing at school:

I never sang in choirs... and now I *run* them (laughs). I sang in a choir a little bit in junior school and then joined the choir in high school and... didn’t like the teacher, so I left. I didn’t like the teacher. And the choir was very good, apparently. They won prizes and so on. But I never sang in the choir.¹⁶⁸

During her teenage years, Amanda became intensely aware of how the country’s racial divide limited her musical experiences:

As a teenager, when you’re growing up, you have your social circles. I went to a multi-racial school that was multi-racial from its inception. It was never a [racially] separate school. Before 1980, the schools were [segregated]...you know, there was like an *apartheid* system in Rhodesia at the time...it wasn’t the law, but it was there. It was unofficial but it was *present*. After 1980, all schools were integrated, but the convent had always been a multi-racial school. Even though that was the case, you’d still find kids of certain races hanging out with others that looked like them...I suppose you had a common reference. I didn’t have a multi-racial group [of friends], even though I was friendly with the girls in my class. As I grew up, I started working in a youth theatre group at the local theatre and that was multi-racial. I met

165. Ibid.

166. Tiffin, No. 3.

167. Tiffin, No. 1.

168. Tiffin, No. 3

teenagers and young adults of different races and I realised I'd been missing out on a whole lot of stuff. So I made friends with them and hung out a bit more, and started socialising a little more across the "colour bar", if you like. It was quite frowned-upon. In general, the white community didn't mix with the black community in Bulawayo.¹⁶⁹

She did, however, learn to speak a local language, something that became mandatory after the country gained its independence:

It was required at school. You'd learn the language of the region where you were, so in my region it was Ndebele. It was part of your schooling, I think, from the first year of high school. But sadly... again, with the racism and the mindset of "us and them"... I never really assimilated [the language] properly. Even though I remember words and phrases, I was also learning French [at the time]. I always regret that I hadn't learnt it properly.¹⁷⁰

Amanda was acutely aware of the impact colonialism had on the dynamics in the classroom, in particular her teachers' rigidly traditional style of teaching:

The way it was taught, it was almost like passive learning... It was a bit like, "Teacher in front of class, *this* is how it goes", instead of more interactive learning. There were children in our class, native speakers... if the teachers had the skills and the tools I suppose they would have got people into conversation groups or whatever. But there was still such a pervasive racist attitude in Zimbabwean society, especially in the white community. It [being a native speaker] wasn't seen as something to be proud of, in a way. Kids that were growing up on farms spoke fluent Ndebele and Shona and I was always like, "Wow!" I was so impressed. It was so cool to be able to speak another language. In that regard I probably missed out on a lot. [Learning French] was more strongly encouraged. That was more impressive to people. I remember more French than I do Ndebele, and that's embarrassing.¹⁷¹

Nevertheless, *Chimurenga* music found its way into the school, albeit as a more "casual" extramural activity:

I played in the marimba band at school, so we'd play the songs of the day as well as other popular songs, so [*chimurenga*] was kind of *around* you. I wish that I had more exposure to it, a more open-minded exposure, but I guess that comes to you later as an adult, when you make those choices for yourself.¹⁷²

In her final year of high school, Amanda's teachers discovered that she could sing, something they were previously unaware of as she wasn't a member of the choir:

I was involved in the school musical in the last year of school. I had a small role in that musical and people went, "Oh, wait! You can actually sing?" And I was like, "Oh, right – I *can* sing!" (laughs) It

169. Ibid.

170. Ibid.

171. Ibid.

172. Ibid.

wasn't a big focus for me, singing. And [later], when I started my degree, I didn't do it on voice, I did it on piano. Voice was a secondary thing.¹⁷³

Amanda was also keen to learn other musical instruments in more informal ways. Not all of these ventures came to fruition, but they all contributed to her growing musical knowledge. Again, supportive adults – both at home and at school – enabled her to explore different interests:

Our art teacher was quite young, and she could sing and she played guitar. My friend, who went with me to the orchestra, she played the guitar and taught me some chords. I begged my parents to buy me a saxophone. I wanted to play saxophone so badly, but we couldn't afford it. It was too expensive, so they bought a flute! My stepdad went to the UK and came back with this flute. And I was like, "Well, it's not a sax" (shrugging), but I went for flute lessons for about a year... it didn't really gel. I could already read music really well from playing piano, so the "notes" part was fine, but the "making a sound" part was hard! It was too much hard work, so I gave it up. I asked them, "Can I sell the flute and buy a guitar?" You can see it behind me (gestures over her shoulder)... it's the same one! So I played guitar for fun and I'd write these really bad songs and I'd learn Simon and Garfunkel and Eagles songs... those were the things I would do.¹⁷⁴

Amanda didn't plan on pursuing a career in the performing arts; instead, she was poised to follow a path befitting a top academic achiever during the 1980s and early 1990s:

[Music] wasn't an option. I was a straight A-student, so I did sciences. I did maths, physics and chemistry for A-levels, and my trajectory was supposed to be medicine. I was *supposed* to apply to medical school. You know, in retrospect, when you look at what I was busy with and what I occupied my time with... I was playing music four or five hours a day, I was reading poetry, and writing bad poetry (laughs) and reading novels and enjoying literature. So I really should have done the arts, but because I was a smart kid...in those days, especially, they would just funnel the smart kids into the sciences. The thing is, when you're in a small town like that, your only option for studying music as a career would be to *teach* it. At that time, funny enough, I had no interest in teaching! So, from what I could see, the options were... being a high school music teacher or a concert pianist. And I wasn't good enough to be a concert pianist! I didn't know what kind of other options there were. There was classical music, and that was it, basically. So, I didn't even *look* at studying music until I got to varsity.¹⁷⁵

Amanda's testimony highlights the important role that schools play in boosting or diminishing individuals' musical potential. A serendipitous move to a school that offered piano lessons allowed her to find a musical activity closely connected to her home life and her mother's limited musical heritage. For her sister, who grew up in the same home and also had access to music lessons, things played out differently. Unable to choose her own instrument due to the power dynamics within the local music academy, Amanda's sister missed the opportunity to connect with music in the same way. As a child, Amanda admired the resilience and work ethic

173. Ibid.

174. Ibid.

175. Tiffin, No. 2.

of her mother and their friend who managed a dairy farm as a single mother. The arrival of another strong female role model – her school music teacher – similarly inspired Amanda to “keep going”, and to further develop a strong sense of discipline and commitment. Her music teacher – intimidating to some – was quietly supportive throughout Amanda’s school career and provided her with a solid musical grounding based on the available resources at the time. She describes her teacher as a quietly powerful and reassuring presence, in stark contrast to the choir teacher whose demeanor was a deterrent rather than an inspiration. Despite the obvious cultural capital that came with being a member of the prize-winning school choir, Amanda’s only (visible) act of defiance at school was to forego choral singing, even if it meant not developing her hidden talent for singing.

Beyond these micro-power dynamics, wider power imbalances in the country deeply impacted her musical enculturation. Learning to speak French held more value than speaking a local language, even if the latter would have allowed her to feel connected and integrated rather than a constant outsider. Even though her school was a Catholic convent and racially integrated, the political climate in the country still determined who could do what, go where, and with whom. Kept apart by an “unofficial” apartheid, Amanda and her friends did not “mix” socially with classmates of colour. Echoing Shannon’s reference to the “colour board”, Amanda mentions the “colour bar”, referring to it as a physical entity that couldn’t be freely traversed. Being deeply aware of class and racial divides, unspoken social rules prevented her from frequenting integrated spaces or forming close relationships with people of colour. During her later teens, joining a racially integrated theatre group that also included some young adults provided an opportunity for her to exercise more social freedom.

Stephanie Pitts has argued that the self-belief of aspiring young musicians during childhood is influenced by the ways “significant adults” in their lives – in the form of parents, wider family and later teachers – either affirm or reject their emerging “musician identity.”¹⁷⁶ Amanda’s testimony speaks to this insight on several levels; throughout her childhood, her musical aspirations were supported “in stereo” by a variety of family members and teachers. Unlike her biological father, with whom she had little contact since early childhood, her stepfather proved to be a new supporter of her musical talent. Her desire to play the saxophone was not met with disapproval, but rather a compromise. The flute he gifted her was “not a sax”, but she –

176. Stephanie Pitts, ‘Roots and routes’, 242.

knowingly or unknowingly – followed her mother’s pragmatic “system” of trying an instrument before rejecting it. Selling the flute to buy a guitar – a tool she needed for songwriting – reveals her burgeoning agency as a musician and the steadfast support of her family as she pursued new musical avenues.

Shannon Mowday

Professional connections via family members allowed Shannon Mowday to access a range of musical mentors from a very young age. For Shannon, home, church, school and professional stages were deeply interconnected. Aside from playing professional gigs with some of Cape Town’s foremost self-taught musicians, she also studied music in more formal spaces, some of which were an extension of her musical education at home. Shannon’s father not only taught her to play music at home, but also taught her (and her brother) jazz saxophone at the Beau Soleil Music Centre in Kenilworth, a short drive from their home in Plumstead. Here, she also received classical saxophone lessons from internationally acclaimed performer and educator, Douglas Masek (USA). In addition to playing the clarinet, saxophone and piano, Shannon added a range of woodwind instruments including the bass clarinet, contra-alto clarinet and baritone sax to her musical arsenal during her teenage years. At school, she studied classical piano and clarinet, but ensemble activities were a source of frustration:

My music world... [it clashed] completely with school, but I was a high achiever, so I managed to keep it all going... even with frustrating teachers who expected me to play in the tragic school band when I was already playing professionally. Mom was a big part of making it work and instilled a big sense of discipline in us.¹⁷⁷

Straddling these diverse musical learning spaces gave Shannon a chequered view of musical education. She recalls the exclusionary and elitist “us-and-them” dynamic that existed between university-educated jazz musicians and community musicians during the late 1980s and early 1990s:

You’re playing *this* kind of music and *this* kind of music and you must not mix ... but when we grew up, everybody played everything and [they] mixed and *people* were mixed, but of course it was behind close doors because it wasn’t allowed... We grew up with this very broad spectrum ... it was a very different music scene to what it is today. I think it was far more vibrant, because everybody was kind of fighting to play together... this was before the *education* thing told people, “You’re good. You’re not.” So, the musicians I grew up with ... like the Moses brothers... the Schilders...Robbie Jansen... I heard them and I played with them ... *those* were the musicians who I think [were influential]. This is another tangent, but you know, the musicians who stayed behind in apartheid, who didn’t go into exile. The ones who stayed and created a scene, especially in Cape Town ... it’s very different to the music that left

177. Mowday, E-mail correspondence, 6 September 2022.

South Africa. There was a massive mix of musicians. There wasn't anything like, "You play *this* jazz. You play *that* jazz." Everyone just played whatever, you know? It was not so stylised or defined. And I think, with the university programme, came a lot of arrogance towards musicians who didn't, for instance, have an education. Who, to me, are the ones who are the genuine South African jazz musicians. I saw the way some of them have been treated by younger musicians who have this attitude of, "If you don't have a degree, you're useless" or you're "folding"... this *terrible* term.¹⁷⁸

Denis-Constant Martin offers rich descriptions of the Cape Town music scene during apartheid, writing that:

...barriers erected to divide and isolate people included in racial categories were never totally waterproof. Music offered the means by which to cross boundaries, and opened up spaces for creative cooperation and blending: music never respected "racial" delimitations, and creative musicians always looked beyond the horizon of the "culture" they had been assigned to find ideas and material they could use to develop their own modes of expression.¹⁷⁹

Martin pays close attention to how musicians like Shannon and those with whom she shared the stage during the 1980s (including the Schilder family and Robbie Jansen) challenged the draconian laws designed to keep them apart.¹⁸⁰ When she turned fourteen, Shannon and her brother joined the band in the newly established jazz programme at the University of Cape Town (1989). As the only girl and the youngest band member, Shannon was an accomplished reader, soloist and multi-instrumentalist:

We got involved with the various university programmes, the only one that [existed] at the time. I was the only girl at that time. I mean, I was the only one, *really*. So, for me there was a difficulty from the start. "Okay, how do I find my place as a young girl in this scene?" I think I was a little tired [of it] already by the time I finished school and then I didn't want to go into music as such, because the infrastructures that were in place... I didn't see them supporting me, certainly, as a musician. And when you've been so involved at the highest level from such a young age, you get to the point where you're *supposed* to be part of these institutions, but [you feel] like "Yeah, but I've *done* this".¹⁸¹

Her family provided a safe space when she performed on stage as a young child, but being a teenaged girl in male-dominated university spaces left her vulnerable. Shannon had a strict upbringing and wasn't allowed to attend school dances or meet up with boys. She also had little opportunity to socialise with children her own age due to her family's busy gigging schedule. Increasingly alienated from her brother and his friends' musical circle, she spent most of her time offstage practicing, studying or reading. Her goal was to study medicine after school and

178. Mowday, No. 1.

179. Denis-Constant Martin, *Sounding the Cape: Music, Identity and Politics in South Africa* (Somerset West: African Minds, 2013), 105.

180. Martin writes that, 'Robbie Jansen and his bands, which were always mixed, played at rallies, on campuses, interpreted freedom songs and invented new ones' (Martin, *Sounding the Cape*, 242). He also refers to various members of the Schilder family, their contribution to Cape jazz and their clashes with apartheid authorities (Ibid, 225-226, 236-237).

181. Mowday, No. 1.

she was, in her own words, a “high achiever.” Balancing her academic work with her countless musical endeavours would have required a strong sense of determination and discipline; not many teenagers earn an income from performances before they enter high school. Her bookish demeanour at school was in complete contrast to the flashy “alter ego” she cultivated for stage performances:

I loved dressing up and all the attention that came with it, because it was so far away from my “regular” personality – it was such a stark contrast to the studious and academic young girl that I was, glued to books and only interested in getting the best grades.¹⁸²

Being “the only girl on stage” was both thrilling and marginalising; Shannon was unlikely to be overlooked, yet struggled to gain the level of respect afforded to the men on stage. She realised that her onstage appeal had very little to do with her exceptional musical skills; she was repeatedly reduced to decorative status and often represented in an overly-sexualised way:

In one band in particular, I was introduced as “The only rose amongst the thorns”... and this was always followed by “...and this band has some very thorny men!”¹⁸³

The novelty status she enjoyed as a young child later transmuted into feelings of intimidation and objectification:

Because of my dad and my brother, I was kind of accepted in the scene, but in another way I was also constantly put down, because that was the way everybody talked. And because you're *in* it, you know nothing else. You only know *this* way. *This* is the way it is. So, what I realised was that all these people that “inspired” me were actually my abusers as well.¹⁸⁴

In order to operate within this highly exclusionary scene, Shannon felt she needed to play by the proverbial rules. This meant acting out of character and pretending to be unaffected by the misogynistic behaviour of band mates:

From a very early age, I heard myself try to “talk the talk” of the men in the way they rated other musicians or saw music. I would eagerly listen to their banter and then enjoy how they “flattered” me and spoke about women as objects of desire. Even though I was a girl and loved this “image”, this “standing out”, I also desperately wanted to be one of the boys - to fit into “their” world of music. It was a really awkward place to be as a young girl.¹⁸⁵

182. Shannon Mowday, personal notes, received via E-mail, 6 July 2021.

183. Ibid.

184. Mowday, No. 1.

185. Mowday, personal notes.

Shannon's introduction to the jazz scene most closely approximates those of the musicians described by Berliner in terms of what amounts to capital in jazz culture.¹⁸⁶ Her informal access to professional musicians, a rich family tradition of performance, and growing up in the southern suburbs of Cape Town, allowed her to gain entry to – and thrive in – exclusive musical spaces where she could take up multiple instruments and have access to high-profile teachers. Other transitions, such as playing in the university jazz band and “fitting into” the gigging scene were uncomfortable and often traumatic, leading to a deep sense of disillusionment and otherness. Shannon's use of the words “discipline”, “achiever”, “studious”, “best grades” and “highest level”, indicates that she had a strong sense of her own worth and a very strong work ethic that set her apart from her peers. Despite her eagerness to please and to be recognised, she remained an outsider; from a young age, she recognised that the existing structures – and the people she had to emulate to be successful – were a harmful presence. Accepting and adapting to a culture “because you're *in* it, you know nothing else” highlights just how insular and exclusionary the music scene was, and how its gatekeepers remained unchallenged. Possibly because of these dynamics, Shannon is the only participant who shared visceral experiences of gender-based forms of discrimination and abuse. These experiences not only shaped her musical identity and career choices in later years, but also planted the seed for her current work as an educator-activist.

Chantal Willie-Petersen

In 1990 when Chantal and Shannon were in high school, Cape Town was the “most segregated city in the country and less than 6% of the population lived outside the areas designated for their race”.¹⁸⁷ Nevertheless, having spent her early childhood years traveling between South Africa and the USA, Chantal was more accustomed to racial integration than most of her peers:

Even in high school, though I was [part of] the first generation when schools opened, it was amazing. And because I grew up in the States – my formative years – you know, we were in a predominantly “white” state.¹⁸⁸

When her family moved from the Cape Flats to affluent Rondebosch, Chantal and her sister enrolled at the newly integrated Sans Souci Girls' High School in Newlands. Already seasoned

186. Berliner, *Thinking in jazz*, 21-35, 36-59.

187. See Turok, Visagie, and Scheba, ‘Social Inequality and Spatial Segregation’, 74.

188. Willie-Petersen, No. 1.

gospel performers as young children, it was inevitable that Chantal and her twin sister would take up formal lessons in primary school. Unlike Siya, they enjoyed a smooth transition to their new school:

My parents supported our decision to continue with music; from church through primary school, through to high school... Once we started primary school, we started with classical piano and all the musicals...you can imagine. You know how it goes! Once you are in the music department, you are in the *performance* department (laughs)!¹⁸⁹

Singing in the school choir was a natural extension of family and church musicking, and Chantal's level of stage experience undoubtedly served as capital within her new learning environment. Whereas church performances were a vehicle for religious expression, school music allowed her to expand her musical range and she flourished in the structured, more formal learning environment:

You just get roped into all of the...school items... and then the same happened in high school. My sister and I continued with classical music actually. Classical piano. Up until [my final year of school] I did music as a subject.¹⁹⁰

Unlike Shannon, who had access to jazz tuition from a young age, Chantal's formal music training – like that of Amanda – was strictly rooted in classical music. Jazz studies were introduced at the former University of Natal in 1982 and seven years later at the University of Cape Town. Other universities followed suit during the later 1990 and 2000s. Even fewer schools in the country would have offered jazz as part of their curriculum. Nevertheless, Chantal's music teachers instilled a high level of discipline in their students and provided a solid theoretical foundation:

I started grade eight in 1990 and matriculated in 1995. So, jazz was not really [part of the] curriculum at that time. There was no repository for that during the time that I was in high school...I went to a really good high school and I had really good teachers, experienced teachers who have left strong footprints with regard to the way that I understand the *thinking* around music, the discipline around music practice, the theorizing. The patience it takes. I really had teachers who could teach me *how* to study music.¹⁹¹

Like Amanda and Shannon, Chantal was a dedicated student and strong academic achiever:

Our teacher was the type of teacher who would say, "You're going to get to school at half past six, you're going to practise 'til eight o'clock, and then you've got scales and nah, nah, nah." There was a real *rigour*

189. Ibid.

190. Ibid.

191. Ibid.

around the instrument. Not just the styles, but also the technique. And of course, we had choir, and we had the same approach for that; [they were just] tremendous “old school” teachers.¹⁹²

Despite having performed on professional stages as part of various *a cappella* groups outside of school, Chantal did not shy away from joining various ensembles such as the school choir and school musicals. Dedicated and driven, yet not aggressively competitive, Chantal was happily “roped into” musical activities at school. This is in stark contrast to seasoned professional performer and “high achiever” Shannon who pushed back against her school’s insistence that she participate in lower-ability school ensembles. In terms of gendered dynamics, Chantal was not subjected to stereotyping or required to act out of character in order to fit into educational spaces as was the case with Shannon, not least because she attended an all-girls’ school and shared all her musical pastimes with her twin sister.

Siya Makuzeni

Whereas Chantal’s teachers were “old school”, Siya Makuzeni was fortunate to have progressive music educators who were pioneering jazz education at high school level. Like Chantal, Siya initially attended a racially segregated primary school before transferring to a formerly white school. There are however, glaring differences in the ways they transitioned from their former schools to newly integrated schools. Chantal was unconditionally accepted into a prestigious high school after her family took up residence in an upmarket (overwhelmingly white) suburb; her family’s international profile, educational qualifications and ability to afford living in Rondebosch, provided enough social capital for her to be welcomed into the school – and its music programme – without reservations. Siya, on the other hand, was subjected to a series of tests to determine whether she could attend a school of her parents’ choosing. After she completed her first two years of primary school in Mdantsane, Siya’s parents applied to several newly integrated schools in East London:

I got into [a new school] in grade three and it was a *hard* adjustment, I won’t lie. Because that time was very tricky...what year was this? Probably like ’86, ’87? Maybe later, maybe ’89, because my parents initially struggled to find me a slot in any of these schools; but then it was the transition at that time in terms of multi-racial schools. [Things] were a little more relaxed. I had to go and do a couple of tests at different schools, but in terms of the ethos of the school my parents were very happy with Stirling. So they were sitting there...pinning [their hopes on it] like, “Oh my gosh, if she could only get into *this* school...” And I did.¹⁹³

192. Ibid.

193. Makuzeni, No. 2.

The school had a strong music programme and Siya was determined to play the piano. Her parents wholeheartedly supported the idea, undoubtedly relieved that her focus had shifted from tomboyish musical activities such as breakdancing to a more appropriate pastime for a young girl. Once accepted into the school in question, Siya and her parents believed that she would enjoy equal educational opportunities and, in particular, access to a musical education. However, the school's hard and fast rules about who was permitted to play the piano became a major obstacle:

Sometimes you just gotta look at these things and go, "Nah". Some things are not *meant* for you. I just remember [the teacher] was very wary, because I went in and said, "I've *always* wanted to play the piano. We don't have a piano at home, but my parents are very willing to allow me [to take lessons], because my cousin has a piano at home". They [my parents] were *trying* to make things happen, but she was just (shakes head) "Nuh-uh".¹⁹⁴

Siya's family assumed that the new school's presumably more "relaxed" rules in terms of racial integration would ease her transition from a township school, but as they still lived in the township and had no piano at home, she continued to be excluded. Had the family moved to an upmarket suburb in the vicinity of the school as Chantal's family had done, it is possible that Siya may not have been prevented from enjoying full access to the school's facilities and activities on offer. Siya refused to be discouraged and agreed to take up recorder lessons instead, determined to learn how to read and play music:

I was like, "I *still* wanna learn an instrument." But it was great, it was really, really awesome because it gave me an amazing foundation. The recorder...I always hear people knocking it down, I hear the jokes, you know? (laughing) But if you think of the wealth you can get out of that, just from being *diligent* for a few years ... it teaches you so much.¹⁹⁵

When she enrolled at Stirling High School, she continued with recorder lessons. However, despite several years of lessons at her primary school, she had not completed any graded exams and therefore did not meet the requirements for subject music. (Graded qualifications continue to be the preferred currency in South African music education programmes and are more often than not the deciding factor in whether a student gains access to a music programme.) Instead of focusing on Siya's lack of musical currency, her new music teacher saw her potential and decided to intervene:

She was very determined...like, "I'm gonna make sure we can catch you up", because I was already a few grades behind, obviously. I did grades one to four in the first year...on the recorder. And I think that

194. Ibid.

195. Ibid.

[discipline] must've had something to do with it, because she was a very, very, very good teacher...And eventually, that dedication and diligence is something that becomes second nature.¹⁹⁶

During her second year of high school, her teacher suggested that she take up a different instrument. Siya was reluctant to make a change as she had spent the previous year working towards a more advanced level of playing on the recorder:

[My teacher] gave me such a great scenario...because I didn't *get* it. I was like, "What do you mean?" At that point I had no notion that I wanted to be a professional musician. I was just really enjoying playing this stuff. But she gave me a great scenario where she said, "Think of it this way...think of it in terms of when you leave school. You want to be focused on recorder? That's great... your options, though? Because that world - in terms of concert recorder players - first of all, it is *tiny*. Secondly, the competition is fierce. Thirdly, are you going to *actually* make a proper career? How much can you give of yourself... *creatively*?" She was really stern about this...I was fifteen when she was telling me this. And I went, "Hmm. I've never thought of it like that!" So she convinced me that it was a no-brainer. That I just had to go for it, and there was this programme at school, which was the big band, so I might as well just try it. And she spoke to Alan Webster and the next thing, I was *there*.¹⁹⁷

After years of being excluded and largely overlooked in primary school, Siya's new teacher encouraged her to audition for the school's band teacher, Alan Webster:¹⁹⁸

I actually borrowed a clarinet. I thought I was gonna get into the clarinet section. Already, there were *four* [others] though. It just seemed to make sense...recorder onto clarinet. And, ah man...we got there and the little bit that I'd prepared, I couldn't play anymore 'cos the nerves were on me like...it was *crazy*. So he says, "Well, how about we try *another* instrument?" Look, he had this whole array, like a panel full of instruments there. Ah jeez...we tried all the woodwinds, and *nothing* was happening. I wish I could "re-record" this [scene] for myself just to see how insane it must have been...I mean, him just sitting there like, "Nuh-uh." By now, I'm starting to doubt myself like, "Wait. Maybe I *can* actually just play the recorder." [That was] until we got to the trombone. And when we got to the trombone, he showed me how to put it together, took the mouthpiece and showed me, "Okay, this is how you blow. Maybe just give it a try". So I did, and out came a B-flat and...that was *it*. And he was like, "Okay, yeah. *That* one. Take it home." So I took it home and he gave me about two-and-a-half weeks to learn everything. It was intense. Then I had to go and sit on third trombone in the big band!¹⁹⁹

When Siya brought home the trombone, learning a brand new instrument was not the only challenge she faced:

Deep end! I remember coming home and [my parents] went, "Wait – what happened at school? What is *this* now?" So, already they had to get accustomed to the squeaky recorder, now it was like, "What the hell is she carrying?" So I told them the story and they said, "Okay, we'll see how it goes" (laughing). I can't even imagine. I mean, my mom wondered what on *earth* was going on...yeah. It's a great story, because I do believe that certain things are just kind of...fateful. Meant to happen. In fact, it was really great, because now I was learning two different instruments, both equally demanding – trombone in bass clef and the recorder in treble clef. So I had this *scope* now, of the entire range. I started to write music

196. Ibid.

197. Ibid.

198. Alan Webster is the head of music at Stirling High School in East London, and is currently the director of the Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Festival.

199. Makuzeni, No. 2.

just for myself from maybe the age of twelve or thirteen. And that developed, so by the time I'm fifteen, I'm doing songwriting as well, I'm writing lyrics and trying to come up with proper formulas for songs...it just really all came together. And it was, kind of, a supplement for not having a piano at home. This was the craziest thing - as a result, I actually aced theory a lot, because I was using my ear more than anybody else. So it was a very interesting time!²⁰⁰

Around the age of sixteen, she started performing with the school band. Their shows were a highlight of her school career and allowed her to use her reading skills in new ways:

The school programme was really so incredibly run in such a way that we were already exposed to going off and setting up and doing gigs.²⁰¹

When jazz saxophone legends Zim Ngqawana and Winston 'Mankunku' Ngozi visited her school to perform with the big band, it was a life-changing moment for Siya:

They both paid a visit down to the school and I think just seeing them, being around those two figures and having the experience to at least play with them, was... a game changer for me. [I saw that]... *this* is what actually happens [in professional music]. These people are actually doing it and they're being successful out there. So, if I was thinking about where I was to go with my life, there was now a possibility. Especially at that time... you're seventeen and you're on a stage with somebody like that and you're getting to spend some time [with them] offstage as well...backstage interaction. I think [that] completely changed my mind...this was a complete game changer, because now [I was] working with people within the industry, and that cemented it for me.²⁰²

Throughout her high school career, she participated in the annual Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Festival, competing against talented young musicians from across the country. Despite being new to the trombone, she was selected for the National Schools' Big Band, the National Youth Big Band and the National Youth Jazz Band respectively. Her parents may have been doubtful about her taking up the trombone, but Siya trusted her new teachers' advice and was willing to take the necessary steps to "catch up" to her peers and reach her full potential. Othered and excluded in primary school, Siya's resilience and highly adaptive nature allowed her to play by the proverbial rules, yet actively seek ways to achieve her goals, even if it meant playing an instrument she didn't choose for herself. Douglas Lonie and Luke Dickens have explored this phenomenon, arguing that school children often negotiate "their own learning journeys, apart from formal support" when the available options are limited and/or exclusionary.²⁰³ When Siya started her high school career, she was lucky enough to have access to a progressive music programme – one of very few school jazz programmes in the province

200. Ibid.

201. Makuzeni, No. 1.

202. Ibid.

203. Lonie and Dickens, 'Becoming musicians', 93.

– that provided students with opportunities to perform and interact with internationally renowned music icons. Had she remained in a township school, it is unlikely that she would have had access to an “array” of musical instruments, let alone the opportunity to try them all until she could find a suitable fit. She continued to play the recorder along with the trombone and, in the absence of a piano at home, found ways to make the best of the range that each instrument offered. Making do with what she had at her disposal helped her to excel at aural and to think outside of the proverbial box and explore songwriting. Her tenacity allowed her to persevere despite external stumbling blocks and, empowered by teachers who provided encouragement regardless of gender or cultural background, she was finally able to envision a future in musical performance.

Nomfundo Xaluva

Like Siya, Nomfundo initially attended a segregated primary school before moving to a Model C school. Interestingly, she did not attend primary school in New Brighton where she lived with her grandparents, but in what was known at the time as a coloured area. At age eleven, her grandparents enrolled her in an all-girls’ boarding school in Makhanda that offered music lessons:

[I moved] from what was considered a coloured school in Gelvan Park to a Model C school in Grahamstown – Makhanda - where they had classical music lessons and that was the first thing that I enrolled for. That was [my] first extramural and that is kind of where my relationship with music began as a child; purely formal. And now, I look back and I realise just what a rarity that was for a little black girl growing up.²⁰⁴

Gelvan Park was declared a coloured area by the apartheid government during the 1960s; situated in the Northern Areas of Gqeberha, it is an area widely known for gang violence, poverty and poor service delivery. However, as discussed earlier, apartheid education in coloured schools still occupied a higher tier than that of schools in black townships. This may suggest that Nomfundo’s grandparents made a conscious decision to enroll her in a primary school situated in another part of the city. As was the case with Siya, Nomfundo was able to move to a former Model C school when all schools became legally integrated. Nomfundo’s primary school music programme empowered her to pursue her childhood musical aspirations from a young age. Attending an elite all-girls’ boarding school from the age of eleven meant that she had unfettered access to any musical activities on offer without having to navigate a

204. Xaluva, No. 1.

climate of racialised and classed exclusion as Siya did, a few years prior. Nomfundo's piano progress at school was rewarded with her very own piano at home, allowing her to start her musical journey exactly as she had envisioned rather than via several potentially demotivating detours. Whereas her formal school music activities consisted of graded classical exams (piano and voice) and choral activities, her peers introduced her to new genres that broadened her musical tastes:

When I got to boarding school, that's when I started to listen to a lot of *kwaito* and a lot of R&B, you know? It was the soundtrack to [my] hostel and boarding school years.²⁰⁵

She was elected as the first black head prefect during her final year of high school, a testament to her leadership qualities and all-round academic and musical achievements. Although she exclusively studied classical music at school, Nomfundo admired the new crop of South African jazz artists making waves in the music industry. Confident in her own musical ability, she was quietly determined to join their ranks:

I knew in my teen years that I would want to do *something* that was music-related after school: there was just something about how good I felt I *was* at it . . . I think I was exposed, in a way, to what it could be like, having a career in music. At the time – early 2000s – the Judith Sephumas were coming out and the Jimmy Dlodlus were coming out²⁰⁶. This kind of jazz, this contemporary sort of music...at the time, there were music videos that used to play on national TV. And these *incredible* musicians who were coming out in this jazz world were graduates of the University of Cape Town and of the jazz programme there. So I thought, "That's interesting, actually. I'm going to explore that!"²⁰⁷

Like Siya, Nomfundo was determined to pursue jazz studies after hearing successful black South African musicians perform; whereas Siya was drawn to jazz after meeting self-taught jazz veterans in person and played in various national youth bands as a result, Nomfundo was inspired by a younger generation of jazz artists who had formally studied jazz. While Siya was inducted into the jazz scene via personal connections with high-profile mentors, Nomfundo believed her academic abilities and classical music background would count as sufficient capital to pursue a jazz career. Unaccustomed to informal musicking, improvisation or songwriting, she was nevertheless confident that she could gain access to a university jazz programme. Her plan was reinforced when, during her final year of high school, she was selected as a member of the National Youth Choir. She attended a workshop in the Drakensberg

205. Ibid.

206. See <https://www.judithsephumamusic.com> and <https://www.musicinafrica.net/directory/jimmy-dlodlu>

207. Xaluva, No. 1.

where she met Gqeberha-born jazz trumpeter Mandisi Dyantyis, then a first year student in the programme:

I had a conversation with him and I'm like, "Well *this* is actually what I really want to do." I knew from the onset. I just always knew that when I looked at what was coming out of UCT, that *that's* what I actually wanted to do. And so, I applied. The decision was very clear. I didn't even apply to multiple institutions. It wasn't like I was going to apply for music and *this* and *this* [or that] I'd just take whichever one [I was accepted into]. I just had this confidence that *this* is what I wanted to do. And I think I knew that I would make it in, because I'd studied music throughout high school and I had it [as a subject in matric²⁰⁸].²⁰⁹

For Nomfundo, formal music lessons provided the tools she required to follow her childhood aspirations. She listened to popular music with her friends and enjoyed jazz and gospel music recordings with her grandparents, but these experiences belonged to distinctly separate musical worlds. Like Amanda, a generation before, Nomfundo didn't grow up in a musically active family, but inherited a love for music. Both women attended all-girls' schools and though they listened to a wide range of music outside of the classroom, their musical worlds did not "mix" until their late teens. For Amanda, this happened by way of songwriting and transcribing popular music at home, drawing on her music reading skills and theoretical knowledge. Her formal lessons served as a springboard for her songwriting at home and with friends. Conversely, Nomfundo's school music career was dedicated exclusively to gaining the graded qualifications required to pursue music studies. Like Chantal, who also attended an all-girls school, both women closely followed the traditional models upheld by their schools and although they were aware of certain shortfalls in their musical education, they diligently conformed to the status quo and performed various leadership roles. From an early age, Nomfundo understood that her musical goals could be realised through careful and strategic choices and an unwavering work ethic. These qualities would continue to shape her musical development in later years and allow her to carve out a steady and successful career as a performer and educator.

Thandi Ntuli

As discussed, Thandi was exposed to a rich and diverse range of musical traditions. In addition to participating in choral musicking at home and in church, she participated in classical piano competitions. Unlike Siya and Nomfundo, Thandi had access to piano lessons from the age of

208. "Matric" refers to the final year of formal schooling in South Africa (grade twelve).

209. Xaluva, No. 1.

four and was surrounded by highly proficient musicians in her family. Nevertheless, her musical worlds didn't intersect until her late teens. Lucy Green refers to the process of learning in (and across) formal and informal spaces as "bi-musicality." According to Green, some traditions like brass bands and gospel choirs stand "between the two spheres", but:

...there are some significant differences between the formal and the informal approaches to music learning and teaching, the networks they involve and the attitudes and values that tend to accompany them. For a number of people the two rarely, or never, come into contact.²¹⁰

With the encouragement of an inspirational teacher, Thandi was able to bring together different strands of musical influence and developed a keen interest in songwriting:

I'd go and practice my repertoire for exams and there was one particular practice session where I was just sitting in the evening and I thought, "Wow, I wish I could write like these people whose music I'm playing", because I'd always play and be fascinated...how does someone *think* like this?²¹¹

Her practice sessions soon became opportunities to develop variations on her classical pieces. "Playing around" with musical passages to create new songs was the beginning of her composing career. She soon started to draw attention with her songs:

I'd sing some songs and play some songs at school events... for friends at school. I think that contributed [to my confidence]... seeing the way people responded to me.²¹²

One person's response was particularly meaningful; impressed by her performances and songwriting talent, Thandi's music teacher reached out to her family and suggested that she should pursue tertiary music studies:

Yeah, there's always a teacher! I think teachers are really undervalued, because I think so many people have a memory of a teacher who really encouraged them. There was a teacher – he was the choirmaster at our school at the time and he also used to teach singing lessons – Mr. Ralf Schmitt, who is now with Ndlovu.²¹³ When he first heard me singing and playing he was just like, "We need to speak to your parents. You need to study music [as a career]"! I remember the first time [he spoke to my parents]. He is quite a larger-than-life character so he met my dad and he was, like, "Your daughter *needs* to study music! That's just what it *has* to be". My father wasn't so keen on it at the time. I think I was about in grade eleven, but he [Ralf] continued to encourage me. He taught me for a short stint – vocal coaching –

210. Green, *How Popular Musicians Learn*, 6.

211. Ntuli, No. 1.

212. Ibid.

213. The Ndlovu Youth Choir, directed by Ralf Schmitt, is a show choir that hails from the Limpopo province in South Africa. In 2019, the choir reached the final round of the television show, *America's Got Talent*, catapulting them to international fame.

and he was my choir teacher. He would just *pump* things at me. So, I definitely credit him for the belief that I'd be able to study [music].²¹⁴

Thandi's father may not have been sold on the idea at the time, but he was an equally important influence on her musical development during her teenage years. In a self-penned article, Thandi speaks about his role in introducing her to jazz, in particular the music of Abdullah Ibrahim:

I remember wondering how on earth the piano could sound the way he made it sound – both hard and warm at the same time. Still in high school at the time, I was completely oriented with my classical repertoire and how acceptable piano playing was meant to sound. I used to try to play what I remembered hearing from the recording and when my father heard me he would come near the piano and sing the bass lines that Ibrahim's left hand kept going in the recording. I was so fascinated by his mantric left hand, truly "a brother with perfect timing". Hearing the sounds of home on this instrument I had always associated with Western classical music informed a lot of my artistic decisions moving forward.²¹⁵

Thandi's musical worlds did not overlap until her late teens, yet she absorbed unique elements from each genre that would define her compositions in later years (see chapter five). Despite being exposed to jazz records at home, it was a chance encounter at a gospel choir rehearsal in the UK that inspired Thandi to study jazz. After graduating from high school, Thandi embarked on a gap year abroad "to figure things out" and visited her sister who was studying in the UK. She regularly tagged along to her sister's gospel choir rehearsals:

I would sing with them sometimes or just watch. But there was a pianist, the guy who played piano for the actual gospel choir. He was self-taught and I didn't know that at the time, until one day after practice I heard him playing. He just sounded really beautiful and I [asked], "Oh, wow, what song is that?" I thought, as a classical musician, [that] he had probably memorised the song, and he said, "Oh, no, I'm just improvising." I said, "What do you mean you're improvising? How are you making all that up *now*?" So that's when the term "improvising" really stuck in my consciousness and really got me thinking about jazz...and I think that was the final push [towards] wanting to study jazz at university.²¹⁶

Romy Brauteseth

Romy is largely self-taught, and is the only participant in this study who did not formally study music at tertiary level. As a young child, she chose to "flip the script" by rejecting traditional models of music education and carving out her own musical trajectory. Although she participated in musical activities in pre-primary school, she preferred learning music in more informal ways with the help of her mother, older brother and members of their church band:

214. Ntuli, No. 1.

215. Thandi Ntuli, 'The List: Live and direct selections by Thandi Ntuli', *Mail & Guardian*, 16 July 2020, accessed 24 May 2021, <https://mg.co.za/friday/2020-07-16-the-list-live-and-direct-selections-by-thandi-ntuli/>

216. Ntuli, No. 1.

I was in the *Orff* [orchestra] and I played glockenspiel. Then when I got to junior school, the first thing was... I started piano lessons. Unfortunately... I didn't take well to that kind of learning. I was like, "No." I came from a house where everybody was learning instruments by ear, except for my sister of course, who went with the graded approach. But there was very much a [culture of] "music is enjoyment and let's listen to *this* song and figure it out on *this* instrument." I really didn't take to that whole academic thing...okay, now we're gonna learn *this*, and reading. It was a silly, childish thing, you know? Like, "I'm not up for this. I just wanna play. Someone must just show me how to *play* it!"²¹⁷

Despite ready access to a structured music programme from a preschool age and an older sister who took formal music lessons at school, Romy's initial interest in music was purely social:

My sister is an academic. She's got a different brain to me. She likes that kind of thing, the learning process. But I was into sport. I was doing Nippers,²¹⁸ so I just didn't dig it... the lessons. But obviously, at home, I was always on the piano and always *doing* stuff... and that carried on through my life. I didn't want to study music for the same reason!²¹⁹

Like her older siblings, Romy attended the high school where her mother worked as a teacher. Her involvement in the school music programme wasn't as much voluntary as it was expected:

[The band teacher] Marlon [Louis] knew that my sister was musical because my sister was playing... Keryn was musical, she was doing that stuff. [My brother] Shaun was in a band, and then there was a situation where Shane²²⁰ [Cooper] was leaving school...my recollection of this is not great...Shane would probably be able to shed more light on it. I think what happened was that I wasn't really playing at the time, but my mom might have said something to Marlon and he approached me and said, "Look, I hear you play bass in church" or whatever. "Isn't this something you'd want to do a bit more formally?" It definitely came from him. I don't think I was knocking at the door of the music department going "Hey!" I was interested in other stuff. I was doing hockey and stuff, you know? I think he organised that I spend a bit of time with Shane, and Shane kind of saw where I was at. So, Shane - as the bass player in the jazz band - played a role, going "I think that perhaps she could do this." I couldn't read [music] at the time; that would have been grade eight or nine. So yes, it kind of came to me via my mom and what Marlon knew of my family, through my mom. He approached me and I definitely have a lot to thank him for, because he kind of dragged me in there a little bit... like, kicking and screaming (laughs). I knew band practice times were at the same time as hockey practice and I was like, "Guys, this is going to force me into a decision I don't wanna make," (laughs), but I *had* to eventually. And that was it. I was like, "Well, this is what it *is* now".²²¹

Despite her initial frustration at being "expected" to take music, Romy believes that her teachers and friends played an important role in helping her to realise her own potential:

I think you can get, like, the same kind of message running through my career... people have forced me into doing stuff (laughs). I've been so – what do you call it when you don't instigate anything yourself – so *non-committal* when it's come to this music thing. Other people have basically, through all of this, seen something in me and said like, "Come on, you *have* to. You're clearly musical, you *should* be doing

217. Brauteseth, No. 2.

218. "Nippers" is a beach sport for young children, modeled on surf lifesaving. It is a popular sport in coastal cities across South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. In Gqeberha, Nippers is situated on Pollock Beach in Summerstrand where Romy grew up.

219. Brauteseth, No. 2.

220. Shane Cooper (<http://www.shanecoopermusic.com>)

221. Brauteseth, No. 2.

this.” And I’m like, “Okay”. I mean, [my first teacher] Ms. Swart was horrified when I quit piano [in grade one]. She was absolutely horrified. She was like, “You’re making the biggest mistake, you’re talented. Don’t *do* this.” But I was seven and I wanted to have *nothing* to do with this... like, “Leave me alone” (laughs). I felt bad later on, but then she rocked up at one of my gigs and she was just beaming and had like a smile of pride on her face. This was when I was already living in Cape Town. She might have even have been at a gig [I played] with you. And she was like, “I *knew* it. I knew that you’d end up here”.²²²

Romy’s mother was similarly disappointed when she decided to discontinue her primary school piano lessons, but there was no expectation that she would pursue music as a career. Instead, her mother encouraged her to be versatile and to embrace her diverse interests including art, another popular family pastime:

My mom was upset at *that* point. She was like, “I wish you would carry on.” That was when I was very young. She didn’t appreciate that. But I mean, parents are strange that way. They kind of push you into these things, but when you get to the end of school, they go, “No, no. You shouldn’t *study* it.” They want you to be involved in it because it’s important to them, but they don’t want you to follow it as a career. I think even my mom was a bit confused, actually! Music has been a part of her life, but never *formally*. She has always played something or other from very early on, but went a different route when it came to a job. She was never one of those parents who are a performing musician and they have child...and all they want for their child is to be the same. It was never like that. Academically, I was into a lot of things before I eventually [took] music as a subject. I was doing accounting. I *loved* accounting. And [having to choose music as a subject instead of accounting] was a horrible decision for me. I loved maths and I was *good* at maths. I think that my mom liked that there were two sides to me. My dad’s very logical side – he was very good with numbers and all of that – and then my mom. There’s also a creative side that comes from the Brauteseths. Art was also something she was very proud of in me and my brother. We both did art. I think she really like that I was playing the bass. Between me and my sister, I think she liked the fact that she played bass and now *I* was taking it on.²²³

At the insistence of her teachers, Romy finally took up music as a subject, finding it easier to capitulate than to keep resisting what seemed to be inevitable:

They were all on my case about taking subject music, because of what [they assumed] might happen *after* I finish school. But I wanted to do something I enjoyed. I wasn’t into the academic implications of [studying music], you know? Taking music as a subject so I could study it after school was never my move. But at some point it became obvious that I should. I think it was in grade eleven.²²⁴

She discovered South African jazz through her school friend Kyle Du Preez.²²⁵ After years of playing pop, rock and gospel music at home and in church, and playing school band repertoire

222. Ibid.

223. Ibid.

224. Ibid.

225. Trombonist, bandleader, composer and educator Kyle Du Preez regularly performs at South Africa’s top jazz festivals with the likes of Nils Landgren, Shannon Mowday, Sisonke Xonti, Marcus Wyatt and the ZAR Jazz Orchestra.

(mostly popular music, occasional American jazz standards and movie themes), Romy was instantly hooked:

Kyle was the one who played me all those records in PE. He played me Bra Zim [Ngqawana] and he played me Bheki [Mseleku] and he played me Carlo [Mombelli]...and he was like, "Listen to all of *this*," and I was like, "Err . . . what's going on *here*?"²²⁶

Her role in the school band soon extended to additional gigs, facilitated by her band teacher. These opportunities empowered Romy and her peers to form their own band:

When there wasn't enough budget or space for the big band, then the normal thing to do was to take someone to play the melodies – so it was Devon, Tim, myself, and Kyle. Marlon would just send us off to Walmer Park Shopping Centre to play gigs (laughs)! Those were good gigs! I loved those Saturday gigs...and that [became] the *J-Walkers*.²²⁷

As the J-Walkers, Romy and her band mates Kyle Du Preez (trombone), Devon van Rooyen (drums) and Tim Robinson (guitar) started performing at weddings, private functions and local venues in and around the city. In addition, Romy also regularly worked as a pit musician for theatre shows and revues. Her school music teachers facilitated what would become another major defining moment in her development as a jazz musician. The school band participated in the Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Festival, Romy's first encounter with professional jazz musicians. Her first big break came when she was selected for the National Schools' Big Band in 2005. It was a daunting experience, but Romy was determined to learn as much as possible from her new mentors. Playing in the school band provided her with a solid reading background and experience in ensemble playing, but the repertoire largely consisted of American popular music. Her exposure to South African jazz, via school friends Kyle Du Preez and Shane Cooper, allowed her to master the repertoire that conductor Graham Beyer²²⁸ had selected for the National Schools' Band that year:

That whole programme he put together was so *killing*; it was Jonas Gwangwa and people I had never heard of. He was the perfect person to lead that band actually, because he'd exposed himself to a lot [of South African jazz]. And Kyle also, he was in the band. So I was in the deep end, but it was so cool. I was so happy.²²⁹

226. Brauteseth, No. 1.

227. Brauteseth, No. 2.

228. Graham Beyer is a Port Elizabeth-born multi-instrumentalist, bandleader and educator. He has performed with South African jazz luminaries including Winston "Mankunku" Ngozi, Marcus Wyatt, Feya Faku.

229. Brauteseth, No. 2.

After graduating from high school, Romy surprised friends, family and teachers alike when she enrolled for a National Diploma in Graphic Design at the erstwhile Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (now Nelson Mandela University):

Well, the thing is that in [Port Elizabeth] there weren't really enough role models in terms of what full-time musicians looked like. We didn't really have a realistic view of what happens in the rest of the country. Most people who are playing [jazz], they are either teaching or they have another gig on the side. So, it actually was never really an option. I just thought, well I don't want to *teach* [music], so why would I study?²³⁰

When asked whether she ever considered music as a career, Romy replied:

There's a short answer to that and it's "never". No, I held it off for as long as possible.²³¹

Romy is the only participant who actively resisted a traditional musical education; she participated in a range of activities during her school career and, to her teachers' dismay, didn't particularly favour music above more physical pastimes like surfing, hockey and Nippers. Although her family connections allowed her automatic entry into school musical activities, she made deliberate decisions to "do music" on her own terms. Choosing what to learn and with whom, Romy crafted her own musical education by observing – and interacting with – family members and peers rather than music educators. Nevertheless, her schoolteachers took enough of an interest in her abilities to continue exposing her to learning opportunities that would later change the course of her career. Like Siya, she was a beneficiary of the generally progressive primary and secondary music education scene in the Eastern Cape during the 1990s and 2000s. This allowed her ready access to a prominent incubation programme for jazz where she soon made her mark in various national youth bands.

Structure versus agency: the emergence of individual voices

As mentioned earlier, making use of Bourdieusian and other, related theoretical frameworks to organise the participants' interview data does not allow for deeper readings of their complex individual responses to oppressive structures of power. Michel Pêcheux's theoretical model of subject construction²³² is well suited to exploring individual action and agency, and I argue, may be profitably incorporated within Bourdieu's frameworks. Pêcheux theorises that subject

230. Brauteseth, No. 1.

231. Ibid.

232. Michel Pêcheux, 'Language, Semantics and Ideology: Stating the Obvious', in *Language, Discourse, Society*, eds. Stephen Heath and Colin MacCabe, translated by Harbans Nagpal (London and Basingstoke: The Macmillan Press Ltd, 1982), 158-200.

construction can be classed in three ways: identification, counter-identification and disidentification. This model offers a starting point towards analysing how the participants chose to fit into, reject, or operate outside of the master narratives that underscored their early professional experiences. Very simply put, for Pêcheux, identification describes the actions of a “good subject”, an individual who complies with the dominant social, ideological and cultural structures. Rosemary Hennessy in turn explains that the good subject “freely consents” to hegemonic interdiscourse by conforming to (or operating within) the dominant structure.²³³ Counter-identification can best be described as the actions of a “bad subject”, an individual who opposes the status quo, “rebels against or counteridentifies with the discursive formation imposed on her by the interdiscourse” and therefore remains in a symmetrical relationship to it. Hennessy explains:

However, because the bad subject is a symmetrical inversion of the good, she keeps in place through negation the framework of the hegemonic ideology inscribed in the interdiscourse...The woman-centered discourses of feminism that merely reverse patriarchy’s gender hierarchy, for example, produce a counter-identified subject.²³⁴

Pêcheux’s third positionality – that of disidentification – is the most radical strategy; José Esteban Muñoz explains:

...a third mode of dealing with dominant ideology, one that neither opts to assimilate within such a structure nor strictly opposes it; rather, disidentification is a strategy that works on and against dominant ideology but in a way that does not erase differences.²³⁵

Whilst the participants’ actions (and those of significant adults in their lives) are too nuanced to fit neatly into these three categories, Pêcheux’s schema is helpful in making sense of how they responded to dominant power structures.²³⁶ Below I briefly track some of the participants’ responses – and in some cases those of their mentors – in chronological order.

At first glance, Amanda’s mother is a “good subject”: despite having to play the piano against her will, she conformed to the genteel family tradition because it was “expected” of her. She

233. Rosemary Hennessy, ‘Women’s Lives/Feminist Knowledge: Feminist Standpoint as Ideology Critique’, *Hypatia*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (1993), 29.

234. *Ibid.*, 29.

235. José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics*, Vol. 2 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 11.

236. Building on Pêcheux’s schema, Ellen Koskoff theorises that women’s musical performances are shaped by gender ideologies and that these can be categorised in much the same way (Koskoff, ‘An Introduction to Women, Music, and Culture’, 1-24). In chapter five I briefly explore how Koskoff’s categorisations may be useful in exploring certain elements of the participants’ musical performances.

worked as a kindergarten teacher and occasionally played the piano when Amanda was little, but in later years these “feminine” roles made way for those of single mother and “boss lady”. In keeping with tradition, she enrolled Amanda and her sister in music lessons, but allowed them the choice to opt out after a reasonable period of time. Forced to play the recorder, Amanda’s sister soon quit music lessons altogether; Amanda, on the other hand, found it easier to comply as she was offered the option of learning the piano, an instrument she loved from a young age. Amanda and her sister were raised to make careful and conservative choices and they attended an all-girls’ convent school. At school, Amanda didn’t challenge or disrupt the status quo and was a high performing student and natural leader. She diligently completed her graded music exams and developed a strict practice discipline. Her testimony nevertheless reveals glimmers of counter-identification and disidentification; as a teenager, she explored (sometimes risqué) pop music, antithetical to the school’s regimented classical programme and conservative Catholic ethos. When her piano teacher (a nun) asked her to play in church, she agreed despite not growing up in a particularly religious home; playing in church afforded her an opportunity to secretly meet with the head altar boy.

Unlike Amanda’s mother, Shannon’s parents disidentified with the dominant political and cultural ideologies that shaped the Cape Town music scene during apartheid. Even though she was raised conservatively, Shannon’s parents normalised the notion that girls could be gigging musicians, even in spaces (other whites) deemed unsuitable. Moreover, her father taught her to play the same instruments as her older brother, suggesting that – within their family – gender stereotypes did not extend to musicking. Shannon can be described as a “good subject” nevertheless; as a “bookish” academic achiever, she conformed to school structures and mostly played by the rules. Like Amanda, Shannon also subtly migrated towards counter-identification; whereas she performed the role of the “good subject” at school, she spent her teenage years trying to identify with a (male) subculture that treated her as an outsider. In the next chapter, I explore how her desire to be a “good subject” in male-dominated spaces required her to be a “bad girl”.

Chantal can be described as a “good subject” in all the spaces she inhabited as a child. As a pastor’s daughter, she sang in church and developed a deep sense of spirituality and social responsibility. At school she was a diligent student who participated in all the “expected” musical activities (e.g., musicals and choirs) and was dedicated to her classical piano lessons. When she moved to a formerly white school, she seamlessly integrated into the music

programme as a result of her existing cultural capital, and because she had the talent and academic clout to back it up. Identification is not necessarily “passive”: Chantal’s conformity can possibly be ascribed to contentment. She had no compulsion to push back against the social structures at home, church and school, as these were safe places where she was empowered rather than forced into certain activities. In chapter four, however, I explore how she was forced to abandon this orientation because of negative power imbalances in her immediate environment.

Siya’s testimony offers examples of counter-identification: even as a young child, she challenged and disrupted ingrained gendered and social norms despite pushback from family members and teachers. As a young child, her actions were not aligned with traditional gender roles and propriety and she was viewed as a “troublemaker”: her determination to follow her own path was overruled by her parents who attempted to “correct” her tomboyish behaviour. This motivated her to seek other (more gender-appropriate ways) to engage with music. She disidentified with the rigid and exclusionary music programme at her primary school by finding ways to make the most of the tools at her disposal and empowered herself despite being neglected and overlooked. The vibrant and inclusive culture within her high school jazz band allowed Siya to come into her own as a “good subject”, someone whose ability and creativity was recognised by her peers and mentors. Inspired to emulate successful black South African jazz musicians she met at school and as a member of various national youth ensembles, Siya was happy to conform to a subculture that would enable her to reach her creative goals. Moving across all three of Pêcheux’s positionalities, Siya displays a great deal of adaptability and an innate talent to locate or create structures that work for her.

For Nomfundo, being a “good subject” was a way to gain legitimacy within spaces that she once viewed as off limits. Her grandparents facilitated this process, strategically enrolling her in what would have been an all-white school only a few years prior. In a significantly changed South Africa, it was no longer unusual for a young black girl to excel at classical piano or to be the head prefect of a prestigious, girls’ boarding school. At home, being able to play the piano for family and friends was powerful proof that compliance paid off. The presence of successful young, black graduates in the commercial music scene convinced her that a jazz career was attainable when armed with the requisite educational and musical capital. Unlike Amanda who engaged with various genres and experimented with songwriting, Nomfundo focused exclusively on the curriculum and – as is customary in prestigious school music

programmes – methodically racked up graded qualifications from Trinity College of Music. Joining the school choir led to a position in the National Youth Choir where a chance meeting with a jazz student cemented her decision to apply to the same institution her role models attended.

Thandi can be described as a “good subject” who played by the rules in all the musical spaces she inhabited as a child. At home – and by extension in church – she strongly identified with her family’s musicking traditions and happily played her part in keeping her grandfather’s music alive. Despite the family’s already-rich musical habitus, Thandi’s mother chose to enroll her for classical piano lessons, enabling her to acquire a level of high-status musical capital her older family members were denied. Up until her late teens, Thandi viewed herself as a classical pianist first and foremost. Like Nomfundo, Thandi attended an upmarket all-girls’ school where she excelled at classical piano and sang in the choir. Like Siya, Thandi had an inspirational teacher who empowered her to explore her own musical voice rather than limit herself to the (classical) curriculum. She began to draw positive attention by performing her own compositions and slowly began to dis-identify with her carefully constructed identity as a classical musician without disrupting her “good subject” status.

Romy’s testimony offers the most striking examples of disidentification, possibly as a result of her parents’ progressive stance on gender stereotypes. Instead of “protecting” her from experiences traditionally associated with boys, Romy’s father normalised the idea that no activity was reserved for boys only. Her mother – an outlier herself – also quietly disidentified with the dominant stereotype of a conservative suburban pastor’s wife and schoolteacher. Romy refused to submit to formal music lessons at a very young age, when other little girls are unlikely to deviate from societal (and gendered) norms. Instead of imitating her older sister (a reading pianist and flautist), Romy chose to surf and play the guitar “with the boys”. At school however, her refusal to cave in to the increasing pressure to take up formal music painted her as counter-identifying “bad subject” (rebel) for several years. When she finally capitulated/conformed, it was not to appease her teachers, but to achieve a new goal: attending a national jazz festival exposed her to inspiring role models and changed her views on playing professionally. With this new possibility on the horizon, Romy played by the rules and – within two short years – mastered the theoretical aspects of music that she had been avoiding since primary school. Romy’s testimony demonstrates how, even in the space of a few years, individuals can oscillate between identification, counter-identification and disidentification.

The next chapter explores the participants' experiences as emerging and established professionals within educational spaces and as performing artists. It tracks some of the most important moments in their careers and pays close attention to power as both constraint and/or capacity.

4. Professional Stages

This chapter focuses on the participants' engagements with patriarchal dynamics in their professional lives, beginning with their early experiences as students in university jazz programmes and other performance environments. As in the previous chapter, their testimony indexes ever-evolving histories of gender, race, and the distinctive ways these histories played out in particular "practiced places".¹ While wider-scale societal structures have inevitably impacted on their trajectories as emerging jazz artists, the guiding and enabling presence of supportive peers and role models cannot be overstated in the participants' navigation of new territory as young adults. Wahl and Ellingson argue that, "familial and informal networks are still crucial despite the credentialing now available through academic jazz programs".² For some of the participants, entry into the professional jazz scene was largely facilitated through personal relationships, alliances and mentorships – old and new – rather than via formal qualifications.

As discussed in chapter three, Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, dispositions and field are useful but limiting when analysing the participants' individual agency: for one, Bourdieu does not appear to engage with the dynamism and historically shifting nature of fields. In post-apartheid South Africa, variables to consider when studying individuals' "feel" or "sense" of the game – in this case jazz performance – include class, race, gender, level of education, political affiliation and generational differences to name a few. In this chapter, I continue to draw on Pêcheux's theoretical schema to analyse the participants' individual responses to gendered narratives of mastery, and explore their complex negotiations with power as capacity and constraint as described by Foucault.

Amanda Tiffin

Amanda moved to South Africa in 1991 to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Cape Town (UCT). During her first year, two chance encounters ignited her interest in jazz:

1. De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 117.

2. Wahl and Ellingson, 'Almost Like a Real Band', 465.

I discovered [the existence of a jazz programme] through a very friendly chap who was playing the piano in one of the neighbouring residences... he was studying jazz at the College of Music. I was like, "What? You can study *jazz* at university?" I started learning jazz from that friend and he would give me recordings and stuff...cassettes (laughs). I listened to Ella Fitzgerald and Dave Brubeck and all these people I'd never heard of before. I fell in love with it and I started playing...I was playing my own songs anyway, but they were folk and pop songs... and I used to play guitar, badly. I'd also sit and play lots of classical piano. He suggested that I come and sing with one of the ensembles at the College. So I went along to sing some Stevie Wonder and it opened up a whole *world* I had no idea of... [My friend] had already been gigging, playing little restaurant gigs and parties and stuff like that, so he opened up all of these career options and gigs, and writing music. Arranging...he explained that stuff.³

A campus concert by the African Jazz Pioneers⁴ further cemented her decision to study jazz:

I was *blown* away. I was like, "Oh my gosh, what did I just *hear*?" It opened up a whole world of music I had no idea was there...I had to approach my mom and ask if I could switch to studying music and got myself all prepared for my "speech" on the phone. I said, "I want to switch to studying music and do a jazz specialization and do all *these* things" and my mom was like... "Okay" (laughs). I was really not prepared for that!⁵

Being able to play (popular music) by ear and being somewhat familiar with reading chord symbols counted in her favour, but she acknowledges that her jazz knowledge was limited and that she was accepted into the (now prestigious) programme because it was still young and developing:

I don't think I would get in [today]...it was 1992 and the jazz programme had only been going since '89. So they were just happy to have applicants (laughs)! They were happy to have applicants who could *play* their instrument...my friend gave me some written-out jazz pieces to learn, an Oscar Peterson thing, I think. He'd shown me how to do it, so I took that along and I also played Beethoven just to show that I could play and [the lecturer] asked, "Can you play chords?" I said, "Ja, I play pop music, so I guess I know a few chords." [He said] "Okay, play Cmaj7." So I went *plonk* on the piano, in root position. (laughing)! I think for him it was like, "Okay, this person can play, she reads music, got some music theory..." I had some rhythm...that was enough.⁶

At the time there were no women jazz lecturers and unlike the male students who found strength in numbers, Amanda was one of very few women in the programme who stayed the course:

I was the only girl in my [first year jazz] class in a class of twenty...at the end of it, maybe only four of us graduated. Because I was the only girl I had no reference, in a way, to how it *should* be . . . I was trying to be one of the guys a lot of the time, to fit in. And looking back now, to when I was a young

3. Tiffin, No. 1.

4. The African Jazz Pioneers have celebrated and recreated the sounds of 1950s and 1960s Sophiatown since 1981, fusing traditional American big band elements and township jazz. See Christopher Thorpe, 'Deconstructing "The South African jazz feel": Roots, rhythms and features of South African jazz' Masters thesis, Rhodes University, 2018), 42-54.

5. Tiffin, No. 1.

6. Ibid.

musician, I didn't have friendships when I was a student. I had "colleague-ships", you know? I didn't really have a mirror or someone to bounce things off, or compare notes with.⁷

Nevertheless, Amanda had a clear idea of what she wanted to achieve: unable to major in jazz voice, she majored in jazz piano instead. After several years of trial and error – and resisting her lecturers' suggestion to choose a more convenient option – the arrival of a new and supportive voice lecturer allowed her to develop and embrace her own sound:

[They] didn't want me to [major in jazz voice] because there was no jazz singing teacher at that time. There was no jazz voice programme at all, so I had to take classical singing lessons... They were trying to convince me to take guitar [as a second instrument] because they had a jazz guitar teacher and I already played a little bit of guitar. And I *insisted*. "No, I want to *sing*." Eventually they said, "Okaaaaaaay!" and let me do singing. Thank God. I did classical singing all the way through varsity [and] the [jazz and pop] singing thing, I kind of figured out by myself a lot... I went through a few different teachers and then I was given a teacher, Hanna van Schalkwyk and she was the first teacher I had that never tried to make me into something that I wasn't. She said, "You're a jazz singer. Your sound is light. You will never be an opera singer. Never. If you wanted to [pursue] classical music, you'd never make it in opera ... You'd have to sing *Lieder* ... but you're a *jazz* singer, so let's give you classical stuff that's got some of that influence that's going to challenge your ear, that's going to challenge your technique." So, she gave me all this beautiful, 20th century classical stuff to learn and I thank God she did, because it really helped my intonation, it helped all of those things. She was great. She taught me for about four years.⁸

Although Amanda loved to sing, she resented being overlooked as a pianist and bandleader:

I was a very good piano player at that time... I was really focusing on jazz piano. I was good at what I did, but I did not get booked as a pianist. I got booked as a singer. A lot. It was like I wasn't on the radar as an option . . . and I suspect it [didn't have] much to do with my abilities, but *everything* to do with my gender.⁹

Ironically, it was a family friend in Zimbabwe who first helped her to record her own music and recognised her value as a songwriter and keyboardist. Like the friend who introduced her to the jazz programme (and gigging scene) in Cape Town, her new mentor enabled Amanda to apply her skills in a practical way, but also to gain access to another, smaller, jazz scene where she was in the company of responsible male friends with a connection to her family:

I went home [a lot] during the holidays in the beginning... I met a guy through my mom, actually he was working with my mom. He was a rock guitar player who was just the sweetest guy. He took an interest and set up my guitar, showed me some chords and said, "Oh, you're writing really good songs! We should record them". I started to work with him and another guy who had a little studio on his farm (chuckles) and they had a little sequencer. They taught me how to use that and loaned it to me, and I took

7. Tiffin, No. 1.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

it home and programmed all my songs with a keyboard. They even loaned me a keyboard! He was really quite a big part of the reason I ended up [doing] music as a career, actually.¹⁰

Back in Cape Town, respected jazz pianist and musical producer Andrew Ford¹¹ was another influential mentor who made an effort to introduce her to the professional jazz scene:

Andrew Ford booked me for my first jazz gigs... he wrote out lead sheets for me and said, “This is how you write a lead sheet. Put it in your key...” He showed me a lot of stuff and...he booked me for gigs... I was so green and he still booked me! He was so encouraging and positive, and he’s still like that with young people.¹²

Dominated by jazz lecturers, university students and alumni, the local jazz scene required her to take a backseat to her male counterparts. Not satisfied with being typecast as a songbird and a pretty addition to all-male bands, Amanda stopped trying to “fit in” and created musical spaces of her own:

I’ve heard a lot from other countries – on gender panels and discussions – when other female musicians said, “I didn’t get the job opportunities because of my gender. I was good at what I did, so I made my own projects, I made my own bands, my own work and I was the one booking the men.” That’s how I built my career. I made my own work and built respect from doing that, because I was *leading* all the time and I did well. [During] my student days, there were people forming bands and projects and stuff, and I was just not included in that. Never. It was never even entertained that I would be included...I mean, my first instrument was piano, but I was seen as “the girl singer”. [It] was fine because I got a lot of work out of it, but at the same time I also wanted to be taken seriously as a musician and it just wasn’t the case. So, one just gets on with it and do what you do, and create the work for [yourself].¹³

Amanda began to pursue other musical ventures outside of the university that allowed her to use both her vocal and keyboard skills. She played numerous corporate and theatre shows in the city, and after earning a Masters degree, she took on a part-time position as vocal lecturer at the university alongside other teaching work at local schools and studios. Soon, her rising profile as a performer afforded her the confidence to forgo “sensible” teaching work and pursue a stage career:

It was the age of the tribute show and there were lots of venues in Cape Town that were doing them, so I was fortunate enough to ride that wave for a while...I think I’m a product of my generation to a large extent...those of us who have been in the jazz world specifically, but in *music* in general. [Jazz is] a much more male-dominated part of the music industry than, say, pop music. The tribute shows that I did definitely [reflected] an even spread of gender across the board...all kinds of people playing all kinds of

10. Tiffin, No.2.

11. Andrew Ford is a leading jazz pianist, composer and producer based in Cape Town. He is the owner of recording studio The Nut House, and a long-time member of the veteran Cape jazz band, Virtual Jazz Reality (VJR). He composes and produces music for film, television and radio, and is a respected member of the jazz education community.

12. Tiffin, No. 1.

13. Ibid.

instruments in the pop and rock world. It was a lot more acceptable [having] female musicians in the band, on *whatever* instruments. If they were decent at what they did, they got jobs. But in the jazz world, it was always very male-dominated.¹⁴

Amanda was fortunate to meet strong women in the popular music industry who helped her improve her business and professional networking skills. Calli Thomson (formerly Housdon)¹⁵ was the first bandleader to hire Amanda for a professional show:

She was finishing [university] as I started, and I remember she had her own band...She was playing all the shows. She played double keyboards and jazz and pop, and doing backing vocals at the same time, and she was the musical director on things. So, I used to see what she was doing and be like, "Oh, wow, okay. I can do that." I got to watch her run her band and see how she conducted her business. She was really proactive in terms of the business side of things...the band was always well rehearsed in how they did things [and] they were good, playing at weddings and parties and stuff. I saw how you run a function band and I still use some of those skills. She musically directed the first tribute show I was in, my first big theatre show. I watched her, a woman alone with an eight or ten piece band, running that whole show...she was a *boss*, but she was always so nice about it. Gentle, yet firm...so, people were really respectful of her and I really loved seeing that.¹⁶

Afrikaans pop singer and television personality Mynie Grové introduced Amanda to session work:

She was like, "Okay, *skat*¹⁷...you put one ear like *this* and... can you hear? Yes, okay, and you must do this and this and this." I learnt some studio things with her and I worked with her later on in leadership roles and all kinds of big projects and stuff.¹⁸

Amanda was booked to mime playing keyboards in various music videos featuring leading Afrikaans recording artists. Although she was more than qualified to play keyboards on the actual recordings, she was only seen and not heard. Nevertheless, this bizarre scenario was simultaneously a lucrative way to build capital in the music industry:

They would book musicians to come in and mime... it was via Mynie, and she said, "Oh, they need a keyboard player to come and mime. Bring a keyboard." And then you'd learn the song and [next thing you knew] you're on the beach with Gé Korsten¹⁹ or something!²⁰

14. Ibid.

15. Calli Thomson (Housdon) is a UCT music graduate and veteran musical director, bandleader and performing keyboardist/vocalist. She is well-known for directing professional shows across South Africa, including the popular Barnyard Theatre venues.

16. Tiffin, No. 1.

17. *Skat* means "darling" in Afrikaans.

18. Tiffin, No. 1.

19. Gé Korsten (1927-1999) was a Dutch-born, South African opera singer and actor. He released numerous albums, performed the theme music to iconic Afrikaans feature films and worked as a television actor.

20. Tiffin, No. 1.

Although she had little interest in teaching during her 20s and early 30s, Amanda has in recent decades become one of the most respected jazz educators in South Africa. She works as a festival curator, conducts various ensembles, performs at festivals and has become a prominent national advocate for gender equality in jazz. She was recently thrust into the spotlight for her roles as the first woman to hold the prestigious title Head of Jazz Studies (University of Cape Town) and “the first female”²¹ conductor of the Standard Bank National Youth Jazz Band (2018):

The fact that I was the first female national bandleader was outrageous in 2018 – *outrageous* – and it was mildly annoying that I had to be branded like that. It wasn’t just, “Here’s the next National Youth Band director.” Rather, “First female, first female.” Which is good in some ways because it highlights the problem, but at the same time you just want to be chosen or booked for that job because you are good at what you do.²²

In an earlier published interview, Amanda expresses her appreciation for the latter appointment, but questions the timing of the offer in the wake of #MeToo:

There has been quite some heralding of the fact that I am the first woman to hold this position, so it has come with a little pressure, a feeling of leading a charge to some extent, but I am glad to have been asked to do so...Naturally, I would hope that I have been asked to lead the project based on my skills, and not just to fulfill a gender equality mandate, given the telescoping of media attention on gender imbalances in the arts in general and in jazz in particular. However that would be a little naïve. It was mentioned to me that my name had come up a few times in previous years, so one does wonder a little at the timing of this, and begs the question why the delay?! Regardless, it is an important step in the right direction, and I am indeed honoured to be taking on the role.²³

Initially reluctant to have been cast as a mouthpiece for women, Amanda nevertheless uses her status as respected artist and educator to affect change:

There are times when I feel like I really don’t want it. I don’t want the pressure. I just want to quietly get on with what I do. I want to quietly make music, write music, lead the band and not have to have that kind of magnifying glass on everything I do. At the same time I see how much of a difference I’m making even in a few years...modeling a way of leading and a way of interacting for younger colleagues and students that is new and different and more consultative, more collaborative...I think there’s a hell of a lot of people...in the generation after me, or maybe two generations after me, who are still perpetuating the “bro” network. There’s still a lot of that. A *lot*. But the students who are graduating now and going off into the professional space are the ones that are more woke and more aware, and more interested in

21. Ncube, Carlos. ‘SA: National Youth Jazz Band appoints first female conductor’, *Music in Africa*, 18 June 2018, accessed 2 September 2019, <https://www.musicinafrica.net/magazine/sa-national-youth-jazz-band-appoints-first-female-conductor>

22. Tiffin, No. 1.

23. Nicky Schrire, ‘Amanda Tiffin (appointed as first Female Conductor for National Youth Jazz Band in South Africa), interview, *London Jazz News*, 9 July 2018, accessed 10 February 2021, <https://londonjazznews.com/2018/07/09/interview-amanda-tiffin-appointed-as-first-female-conductor-for-national-youth-jazz-band-in-south-africa/>

equality in terms of whom they work with. I see them booking their female colleagues because that person is *good* at what they do and they want to work with them.²⁴

Alert to her own shifting positions as a gendered subject and agent, Amanda generously acknowledges her indebtedness to a younger generation of women jazz students (and women more generally) who have helped her identify her power and use it to effect positive change:

I accepted a lot more [then] than I would accept *now*...and I think it's taken the younger generation to highlight that stuff and make me realise in retrospect that there was so much that was dysfunctional... and that one just went along with it, because what *else* would you do? If you wanted to work, that's how you had to operate...looking back, I think there were definitely a lot less opportunities offered to me. It was only really in recent years, with the whole bubbling up of the #MeToo movement, that I really started to become a lot more educated. And it was my students, my younger generation students, who were discussing these things and talking about this...and some of my younger friends. And...it sort of woke me up. I realised...I look around and I'm like, "I'm in a position of authority now, where I can actually make *changes*."²⁵

Working with the Lady Day Big Band has been an empowering experience, and is another way for Amanda to extend a hand to young women starting (or considering) jazz careers:

I think having worked with an all-women band for these last few years has also changed the way I conduct myself in other spaces. In a way, it's given me a different kind of confidence. And when you work with only women, you don't have as many defenses up as you would in mixed spaces. I also think I'm reaching a certain age when I'm starting to be "invisible" – women become invisible as we reach middle age! So, in a way, I don't have *that* to contend with as much as I used to. So it doesn't affect me – I think being a young woman in some spaces, your defenses really have to be up, because you'll be approached in certain ways and it happens pretty much as a guarantee. But as you get older, those things become less and less of an issue (laughing). You can just do your work and do your thing. And also because you're older, you carry a certain experience with you that people are quite respectful of...I don't mind that part. I'm happy to do it. I'm happy to mentor people if they want or if they need that. There were certain people in my career who have mentored and encouraged me, so it's nice to be able to pass it on. It makes a difference to people, having someone in their corner...I'm almost always the oldest in the room these days (pretends to cry, then laughs). I still remember being the youngest! People see you in a different light, so they treat you a different way. There's a measure of respect [that comes with my job] so they expect me to take a leadership role even if it's not necessarily my project alone, or something like that. People look to you for guidance.²⁶

Amanda has founded and led various projects to even the playing field and believes that empowerment should start at school level:

I think there's still a perpetuation of the gendering of instruments in some school environments... but that's one of the main drives for the Lady Day Big Band... there are a lot of amazing schoolteachers that are encouraging young female learners to take up whatever instrument they want and encouraging them to take it seriously, and then teaching them...I think it's very important that young women see other women modeling what's possible. This is what's *possible* for you, you know? You can be a drummer, a

24. Tiffin, No. 1.

25. Ibid.

26. Tiffin, No. 2.

saxophone player, a bass player, and be a successful professional musician . . . and do interesting and exciting things!²⁷

Since her appointment as head of jazz studies at UCT in 2019, Amanda has encountered resistance to some of the positive changes she has sought to make to the historically exclusionary culture of the programme. For Amanda, it is vital to dismantle the “white man thing” that dominates the “institutionalised world of jazz education”.²⁸ Her transition from lecturer to department head has been challenging:

There has been pushback... you know you're doing something right when people push back. I'm sure that there are labels for me now...labels that say I'm a man-hater or whatever, because I've laid down a line... particularly where this kind of [sexist] behaviour is *not* okay anymore. In the past, it would've just been swept under the rug or laughed off as “boys will be boys”, or “a lecturer can be a bully, because they're in a position of authority” and that kind of thing... Some of the lecturing staff left, because they don't like...to quote one person, he said, “I don't want to teach in a place where the tail is wagging the dog.” Which is fine. That's okay. You can take your bullying tactics elsewhere. It's not a healthy place for young people to learn. How do you learn when people are shouting and screaming at you? *You don't*. You just shut down, and that dysfunction is not okay.²⁹

Whilst in the process of taking over the reins of the jazz programme at UCT, she was invited to a series of meetings with international colleagues in Norway aimed at initiating collaborations between universities. Despite being there as the head of a well-known programme, she was given the proverbial cold shoulder as the only woman in the room:

The guy who was chairing and running the whole thing had obviously formed a really good friendship with one of the guys from an American university. They had this buddy-buddy, “bro” relationship, they had played together and they obviously had visited before...there was definitely that whole “jazz bro” thing going on between these other two and it was so *weird* for me. I felt really out of place and out of the loop, in a way. So much so that I actually disengaged from the whole process and nothing ever came of it. But it was interesting, because I think if I had been a man, I'd have been included in that “bro” thing. It made me feel like, “Did I do the wrong thing?” But I couldn't force myself to play nice, you know?³⁰

She believes that a shift towards greater inclusivity and diversity is happening within the academy and the music industry, albeit slowly:³¹

I see the shifting of the media focus to some extent, [towards] artists that are... not only male jazz artists. [Women's visibility is] still a lot less, but there is more focus, more exposure, more opportunities. I do

27. Ibid.

28. Tiffin, No. 2.

29. Ibid.

30. Tiffin, No. 2.

31. In 2020, Amanda presented an online video about some of the patriarchal dynamics women face in the South African music industry (see Amanda Tiffin, ‘Gender Dynamics in the Music Industry (CTMA Moments with Masters), *YouTube* video, posted by CTMA, on 9 August 2020, https://youtu.be/NSsRfpA_PbQ).

see things changing in the industry. I see it changing in terms of when you see a new project coming up, there's a mix of gender... because those young people decided that they want to work together.³²

Amanda feels strongly about creating safe and inclusive learning spaces for educators and students alike, particularly at jazz festivals:

In terms of music, it's been wonderful for young people to interact with professionals...but there's a dark part of it for the women and for young female students that's been...horrendous, because of that environment...[and] everyone interacting and drinking and all of this *gaan-ing aan*³³...all kinds of horrible things have been said and done, and have scarred some young women along the way...Young musicians are seeing older male musicians behaving ridiculously badly. And of course they think, "Well, if I'm going to fit into that crowd, I need to behave the same way".³⁴

With the exception of Shannon Mowday and Gwen Ansell, few others have taken such a public stance against patriarchy and sexism in contemporary South African jazz culture. Amanda believes that younger, more inexperienced women are reluctant to call out sexism and discrimination for fear of further exclusion:

The problem for a lot of women musicians is the pushback. If they're seen to be advocates or seen to be vocal about being a feminist and advocating for gender equality, [they feel] that they won't get booked in the men's spaces...and it's true. They won't. But for me...I don't care. I'm in a position where I've made my own work, I have my own projects, I'm in a great job, so I'm not dependent on anybody else...I can create the work that I want to create and work with the musicians that I want to work with, without fear. I have the luxury to be able to speak out without it affecting my bottom line. [Some people really shy away] from having any part in the whole gender activist movement in music and in jazz and being on panels and things like that...because of that pushback. Because [they] play so much in male spaces and [they] don't want to be seen as the angry, loud, shouting woman. I just have the luxury of not really giving a toss about that anymore. I'm old enough not to care. I'm not starting my career.³⁵

Amanda's testimony reveals some of the significant changes that have taken place in South African jazz culture and education over the past three decades. More women than ever before are entering tertiary jazz programmes, and vocal students have access to the same level of specialisation as their instrumental counterparts. A younger generation of musicians is disidentifying with ingrained traditions of racial segregation and exclusionary gender practices thanks to the legwork done by women like Amanda. Her recent appointment to several coveted positions of power shouldn't be viewed as finally "having earned the right to speak" as an

32. Tiffin, No. 1.

33. Afrikaans for "shenanigans" or "carrying on".

34. Tiffin, No. 1.

35. Ibid.

activist and musician, but rather as an amplification of her contributions to local jazz culture spanning nearly three decades.

Shannon Mowday

Shannon had aspirations of studying medicine after high school, but first decided to work towards financial independence by joining the Army Band at the age of eighteen. When her mother unexpectedly passed away a few months later, she lost not only a parent, but also her most loyal supporter:

I was the first girl in the SANDF Band³⁶ and I was also studying law part-time, and doing a lot of other things...but my mum died and I think it was a very big turning point. Suddenly...I was already *in* this music thing...everything around me was falling apart and I just kind of continued [with music]. The choice to be a musician, *actually* going, “I am a musician” has come many times in my life after that, but [at that time] it wasn’t like I *wanted* to be a musician, because I wasn’t happy from a very young age with the scene. I saw it for what it was.³⁷

Being the sole woman in a deeply patriarchal space was not new to her, but being in the Army Band presented its own challenges. Her professional background allowed her to occupy a higher rank than some of her male counterparts, and to be awarded principal positions and solos previously reserved for older players. When she called out the sexist and aggressive behaviour of certain band members, she was not only accused of insubordination, but treated as an outsider whose value was purely decorative:

...my face was used in many of the public images for the band, for example when we played for big army celebrations. Many of the top army officers had seen the shows I [played] in, were big fans, and thought of me as “gold” to the band. It didn’t matter that my days were just awful because of the resentment from some of the musicians. I would literally lock myself in a practice room all day when not working in the band, and practice.³⁸

Shannon left the Army Band and – as she was already teaching part-time at the university – decided to enroll for a Bachelors degree in jazz. For a brief and unhappy period, Shannon navigated the complex dichotomy of being a young girl and “playing like a man”. Fitting in required a great deal of determination and skill, and the ability to shake off abusive language and name-calling:

36. SANDF is the South African National Defense Force. Between 1957 and 1994, it was called the SADF, or South African Defense Force. For an in-depth look at South African military bands (in particular during the apartheid era), see De Jongh, ‘Music and Militarisation’, 2020.

37. Mowday, No. 1.

38. Ibid.

A tertiary institution sets the tone for the professional environment...the cliques that form in university are the cliques that will play together [professionally]...and the only way to get into those things is to hang around at the bar. It has *nothing* to do with music. Who is seen? Who is allowed in by the gatekeepers?...There was this way of talking and this way of *being*, and the entire aesthetic behind how the jazz community was formed, certainly in Cape Town...you were either “burning” [skilled/exceptional] or you were “folding” [useless/weak]...It was [organised around] these terminologies [and] from a very early age I got *into* that thing. I knew some of these men were pigs, to say the least, but in a way you hero-worship them...From a very early age – because of my dad and my brother – I was kind of *accepted* in the scene. But I was also constantly put down because that was the way *everybody* talked. And because you’re in it, you know nothing else. You only know *this* way. *This* is the way it is. I realised that all these people that inspired me were actually my abusers, as well.³⁹

Like Amanda, Shannon was fortunate to access role models she admired and trusted:

My father and my brother, if anyone, were my inspirations. I also had a great friend I played with, Calli Housdon. We used to play a lot together...in function bands. One of the good guys I will mention is [bassist] Basil Moses. I played with him and Nol Klinkhamer, a Dutch pianist. That was my training ground for the jazz thing. I was playing in a trio with them for quite some years when I was in my early twenties. They are the ones I will say categorically helped me.⁴⁰

Despite the presence of these individuals, Shannon identified with the intensely masculine subculture at the start of her career:

I was trying to be one of the boys and I think this was very much the scene, certainly in Cape Town for so many young girls...you feel you have to play like the boys. You feel like you have to *behave* like the boys...drinking at the bar. I was *leading* the tribe. I became the measure of “How much can I push it?” because I wanted to be *better*. Only years later I realised the damage. I didn’t realise, at the time, the damage it was doing to me...You take on these manners of expression, you take on the *personalities* of these people that you abhor, but this is what the scene is. And, with sanctions during apartheid, there were not a lot of [international] musicians coming to South Africa. So, you didn’t *know* that there was another way [of working professionally]...The interesting thing about me is that I *did* subscribe to the “male” way of doing things my whole life. That’s what I did...when I realised [in recent years] that these things were still going on, the sexual transgressions...all of the stuff, the cesspit of the way women are treated...Even *I’ve* used that expression, “Oh, come on! Play like a boy!” I’ve *said* it, you know? I can only put it down to my ignorance. I didn’t know better.⁴¹

Diana Miller explores the “exaggeratedly masculine behaviours” (such as drinking heavily and telling crude jokes) women adopt to gain a level of acceptance in patriarchal music spaces; these “aggressive, competitive practices function as embodied culture” within such spaces.⁴² For Shannon, these very specific gendered, social performances alone were not enough; she also had to *play* like the boys, constantly displaying her ability to “burn” through virtuosic

39. Ibid.

40. Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. Diana Miller, ‘Gender, Field, and Habitus: How Gendered Dispositions Reproduce Fields of Cultural Production’, *Sociological Forum*, Vol. 31, No. 2 (2016), 340-341.

soloing. She appeared on the popular Afrikaans television game show *Liriekerai*⁴³ for several seasons and worked as a featured soloist in commercial pop and rock shows where she played the “sexy sax” role to the hilt:

I had this naïveté that I could present myself as a sexy girl and play the saxophone. That I could *prove* that I could be both. But the issue there is, once you’ve been objectified, you cannot expect to be taken seriously...“Ja, but I *want to* dress nicely.” “Yes, but did you have to wear *such* provocative outfits?” I question myself. “Did I *have to* grind the saxophone when I played?”...I didn’t really have [female] role models. I didn’t know what I was supposed to do...I was used a lot. My image? My face? And again, I *played* that role...because that’s what I had to do [to find work]...I was playing a lot with symphony orchestras before I left South Africa. I had an arrangement with them...they were commercial shows, but I wanted to play *my* music with symphony orchestras. So what I did was, I would play a pop [segment] and then I’d get to play *my* tunes. So I understood the trade-off. I understood the transaction. I would come as the girl with the flower [gestures to her hair] and the big red dress and the backless dress and then everyone would go, “Whooo!” and I *played* that role. At the end of the day, the girl with the saxophone and the flower in her hair makes a pretty good programme cover. I *played* that role, so I can’t complain. But then, ten years later, post-baby, I show up at a jazz festival in South Africa and the first thing the festival director says to me is, “Hey, what happened to you? You got so fat!” It shouldn’t matter, but it does.⁴⁴

Being represented – and representing herself – in a highly sexualised manner exposed Shannon to sexual harassment and assault, with some instances dating back to her teenage years:

I was really resilient because I always had to fight and punch...constant comments, constant coming onto me and touching [my] bum and what have you...and I became this fierce little fighting character that everyone [came to know me] as. When I was in a professional space [as a young girl] I could just turn around and say, “Get away from me.” But then, when it [happened] in a university context...I didn’t feel I could [call it out] in the same way. When a lecturer made an advance at me and I put a stop to it, I left the institution. *He* didn’t leave. This is the case for many...when they can’t handle it they leave...In South Africa we have the highest rate of abuse against women and children...our role models are where we should *really* be paying attention. [Some of the] role models are the ones who are not behaving [appropriately] but [people say], “Oh, they’re so wonderful as artists!” I’m not prepared to subscribe to that. It is [like a] Stockholm syndrome thing, where your abuser is also your hero...I was always the thorn in everybody’s side because I called shit out...One reason I left the country is that I did not feel safe. For instance, travelling to gigs at night. I did not feel safe within my own bands when, time after time, I would be pinned against the wall because somebody was drunk. Or playing and hearing, “Hey! Check out your ass!” and this shit I had to deal with...you can resist, you can resist, you can resist...but at the end of the day if you can’t earn a living, if you cannot earn money, it’s going to screw you up.⁴⁵

During her later twenties, she increasingly came into contact with international musicians who performed at high-profile South African jazz festivals. After years of turbulent counter-identification, Shannon abandoned her fight for acceptance and began to construct a musical career on her own terms.

43. Loosely translates as ‘guess the lyrics’ in Afrikaans.

44. Mowday, No. 1.

45. Ibid.

...I found my role models and I was already twenty-five by then...I wanted to understand this culture. I saw something *different*...I had heard a lot of Scandinavian musicians [at the jazz festival] in Makhanda, and I wanted to know what was happening there. So, I had to find a way [to go there] and the only way, with visas and everything, was that I did a Masters degree. I had to get the “piece of paper” [a Bachelor’s degree] so I could do a Masters.⁴⁶

When she won the Standard Bank Young Artist for Jazz award in 2007, Shannon strategically leveraged her position as a former university band member and part-time lecturer to complete an Honours degree in record time. Bending the rules and taking ownership of her future allowed her move to Norway and complete a Masters degree in improvised music. In recent years, Shannon has directed the youth jazz orchestras, *Akershus og Oslo Ungdomsjazzorkester* (AOJO) and *Det Nye Norske Storband*. She has toured with her ensemble *LILA*, and with elite bands across Europe. Her standing in the Norwegian jazz scene earned her the Norwegian Jazz Forum’s Big Band prize in 2018. Shannon presently resides in Norway with her young son and motherhood has necessitated some significant adjustments to her lifestyle. She believes that the industry is generally not supportive of mothers who juggle parenthood⁴⁷ and professional careers involving touring:

I’m not only a mom...I’m a single mom at that...Look at the top line acts now. How many are mothers? One of the most famous female music artists in the world said...we were having a discussion while playing at the *North Sea Jazz Festival* and we were talking about some of the issues that we’ve experienced as women. And she said, “Shannon, I’m not the same as you. I can behave like one of the boys because I don’t have a child”...I think people’s attitude towards you changes. I’ve heard the line, “We didn’t consider you [for the job] because you’re a single mom”...[or], “Oh, you’re a mother? Your career must be going down”... “You have a child. How can you *possibly* be a performing musician if you’re a mother?”...There was a picture of the pianist [Geri Allen]...she’s playing and her child is strapped to her back. And everyone [says], “Oh, that’s incredible!” But my response is, “Why the hell should she *have* to do that? Why *should* she have to do that? Because I’ve been in that situation before...There’s this image of the *supermom*. “Oh she’s incredible!” Why should you have to be like that just to do your craft? Why can’t we create infrastructures so we don’t have to be *superhuman* to focus on our kid *and* on playing? It’s almost like we have to be *more* and *super*...I don’t want to be marveled at. Just *help* me, you know?⁴⁸

The image Shannon refers to is a graphic example of how women musicians juggle childcare and their professional work,⁴⁹ a reality few of their male counterparts face when on stage or whilst touring.

46. Ibid.

47. In 2022, South African born jazz vocalist Nicky Schrire launched ‘Mothers in Jazz’, a series of podcasts featuring international jazz musicians who navigate motherhood and professional careers (<https://londonjazznews.com/category/feature-interview/mothers-in-jazz/>).

48. Mowday, No. 1.

49. Mark Miller, ‘Geri Allen and Wallace Roney III’ (1997), in Nichole T. Rustin and Sherrie Tucker, eds. *Big Ears: Listening for Gender in Jazz Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 14.



Fig. 29. Geri Allen and her son Wallace Roney III, 1997 (Photo: Miller)

Moreover, numerous off-stage aspects of jazz culture are inherently exclusionary to women in general, and mothers in particular:

The hanging. The playing. The listening to music. The jamming. The whole jamming culture. That's where you meet and greet other musicians, but the jamming culture is based on *proving* yourself. So how creative is that?...Yes, I've played at a few, but I don't like that. I don't like that form of expression where everybody is just gunning for it. So what happens [if you don't go]? Then you're not seen and heard...I can't hang out after a gig. I can't go to jam sessions on a Sunday night and hang out until four o'clock in the morning where everybody meets and greets and all that shit. And I'm not interested. I don't want to. But, if I don't subscribe to that way of doing things, I'm excluded...I can be a mother *and* play great jazz [without doing all of that].⁵⁰

Although Shannon advocates for greater inclusivity and the creation of safe musical spaces, she is wary of tokenism:

Everybody knows they have to balance the gender books [nowadays]...they have to balance the minority groups, so they find the ones that are fulfilling those needs. Are those necessarily the best musicians? Questionable...Are you really creating a healthy environment or are you creating resentment?...I think [all-women projects] are necessary...But what I have experienced is that women compete worse with other women. There is this *other* thing that happens...I've pulled out of a lot of projects like that. Because, number one, it's usually about the gimmick, which I don't buy into. I don't want to be patronised. You're booking me because I'm a good musician. I think the minute you polarise all-girl bands, you're not solving the problem...one of the *biggest* issues I've had, have been with other women musicians, because they want the approval of male musicians. There is a whole other world out there...women together? It's another ballgame. It's a dog show.⁵¹

50. Mowday, No. 1.

51. Ibid.

This is because she recognises, as all the participants do, that gender discrimination in jazz culture and wider society is a structural issue:⁵²

The problem of having [panel] discussions...is you're treating the symptoms. The *disease* is that the infrastructures are archaic. The infrastructures need revision.⁵³

Like Amanda, she highlights the conscientizing impact of engaging with a more empowered younger generation of jazz musicians:

The older generation had to fight for their rights...one of the things I noticed [with the younger generation] is that music is different with people who haven't had to fight...there's an *ease*. I played with a trumpet player in France and [brought] my high trumpet parts...and she just said to me, "I'm sorry, I can't. I don't do that kind of trumpet playing...I need to take it down an octave." I was angry with her..."How dare you?" But, my God, she was like, why did she *have* to play high trumpet? She didn't want to, so why should she? And I remember that *dis-ease* I felt, you know? Why have I had to do all the shit I didn't want to do, when you can just...*not*?...The younger generation, especially here [in Europe]...they didn't have the same *fight* we had. I have had those feelings of, "Why should *you* have it so easy when I didn't?"⁵⁴

Shannon's testimony paints a disturbing picture of some of the factors that discourage many young women worldwide from pursuing jazz careers. This notwithstanding, she is a shining example of self-empowerment and resilience in the face of overwhelming odds:

I have *always* been an outsider. But for some reason, I have this gumption or this *staying power* that I'm not willing to give up. Most people give up.⁵⁵

Shannon may have been more vocal in her fight than Amanda, but both women were able to assert their own power by disidentifying with the status quo; as respected educators, composers and bandleaders – positions traditionally held by men in the spaces where they currently work – they have become powerful change makers in the world of jazz.

Chantal Willie-Petersen

For Amanda and Shannon, the road to empowerment was long and solitary: being the "only girl in the band" (Shannon), "just the girl singer" and the "only girl in class" (Amanda) during the early stages of their musical careers isolated them from their peers and often required them

52. See Shannon's online video, 'I Just Want To &^!* Play!' (Shannon Mowday, 'I Just Want To &^!* Play!', *YouTube* video, posted by CTMA, on 13 August 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsU2YUQeotc>).

53. Mowday, No. 1.

54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.

to compromise their own identity. Chantal's testimony below reveals how the presence of strong allies and role models can fortify marginalised individuals. This is particularly true when individuals have experienced life-altering trauma. Like Shannon, Chantal aspired to a career in medicine, but her plans were derailed when she lost her mother at a young age. At the beginning of her final year of high school, her mother was murdered, leaving their father to care for Chantal, her twin sister and their two younger brothers:

She was shot and that was horrific. All the plans that I had...I wasn't looking at music full-time, although I loved it. I didn't think that pursuing it full-time was an option for me. I think it had to do with my mom dying, and the trauma of that just dislocating a lot of things for me. I also didn't have enough information [on possible careers in music]. Besides my world just being *volcanoed* through and under, I just felt I didn't know what the possibilities were for anyone following full-time music, whether you could study further, or what the possibilities were...because I also loved *learning*. My first decision was to study medicine and then, with my mom dying, I was like, "No." I was going to have to deal with other people's trauma and I didn't want to do that.⁵⁶

After her mother's passing, Chantal enrolled in a business studies degree at UCT. She was determined to stay the course until her sister convinced her to try her hand at community theatre. Here, the sisters – with the help of an encouraging director – found a communal outlet for their talent:

In that [first] year, my sister...had the brave idea to audition for a musical theatre [production] at the Baxter Theatre. She got in and then she came home and I was like, "Denay, what am I gonna do [while you're busy]?" (Laughs) She said, "Okay, you know what? I'm going to speak to the director," and then he actually wrote a play for both of us! ... So, that whole musical scene, musical theatre, was quite new [to us], but not altogether new, because we did drama at school.⁵⁷

Chantal blossomed on stage, but was apprehensive about telling her father about her plans to drop out and pursue music studies. Unlike Amanda's mother who unconditionally supported her decision to make such a radical change, Chantal knew her father would disapprove. However, Chantal had the ultimate ally – a twin sister – to help champion their joint ideals:

I studied Business Science and my dad was very happy, and my sister did law and my dad was very happy...until we came home in that very first year and said, "Dad, it's not working" (laughs). We were really not happy. And we [said it], knowing we were disappointing my father. It was *really* tough and on top of it, we'd just lost our mom...but I sat in those Economics lectures and I was really unfulfilled...I found this flourishing fulfillment with the theatre and...just needed to say, "Well, what now?"⁵⁸

56. Willie-Petersen, No. 1.

57. Ibid.

58. Ibid.

Like Amanda, Chantal didn't have a jazz background, but years of gospel performances and the ability to play piano accompaniments made for a successful audition. As was customary, the twins approached the next stage of their musical development as a team:

I deregistered and went to audition at UCT...and even at that point, I knew *nothing* about jazz. [Programme director] Mike Campbell was sitting there and I played [piano] for Denay, and Denay played for me, and we had a good old singsong of "Georgia" and "First I was afraid, I was petrified..." (Laughs). We only knew those songs... "I Will Survive"! And well, you know, we survived that, because we got into the programme. With Dad it took a *while*, but my father is a wonderful supporter and I'm so happy that transition happened.⁵⁹

During their first year, Chantal and Denay formed a vocal quartet, Damage, with fellow vocal students Melanie Scholtz and Mandisa Bardill. The ensemble was a natural continuation of the *a cappella* groups in which she had performed since childhood and unlike Amanda who had to find her own way "without a reference", Chantal was fortunate to lean on her twin and other young women in the jazz programme. Together, they created a communal, safe space – much as they had in the church – where they could make music at a professional level without being forced to take a proverbial backseat to their male counterparts:

...we had a *communion* in the ensemble...that joy with the other vocalists...That was tremendous, because it also opened doors and we played with really good musicians and learned different things.⁶⁰

In contrast, Chantal's transition from classical to jazz piano was more challenging, and she was determined to match the abilities of fellow students who had been involved in jazz programmes since high school. Jazz piano was a solitary endeavour that required countless hours behind closed doors and required her to learn a great deal in a short period of time. In addition, she decided to take up the double bass, an instrument she had not played before. Having been the ultimate "good subject" at school, Chantal immersed herself in the programme with the same level of dedication:

I knew *nothing* about the repertoire, the composers, arranging, but...I give tribute to my schoolteachers...I had some skill in understanding how to internalise a new genre and what needed to be done, although the practice base was different. I had to really use my ear and transcribe, and not only focus on notation. I had to understand, "What is a lead sheet? Where do I improvise?...It was a *steep* curve, the first year...I already had an interest in musical direction, arranging and composing...I used my [piano playing technique] to get through voicings, get through the rubrics. [I had to] make sure that the time I had put in since I was six or seven...was [transferable] and beneficial to the *other* subjects that were not so easy for me to acclimatise to...I was at six to eight hours [of piano practice] a day to try and make up for not having [a jazz] background. Then I started studying double bass...because I really loved the instrument and I always knew that at some point I was going to make a switch...I was in the company

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid.

of peers like Judith Sephuma and Mark Fransman, and I also met André [Petersen], the love of my life...and Clement Benny, Musa Manzini...I could see what they were doing and be inspired by that. Because of what I was going through [losing my mom], it was the only thing that kept me going, so maybe it was a lifeline in the sense that it kept me busy, kept me occupied, helped me transition from not having Mom in the home anymore...The hierarchy was never intimidating, it was inspiring. There was a real mentorship...It was brief, only a year and a half, but I had a really good experience.⁶¹

Halfway into her second year, with the help of Dutch jazz pianist Jack van Poll, Chantal was offered a scholarship to Belgium. She was initially reluctant to leave behind her family, but knew the opportunity would take her career to the next level. Having traveled abroad as a child had introduced her to life in a foreign country, but she was unprepared for the vast cultural and educational differences she would encounter in Europe:

I have to thank Jack and Judy [van Poll]. They were so tremendous in setting me up and they continued to support me. What was to be one year, became ten! The conservatory model was similar to UCT, but now I had to speak Dutch. There were young people my age, but they'd already studied jazz in high school...the architecture was *different*...At UCT, we were in the third basement and I loved that space. Now I was in a space with open windows overlooking rivers and forestry, glass panels and wood panels, too many pianos...and they are not upright, they are grand (laughs). I thought, "What am I *doing* here?" I was inspired. I was scared, I was grateful...the conservatories there are very cosmopolitan and international [in terms of] students and lecturers.⁶²

Growing up during apartheid, Chantal had little exposure to musicians from other countries save for her family's church connections in the USA. She also did not have access to the resources and lifestyle that students in Europe took for granted. Despite the cosmopolitan culture on campus, Belgium – and not South Africa – was where Chantal first felt like an outsider:

I was acclimatising to new teachers, new material, a new system, a new place to live, a new language... what was difficult at that time, was being the only person of colour. I never made an issue of it, but it was hurtful when I was looked at in a certain way and made to feel unwelcome or like an "ornament." It was tough, because I didn't grow up in a politicised home. These things were not foreign to me [having grown up in Bonteheuwel], but now I was in a new country and dealing with this sort of social...*presence* that I haven't experienced...*ever*...that also impacted the *things* I started to say in my music at that time.⁶³

Chantal was determined to learn as much as possible from her new lecturers, some of whom she had admired from afar for many years. The intensity of the programme provided a new lifeline, an escape from racial undercurrents and social isolation. When her voice scholarship came to an end, she took a leap of faith and requested an extension in order to remain in

61. Ibid.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid.

Belgium and continue her studies. Again, her mentor Jack van Poll assisted her. Chantal completed Masters degrees in both double bass and vocals whilst juggling a busy professional schedule:

I started singing *and* playing bass, which became something I got booked for [professionally]. I got booked for *Zap Mama*...a huge mentor in my life. As I began my professional career, I was doing very eclectic work. I did a lot of television and radio, either playing or singing. But eventually, around the fourth year that I was there, I was busy full-time with *Zap Mama*... four years of full-time singing and playing bass...I also had my own band and that was very rewarding. With *my* band, that's when I started writing. I opened for Cassandra Wilson⁶⁴ and at the point when [my band] started to take off, I joined *Zap Mama*, so I *had* to stop. It wasn't possible to do all of that as well...that was around 2003 to 2007...I bumped into André [Petersen] at the North Sea Jazz Festival; he was playing and I was playing, and we reconnected...this was in 2006. Then Feya [Faku] asked me to do a tour in South Africa in 2007, so I had been coming home periodically...When [André and I] got married in 2008, things had to take some sort of form... home, *house* form! Being home with my family was *everything*.⁶⁵

However, after a decade abroad, she was no longer connected to the Cape Town music scene:

Coming back home in 2009 was *tough*. Cape Town, in my experience, was just *horrible*, coming home...I'd just come from four years of very intense traveling so I had this exhaustion...with music. I also felt that the environment [in Cape Town] was very male-driven...“*Die manne is hier, kyk die manne*”⁶⁶ and “*my broer*”⁶⁷...I was not *talking* in that language. I never experienced it when I was in Belgium...and I didn't know how to cope. I never felt that...genderism...or gender *zones* in Europe...The [hierarchy] changed [at UCT] ... my peers were fully professional, but they weren't inspiring or encouraging one another. There was quite a lot of competition. I taught bass at UCT when I came back – for almost two years – but I was *just* managing to keep my professional tone, and even that was such an effort. I was back in the same university space [where I started], but it wasn't working and I was unhappy.⁶⁸

Despite her many international achievements, she once again had to “prove herself” to members of the jazz scene. In an attempt to connect with a new generation of rising stars – and old friends – in the city, she shared her knowledge and experience with numerous musicians who were eager to learn from her and to tap into her vast professional network:

It was almost...abusive. [I didn't set] boundaries, but I was just so eager to create a communion with my peers, because I respected them and it was important to me to feel I could come home and have that again. Some of the other issues would just be...*looks*, you know? Often they'd say, “Oh, she can play like a man!” or “That's hard *for a woman*.” I remember coming back and they also said, “Playing the bass, you have to play *hard*.” It's so nuanced, but it's so tangible! You're always questioning yourself and you go through a peer pressure thing. Am I going to compromise myself to “fit in”? And I'm talking about...as a woman among a group of men. What you really want...is just [to work with] *gentlemen*...Where I came from – my time in Belgium – the older men who were mentors to me...there

64. Cassandra Wilson (1955-) is a multi-award winning American jazz vocalist, guitarist, songwriter and producer, known for fusing genres like funk, blues and rap (<http://www.cassandrawilson.com/>).

65. Willie-Petersen, No. 1.

66. Afrikaans for “The men/guys are here, check out the men/guys”.

67. Afrikaans for “my brother”, or “bro”.

68. Willie-Petersen, No. 1.

was no “She’s a woman, so...” There was *nothing* like that. Also, at that time, I was aware of relationships between lecturers and students here...that had not gone right. I think that was not allowed, but I saw some things that were uncomfortable, and sad. I just didn’t want to be in that network...it was just depressing. I’d see hurt and broken women, and [asked myself] “Do I want to be part of this *economy*?”⁶⁹

Like Shannon, Chantal had outgrown the need to “fit in”; with the support of her family and her husband, Chantal strategically disidentified with the jazz scene. Returning to her roots allowed her to take on a mentoring role, both musically and spiritually, much like her parents whose lives had been dedicated to serving their community:

I’d grown and experienced things differently. And *they* [other musicians] had experienced things differently...I didn’t *want* to be in that environment. It was a different type of pressure that I had never felt before...[there were friends and colleagues who inspired me] to go ahead and enjoy the next “season” of my musicianship...I was very active in church. I started training worship teams, I started writing, I started doing a lot of musical direction, but with gospel. And that allowed me to go back all the way to my youth and to appreciate that lineage and that tradition, and to give back. So, [my career] never stopped...it *changed*. [After] being away for so long and coming home...I found a very restorative place...I am coming into a season where I feel complete acceptance of the fact that I love so many genres. I feel good expressing my gift through not only having a career as a performing artist, but also as a composer and an arranger and a director.⁷⁰

As with Shannon, motherhood changed Chantal’s outlook on life and work, adding a new dimension to her playing and her compositions:

I think, as you mature with family and motherhood...I don’t think it’s intentional, but [people think] think there is a sort of “settling down” that you should do. Like, you’re *archiving* yourself (laughs)! [That] is only for a period of time, especially when the baby is very young. I honestly believe that when that season is done, you come back with so much more in your musicianship and musicality. So much more of what you do touches people, because there is life and living and loving...it’s another level of living on Earth, to have that sort of experience.⁷¹

Like Amanda and Shannon, Chantal discovered a passion for teaching; she draws on her own experiences – good and bad – to prepare her students for the harsh realities of a professional music career. She currently lectures in double bass and voice at Wits University, where she regularly curates and directs musical collaborations with students and industry professionals from across the world.⁷² For Chantal, teaching and motherhood are strongly aligned; she acknowledges that the relationships she builds with her students often reach beyond academic support. The assumption that women are “softer” and more nurturing – and that those qualities

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid.

71. Ibid.

72. See Gwen Ansell, ‘Life in jazz notes and rhythm’, *New Frame*, 6 November 2020, accessed 4 April 2022, <https://www.newframe.com/life-in-jazz-notes-and-rhythm/> and <https://englewoodsowetoproject.org/index.php/about/>

are traditionally linked to singing – is one of the topics she is exploring as part of her PhD studies:

I've heard from the students that the space was very paternalistic before I arrived and that outside of the teaching, I have brought a very maternal presence. I found that interesting, because I never [experienced] that binary...where I studied, not at all...especially not in Belgium. So, it's interesting to me to observe what that is about. That is also part of my PhD work...in some way there is a genderised role that the vocalist plays or – in this case – the vocal department. Everybody assumes it's mostly women [who sing or teach singing], so there are these genderised spaces already...that bring preconceived perceptions that need to be changed. I happen to be in a department with more women than men...there's a real mentoring that happens, which is also emotional and psychological.⁷³

Chantal's quiet strength and unwavering faith have allowed her to overcome great personal losses and to navigate often-hostile professional spaces, both in South Africa and abroad. In a tragic turn of events, her husband André passed away in 2021, a victim of the Covid pandemic. The loss of her “greatest supporter” and partner in numerous musical collaborations has – like the loss of her mother years ago – inspired her to rise to even greater musical heights. In 2022, she was elected as the president of the South African Association for Jazz Education (SAJE), the first woman to hold the position.

Like Amanda and Shannon, Chantal had no explicit desire to become an educator at the start of her career. Nevertheless, these three women have all used their prominent positions in educational institutions, organisations and on the bandstand to empower others. They have worked towards dismantling generational, social, racial and institutional forces that perpetuate the exclusion of women, people of colour and anyone else who fails to conform to patriarchal jazz culture. As leaders in the field, they take pride in “paying it forward”, sharing their expertise to uplift rather than dominate those who look to them as mentors.

Siya Makuzeni

Siya's participation in various national jazz bands as a teenager and her subsequent connection to important figures in the South African jazz scene meant that she was ideally positioned to enter the professional jazz scene. When she graduated from high school, her mother supported her decision to apply for jazz studies at Rhodes University (in Grahamstown), less than two hours' drive from her hometown. With the exception of the annual arts festival, the town is

73. Willie-Petersen, No. 1.

quiet and the music scene small; when her lecturer emigrated, Siya decided to reevaluate her position:

The people were great, but it just wasn't as active as one would've hoped... and it's a small town, so there were no gigs. [After a year] I took the plunge and called [Pretoria Technikon⁷⁴]...[I knew] if I wanted to succeed as a professional musician, I needed *everything*.⁷⁵

Despite regularly appearing in national bands and sharing the stage with some of the country's jazz icons since high school, Siya was required to repeat her first year of jazz studies. The presence of vocal lecturer Jelena Jovovich – a mentor Siya knew from the festival circuit – prompted her to take up jazz voice along with the trombone:

I am where I'm at because of her. I can tell you as much. She is incredible...I'd seen her perform in the context of the National Youth Jazz Festival...I was *thoroughly* impressed. She was really incredible at what she does. So to have that experience with her, even though it wasn't a major subject, was very, very beneficial to my foundation.⁷⁶

Not all of her lecturers were equally supportive, and Siya's plan to graduate with a degree in jazz was derailed when she refused to bow to systemic racialised and gendered power structures within the institution. Speaking out against racism, sexism and the intimidation tactics of certain lecturers, Siya was soon labeled a troublemaker:

I was in Pretoria from 2002 until just before the end of 2003. I stayed away from this story for a very long time, because it just...*hurt* too much. But I think, perhaps, speaking out now might be able to help [others]...to confront these issues that we have in our institutions...What you would imagine, is that lecturers are the people who make us feel the safest...I was a loose cannon and I spoke my mind...obviously you draw attention to yourself...But it was *important*. [For example] I was late for a first year arranging lecture. I walk into the class, and this [lecturer] is busy conducting the entire lecture in Afrikaans...I grew up with and I understand Afrikaans, and I can definitely say it is one of my spoken languages. I didn't have [a] problem with it, but thought...where *are* we? ...I took my seat and waited for him to switch to English and gave it about five minutes. Then I put my hand up and asked him a question in Xhosa, and defused that thing really quickly...I felt we needed to have conversations [about this], but some of the lecturers had this [habit] of not actually listening to the students, because...well, you're a *student*. I remember that was one of their threats: either you're a student [and know your place], or you go and you figure out what the hell you want to do with your life...talk about ultimatums and that type of thing...You couldn't speak too much, or [they'd say] you think you *know* too much.⁷⁷

Siya was viewed as being too assertive and independent, qualities that – as an outsider – she had spent years developing:

74. The erstwhile Pretoria Technikon is now known as the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT).

75. Makuzeni, No. 2.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

I haven't been able to speak about this on record for the longest time as I just felt that it was extremely sensitive, but a lot of the reasoning behind it [discontinuing tertiary jazz studies] was actually out of my control. I got kicked out of school...[yet] I was performing and producing *results*. I was a good student, but there were personal clashes. I took work outside of the university and this created tension with the lecturers...I was learning the industry while I was still studying...Unfortunately, within my personal experience...race relations were also a huge factor...it just was very messy. It was very messy, and it was not the best way that the institution could've handled my situation. I'm bringing up race relations [because] there were other people at the same institution who were doing the exact same thing and they did not receive the same treatment.⁷⁸

In a move reminiscent of her childhood decision to make the most of her recorder lessons when sidelined by a gatekeeping music teacher, Siya actively sought out supportive mentors and took charge of her own development:

When I was in my second year, my mom was struggling with fees and I was bored because I was repeating stuff...they made me repeat my first year and there was no need. I was ready. I'd covered everything [at my previous university]. I decided to start looking for work, [and got] into voiceovers and some studio work...and then with people I worked with, like Marcus [Wyatt] and Carlo [Mombelli], the gigs started coming in a little bit more...Around October 2002, I got a corporate gig through Richard Loring and it was very long, it was for an entire month. I wrote to [the department] and said, "Look, you guys know me, I'm still going to ace everything"...in two to three weeks there was a petition written...apparently it was from the other students, and the lecturers decided to act on it. [My] friend came up to me at one of the rehearsals...and *served* me with a notice that I mustn't come back to school. Just like that. It was terrible and I remember my mother came up there...she was trying to figure it out...she'd been paying money all this time. She walked into [the lecturer's] office and he starts talking about my life, and how I'm not paying rent. What does *that* have to do with anything? I asked what that had to do with my studies...where [was] I failing? These were the questions my mom tried to figure out, but which we never resolved...I'm *happy* now, and old enough, to speak about it, because it disgusts me.⁷⁹

Siya dropped out and approached mentors she had met as a schoolgirl, determined to find alternative ways to "learn the industry". These strong male role models empowered her to embrace her non-conformity and develop a unique style that would set her apart from other artists:

[I decided] I'm going to move to Johannesburg and figure my life out. I'm already doing this thing [playing gigs], and now I'm going to rely more on my experience until perhaps one day I can – if needs be – get back into studies...It became really clear once I moved out of the student environment, that "This is it, Siya". Just throw yourself in and see what happens. Sink or swim, darling...I threw myself into it and I was very lucky, because I still [occasionally] worked with people like Zim [Ngqawana] and Winston [Ngozi] when they were still around. I had my "uncles" who said, "Come, come. I'll show you the ropes. You can be our roadie" (laughs)...Themba Mkhize is huge...one of the best mentors that I think I've ever had. I've spent time with Feya Faku who just took me under his wing...and Carlo Mombelli during the eleven to twelve years that I spent in his band. I learnt [a lot] in terms of expression and working out what it means to have your own voice within this industry, and stretching boundaries...being in a band like Prisoners Of Strange⁸⁰ that kind of stretched as far as they could go

78. Makuzeni, No. 1.

79. Makuzeni, No. 2.

80. Nishlyn Ramanna provides detailed accounts of some of Siya's experiences as a member of Mombelli's band, Prisoners of Strange (see Ramanna, 'Experiences of Belonging and Exclusion', 279-281 and Ramanna, 'Jazz as discourse', 225-227).

when it comes to *imagination* and not being bound to stylistic expression...Marcus Wyatt⁸¹ [was an important ally] as well, us [having been] together in Prisoners Of Strange and then working on his stuff, too.⁸²

Some of these collaborations took place while Siya was still at university, but none were as radical and eclectic as her grunge/ska/rock/jazz outfit IppyFuze that featured a tribe of young (white) men, equally willing to get loud. The band defied musical and societal rules and allowed her to channel her rage and her creativity:

I started writing music pretty early for this band, but I would say that it really came together when I was [a student] in 2002. I think what was nice, was that suddenly I was with people who shared this vision with me. They weren't scared of me trying things out.⁸³

Over the next decade, Siya's original work gathered momentum and drew much attention, not always in a positive way. As a regular performer at prominent festivals in her early twenties, she had to weather criticism from various gatekeepers in the jazz scene because of her "out there", hybridised sound. Siya reveled in her status as the ultimate "bad subject" and had no intention of playing by anyone else's rules:

Around 2013, there was some frustration about where I was going jazz-wise...people were coming to me...it was frustration for *them*, saying, "Siya, wow. They're not going to give you this award".⁸⁴ I said, "What award? I don't care. I'm here and doing my thing. This [award] is not going to validate what I'm doing"...That dynamic was happening around the rest of the music fraternity, and I was just like, "I don't care. *This* is my music and to be really honest with you guys, if you are so perturbed, [I'll] go and be a rockstar. I'll show you I'll be a rockstar. I can revamp and always come back in new forms...I'm still a musician and I'm going to do what I need to do to get where I need to go, you know?" At that time, creatively, it was really starting to come together for me, so I was really "all in" with my projects. I'm so glad I didn't have to choose [one genre], thank God.⁸⁵

The release of *Amaxhentsa* (with IppyFuze)⁸⁶ cemented her status as a serious creative with crossover appeal. In 2016, she received the Standard Bank Young Artist for Jazz award, which she followed with the release of her debut album⁸⁷ as leader:

81. Siya was a regular member of Marcus Wyatt's Language 12 for several years and more recently, in Wyatt's ZAR Jazz Orchestra and Bombshelter Beast.

82. Makuzeni, No. 2.

83. Ibid.

84. The Standard Bank Young Artist for Jazz is South Africa's top accolade for jazz musicians and is awarded annually.

85. Makuzeni, No. 1.

86. See chapter five

87. Makuzeni, *Out Of This World*

Of course, the accolade is definitely [helpful]...having the recognition is definitely great, but I would have been able to carry on with my life without it. I really do believe that, you know?⁸⁸

Professionally, the award opened many doors, both locally and internationally. For the first time since her childhood, she had enough professional clout to brush off criticism and stereotypes:

I really went in deep, in terms of what I was creating at the time. And this time, it was welcomed. This time, there was no [need to choose] between the rock and the jazz...this is all *you*, Siya. You just write your music and this is going to come out and be a facet of what you can do...and now you're in a position where you can do both. And these were the kind of conversations I was having with myself...it's not about [having] one focus. Now you can actually do it *all*.⁸⁹

Siya has worked hard to balance her identity as a musical rule-breaker with a stable career: rather than play to the tastes of the mainstream jazz community, her strategy has been to convert them with her compelling live performances. She ascribes her success to the one quality she had in abundance since her childhood:

My resilience...and the ability [if people didn't like it] to just go, "Well, that's tough". I'm going to come out here and portray myself in the best way possible, with the guidelines that I have for *myself*...[Even so] you have to be very mindful of the mainstream element of the industry. I had a certain knack of just wanting to push through and say, "There *are* people [who will] understand this music and be my followers, regardless of what is mainstream"... I think a big part of [sharing my music] is backing it up with live performances, because without that, you can have a product on the shelves but [nobody hears it]. You know, the biggest, most successful kind of marketing really lies in the kind of impact you have on your audiences...a lot of people would probably come in not knowing who on earth I am, but walk away with an album or a CD under their arm at the end of the show...Musicians need to focus on [presentation] a lot more and it's still very difficult, because we need the resources to be able to do such things...when you try to do it on your own, independently, it's still very, very tough. But it's a large component of how we do what we do.⁹⁰

Her live shows are highly sensory experiences in terms of sound, visual drama and energy. Over the years, Siya has become similarly bold in her fashion choices and stage appearance. She flaunts her African roots yet augments her style with unorthodox elements in an extension of her musical artistry. This was not always the case:

When I got into the industry I was very tomboyish..."I'm part of the band and I'll wear the penguin suit just like everybody else! What's more important is what's coming out of my horn". For many years I was very "anti" [dressing up]...the change happened [when I started a] solo career and realised that – outside in society and then in the industry – people were expecting this...It does so much for your confidence, because now I have room to *play* and if I want to, I can have purple hair. And if I want to

88. Makuzeni, No. 1.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid.

then that hair can be curly, it can be short, it can be *whatever*. And that took me the longest time to realise...because then you are more in charge of your image and how *you* want to be perceived.⁹¹

Although Siya has led various all-women projects, like the other participants, she has mixed feelings about the recent fashion for “uncovering” women musicians, which she describes as “an extreme conundrum” that “marginalizes the musicians further”. She believes that the South African jazz scene is slowly transforming and that her experiences can help to empower a new generation of women who are entering the industry:

I think women have more agency and I’m happy about that...especially young kids that are at school at the moment...if they’re seeing [women’s] visibility and they’re seeing the representation, it is a lot easier for them to decide that they might want to be part of the industry...I know that *my* professional experiences have been mostly on the male-dominated side of things. When I had an opportunity to start working with more women, that’s when I actually went out of my way to be more inclusive...so as to perhaps propel them to that visibility too. Our society has changed...[Younger men] are also trying to change the game...Something that *had* to change in, say the last decade, was the focus on the “veterans” and the “greats”... Young people are being represented a lot more and [they] can actually advocate for themselves within this space.⁹²

Siya’s understanding of the power held by jazz “veterans” and “greats” is aligned to the boys’ club or “bro network” described by Amanda, Shannon and Chantal; in previous generations, few women were counted among the heroes of South African jazz. This narrative of the masterful *jazzman* continues to limit women’s participation in contemporary jazz culture, especially when they juggle professional careers and domestic responsibilities. Like Shannon and Chantal, Siya is raising a young child whilst managing her own career:

Resources make or break you and if you’re trying to navigate this industry [independently] it’s tricky as anything...what a lot of people don’t think about are the roles that women have to play, because we are mothers, we have to go to work, and then come back and look after the kid, and cook for the family. And it’s about having *time*. Ultimately. So, trying to find a balance in terms of that is extremely tough...you need plenty of assistance and a supportive system or environment around you...[Managing your own career] is really freeing,⁹³ but at the same time the most challenging thing...because you are in charge of absolutely everything. It’s really tricky...trying to find the balance...it’s challenging. But I think it’s one of the things that makes me thrive and live, and look forward to living...every single day...and help me to be creative at the same time.⁹⁴

91. Ibid.

92. Ibid.

93. Challenging stereotypes around the ‘creative, but disordered, disorganised jazzman’, Gwen Ansell and Helena Barnard believe the South African music industry’s strength is ‘founded on, and derived from, volatility, adaptivity and fluid but strong personal relations’ (Gwen Ansell and Helena Barnard, ‘Working small, acting big: Sources of, and strategies for, business innovation among South African jazz musicians’, *SAMUS: South African Music Studies*, Vol. 33 (2013), 26.) ‘One-person organisations’ like Siya not only improvise when they perform jazz, but also ‘improvise business strategies’ (Ansell and Barnard, ‘Working small’, 11-13).

94. Ibid.

Like Shannon, Siya is deeply aware of the extra load that mothers carry compared to their childless peers in the industry, especially as a single parent:

I think you get to a [point] where you realise that help would be welcome! Help would be welcome at any given time, because there are *so* many hats to wear at any given time, really.⁹⁵

Whereas Siya enjoys giving advice to young artists, she doesn't believe that teaching in a formal capacity is necessarily the best way to share her experience:

When a lot of people think of mentorship, they're thinking of the teacher-student thing. I don't look at it as that, because I [learnt] with the help of the "uncles" who, when they saw my talent said, "No, no, no...you're not just going to be idle...I can see your talent...even if [we are the only ones] creating these opportunities... performances or commissioned gigs or projects or anything like that...we need to keep you close, and [keep you] very busy"...You don't necessarily have to [be] a *teacher* to somebody, but just be *around*.⁹⁶

Siya still encounters hostility in certain professional settings, but no longer allows it to affect her work or her personal life. Contrary to her early years as a performer, she now holds enough power to control where and with whom she works:

I have this thing called a *really tenacious spirit*. A lot of people would see that and say, "She's full of herself", but I've needed to build that thick skin from an *early* age...I'm very straightforward. I'm super assertive...These days, I'm very wary and super protective of my peace...There was an incident in a big band situation and I was speaking for *everybody*, but they all threw me under the bus...unfortunately, that comes with the territory. You are *not* going to be liked. Nobody's going to like the fact that you're speaking the truth. Nobody's going to like the fact that you're challenging what is going on, of course not. So, it's the price you pay for being strong. You must pay to do the right thing.⁹⁷

Nomfundo Xaluva

Whereas during the 1980s and 1990s it was rare to see women graduating from jazz programmes or occupying prominent positions in the local jazz scene, their presence was more commonplace when Nomfundo attended high school. Like the previous four participants, she acquired enough educational and musical capital to be accepted into the jazz programme at UCT. Confident about "getting in", she was nevertheless apprehensive about her abilities to "stay in". Although more than capable of holding her own among her peers, she didn't feel as if she belonged in the programme, something she recognises as being the result of lingering childhood beliefs about race and class:

95. Ibid.

96. Makuzeni, No. 2.

97. Makuzeni, No. 1.

It was quite obvious that people like myself who had [formal] music training were finding it a lot easier to adjust to the curriculum versus the classmates who didn't... the first two years of the programme were literally just a blur for me, because I was just trying to understand the concepts of jazz... [I had] this pre-occupation with the fact that (gasps), "I'm studying jazz at UCT! This is so incredible!" Just constantly feeling this over-inflated sense of *gratitude*... feeling like, "Oh, I can't believe I'm here!"...It *shouldn't* have been like that, you know?⁹⁸

Her approach to transitioning from classical piano to jazz strongly resonates with Chantal's and she similarly thrived on communing with her peers:

[My approach] was just to work hard and I found it quite mathematical in the beginning...adjusting [musically] wasn't too difficult and I think that was because I understood the language of music. I understood the terminology. I understood the basic concepts of music. It was really just about putting them in the context of jazz. I only started to come into my own [around] my third or fourth year. I really enjoyed my undergrad...I don't know if that was really about the programme [itself]... It was the camaraderie, the friendships, going through the struggles of understanding this really intense art form *together*... it was the dynamic amongst us as creatives...It was really quite stimulating to be in that space.⁹⁹

Unlike Siya, she played by all the rules and kept a low profile for a few years, determined to acquire the requisite jazz capital before attempting to "come into her own" during her fourth year of undergraduate studies. She also strongly identified with the rich and diverse peer culture that existed within the programme:

There was always a rich cultural buzz, but it wasn't cultivated by the lecturers...it was cultivated by the students themselves. There were the South Africans, the Mozambicans and all of [their] bands...there were "tribes"...the students back in the day didn't rely on the institution to create a cultural space for them. I think we had an acute understanding that we had four lecturers [who were] teaching us everything that *they* felt we needed to know in terms of jazz. Everything else, we just created on our own. It was only much later [towards the end of my undergraduate studies]...that I [became] part of an ensemble. I just felt like there was too much going on and there were just too many people who were really, *really* good...I was that person who didn't want to put herself "out there!"¹⁰⁰

Nomfundo carefully ventured into the local gigging scene, but felt compelled to enroll for a Masters degree.¹⁰¹ Again, she was strategic and careful about putting herself "out there" until she felt certain that she had acquired the maximum amount of knowledge and experience she believed was required:

98. Xaluva, No. 1.

99. Ibid.

100. Ibid.

101. Nomfundo holds a Masters degree in jazz performance from UCT; in addition to presenting vocal recitals, her accompanying dissertation focuses on the music of South African vocalist, songwriter, and activist Miriam Makeba (Nomfundo Xaluva, 'An analysis of the musical style of Miriam Makeba', (Masters thesis, University of Cape Town, 2009).

The decision to do a Masters was [because I felt] like I hadn't quite extracted enough *value* from the university space after my undergrad. I didn't feel like [it] had pushed me far enough...I needed to do something that would...*shape* me a little bit and really challenge me.¹⁰²

Nomfundo didn't initially plan on becoming an educator, but a part-time teaching job opened the door to what would become an important part of her professional career:

I started to teach at a gorgeous little private school in Rondebosch...a girls' school. I got to teach little girls singing while I was doing my Masters and that was [how I] got my foot in [the door]...there's no better training than teaching nine year-olds and ten year-olds who basically tell you when you are five minutes late!¹⁰³

As an alumnus of an elite all-girls' school herself, Nomfundo felt comfortable within the school, and the position allowed her to gain teaching experience within a familiar setting. As had been customary throughout her life, knowledge signaled power and she was determined to do the job well instead of "winging it":

Teaching is not something that people can just do naturally...just because you can play music and you are *good* at playing music, doesn't mean that you make a good lecturer...I needed to develop the skill and hone it, and train it and *then* actually do it. [Today] it's something that comes a lot more naturally to me, but it's a separate skill altogether.¹⁰⁴

A few more teaching stints around Cape Town followed, as did a part-time position lecturing jazz vocals at her alma mater. In 2016, she was inducted as a board member of the SAMRO Foundation,¹⁰⁵ where she served alongside South African music icon Sibongile Khumalo for four years:

I knew I could always pick up the phone at any hour of the day and say, "Look, this is what I'm going through...she would give me honest counsel...[and] has been quite pivotal in my journey."¹⁰⁶

Nomfundo released her first two albums under the Universal Music label (see chapter one); unlike Siya and Amanda, who gained industry savvy with the help of professional mentors, Nomfundo opted to upskill herself once again, this time enrolling for an MBA:

I never, ever, ever in my wildest imagination thought that I would do an MBA. I always thought it was for extremely smart people who are number crunchers and people who were brilliant in maths at school. I was like, "What are you doing?" But ten years after the Masters...again, I just felt like I needed to do

102. Xaluva, No. 1.

103. Ibid.

104. Ibid.

105. The SAMRO Foundation is the 'social investment and education arm' of the South African Music Rights Organisation (<https://www.musicinafrica.net/about/partners/samro-foundation>).

106. Xaluva, No. 1.

something else. I felt like I needed to *level up* and do something else that was going to...completely shift me out of my comfort zone. I'd been in the music industry for about ten years already, and I'd recorded albums. I'd won awards. I'd done all the jazz festivals. I'd done all these really cool things, but then at the end of it, I still felt like I needed to do something *more*...It was probably the best investment I ever made in myself...no artist can afford not to understand how the business works.¹⁰⁷

Nomfundo currently lectures full-time at the University of Cape Town where she also presents occasional classes about the music business. She highlights gender dynamics during these presentations:

One of the things that I've tried to unpack is the use of language and...framing. How do we *frame* things where women are concerned? If there's a woman and a man involved in an album or track, the woman is always a *feature*, you know? And I'm saying, "What is a feature? Do we understand what a feature is?" If the song is a 50-50 split of royalties, surely then the notion of a feature falls away? Because if it's 50-50, it means we *should* be saying that they're *co-composers*...it's about the language and how language affects perception. We need to *trouble* that [type of] thinking. There are just not enough women who sit in positions of influence and executive decision-making in the industry...women are in songs and on posters and in gigs and stuff, but we're not sitting in the boardroom. We're not sitting where the *money* moves. And we're not sitting where the contracts are being negotiated, where the contracts are being signed, and that's *really* what the issue is about. Because I think once we can tackle that, then we're able to start to enjoy *some* level of acknowledgement.¹⁰⁸

She regularly speaks out about the under-representation of women in music industry spaces, but has strong reservations about the current wave of "women in jazz" advocacy:

[I saw] a poster advertising a workshop about "women in music" and the question [on it] was, "What would the industry be like – or what will the music sound like – if more women were involved?" or whatever. And it puzzles me, because that kind of question is in and of itself extremely and deeply problematic, because it basically insinuates that women are *not* involved, and it gives this impression that women are not *there*. I think the issue is not whether women are involved, or women are *there*, [it] is the fact that they continue to be *erased*. When I zone in on jazz [and] look at the award ceremonies, the odd woman is nominated, but we never win...Women are *there*. Women are doing incredible work. It's just that the industry fails to recognise it. That, for me, is the real issue and I don't think male musicians are going to do anything about it. Why should they? Who wants to change a situation that continues to favour them?¹⁰⁹

Although Nomfundo has worked hard to empower other women in the music industry, she is wary of tokenism. Like Siya, she believes that all-women initiatives are useful provided that musical standards are not compromised:

I've got mixed feelings about projects that are just – especially in jazz – that are just purely [made up of] women. I've got no problem at all playing in an all-women unit if that's the kind of unit that I wanted. If I want to have a band and I want to play with Romy Brauteseth and Thandi [Ntuli] because I love their playing, I'll play with them. Not because I want it to be an all-women sort of thing...I do think that there's a space for it... at the 2019 *Standard Bank Joy of Jazz* festival, I was part of a women's

107. Ibid.

108. Ibid.

109. Ibid.

collaboration between South Africa and America. It was a really powerful project and...we played material that spoke to women and their strength... you know, a lot of Nina Simone, Miriam Makeba...it was extremely powerful...if there is an urge and if there is a *message* that I feel will only be conveyed most succinctly and clearly by only having women on stage, then it's something that I'll do. But not because it's Women's Month! I don't know that women...have the *luxury* of not supporting each other's decisions in this industry. We owe it to each other to support each other, because we are *all* that we have.¹¹⁰

She wasn't always as attuned to sexism and discrimination in the workplace and like Amanda and Shannon before her, not even her status as a tertiary jazz graduate prevented her from being treated as a lesser musician:

I [didn't have the language] to call it what it was at the time. I have walked into spaces, especially when I was a bit younger, where people have already – just by looking at [me] – decided what I can and can't do. They've already outlined your limitations, and sometimes it's subtle...when you're in a band practice [and you, the singer] gives the band their charts... "This is my music. This is what I want to do," and the musicians...they're male, right? Often, they do what *they* want to do...and when you [try] to voice what *you* want to do, oftentimes [people say], "No, no, no. There's a *better* way of doing it," or... "It's better if we play it like *this*"...Sometimes musicians will talk amongst each other [when] you're in the room and it's *your* rehearsal, or it's *your* song...It's this *thing* that says the singer and the woman sits outside of whatever decisions are made, artistically. I've always called that out...I'm very clear about what I want and I always say to people, "I *understand* jazz. I know that...for this one chord that I've written here, there are probably ten other versions that you *could* play. I understand how it works, but *this* is the one that I want. This is the one that *I* want...I understand that you might feel the urge to do a re-harm because maybe it is boring for you to play *Yakhal' Inkomo* like this and just to stay on the riff. I'd appreciate it if you just play it in its simple way...Sexism isn't necessarily someone commenting on how you look. "Oh, you clean up so well. Oh, look at your dress." Sometimes it's not as unsubtle as that...it's [also about] the band just deciding to change things up without checking if it's okay with you when it's *your* gig!¹¹¹

Like Chantal, Nomfundo enjoys being able to relate to colleagues on a more personal level rather than fighting to be heard on the bandstand:

I embrace the feminine energy of having just women in the room, irrespective of what their sexual orientation is. That's not important if there are women in the room...I relish that energy and I appreciate it...It's a space [where you are] not in a persistent and continuous *contestation* with the male ego and patriarchy.¹¹²

In a recent published interview, Nomfundo perfectly describes her approach to achieving success – and staying true to her identity – in a male-dominated industry:

110. Ibid.

111. Ibid.

112. Ibid.

I own my womanhood and I flaunt it with pride. Jazz is very patriarchal. I don't fight that. My work does.¹¹³

Thandi Ntuli

Thandi enrolled in the jazz programme at UCT in 2007. Like the other participants who experienced challenges in transitioning to an unfamiliar space and genre, she was lucky to find another inspiring teacher who helped her find her own musical voice while mastering the set curriculum:

In my first year, my piano teacher was André Petersen. Having been a student at the university as well, he laid out some expectations and how to navigate them. So, as much as he was a piano teacher, he really broadened my thinking [about music] at the beginning...I could hardly improvise, but...he would introduce me to different things. He put me onto Questlove...and [then jazz was accessible] because I grew up knowing hip-hop and all that.¹¹⁴

Thandi majored in jazz piano and only briefly studied jazz vocals during her third year. Unlike Nomfundo who largely avoided the stage during undergraduate years, Thandi was a more confident performer, thanks to years of piano competitions and her upbringing in a musically active family. She had also explored songwriting during high school and was eager to make her mark on the music scene. Her dedication paid off and she was offered a scholarship to Berklee College of Music, but declined the offer:

That decision, at the time, was the perfect decision for me. My [piano] teacher, Andrew Lilley ... had been to Berklee, so his insight was, "Look...at Berklee, it's hit or miss. It's actually about *who* is there at the time." And from his perspective, what was happening in Cape Town at the time was really magical. Which was true. I was in a city where there were so many incredible piano players at the time...I think it was good advice, because sometimes we think that it's a university that turns a person into a certain musician.¹¹⁵

Like Nomfundo, Thandi carefully plotted her trajectory and relied on the advice of supportive lecturers. When she graduated in 2010 she was already actively involved in the professional jazz scene. Whereas Siya was "othered" for her hybridised style, Thandi was in the company of a new generation of artists, celebrated for changing the face of South African jazz. Despite the relative ease with which she entered the professional jazz scene, Thandi was keenly aware that she missed out on mentorship opportunities that her male counterparts took for granted.

113. Nicky Schrire, 'Interview for #IWD2019: Nomfundo Xaluva, jazz vocalist', *London Jazz News*, 8 March 2019, accessed 5 September 2021, <https://londonjazznews.com/2019/03/08/interview-for-iwd2019-nomfundo-xaluva-jazz-vocalist/>

114. Ntuli, No. 1.

115. Ibid.

Although they started their careers more than a decade apart, Thandi's testimony is strikingly similar to Shannon's:

The jazz space is a very mentorship-driven genre of music. A lot of my male counterparts have an "elder" in music, at least one...they're almost like a son to that other person. I think there is a huge amount of education in spending time with someone who has walked the walk, who's sharing the space with you. Not just sharing musical ideas or whatever, but sharing life perspectives with you. But as women, whether for cultural reasons or us not feeling safe in those [situations]...not because people *make* us feel unsafe, but just because there is an inherent defensiveness that we *must* have, because you just never know. I think that creates a more isolated development for a woman and you actually see that there are so many things you miss, things that male musicians get. I think those are very structural things. I'm not sure how that gets addressed, but it's definitely something that I've noticed that plays a huge role in [whether women become] performers.¹¹⁶

She has experienced a fair amount of discrimination and subtle undermining tactics in the workplace, especially at the start of her career:

I grew up with sisters and brothers, but my brothers were closer in age to me so I've never really been intimidated in spaces filled with men. But I've picked up on being treated differently, or on *shifts* in the way things are being done. I've had this experience with sound engineers, for example, where I'd say, "Can I have reverb?" and they're like, "Are you sure?" It's taken some time and experience to really assert myself, because sometimes you [think], "*Am* I sure? *Do* I need reverb? Maybe not", you know? In the earlier days of my career, I probably accepted less than what I wanted sound-wise, because I just felt like maybe I've overstepped. Maybe what I'm asking for is a bit stupid...I don't think I was aware [at the time] that it had to do with being a woman...Someone keeps second-guessing the things you ask. I didn't see it so much as...not being *welcome* in that space, but as being undermined. And I guess it just made me realise that I need to fortify myself.¹¹⁷

Thandi did just that, taking full control of all aspects of her professional career. She carefully constructed her musical image and – after years of conforming to the status quo within institutions – stepped away from what was "expected". Unlike Nomfundo who chose to launch her recording career backed by a major record label, Thandi released her music independently. She believes that women need to empower themselves rather than place themselves at the mercy of gatekeepers:

With time, as you put out music, you start learning about the business side of the industry and you realise that there's a lot of exploitation that happens with the [record] labels. [Doing it myself] demystified the idea of being signed to a major label. I'm very glad I did it that way, because I learned things. And now, when I do get into deals, I understand exactly what it is that I need to negotiate for myself. When I started [my jazz career], the question about the visibility of women used to come up a lot and I found it very strange. When I grew up... playing classical music, everyone was a girl. And there were, like, three boys! What is happening now, first of all, is that the internet has made visibility a little bit more possible for anyone. And then, the second is...it's not like the *only* music we know about comes from record labels and publishers. Nowadays, if you write and you have the internet, you can put *yourself* out there...I'm very deliberate about making sure that I document my own stuff so that I control the narrative...I work under my own company. I do get help from people, but I'm the one who chooses who to work with. I get

116. Ibid.

117. Ibid.

asked a lot why I didn't sing much on my first album. I was very deliberate about that, not wanting the piano [to be on] the back burner, you know? I really, really enjoy playing piano...I was trying to make sure I control how I'm received as much as I can, but I still get booked a lot more for voice than I do piano.¹¹⁸

This resonates with Amanda's view that vocalists remain less likely to be taken seriously as composers and arrangers:

There's a very stark divide between women who are instrumentalists and women who are vocalists. It's always made to seem like these singers just got on stage and they were in front of a mic and they sang beautifully. But there is not much conversation around how *musical* these singers were...as arrangers as well, you know? Betty Carter, for example, was an incredible arranger. [It's about] finding the *proper narratives* in the history. Why do they [only] tell the story of the *man* who was a great improviser and composer? When you think about Thelonious Monk you can't think of him as just as a pianist, you think of him as a great composer as well. Duke Ellington as well, but a lot of women who were singers...that's all we ever know them as...but they were actually great writers as well, and great arrangers. The internet exposes us to more knowledge than what is put in front of us. It's a product of the age we live in. We have more knowledge now, because we are able to *find* knowledge, even when what is given to us is limiting.¹¹⁹

Like some of the other participants, she is reluctant to participate in all-women projects where novelty value outweighs musical ability:

My thoughts around that have developed and shifted over time. It's something I've not been able to run away from, and I think that I'm now in a more peaceful and understanding place with it. I remember, at university, being approached by an all-women band. I had a huge problem with it, because...it was short skirts and instruments...I very strongly rejected the idea of girl bands in the beginning...until I auditioned for Thandiswa Mazwai's all-women band¹²⁰. A friend of mine sent me the flyer and [said], "I know you hate this, but I know you love this artist!"...Having followed her career since I was in high school, I understood that it was probably not a tokenisation, [but rather] a platform...There is a level of invisibility that you continue to have when you're tokenised, because no one deals with your art on a "what-is-she-thinking" level. What is she doing? Where is she coming from? What is she reaching for?...In spaces where women are tokenised it's just, "She was a woman in a male-dominated space", and that's where [her story] ends.¹²¹

Thandi is aware that young women who are interested in jazz view her as a role model; like Amanda, she sees her platform as both a blessing and a burden. She prefers to think of herself as an informal mentor rather than a teacher, someone who could guide and motivate upcoming musicians on the bandstand rather than in a classroom:

118. Ibid.

119. Ibid.

120. See Shongwe, 'Mazwai assembles unique band'.

121. Ntuli, No. 1.

I have mixed feelings about it, but I also know that it's a responsibility that we have, unfortunately (laughs), to bring awareness to [gender inequality]...I love imparting knowledge, but I don't think I'm a teacher...but I really enjoy ensemble work, because I love seeing things come together.¹²²

Thandi received the Standard Bank Young Artist for Jazz award in 2018, an event that greatly contributed to her international profile, including an artist residency in Switzerland (2019) and a featured performance with Wynton Marsalis' Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (2019). Thandi didn't expect to receive the award, convinced that her work would be overlooked in favour of more "pure" jazz offerings:

I've always been aware that I'm not the purists' idea of jazz, so I was quite surprised to get the award. It coincided with the release of my second album, so it gave me the opportunity to really share my work with a much larger audience that I'd been able to with my previous work.¹²³

The current flavour of contemporary South African jazz has allowed Thandi to develop her unique sound without the resistance and disapproval Siya faced less than a decade earlier:

When I first went to jazz school I wanted to become a person who could write *music* and that's all, you know? So, if jazz has given me the tools to do that, and classical and everything else that I've been exposed to has given me the tools to write and express myself, then I'm okay with whatever people want to [label me as]!¹²⁴

Thandi is keenly aware that her creative work may not have been as well received in the jazz scene a generation ago. More importantly, if she was a contemporary of Amanda and Shannon, it may have been near impossible for her to launch an independent performance career as a young, black woman:

I think about...maybe just a mere thirty years ago – not even too long ago, just *thirty* years ago – it may have been a very different outcome.¹²⁵

Romy Brauteseth

As the only participant who did not study jazz at university, Romy's career trajectory is a study in disidentification. Instead of pursuing music studies, she studied graphic design despite spending most of her time playing in various bands. Her approach to music had always been informal and she enjoyed having the freedom to choose what to play, and with whom. Between 2009 and 2012, I was fortunate enough to hire Romy for some of her first professional gigs.

122. Ntuli, No. 1.

123. Ntuli, No. 2.

124. Ibid.

125. Ibid.

Towards the end of her design studies, she came to the realisation that she didn't want to pursue it as a career:

I knew that I didn't want to go into [graphic] design so I was at a bit of a [crossroads]...do you remember the 2010 World Cup? We played a lot together that year...that was kind of my gap year after design...I was like, "I *really* don't like this industry. I don't want to go into advertising. This is not for me". In terms of the performance thing on double bass...you must include *yourself* in my list of mentors. The first time I played double bass [was] with *you*, don't forget. Because you forced me (laughs)!¹²⁶

In 2012, the opportunity to play the bass for the popular theatre production, *High School Musical*¹²⁷ presented itself, and she toured internationally for several months. Fellow band member, Norwegian-born guitarist Gorm Helfjord was pivotal in her decision to move to Cape Town after the tour, and to try her hand at a professional career:

I owe a lot to him, because up until that point he had never heard me play double bass. I was playing *High School Musical* on electric [bass]. But there was something that he saw [in my playing].¹²⁸

Growing up within a close-knit family and being accustomed to the communal safety of her "church family", Romy was fortunate to be welcomed into the jazz community by Helfjord and his (then) wife, jazz vocalist Melanie Scholtz:

Gorm and I really established a good relationship and he was like an older brother to me... it almost felt like I was going to [join] a family, and I felt like I was going to be sorted, one way or another...I didn't have my own [upright] bass yet, but I did it anyway! I drove to Cape Town...and they were like, "Buy a bass and we'll get you into some stuff"...Gorm was my biggest reference, because he was so linked in with a lot of people. He was obviously linked to Mel, but he was also linked to Dan (Shout) and to the people playing at the Green Dolphin,¹²⁹ like Andrew Ford and Maurice Gawronsky. They were cool. They were there for me. [The move] was very uncharacteristic for me. I don't usually do stuff like that. I'm a comfort zone girl!¹³⁰

After performing in Johannesburg with Melanie Scholtz, Romy started receiving calls from high-profile artists like Bokani Dyer, Marcus Wyatt, Afrika Mkhize and Feya Faku. Romy believes that her novelty status counted in her favour at the beginning of her career. She

126. Brauteseth, No. 1.

127. The stage show *High School Musical* is a spin-off from the Disney film of the same name (see *High School Musical*, directed by Kenny Ortega (2006; Buena Vista Television), film.) Romy toured extensively with the cast and crew of South African theatre impresario Pieter Toerien's production of the musical.

128. Ibid.

129. Between ca. 1990 and 2011, the Green Dolphin was a landmark jazz venue at the Cape Town waterfront where top South African and international jazz musicians performed seven nights a week.

130. Brauteseth, No. 1.

appeared on numerous albums and was booked for tours by several established artists in the jazz scene:

There's this whole argument about starting off on the wrong foot if you're a female and I just don't believe that. It's not true. I really don't...the response in Cape Town would've been very different if I was a guy, I think... if you can hold your own, people are like, "Oh, wow", you know? It was very different for the guys that came [through the ranks] with me... It took them a lot longer...they grew up in Cape Town and they played great, but it took them *much* longer to get those gigs. I just came *in* there (laughs).¹³¹

Romy has strong feelings about gender advocacy in jazz, and tries to avoid engaging publically on discussions around the marginalisation and exclusion of women:

...people speak as if [sexism] only exists in the music industry. It's a societal thing...If it *didn't* exist in the music industry it would be weird, right? Say you walk down the road and people shout at you, or if you're in a bar and you're the only woman... you feel a certain way. It's got nothing to do with music...my opinion [is that] all that we really see going on is a manifestation of the traditional way of bringing up your children...you treat little boys and little girls very, very differently. What little boys learn when they're young, is that they must take risks. They might hurt themselves, but they fall and they cry and they get up, but they do it better the next time. And little girls don't learn that.¹³²

As discussed in chapter three, Romy's parents did not conform to this particular stereotype and she acknowledges that it has since become more common for girls to emulate role models who don't subscribe to traditional gender norms:

Girls are growing up and seeing single mothers working, and feeding them...What little girls identify with now, I think, is a much broader thing [than in the past]. Because now...mothers are working and they're doing this and they're doing that, and they have to be the dad *and* the mom.¹³³

Romy is very candid about her own bias concerning women musicians and her testimony echoes that of a younger Shannon, twenty years ago:

If somebody tells me that I'm playing in a big band and the drummer is a female, my first reaction is going to be like, "Oh, God". I'm a female and even I have stereotypes...[I think], "Oh, Jesus. Is this chick going to play or is she not?" Because...my reference is that I have to, like, smack them from behind, you know?¹³⁴

131. Ibid.

132. Ibid.

133. Ibid.

134. Ibid.

She has participated in various all-women projects earlier in her career, but her experiences have led her to avoid them altogether. Her testimony again resonates with Shannon's views as she recalls a recent performance at a major South African jazz festival:

It was terrible, and the reason why it was terrible was because you can't book people just because they're females! And they can't play! I don't understand! If I was booked in that band because I was a female – which I was – it actually offends me... there's nothing that should go ahead of the music. If you're booking people based on the way they look, or based on their gender, or based on their race, or based on the fact that they all play chess, then I don't want to be a part of it... I have been asked since then and I've said no... I think it has its place, for sure, because there are a lot of girls who feel more comfortable around girls... as a starting point for a musician in their developmental stage, it's cool. You have a place where you feel like everybody's *holding* you and going, "That was a great solo", even though it was terrible, you know? Whatever, it's cool. It has its place. I get it, but it's not realistic. And, because it's not realistic, I don't really want to do it... The thing that irks me the most about this industry is the fucking gender political shit... I don't like that it's always at the forefront now... right now, I have an issue with the fact that it always needs to be highlighted that I'm a female. I hate it.¹³⁵

Romy's statements unwittingly reveal the nature of the local jazz scene: her understanding of a "realistic" work environment implies that competitive, masculine and aggressive traits are the norm, and that they are required if you want to be accepted into the proverbial fold. She describes how, as a newcomer to the scene, she needed to convince a prominent jazz drummer that she was worth hiring instead of other bassists who "fell apart" as a result of his demeanor:

He will push you beyond – you'll show him your fingers are bleeding, he doesn't care...there are so many people who have gone through that [with him]...the reason [he] kept booking me was because of that first gig where I got two blisters and I ran home in the break and got a bandage...I played the rest of the gig with my fingers bandaged...if we're going to look at men versus women, that's perhaps where [they have the edge]...whatever it is. It's that *thing*. It's like that sense of determination, like, "I'm not going to let you [beat me]", and I think men have it much more readily than women do. I really believe that...and you *need* it in this industry.¹³⁶

This is a graphic example of just how violent the "uneven differentials of power"¹³⁷ (described in chapter one) can be within competitive spaces where mastery can only be attained through enduring, conquering and, eventually, displaying domination. Romy believes that the presence of women on the bandstand affects the balance of power; unlike Chantal and Nomfundo who draw strength and inspiration from other women's presence, Romy finds their "soft" energies to be limiting rather than mutually empowering:

There's something to be said for [energies], especially in a big band context...I find it difficult [in an all-women band] because the energy is just not *right*. It's [like being] on a stage with twenty-five insecure,

135. Ibid.

136. Ibid.

137. Werner et al. 'Broadening research in gender and music practice', 637.

needing-affirmation personalities. You get that in men as well, it's not only women, but it's more prevalent in women. That [need] to be held and encouraged through something...because that's what women are about. They're nurturers and they're softer and they *carry* [others], you know? So, naturally, that's what they want out of somebody else, and I just can't [give them that]. I'm, like, swinging my dick around (laughs).¹³⁸

Romy spent much of her childhood and her high school career socialising, surfing and making music with boys rather than girls. It is therefore no surprise that being “one of the boys” had been her main strategy to operate within the jazz scene. Nevertheless, she enjoys – and performs – her femininity in subtle ways:

I have always been one of the boys. I've been a bit more comfortable around boys, but actually, I'm a good go-between, because I still want to know all the gossip...it's like a natural thing! There's a good friend that I play with and he's a drummer...we did a gig and afterwards he was like, “Romy! Romy! Come here, let me show you something”. He's just had a baby...he's been working on the new baby room. Like, all the little decorations and stuff and...he waited until everybody else had left and then said, “Romy! Come and look!” and I was like, “Oh my word! That's so cool! Wait, let me see it again!” There's like this natural thing...he gets something out of it, because he knows I love it, and I want to see it because I'm a girl, you know, and I love shit like that...So, there's a bit of a *different* relationship that is formed and because of that kind of interaction, I don't have to change the way I am, because I can operate the way that I operate. The guys know that I'm happy to sit and drink a beer and laugh about stupid shit, but I'm also still a woman, you know?¹³⁹

When Romy started her professional career, she made a concerted effort to downplay her sexuality and to set boundaries in terms of personal relationships in the workplace.¹⁴⁰ Whilst living in Port Elizabeth, she dressed down in often shapeless, androgynous clothing and sneakers or flats, even on stage. This was also the case at the jazz festivals she attended where casual, sometimes grungy attire was the norm. When she moved to Cape Town, however, she slowly shed her tomboyish look as she began to perform in more prestigious spaces and alongside industry professionals:

When I moved to Cape Town and I met all these young boys...I was very aware of what was to come...they were going to get married or they were going to be in long-term relationships and there were going to be issues. And I couldn't let that get in the way of what I was trying to do there. I had to establish myself, but [keeping my distance] was a conscious decision and it's not always easy.¹⁴¹

Romy has little sympathy for women who represent themselves in an overtly sexual way on stage, yet complain about being objectified. Whereas Shannon deliberately “played that role”

138. Ibid.

139. Ibid.

140. Bennett et al. refer to this behaviour as ‘normalization’, a strategy women use to ‘divert attention away from their gender by downplaying their gender and ‘assimilating into the male social identity group by adopting stereotypical masculine characteristics’ (see Bennett, Hennekam, Macarthur, Hope and Goh, ‘Hiding Gender’, 27.)

141. Brauteseth, No. 1.

during her twenties, Romy cultivated a more subtly feminine appearance, largely to avoid conflict with wives and girlfriends, but also to avoid detracting from her playing:

It's the thing that grates me the most, actually...because women operate the way they do and they want to be the "rose amongst the thorns"...[some women] get dressed, then walk out and say, "How do I look?" and everyone goes, "You look amazing!" So...you *want* that [response] but then it becomes your enemy...[you say], "Men just treat me like I'm a sex symbol" and I'm like, "You set this up *yourself* and then suddenly you want to change it?" That's not how this works!¹⁴²

Despite her growing international profile, Romy still experiences a fair amount of discrimination, often at the hand of other women:

It must be said that I've actually, more often than I have been booked *because* I'm a girl, I've *not* been booked because I'm a girl...Somebody once phoned randomly and said, "I got your number from somebody. Are you the bass player?" and I'm like, "Yes. I'm Romy"...and they obviously didn't realise [I was a girl]. Somebody just said, "Phone Romy. Here's the number" or whatever. They didn't realise that I was a chick, and I'm like, "Yeah, I'm a female". And they'd say, "Oh...this is their manager and [the artist] doesn't actually want another female on stage with her while she's singing". Other times it's been more indirectly...when girlfriends and wives have said, "No. No, Romy's not in your band. No. Pick another bass player. I don't care who it is, but it's not a woman".¹⁴³

After a recent big band show, the bandleader thanked Romy for participating, saying it was "about time" the band included a woman:

If that is the case, then don't book me. Please. Don't book me, man, because what *is* that? What are you saying to me by saying that? My gender is not something I can work on, or that I can change, or that I have any control over. My *playing ability* is what I can work on, what I can change and what I can improve ...and now [you say] that you booked me to have a woman in the band...How is that a *compliment*?¹⁴⁴

For over a decade, Romy has been a regular fixture at all the major jazz festivals in South Africa. Music is but one of her creative pastimes and she divides her time between gigs, photography, visual art and filmmaking, in particular the popular "House on the Hill" video series she has produced with Marcus Wyatt since 2020. In 2019, she performed in a joint concert featuring the ZAR Jazz Orchestra and Wynton Marsalis' Jazz at Lincoln Centre Orchestra at the Standard Bank Joy of Jazz Festival. For most jazz musicians, performing with Marsalis would equate to the ultimate currency and act as visible proof of their legitimacy. Disidentifying with yet another narrative of mastery, Romy does not gauge her value as an artist by her association with industry giants:

¹⁴². Ibid.

¹⁴³. Ibid.

¹⁴⁴. Ibid.

The big band gig alongside Wynton Marsalis and Lincoln Centre...in scale, it's big, it's quite something, but in a way it's...it's just another one of those gigs, like the gigs I've had with other people I admired. I've never thought, "*This* gig is going to *make* me. *Now* I've hit the big time." That's an illness that – luckily – I've never had. Because I don't have *massive* dreams [of being famous] (laughs) so, every gig becomes cool then. But that's, I guess, what music's always been for me. It's a team sport. Just being in the thing – making music – is cool...I mean it goes *way* back, like the gigs with you...we had some cool gigs back in the day (laughs). I learnt a lot on those gigs.¹⁴⁵

As the youngest participant in this study, Romy has arguably achieved more during her first decade as a professional musician than most of the other participants, despite not having had a formal music education or releasing her own compositions. She was recently awarded an artist residency in Switzerland for 2023, firmly positioning her alongside award-winning South African jazz contemporaries like Thandi Ntuli and Bokani Dyer. Romy's testimony reflects various shifts in South African jazz culture, but also in society more generally. As the beneficiary of more enlightened gender mores, Romy didn't experience patriarchy as a constraint in the ways Amanda and Shannon did. During high school, she had access to male mentors who facilitated her entry into the jazz scene, first as a member of national youth jazz bands and later as a professional performer. To build on these connections and be seen by the "right" people required a move to Cape Town, where she would have greater access to key figures within a vibrant professional jazz scene: had she decided to formally study jazz during the early 2000s, she may have been pitted against the institutional "bro network" (as described by the older participants). Instead, she was fortunate to join a "family" of musicians within an elite network of professional players, venue owners and bandleaders. Backed by this safety net, she actively sought out her musical heroes and soon shared the stage with them.

Berliner writes that self-reliance "requires [jazz initiates] to select their own models for excellence and to measure their abilities against them..."¹⁴⁶ These models sometimes enforced violent rites of passage (in one instance, resulting in her playing with bleeding fingers to impress a demanding bandleader), but mostly Romy acquired her skills through "hanging out". Joining – and being readily accepted into – this vibrant subculture enabled her to make her mark on the South African jazz scene with little to no patriarchal constraints. Like Shannon, Romy was accustomed to being the "only girl in the band" from an early age, but her experiences of exclusion have been linked to women rather than men. Working within a largely male environment, Romy intuitively constructed a set of dispositions – such as underplaying

145. Ibid.

146. Berliner, *Thinking in jazz*, 169.

her femininity and “being one of the guys” – to ensure being viewed and treated in a non-sexual way. Romy’s use of masculine language and strong reluctance to overtly engage with issues of gender has served her well in male-dominated spaces and may be another deliberate strategy to retain her position.

Although Thandi and Nomfundo are only marginally older than Romy, they have both experienced enough exclusion to speak out against patriarchy on various public platforms. Nevertheless, when they enrolled for jazz studies at UCT, gender was less of an obstacle than it had been when Amanda and Shannon inhabited the same space; they entered the professional arena in an era where women in a number of fields have occupied positions of power traditionally reserved for men.¹⁴⁷ Most importantly, their industry role models included women of colour like Judith Sephuma, Tandise Mazwai, Gloria Bosman and Siya Makuzeni. As undergraduate students, Nomfundo and Thandi thrived within the rich, hybridised melting pot of jazz that sprung from the influx of international jazz students and performers after apartheid. By comparison, Amanda, Shannon and Chantal all refer to their musical isolation during and in the immediate wake of apartheid: Amanda and Shannon only collaborated with musicians from other countries in their later twenties, and despite her family connection to American gospel artists, Chantal’s first encounters with international jazz musicians took place in Europe in the early 2000s.

Launching their professional careers during an increasingly digital era further advantaged Nomfundo and Thandi, as they had ready access to mentors and opportunities that allowed them to reach a wide international audience. Both women approached their careers with a keen understanding of the business elements involved, especially Nomfundo, for whom acquiring an MBA was an important way to empower herself as an artist. Once armed with formidable holdings of educational capital in the form of a Masters degree in music *and* an MBA, Nomfundo fastidiously prepared herself for the positions of teacher, university lecturer, board member, recording artist and bandleader. Moreover, she has infused her teaching with her business acumen to provide on-the-ground mentorship that extends beyond music alone.

Whereas Nomfundo made her performance (and composing) debut at a slightly more mature age, Thandi had been performing since childhood and had explored her innate songwriting

147. As of February 2021, women held a total of 45.8% of South Africa’s parliamentary seats by women (see ‘South Africa fact sheet, Gender data gaps and country performance’, UN Women, accessed 15 December 2022, <https://data.unwomen.org/country/south-africa>

skills since high school. For Thandi, taking charge of all aspects of her career was more intuitive; she claimed sole control over how to present her music – and herself – to the public, sidestepping industry stereotypes and asserting her status as pianist and composer. She sustained her standing as a top student whilst simultaneously building her professional profile; more surprising is her decision to decline a prestigious scholarship abroad so as to advance her own already-emerging sound within a richly stimulating and familiar environment.

For the majority of participants, entrepreneurship and “outside” work translated to a degree of capital within the university programme (especially when the work involved performing alongside lecturers or fellow students), yet Siya experienced painful and irreconcilable clashes with institutional gatekeepers as a result of her independent musical ventures. Nearly two decades ago, Siya’s very presence as a female trombonist-vocalist of colour disrupted powerful stereotypes and hinted at a new era of unapologetic difference in South African jazz. Alienated for her outspokenness and nonconformity within university spaces, she abandoned her studies and decided to seek out kindred musical spirits who similarly thrived on nonconformity. With the help of her “uncles” – powerful black jazz icons and masters of the industry – she was able to earn a living and build her unique brand of music. Young enough to benefit from shifting power formations yet old enough to have experienced the worst of previous regimes, Siya is a transitional figure whose public fight for “legitimacy” contributed to processes that paved a way for Nomfundo, Thandi and Romy to pursue their careers under less constrained circumstances.

During her undergraduate years in Cape Town, Chantal was part of a vibrant, racially integrated community of peers and inspirational mentors. In the wake of her mother’s death, she and her twin leaned heavily on each other for support and soon gravitated towards other women in the programme, with whom they continued their family tradition of *a cappella* singing. With the help of well-connected mentors, she accepted a prestigious scholarship in Europe where she had to contend with vast cultural differences: Chantal was often the only person of colour within university spaces and experienced racial “othering” despite the cosmopolitan environment. Despite her social isolation, she devoted a decade to building a career during which she completed two Masters degrees and worked in various sectors of the music and entertainment industries. It is not surprising that she would again find a communal safe space in the all-women group Zap Mama led by Belgian-Congolese singer Marie Daulne. Upon returning to Cape Town, Chantal withdrew from what had become a toxic, male-dominated

jazz scene and took several years to reposition herself as a composer, bandleader, educator and performing artist.

Shannon was able to hold her own among some of Cape Town's most influential jazz musicians since the age of eleven. She is the only participant who had a classical *and* jazz education. With the exception of vocalists, women were severely underrepresented on the bandstand and in jazz educational spaces, making Shannon's position as a saxophone lecturer during her early twenties all the more exceptional. Her expertise was put to good use within the university programme, but she was treated as an outsider nevertheless. Most disturbingly, she was the victim of sexual harassment and misconduct for years, unable to speak out against powerful perpetrators who had a direct impact on her livelihood as a performing artist. During her stint in the Army Band, her attempts to speak out against patriarchy were met with equal disdain. Silenced for the first two decades of her career, Shannon devised and executed a failsafe plan to leave the country in search of more inclusive musical spaces abroad.

Amanda similarly experienced institutional spaces as incubators of male power: without the family ties that allowed Shannon access to the scene, Amanda's career options were limited. Pigeonholed as a "girl singer", she was overlooked as a pianist and bandleader within the jazz scene, but built a solid performance career in popular music and the corporate scene instead, largely with the help of older women in the industry. Her acceptance into the jazz scene was years in the making and with the exception of a supportive male mentor, she wasn't "taken seriously" as a jazz musician. Despite her tertiary qualifications and proximity to some of the country's leading jazz musicians, Amanda's creative and career aspirations, like Shannon's, were particularly frustrated by the homophily of the jazz scene. Ironically, it was with the help of (male) friends in Zimbabwe – not "schooled" professionals at UCT – that Amanda first recorded and performed her own music. Leading her own projects – and abandoning the endless fight for legitimacy and acceptance into a game where the same rules didn't apply to women – she quietly rose to various positions of power in the jazz scene.

Studying gatekeeping processes in Swedish jazz education programmes, Erik Nylander argues that straying too far from the "tacit and uncoded rules" of the field often leads to the rejection

of aspiring newcomers.¹⁴⁸ For many of the participants in this study, legitimisation as jazz players hinged on how well they embodied the rules enforced by male gatekeepers. By way of example, Amanda, Shannon, Nomfundo and Thandi all referred to the international, institutional *lingua franca* of bebop as a marker of legitimacy, regardless of whether its “speakers” could relate to it on a personal level. “Burning” solos and “playing like a man” were the accepted currency for the older participants, and Shannon in particular was frowned upon for preferring to play with “unschooled” (i.e., self taught) musicians versus “educated” institutional gatekeepers. Chantal acquired an impressive skill set in Europe, yet upon her return to South Africa this was of little value in the Cape Town jazz scene, where it was more important to be connected to (and play like) the “manne” (men) who ruled the roost.

The young European woman who refused to play Shannon’s high trumpet parts, for example, didn’t feel the need to validate her presence in a high-profile band by demonstrating technical virtuosity or playing “like a man”. This realisation also came to Nomfundo, Thandi and Romy early in their careers: they recognised that such displays held an enormous amount of embodied capital, yet they felt free to choose whether or when to employ them. For Nomfundo, Thandi and Romy, the changing political landscape meant that they had a wider palette of stylistic and tonal colours at their disposal; while the influence of international musicians – now freely visiting the country – on contemporary South African jazz allowed participants like Thandi to create an unapologetically hybridised sound and musical identity. The scene was not as primed a decade earlier when Siya attempted to redefine South African jazz.

Shifting gender relations in the country have diluted the younger participants’ experiences of overt sexism and misogyny, and afforded them a higher level of “automatic” agency, especially in the wake of #MeToo. Nevertheless, they are still partially regulated by gender dynamics in the jazz scene, such as the complex social rules around sexual behaviour. The older participants explicitly refer to the objectification of women and the widespread occurrence of sexual transgression in the South African jazz scene, but it is often gendered assumptions rather than actions that paint women in a certain light.

148. Erik Nylander, ‘Mastering the jazz standard: sayings and doings of artistic valuation’, *American Journal of Cultural Sociology* 2, No. 1 (2014), 22-23. See also Erik Nylander and Andreas Melldahl, ‘Playing with capital: Inherited and acquired assets in a jazz audition’, *Poetics* 48, (2015), 83-106.

Shannon's testimony reveals that even when women are not sexually involved with male colleagues, it is widely assumed that they are. Romy intuitively knew "what was to come" when she started her career alongside male peers. Attuned to the ways men in the jazz scene – and their partners – would likely view her presence, she carefully played by a set of self-imposed social rules to avoid scrutiny for real or imagined entanglements. Unlike Shannon who spent years navigating tricky sexual dynamics in the workplace, Romy took this decision at the beginning of her career, empowered by non-threatening peers and mentors who acted as a protective barrier against patriarchal forces.

The testimonies in this chapter not only reveal some of the barriers faced by women in formal and informal jazz spaces, but also how they – as gendered agents – have negotiated jazz as a field of power relations. As discussed in chapter one, women's engagement with jazz involves not only on their musical skill and creativity but also their ability to negotiate complex power relations. There are tacit rules to being a jazz musician and myriad other rules to being a woman playing jazz, or being a woman of colour who plays jazz. Like extended chord notes, each added descriptor involves more nuance and complexity. "Mastering" jazz demands submission to these rules and repeatedly impels women to prove their legitimacy. This often requires deliberately and/or subconsciously adjusting their way of "being in the world", by adopting behaviours, language, and playing styles that are aligned with that of gatekeeping teachers and bandleaders. In the context of professional jazz culture, Bourdieu's now-iconic idea of a "collectively orchestrated" habitus would suggest that all who participate in a field are "good" identifying subjects (as described by Pechêux): complicit in maintaining its structures, even without explicitly being told what to do or how to do it.¹⁴⁹ For the participants to have achieved their current positions of success, it can be argued that they have bent, sidestepped and followed the rules of local professional jazz fields by developing sophisticated strategies for successfully negotiating those fields with variously antagonistic and accommodating role players at different times of their careers. Ironically, even when they counter-identified with "bro networks" and with wider oppressive regimes of race and class, they were in part still complicit in sustaining and legitimising those structures.

149. Pierre Bourdieu, 'Structures and the Habitus', chapter in *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, translated by Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 72.

On the other hand, the success and standing of jazz musicians lies in their ability to improvise and adapt. The score that jazz musicians work with is not the dictatorial entity that it is in the context of a classical orchestra, but rather a set of prompts that guide dialogic musical and social engagement. Whereas the realisation of a classical score requires identifying performers, jazz offers space for performances of counter- and even disidentification.¹⁵⁰ Evoking this jazzier conception of Bourdieu's collective orchestration, I argue that the participants not only "mastered" the field of jazz, but they have reformulated some of the parameters set by its gatekeepers. As disidentifying subjects with significant holdings of jazz capital, they have also been able to rewrite rules and master narratives to effect more positive developments within local jazz culture. I argue that structural *and* agentic dynamics are deeply and *finely* interwoven in the participants' musical lives. Although they were omnipresent, patriarchal forces did not always act as a constraint, but also as a catalyst for powerful performances as jazz musicians and as women. All the participants initially associated power/agency with compliance: this perceived sense of agency/legitimacy was linked to their hard-earned acceptance into hostile spaces. However, they all at some point in their careers realised that their true agency lay in challenging power structures that sought to marginalise them. Disidentifying with the unspoken rules of South Africa's jazz worlds and those who govern them proved to be an even more empowering move. The next chapter explores how this hard-won power finds expression in the participants' musical utterances as composers and improvising performers.

150. Ramanna, 'Jazz as discourse', 125.

5. Musical Testimonies

Kofi Agawu describes musical analysis as a process that shares “affinities and structural parallels with performance and composition”.¹ He suggests that we should:

...disentangle analysis from theory, not so as to deny that analyses are always already based on some theory or other, but to emphasise the rhetorical advantages of adopting a strategic and temporary blindness to the theoretical scaffolding on which a given analytical proceeding is based.²

This resonates with IPA and feminist scholarship in placing great value on the research process rather than the pursuit of clearly defined, expected outcomes or findings. Like the participants’ fluid and ever-evolving musical lives, analysis is a dynamic process. To this end, this chapter is but a starting point for deeper studies about the participants’ compositions and performances. For Agawu, analysis is “not mere description, nor is it bound by a consideration of wholes of totality; it could just as legitimately concern itself with parts or fragments”.³ Agawu’s conception of analysis is compatible with feminist epistemologies in that it does not accept universal truths:

The value of analysis should not rest on the accumulation of analytic discourses. On the contrary, analysis depends crucially on a regular reinvention of the wheel. Analysis is at its most vital when it denies history and precedent.⁴

He also argues that analysis should ideally be an oral genre where the “complex dynamics of orality”⁵ can allow for greater depth than the written tradition. Consequently, I return to Sherrie Tucker’s “Telling Performances”, that defines the personal “telling” of women’s stories as a crucial ingredient in jazz scholarship:

...women musicians tend to construct narratives in which they dramatize themselves, at various stages of their careers, negotiating gendered identities (often in creative ways) as jazz musicians. Indeed, these “telling performances”—the narrations themselves—may prove a rich site for learning about the function of oral history-telling in female artists’ construction and maintenance of identities as jazz musicians in a discourse which has historically denied them a place.⁶

1. Kofi Agawu, ‘How We Got out of Analysis, and How to Get Back in Again’, *Music Analysis*, Vol. 23, No. 2/3 (2004), 270.

2. Ibid, 269.

3. Ibid, 272.

4. Ibid, 275.

5. Ibid, 276.

6. Tucker, ‘Telling Performances’, 68.

In this chapter I build on Tucker's insights by exploring women's *musical utterances* as another form of "telling", and how their compositions and stage performances may act as "sonic manifestations"⁷ of their musical lives as played out during - and *on* - various stages of their careers.

With the exception of Nomfundo Xaluva's dissertation on Miriam Makeba's performance styles, there have been no analytical studies of the compositions and/or musical performances of South African women in the field of jazz.⁸ In this chapter I begin to address this lacuna but I do not present comprehensive technical accounts of the participants' music as (for example) provided by Christopher Merz⁹ in his analysis of the playing styles of jazz alto saxophonists Kippie Moeketsi, Barney Rachabane, Robbie Jansen, Dudu Pukwana, and Ntemi Piliso. Instead, I employ several modes of analysis consistent with feminist phenomenology and IPA that allows me to expand on Muller and Benjamin's exploration of women "thinking in jazz"¹⁰ by delving into the ways South African women create, compose and perform jazz. To varying degrees, all the participants' have created work that reflects their responses to gendered experiences and/or power relations. However, I focus on the compositional styles, musical elements, lyrics and performances the participants *themselves* opted to speak about within the context of gender and power.

As in the previous chapters, I remain committed to the process of amplifying what the participants believe to be true, relevant and important to their creative processes. The analyses below are thus cued by the participants' *own* understanding of their music, and the experiences that motivated the creation of the relevant works. Although their musical utterances often clearly mirror some of the recurring or overlapping experiences recounted in their interview testimony, I also paid attention to the silences: for example, some of the participants' gendered

7. Marie Jorritsma explores how musical performances can challenge patriarchy and oppression and refers to the communal singing of church hymns acts as 'sonic manifestations' of the socio-historical background of a racially oppressed community (Marie Jorritsma, 'The hidden transcripts of sacred song in a South African coloured community', *African Music: Journal of the International Library of African Music*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (2008), 58). The study demonstrates how close readings of musical performances can reveal subversive actions that challenge dominant social structures. In a related study, Jorritsma focuses explicitly on how 'church women's society music and actions allow women to comment on expected gender roles without unduly disturbing the norms of the community' (Marie Jorritsma, 'Mothers of the church: coloured women's society music and South African gender issues', *SAMUS: South African Music Studies*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (2008), abstract).

8. Xaluva, 'An analysis of the musical style of Miriam Makeba'.

9. Christopher Linn Merz, 'Tracing the Development of the South African Alto Saxophone Style', *The World of Music*, Vol. 5 (2016) 2: 31-46.

10. Muller and Benjamin, *Musical Echoes*.

performances are more overtly evident in the visuals accompanying their music, such as their album covers. This allows for a deeper listening to their musical “thinking” and being, as Kristin McGee accomplishes in her exploration of Candy Dulfer’s “pin-up” album covers (see chapter two),¹¹ and Carol Muller in her evocative description of the cover for Sathima Bea Benjamin’s album, *A Morning in Paris* (see chapter two).¹² Ramanna describes the latter as an example of how “jazz culture’s visual texts can be rich repositories of social, historical, and emotional meaning”.¹³ Building on this notion, I pay particular attention to the participants’ album covers as visual “repositories” of gendered performativity.

The participants’ musical testimonies also reflect the changing landscape in South Africa in terms of gender, race, and society more generally. The increasing hybridity of international jazz is mirrored in the post-apartheid South African jazz scene; as discussed in earlier chapters, the younger participants in this study – in particular Nomfundo and Thandi – were exposed to a more cosmopolitan environment during their undergraduate years, allowing them to experiment freely across musical styles. As Muller writes:

So far from the American centers of jazz composition, performance, and canonization, South African jazz embraces the freedom to expand creatively on all kinds of possibilities, and to experiment with a multitude of partnerships, languages, instruments, and sounds, relishing the power of peripheral thinking and all the “virtues of bastardy.”¹⁴

For the older participants in this study, it was harder to stray from the traditional jazz styles promulgated when they were at university; consequently, their “crossover” compositions were created (and performed) independently, with the encouragement of self-taught musicians and popular music industry professionals. Nevertheless, whatever their musical journey, all the participants’ work can today be described as defying strict genre classification. Their stories manifest sonically in various ways, ranging from overtly feminist lyrics and thematic material to the deliberate composition of technically complex, “masculine” passages. The majority of the participants’ work responds in equal measure to problematics of gender and

11. McGee, ‘Promoting Affect and Desire’, 281.

12. Muller and Benjamin, *Musical Echoes*, xii.

13. Ramanna, ‘Introduction: Discursive Flows’, 20.

14. Carol A. Muller, ‘Why Jazz? South Africa 2019’, *Dædalus, the Journal of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences*, Vol. 148, No. 2 (2019), 126.

race/class/nation and therefore – as in the previous chapters – a more intersectional approach to analysis was required.¹⁵ In a 2012 article on Esperanza Spalding, Nicholas Baham writes:

It turns out that while jazz critics and scholars have been waiting for the second coming of John Coltrane and Miles Davis, a powerful resurgence of discursively relevant, popular jazz has been happening at the intersection of women's performance, hybridity, multilingualism, and intertextuality.¹⁶

It is along these intersections that the participants have created musical (and physical) spaces and performances that allow for alternate narratives of musical mastery. Women have worked as jazz composers and arrangers since the birth of the genre; the issue is not their invisibility, but rather the shortage of scholarly discourse aimed at amplifying – and translating – their stories. Vickie Willis writes:

Rather like the Bermuda Triangle, jazz is a mysterious, curious area of complicated intersections where women frequently disappear. However, within the vanishing point, and within the representations of its location on the map of music history, jazz is a site of subversion in performance and language, where power is asserted and appropriated and undermined. Like elusive and untranscribable blue notes, women in jazz exist, invisible, in-between the spaces, creating voices through subversion and speaking in ways that are nearly impossible to transcribe into a discourse traditionally owned by men, and where questions of gender are nearly always overshadowed by questions of race.¹⁷

Amanda Tiffin

As a prolific songwriter for over three decades, Amanda draws on her vast experience in the popular music industry, musical theatre, jazz performance and education. During her undergraduate years, her songwriting took a backseat while she focused on the jazz composition and arranging skills she required to be “taken seriously” by her peers and lecturers:

I grew up with pop music, and I loved it so much...I also loved the jazz. The jazz appealed to the more intellectual side of the music that I liked, the sophistication and the complexity of it. But the pop music just appealed to the emotional side and that little girl inside who wanted to be a star, you know (laughs)? Those simple and strong melodies you just enjoy singing so much. I wrote a lot of songs as a teenager... prolific...but *bad* songs! When I started at varsity and started with jazz composition and arranging, I stopped writing because everything I wrote felt like it was cheesy or it was “less than”. So I didn't write songs for quite a long time, until I finished varsity and kind of really had to go through a process of...reclaiming pop music and writing pop songs.¹⁸

15. See Appendices A to D for cursory overviews of relevant compositions/albums the participants did not discuss within the context of gender and/or power, but that nevertheless provide insights into their musical responses to these dynamics.

16. Nicholas L. Baham, “‘I Know You Know’: Esperanza Spalding’s Hybrid, Intertextual, Multilingual, Relevant Jazz Aesthetic”, *Americana: The Journal of American Popular Culture* (1900-present), Vol. 11, Issue 2 (2012), http://www.americanpopularculture.com/journal/articles/fall_2012/baham.htm

17. Willis, ‘Be-in-tween the Spa[]ces’, 293.

18. Tiffin, No. 1.

Amanda's debut album, (*Who Am I?*),¹⁹ reflects her early musical influences as discussed in chapter three, for example the storytelling lyrics of Simon and Garfunkel and the catchy melodies of the Beatles that inspired her as a child.²⁰ The original track "Someday Somehow Someway"²¹ is an uplifting pop song with rich, layered vocal harmonies inspired by ABBA and the Carpenters. "Happy Samba"²² is reminiscent of the 1980s and early 1990s Latin-pop fusion performed by Polish singer-songwriter Basia while her rendition of Paul Simon's "Still Crazy After All These Years"²³ showcases her command of both jazz and pop styles as a singer and pianist. Amanda's original songs have all the elements of commercial pop music including relatable lyrics, universal themes of love and self-discovery, and catchy choruses. However, the melodies are backed by sophisticated arrangements and are not as sing-able as they sound: in terms of intervals and range, they require a high level of technical skill. In addition, Amanda herself plays the piano parts, including challenging solos not ordinarily heard in mainstream popular music. By way of example, the introspective "Silenced By Dreams"²⁴ draws on elements of 1980s pop ballads complete with a soprano sax solo, yet the unexpected time signature changes and modulating bridge set the song apart from mainstream writing. Amanda's subtle pushback against conformity and "fitting into an established musical box"²⁵ is perhaps best seen in the album's acoustic pop/fusion title track, "Who Am I?"²⁶ The lyrics speak to the complexities of her musical identity, perceived success (or lack thereof), and of navigating criticism, as the fragments below demonstrate:

*If I can't hear my thoughts between the television's proclamations
Should I scream louder?
If I can't breathe and shine
Between the evening news headlines*

19. Amanda Tiffin, *Who Am I?*, recorded 2005, Amanda Tiffin, AJT01, 2005, compact disc.

20. By way of example, the album includes a smooth, *bossa nova* arrangement of the Beatles' 'Here Comes The Sun' (see Amanda Tiffin, 'Here Comes The Sun', *YouTube* video, posted by Amanda Tiffin-Topic, on 25 September 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDSr8rWhLQk>).

21. See Amanda Tiffin, 'Someday Somehow Someway', *YouTube* video, posted by Amanda Tiffin-Topic, on 25 September, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLY-c7eZY50>

22. See Amanda Tiffin, 'Happy Samba', *YouTube* video, posted by Amanda Tiffin-Topic, on 25 September 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=op0UbkPaypl>

23. See Amanda Tiffin, 'Still Crazy After All These Years', *YouTube* video, posted by Amanda Tiffin-Topic, on 25 September 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uCtrBt6FIKo>

24. See Amanda Tiffin, 'Silenced By Dreams' *YouTube* video, posted by Amanda Tiffin-Topic, on 25 September 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RMZdf9ms5aY&list=OLAK5uy_kdfjgMiZA985LLi4vUGNgobRoV-B6D28&index=3

25. Tiffin, E-mail, 20 June 2022.

26. See Amanda Tiffin, 'Who Am I?', *YouTube* video, posted by Amanda Tiffin-Topic, on 25 September 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cR0Y6uzlZQg>

Should I sigh deeper?

...

But who am I

Tell me why

Should I fit between the lines?

Should I only be one thing?

...

If I can't fit it all into the demarcated box

Should I be smaller?

...

Am I all so neatly summarised in the photo frame

Sitting on the mantelpiece

Am I everything all the pictures make me out to be?

...

The album cover features a young and fresh-faced Amanda, pictured off-centre with her body partially obscured by a light blue backdrop. She wears a silver sequin top (perhaps a nod to her flourishing showbusiness career at the time), but her outfit is not overly revealing, “girly” or sexualised. The image does not provide any clues about musical genre but invites the listener/viewer to discover the answers to Amanda’s question (*Who Am I?*) for themselves.

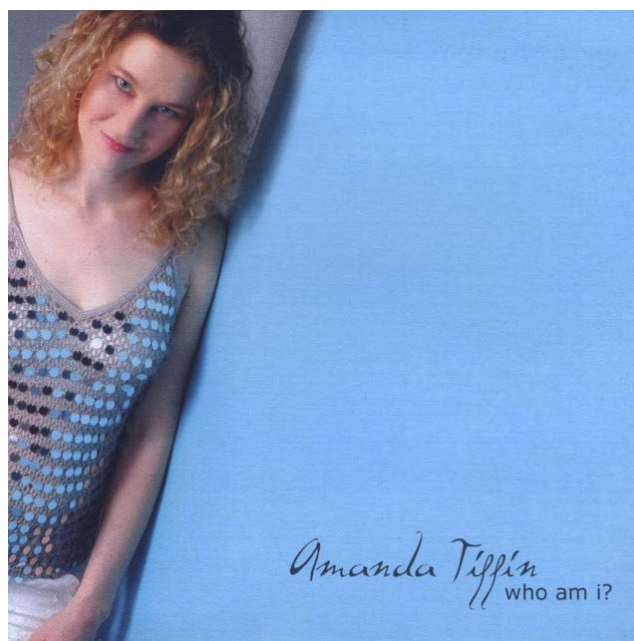


Fig. 30. Amanda Tiffin, *Who Am I?* (album cover)

In contrast, her second album cover (*A Woman Like Me*)²⁷ is more opulent: a red silky backdrop and florid script frame a reclining Amanda wearing a velvet evening dress in a similarly bold jewel tone. The image is more intimate, yet still refutes the male gaze. Whether intentional or not, the understated glamour of the image is reminiscent of Canadian pianist-vocalist Diana

27. Amanda Tiffin, *A Woman Like Me*, recorded 2007, Amanda Tiffin, AJT002, 2007, compact disc.

Krall's album covers from the same period. The album showcases Amanda's command of traditional jazz piano playing, improvising, and swinging vocal skills on jazz standards like "Them There Eyes" and "The Joint Is Jumpin'". Like Krall, Amanda provides fresh takes on classic standards; by way of example, George Gershwin's "Nice work if you can get it" is performed as a piano-vocal ballad that highlights Amanda's ability to tell captivating stories even if they are not hers. A self-confessed "medley queen",²⁸ Amanda's jazz arranging skills shine through in "All Rhythm Medley",²⁹ a classic big band Swing selection featuring scat singing and tight horn arrangements.



Fig. 31. Amanda Tiffin, *A Woman Like Me* (album cover)

Whereas the album is largely a tribute to the masters of traditional jazz, Amanda includes original compositions that showcase other equally important musical traditions that have shaped her musical identity, in particular the songs of Zimbabweans Oliver Mtukudzi and

28. Tiffin, E-mail, 20 June 2022.

29. See Amanda Tiffin, 'All Rhythm Medley', *YouTube* video, posted by Amanda Tiffin-Topic, on 25 September 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GygWqMNCUwE>

Thomas Mapfumo. In her composition “Tuku”,³⁰ Amanda recreates elements of the *chimurenga* music from her childhood in a tribute to Oliver “Tuku” Mtukudzi.³¹

Amanda’s third album, *Consideration*,³² was recorded nearly a decade after her debut; instead of relying on cover versions and tributes, the album features songs that speak to Amanda’s resilience as a musician and as a woman. Instead of using another posed photograph for the album cover, Amanda opted for a sketched portrait in neutral colours against a textured background. It reflects a more mature, introspective Amanda gazing past – instead of directly at – the viewer. The image conveys quiet confidence and seriousness, and the only hints of glamour are her red lips and trademark long, wavy hair.

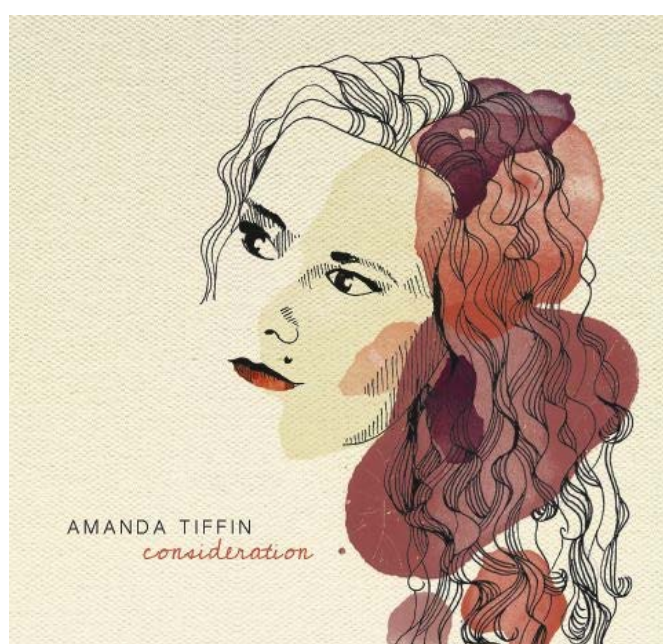


Fig. 32. Amanda Tiffin, *Consideration* (album cover)

The title track was written in reaction to Amanda’s repeated exclusion from the Cape Town International Jazz Festival lineup. More than capable of churning out compositions using the bebop blueprint favoured by jazz gatekeepers in the city, Amanda was determined not to “toe the line” in order to be counted as a “serious” jazz musician. At the time, bebop was widely

30. See Amanda Tiffin, ‘Tuku’, *YouTube* video, posted by Amanda Tiffin-Topic, on 25 September 2015,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zz1OhxAJ3oo&list=OLAK5uy_mQ1mTTzN8bTVMgAqisJltj_FDqrED9soQ&index=11

31. Zimbabwean guitarist-vocalist Oliver ‘Tuku’ Mtukudzi (1952-2019) was a world-renowned musician, philanthropist and UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador. Mtukudzi combined various southern African musical sounds, including traditional *Korekore* drumming, the *mbira* and *mbaqanga*. He is best known for the song ‘Neria’, the theme song to the film *Neria* (1991) that highlighted the struggles of a widow who loses her fortune and her children as a result of patriarchal cultural customs.

32. Amanda Tiffin, *Consideration*, recorded 2015, Amanda Tiffin, AJT003, 2015, compact disc.

regarded as a sonic and intellectual way to claim the stage and was regarded as superior to the hybridised style of jazz Amanda championed:

[Jazz is] about pushing boundaries and envelopes and experimentation and exploration...let's try to change the [old] framework, let's improvise over different sounds and try some different things. [When men do this] they're so innovative, they're breaking boundaries!³³

When she was finally included in the festival lineup in 2010 – thanks to a manager with the requisite connections – a series of clashes about scheduling issues with festival organisers and other gatekeepers turned a long-awaited moment into a low point in her career:

I wasn't "in" with the hip cats, you know? I think [it was] the fact that I had done a lot of pop and tribute shows in my career, and hadn't dedicated my career to *only* being a jazz musician. I'd switched tracks and started really pursuing the jazz seriously only after doing all that other stuff, so they kind of painted me with a certain brush, and put me in a certain "box"...and dismissed me in some ways, I guess. That's the thing that really used to bother me about some of the individuals...definitely in Cape Town certain individuals had this real purist approach. But the thing is, jazz has always *been* about hybridisation, that's how it came to *be*. It's hybridisation of all kinds of things and every new style of jazz that came out was always about incorporating new sounds and influences from what those musicians were hearing around them at the time.³⁴

After the festival, Amanda composed "Consideration",³⁵ a study in improvisational and technical dexterity, as a riposte to the experience. Her album performance of the song is vocal-driven, accompanied only by double bass and drums. The drummer propels the up-tempo samba, but uses brushes throughout, allowing the vocals to remain in the foreground. The skittish bass playing complements the groove but offers relatively little in the way of harmonic support. As such, both instruments are there for the benefit of the listener rather than to anchor her voice. There is an initial unsettling sparseness due to the absence of guitar or piano accompaniment, but this soon dissipates as Amanda's firm control of the performance becomes evident. The song is far removed from the standards she performs on *A Woman Like Me*, and is more akin to the style of vocal acrobat, Bobby McFerrin.

The main theme is introduced in the first eight bars and begins with a crisply articulated octave jump and also contains an uncomfortable tritone interval (see bar 7 below) that Amanda executes with impressive and consistent accuracy throughout, despite the brisk tempo.

33. Tiffin, No. 2.

34. Tiffin, No. 2.

35. See Amanda Tiffin, 'Consideration', *YouTube* video, posted by Amanda Tiffin-Topic, on 31 January 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9tZAMEqfRFM>

SAMBA $\text{♩} = 116$

AMANDA TIFFIN



Ex. 1. “Consideration”, bar 1-8 (A. Tiffin, adapted/transcribed K. Ferguson)

Harmonically, the A section (00 min 18 sec) builds on a simple ii-V-i progression in g minor, and the melodic range widens (F#3 – Bb5), incorporating an interval of a 9th (bar 17).

The image shows the musical notation for the A section of the song 'Consideration'. It consists of four staves of music in G minor (one flat). The first staff is marked with a box labeled 'A' and contains measures 9 through 12. The second staff contains measures 13 through 16. The third staff contains measures 17 through 20. The fourth staff contains measures 21 through 24. The melody is written in a treble clef, and the bass line is written in a bass clef. The lyrics are written below the notes. The harmonic progression is indicated by chords written above the notes: Gm7, Am7(b5), D7ALT., Gm7(b9), Am7(b5), D7ALT., Gm7(b9), Am7(b5), D7ALT., Eb7, Eb7, D7ALT., Gm7(b9), Am7(b5), D7ALT., Eb7, Eb7, D7ALT.

WITH NO _____ CON - SI - DER - A - TION.

AR - GU - MENTS A - BOUND WHEN THE FO - CUS IS ON SELF AND NO - THING

ELSE ALL _____ THAT MAD FRUS - TRA - TION

ALL _____ COULD BE RE SOLVED IF YOU'D CON - SI - DER YOUR - SELF JUST ONE, ONE OF THE MA - NY AND THEN

Ex. 2. “Consideration”, A section

The B section (00 min 35 sec) “expands” rhythmically and harmonically along with the lyric, “Let your mind expand” and the simpler, more diatonic melody and slower harmonic rhythm allows for some breathing space after the busier A section. The melody consists of long, legato notes that move in larger, “open” sounding intervals (5ths, 6ths, 7ths). The melodic and

rhythmic motive in bars 33-34 is enharmonically repeated in bars 35-36, followed by a ii-V progression across bars 37-40 that leads into the C section where the opening theme is repeated, this time sung with lyrics instead of scatting:

[B]

25 $E\flat maj7(\sharp 11)$

LET YOUR MIND EX - PAND.

29 $B\flat maj7$

FREE YOUR TA - - - OED HEART.

33 $A\flat maj7(\sharp 11)$ $B\flat maj7$

SEE THE MA - GIC THERE THAT LIES IN - SIDE THE HU - MAN

37 $A7(\flat 9)$ $D7 ALT.$

SOUL. CON - SI - DER THAT WE ALL ARE ONE AND THE

Ex. 3. "Consideration", B section

[C]

41

SAME TAKE SOME TIME TWO CON-SI-DER THAT THERE MAY BE SOME O - THER WHO NEEDS A HAND

45

STEP BACK TAKE TIME TO CON - SI - DER THAT THE

47 **To Coda**

TOUR - NEY WE TAKE IS NOT A ROAD WE TRA - VEL ON OUR

Ex. 4. "Consideration", C section

Without an awareness of the contexts that motivated the song's creation, it isn't explicitly evident to the casual listener that it speaks of a woman's frustration at being overlooked, silenced, and "mansplained" to for most of her career:

People seem to have a viewpoint that it's okay to tell a woman how to make *her* art. It's like, "Shame, let me tell you how to do this, because I only have your best interests at heart". Would you say that to a person if they were a man? No. They give themselves permission to tell you how to do what *you* do.³⁶

During the vocal solo (01 min 01 sec), Amanda leaves no room for interruption (or musical "mansplaining") as she scats rapid-fire lines steeped in the bebop licks and jazz scales that her male counterparts use to assert their dominance on stage. The solo demonstrates her technical dexterity across nearly two octaves, but also requires virtuoso levels of breath control to accurately perform numerous uncomfortable intervals and chromatic passages at a challengingly fast tempo.³⁷

In complete contrast, yet equally impressive, is the album track "Thanks Miss Abbey Lincoln (For The Songs)".³⁸ The ballad exemplifies sophisticated traditional jazz writing that evokes the Great American Songbook, while Amanda's piano solos do not overpower the story being told. Her pointed decision to credit Lincoln as a songwriter/composer is a nod to women composers and bandleaders everywhere who have been labeled as "only a singer":

*Thank you, Abbey Lincoln, for the songs you named and signed
Your words will linger always, your melodies we'll treasure
Thanks, Miss Abbey Lincoln for the songs*

"Connected"³⁹ and "Just Today",⁴⁰ both feature colleague Shannon Mowday (on sax and bass clarinet respectively). In the ballad, "Just Today", the opening section can be described as two women having a musical dialogue. Reminiscent of a two-part invention, Amanda's alto vocalising is juxtaposed with Shannon's plaintive bass clarinet melody. Subverting the "expected", Shannon plays the first eight bars alone before Amanda joins in for another eight

36. Tiffin, No. 2.

37. See Appendix A (1) for transcription of vocal solo

38. See Amanda Tiffin, 'Thanks Miss Abbey Lincoln (For The Songs)', *YouTube* video, posted by Amanda Tiffin-Topic, on 31 January 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUXfSNLXIBI&list=OLAK5uy_nxsiVyKxemBDDcaI-0jgLUyfbUaJnye-c&index=3

39. Like "Tuku" on *A Woman Like Me*, "Connected" incorporates Zimbabwean sounds, but also elements of mbaqanga (see Appendix A (2)). See also Amanda Tiffin, 'Connected', *YouTube* video, posted by Amanda Tiffin-Topic, on 31 January 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xW5F1WODW_I

40. See Amanda Tiffin, 'Just Today', *YouTube* video, posted by 'Amanda Tiffin-Topic', on 31 January 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fX0TOBZMltw&list=OLAK5uy_nxsiVyKxemBDDcaI-0jgLUyfbUaJnye-c&index=8

bars without any harmonic accompaniment.⁴¹ Sometimes a whisper can command more attention than shouting, and in the interplay between Amanda and Shannon, there is no clamoring for centrestage. Eschewing the one-upmanship they have both encountered on the bandstand, they outclass their detractors with subtle yet complex melodic material and shifting key signatures. In her most recent work, Amanda continues to disidentify with aggressive displays of technical mastery, proving that a more equal distribution of power on the bandstand is possible regardless of gender. The album *Facing South* (with longtime collaborators Brazilian accordionist/pianist Guilherme Ribeiro, British-South African guitarist David Leadbetter and Dutch bassist Hein van de Geyn)⁴² is more experimental and improvisatory in style than her earlier albums. The album embraces co-creation as the players display their virtuosity in subtle ways that give precedence to musicality over “cockiness”⁴³:

I just seem to find that the playing style and approach of musicians from Europe and Brazil is very different to the American and the African style; it’s a lot less ego-centered and a lot less...macho, if you like. There’s much more empathy and collaboration and that’s really what I’m about.⁴⁴

The lush green album cover – a nod to the South African and Brazilian landscapes that have inspired the music – does not feature any of the musicians. To this end, gender is taken out of focus as only the names of the four collaborators are pictured.



Fig. 33. Amanda Tiffin, Guilherme Ribeiro, David Leadbetter and Hein van de Geyn, *Facing South* (album cover)

41. See Appendix A (3)

42. Amanda Tiffin, Guilherme Ribeiro, David Leadbetter and Hein van de Geyn, *Facing South*, Amjati Music 2019, *iTunes*.

43. See Ramanna, ‘Experiences of Belonging and Exclusion’, 278.

44. Tiffin, No. 1.

Shannon Mowday

Despite appearing on numerous albums and performing professionally since the age of ten, Shannon only released her debut album as leader at the age of thirty-two:

I started quite late with my original projects...I started late because it wasn't something that I saw myself doing, but what was really hard [about not having my own music] was getting the respect from fellow musicians.⁴⁵

In chapter four Shannon speaks extensively about her complicity in being objectified, both on stage and as a “poster girl” to attract audiences. Although she ranked among the top saxophone players in the country, Shannon was still impelled to trade on her feminine attributes to satisfy the professional music market. After appearing on various (Afrikaans) television shows and film soundtracks in South Africa during the late 1990s, Shannon released *Tussen Jou En My* (Afrikaans for “Between You And Me”),⁴⁶ comprising well-known Afrikaans songs that cemented her status as the “queen of sexy sax.” The cover pictures a fresh-faced, smiling Shannon holding a saxophone against a dark backdrop. The image is perfectly aligned with the wholesome persona she cultivated for television game shows targeting a more conservative Afrikaans-speaking audience.



Fig. 34. Shannon Mowday, *Tussen Jou En My* (album cover)

Shannon wouldn't release her debut album, *African Eyes*, until 2007 when she was no longer living in South Africa.⁴⁷ The album cover pictures her in silhouette, creating the illusion of

45. Mowday, No. 1.

46. Shannon Mowday, *Tussen Jou En My*, recorded 2004, Trio Records, 803680670606, 2001, compact disc.

47. Shannon Mowday, *African Eyes*, recorded 2007, Jassics, B000NDJSKC, 2007, compact disc.

being backlit by stage lights. She is holding an alto saxophone and her face is in darkness; much like the revealing stage outfits she describes in chapter four, Shannon is dressed in a strappy, cropped top and skirt with a bared midriff. The title track, “African Eyes” would only find its way into mainstream South African jazz with the release of the *South African Jazz Collection: Original tunes by South African Composers* in 2021.⁴⁸



Fig. 35. Shannon Mowday, *African Eyes* (album cover)

Since relocating to Norway in 2009, Shannon has enjoyed greater creative freedom, but has had to navigate stereotypes about how a South African jazz musician should look, sound and compose:

There is this expectation of “what I am” as a South African. [For many Europeans], the music from the exiles that left South Africa is their idea of South African jazz. Yes, that’s *one* stream of jazz, but there was a lot more. The jazz that I grew up with, was from the musicians who stayed behind...[some people don’t] understand the full history of South Africa and don’t understand somebody’s *place* there...I’m part of a tour that will go to America next year and I realised I’m one of the only ones within my generation who had these experiences before apartheid [ended]. I had those experiences and that is *valuable*...and I don’t feel there are any people to tell that story anymore, you know? [Today] there’s a *new* history being told. There’s not much [left] of the story back *then*. That’s why I feel I have validity. I don’t give a shit about what [others think]. I have validity because those things *happened*. Those experiences. Everybody has a story to tell. I think the problem in [jazz] is that we select the stories we *want* to hear.⁴⁹

After close to three decades of “playing like a man”, it took a traumatic life event to change her entire approach to performance and composition:

48. See Miller, *South African Jazz Collection*.

49. Mowday, No. 1.

I had a very serious car accident and I was not able to play...I spent four years, five years in surgeries and my ability to play was taken away. Also, I became a mother and that's a whole other ballgame...I had to assess, "Okay. What have I been doing my whole life?" Because suddenly the thing that I thought *defined* me [was gone]...then I started addressing all the damage. I came across the book, *In A Different Voice* ⁵⁰ and...this book [showed me] that we measure so many frameworks...psychology, communication, social behaviour, businesses...everything is built on the male blueprint. It's built on how men do it. And...it was like this massive penny, or *clang* of pennies, dropped for me and I realised, "Holy shit! Every part of my creative being has been about trying to fit into these male frameworks!" [I realised] it's not that I am not good enough to play in those ways...it's like asking a cat to be a dog. I'm not a man. I don't *relate* to music that way and for many years I thought, "I just *have* to, you know? I just have to be *better* [in order to be accepted]"...I'd spent my whole life trying to express myself in a way that I actually don't *relate* to...As soon as I started expending energy on what I *do* relate to, everything fell into place and my music soared... I don't play like Charlie Parker, not because I'm not good enough, but because I don't relate to his way of *expressing* himself. And I don't think *those* conversations happen enough. When they have gender debates they often have men on the panel, which is great, but you're actually discussing it from *your* point of view, of what *you* relate to in music. You don't *know* what I relate to. I don't relate to that way of playing. And that emphasis is not seen as part of these debates. [People believe], "You're supposed to play like John Coltrane," or "You're supposed to play like Charlie Parker," you know? That's the way to do it", but we're not *them* and we haven't lived their lives. We haven't – and certainly *I* don't have it in me. I can relate to Coltrane, for instance, [in terms of] his sense of harmony. I love his sense of harmony, but when he plays, my stomach – I get stressed when I hear his sound! I don't feel it's expressive, I feel it's "stress-y". So if one person relates to that expression, that's *them*, but what about the hundred [women] that dropped out because they didn't? And nobody hears the stories of the ones who have dropped out. They hear the stories and the perspectives of the one who *survived* it, or the one who succeeded.⁵¹

Shannon is committed to creating musical spaces that are not governed by labels or hierarchical limitations:

I don't subscribe to the traditional jazz thing...why can't I create my own brand of jazz that is against the "system"?...I don't want these boundaries. I don't want these *restrictions*. I don't want to hear, "You're *this*, you're *that*," because when you see me, you have an *impression* of me before I've even played a note. I'm not subscribing to the cultural association, I'm not subscribing to the gender association, and then I have a baby on top of it...I fit in those places where all of the *other* stuff happens, where the *real* creativity is...[Jazz] is about a reaction to society...and it's a reaction to what's been done before. Yet, everything about the way we're [teaching] jazz is about the *notes* and not the aesthetic. The aesthetic is a *reaction*...all of this stuff about women should be a *reaction* to what's been done before. Not about *fitting into* the boxes of what's been done before...We want to put things in boxes and we need to get rid of that...giving people the *space* to believe and trust in what they have to say from a very young age means that they grow up believing that their voice is important. You speak differently when you feel that nobody is going to question you. *Speaking* that voice in music determines whether people believe you or not.⁵²

Her goal is to write challenging new music that is also accessible to young players who don't fit the traditional mold:

I'm known for writing in a way that incorporates everybody. I don't care about [playing] level. I want to find what you have to say and I write around that...The universities won't let me near them because I'm a shit stirrer and I've been labeled a troublemaker...The target group I aim for is twelve, thirteen. *That's*

50. See Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Harvard University Press, 1993).

51. Mowday, No. 1.

52. Ibid.

where you fix the problem. Not at eighteen. And you [have to] address the social issues... We're creating a movement of resistance to this ideology of what jazz is. If you subscribe to the American traditions, it's because you relate to it. That's okay, but you have to allow space for all and not have [that] as the only blueprint. In pop music, in anything else, there are so many different types... in classical music [too]. But in jazz it seems [that] so much is based on, "Look at what *I* can do!"⁵³

In 2019, Shannon released *Oasis of Bad Vibes* with the Akershus og Oslo ungdomsjazzorkester (AOJO), a Norwegian youth orchestra under her direction since 2016.⁵⁴ Unlike her previous album covers, *Oasis of Bad Vibes* features no image of Shannon or the other musicians; instead, bright, geometric shapes are used to depict the head of an elephant, creating an ethnic yet modern feel. The album combines big band jazz and orchestral timbres, juxtaposing a horn section with strings, vocals, acoustic guitar, rock guitar and accordion on a range of diverse pieces.



Fig. 36. Shannon Mowday and AOJO, *Oasis of Bad Vibes* (album cover)

The sheer plurality of styles and sounds Shannon incorporates in her recent compositions can be heard in “Subtropical Thicket”,⁵⁵ which showcases the large, orchestral sound and complex, melodic lines that have become synonymous with Shannon’s writing style. Rock, jazz and improvisational vocal motifs form an unorthodox backdrop to the virtuosic instrumental solos performed by Shannon and other band members. The piece oscillates between quiet, rhythmically free sections and complex, up-tempo rock, Latin and swing beats. Shannon

53. Ibid.

54. Shannon Mowday and AOJO, *Oasis of Bad Vibes*, Østnorsk jazzsenter 2019, Amazon Music.

55. See AOJO – Akershus og Oslo ungdomsjazzorkester, ‘Subtropical Thicket’, *YouTube video*, posted by Akershus og Oslo ungdomsjazzorkester-Topic, on 28 August 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OvOcRgEfQKM>

deliberately deconstructs the traditional hierarchies found in big bands and focuses instead on leveling the playing field in terms of gender, age, musical background and technical ability. The album also features an arrangement of the title track from her debut album, *African Eyes*.⁵⁶

If you have some experience with big band you know the roles within a big band are defined. The second trumpet player plays the solos. The first trumpet player plays this. The first alto plays this. These roles are *defined*. I'm breaking with that and I'm going, "You know what? That does *nothing*." Because what happens to the egos of these people? I write for the craziest of setups but I mold [the compositions] around *people*. And more and more, their individuality is able to come out...with AOJO everybody [says] "Oh, it's incredible! They're so amazing!" But the strength is in finding the ones who are not so strong and finding a place for *them*. That's the secret. But in jazz – in particular this institutionalised shit that was [happening] in Cape Town – the focus was on the *best*. The focus should not *ever* be on the best. The best will take care of themselves...they can see things for themselves. I focus on the ones who are not the obvious choices, and that's where I am building...I focus on the ones who don't fit into the boxes.⁵⁷

Shannon has drummed up much support for her projects with young Norwegian musicians on the basis of their musical excellence and openness to hybridity, but also for their strong activist agenda. Shannon's most recent project, "Bridge Over Me Too", is her most ambitious to date, and was created to call out – and weed out – patriarchy and sexism on the bandstand. In a recent article about the project Gwen Ansell explains, and quotes Shannon:

Through workshops and performances, the project works to dissolve the exclusionary binaries that can make jazz classrooms and stages hostile environments for young women, LGBTQIA+ musicians "and anybody else who isn't part of the boys' club. You can't just force girls into a guy environment; the point is to create a new environment with space for everyone".⁵⁸

The compositions are meant to hit back, educate and empower, rather than entertain. Leading an ensemble of young Norwegian men and women (Det Nye Norske Storband), Shannon impresses as composer, arranger and director/conductor. The project features Norwegian Slam Poetry Champion, Olav Abildgaard, with whom Shannon had worked on earlier projects:

...after many discussions where we appeared to be on very common ground, I knew he was the perfect person to "deliver" the message needed to open up discussions and also using humour because some situations were so bad, it was almost tragically laughable.⁵⁹

56. See AOJO – Akershus og Oslo ungdomsjazzorkester, 'African Eyes', *YouTube* video, posted by Akershus og Oslo ungdomsjazzorkester-Topic, on 28 August 2019,

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R19B3KGdnt0&list=OLAK5uy_nLCXmyiVGAPDuG5A07L7Uyqspj36wMNaU&index=10

57. Mowday, No. 1.

58. Gwen Ansell, 'Saxophonist Shannon Mowday bridges the gender gulf', *New Frame*, 18 May 2022, accessed 16 June 2022, <https://www.newframe.com/saxophonist-shannon-mowday-bridges-the-gender-gulf>

59. Shannon Mowday, Personal notes shared via E-mail, 6 July 2021.

A series of short satirical videos⁶⁰ released on social media in 2021 highlight the motivation behind the project, and depict Shannon being interviewed by a young, Norwegian man (Abildgaard) acting as a talk show reporter. His questions are outrageously sexist and patronising, yet are a perfect example of some of the real questions Shannon and other women – largely those who abandoned music careers due to patriarchy – have fielded from “musicians, educators, record labels, women ‘activists’, band family members, audience members [and] festival producers...”⁶¹ Shannon provides examples of some of the phrases that sparked the project:⁶²

“You want a lesson...come to my hotel room.”
“I see the composition you wrote but rather show me your tits.”
“Are you having an affair with my husband?”
“I didn’t consider you for the job – you are a single mother.”
“You are so small and your instrument is SO big.”
“Wow, I bet you give good blowjobs.”
“You play saxophone, clarinet, flute, piano, compose, arrange and conduct...but do you sing?”
“What happened to you is completely wrong but if I speak out about it, I stand to lose my job.”
“Why does your music have to be so complicated?”
“Your boyfriend is a really famous musician...Well done!”
“So you can actually play for a girl.”

60. See Shannon Mowday & Det Nye Norske Storband, ‘Bridge Over Me Too’, *Facebook* video, posted by Det Nye Norske Storband, on 3 June 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/DetNyeNorskeStorband/videos/1934602763368751/>; Shannon Mowday & Det Nye Norske Storband, ‘Bridge Over Me Too #2’, *Facebook* video, posted by Det Nye Norske Storband, on 4 June 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/DetNyeNorskeStorband/videos/818075288844252/>; Shannon Mowday & Det Nye Norske Storband, ‘Bridge Over Me Too #3’, *Facebook* video, posted by Det Nye Norske Storband, on 11 June 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/DetNyeNorskeStorband/videos/130841175784851/>; Shannon Mowday & Det Nye Norske Storband, ‘Bridge Over Me Too #4’, *Facebook* video, posted by Det Nye Norske Storband, on 14 June 2021, <https://www.facebook.com/DetNyeNorskeStorband/videos/180724200731116/>

61. Shannon Mowday, personal notes #1, shared with author via E-mail, 6 July 2021.

62. Ibid.



Fig. 37. Shannon Mowday, Det Nye Norske Storband, Olav Abildgaard, *Come on...Play like a Boy!* (album cover)

The album art for the project features a black and white drawing of a nude woman, partially obscured by a red “dress” made of flowers, and sporting what appears to be saxophone keys. Her face is similarly hidden as she strides across the picture with her legs on full display. The image is clearly a parody of her earlier stage persona and makes a strong statement about the pressures of satisfying the male gaze; her hands and face/identity are hidden but her body is an “instrument” to be handled and “played”. The image has a strong burlesque feel (complete with feathers and fetish-y high heels), again emphasising the sexualisation of women performers.

The track, “Come on...Play like a boy!”⁶³ is built around a distinctive, “typical Mowday [baritone sax] line...the starting point for the tune”.⁶⁴ Shannon herself plays the part on the recording, and also improvises over the introduction:⁶⁵

63. Shannon Mowday & Det Nye Norske Storband, *Come On, Play Like A Boy!* (feat. Olav A. Abildgaard), Shannon Mowday 2021, iTunes.

64. Shannon Mowday, Text message, 29 December 2022.

65. See Shannon Mowday, Det Nye Norske Storband, Olav A. Abildgaard, ‘Come on...Play like a boy!’, *YouTube* video, posted by Shannon Mowday-Topic, on 30 November 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KTiO9YQwjf4>

One of the [pieces] is called “Come on...Play like a boy!” and what is so funny is, I’ve written it so that it’s almost impossible for the saxophone...and I’m the only one who can play it. And these are really good players.⁶⁶ So it’s kind of like, “Stuff you!”⁶⁷

The main theme of the piece (introduced in bar 27) is driven by a Latin salsa groove, with syncopated brass and sax parts crafted around Shannon’s baritone sax line (00 min 45 sec):

The musical score consists of five staves of music. The first staff (measures 26-29) begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat, and a 4/4 time signature. It features a syncopated melody with eighth and sixteenth notes. A box labeled 'C' is placed above the staff. Dynamics 'ff' and 'f' are indicated. The second staff (measures 30-33) continues the melody. The third staff (measures 34-36) begins with a box labeled 'D' and features a more complex, syncopated melody with triplets. The fourth staff (measures 37-39) continues the complex melody. The fifth staff (measures 40-40) ends with a double bar line and features triplets. The piece is titled 'Come on...Play like a boy!' and is by S. Mowday.

Ex. 5. Baritone saxophone (sounds an octave and a major 6th lower than written), “Come on...Play like a boy!” (S. Mowday)

Later in the piece (05 min 04 sec), a “drum/guitar “bonanza” (as per Shannon’s own in-score text) features a typical playoff between the drummer and guitarist. The guitarist performs a wailing, distorted solo in a display of domination whilst the drummer lays down the groove with splashing cymbals on each beat and the occasional aggressive drum roll. The complex horn backings create the feeling that too many players are clamoring for centrestage. They are almost mechanical in their precision and are loud throughout, creating a dense texture and

66. Ajay Heble writes how in 1949, the fellow band members of professional big band trombonist Melba Liston refused to give up a seat in the band to a ‘bitch’, until bandleader Dizzy Gillespie asked the men to play Liston’s intricate compositions and arrangements: ‘He said, “Did you bring the music that I told you to write?” I said, “Yes, sir”. He said, “Pass it out to these muthafuckas and let me see what a bitch you are.” He said, “Play the music, and I don’t want to hear no fuckups.” And of course they got about two measures and fell out and got all confused and stuff. And Dizzy said, “Now, who’s the bitch!”’ (Ajay Heble, *Landing on the Wrong Note: Jazz, dissonance, and critical practice* (New York and London: Routledge, 2000), 152-153.

67. Mowday, No. 1.

underlying feeling of unchecked power. The track, “Who’s Your Daddy?”,⁶⁸ offers an even more explicit example of what prompted Shannon to create the “Bridge Over Me Too” suite:

“Who’s Your Daddy”⁶⁹ is a statement about the “social” part of music - the first part is about who is your “daddy”, mother, boyfriend, what’s your “lineage”, where did you go to school, who were your teachers...who do you know and who has given you the “thumbs” up so you are supported (or not)? The lyrics (that end with “WELL DONE!”) were inspired by [an incident] when I first moved to Norway. Aside from having had an active international performing and teaching career, I was also the first female instrumentalist to do a Masters in Improvised Music at the main school in Oslo (Norges Musikkhøgskole). I was already making serious inroads in the music scene in Norway. I started seeing a pretty well known musician in Norway and one day at a gig – where I was leading a big band with my [own] music – the head of perhaps one of the major music composing associations in Norway (someone I had worked with often before in South Africa and Norway) was there. She didn’t mention *anything* about the music but said, “I heard you are going out with so-and-so...he is such a good musician...WELL DONE!” As though going out with him was an achievement, something to be proud of because now I was associated with *him*. Something in that really struck a nerve with me.⁷⁰

Shannon’s lyrics are autobiographical, laced with double *entendres* and – for those who know her story – uncompromisingly honest. The bluesy opening melody (A section) is sung by a young woman (Ingeborg Gravem Sollid) and accompanied by raunchy-sounding wah-wah trumpets (using plungers), trombones and a prominent baritone sax line that is doubled by the bass trombone (all traditionally “male” instruments). The rhythm section plays a raunchy funk groove, and at the end of the section, the male members of the band join in to shout “Well done!” The vocalist performing the lyrics sounds slightly out of place – a deliberate move on Shannon’s part – surrounded by a raucous group of men:

*Who’s your Daddy, girl?
Is he famous?
Who’s your mommy, girl?
Is she one we know?
Who’s your boyfriend?
Oh it’s him!!!
I say...he can play, O yes!
He can play.
WELL DONE!*

The B and C sections (00 min 36 sec) is reminiscent of action film soundtracks with frantic, staccato horn playing and a driving rock groove. The electric guitar is prompted to use “funky wah wah comping with some wailing solo” (Shannon’s own in-score text) and is the most dominant voice in the section. The D section (01 min 12 sec) introduces slam poet, Olav

68. Shannon Mowday & Det Nye Norske Storband, *Who’s Your Daddy?* (feat. Olav A. Abildgaard), Shannon Mowday 2021, iTunes.

69. See Shannon Mowday, Det Nye Norske Storband, Olav Abildgaard, ‘Who’s Your Daddy?’, *YouTube* video, posted by ‘Shannon Mowday-Topic’, on 4 October 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMIzO38iiJI>

70. Shannon Mowday, E-mail, 29 August 2021.

Abildgaard, rapping over a funk groove in the rhythm section. The section ends with the band once again shouting, “Well done!”

*I noticed you're embarrassed!
 You see, your playing's insane,
 But who are your parents?
 What's your surname,
 what's your inheritance?
 Your heritage? Your fame?
 To get into this game,
 You better be a name,
 Or you'll never make a claim
 I never heard of you
 I never plan to do
 Unless you have a reason to
 an apparent reason, maybe two?*

*Maybe you're pushing through
 Maybe you're just someone who
 Will end up in my “unread” cause instead
 I'll get the same I always meant
 It might be bad but it depends
 On who's your daddy and your friends
 So make a habit to pretend
 Or you will have a bitter end
 You better pay attention
 For my generation is the
 Definition of who gives admission
 All your competition
 We design it, we rewind it,
 We compile it, we define it
 These are mine, you need to find a
 Reason why to be invited
 Well done!*

At sections E and F (01 min 49 sec) the rhythm section segues back into the funk groove over which an alto sax solo is played; on the final repeat, the trumpet and trombone backings (played with plunger) give the impression of a drunken, bawdy free-for-all and are marked “bit sleazy” in the score. At section G (03 min 01 sec) the rock groove from section B returns, backing a virtuoso baritone sax solo. Increasingly busy horn backings – in particular high “stabs” on the trumpets – add to the solo’s climactic end. At section H (03 min 36 sec) the funk groove returns (rhythm section only) for the second verse of rapping:

*Your friend is my customer
 My friend is your manager
 Your friend's from your childhood
 My friend owns your livelihood
 Your friend is your classmate
 My friend is your master
 Your friend is someone friendly
 My friend is my enemy
 Your daddy, who is he?*

*My dad's the ministry
 Your daddy, who is he?
 My daddy's the industry
 Your daddy, who is he?
 My dad is the business
 So before I let you have it,
 Please tell me, who's your daddy?
 Everybody gotta be somebody that I
 Wanna meet because I wanna see the son or
 Daughter of someone who's father is someone,
 I rather wanna know the one I know is gonna blow,
 Do you even get it if you never
 Made it while another paid it
 Can you be the greatest player if you came in later
 And your parents aren't paying,
 Your embarrassment is – noticeable*

In Section I (04 min 06 sec) an overdriven, rock/metal guitar solo is accompanied by the driving rock groove and the punchy baritone sax and bass trombone line introduced in section A. In section J (04 min 43 sec) the horn themes from section B return, building furiously and ending on a dramatic fermata before leading into the final verse at section K (05 min 20 sec), marked “Messy, drunken and broken but follow each other into chaos”. Shannon explains:

The last verse tackles the sexual transgression aspect...again based on experiences I have had. The (mostly) drunken or lecherous one...perhaps a role model, fellow band member, teacher you may meet that preys on young or inexperienced ones, offer fame and fortune if you are with them...they are the ones who give you the inroads to the industry: “If you are with *me* – I say who can play”.⁷¹

The section is played at a very slow tempo and is a deconstruction of the opening verse. This time the lyrics are sung in a gruff, male voice and the horns (except the baritone sax) play the melody in unison, guided by Shannon’s in-score indications to use “flutter tongue” and “growl ugly”:

*I'll be your Daddy, girl!
 I'll make you famous!!
 Where's your mommy, girl?
 She can stay at home.
 I'll be your boyfriend.
 If you're with me...I say who can play,
 O yes! You can play.
 WELL DONE!*

“Bridge Over Me Too” signaled an important phase in Shannon’s career, one in which she can confidently showcase her wide range of skills without fear of reproach:

71. Ibid.

[With my most recent project] “Bridge Over Me Too”...it’s kind of sad that it was the first time [I felt respected]. I’m forty-six years old now. It was with some of the young musicians...the next generation of great musicians in Norway that I presented my music and it was the first time in my life I felt, *really*, that...*now* they are respecting me. But I’m twenty years older – or twenty-five years older – so I don’t have the, you know [makes grinding sound], all the sexual tension. That doesn’t exist, that’s taken out the way. I have the age. I have the respect. They respect my music. I have all those things in my favour, but why should it only happen when I’m forty-six when I see young musicians able to do the same thing at twenty?⁷² Why have I felt like I’ve always been ahead of what I *could* represent? It’s pretty sad that twenty-five years down the line – and I’ve worked on three continents, because I also lived in Australia – I am finally able to say, “Here is my music” and – I mean, it’s *difficult* music – they’ve eaten it up and they’ve really taken it to heart. This is the first time I feel like I have got what I was after. And that’s pretty sad.⁷³

On her 2020 album *The Land In-Between*, with the ensemble LILA,⁷⁴ Shannon combines South African sounds with improvisational Scandinavian sounds, inspired by her “travels, life stories and...issues for social discourse”.⁷⁵ In the liner notes, Shannon describes her status as a “foreigner”, not only geographically, but also as a woman in a male-dominated arena:

I was born on African soil with my feet firmly planted in its earth, but parts of my roots are from elsewhere. I took on a new habitat in Norway and planted my own seeds. In both lands, I am a foreigner. I am [a] woman expressing myself in a musical genre where the “landscaping” (blueprint) was essentially architected (designed) by men and their expression. Here too, I am a foreigner. In LILA we seek to find common ground in expression but also explore our differences beyond borders of musical genres or expectations of style and essentially create a “play” ground in “The Land In-Between”.⁷⁶

72. Examining the intersection of age and gender as it affects women musicians/composers, Catherine Haworth and Lisa Colton explain how ‘a male composer’s first symphony in his sixties might be understood as his crowning achievement, a culmination of previous successes, whereas a woman in the same position might be dismissed or patronized as a “late bloomer” or “retired amateur”’ (Catherine Haworth and Lisa Colton, *Gender, Age and Musical Creativity* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2016), 2).

73. Mowday, No. 1.

74. Shannon Mowday and LILA, *The Land In-Between*, recorded 2019, Jazzland Records, 377 930 4, 2020, compact disc.

75. See *Cosmopolite Scene Oslo*, ‘The Land In-Between – Shannon Mowday’s LILA og Oslo & Akershus Ungdomsjazzorkester, February 2021, webpage, accessed 7 March 2022, <https://cosmopolite.no/en/program/cosmopolite/2021/february/land-between-shannon-mowdays-lila-og-oslo-akershus>

76. Ibid.



Fig. 38. Shannon Mowday and LILA, *The Land In-Between* (album cover)

The Land In-Between is the first album to feature Shannon on the cover since *African Eyes* in 2007. Whether intentional or not, Shannon is wearing a red dress, reminiscent of the infamous, backless red dress that formed part of her stage wardrobe as a soloist with symphony orchestras in the early 2000s (see chapter four).⁷⁷ This time (on *The Land In-Between*), the dress is more modest and Shannon is partially obscured by large green leaves. In stark contrast to her obscured face and downcast gaze on the cover of *African Eyes*, an unsmiling Shannon is looking straight at the camera.



Fig. 39. Shannon Mowday, promotional shoot, 2007 (Photo: Nix)

77. See Fig. 39

One of the social issues that Shannon is actively addressing through her music is the dire situation of women in South Africa (and worldwide) as a result of the high incidence of gender-based violence and violent crime. For Shannon, years of experiencing – and witnessing – misogyny and sexual violence on and off the bandstand, is a reflection of this wider societal crisis. Many of Shannon's compositions were created in reaction to events and experiences that impacted her on a personal level, in particular the resentment and rage resulting from years of weathering sexism and sexual misconduct on and off stage:

I became [raises fists and makes explosive noise] because my sensitivity couldn't manage. And what happens is, it *does* shit to you. It's really...it makes you into...I have been a fighter, so everybody sees me as this really tough girl, yet I went through hell and it meant that my music had to suffer...Everyone jokes about it [and say] I cannot write a ballad (laughs). I mean, I *can*, and it has some kind of intensity behind it, but it's a struggle.⁷⁸

She dedicated *The Land In-Between* to the memory of Courtney Pieters and other victims of gender-based violence. Three-year old Pieters from Elsiesriver, Cape Town, was raped and murdered in May 2017 sparking a national outcry about the continued gender-based violence perpetrated against women and children in South Africa. The #MeToo movement has provided an opportunity for women to speak out about sexual violence, harassment and abuse, yet Shannon found that not all reporters in South Africa were interested in sharing these stories with their audiences:

I'm very outspoken because I see the relation to gender-based violence...I've been a victim [of that] my whole life. I dedicated an album to Courtney Pieters...the album is dedicated to her and other victims of gender-based violence. I've been told my whole life that I don't have a voice. It's the same thing that happens in an abusive relationship. You don't have a voice and it's *insulating*, especially in South Africa...When I produced my album, I wrote in all the liner notes, I wrote everything about the fact that it was [about] this. Not one single person except the women have mentioned it's an album dedicated to victims of gender-based violence. Women have...No men mentioned it [in reviews of my work], yet they will say when an album is about black empowerment...*Black Lives Matter*. But why has *nobody* responded to the fact that my own, personal movement is *Women's Lives Matter*? A critic [or journalist] is the one who has the *power* to say, "This person's voice has validity." I'm an activist against gender-based violence. I *have* a voice but you don't even *mention* it. I cried for months about that girl because in a way she just represented all of these [other] lives too, you know?⁷⁹

The track "Courtney"⁸⁰ shows a side to Shannon's playing that is in stark contrast to the driving, virtuosic bursts of energy she displays in her work with AOJO and Det Nye Norske Storband. The track features a plaintive alto saxophone melody, backed by an upright bass, piano and

78. Mowday, No. 1.

79. Ibid.

80. See Shannon Mowday, 'Courtney', *YouTube video*, posted by Shannon Mowday, on 15 October 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01ao9lGKu2A>

drums. The piece opens with sparse piano and bass lines accompanying the saxophone, creating an ominous feel.⁸¹

“Courtney” is the heart of the album. [The piece] first [portrays] the innocence of a child, who is swinging on a swing that is pulled back really high and let go, followed by a [mother’s] tormented wail of having lost her child in the most horrendous way. Aside from the obvious wailing and crying on the saxophone representing the loss of this child and all she stands for, I visit the sounds from Courtney’s home of Elsiesrivier⁸² and reflect the sound of the saxophone from the Christmas choirs I grew up with when my father used to work with them.⁸³

Chantal Willie-Petersen

Like Shannon, Chantal has a wealth of international performance and touring experience. Although her discography as leader is not as extensive, Chantal has appeared on numerous albums, most of which were produced in Europe. One of the first albums to feature Chantal was a Christmas album⁸⁴ (*Swingende Kerstsongs*, meaning “Swinging Christmas Songs”) with Belgian vocalist Sofie Verbruggen and Dutch singer-songwriter Yvonne Walter, and accompanied by an all-male jazz trio. The three “Jazz Ladies” wear formal black clothing against a velvety theatre curtain with Christmassy fairy lights. Aimed at an upmarket European audience, the album is wildly different from Chantal’s skill when compared to the richness and depth of her work with her own band (Rainbow Rhythms⁸⁵) at the time.

81. See Appendix B

82. Elsiesrivier (or Elsies River) is located in the Northern suburbs of Cape Town and is part-residential, part-industrial. During apartheid, the area was designated for coloured residents after the passing of the Group Areas Act. The area continues to be plagued by poverty, gangsterism and crime and has one of the highest murder rates in the world. Due to ongoing gang violence, the South African National Defence Force is occasionally deployed to assist local police.

83. Shannon Mowday, E-mail to author, 23 April 2021.

84. Jazz Ladies, *Swingende Kerstsongs*, recorded 2002, Impuls International, IMP 20022635, 2002, compact disc.

85. See Appendix C (2)

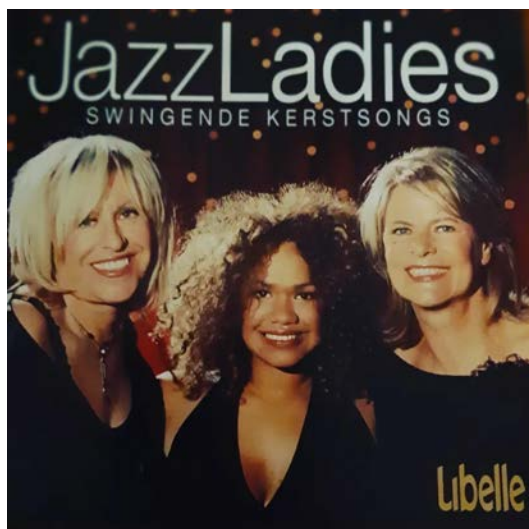


Fig. 40. Jazz Ladies, *Swingende Kerstsongs* (album cover)

After being racially “othered” as a student in Belgium (see chapter four), a five-year stint with award-winning, all-women Belgian group Zap Mama (2003-2007)⁸⁶ allowed her to see the world and flourish as a composer:

With Zap Mama, it wasn't jazz it was world music. It had a jazz approach because there was improvisation and the music was at a very high level, but it wasn't...bebop. And it wasn't the Brussels Jazz Orchestra. And it also wasn't that third stream that you find in Europe...it was just *different* and beautiful.⁸⁷

She also gravitated towards other hybridised, international musical styles, and worked with musicians from diverse backgrounds:

In different seasons, there were different focuses. There were lots of experimental projects (like) indigenous Moroccan music with jazz frameworks, lots of crossover stuff.⁸⁸

Chantal's writing has a distinctly international feel that could be ascribed to her eclectic mix of teachers and mentors in Belgium. In her first year, she worked with the legendary Toots Thielemans and later studied arrangement with Frank Vaganée (the renowned Belgian composer and director of the Brussels Jazz Orchestra) and recalls that “there was a strong press towards writing” [one's own music] when she was completing both her vocal and double bass Masters degrees; with the exception of “one or two standards”, her final performers' recitals

86. See Zap Mama, 'RAFIKI concert LIVE at AB Brussels 2003', *YouTube* video, posted by 'Zap Mama', on 18 November 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PmWNcJGiVsQ>

87. Willie-Petersen, No. 1.

88. *Ibid.*

consisted of original compositions. Vocally, she studied with Jeanne Lee (who worked with American jazz pianist and composer Mal Waldron), and she credits Swiss vocalist Kristina Fuchs for introducing her to *avant-garde* singing styles. These influences can be seen in Chantal's affinity for complex time signatures, intricate rhythmic patterns, and her melodic bass lines.

Since her return to South Africa in 2009, she has been active as an educator, arranger and festival curator, and has been involved in church musicking and mentoring. Her works have been performed by various ensembles, including the Cape Town Goema Orchestra⁸⁹ and the SA/Ghana collaborative, "Wits Cosmology", celebrating "jazz cosmopolitanism", that Chantal musically directed in 2020.⁹⁰ In 2019, she formed part of the USA/SA jazz collaborative, the Soweto-Englewood Exchange,⁹¹ led by American saxophonist and composer Ernest Dawkins. The project brought together musicians from Chicago, Soweto and Durban, and explored fusions of jazz and Hip Hop, including Chantal's "Colour of my Shade".⁹²

In 2022, she was invited to the University of Michigan's Center for World Performance Studies to speak at the premiere of her composition, "Kloppe Roep – Calling Bells",⁹³ commissioned for carillon bells and performed by Professor Tiffany Ng (USA) as part of a project interrogating colonialism and patriarchy in music. Ng explains:

I looked at the music [I'd performed during my first year] and realized I had become a mouthpiece for creative voices of white men. My job had become reproducing the patriarchal soundscape, through playing the published carillon music on the shelves. The carillon can't help but engage with historical context, and if we don't think about [that context], we simply perpetuate it.⁹⁴

89. For snippets of Chantal conducting the Cape Town Goema Orchestra playing her composition 'Zazuwe' at SABC Studios in Cape Town (2011/2012), see Chantal Willie-Petersen, 'Chantal Willie-Petersen: Composer/Arranger with 'The Goema Orchestra' (MD Mac McKenzie) 2011-2012, *YouTube* video, posted by 'Chantal Willie', on 22 September 2020,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fg5pYyDk4Bc>

90. Gwen Ansell, 'Life in jazz notes and rhythm', *New Frame*, 6 November 2020, accessed 4 April 2022, <https://www.newframe.com/life-in-jazz-notes-and-rhythm/>

91. See <https://englewoodsowetoproject.org/index.php/about/>

92. See Appendix C (2)

93. See Tiffany Ng, "'Your Rhythm Is Rebellion': Ringing in Postcolonial Carillon Solidarity', *YouTube* video, posted by 'University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre and Dance', on 1 April 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4U7TyydbFVQ&t=275s>

94. University of Michigan African Studies Center, "'Your Rhythm Is Rebellion': Ringing in Postcolonial Carillon Solidarity on the Sixty Bells of the University of Michigan Carillon Tower', *University of Michigan*, 3 September 2022, accessed 30 December 2022, <https://ii.umich.edu/asc/news-events/news/search-news/your-rhythm-is-rebellion.html>

Along with works by fellow South African composers Bongani Ndodana-Breen and Kendall Williams, the piece forms part of the first carillon works by black South African composers. It was Chantal's first time composing for an instrument that is largely unknown in South Africa. There is no clear tonal centre, yet in some sections the implied chords include 7ths and 9ths in a nod to her jazz background. The use of dissonance and chromaticism creates an feeling of unease while the 5/4 time signature and tempo changes between sections lends an improvisational feel overall. The bass line, played by foot pedals, is typical of Chantal's style in creating rhythmic and melodic interest rather than simply providing a harmonic base. The composition is particularly symbolic: the only playable carillon in South Africa – and the African continent – is in Cape Town, Chantal's hometown. Inaugurated in 1925 on the city's Grand Parade, it is "decked with a statue of King Edward VII", and its largest bell dedicated to Cecil John Rhodes:

Carillons were initially conceived as public symbols at the heart of the cities they were housed in. Carillon performances from the city hall could be heard far and wide by Cape Town's inhabitants. Given South Africa's spatial planning of racial segregation and Apartheid, the sounds of the city's carillon indicated a very specific "public" for whom its bells rang.⁹⁵

As a woman of colour who grew up on the Cape Flats and experienced racial segregation, Chantal is an inheritor of more than just one layer of oppression, hence her dedication of the piece to "the enslaved women at the Cape (1657)".⁹⁶ The Dutch title is not only a nod to her colonial roots in the Cape, but the language in which she studied whilst in Belgium.

Siya Makuzeni

As a child, Siya experimented with her musicality in many ways; those early expressions laid the foundation for a career that is constantly evolving. Unapologetically different, Siya creates soundscapes that are as complex and layered as her identity:

Even from my earlier years, because I was exposed to such a different, *varied* [range] of music... even once I found jazz, I don't think I ever wanted to [say] "*This* is how I want to be portrayed". When I started performing it became even more important to say, "Because I like all these different things, because I like all these different genres, I'd like for that to come out in whatever I present to people."⁹⁷

95. University of Michigan African Studies Center, 'Your Rhythm Is Rebellion'.

96. From webpage, <https://chantalwillie-petersen.com>

97. Makuzeni, No. 2

Her early composing days were all about discovery as she experimented with the scope of her voice and that of the trombone; her goal was to express herself in new and unusual ways and to find like-minded musicians with whom to collaborate:

I've always been interested in trying to meld and fuse genres and I knew that was not going to happen if I decided to approach music...where I had to think in each [separate] box. I had to find a way to be creative about how exactly to do that. When I approached my vocals or even the trombone it was like, "Okay, I'm playing this instrument which has these specific constructs in terms of how people know the instrument to sound, but what can I do to... convey the things that I hear *outside* of these genres, and what is really kind of *out there*?" That [was always] the biggest factor in terms of [choosing] whom I collaborated with, what kind of music I did and even how I composed...if I heard something that might sound as though it doesn't necessarily fuse with another genre, then that would actually get me quite excited, because it's a big challenge to try and portray that or convey that in a way that made sense for everybody. I'm still like that.⁹⁸

During her undergraduate years in Pretoria – and before dropping out of university – Siya formed the band IppyFuze⁹⁹, with whom she had the freedom to be herself without being forced to “tone down” her creativity:

They weren't scared of me trying things out. In terms of the instrumentation in itself, it was a big, eight-piece band and we had a lot of horns. And it was definitely more...rock, but it had ska, dub and punk mixed in there. And funk, actually...and why not? It was very interesting performing with those guys because I was still very much in a searching phase...around 2003...I had those horns, and have been able to keep those jazz elements, but I need to revamp this thing. So I started tweaking some songs...Taking out horns and putting in guitars and it basically grew from there. That's when I started writing for the album. Which took *nine* years...oh, my God. It was intense. I think I'm a little bit of a perfectionist...and it's fine. Because it taught me that sometimes the wait is worth it.¹⁰⁰

Whilst in the process of completing the album in 2013, Siya went to Europe to participate in a collaborative project that – like IppyFuze – otherwise consisted entirely of male musicians. Since her teenage years, Siya had performed in all-male bands and learnt from South African jazz “elders”, yet she was unprepared for the acute sense of isolation and “otherness” she experienced abroad:

I had some interactions with musicians who didn't believe in my worth because of my gender, which was really ridiculous, but it happened. And that particular experience [of not belonging] was two-fold for me, because I was also far away from home. It happened overseas and it was with musicians I didn't know too well. I was made to feel inferior. The things that were being inferred about my presence there...[suggested that] because I come from Africa I don't know as much and I'm probably not as musical. It was very passive-aggressive and very hard for me to wrap my head around. It happened at the beginning of the tour...on the second day, realising that *this* is what was going on at rehearsal, I decided to channel that energy and wrote a song about it and tackling issues about being away from

98. Ibid.

99. See IppyFuze, 'Amakhentsa promo', *YouTube* video, posted by 'IppyFuze', on 28 May 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qk5CTKI0Ttg>

100. Makuzeni, No. 2.

home. Because you're so far, you tend to doubt yourself. What you need is a constant reminder of your roots that will help you to bounce back. The song was a clapback...saying that through all the stresses and hassles you go through and that people throw at you...they will try to have you running around. But if you know who you are, if you know yourself...mm mm, I've *got* this!¹⁰¹

Upon her return to South Africa, she recorded the song ("Ungazilibali") with IppyFuze and released it on the EP, *Amaxentsha*.¹⁰² "Ungazilibali" roughly translates as, "Do not forget yourself/who you are". Siya sings in isiXhosa and although the song is hybridised in terms of style it is firmly rooted in her ancestry, allowing her to reconfigure power relations on the bandstand.¹⁰³ The song revolves around a prominent rhythmic theme moving in open fifths that is first introduced by Siya's vocals and the African bow (*uhadi*). The introduction builds in intensity through distorted layering and blurring of the voice parts. A distorted/overdriven electric guitar, bass and drums join in and establish an aggressive grunge rock/metal groove. This riff is also used in the choruses. Siya sings the verses (00 min 46 sec; 02 min 26 sec) in isiXhosa and despite the simple harmonic progression in g minor the accompaniment is an unorthodox blend of sonic textures. The sustained, shimmering guitar chords are reminiscent of those favoured by 1990s grunge outfits like Soundgarden and Nirvana. She makes use of vocal effects based on traditional call-and-response singing, and layers her own backing vocals to create dense harmonies.



Ex.6. Opening riff, "Ungazilibali", bar 1-4 (S. Makuzeni)

The bridge (03 min 44 sec) sees the introduction of a new harmonic progression and has a mellow overall feel. As discussed in chapter four, Siya brushed off the criticism of gatekeepers in the jazz scene, threatening to "become a rock star" if that would allow her to blend all her musical influences. To date, no other Xhosa woman – certainly not from Siya's generation –

101. Makuzeni, No. 1.

102. IppyFuze, *Amaxentsha* – EP, Siya Makuzeni, 2014, iTunes.

103. See IppyFuze, 'Ungazilibali', YouTube video, posted by 'IppyFuze-Topic', on 23 June 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxdSAQvVkrk>

has released alternative rock/grunge/metal overlaid with Xhosa lyrics and African instruments like the *uhadi*. Siya is renowned for introducing various “firsts” in the South African music scene. Even internationally, it is rare to encounter a woman fronting and leading hard rock/metal outfits. Diana Miller describes the “competitive masculinity” that abounds in such bands, where men perform “domination and exaggerated aggression”.¹⁰⁴ Siya inverts this narrative; she doesn’t play “in” IppyFuze because she wants to fit into an even more aggressively patriarchal musical space/genre or to seek approval. She *created* the space/band because it was the only platform where she could express all the facets of her musical identity without limitations. Deliberately designating the music as “alternative”, she cleverly sidesteps having to play by the rules of any one genre. Even the album cover (an African baobab tree shaped like a human skull, backlit by a red sunset/sunrise) signals difference, subversion and power.



Fig. 41. IppyFuze, *Amaxentsha* (album cover)

The rough translation below only serves as a guide – as with most translations, the subtle nuances of a language are lost when transposed to another. The “land of the Buffaloes” is a nod to her birthplace (Mdantsane forms part of the Buffalo City metropolitan area) and the Buffalo River that flows through it:

*Almighty, my Creator
Give me the strength, the power*

104. See Miller, ‘Gender, Field, and Habitus’, 338.

*I have lost the strength
 To serve my Creator
 That I may shine
 Do not forget yourself, do not deem yourself unworthy
 In all of this chaos
 From the land of the Buffaloes
 They will cause you to be afraid
 You'll stomp a journey of many years
 A disgrace in their tongue
 But when you learn the lesson of your land/home
 It's because of the loud bangs
 You don't attend to yourself
 They will make you stomp and dance
 Look at yourself / look after yourself
 Do not forget who you are
 Almighty, my Creator
 You who are pure
 Please look after me
 When this journey just won't take off
 What should I do?
 Who will point at me, who will point me out
 At the place of truth*

Niren Tolsi describes Siya's live performances as follows:

There is also a voracious appetite for experimentation and cross-over. She has been extending the possibilities of her voice digitally, with loops and backtracks "to have a complete other range of what would be considered unnatural sounds" or to create harmonised backing vocals over which she layers live vocals during performances. With her band IppyFuze, Makuzeni moves into the realm of rock music, hip-hop and electronica, a sound she describes as a journey "between everything, but the core sound is a heavily groove-based rock riff".¹⁰⁵

After receiving the Young Artist for Jazz award in 2016, Siya was primed to release a new album.¹⁰⁶ *Out Of This World* cemented her status as a jazz artist to be reckoned with:

I really went in deep in terms of what I was creating at the time. And this time, it was welcomed. This time, there was no "beef" between the rock and the jazz... this is all *you*, Siya. You just write your music and it is going to come out and [represent] a facet of what you can do, and now you're in a position where you can do both. And these were the kind of conversations I was having with myself. To open up [creatively]...it's not about one focus. Now you can actually do it *all*.¹⁰⁷

The album cover is surprisingly conservative when compared to *Amaxentsha*. It features an understated, unadorned portrait of Siya and has a timeless quality. The black background gives

105. Niren Tolsi, 'Why Siya Makuzeni is "a little bit more than a jazz musician"', *Times Live*, 6 December 2015, accessed 1 February 2020, <https://www.timeslive.co.za/sunday-times/lifestyle/2015-12-06-why-siya-makuzeni-is-a-little-bit-more-than-a-jazz-musician/>

106. Siya Makuzeni Sextet, *Out Of This World*, Siya Makuzeni, 2016, *iTunes*.

107. Makuzeni, No. 1.

the appearance that she is floating in space and her face is only partially lit. The image is reminiscent of pensive Billie Holiday portraits and is both simple and mysterious.

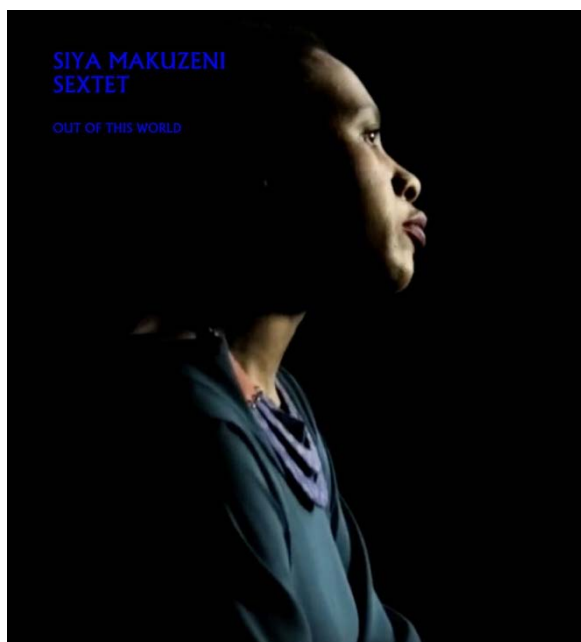


Fig. 42. Siya Makuzeni, *Out Of This World* (album cover)

Out Of This World, Siya's first album with the Siya Makuzeni Sextet, made waves locally and internationally. Mutle Mothibe describes the title track, "Out Of This World"¹⁰⁸ as follows:

At two clicks of a button I was lifted off to an auditory Oz world of dexterously looped vocals, adorned with Xhosa nuances, hinting at an eclectic lineage influenced by genres that reach as far as Iceland while perfectly visible through my Jazz tinted spectacles.¹⁰⁹

The lyrics to the album's title track "Out Of This World" speak of Siya's deep spiritual connection to her heritage, and of her journey of evolution and becoming:

*We've walked the earth
For over millions of miles
Through all we have evolved
Learnt of love and kindness, our fateful joy*

*Out of our dreams
Lives hope to further unfold
Remain the symbol of truth
You can only find you, it's for you to own*

Out of this world, we learn, we dance, we love

108. See Siya Makuzeni Sextet, 'Out Of This World', *YouTube* video, posted by 'Siya Makuzeni-Topic', on 23 April 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQTik0GLkQI>

109. Mutle Mothibe, 'Siya Makuzeni: An Out Of This World Auditory Experience', *Culture Review*, 28 May 2021, accessed 20 June 2021, <https://culture-review.co.za/siya-makuzeni-an-out-of-this-word-auditory-experience>.

*Out of this world, we gain, we strive to live
 Out of this world, we learn, we dance, we love
 Out of this world, we gain to give unconditionally*

Out Of This World incorporates more jazz elements than her work with IppyFuze, yet Siya was determined to create a jazz album that would change perceptions of what a South African jazz musician could look and sound like, regardless of their gender. She simultaneously displays skills coded as “feminine” and “masculine” such as marrying traditional Xhosa overtone singing with electronic wizardry (digitally looping and manipulating her own vocals and trombone playing on stage) and electric guitars. This mastery of the technological and the traditional/organic has allowed Siya to shape a unique musical identity that defies genre and societal expectations. She scats and sings in English and isiXhosa, and it is often unclear when one mode of expression ends and another takes over. Even when working only with acoustic instruments, her music has a unique and otherworldly quality:

The biggest strong point in how I’ve approached my music is being able to tap back into our folk traditional music and trying to fuse that [with other styles]. And maybe that’s really what set me apart. That, and being very free with experimenting with electronic components of music... this is my voice and I’m very happy with that being a portrayal of what I’m capable of.¹¹⁰

The track “New Age”¹¹¹ is built on a slippery progression of 7th chords; instead of foregrounding complex, “traditional” American jazz harmonies, Siya uses chords as a starting point or backdrop for her real creativity. Instead of thinking vertically, she approaches her arrangements in a cyclical way; she creates dense layers of rhythmic material and harmony that create soundscapes rather than songs. Each added layer introduces elements of surprise and seemingly incompatible parts. Yet upon closer inspection, they are anything but random. The unique musical language she created is unbound by rules, yet backed by a superior grasp of the theoretical.¹¹²

Siya uses the full range of her voice, this time without any digital manipulation. She not only bends pitch and tone, but also seems to bend time as she leads the band through the performance. Throughout, Siya cues the band members with subtle gestures that reflect years

110. Makuzeni, No. 1.

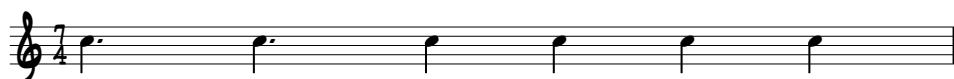
111. See Siya Makuzeni Sextet, ‘Downtown Jazz Sessions’, *YouTube* video, posted by ‘Siya Makuzeni’, on 9 January 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oE-XI2ptSF0>

112. See Appendix D.

of experience as a bandleader and soloist. “New Age” speaks to her own resilience and sense of self, but also poses wider existential questions:

*Every day I wake up, bright and early morning
Ready to face the battles that have dawned in
And though there will be battles – there is always trouble –
I’m ready to sow the seeds of my redemption
I’m looking to discover, reach into my soul now
Where do I go, which way will find me solace?
So everyday I wander out into the new world
Hoping my soul will delve into the new age
Find your way to your own journey
Live with your ambitions
New age right before you
Full of wonder*

Leading the sextet comprising some of the top figures in contemporary South African jazz,¹¹³ Siya’s command of the band is impressive – she is simultaneously “inside” the three-piece horn section and fronting the band. She deftly positions her notes between and around the horn lines as the rhythm section holds down the 7/4 - groove. As the performance progresses, she alternatively emphasises different beats within the time signature that are at odds with the rhythmic foundation. The improvisation depends on lightning-quick harmonic reflexes because of the harmonic rhythm (see below) and the rapid shifts between remotely related tonal centres:



Ex. 7. Harmonic rhythm, “New Age” (figure by author)

The most distinctive element of Siya’s music is her voice and the endless palette of colours she can access, ranging from raw and guttural to breathy and pure. Her vocal harmonies often move in intervals of 4ths and 5ths and she bends pitch and tone without compromising on intonation; this is particularly evident when she executes a scat solo, such as the one she performs in the video discussed above (05 min 40 sec).

Moving effortlessly across vocal registers and confounding the ear with her deft navigation of the unusual harmonic base, Siya’s solo not only features complex chromatic lines but also goes

113. Benjamin Jephta (double bass), Bokani Dyer (keys), Marlon Witbooi (drums), Sthembiso Bhengu (trumpet), Linda Sikhakane (tenor saxophone).

against the proverbial grain of the band in terms of rhythm. A transcription of the vocal solo appears below, with the full lead sheet appearing in Appendix D.

61

SOLO

TPT.

SAX.

TBN.

DB.

62

SOLO

63

SOLO

Ex. 8. Vocal solo, “New Age” (05 min 40 sec), Siya Makuzeni Sextet, ‘Downtown Jazz Sessions’, *YouTube* video, posted by ‘Siya Makuzeni’, on 9 January 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oE-XI2ptSF0> (transcription by author and K. Ferguson).

64 *SOLO* $E^b(add4)/A^b$ $A^b(maj7)$ E^m $F^\sharp m$ G B^m

65 *SOLO* $D^6(omit3)/A$ $B^7(sus4)/E$ $E^9(omit3)$ E/B $B^7(\sharp5)/A$ $G^7(\sharp5omit3)$

66 *SOLO* $E^b(add4)/A^b$ $A^b(maj7)$ E^m $F^\sharp m$ G B^m

67 *SOLO* $D^6(omit3)/A$ $B^7(sus4)/E$ $E^9(omit3)$ E/B $B^7(\sharp5)/A$ $G^7(\sharp5omit3)$

68 *SOLO* $E^b(add4)/A^b$ $A^b(maj7)$ E^m $F^\sharp m$ G B^m

69 *SOLO* $D^6(omit3)/A$ $B^7(sus4)/E$ $E^9(omit3)$ E/B $B^7(\sharp5)/A$ $G^7(\sharp5omit3)$

70 *SOLO* $E^b(add4)/A^b$ $A^b(maj7)$ E^m $F^\sharp m$ G B^m

71 *SOLO* $D^6(omit3)/A$ $B^7(sus4)/E$ $E^9(omit3)$ E/B $B^7(\sharp5)/A$ $G^7(\sharp5omit3)$

72 *SOLO* $E^b(add4)/A^b$ $A^b(maj7)$ E^m $F^\sharp m$ G B^m

Ex. 8. Vocal solo, “New Age” (cont.)

73 $D^6(\text{omit } 3)/A$ $B^7(\text{sus } 4)/E$ $E^9(\text{omit } 3)$ E/B $B^7(\sharp 5)/A$ $G^7(\sharp 5)(\text{omit } 3)$

SOLO

74 $E^b(\text{add } 4)/A^b$ $A^b\text{maj } 7$ E^m $F^{\sharp}m$ G B^m

SOLO

75 $D^6(\text{omit } 3)/A$ $B^7(\text{sus } 4)/E$ $E^9(\text{omit } 3)$ E/B $B^7(\sharp 5)/A$ $G^7(\sharp 5)(\text{omit } 3)$

SOLO

76 $E^b(\text{add } 4)/A^b$ $A^b\text{maj } 7$ E^m $F^{\sharp}m$ G B^m

SOLO

77 $D^6(\text{omit } 3)/A$ $B^7(\text{sus } 4)/E$ $E^9(\text{omit } 3)$ E/B $B^7(\sharp 5)/A$ $G^7(\sharp 5)(\text{omit } 3)$

SOLO

78 $E^b(\text{add } 4)/A^b$ $A^b\text{maj } 7$ E^m $F^{\sharp}m$ G B^m

SOLO

TPT.

SAX.

The musical score is written for a vocal soloist and three instrumentalists (Trumpet, Trombone, and Saxophone). The key signature is B-flat major (three flats). The tempo and style are indicated by a '4' in a circle. The score consists of six systems of music. The first four systems are for the vocal soloist, with measures 73 through 78. The fifth system is for the instrumentalists, with measures 79 through 84. The sixth system is for the instrumentalists, with measures 85 through 90. The vocal soloist's part is written in a treble clef. The instrumentalists' parts are written in a treble clef. The vocal soloist's part is a melodic line with various intervals and rhythms. The instrumentalists' parts are more rhythmic and harmonic, often playing chords or single notes. The score is labeled 'Ex. 8. Vocal solo, "New Age" (cont.)'.

Ex. 8. Vocal solo, "New Age" (cont.)

79 $D^6(\text{omit } 3)/A$ $B^7(\text{sus } 4)/E$ $E^9(\text{omit } 3)$ E/B $B^7(\sharp 5)/A$ $G^7(\sharp 5 \text{ omit } 3)$

SOLO

TPT.

SAX.

80 $E^b(\text{add } 4)/A^b$ $A^b \text{ maj } 7$ E^m $F^{\sharp}m$ G B^m

SOLO

TPT.

SAX.

81 $D^6(\text{omit } 3)/A$ $B^7(\text{sus } 4)/E$ $E^9(\text{omit } 3)$ E/B $B^7(\sharp 5)/A$ $G^7(\sharp 5 \text{ omit } 3)$

SOLO

TPT.

SAX.

The musical score is for a vocal solo, with piano accompaniment for Trumpet (TPT.) and Saxophone (SAX.). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The score is divided into three systems, each starting with a measure number (79, 80, 81) and a set of chords. The Solo part is written in treble clef. The TPT. and SAX. parts are written in treble clef. The chords are: 79: D6(omit 3)/A, B7(sus 4)/E, E9(omit 3), E/B, B7(sharp 5)/A, G7(sharp 5 omit 3); 80: Eb(add 4)/Ab, Ab maj 7, Em, F#m, G, Bm; 81: D6(omit 3)/A, B7(sus 4)/E, E9(omit 3), E/B, B7(sharp 5)/A, G7(sharp 5 omit 3). The Solo part features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The TPT. and SAX. parts provide harmonic support with sustained notes and some movement.

Ex. 8. Vocal solo, "New Age" (cont.)

Unlike her larger-than-life performances with IppyFuze and occasionally with Bombshelter Beast, her look is more understated in the video for “New Age”, as are her physical gestures. Her vintage-styled salmon satin dress with beaded detail around the neckline has the look of a “classic” jazz vocalist, yet her performance is anything but traditional as she simultaneously shatters stereotypes about (women) vocalists and of jazz trombone players. The persona depicted here is far removed from the deliberately exaggerated Afro-bohemian look Siya has embraced in her latest work. In recent years, she has added visual art/photography to her creative portfolio, with artwork inspired by the Eastern Cape where she was born and raised.¹¹⁴ Expressing herself through yet another medium is in line with her way of “being in the world”, a way of being that was established nearly four decades ago when she tried her hand at breakdancing, flipping the script reserved for young Xhosa girls growing up in conservative communities. The cover art for her single, *Thixo Somandla*¹¹⁵ captures the many facets of Siya the musician, the visual artist, the storyteller, and an inhabitant of the ancient landscape that continues to inspire her.

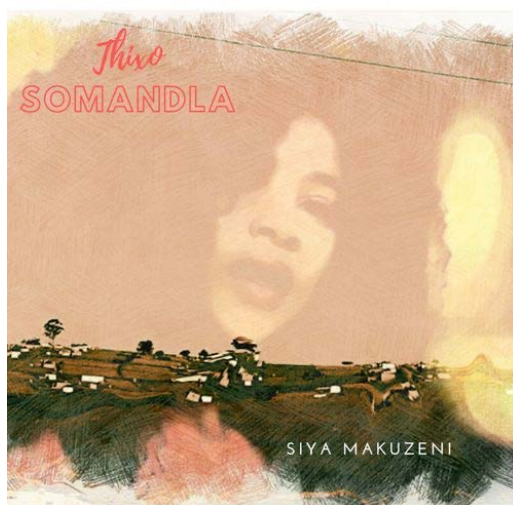


Fig. 43. Siya Makuzeni, *Thixo Somandla* (album cover)

In an online interview with “The Showroom”, Siya explains her deep connection to the region, (inadvertently) reaffirming her lyrics in “Ungazilibali”:

114. *The Showroom*, ‘Introducing Composer Siya Makuzeni’, 2020 (online publication date unknown), <https://www.theshowroom.org/events/siya-makuzeni>

115. Siya Makuzeni, *Thixo Somandla*, Siya Makuzeni 2019, *iTunes*; see Siya Makuzeni, ‘Thixo Somandla’, *YouTube* video, posted by ‘Siya Makuzeni-Topic’, on 18 December 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=em6LXkVvjPQ>.

I am aware that to truly know who you are (becoming) one needs to understand where they come from. There is a certain unspoken peace when I am in those lands, one that allows me to tap into the spiritual energy of those who came before me, my guides, my ancestors, and go forth into the unknown with an unshakable truth and determination.¹¹⁶

Siya's approach to rhythm demonstrates her ability to think out of the proverbial box and she has often shared the stage with renowned local and international musicians who have underestimated the complexity of her music:

I was watching a video of a recent performance at Joy of Jazz, and it was so funny...I was like, "You're busy on stage, girl!" Because I had to conduct – I had to bring everybody in or else...it's the funniest thing for me...I was supposed to perform with [a multi-award winning American bass player] so I sent him my music and it was [silence]...I hear nothing from him, until the day of the gig...and we spent the entire sound check rehearsing! People have this impression that you go to school and get all this technique and information that's necessary to be a musician... but because you don't listen to this music or spend time in that environment, all your accolades can't help you. It was a massive learning curve for me...yes, he was busy and didn't really have time to prepare, but he looked at the stuff and went, "What the...?" I can't tell you how many times I've had to sit there – even with South African musicians – who tell me I've written the chart "wrong" (laughs). Then, once you workshop the material, they're like, "Ohhhhhhh!" This stuff happens a lot overseas, but I've also seen it happen here at home...institutions are doing musicians as disservice because [being open to understand "other" musical traditions] should not be special, it should be a prerequisite!¹¹⁷

In 2021, Siya was invited to musically direct and front a high-profile big band concert showcasing her original compositions. It was an opportunity to sharpen her arranging skills and to put together a band comprising some of South Africa's top young jazz musicians:

I was ready to take this on...I had to step on the freaking...jeez, that wagon is *crazy*, man!...So for me, it was a step up...it really gave me the impetus to – without worrying about the financial aspects [of producing a show] – literally sit in front of my computer, just arranging.¹¹⁸

She was particularly pleased by the openness and respect from the band members, all younger men known for their own groundbreaking work in the contemporary jazz scene:

These guys were amazing. I think they were surprised as well, to be honest...I think they were pleasantly surprised. Because there is usually –always – someone sitting there, thinking, "What is she going to do, is she going to arrange? Are you kidding me? How is this music going to pan out?" [But I had] band members who, even during the process, were sending me messages and saying, "Okay...my score is a bit...maybe fix the beaming", and I'm like, "*Actually*, thank you!" because there is so much going on at that time. I don't see it as somebody saying, "You can't do this", they're actually helping me along. And I had a lot of that. People coming and saying, "This sounds amazing, what else do you need? Or, why don't we try *this*?" The guys were *all in*. Super supportive, and really all about the music.¹¹⁹

116. *The Showroom*, 'Introducing Composer Siya Makuzeni'.

117. Siya Makuzeni, voice note, 9 January 2023.

118. Makuzeni, No. 2.

119. Makuzeni, No. 2.

Siya regularly collaborates with artists in other fields, including dance, film and visual art (including performances with internationally renowned visual artist, William Kentridge).¹²⁰ This interdisciplinary work allows her to enjoy a greater sense of creative freedom and she actively seeks out unusual projects that will enrich her portfolio:

Collaborating...is definitely something I've been doing my entire career. What's nice, is that usually those spaces have more room for experimentation and going "off the cuff", not necessarily having to follow a rulebook of sorts. So I think...what is happening now, more recently, I choose these projects...I mean, you can work with as many people as you want, but at the end of the day when you're looking at the catalogue of work you want to leave behind...that's very important...That world, in particular, is not easy. It's very clique-y, very much about who you know, your contacts...I think I've built quite a bit of a show reel, enough to show people I am capable of this... I think that ultimately, where you can improve, you *must* improve. And the more skills you have, the more resourceful you are. That's just as simple as it is.¹²¹

Nomfundo Xaluva

Nomfundo only ventured into songwriting after completing her undergraduate degree at UCT and claims that songwriting didn't "come naturally" to her. Like Chantal, she felt the pressure of having to compose her own music as a means of establishing herself as a serious contender in the local jazz scene. Berliner refers to the importance of developing one's own voice and musical personality, an important step that allows musicians to move beyond mimicking their role models and idols:

Lester Young and others in Roach's early circle advised artists with cleverly rhymed aphorisms like "You can't join the throng 'til you write your own song."¹²²

Nomfundo's reticence to compose and perform original music like many of her peers initially caused her to doubt her legitimacy as a jazz artist within a competitive environment. She was fortunate to have a vocal lecturer who encouraged and guided her:

I only started writing my own music during my Masters...it was very late compared to my contemporaries. I remember struggling with this notion about being a bit of a late bloomer in terms of songwriting and having a conversation about it with my singing teacher, German jazz singer, Natasha Roth, [who] was in South Africa at the time...I remember at one of my lessons with her [saying], "I'm not writing...how come I *can't* write my own songs?" There was this sort of *upsurge*, you know? Gigs where people had to perform their original music...*originals, originals, originals*, to the point where writing and performing original music [became] incentivised. I just felt like I was never going to score those gigs because I didn't write original music. I remember Natasha's response, "Well, you know, there

120. William Kentridge is a South African visual artist internationally renowned for his animated films, charcoal drawings, printmaking, installation art and collaborations with musicians, dancers and theatre performers (see <https://www.kentridge.studio/explore-art-william-kentridge/#performance>).

121. Makuzeni, No. 2.

122. Berliner, *Thinking in jazz*, 312.

are so many incredible musicians and so many incredible jazz singers and jazz artists who don't write their own music. But [they] have this really, really, great gift of being able to breathe life into music that already exists." She said, "*That* kind of artistry is equally important and valuable as someone who writes their own music." There was something quite settling about that piece of advice...So I took that approach. I think I started to write my own music...2009, 2010 roughly. But even so, it wasn't something that I'd *planned* and even 'til today, writing music isn't something that I schedule in my diary, like, "I'm going to write music this weekend!"¹²³

Nomfundo creatively marries her classical piano background and formal jazz education with elements from an array of South African popular music styles:

I think my *identity* is always at the centre of my music as a black Xhosa speaking person with very traditional roots in my Xhosa upbringing. That comes through quite strongly in my music...I don't run away from the fact that I am a trained musician. I am a *trained* jazz artist and those elements will always find a way to [come out] in the music that I write. I embrace that and it's part of who I am. It's part of the DNA of my art. But I think at the core of it, I write predominantly about stuff that I've experienced and I try not to write on behalf of what someone *else* has experienced. I write about stuff that *I've* been through...stuff that *I'm* thinking, stuff that I feel...and that's what comes through in the music. I don't try to control too much about [the music itself]...if it comes to me in English it's going to be sung in English, and if it comes in Xhosa it'll be sung in Xhosa. I'm not precious about stuff like that because I think the most important thing is my *voice*. I think as long as my voice is unique and you can hear when a song comes on and it's me, that it's *me* singing...that's enough, you know? I'd like to have the kind of career where people hear my voice and they know *immediately* that it's Nomfundo singing, you know? If I can [achieve] *that* then I'm good to go!¹²⁴

Unlike Shannon for example, Nomfundo does not overtly address issues of gender in her music; her work does not aim to disrupt or drive activist agendas even though she has spoken out against patriarchy in the music industry. Upon closer inspection, her earlier albums reflect her position as a "good" (identifying) subject, eager to display her mastery of the esteemed South African jazz "greats". Only a generation ago it would have been unusual for a young woman of colour to direct these songs from behind her piano yet – unlike Siya who loudly asserted her position as a serious artist – Nomfundo chose a more conservative and compliant approach to entering a field dominated by male icons. Her first album, *Kusile*,¹²⁵ features a selection of well-known South African jazz standards by "masters" of the genre, such as "Yakhalinkomo"¹²⁶ by jazz legend Winston "Mankunku" Ngozi. Arguably her most popular track off the album, the title literally translates to a "Bellowing Bull" being led to the slaughter. Unlike Siya who deconstructs, hybridises and digitally manipulates elements of traditional

123. Xaluva, No. 1.

124. Xaluva, No. 1.

125. Nomfundo Xaluva, *Kusile*, recorded 2012, Universal Music Group, CDRBL 640 133, 2012, compact disc.

126. See Nomfundo Xaluva, 'Yakhalinkomo', *YouTube* video, posted by 'Nomfundo Xaluva', on 20 July 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MwdMyJZM1wk>

Xhosa melodies, Nomfundo pays tribute to her musical elders by keeping her renditions “simple...[with] a lot of integrity”¹²⁷, thereby reaching a wide, cross-generational audience.

The album cover for *Kusile* – in black and white – features a close up of Nomfundo and has a retro look that is in line with the classic tribute style of the music. Despite being an accomplished jazz pianist, Nomfundo is pictured holding a microphone instead of appearing alongside a piano as can be seen in many of her subsequent images. She does not meet the photographer’s gaze, but appears to have been captured during a vocal performance.

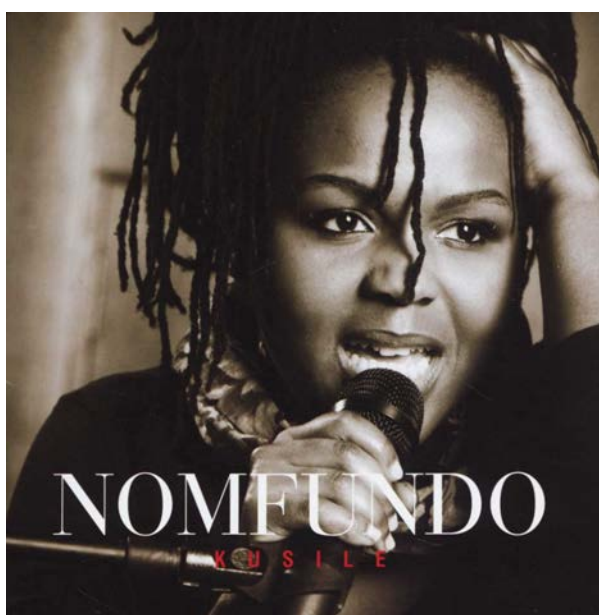


Fig. 44. Nomfundo Xaluva, *Kusile* (album cover)

On her second album cover (*From.Now.On*) she is pictured in sepia tones, seated beside a large gramophone that gives the image a timeless quality reflecting both early American jazz imagery and Sophiatown. She is again conservatively dressed, this time smiling at the camera and exuding a more mature confidence:

127. Terri Dunbar-Curran, ‘Xaluva’s melodic jazz keeps it simple’, *Independent Online*, 4 March 2013, accessed 6 July 2021, <https://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/arts-portal/xaluvass-melodic-jazz-keeps-it-simple-1480207>



Fig. 45. Nomfundo Xaluva, *From.Now.On* (album cover)

*From.Now.On*¹²⁸ was inspired by her birthplace (New Brighton) and is another example of her dedication to preserving the legacy of jazz elders:

The album title, *From.Now.On*, is loosely based on the concept of where I come from in terms of musical heritage paying tribute to the masters of South African jazz with some traditional standards reworked to fit a more modern context...Then music that represents where I am now as a beneficiary and custodian of that rich heritage and how “old” music continues to shape and inspire the way we write songs. Then finally how we carry and pass on the legacy. It’s an acknowledgement of identity through music and how one must always remember where they come from.¹²⁹

The album features reworked Xhosa folk melodies¹³⁰ and also showcases her original compositions and her effortless marriage of Xhosa elements and more traditional jazz writing and arranging.¹³¹ The inclusion of “Ebhayi” (an isiXhosa name for Port Elizabeth) by Victor Ndlazilwana has particular significance, as it is also Nomfundo’s hometown. In this way, she pays tribute not only to Ndlazilwana, but also to the rich jazz history of her birthplace.¹³² In

128. Nomfundo Xaluva, *From.Now.On*, recorded 2015, Universal Music South Africa, CDRBL 800, 2015, compact disc.

129. Sam Mathe, ‘Nomfundo Xaluva: Mama Africa’s musical legacy’, *Music in Africa*, 15 March 2016, accessed 20 January 2021, <https://www.musicinafrica.net/magazine/nomfundo-xaluva-sharing-mama-africa's-musical-legacy>

130. See Nomfundo Xaluva, ‘Amaxesha Osizi’, *YouTube* video, posted by ‘Nomfundo Xaluva-Topic’, on 21 July 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y2hRS2G0JQU>

131. See Nomfundo Xaluva, ‘Mazi/The Heritage Blues’, *YouTube* video, posted by ‘Nomfundo Xaluva-Topic’, on 21 July 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uXWoLISTNi4>

132. See Nomfundo Xaluva, ‘Ebhayi’, *YouTube* video, posted by ‘Nomfundo Xaluva-Topic’, on 21 July 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J9GB33gR-we>

another tribute, her rendition of “Kutheni Sithandwa”¹³³ invokes the spirit of Miriam Makeba who recorded the song with The Skylarks¹³⁴ in 1968, and whose work was the topic of Nomfundo’s Masters dissertation. “Mazi/Heritage Blues” – a tribute to Miriam Makeba – opens with solo vocals and double bass. It features backing vocals reminiscent of Makeba’s group the Skylarks, and the isiXhosa lyrics loosely translate as:

*Mazi*¹³⁵, you are a heroine of heroines
 Your inheritance is a beautiful song/sweet melody
 Mazi, you are a gift, you are an angel
 Your inheritance is a beautiful song/sweet melody
 Makeba, you are a heroine of heroines

♩ = 45

INTRO F7

The musical score is written in 8/8 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). It consists of five staves of music. The first staff is an 8-measure introduction marked 'INTRO' with a key signature change to two flats and a chord of F7. The second staff begins at measure 9, marked with a box 'A', and contains the lyrics 'ZI, U - LI - QHA - WE LA - MA - QHA - WE - KA - ZI - I -'. The third staff starts at measure 12 and contains the lyrics 'LI - FA LA - KHO LI - YI - NGO - MA EM - NAN - DI - MA -'. The fourth staff starts at measure 16 and contains the lyrics 'ZI, U - SI - SI - PHO, U - YI - NGE - LO - SI I - LI - FA LA - KHO LI - YI -'. The fifth staff starts at measure 20 and contains the lyrics 'NGO - MA EM - NAN - DI - MA - KE - BA -'. Chord symbols are placed above the notes: Bbmaj7, Ebm7, Ab7, Bbmaj7, Dm7, G7, Cm7, F7, Bbmaj7, Gm7, Cm7, F7, Bbmaj7, Gm7, Cm7, F7. Measure numbers 9, 12, 16, and 20 are indicated at the start of their respective staves.

Ex. 9. Excerpt from “Mazi/Heritage Blues”, (N. Xaluva, transcription by K. Ferguson)

133. See Nomfundo Xaluva, ‘Kutheni Sithandwa’, *YouTube* video, posted by ‘Nomfundo Xaluva-Topic’, on 21 July 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xThC1cG5reU>

134. The Skylarks were an all-women South African vocal group that rose to fame in the 1950s. The group, formed by Miriam Makeba, performed South African music and jazz.

135. In Xhosa culture, the word “Mazi” (derived from “makazi”, or maternal aunt) is a term of endearment used to address a mature member of the family, or someone who is close and very dear to the family.

The section is followed by a pedal/vamp on the dominant chord, gradually increasing in tempo before transitioning into the “Heritage Blues” at bar 31 (02 min 18 sec). Again sung in harmony, the opening melody is based on a blues scale:

31 Bb^6 C^7 Eb^7 F^+7 Bb

WEH - YAH YOH WEH - YAH WEH - YAH YEH-DAH-DOH DEH-DOH DEH

Ex. 10. “Mazi/Heritage Blues”, bar 31-34

Making use of a 12-bar blues structure (but starting on chord IV instead of I), Nomfundo switches to English:

*I sing this blues for my forefathers
Jazz in the womb of my foremothers
I got their blood running through me
Trust me I know exactly who I am*

35 Eb^7 Bb^7 Eb^7 Bb^7

I SING THIS BLUES FOR MY FORE-FA-THERS. JAZZ IN THE WOMB OF MY FORE-MO-THERS.

39 Eb^7 Dm^7 $\text{G}^7\text{ALT.}$ Cm^7 $\text{F}^7\text{ALT.}$

I GOT THEIR BLOOD RUN-NING THROUGH ME. TRUST ME I KNOW E-XACT-LY WHO I AM.

43 Bb^6 C^7 Eb^7 F^+7 Bb FINE

WEH - YAH YOH WEH - YAH WEH - YAH YEH-DAH-DOH DEH-DOH DEH

Ex. 11. “Mazi/Heritage Blues”, bar 35-46

Nomfundo proceeds to take a piano solo over the full form of “Heritage Blues”, displaying technical precision and just enough “schooled” traditional jazz licks. The self-affirming lyrics proclaim that jazz was part of her musical heritage long before she was educated in the American tradition she so confidently performs. In a rare feminist move, she credits not only her “forefathers”, but also her “foremothers”. More recently, Nomfundo has been inspired by the eclecticism of young newcomers in the local jazz scene. She believes that South Africans’

shifting perceptions of jazz and the increased hybridity of the genre is making it more accessible:

They bring a fresh energy and contemporary feel to jazz. Jazz music is no longer just for old people or for the elite and that is the stereotype we need to break.¹³⁶

Thandi Ntuli

Like Nomfundo, Thandi entered a more evolved South African jazz scene where fusions of African and popular music elements (including electronic music) had become the norm.¹³⁷ Unlike Amanda and Shannon who felt pressured to prove their improvisational prowess on stage as newcomers to the jazz scene in the 1990s, there was no need for Thandi to “play like a man”. Thandi believes that her success lies in the fact that she doesn’t only perform, but also composes, directs and produces her own music:

Once you write your own music you’ve already carved out a part of your own originality, so to speak. If you’re a performer, there are people who [say], “Oh, you remind me of this person and that person”, and so once you write your own music, once people associate certain sounds with *you*, there’s a bit of individuality that you get to achieve. I think [composing and producing your own music] does make a difference.¹³⁸

Although she has publicly spoken out about patriarchy and sexism in the workplace, her music itself does not overtly speak to issues of gender. Rather, she subverts patriarchy in more subtle ways. As discussed in chapter four, Thandi deliberately chose not to sing on her debut album (*The Offering*),¹³⁹ but to introduce herself as a pianist and composer to avoid being stereotyped as “just a singer”. On the album cover, Thandi also kept her own visage out of the equation, opting for modern artwork that depicts African women engaging in a spiritual or ritualistic activity:

136. Xaluva, No. 1.

137. South African jazz artists Shane Cooper and Siya Makuzeni have successfully incorporated house, rap, ska, rock and electronica on their albums, while Nduduzo Makhathini continues to push the boundaries of South African jazz with his rich explorations of spiritual and ancestral territory. Perhaps the most eclectic example is Marcus Wyatt’s alternative ‘Afro-Balkan’ collective Bombshelter Beast that fuses jazz, ska, kwaito, dancehall and rap.

138. Ntuli, No.1.

139. Thandi Ntuli, *The Offering*, Thandi Ntuli 2014, iTunes.

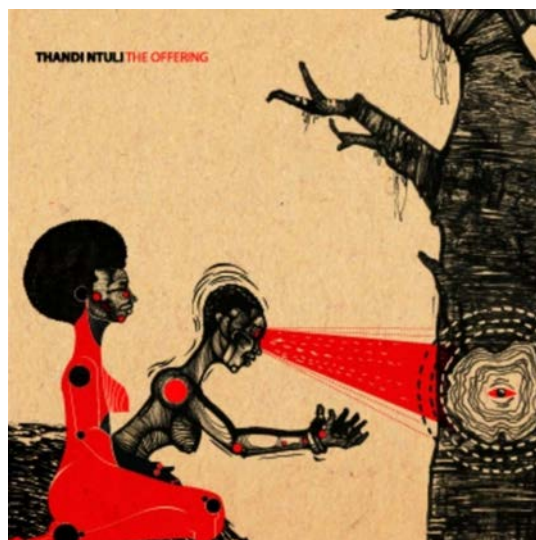


Fig. 46. Thandi Ntuli, *The Offering* (album cover)

During her undergraduate years, she was intimidated by the concept of improvisation because of her classical background and the institution's bebop-heavy curriculum:

I think my strengths are composition and arrangement. I remember [at] university when I was preparing for exams...the part that I really enjoyed – that was the least daunting, I suppose – was the part when I [took] a piece and [made it] my own. Improvisation is something that I think is not my strength...it took a long time for me as a classical musician to really feel safety in that space. Now that I understand that improvisation is really...a continuation of composition, it's just that it's in the moment, I don't really feel that way anymore...even when I practice something specific that I'm trying to get better at, I start writing a song, you know? When I'm at the piano practicing, I somehow gravitate towards writing something! Even if it's something that I'm not going to release, I just like to write.¹⁴⁰

Her albums have been lauded for their spiritual quality, philosophical themes and her channeling of the diverse musical cultures that shaped her sound; Thandi paints soundscapes that speak to the complexities of her own identity:

[I] express myself as an African without pretending that I don't have all these other musical elements – classical, jazz, house – inside me.¹⁴¹

Her single *Cosmic Light*¹⁴² heralded a new direction in her musical style. It set the tone for her second album, *Exiled*, that was released in the same year she received the Standard Bank Young Artist for Jazz award (2018).¹⁴³ The album earned her a South African Music Awards (SAMA)

140. Ntuli, No.1.

141. Gwen Ansell, 'SBYA Thandi Ntuli: messenger of cosmic light', *Sisgwenjazz*, 8 November 2017, accessed 10 October 2020, <https://sisgwenjazz.wordpress.com/2017/11/08/sbya-thandi-ntuli-messenger-of-cosmic-light/>

142. Thandi Ntuli, *Cosmic Light – Single*, Thandi Ntuli 2016, *iTunes*.

143. Thandi Ntuli, *Exiled*, Thandi Ntuli 2018, *iTunes*.

nomination and was inspired by musical elements from other African nations including Mali and Ethiopia, addressing subjects of “love, fellowship and postcolonial reckoning”.¹⁴⁴ On the cover she appears in a black and white photograph, her face entirely covered by an elaborate African mask/headdress:



Fig. 47 (above left) Thandi Ntuli, *Cosmic Light* (cover)



Fig. 48 (above right) Thandi Ntuli, *Exiled* (album cover)

Exile sees her – and possibly her alter ego – emerge from a forest of tall trees, wearing flowing, white garments and long braids. The image is in black and white, and is somewhat blurry, creating the look of an old photograph, the women snapped in mid-twirl. Like the musical themes on the album, the image speaks to Thandi’s complicated African/colonial duality as a musician. She draws on her background in classical piano when composing and her love for orchestral music, in particular string instruments, allows her to “hear things in a big way” rather than just as a pianist:

I gravitate to music because of composition. As much as I write jazz songs, I approach them from an arranger’s way of thinking: what should these instruments do here?¹⁴⁵

144. Zamindlela Zama, ‘Thandi began playing the piano at a very young age’, *Jazz It Out*, 28 August 2020, accessed 29 January 2021, <https://www.jazzitout.com/2020/08/28/thandi-began-playing-the-piano-at-a-very-young-age/>

145. Gwen Ansell, ‘Thandi Ntuli’s deep exploration of exile’, *New Frame*, 22 July 2020, accessed 24 May 2021, <https://www.newframe.com/thandi-ntulis-deep-exploration-of-exile/>

Her third album, *Thandi Ntuli (Live at Jazzwerkstatt)*¹⁴⁶ was recorded in 2019 and was an opportunity to execute her ideas on a bigger platform with the necessary financial resources. The album cover – again in black and white – shows a fragmented image of Thandi, photographed during the performance and turned into a mosaic-like deconstruction of her face. It reflects her creative boldness and growing embrace of her own kaleidoscopic identity. It is also the first album cover to feature close-up views of her face:



Fig. 49. Thandi Ntuli, *Live at Jazzwerkstatt* (album cover)

Included on the album is a new arrangement of “New Way” from her *Exiled* album, reworked for the specially curated 14-piece Thandi Ntuli Art Ensemble. Gwen Ansell refers to Thandi’s use of “churchy brass” and her creation of a “classical, choral mood” on the track as a nod to her grandfather’s legacy.¹⁴⁷ This was not a deliberate, conscious decision but rather an example of how deeply the sounds of her childhood are embedded in her music:

The live version [of “New Way”] wasn’t necessarily inspired by my grandfather’s *music*...it was more like his approach to harmony. But my mum said to me that it actually sounds like one of the songs that he wrote [that I didn’t know]. So I was like, “Oh, wow. Okay.”¹⁴⁸

Thandi embraced the opportunity to arrange for a large ensemble but, like Siya, found it necessary to workshop elements of the arrangement with the musicians, all young Europeans

146. Thandi Ntuli, *Thandi Ntuli (Live at Jazzwerkstatt)*, Thandi Ntuli 2020, iTunes.

147. Gwen Ansell, ‘Thandi Ntuli’s deep exploration of exile’.

148. Ntuli, No. 3.

that Thandi herself selected. Fellow South African, bassist Shane Cooper, and Kenyan percussionist Kasiva Mutua were instrumental in providing the right feel: a gentle rhumba/ballad that the drummer (Rico Baumann, Switzerland) subtly supported:

I really loved it...bless all those musicians because they were really very helpful in interpreting what I hadn't written for certain instruments so there were indications that I didn't get it completely right, but everyone was such a good sport...no one was grumpy and irritable about the fact that I didn't write the violin parts [a certain] way. The notes were there, but some of the indications of how I wanted it played were workshopped in rehearsals. That was really a wonderful thing and I really appreciated the receptivity of those musicians for that.¹⁴⁹

Thandi sings the majority of the piece in a relaxed alto voice, starting the melody on a low D (below middle C) – unusually low for most female vocalists and not easy to execute. Between phrases, Thandi alternates between understated vocal and piano fills; the latter have a distinctive South African feel that hints at the playing style of Abdullah Ibrahim and gospel piano lines. Nevertheless, the piece does not sound overtly “South African”, and has a universal sound that could resonate with other musical traditions. A distinctive, melodic double bass ostinato forms the backbone of the piece. The lyrics of the first verse could be directed at a friend, or an entire nation whilst verse two hints at the complexity of intimate relationships – perhaps interracial and/or intergenerational – that requires a woman to give, nurture and “serve [someone else’s] insecurities”:

*Why can't we tell the truth about how it feels?
Perhaps we are afraid that if we say too much, it might become real
Yet here we are trapped by all these insincerities
I wear a smile, bow down to serve your insecurities*

*This could be the start of a new way
You stand by me and say it's OK to let me be broken and hurting
Process my healing
Let me cry, release all of this pain
You're free to stay, free to walk away,
But don't dare say that "It's been a while now, move on from the past, child!"
Don't tell me it's been a while now*

*You demand the same thing, the same as these old folk
You enter my temple and all this love you evoke
You take my land, my diamonds, my gold
You take my kisses, my healing, my love
You take my soul and demand the same damn thing
And yet here we are trapped by all these insincerities
I wear a smile, bow down to serve your insecurities*

149. Ntuli, No. 3.

*This could be the start of a new way
 Stand by me and say it's OK and let me be broken and hurting
 Process my healing
 Let me cry, release all of this pain
 You're free to stay, free to walk away,
 But don't dare say that "It's been a while now, move on from the past, child!"*

Later in 2019, Thandi had another affirming experience on an international stage that allowed her to fully own her unique compositional style and musical identity: Thandi was one of a handful of South African jazz musicians selected to perform with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra (USA) for the concert, "The South African Songbook: Celebrating 25 Years of Democracy". Performing on such a prominent platform is a significant addition to any professional jazz musician's portfolio. Nevertheless, Thandi felt that it was a learning experience for the renowned American artists as much as it was for their South African visitors:

I really enjoyed the realisation that...it's unspoken, but there's this idea...and I came across it in university as well, that our music – South African music – is easy, you know? Like, think of a I-IV-V progression...it was [seen as] "Okay, let's play a I-IV-V when we don't know what else to play". It's never seen as something that's actually a *thing*, and it's actually not an easy thing for people who were not raised in this culture to understand the nuances of the music...[In our workshops I realised] "Oh okay, this is interesting! This is so natural for me and it's interesting that it doesn't seem to translate as naturally and easily to them". I've always respected our music a lot, but it just reaffirmed, "Don't look down upon our music". Just because it's two chords or because it's three chords, doesn't mean that it's not artistic and it doesn't have its own magic. I felt like we as the South African musicians were bringing an equal gift to the American musicians, who were bringing *their* gift of jazz music.¹⁵⁰



Fig. 50. Various Artists, *Indaba Is* (album cover)

150. Ntuli, No. 2.

In 2021, Thandi co-produced and managed the collective album, *Indaba Is*,¹⁵¹ released by UK-based Brownswood Recordings and featuring South African jazz artists including Bokani Dyer and Lwanda Gogwana among others. The album features her composition “Dikeledi”¹⁵² (Sesotho for “tears”) and cemented her status as curator, producer and creative director.



Fig. 51. Thandi Ntuli, *Blk Elijah & The Children of Meroë* (album cover)

In 2022, Thandi released the album *Blk Elijah & The Children of Meroë*.¹⁵³ Building on the postcolonial themes of *Exiled*, the concept album can be described as spiritual and futuristic, and introduces an imaginary, postcolonial world (Meroë). As “Blk Elijah”, Thandi appears in full colour for the first time; she is at the centre of the album cover, surrounded by an exaggerated halo. She has a regal African look, and gazes down at her old self/selves (reminiscent of the white-robed figures from the *Exiled* cover). She is bigger, more powerful and more colourful than ever as she brings light and rebirth (in the form of bright plants and butterflies) to a mud-coloured post-apocalyptic cityscape. Thandi has assumed the identity of “Blk Elijah”, a spiritual leader/prophet/mother who leads her tribe into a post-pandemic world that is representative of the wider African continent rather than rooted in South African political history. On the album, she makes use of the acoustic piano and synthesizers, vocal multi-tracking, and spoken word. Like her late uncle Selby Ntuli, who with the band Harari pioneered Afro-futuristic funk/fusion during the 1970s, and her role model Bheki Mseleku, Thandi

151. Various, *Indaba Is*, recorded 2021, Brownswood Recordings, BWOOD0236CD, 2021, compact disc.

152. See Thandi Ntuli, ‘Dikeledi’, *YouTube* video, posted by ‘Brownswood Recordings’, on 27 January 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jLbhwx86X6Q>

153. Thandi Ntuli, *Blk Elijah & The Children of Meroë*, Ndlela Music under exclusive license to Next Music 2022, *iTunes*.

continues to blur genre classification and approaches her music in a deeply philosophical way.¹⁵⁴ Whereas Thandi's earlier albums addressed themes of race, home, belonging and identity, she brings gender into the conversation via "Blk Elijah" as she speaks to her own volatile, ever-evolving, multi-faceted identity. Nobhongo Gxolo quotes Thandi:

[Black Elijah] represents a higher version of myself. It is initially a feminine, destructive energy who comes and breaks everything down, dismantles, burns it to the ground –because it's a mess here. In this place. At first she's fire – until there's nothing left. And then she's intuition – nurturing, loving, caring – guiding us forward.¹⁵⁵

Thandi describes the children of Meroë as follows:

It's the people who ideologically see the importance of embracing the feminine in the realm of spirit. Who recognise the feminine as the foundation of all things. Who recognise the importance of the feminine within themselves.¹⁵⁶

The album showcases a powerful progression from the narratives of disillusionment, uncertainty and disempowerment that were addressed on *Exiled*; through Blk Elijah, she claims her identity as a resilient, powerful woman who no longer "bows down" to serve anyone's insecurities. Thandi confidently (and successfully) marries her pre/colonial music roots with African and international contemporary jazz, and has taken a leaf from Siya's book in blending themes of African spirituality with otherworldly, futuristic elements. She has quietly shaken off gendered stereotypes and steered public and scholarly focus towards the musical rather than the social when discussing her work. *Blk Elijah* demonstrates how dramatically some of the participants' musical styles have evolved over the course of their careers. In chapter four, Thandi and some of the other participants refer to their respective struggles to relate to (or prove their "mastery" of) American jazz in order to be counted among jazz musicians/educators "in the know". The ability to fluently "speak" bebop was not only an integral part of their undergraduate studies, but also the currency required to gain access to other performance spaces dominated by male gatekeepers. At that time, that particular "dialect" of jazz was the symbol of masculine domination, elitism and power, a phenomenon that is not unique to pockets of the South African jazz scene. Nicolas Baham notes that Esperanza Spalding

154. See Thandi Ntuli, 'Blk Elijah & The Children of Meroë [Full Album Stream]', *YouTube* video, posted by 'Next Music Distribution', on 9 July 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rLWSb-Q1EP4>

155. Nobhongo Gxolo, 'Thandi Ntuli explores the sense of exile in her latest work', *Mail & Guardian*, 20 September 2022, accessed on 1 December 2022, <https://mg.co.za/friday/2022-09-20-thandi-ntuli-explores-the-sense-of-exile-in-her-latest-work/>

156. *Ibid.*

heralded a similar shift in the American jazz landscape, one that challenges ingrained beliefs about who should play jazz and how they should play it:

The failure to comprehend genre hybridity and ever-expanding definitions of jazz music is complicated by the presence of jazz purists and conservationists who have long failed to recognize the kind of radical hybridity and experimentation that has always been happening at the margins.¹⁵⁷

Romy Brauteseth

To date, Romy has opted to play a supportive/foundational role within various high-profile bands rather than working as a composer and arranger. Unlike the majority of participants whose livelihoods are fully dependent on work within various musical fields, Romy creates art in various ways – graphic design, fine art, photography, film making – of which music is but one. Whereas Nomfundo initially felt pressured into composing like her peers, Romy does not believe that being “only” a performer diminishes her value as a musician. Instead of composing music as a reaction to certain experiences like the other participants, Romy prefers more practical outlets:

I have [written some music] before...there is some stuff lying around on my iPad and in voice notes that probably needs to be put down formally and put together formally. The thing is... with writing music...what is a big problem for me, is you have to set aside time to do it, you know? I had a [gig] recently where I was playing by myself – it was such a weird gig, just me by myself, so I had to try and make it interesting. I got a loop pedal and I sang as well, and I had to play twenty minutes of music so I wrote some stuff. But I am so bad at getting to that point of, “Okay, today I’m going to go down to the studio and just write stuff and put it down and record it...that’s where I’m really, really bad! There’s never been a sense of urgency for me to do that...For a lot of young musicians, it’s what they want to do; put down some stuff, get bands for themselves and play their own music. For me it’s never been a priority...I *am* capable and I have some stuff that can be built on...but my interests are spread quite far and wide. So when I have a day – or a week or a month – where I’m not doing anything, the first thing that comes to my mind is not, “I’m going to write an album’s worth of music!” I’m like, “I’m going to build a cabinet under the counter because actually I’ve wanted to do that for ages (laughs)!” Or...I’m going to draw these pictures of photographs we’ve been taking of musicians, you know? Weirdly enough, writing music is right at the back [of my mind], but it does tie into that whole thing...I avoided doing music until the very last second and then went, “Oh, ok. I’ll give this thing a go.” It’s that reluctance that resides in me that I can’t control (laughs). But there will come a time and I’ll have to force myself into it.¹⁵⁸

Her reluctance to turn creative work into something structured, organised and disciplined was also the reason she shied away from a full-time career in graphic design. Designing album art for fellow musicians allows Romy to be an intimate co-creator in a musical space without

157. Baham, ‘I Know You Know’

158. Brauteseth, No. 2.

(physically) playing the bass, and to play a quiet yet powerful role in how other artists' music is presented to the world:

I'm not one to put my designs or my artworks online, for example. I just don't really have that "thing" inside me. I'm just quietly enjoying it. I'm very bad at marketing myself. I would, at the end of the day, like to *add* something to the music scene – not to become rich and famous (laughs)! I don't have that "thing" that a lot of younger musicians have. I just don't have it. And it can be laziness or procrastination or – like fear, maybe? I don't know what it is...or it's all of them combined...I hold quite loosely onto music, because I've got a lot of things that make me happy. If something had to happen tomorrow and I won't be able to play music anymore, I would divert my attention elsewhere. There are other things that I can do. Obviously it would be very sad, but it's not what I eat, sleep, and breathe.¹⁵⁹



Fig. 52. Romy (left), pictured with Bokani Dyer and Sphelelo Mazibuko, *Neo Native* (album art by Romy Brauteseth)

As a bass player, Romy holds a significant amount of power and she has learnt how to shift the energy on stage in quiet yet firm ways; this allows her to control aspects of the musical performance instead of taking a backseat to her louder counterparts on the drums. Unlike at the start of her career when she felt compelled to prove her worth with bleeding fingers, Romy has become self-assured enough to temper the volatility of an all-male band:

Gender aside, everybody has their place musically you know? Bokani [Dyer]...[books me] because I tone down everything, you know? With [certain drummers and bassists] things go like (gestures wildly)...if you look at [their] projects, it just shows you what it's about. It's just *epic*. It all just goes like *that* (gestures upwards), and that's what it *should* do, and that's what he wants...that's fine and that's the purpose of that. It's about the combination...but then you put me and [the same drummer] together and it's a very different situation, because I bring him "down". I will not "go" with him, you know? I will if it's necessary, but I won't if the music doesn't ask for it... I'm a listener. I like listening and I guess

159. Ibid.

that's my nature... I don't like bulldozing over music. I like playing with people who think in the same way.¹⁶⁰

As the ultimate disidentifying subject, Romy has crafted a career – and a lifestyle – that can be described as bohemian and unconstrained by traditional social narratives. She is equally comfortable playing the double bass in high heels and dresses as she is wearing gaudy, bohemian garb when playing the bass guitar with Bombshelter Beast. Both personae disrupt gender stereotypes about bass players and the way they are “expected” to perform.

Performances and performativity

As demonstrated by Romy, composition is not the only way in which women's musical utterances can challenge patriarchal structures. More literal performances of gender and subversion happen on stage in real time. As discussed in chapter four, even the most empowered of the participants oscillate between playing the roles of good subject, bad subject and disidentifying subject (Pêcheux). Teresa Gentil explores how gender shapes women's performances to “simultaneously consent to and contest the ‘expected’ behavior for a woman in the music industry”.¹⁶¹ She refers to Koskoff's four main categories of women's musical performances:

(1) performance that confirms and maintains the established social/sexual arrangement; (2) performance that appears to maintain established norms in order to protect other, more relevant values; (3) performance that protests, yet maintains, the order (often through symbolic behavior); and (4) performance that challenges and threatens established order.¹⁶²

Koskoff's theoretical model is strongly aligned to that of Pêcheux. Within the context of this study, it provides a useful analytical tool to explore not only how the participants' musical *performances* have evolved over time, but also how their compositions and recordings of other composers' work reflect the various power dynamics prevalent when and where the works were created. Some of the participants' inclusion of (South African and international) jazz standards and also original compositions inspired by the “masters” on their earlier albums could be viewed as exercises in compliance that allowed them to work within the “established

160. Brauteseth, No. 1.

161. Teresa Maria Marques de Matos Ferreira (Teresa Gentil), ‘More than Singers: Biography, Gender and Agency in the Voices of Four Women Singer-songwriters in Contemporary Portugal’ (Masters thesis, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 2017), 3.

162. Ellen Koskoff, ‘An Introduction to Women, Music, and Culture’, in *Women and Music in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, ed. E. Koskoff (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 10.

social/sexual arrangement” (Koskoff). Playing the music of iconic (mostly male) composers gave them a degree of legitimacy and proved that they could “speak the language” of the greats, whether through bebop or styles established by “father” figures in South African jazz. Although these women initially “paid their dues” by replicating traditionally male blueprints, their renditions of these standards are bookended by album tracks more representative of their unique musical voices. By way of example, Siya’s revolutionary debut album (*Out Of This World*) includes one token composition by another artist, a piece by South African jazz piano icon Bheki Mseleku (whose work also inspired Thandi’s style).¹⁶³ Having ticked the obligatory “tribute” box, Siya devotes the rest of the album to her own sound, transcending the expectations of her detractors. She is also an excellent example of an artist who “uses her body as a means to propel and instill counter-narratives”.¹⁶⁴ In an article about Lady Gaga, Jaime Guzmán argues that disidentifying with the normative during musical performances allow for a shift away from “master narratives, master plans, and events of mastery”¹⁶⁵ that artists feel compelled to follow:

In essence, since we are born into a system that values only the lifestyle that [reiterates] the principles of heteronormativity, we are at times exposed to performances that exist beyond the borders of this normalcy mindset. When performances cannot be identified within this socially constructed umbrella, society calls the perform/ance/er “eccentric,” unconventional, or strange.¹⁶⁶

Drawing on the Butlerian notion of performativity, Guzmán writes:

Since performativity is the rearticulation of the same reiteration of the same performance it can be stated that the power of agency can only be attained through the repetition of the performance – performativity is anything but an accident when used as a critical mode of performance.¹⁶⁷

Vickie Willis in turn argues that jazz is a performative discourse that allows women to challenge patriarchy:

163. Thandi has described the style of Bheki Mseleku as highly influential in the development of her own style (See Monaheng, ‘Exiled/A Call For Healing’). Her work has been likened to that of Mseleku by various writers, including Gwen Ansell who points out their shared “pan-religious vision” and deeply spiritual approach to music (see Ansell, ‘SBYA Thandi Ntuli: messenger of cosmic light’).

164. Jaime Guzmán, ‘You and I: Lady Gaga’s Performative Disidentification of Social Normalcy’, *Colloquy*, Vol. 8 (2012), 55.

165. Ibid, 58.

166. Ibid.

167. Ibid, 63.

In order to speak within the intertwining, over-lapping spaces in jazz, women must write with performance of the body in order to write with the body – women must speak through performing race and/or performing gender, and subverting both to counter the naturalization of jazz as masculine.¹⁶⁸

Some of the participants deliberately “write with their bodies” to counter the ingrained stereotype of the “jazzman”, usually in a suit and tie. Siya, for example, performs her “difference” with great relish, and purposefully manipulates her voice, body, instrument and physical appearance to disrupt gendered and racial stereotypes. In the video “Rain in the Sun”,¹⁶⁹ Siya performs solo, creating layers of sound with her trombone, voice and an effects unit which she uses to loop and digitally manipulate the various layers. The visual presentation is as striking as the music itself, which is at once ancient and futuristic sounding. The combined effect is hypnotic, her body movements obscuring her manipulations of the microphone and effects unit in front of her. Even when she improvises vocally, her physical movements appear as if she is holding the trombone. Her two instruments become parts of the same unique vessel through which musical sound emerges – where one stops, the other takes over. The performance exemplifies Siya’s originality and game-changing hybridism. Although she wears a dress and makeup, she is far removed from the stereotypical jazz songbird hugging a microphone as she balances the perceived “feminine” elements of her performance – her appearance and the fact that she is a vocalist – with traditionally “masculine” coded elements (playing the trombone and making use of digital technology in real time).

The women in this study have – to varying degrees – been silenced by restrictive and masculinist narratives of jazz as sonic expression/aesthetic discourse. Nevertheless, they have performatively actuated spaces where they (and their collaborators) are free to create their own rules, embrace sonic hybridity, and collaborate across various fields without the limitations imposed by traditional conceptions of jazz mastery.

168. Vickie Willis, ‘Be-in-tween the Spa[]ces: The Location of Women and Subversion in Jazz’, *The Journal of American Culture*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (2008), 300.

169. See Siya Makuzeni, ‘Rain in the Sun’, *YouTube* video, posted by ‘Siya Makuzeni’ on 7 May 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CrSEpwIo0bI>

6. Beyond Mastery

Personal motivation

The initial motivation for this study stemmed from my personal frustration with aspects of jazz education in post-apartheid South Africa, in particular the glacial pace of transformation within institutions and the deeply entrenched hierarchies that govern them.¹ As a vocal teacher, I have curated many campus performances that were dismissed as “entertainment”: “It’s lovely”, I was told, “but is it real jazz?” Ironically, when male colleagues presented similarly hybridised programmes, they were lauded for their creativity and innovation. Ansell explains how “jazz faculties often present as boys’ clubs, as well as white clubs”,² a phenomenon that remains true in the majority of tertiary jazz spaces in South Africa. As one of a handful of women (mostly vocal lecturers) who has taught in local university jazz programmes, I can attest to the high levels of gatekeeping and “mansplaining” that continue to preserve gendered narratives of mastery in jazz education.

I have witnessed on the bandstand a similar culture of exclusion, “othering” and often-outright hostility towards women regardless of their musical abilities and experience. As a pianist and vocalist, I have been told to know my place in jazz settings; not graduating with a formal degree in jazz performance or studying with the grand masters of the genre meant that I operated on the margins of “serious” jazz culture. Often, after performances, I have received backhanded compliments like “You play just like a man!” or “You’ve got chops...for a chick!” For two decades, my musical life was deeply entangled within what Butler calls the heterosexual matrix; in jazz, men play the real thing and “chicks” sing songs. Like some of the participants, I too have felt impelled to adopt masculinist discourses and behaviours in order to fit in; in my twenties, I cursed just a little more than usual when I was on the bandstand (sometimes I still

1. South African educational institutions are required to commit to the decolonisation of the curriculum and other transformative practices in order to address inequality and oppression, and to open higher education spaces to knowledge systems, epistemologies and value systems that are accessible and inclusive. Music higher education has been particularly slow in shaking off colonial, outdated and “out-of-touch” regimes (see Mieke Struwig, ‘Surveying Post-Apartheid Decolonisation of the BMus Curriculum at Four South African Tertiary Music Departments’ (Masters thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 2021); Boudina McConnachie, ‘Reshaping our musical values: decolonizing the teaching and curricular frameworks in the Eastern Cape’, *Ethnomusicology Forum*, Vol. 30, No. 1 (2021), 40-51; Gavin Robert Walker, ‘Music Research in a South African Higher Education Institution’, *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (2019), 144-171; Gwen Ansell, ‘South Africa: Improvising the Future of Decolonized Jazz’, *All Africa*, 21 March 2022, accessed 9 January 2023, <https://allafrica.com/stories/202203210346.html>

2. Ansell, ‘Who should teach jazz in South Africa?’

do) and stood aside so the boys could take the “real” solos while I held down the blank canvas on which they could create their masterpieces. Worse still, I told other women to “stop playing like a girl” or to “suck it up” when they were not taken seriously. As such, I acknowledge my complicity in a pernicious master narrative in which women are not only outsiders but also subordinates. This research journey was sparked by my refusal to accept such narratives any longer. I had a story to tell and I knew other women who shared in my frustration and outrage. Their stories needed telling, too. More importantly, they needed to be *heard* and documented.

Methods, limitations and themes

IPA – especially when allied with feminist phenomenology – was a method that would facilitate this process of listening and telling. As discussed in chapter two, I followed the basic tenets of IPA, starting with a relatively small sample size (seven participants).³ The method typically calls for a “fairly homogenous sample”⁴ suggesting an exclusion of racial and generational diversities. However, in the first instance I was interested in the experiences of women from different backgrounds who are currently active in and have achieved high levels of success in various spheres of the South African jazz scene. Determined by the selection criteria outlined in chapter two, my sample comprised three white women (aged 30-50) and four women of colour (aged mid-30s to 40s). While there were some similarities in terms of their musical education for example, there were fewer commonalities in terms of race and geographical location.

As discussed in chapter two, one limitation of this study is the absence of women from religious groups other than Christianity. Women of Asian and Indian descent were also not represented; this warrants further exploration given the rich cultural diversity in South Africa. Another limitation was the absence of participants from other provinces. Building on Ramanna’s work for example, a study on women currently active as jazz musicians in the Durban area could yield fascinating data.

As a researcher who shares several commonalities with the participants, I was able to elicit candid responses to often deeply sensitive questions; this largely enabled me to forego generic/neutral questions in favour of more specific inquiries about how the participants think,

3. Smith, Flowers and Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*, 52.

4. Smith and Shinebourne, ‘Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis’, 75.

feel, speak, and operate as women and as jazz musicians. The idiographic nature of the chosen methodology required in-depth explorations of the participants' individual experiences before searching for patterns or similarities. Thus, it became evident that no two women responded or made sense of their experiences in the same way, regardless of how much they had in common on the surface. There were, however, strong overall themes that emerged; these connections and commonalities or "super-ordinate themes" in the participants' testimonies⁵ include:

- a) The significance of interactions with key adult figures – in particular strong women – during their early musical enculturation and more generally,
- b) Access to supportive powerbrokers on various jazz scenes alongside repeatedly agentic responses to otherwise pervasive structures of race and patriarchy,
- c) The acquisition of dispositions and strategies of empowerment that enabled them to transcend/move beyond gendered narratives of mastery in jazz.

Shifting cultures, shifting strategies

In chapter three I explored how theories of space, place and habitus could provide insights into how the participants operated within and outside of the dominant power structures at home, church and school. However, as discussed in chapter two, the shifting political and social scenes within which the participants developed as women and as jazz musicians meant that a neat single-theory analysis – in this case the concept of habitus as described by Bourdieu or musical habitus as described by Rimmer – would not allow for deep readings of the participants' musical childhoods due to the vastly divergent worlds into which they were born. Had they all been of a similar age and belonged to the same racial group, a Bourdieusian approach may have revealed more commonalities than differences. Such an approach would have yielded very different results, as the focus would have been on the social *structures* of power themselves, rather than the participant's responses to those structures of power. It is true that much of the participants' musical enculturation was inherited/acquired through accident of birth; however, while their musical identities were shaped by societal dynamics, space, place and capital do not account for the presence of key figures at home and at school that often steered them away from what was "expected".

5. Smith, Flowers and Larkin, *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis*, 96.

Chapter four focused on the participants' early professional experiences as jazz musicians and their responses to power dynamics within educational spaces, on the bandstand, and as activists. As in chapter three, it was important to pay close attention to the intersectionality of gender, race, class, and age to better understand the participants' understanding of some of the experiences that shaped their careers. Foucault's notion of power as a capillary force and Pechêux's schema of identification/counter-identification/disidentification offer a useful framework for analysing their responses to narratives of mastery. This approach revealed that their dispositions, actions and beliefs are not static, but flow in multiple directions. Judith Butler explains that, "...in order to maintain one's existence as a subject, one is forced to continuously reiterate socio-historical discourses as the conditions of existence".⁶ Thus virtually all the participants initially operated as "good subjects", capitulating to dominant power structures within formal/educational spaces. This self-subjection to jazz as discourse allowed the participants to attain the levels of mastery required for acceptance into various jazz spaces. Their early career trajectories exemplify Butler's recognition that mastery and submission work simultaneously:

The more a practice is mastered, the more fully subjection is achieved. Submission and mastery take place simultaneously, and it is this paradoxical simultaneity that constitutes the ambivalence of subjection. Where one might expect submission to consist of yielding to an externally imposed dominant order, and to be marked by a loss of control and mastery, it is paradoxically marked by mastery itself ... the lived simultaneity of submission and mastery, and mastery and submission, is the condition of possibility for the subject itself.⁷

However, Butler also recognises that, "Agency exceeds the power by which it is enabled".⁸ Thus, at various tipping points, the participants refused subjection through strategic disidentification: Amanda resumed her pop singing and writing, and later decided to collaborate with international musicians who didn't espouse a "macho" playing style; Shannon rejected competitive and "stress-y" Coltranesque way of playing; Chantal temporarily exited the jazz scene and returned to church music; Siya abandoned formal studies and shook up the music scene by leading a rock-heavy crossover band of young white men, and so forth.

Nomfundo and Thandi were able to travel a less rocky road because of a somewhat improved political and gendered landscape, and a less exclusionary jazz scene. Born on the cusp of the

6. Pikka-Maaria Laine, Susan Meriläinen, Janne Tienari and Eero Vaara, 'Mastery, submission, and subversion: On the performative construction of strategist identity', *Organization*, Vol. 23, No. 4 (2016), 506.

7. Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection* (Stanford University Press, 1997), 116-117.

8. Ibid, 15.

New South Africa, and predisposed to disidentification since childhood, Romy managed to establish herself as a professional jazz musician largely on her own terms. The shifts in jazz culture from which these younger participants have benefitted are also related to shifts in jazz scholarship. Over the past thirty years the development of the New Jazz Studies has seen the creation of new, cross-disciplinary perspectives on jazz history attuned to “the blurriness of jazz categories”⁹ and jazz’s status as a contested, hybridised, internationalized, and pluralist art form. In tandem with the feminist jazz scholarship discussed in chapter two, New Jazz Studies has had a knock-on effect on jazz education.¹⁰ In South Africa, this can be seen in the different ways Nomfundo and Thandi experienced UCT compared to Amanda and Shannon. Local jazz culture continues to expand and hybridise, and women’s presence on the jazz scene is more common than a generation ago.

Playing like a man

In chapter four, a fourth super-ordinate theme – not explicitly addressed in earlier chapters – emerges, relating to the jazz canon and its rootedness in masculinist discourses. As discussed in the introduction to this study, the masculine “backstory” of jazz required the participants to fundamentally change their way of “being in the world” as musicians (and as women) in order to be recognised for their contribution to jazz culture and discourse. In popular discourse but arguably even more so in the academy, jazz is primarily a “male music”¹¹ played by musicians who display technical domination and a grasp of challenging changes at blistering tempos. As discussed in chapter one, Lara Pelegrinelli¹² argues that the qualities women brought from the blues into jazz (e.g., subtlety and expression) were swept aside in favour of virtuosity, particularly instrumental and harmonic skill, dexterity and prowess.¹³ Unsurprisingly, several participants expressed feelings of intimidation or frustration regarding bebop as an enforced language within educational spaces and the division between “schooled” jazz musicians and self-taught/community jazz musicians. From their testimony, it became evident that those who are able to prove their mastery of (and ability to exceed) the skills passed down by prominent

9. Sherrie Tucker, ‘Deconstructing the Jazz Tradition: The “Subjectless Subject” of New Jazz Studies’, in *Jazz/Not Jazz: The Music and Its Boundaries*, ed. David Ake, Charles Hiroshi Garrett and Daniel Goldmark (University of California Press, 2012, e-book), 420.

10. See Ken Prouty, ‘Jazz Education: Historical and Critical Perspectives’, in *The Routledge Companion to Jazz Studies* (Routledge, 2018), 45-53.

11. Ramanna, ‘Experiences of belonging and exclusion’, 277.

12. See Pelegrinelli, ‘Separated at birth’.

13. See Ramanna, ‘Experiences of belonging and exclusion’, 278.

mentors and idols have easier access to professional networks. Julietta Singh argues that mastery is traditionally a “mode of relational being” that hinges on impulses to master, control, or subjugate.¹⁴ She explains that:

...there is an intimate link between the mastery enacted through colonization and other forms of mastery that we often believe today to be harmless, worthwhile, even virtuous. To be characterized as the master of a language, or a literary tradition, or an instrument, for instance, is widely understood to be laudable. Yet as a pursuit, mastery invariably and relentlessly reaches toward the indiscriminate control over something—whether human or inhuman, animate or inanimate. It aims for the full submission of an object—or something *objectified*—whether it be external or internal to oneself.¹⁵

The notion that “full submission” is a prerequisite to mastery resonates with Paul Berliner’s description of jazz improvisation as not only an acquired skill, but as a “way of life”:¹⁶

Jazz improvisation is not merely a process by which musicians create a record album or an evening’s performance. It is a particular artistic way of going through life.¹⁷

While I agree that being a jazz musician is more than a profession, I challenge Berliner’s suggestion that *all* jazz musicians can move “through life” in such a singular, artistic way. Berliner argues that the life of a jazz musician is dedicated to the “unrelenting artistic demands of a jazz career and to a particular orientation to the world of musical imagination characteristic of jazz community members”.¹⁸ To become fluent in the art form requires “total immersion in the music’s language”. In addition, Berliner describes jazz musicians’ “constant preoccupation with musical ideas and notions of creativity”¹⁹ that sees them rehearsing, creating, improvising and conceptualising music anywhere and at any time. I posit that this rather utopian and Merleau-Pontyesque way of “being in the world” is not necessarily possible for women who pursue jazz careers.

As discussed in chapter two, Iris Young’s concept of “throwing like a girl” challenges Merleau-Ponty’s notion of the (neutral) lived body as “pure fluid action”.²⁰ In turn, Simone De Beauvoir takes issue with Sartre’s belief that anyone can transcend the facticities of their situation,

14. Justyna Poray-Wybranowska review of ‘Julietta Singh, *Unthinking Mastery: Dehumanism and Decolonial Entanglements* (Duke University Press, 2018)’, in *Contemporary Women’s Writing*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2019), 112-113.

15. Singh, *Unthinking Mastery*, 9-10.

16. Berliner, *Thinking in jazz*, 486.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Gardiner, ‘Hannah and her sisters’, 298-299.

arguing that ingrained social rules/narratives/frameworks relegate women to a position of subordination. Transposing Young's concept of "throwing like a girl" to jazz performance, "playing like a girl"²¹ is an equally limiting and discriminatory narrative, perpetuated by men to assert their dominance in the field of jazz. One of the recurring themes in this study is the conundrum of being a girl and feeling compelled to "play like a man". For the majority of participants, playing like a man meant mastering bebop and engaging in aggressive, hyper-masculine displays of power. This mode of expression was the only accepted currency that enabled the participants to join the league of "serious" jazz musicians occupying positions of power in tertiary spaces and on the bandstand.

Whereas playing like a girl is problematic, singing like a girl is accepted because it does not disrupt power dynamics on stage. Erin Wehr explains:

Jazz is about finding your own sound, and finding individuality in musical expression. If a girl turns away from the masculine approach in an attempt to play in her own voice, then she is threatened by the possibility of "playing like a girl"...If a woman plays like a man, she is too aggressive and stereotyped as an iron maiden. If a woman plays like a woman, she is too effeminate to be taken seriously, and stereotyped as a pet or mother. If a singer, she is likely viewed in the seductress role, and valued for her looks rather than her musical contribution...²²

In an article on Mary Lou Williams, Kimberly Teal writes:

I argue that the two poles of the myth of Mary Lou Williams, twenty-first-century culture hero, are "master jazz composer-instrumentalist" and "woman," because those are indeed largely conflicting ideas in the context of jazz culture. Because the myth of Williams contains both of these traits, her status as a culture hero can be used to paint a picture of a present and past version of a jazz world that embraces and celebrates the contributions of diverse artists, women included.²³

Simultaneously being a "master jazz composer-instrumentalist" and being a woman has proved challenging especially for those participants who are mothers. Not only is it near-impossible to live Berliner's "jazz life", moving freely where and when inspiration strikes but there is an assumption that motherhood signals the end of an individual's career as a composer/performer. Shannon, Chantal and Siya have proved that their best work was indeed created after becoming parents, albeit after a hiatus of sorts.

21. See Biddy Healey, 'Be a good girl or play like a man: why women aren't getting into jazz', *Biddy Healey*, 1 August 2016, accessed 23 August 2021, <https://biddyhealey.com/blog/2016/6/18/be-a-good-girl-or-play-like-a-man>

22. Wehr, Erin L. 'Understanding the experiences of women in jazz: A suggested model', *International Journal of Music Education*, 34, No. 4 (2016), 479.

23. Teal, 'Mary Lou Williams as Apology', 3.

On the practical side, everyday life for many women – especially those who are mothers – is largely occupied by more mundane duties, domestic or otherwise. The level of bracketing off from everyday life that Berliner describes is an ideal rather than an attainable goal: in chapter four, Shannon, Chantal and Siya all alluded to time as a scarce commodity as they navigate multiple roles. More importantly, being a parent affects how *others* view their ability to work, often resulting in them being overlooked for jobs. On a more theoretical level, it can also be argued that the “real” jazz musician – the one who is entirely immersed in the genre to the exclusion of all else – is more likely to be a man, someone able to devote *his* life to mastering the language of jazz.

Performing jazz, performing gender

Through their music and their commentary on it, the participants in this study recognise that discourses of mastery are not merely patriarchal but that they also converge with colonialist regimes of truth. In chapter five I offer an additional layer of analysis by exploring the musical compositions and performances that the participants themselves identified as relevant and important to their experiences of jazz, gender and power in South Africa. These excerpts reveal new insights into how the participants’ lived experiences are articulated in their music and their physical performances. In addition to sharing the participants’ “musical testimonies”, I was particularly interested in how their physical representation/appearance (e.g. on album covers) correlated with their music and the lived experiences they shared. Analysing these silences and listening to the “unspoken” is in line with IPA and feminist phenomenology; more in-depth studies of the album covers and/or other promotional images of women working in professional jazz could warrant studies in their own right.

Over the last few decades, figures like Terri Lyne Carrington, Ingrid Jensen, Cyrille Aimée, Nubya Garcia, Melissa Aldana, and Yazz Ahmed have begun to enjoy greater visibility than their foremothers, albeit still not to the same level as their male contemporaries. Unlike their celebrated contemporary Robert Glasper,²⁴ they use their power to contest patriarchy rather than perpetuate it. The participants in this study similarly use their respective platforms to fight oppressive power and challenge received notions of “mastery”. Amanda is creating more inclusive spaces in jazz education; Shannon works with adolescent girls and boys to dismantle

24. See chapter one (Berliner, ‘An open letter’).

– at source – ingrained binaries and violent gendered hierarchies; Chantal is committed to women-centered research and composition that disrupts colonial narratives; Siya continues to flip the script in terms of what South African women of colour can/should sound like; Nomfundo uses her MBA to teach young people how to engage with jazz as a field of production; and Thandi's albums drive powerful messages of feminism and decolonialism. Despite being a reluctant role model, Romy represents a powerful new figure in South African jazz: a woman largely unfettered by institutional, cultural and gendered narratives.

The participants' testimonies reveal their responses to various forms of patriarchy and power, but also their ever-shifting understanding of mastery. While existing theoretical frameworks are useful as a starting point towards analysing the interplay of jazz, gender and power in their musical lives, more research is needed. This is particularly true in terms of musical analysis as this study only allowed for a cursory look at their compositions. Rather than providing definitive findings, my hope is that this study will lay the groundwork for future research that will contribute to feminist jazz studies, but also jazz studies overall. Much can be learned from the participants' testimonies and their music itself. Through their intensely hybridised music, their groundbreaking work as educators/activists, and their astute self-presentation and self-management of their careers, they espouse a pluralism that refuses the "Same-Other" binarism upon which mastery depends. Discursively and performatively moving beyond mastery, they call on us as listeners, students, and fellow musicians to do the same.

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Appendix A

(1) “Consideration” (Amanda Tiffin)

Vocal solo (original transcription K. Kelderman, adapted by author)

SAMBA ♩ = 116

49 $Gm\frac{6}{9}$ $Am7(b5)$ D^7 $Gm\frac{6}{9}$ $Am7(b5)$ $D^7_{ALT.}$

53 $Gm\frac{6}{9}$ $Am7(b5)$ $D^7_{ALT.}$ Eb^7 Eb^7 $D^7_{ALT.}$

57 $Gm\frac{6}{9}$ $Am7(b5)$ $D^7_{ALT.}$ $Gm\frac{6}{9}$ $Am7(b5)$ $D^7_{ALT.}$

61 $Gm\frac{6}{9}$ $Am7(b5)$ Eb^7 Eb^7 $D^7_{ALT.}$

65 $Ebmaj7(\sharp 11)$ // // //

69 $Bbmaj7$ // // //

73 $Abmaj7(\sharp 11)$ // $Bbmaj7$ //

77 $A7(\flat 9)$ $D7^{ALT.}$

81 $Gm\flat 9$ $Am7(\flat 5)$ $D7^{ALT.}$ $Gm\flat 9$ $Am7(\flat 5)$ $D7^{ALT.}$

85 $Gm\flat 9$ $Am7(\flat 5)$ $D7^{ALT.}$ $E\flat 7$ $E\flat 7$ $D7^{ALT.}$

89 $Gm\flat 9$ $Am7(\flat 5)$ $D7^{ALT.}$ $Gm\flat 9$ $Am7(\flat 5)$ $D7^{ALT.}$

93 $Gm\flat 9$ $Am7(\flat 5)$ $E\flat 7$ $E\flat 7$ $D7^{ALT.}$

97 $E\flat maj7(\sharp 11)$

101 $B\flat maj7$

Vocal solo from "Consideration" (cont.)

105 $A\flat maj7(\sharp 11)$ $\%$ $B maj7$ $\%$

109 $A7(\flat 9)$ $\%$ $D7_{ALT.}$ $\%$

113 $Gm\flat 9$ $Am7(\flat 5)$ $D7_{ALT.}$ $Gm\flat 9$ $Am7(\flat 5)$ $D7_{ALT.}$

117 $Gm\flat 9$ $Am7(\flat 5)$ $D7_{ALT.}$ $E\flat 7$ $E\flat 7$ $D7_{ALT.}$

121 $Gm\flat 9$ $Am7(\flat 5)$ $D7_{ALT.}$ $Gm\flat 9$ $Am7(\flat 5)$ $D7_{ALT.}$

125 $Gm\flat 9$ $Am7(\flat 5)$ $E\flat 7$ $E\flat 7$ $D7_{ALT.}$

129 $E\flat maj7(\sharp 11)$ $\%$ $\%$ $\%$

Vocal solo from "Consideration" (cont.)

Vocal solo from “Consideration” (cont.)

161 Ebmaj7(#11) % % %

165 Bbmaj7 % % %

169 Abmaj7(#11) % Bbmaj7 % 3

173 A7(b9) % D7ALT. %

The image shows a musical score for a vocal solo. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff starts at measure 161 with a key signature of two flats and a chord of Ebmaj7(#11). The second staff starts at measure 165 with a key signature of one flat and a chord of Bbmaj7. The third staff starts at measure 169 with a key signature of two flats and a chord of Abmaj7(#11), followed by a key signature change to one flat and a chord of Bbmaj7. The fourth staff starts at measure 173 with a key signature of one flat and a chord of A7(b9), followed by a key signature change to no sharps or flats and a chord of D7ALT. The score includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and rests, as well as repeat signs.

Vocal solo from “Consideration” (cont.)

(2) “Connected” (Amanda Tiffin)

In “Connected”, Amanda expresses her deep connection with the musical styles of Zimbabwe and South Africa; as a white woman with a classical piano (and later jazz) background, her treatment of the piano to “sound mbira-esque”¹ is another example of how Amanda subverts cultural and gendered stereotypes:

OPEN

Ebmin African pentatonic interaction -
kinda mbira style

The image shows a musical score for a piano introduction. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff starts with a key signature of two flats and a 4/4 time signature. The second staff starts with a key signature of one flat and a 4/4 time signature. The score includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and rests, as well as repeat signs. A text box labeled 'OPEN' is placed above the first staff. A text box labeled 'Ebmin African pentatonic interaction - kinda mbira style' is placed below the first staff.

Piano introduction, “Connected” (A. Tiffin), bar 1-4

The solo section moves into a South African mbaqanga groove featuring a sax solo by Shannon Mowday. Whilst the overall feel and initial harmonic progression (I-IV-V) are typical of the style, the alternating time signatures between the bars are not. Both women are unlikely

1. Tiffin, E-mail, 20 June 2022.

performers of these styles (traditionally performed by black South African men), yet they form an important part of their respective musical identities:

Vamp for solos (normal time)
E Mbaqanga style

67 A A/C# D E7sus F#m A/C# D E7sus

71 A Eb7 D C#7 F#m F#m/E Dm7 G7

Vamp for solos, “Connected” (A. Tiffin), bar 67-74

(3) “Just Today” (Amanda Tiffin)

A Voice & Trombone only
Piano tacet:
(trombone cue)

A' Voice:

Excerpt from “Just Today” (A. Tiffin): two-part introduction originally written for voice and trombone. The recording discussed in chapter five features a bass clarinet, played by Shannon Mowday.

Appendix B

“Courtney” (Shannon Mowday)

COURTNEY

SHANNON MOWDAY

♩ = 60

ALTO SAX

PIANO

BASS

VOICE

A- E/G# F/F# D-/Bb

A- E/G# F/F# D-/Bb

A- 2ND TIME E/G# F/F# D-/Bb

LIT-TLE GIRL WITH YOUR BIG BROWN EYES I HOPE THEY CLOSED QUITE

4 F#b7b13/Ab F/Gb EbΔ13#11 DbΔ7#11 Gb-11 Db- Gb-11

E7b13/G# F/F# EbΔ13#11 C#Δ7#11 F#-11 C#- F#-11

A. SAX.

PNO.

BASS

VOICE

E-AR LY THAT DAY IN MAY, SO YOU COULD DREAM FAIR-IES AND

“Courtney” (Shannon Mowday): the recording discussed in chapter five does not include Shannon’s lyrics as shown here.

2

8

A. SAX.

PNO.

BASS

VOICE

Chords: Db-, Gb-11, Db-, Gb-11, Db-

Chords: C#-, F#-11, C#-, F#-11, C#-

Chords: C#-, F#-11, C#-, F#-11, C#-

Lyrics: BUT-TER FLIES WOULD TAKE__ YOU WHERE LIT-TLE GIRLS ALL LAUGH AND PLAY, JUST

17 $G\flat_{-11}$ $D\flat$ $G\flat_{-11}$ $D\flat$ 3

A. SAX. $F\sharp_{-11}$ $C\sharp$ $F\sharp_{-11}$ $C\sharp$

PNO. $F\sharp_{-11}$ $C\sharp$ $F\sharp_{-11}$ $C\sharp$

BASS $F\sharp_{-11}$ $C\sharp$ $F\sharp_{-11}$ $C\sharp$

VOICE

LET YOUR EYES JUST SEE LOVE... SO PURE, AS YOU ARE

21 $G\flat_{-11}$ $D\flat$ $A\flat^9$ $A\flat^{(No\ 3)}$ SOLOS ON FORM (1ST END)

A. SAX. $F\sharp_{-11}$ $C\sharp$ $A\flat^9$ $A\flat^{(No\ 3)}$

PNO. $F\sharp_{-11}$ $C\sharp$ $A\flat^9$ $A\flat^{(No\ 3)}$

BASS $F\sharp_{-11}$ $C\sharp$ $A\flat^{(No\ 3)}$

VOICE

COURT - NEY

“Courtney” (cont.)

Appendix C

(1) “Rush Hour” (Chantal Willie-Petersen)

After visiting New York City on her first tour with Zap Mama (Ancestry in Progress Tour, 2003), Chantal composed and recorded the track “Rush Hour”¹ with her own band (Rainbow Rhythms) in Belgium. The track is an early example of Chantal’s synthesis of the highly varied musical influences that shaped her style (gospel/R&B, traditional jazz, and classical orchestration). The arrangement evokes the sound of big city orchestrated chaos and is an early example of her affinity for unconventional time signatures and rhythmic complexity. Chantal’s agile double bass playing is prominent throughout the performance and, instead of merely providing a harmonic foundation, adds rhythmic and melodic interest.

(2) Colour of my Shade (Chantal Willie-Petersen)

In “Colour of my Shade”,² Chantal addresses racism, but also subtly performs gender in how she presents her message. During the introduction, she chooses to speak rather than sing: instead of shouting and embodying the much-maligned “angry black woman”, she delivers her scathing message in a quiet tone, joined by soprano sax and sparse piano accompaniment:

*The colour of my shade – or was it the shade of my colour
That mattered?
And you rationalize and you intellectualize
And you’re defined and you’re described by many, many things
And as you ponder and you think about many things
Will time explain what I denied
I will never understand the racist poetry that our history demands
This insane philosophy, this cheap sociology
Something simple, like the colour of my shade
And yet you decide to define... what?
So many things, so many things
Colour?*

*Will time explain what I denied
I will never understand the racist poetry that our history demands
This insane philosophy, this cheap sociology
And you rationalize and you intellectualize
All these things
As I’m constantly described by and defined by many, many things
That are outside the judgement or control of my world
He said... what?*

1. Chantal Willie-Petersen Sextet (Rainbow Rhythms), ‘Rush Hour’, web audio player, *Chantal Willie-Petersen*, <https://chantalwillie-petersen.com>

2. Chantal Willie-Petersen, ‘Colour of my Shade’, web audio player, *Chantal Willie-Petersen*, <https://chantalwillie-petersen.com>

*And you rationalize and you intellectualize
 And you say what?
 As if you have any idea what it is to be judged by things that you do not know
 That you are not even interested in trying to get to know
 Something simple, something vague, something so opaque
 Something that you think you've seen
 Colour?*

Musical score for "Colour of my Shade" (bars 1-15). The score is in 7/8 time and features a piano accompaniment. The key signature has five flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat, D-flat, G-flat). The piece begins with a sustained Ebmin11 chord in the right hand and a repetitive double bass line in the left hand. The score is divided into measures 1 through 15. Measure 15 ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

“Colour of my Shade”, bar 1-15 (C. Willie-Petersen)

The piece is written in 7/8 and begins with a rhythm section vamp over a sustained Ebmin11 chord. The repetitive double bass line played by Chantal remains prominent throughout and is

built on an Eb minor pentatonic scale. As in “Rush Hour”, Chantal makes use of a small horn section: here, it plays a distinctive ascending chromatic passage that returns after each solo.

Her voice is multi-tracked, and her vocalising and murmuring in the background creates the illusion of several internal voices speaking simultaneously. The spoken phrases in the foreground are reminiscent of iconic Nigerian-born vocalist, composer and bandleader Sade Adu, whose albums have blurred the lines between “world music”, smooth jazz, R&B and pop since the 1980s (much like Zap Mama’s Belgian-Congolese leader Marie Daulne, who undoubtedly had an influence on Chantal’s performance style).

Appendix D

“New Age” (Siya Makuzeni)

INTRO ♩ = 85

TRUMPET $E_b(Add4)/Ab$ $Ab\ maj7$ Em $F\#m$ G Bm

T. SAXOPHONE LOOP UNTIL CUE

TROMBONE LOOP UNTIL CUE

2 $D^6(omit3)/A$ $B7(SUS4)/E$ $E^9(omit3)$ E/B $B7(\#5)/A$ $G7(\#5omit3)$

TPT.

T. SAX.

TBN.

3 **ON CUE**

V. E - V'RY DAY I

A

4 $E_b(Add4)/Ab$ $Ab\ maj7$ Em $F\#m$ G Bm

V.

WAKE UP, _____ BRIGHT AND EAR-LY MOR - NING, _____ REA - DY TO FACE
CO - VER. _____ REACH IN - TO MY SOUL NOW. _____ WHERE DO I GO_

Lead sheet with horn parts, “New Age” (S. Makuzeni, transcription by author and K. Ferguson)

5 $D^6(\text{omit3})/A$ $B7(\text{sus4})/E$ $E^9(\text{omit3})$ E/B $B7(\sharp5)/A$ $G7(\sharp\text{somit3})$

V.

— THE BAT-TLES THAT HAVE DAWNED IN. — AND THOUGH THERE WILL BE
— WHICH WAY WILL FIND ME SO - LICE? SO E - V'RY DAY I

6 $E^b(\text{add4})/A^b$ $A^b\text{maj}7$ E^m $F\sharp^m$ G B^m

V.

BAT - TLES. — THERE IS AL-WAYS TROU - BLE. — REA - DY TO SOW
WON - DER. — OUT IN - TO THE NEW WORLD. — HO - PING MY SOUL

7 1. $D^6(\text{omit3})/A$ $B7(\text{sus4})/E$ $E^9(\text{omit3})$ E/B $B7(\sharp5)/A$ $G7(\sharp\text{somit3})$

V.

— THE SEEDS OF MY RE-DEMP - TION — I'M LOOK-ING TO DIS-

2. $D^6(\text{omit3})/A$ $B7(\text{sus4})/E$ $E^9(\text{omit3})$ E/B $B7(\sharp5)/A$ $G7(\sharp\text{somit3})$

8 $D^6(\text{omit3})/A$ $B7(\text{sus4})/E$ $E^9(\text{omit3})$ E/B $B7(\sharp5)/A$ $G7(\sharp\text{somit3})$

V.

(SOUL) WILL DELVE IN - TO THE NEW AGE. —

8

9 $E^b(\text{add4})/A^b$ $A^b\text{maj}7$ E^m $F\sharp^m$ G B^m

V.

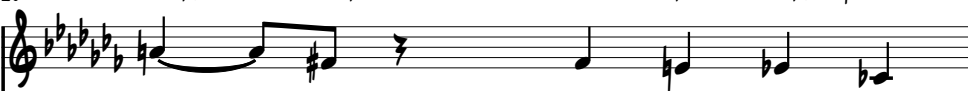
FIND YOUR WAY TO YOUR OWN

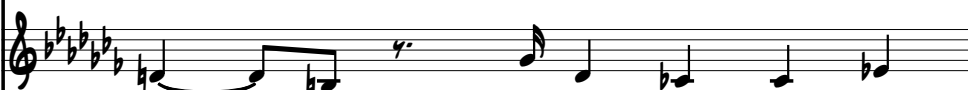
TPT.

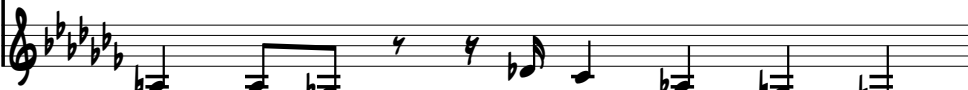
SAX.

“New Age” (cont.)

10 $D^b(omit3)/A$ $B^7(sus4)/E$ $E^9(omit3)$ E/B $B^7(\sharp5)/A$ $G^7(\sharp5omit3)$

V.  TOUR - NEY LIVE WITH YOUR AM -

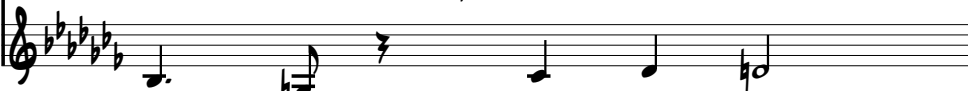
TPT. 

T. SAX. 

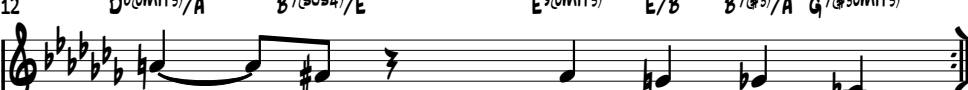
11 $E^b(add4)/Ab$ $Abmaj7$ Em $F\sharp m$ G Bm

V.  SI - TIONS NEW AGE RIGHT BE -

TPT. 

T. SAX. 

12 $D^b(omit3)/A$ $B^7(sus4)/E$ $E^9(omit3)$ E/B $B^7(\sharp5)/A$ $G^7(\sharp5omit3)$

V.  FORE — YOU FULL OF WON - DER

TPT. 

T. SAX. 

“New Age” (cont.)

13 ^{2.} D⁶(omit3)/A B7(SUS4)/E E⁹(omit3) E/B B7(#5)/A G7(#5omit3) JUMP TO **A**

V. FORE YOU E - V'RY DAY I

TPT.

T. SAX.

The musical score is for three parts: Voice (V.), Trumpet (TPT.), and Tenor Saxophone (T. SAX.). The key signature has four flats (Bb, Eb, Ab, Db). The music is in 4/4 time. The Voice part has lyrics 'FORE YOU' and 'E - V'RY DAY I'. The Trumpet and Tenor Saxophone parts play a melodic line. The score includes a 'JUMP TO A' instruction with a boxed 'A'.

“New Age” (cont.)