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Mapping Music and Musicking in Southern Africa

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Introduction
In this essay I wish to introduce my research, which maps music and musicking in Southern Africa. I shall begin by describing some of the impulses that inspire me; then provide examples of recent music mapping projects that have been conducted.

My postdoctoral research project, housed at Africa Open Institute for Music, Research and Innovation, Stellenbosch University, proposes the mapping of ‘music’ and ‘musicking’ in Southern Africa as a long-term goal. My project designs and implements a mapping tool that collects data on music and musicking. Such data synergises into networks of research and sound curation amidst a sensitivity for societal change. The data harvesting tool and data storage tool are planned to be in accessible, sustainable and collaborative formats.

Impulses in my sensing-doing-thinking-being musicianship
I’d like to mention three impulses that I consider central to my work as musician-researcher. These impulses have reverberations and echoes in my practice.

1. A first impulse to my work is a sense of ‘risk’, as explicated on by Homi Bhabha at his plenary lecture at a conference of the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes held in Cape Town in 2017. Bhabha (2017) pointed out three aspects on risk when he stated that: ‘Risk is ontological (a state of being); risk is epistemological (a way of asking questions) and risk is ethical (thereby demanding decision-taking for better futures).’

2. A second impulse is derived from the notion of an ethical being-human. This impulse incorporates decolonial aestheSis (Mignolo 2012; 2013) as a way of being-artist in the world. Decolonial thinker Walter Mignolo proposes that as artists we instigate projects of decolonial aestheSis, thereby connecting sensing-doing-thinking-being to work from wounds
Decolonial aestheSis strives for creative linking and delinking options of different-being in a pluriversal world.

3. A third impulse is one of what I call enmeshment as a way of knowing. From having worked in artistic research in music I probe the enmeshment of theory and practice, towards finding knowledges that emerge when practice and theory are integrated (Pauw 2015a).

In these impulses I am keenly reminded of how piercing, immediate and important the medium is I work in and on. I am also aware of the capacities for complex layering that music is able to carry. The impulses mentioned above can be summarised with the question: How does music matter? Rephrased as a curatorial question, we could ask: How do our sound exhibitions matter? I use ‘sound exhibition’ here to refer to a broad consideration of what we do as musicians, whether on stages, in teaching studios, on sidewalks, in administrative offices, in publications, and so forth.

When I map sound in this Southern locality, such a mapping activity cannot be pastorally-entertaining, objective or pure, just as the sound of the (classical) flute that I play is not only ‘pastoral’, ‘objective’, ‘objective’ or ‘pure’ (Pauw 2015b). Instead, mapping sounds and sounding practices may be tantamount to mapping signs of warning. Conversely, a map may also indicate options and openings to invite change, flux, creolisation and an understanding of being human. A map is not only a collection of features. Instead, a map shows why things are as they are. I suggest that a map is a vibrant explosion of relations.

**Mapping Music and Musicking in Southern Africa**

My research project asks geographical, quantitative and qualitative questions of ‘where’, ‘how much’, and ‘to what ends’ music and musicking take place in Southern Africa, with mapping heralding the possibility of creating new relational meanings. The notion of a map that draws borders perhaps signals colonial and imperialist control, and hegemony of knowledge, so that limiting my work to signifiers such as Southern Africa, or to Stellenbosch (where I live and work), or to Africa, are potentially harmful. With renewed relationships in
mind I think of a map as ‘border-thinking’,¹⁰ integrated into, and influenced by continental shifts, despite narrowing the map’s contents to a Southern geo-locality. I suggest that this type of mapping strives to be decolonial in its epistemology.

The notions of both product and process—the interconnectedness of these terms—serve as axes for ‘music’ and ‘musicking’. I sense that music as ‘product’ is (amongst many things) a historical Western art-ification, so that music resides in live performances or recorded documents and signs such as compositions, instruments, musicians, ensembles, institutions and informal or formal products for tourists and consumers. Music as ‘process’ is suggested by the notion of musicking, proposed by Christopher Small (1998). For Small the verb extracts the underlying question of ‘what is going on here’ in order to point to processes, both societal and person-based, where agents make music happen. (Small’s inquiry diverges from stage products into front of house processes, to consider humans working with mops and buckets and waste bins as part of the production of music-as-event.) My project investigates traces of music and musicking’s features and relations—recognising the confluence of colonial imprints, local practices, and embeddedness of music as a cultural practice within diverse national and international discourses—as an example of some of these relations.

**Past Music Mapping Projects in South Africa**

‘Mapping’ music and musicking refers to every collating project in the widest sense, be it an encyclopaedia on the music of South Africa (Malan 1979, etc.), a collection of entries on local composers (Klatzow 1987), a chapter that lists and describes the facilitators in ‘South Africa’s music business’ (Shaw 2010, 43-54), a survey of music curriculum aspects (see, for example Sheldon Leal’s (2015) inquiry, which measures music industry demands against music students’ needs by examining BMus courses at tertiary institutions in South Africa), or be it the release of websites and databases such as Pan African Space Station (PASS), or musicinAfrica.net, or music.org.za —the latter of which aimed to voice previously under-valued musicians and practices in South Africa, to name but a few examples. An internet

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¹⁰ The terms ‘border thinking’ and ‘border dwelling’ are used by decolonial scholars to indicate a spectrum of academic engagement and intervention within and around enclaves of disciplinarity. Mignolo (2012, xvi) notes that border thinking requires ‘engaging in conscientious epistemic, ethical, and aesthetical projects’ (emphasis in the original). For a curatorial application of the notion of border thinking through music, see Pauw 2015, 117.
search with data on music and musicking solidifying as a sense of knowledge in the mindset of the person doing the search, can be equated to a music mapping project, although many such searches pertain also to an activity akin to tourism, where geography, sonic practice, consumerism and industry are assimilated.\footnote{Some of these ‘maps’ (or lists) are designed to provide contact details for musicians, groups and institutions, as can be found in the addendums to compilations such as \textit{The Rough Guides to World Music} (Broughton, Ellingham and Trillo (eds.), 1999).}

In order to narrow my project from a sense that ‘everything amounts to mapping’, I focus on mapping that is geo-political (for its agenda related to critical adaptation), rather than mapping that is descriptive (as a tourism activity). To demonstrate this, I refer to a few examples of music-related maps that have been generated by past research from within South Africa. The six types of maps listed below function as examples, rather than as a comprehensive survey.

1. The first is a documentation map of a specified area’s music and dance. An example is that of Patricia Opondo’s video research entitled ‘Cultural and Musical Mapping of Five Townships in Kwa-Zulu Natal’ (1999-2002), in which she documented music and dance over the period 1999 to 2002. Opondo was new to South Africa at the time, and wanted to know what was happening in her immediate vicinity. The information gathered subsequently informed her education practice at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), whereby she still incorporates local specialist musicians and dancers into the teaching of music courses.

2. The second is a map of music research outputs within national boundaries. Christine Lucia’s 2005 survey, of which results were published as ‘Mapping the Field: A Preliminary Survey of South African Composition and Performance as Research’ was intended to evaluate the field of national research. Lucia drew up a mapping of ‘habitus’ (Bourdieu), asking what factors enable the outputs of tertiary music institution appointees to produce performances and composition outputs. Her inquiry was commissioned by the South African National Research Foundation, with this council sensing the need to codify, quantify and qualify research outputs in an
integrated system where publication perhaps consisted of more than the scholarly article.

3. The third type of mapping is related to governance policy, with examples of reports that have been produced, for example, (1) by the Western Cape provincial government’s Tourism department with a focus on the music industry (Ansell, Barnard and Barnard, 2007), (2) on Johannesburg city’s music strategic framework (Shaw and Rodell, 2009), and (3) reports by the national Department of Arts and Culture, Science and Technology (DACST), subsequently renamed the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC), that incorporate music-related aspects. I mention some of these:

(3.1) The South African national government produced the White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage (WPACH) in 1996, based on policy discussions from previous decades (Nawa 2017).

(3.2) The South African national government commissioned the Music Industry Task Team (MITT) in 2001 for an update on the music industry.

(3.3) A revised draft of the 1996 White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage paper is under discussion and ‘examines cultural policy dynamics that either enhance or hamper the fulfilment of national and continental goals of social transformation, poverty reduction, regional integration as well as integration into global development agendas’ (Nawa 2017, 1).

Cultural policy is aligned with strategies such as the The National Development Plan: Vision for 2030 (2011), the African Union’s Agenda 2063 (2014) and United Nations

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12 The report recommended that government support was required to promote Western Cape ‘indigenous’ music as a tourist product through online ‘world music’ markets (2007, 5), in the belief that the ‘Western Cape music industry is a potential earner of significant foreign exchange through online distribution of music to a series of clear niche markets that are distributed globally’ (2007, 7).

13 This report analyses economic drivers of the Johannesburg music industry, with model sectors comprising ‘creators’, ‘enablers’ and ‘revealers’, and ‘facilitators’ as central intersect what does this mean?, to supply ‘consumers’ who ‘guide market taste’ (Shaw and Rodell 2009, 134-7). ‘Key outcomes […] address employment, transformation, skills development, entrepreneurial development, women empowerment, export initiatives and tourism’ (2009, 4), emphasising that ‘industry research and information flow’ (2009, 102) need improvement. I have not been able to determine the successful implementation of the proposed ‘action plan’ (2009, 131). I am also sceptical of the report’s concluding reminder that, in music, ‘what we are actually dealing with [is]: magic…’ (2009, 132).
declarations from United Nations Development Programme (UNDP 2013), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO 2013, 2015) and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD 2015). Economic strategies are integrated into government policy on culture and may signal a somewhat utopian belief that ‘culture’ can operate as South Africa’s ‘golden economy’, amidst unequal resource distribution, as expressed in government communications such as the foreword by Honorary Minister for Arts and Culture Nathi Mthethwa, presented in the conference abstract booklet for the 2nd National South African Cultural Observatory (SACO) conference in 2017 (Mthetwa 2017). In his foreword, the minister refers pertinently to the ‘Mzansi Golden Economy (MGE) Strategy’, a strategy released by the Department of Arts and Culture, and which included the vision of calling into existence a monitoring and analysis body such as the South African Cultural Observatory.

4. A fourth type of mapping is driven by demands for rigorous data collection as a way of producing statistics that help to monitor and evaluate the cultural industry. For this demand, the DAC commissioned the establishment of a body called the South African Cultural Observatory (SACO). SACO, now in its second year, have recently released their Research Agenda for 2017-2020. Perhaps relevant to music, SACO have devised a festival impact evaluator whereby statistics of attendance and spending determine the economic impact of the festival on its immediate host area.¹⁴ It is important to note that SACO is driven by economists, mostly with quantitative approaches, and that ‘development rhetorics’ determine parameters of the so-called ‘cultural industry’ and ‘creative economy’, as demonstrated, for instance, by the titles of SACO’s two conferences, namely ‘Counting Culture’ (SACO 2016), and ‘The Creative Economy and Development: Perspectives from Developed and Emerging Economies’ (SACO 2017). Notions like these alert us to potentially uncritical adoptions of economic evaluation scales that originate from economics as discipline and from the economy of the global North. These are generally based on rhetorics of market scarcity and group exclusivity. Scholars and activists such as

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¹⁴ I have yet to determine whether SACO has undertaken any specific music-focused studies.
Queensland-based Terry Flew (2002; 2011), Leeds-based Justin O’Connor (2010; 2016), the Nesta Provocation written by authors Bakhshi, Hasan and Stuart Cunningham (2016) and, locally, Mike van Graan on the White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage (WPACH) (2016), are notable critical voices.

5. A fifth type of mapping is qualitative in nature, but has similar goals relating to the promotion of music as industry. Examples are the 2010 Moshito/MMINO conference and report (the report on live music circuits was authored by Avril Joffe and Steve Gordon for the research team), as well as Elizabeth O’Connor’s study on Johannesburg live music audiences (2014/2015). These studies inform the two South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) Foundation reports that I discuss below.

6. The South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) Foundation’s research studies, initiated by ConcertsSA, inquire after the workings of the music industry and music heritage, and combine quantitative and qualitative approaches to forge partnerships between business and arts. SAMRO Foundation and ConcertsSA seek partnerships with business, thereby acknowledging the continuum of capital as social, cultural and economic. ConcertsSA produced, under authorship of Ansell and Barnard, a report titled ‘Song Lines: Mapping the South African Live Performance Landscape’ (2013) and another called ‘It Starts with a Heartbeat: Crafting a Model for Live Music Support in Southern Africa’ (2016), authored by Gwen Ansell. Ansell’s report specifically draws on sections of O’Connor’s 2014/2015 study. These reports are disseminated in support of requests for financial backing for the SAMRO Foundation’s live music initiatives.

ConcertsSA’s website is geographical; it telescopes google maps of Southern Africa into details of performance venues that have received SAMRO/ConcertsSA funding. Mapping geographically and quantitatively in this way has increasingly guided support towards under-serviced areas, particularly rural and non-metropolitan areas. Examples are SAMRO’s Mobility Fund, as well as the Arts and Culture Trust’s (ACT) sponsorship of events limited to designated provinces and non-metropolitan areas (http://www.act.org.za/), the latter a separate body from SAMRO.
Some observations that appear to emerge from the examples mentioned:

1. From the variety and scope of mapping projects described, it appears that the music community (and broader ‘culture community’) wants to know ‘what is going on here’.

2. Various stakeholders each have differing aims for undertaking mapping, and these agendas (such as tourism or restitution) may pertain to academe, education, industry or government, or to synergies between these. Impulses towards mapping are somewhat eclectic.

3. Processes of mapping music and musicking are not coordinated nationally or in the wider Southern region. Different bodies are creating their own maps, in a somewhat ad hoc manner, chasing whatever their particular agenda may be.

4. These aspects, together, perhaps point to a system of music and musicking under stress, with increasing systemic collapse resulting in hasty decisions taken for short-term gain. System collapse and hasty decisions result in a configuration whereby music is partnered especially with neo-liberal capitalist popular consumerism. A growing sense of distrust in the power of music and musicking to be critically interventionist may then pervade research, education, live performance, music curation, archiving, music business, music policy, music consumption, and so forth.

5. It may be important to set up theoretical foundations for a mapping project that is long-term, broad, coordinated and based on cooperative networking, and with a concern for the ecology of the local musicking system.

Conclusion

My mapping project has thus far identified the following focus areas:

(1) An initial phase that charts existing ‘musicking maps’ (some of which were mentioned above).

(2) A focus project to collect data on tertiary institutions that present music as a diploma or degree, as well as secondary and primary school music education and education centres.
A focus project to collect data on institutions that present music as performances in professional or semi-professional (ticketed) capacities to publics (orchestra, choir, ensemble, concert society, festival, etc.).

A focus project to collect data outside of institutions and formal performances (street music, music relating to tourism, heritage and museum spaces), including ‘busking’ practices, bars and night clubs with live music for ambience, as well as functional music (churches, gyms, advertisement and ambiance music in industry/travel). Music in support of other programmes or arts (e.g. cultural dance, ballet music, dance music, film music, and national festivity days with music as part of the programme) are also included here.

A focus project to collect data on commercial action, music industry, the recording industry, public broadcasting, etc.

A focus project to collect data on support organisations for music and musicking (financial and structural support, commissioning bodies, etc.).

A focus project to collect data on policy documents of public governance that impact on music practices, acknowledging that culture, arts and heritage does not imply a focus on ‘music alone’.

In this essay I have not addressed directive research questions, nor aspects such as the nature of data packaging, milestones, methods of sustainability, renewability and outcomes to my project. I should emphasise that this is a long term project.

Should this project generate a database, it may ‘become part of a broader collaborative database project. Dr Jürgen May, musicologist at the Richard Strauss Institute in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, and extraordinary professor at Africa Open Institute, is considering possibilities towards the creation and support of a meta-database that will be Southern in its geography, and which will focus on linking music databases under the title of ‘MUSA’ – Music in Southern Africa. Jürgen May hopes to curate a mega-database that is non-hierarchical, participatory, connected to other databases, and is perhaps informed by notions derived from ‘Mobius strip thinking’, where continual intertwining and upending of process and product result in mapping that is not static (Martin and Secour 2014).

I sense that as persons working in the environment of the arts and the humanities, we are sensitive to human change. We note curricular adjustments, morphing culture,
instability, flux and movement, as well as local, continental and global trends. If we are to contribute to critical thinking through our very medium, that is, through sound, then we require data that will help us map diverse, mobile contexts of features and relations. Data—small, or ‘big’—will perhaps reveal the areas that inspire us, as well as those areas that require renewal and remedial interventions.

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South African Cultural Observatory (SACO) and the Department of Arts & Culture (DAC). 2017. ‘National Research Agenda (2017-2020) for research across the arts, culture and heritage (ACH) sectors and the cultural and creative industries (CCIs) of South Africa’.


