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# Framing Performance and 'Fusion'. How Music Venues' Materiality and Intermediaries Shape Music Scenes

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**Résumé :** De quelle façon les performances contribuent à la production collective de valeurs et de sens dans les domaines culturels ? Cet article se concentre sur les lieux qui accueillent les événements musicaux et sur l'encadrement et la mise-en-scène de la musique par les intermédiaires culturels. J'engage un dialogue critique avec l'approche des « cultural pragmatics » dans une perspective bourdieusienne, pour examiner la centralité des conditions de production de la performance dans la structure des scènes musicales, la « fusion » des performances (Alexander, 2004) renvoyant à un moment où les « règles du jeu » des champs culturels (Bourdieu, 1993) sont perpétuées, renforcées ou contestées. Cela met en évidence le rôle des intermédiaires culturels dans cette production des performances, à travers l'interprétation des systèmes de représentation collective. A partir d'une analyse des correspondances multiples (ACM), j'examine d'abord l'organisation et la structure de la scène musicale parisienne à travers l'opposition pur/impur, qui relie des genres musicaux spécifiques à des contextes de performance. Ensuite, j'étudie les pratiques des intermédiaires culturels à Paris dans ce cadre, en pointant le jeu avec les « règles » de la performance, qui vise à cadrer l'expérience musicale des publics. En m'appuyant l'observation ethnographique d'événements dans deux lieux centraux, je montre comment les programmeurs et programmatrices tentent de transformer les « règles du jeu » afin de positionner leurs lieux à l'avant-garde par le mélange d'éléments de mise en scène « purs » et « impurs » dans la performance.

**Mots-clefs :** performance ; musique ; genre musical ; intermédiaires culturels ; fusion ; méthodes mixtes ; ACM

**Abstract:** How do performances contribute to meaning-making processes in cultural fields? This paper focuses on the spaces where performances happen and how music is framed and staged by intermediaries. I engage critically with cultural pragmatics from a Bourdieusian perspective to argue that performance contexts are central to the structure of music scenes, and that fusion may be understood as a moment when the “rules of the game” (Bourdieu, 1993) of a cultural field are enacted, perpetuated, or contested. This points to the role that cultural intermediaries play in shaping performances, interpreting systems of collective representation, and achieving fusion. Drawing on a Multiple Correspondance Analysis (MCA), I analyze how the Parisian music scene is organized and structured by a pure/impure binary linking specific music genres to performance contexts. I also examine how cultural intermediaries in Paris work within this frame, playing with performance “rules” to shape audiences' understandings and experiences of music in particular venues. Drawing on ethnographic observations conducted in two major venues, I show how bookers attempt to transform the “rules of the game” and position their venues as part of the avant-garde by mixing “pure” and “impure” elements of performance during the events.

**Keywords:** performance; music; genre; cultural intermediaries; fusion; mixed-methods; MCA

## Introduction

Music has frequently been at the center of academic debates concerning how taste, distinction, and cultural hierarchies (Bourdieu, 1984) are related consumption practices (Peterson, 1992). However, this line of research overlooks how music is experienced in everyday life (Benzecry, 2011; DeNora, 2000) and very rarely examines live music on stage. Indeed, the sociology of music has been influenced by a “production–consumption paradigm” (McCormick, 2012), and until recently has devoted little attention to performance. As Simon Frith (2007) stated, “live music matters”, not only on an economic level but also as a collective site of meaning-making for audiences and performers alike (Hesmondhalgh, 2007). It forms the very basis of many music scenes.

How do performances contribute to meaning-making processes in cultural scenes? How is meaning in performance influenced by the structure of local scenes? How are musical performances, and the audience’s reception of music, shaped by the people who organize concerts and the spaces where they are staged? Answering these questions requires paying attention to live music’s material context (the types of venues and their architecture) and to the diversity of listening practices. These questions produce fruitful paths for further enquiry, where analysts can examine how these contexts interact with systems of collective representations about music. Furthermore, focusing on music as performance also points to the cultural intermediaries who orchestrate the meeting between audiences and artists and whose role often remains invisible. Not only are these intermediaries gatekeepers; they also shape how music is experienced, appreciated, and understood (Hennion, 2003; Lizé *et al.*, 2011; Negus, 1999; Wynn, 2012).

This paper aims to engage critically with the analysis of music as performance by focusing on the spaces in which performances take place. In addition to emphasizing materiality, it focuses on the way that music is framed and staged within these spaces by

intermediaries. In the first section, I present the theoretical framework that informs my analysis. I discuss how a cultural pragmatic approach to music (McCormick, 2006) as “social performance” (Alexander, 2004) can be fruitfully combined with research on cultural intermediaries and their role in bridging artistic production and reception in artistic fields. Although the strong program in cultural sociology is often presented as incompatible with Bourdieusian field theory (Santoro and Solaroli, 2015), bringing them into conversation opens up new directions in understanding performance fusion, which, as we will see, can be understood as the moment when the “rules of the game” (Bourdieu, 1993) within a field are enacted, perpetuated, or contested. Bridging both theoretical approaches, I analyze the structure of the Parisian music scene, which rests on the pure/impure binary that was previously mobilized to understand performance contexts. In the second section, I examine two cases where intermediaries intend to transform the scene’s rules of the game by playing on the different elements of performance. My analysis emphasizes the role of intermediaries and the structural context surrounding performance fusion.

### **Live music, performance fusion, and cultural fields**

Research about music consumption practices has devoted much attention to the permanence of cultural legitimacy. Often national statistical surveys are used to examine individual preferences for music genres, or attendance at concerts, in order to analyze the changing features—or disappearance—of cultural hierarchies; a considerable number of these surveys study musical omnivorism (Coulangeon, 2003; Friedman et al., 2015; Lizardo and Skiles, 2015; López-Sintas and Katz-Gerro, 2005; Savage and Gayo, 2011). However, researchers have rarely considered how performance shapes these hierarchies within music fields, despite the influence that consumption styles have on the formation of status judgments and the creation of hierarchies between cultural objects (Holt, 1998; Jarness, 2015).

Performance, indeed, remains understudied. It has been argued that sociologists “have understood music either as a *product* of cultural industries and art worlds, or as a *resource* in social action; in both cases the main interest is the social relations surrounding the musical object and its use in social settings, not the properties of the music itself” (McCormick, 2015, p. 21). Contrary to this, Lisa McCormick draws on the strong program’s theory of cultural pragmatics to develop a “performance perspective” on music. In accordance with this perspective, developed by Jeffrey C. Alexander, performance is “the social process by which actors, individually or in concert, display for others the meaning of their social situation” (2004, p. 529). Alexander argues that contemporary, complex societies continue to be permeated by symbolic, ritual-like activities. Although these “ritual-like activities” differ from the rituals performed in earlier societies, their aim remains the same: “to create, via skillful and affecting performance, the emotional connection of audience with actor and text and thereby to create the conditions for projecting cultural meaning from performance to audience” (Alexander, 2011, p. 53). It is only by way of establishing these conditions—of performative fusion—that performances can be considered successful. Performative success rests on the audience’s perception the performance’s authenticity, which, according to Alexander, is achieved through the re-fusion of the basic elements of performance—i.e., systems of collective representations, actors, observers/audience, means of symbolic production, *mise-en-scène*, and social power (see Alexander 2011)—that have been de-fused in complex societies. Re-fusion of all six elements in performance thus appears to be a relatively rare situation, one that can be considered in terms of a short-lived effervescence (in the Durkheimian sense), and which produces a particular type of experience for both the actor and the audience.

This paper engages with Alexander’s cultural pragmatics from a theoretical perspective that draws on Bourdieu’s field theory. These perspectives are often situated in

stark opposition. However, I believe a reexamination of the concept of performative fusion through the lens of cultural fields can serve as a useful heuristic for the further development of a strong program “cultural pragmatic” theory of performance. How can fusion be understood in this sense? Marco Solaroli and Marco Santoro offer two ways forward. Firstly, they argue that “one of the less developed parts of the strong program is precisely a meso-level theory of social organization and of social positioning—exactly what field theory can offer” (2015, p. 65). Secondly, they point to the role Alexander gives to critics in the interpretation, evaluation, and consecration of performative fusion, and emphasize how this resembles the role that cultural intermediaries play in cultural fields. I develop these ideas and point to potential compatibilities in these lines of research by drawing on emphasizing the notion of “fusion.” According to Bourdieu (1993), cultural fields are relatively autonomous social spaces characterized by specific “rules of the game.” In a cultural field, the “rules of the game” are not dictated by the social or the economic; they are refracted according to the specific cultural rules that structure the field. Agents within the field compete to achieve recognition and impose their conception of cultural legitimacy, and their positions differ depending on their amount of capital, which is specific to each field.

How can the concept of fusion be understood within this theory of fields? If performance re-fusion denotes a short-lived effervescence that enables the reenactment of meaning and collective representations, it could be understood as a moment when the field’s “rules of the game” are represented and embodied, whether that is for their enforcement or their contestation. This would mean that, from a field perspective, a fused social performance would draw on the systems of collective representations that structure the field. These representations can be supported by those who are dominant in the field to uphold their position. Subordinate social groups, in turn, may draw on these same systems of collective representation in their struggle to upturn existing hierarchies. In the music field, a fused

performance would thus not just be a “good concert” but a musical event that brings together the field’s rules and values such that it affects its agents’ positions and symbolic capital.

To examine “fusion” from this perspective, this paper examines diverse music venues showcasing all music genres in Paris, including auditoriums, classical music halls, operas, musical bars, clubs, jazz clubs, cabarets, and squats. Although I do not strictly conceive of the Parisian live music scene as a field in Bourdieu’s terms, I draw on his approach to define it as a relational space in which specific meanings about music derive from performance contexts, agents’ positions, and capital. This space is relational because venues represent competing opportunities for audiences to listen to music, or for presenters to book artists in a geographically-defined scene.

#### *Looking for cultural intermediaries in the fusion of performance*

Having established how fusion can be conceptualized within a field-oriented theory, the next question to address is who makes performance fusion happen within these fields. Alexander has emphasized the role of critics, who “provide public judgments before lay members of the public, and even other artists [...]. The effect, in a large and complex society, is not just to offer an evaluation but to create a context for its reception” (Alexander, 2011, p. 213). It could be added that some critics also have the power to recognize, or evaluate, whether or not a performance is fused. Furthermore, other intermediaries contribute to the fusion of the performance by shaping its conditions and by framing how the actors and the audience interpret the performance, including the systems of collective representation at play.

Most research places the audience on one side and the artists on the other, overlooking the cultural intermediaries who organize performances in complex, differentiated societies where culture has become professionalized. One notable exception is Howard Becker’s (1982) work on the cooperation between networks of diverse groups to create art. Recent

work on cultural intermediaries in diverse artistic fields also shows how they participate in artistic legitimation (Bielby and Roussel, 2015; Jeanpierre and Roueff, 2014; Lizé et al., 2014). Drawing on Bourdieu's theory of cultural legitimacy, which entails a structural homology between the social space and the cultural field, Roueff (2013) suggests that cultural intermediaries are the "magicians" who create this homology, linking specific audiences to specific works of art. This homology evolves as a result of transformations in the social structure and artistic fields, as well as through the work of cultural intermediaries. Bookers are especially important. They assess the suitability of artists for a stage by considering their music and the venue's artistic preferences, as well as the size of the venue and expected attendance rates within a geographic locale.

Cultural intermediaries are thus central to the meaning-making process in performance. Whereas some intermediaries, such as critics, are more important on the reception side, others, such as bookers in music venues, contribute to the preparation of performance. However, as Roueff (2013) points out, Bourdieu rarely considered how the latter bring together artists and audiences. The same can be said of Alexander's (Solaroli and Santoro, 2015) research. How do these intermediaries shape the way systems of collective representations appear in social performance? As we will see, they play on the interaction between musical scripts, the venues' material layout, and the different listening practices linked to specific music genres within a field defined by its own "rules of the game."

#### *"Pure" versus "impure:" performance and material listening contexts and practices*

Looking at the cultural intermediaries' role (and more specifically, the bookers) in performance fusion redirects our attention to how performances are shaped to influence audience reception. It is through the material context and listening practices that bookers



influence which frameworks are brought to bear in a performance. These frameworks rest on the systems of collective representation that organize the field and its “rules of the game.”

Performance context and practices have been seldom investigated in a Bourdieusian sense. Research has focused on the permanence of hierarchies between cultural products rather than on how cultural objects are (re)presented and consumed. In contrast, by emphasizing the importance of the different elements of performance, cultural pragmatics draws our attention to the *mise-en-scène* of the performance and its means of symbolic production:

[M]usical texts cannot completely determine meaning because they are never performed in a vacuum. Rather, they are enacted in particular contexts, such as a religious service, a gala or a subway platform. The social setting introduces its own set of collective representations, which may or may not be congruent with those evoked through the scripts, and the interaction between these symbolic frameworks shapes the musical experience for both the performer and the audience. (McCormick, 2015, p. 23)

By exploring how bookers work to shape performance contexts and practices, I build on this insight and contribute thereby to a richer understanding of the conditions for psychological identification and cultural extension—or fusion—between text, actors, and audiences.

Work by scholars such as Simon Frith focuses on the material and embodied dimension of performance in live music. Frith, for example, analyzes the sound, performance, and packaging conventions as well as the embodied values that “determine how musical forms are taken to convey meaning and value, which determine the aptness of different sorts of judgment, which determine the competence of different people to make assessments” (1996, p. 95). In his analysis, Frith emphasizes that these conventions and practices vary depending on the music genre. Indeed, objects and materiality in music venues shape listening practices and embody cultural structures, thereby distinguishing genres: the seats in an Opera house materialize silent and seated listening, whereas the glasses people drink from on the dancefloor, sometimes plastic ones crushed by many raving feet, seem to point to the functional, leisurely aspect of nightclubs. Even the venues’ architecture differs—their walls,

stairs, bars, do not enable the same consumption of music, and do not give it the same meaning.

Given these reflections on the different “genre rules” of performance, this paper suggests that performance contexts should be examined relationally by bridging different music genres: sitting audiences should, for instance, be understood compared to standing audiences. These performance practices also relate to collective representations and oppositions that structure music scenes and distinguish music genres. As we will see, the Parisian live music scene is strongly structured by representations that draw on the opposition between the “pure” and the “impure.” Mary Douglas (1966) shows that this binary is a structuring element in many societies, and that it can be considered as foundational for the social order. Artistic fields thrive on oppositions between the pure and the impure, the sacred and the profane, and the aesthetic and the vulgar (Bourdieu, 1984).

Within the musical field, the pure–impure binary is strongly attached to the contexts and materiality of listening practices. The development of “musical idealism” in the 19<sup>th</sup> century transformed music venues and listening habits: the adoption of a “pure/sacred/aesthetic” serious demeanor during concerts, for example, led to a social homogenizing of audiences (Goehr, 1994). This contributed to a “process of ‘aestheticizing’ art [...], producing pure judgements of taste from the distinction between musical and nonmusical aspects” (Weber, 2008, p. 102). In the French context, the positive side of the binary confers cultural legitimacy. Indeed, the scale of cultural legitimacy theorized by Bourdieu is defined not only “by the segmentation between genres, but also by differentiating between practices, [with] ‘pure’ listening being opposed to ‘functional’ listening” (author’s translation, Coulangeon, 2003, p. 15).

Many struggles around “authenticity” in contemporary music scenes (Bennett and Peterson, 2004), as they have been defined following initial work by Will Straw (2004), also

are based on the binary between the pure and the impure. In these scenes, the “impure” maps onto the inauthentic, and generally occurs when economic stakes (as opposed to artistic ones) are at the forefront; although, judgments may vary according to actors. Perceived authenticity is therefore strongly linked to the venues’ material context as well as its types of audiences and listening practices (Grazian, 2005). Howard Becker demonstrates this with respect to how the meaning attributed to jazz music is shaped by the social place where it is consumed. Warning against “too facilely substituting a classification of people for one of activities” (Becker, 2004, p. 27), he insists that distinctions in jazz are not based on the opposition between “jazz players” and “commercial players,” since these often are the same persons who are simply playing in different (and opposed) performance contexts.

In what follows, I examine how systems of collective representation, and specifically the pure–impure binary, structure the Parisian live music scene by placing venues in oppositional distinction to one another according to their listening contexts and practices. By undertaking this examination, I help reveal how bookers bring these systems of collective representation to bear in performance, and how they position their venues in the local scene when performative fusion is achieved.

## **Data and Methods**

This study focuses on Paris for two reasons. First, selecting a single city delimits a music scene that is recognizable to audiences and professionals. For potential audiences in Paris, venues represent opportunities to listen to music. Audience members choose to attend concerts in venues by considering a range of factors including, among others, musical line-ups, ticket prices, geographical locations (e.g., proximity to home, or whether venues are in a “cool” or “relaxed” neighborhood), and schedules. This live music scene is the space that

shapes their (live) music listening practices. For music professionals, it is also a relational space. Bookers compete to book the “best” artists. Artists, in turn, try to be booked in the “good” venues, or those that project an image that attracts their intended audiences.

The second reason for focusing on Paris is its central role in the French cultural landscape. Many acts are showcased in the capital before touring the country. This is especially the case for international artists. Paris has the most venues in France and plays a defining role in the national music field (Picaud, 2021). The venue which first presents an artist largely determines how their music will be labelled. As one booker put it, “Paris is a city for showcases.”

Paris [...] polarizes the industry, meaning that Paris, well, what I often say is that it’s a city for showcases. An artist, for his first time in France, will necessarily go through Paris, but he won’t necessarily go to Dijon or Tourcoing. He goes to Paris for the good reason that the media is in Paris, the industry is in Paris...bookers, most of them, are in Paris. It’s a place where you start your projects. You create an artistic profile and then it can go on a French tour or somewhere else<sup>1</sup>.

My analysis draws on three data sources. The first is a tailor-made database listing all venues in Paris (n=217) that met simple criteria: indoor places<sup>2</sup> promoting at least four musical events per month (including those involving DJs), which may or may not charge admission. All music genres and venue types are included: night clubs, jazz clubs, big arenas, concert halls, churches, and so on. The database lists material, geographic, economic, and symbolic characteristics of the venues (see list in Appendix). The second data source consists of semi-structured interviews with cultural policy authorities (n=10) and music bookers affiliated with 30 different venues. In Paris, bookers are typically employed by venues to select artists. The bookers, who are anonymized, were selected to represent the diversity of music venues. Interview questions concerned their representations of music and performance,

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<sup>1</sup> Booker in a medium-size venue with diverse music styles including pop, rock, electronic, hip hop, and *chanson*. Interview in Paris on October 29, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Because festivals take place only once a year, they were not included in the database. Similarly, at the time of the study, there were no permanent open-air music spaces in Paris, which thus do not appear in the database either.

working practices, artistic selection and tastes, the venue's audiences and material configuration, as well as their own career. The third data source draws on ethnographic observations of 152 musical events in various venues over a five-year period (2012 to 2017). This allowed me to see how a venue's material configuration shaped audiences' appreciation of the event and the artist and the artistic positioning of the musicians. The interviews and ethnographic observations also informed the definition of venue variables in the statistical analysis, allowing the inclusion of meaningful information on the artists' presentation and the audiences' experience during events.

The database of venues was analyzed using Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) to determine how performance contexts and the materiality of venues structure the Parisian music scene. MCA has been used extensively by Bourdieu and by those adopting his perspective to analyze the homology between cultural practices and social positions (Bennett et al., 2010; Duval et al., 2016). Because it synthesizes the relationships between entities described by complex datasets, MCA is the most appropriate method to map the relations between venues and to see how genres are positioned within this space (as supplementary variables). In other words, it maps the context within which bookers operate and enables the visualization of how performance contexts and listening practices differentiate music genres in Paris.

I thus draw on a specific MCA<sup>3</sup>, with 15 active variables (61 active modalities and 10 supplementary modalities with missing or redundant information). The active variables concern the materiality of the venue, its economic organization and legal status, the audiences in the venue, and the venues' symbolic capital and visibility. A further set of 21 variables are

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<sup>3</sup> For further information on this method, which avoids the contribution of irrelevant modalities to the formation of the axis, see Le Roux, 2004, pp. 378–394; Le Roux and Rouanet, 2004.

retained as supplementary items detailing the venues' musical bookings and music genres (see the Appendix for complete description of variables).

## **Pure or impure? Collective representations structuring the Parisian music scene**

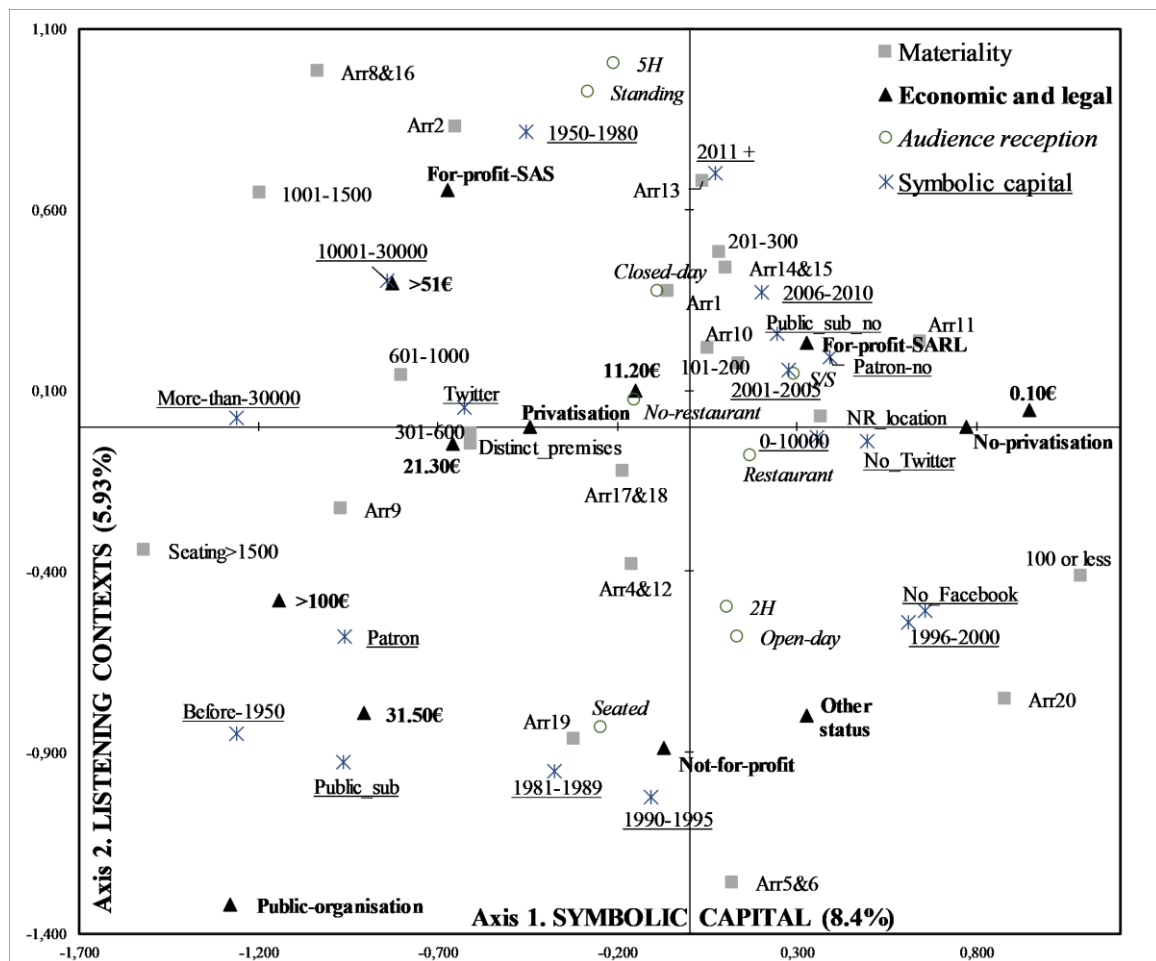
Examining how bookers attempt to create the conditions that lead to performance fusion and position their venues within the local scene initially requires mapping the collective representations that structure the field and its “rules of the game.” Although the music field is influenced by transnational cultural flows, scenes tend to be differentiated according to local and national contexts, as research on cultural globalization has shown: “rock,” “pop,” or “jazz” do not correspond to the same meanings, performances, audiences, or professionals in the United States, France, Indonesia or Japan (Atkins, 2001; Grazian, 2005; Regev, 2013; Wallach and Clinton, 2013).

The first two axes of the MCA illustrate different modalities that contrast venues and listening contexts, pointing to the systems of collective representation based on a pure/impure binary that structures the local scene. This binary does not strictly map onto the venues' symbolic capital—it is a relational notion that depends on the types of bookers, artists, and audiences involved. For example, the binary may be read and mobilized differently vis-à-vis a grand symphonic concert as opposed to a small punk gig. However, those with the most symbolic capital within the field have more power to define the “rules of the game” and as such, how the pure/impure binary *should* be read and mobilized in the music scene. As we will see, in the Parisian scene, this binary is strongly linked to the performances' material contexts and listening practices, and as such, also distinguishes between music genres, according to different “genre rules” (Frith, 1996).

Both oppositions structuring the Parisian scene, as it appears in the MCA, draw on the binary between pure and impure. Firstly, the distinction between venues depends on the centrality of music in their activities and the revenue it generates, and is something that often translates into the venue's design (i.e., was the building initially built to become a concert hall, or is it an old industrial building that was transformed). This can be summarized as the venues' (musical) symbolic capital (Axis 1). Secondly, the scene is structured by the opposition between listening practices, distinguishing venues according to the types of performances presented and the audience participation they enable (Axis 2). Those where audiences must stand and remain open late, such as nightclubs, are opposed to those where audiences are seated and only stage concerts in the evening. Both axes reflect the oppositional relation of music genres and testify to the unequal legitimacy of venues depending on the performance contexts. The pure/impure binary is also mobilized by the local and national government (through subsidies), as well as private sponsors, to hierarchize the music scene and define "rules of the game." I briefly interpret the first two axes of the MCA, which represent 14.33% of the total variance (see [Appendix](#) for contribution tables).

The first principle structuring this music scene (see Figure 1) reveals how material contexts influence the meaning that is given to the venues' activity: is it specifically "musical," or is music secondary to other activities, such as eating, drinking, or socializing? The characterization of music as a primary or secondary activity is strongly linked to the venue's importance in terms of recognition, economic weight, visibility, and seating capacity (the axis represents 8.4% of the  $\Phi^2$  of the cloud). This first axis could be defined, in Bourdieusian terms, as one that places venues in opposition depending on their specific musical capital. Venues where music is "secondary" are recoded by those in a dominant position as supporting an "impure" practice. Axis 1 draws a continuum opposing two types of

venues: those that have the power to define themselves as primarily musical (on the left), and those whose main activity is elsewhere, e.g., bars (on the right).



**Fig. 1** Axis 1 and 2, active variables

The professional venues with larger capacities have strong institutional support, and their reputation is international. These include historical venues (built before 1945) featuring theatrical architectures, which are located in the bourgeois Western districts of the capital. They enjoy considerable recognition, as evidenced by their pervasive social media presence and expensive ticket prices (more than 100 €). The internationalization of the venues' line-ups is linked to their symbolic capital: larger venues host more artists from foreign countries, while foreign artists are uncommon in smaller venues. Indeed, the right side of Axis 1 includes venues whose relative invisibility can be attributed to their small size. Admission is



inexpensive or even free, and the artists tend to be less renowned. These venues do not benefit from patronage or public funding.

The venues' specific musical capital is thus strongly linked to their economic model, i.e., how much they rely on musical performances, how much financial support they receive, which also testifies to their degree of recognition from public institutions and private patrons. But musical capital also rests on the professionalization of the musical activity. For example, in most musical bars, the general manager selects bands and artists when she has the time, whereas in professionalized venues, the labor is more differentiated. Specific professionals are paid to manage the different aspects of performances, such as the box office, public relations, lighting and sound, booking, and production. The bookers I interviewed insisted on differentiating their work in these professionalized venues from what they call "soda merchants" (*limonadiers*). This vocabulary reinforces professional hierarchies and the meaning associated with their work by indicating that they work for music's sake, whereas the others only showcase musical acts to earn money through bar sales, leaving artists poorly compensated. The dominant bookers thus have the power to determine the "purity" of a musical activity.

This opposition between venues according to the degree of perceived "musical purity" also structures the distribution of musical genres (see Figure 2). The first Axis shows a strong opposition between lyrical, classical, and contemporary music in large venues on the left side, and noise, metal, and punk (three genres that rarely appear in Paris<sup>4</sup>), in the less professionalized venues on the right side. The other genres, such as rock, Francophone *chanson*, and electronic music, are less differentiated by this first opposition. This also illustrates how genres excluded from French cultural policies promoting popular music are marginalized in the Parisian scene. The label "*musiques actuelles*" ("current music") usually

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<sup>4</sup> Only 14% of the venues book noise, metal *or* punk acts.

comprises rock, pop, *chanson*, rap, and increasingly electronic music, which appear in dedicated professionalized and subsidized music venues.

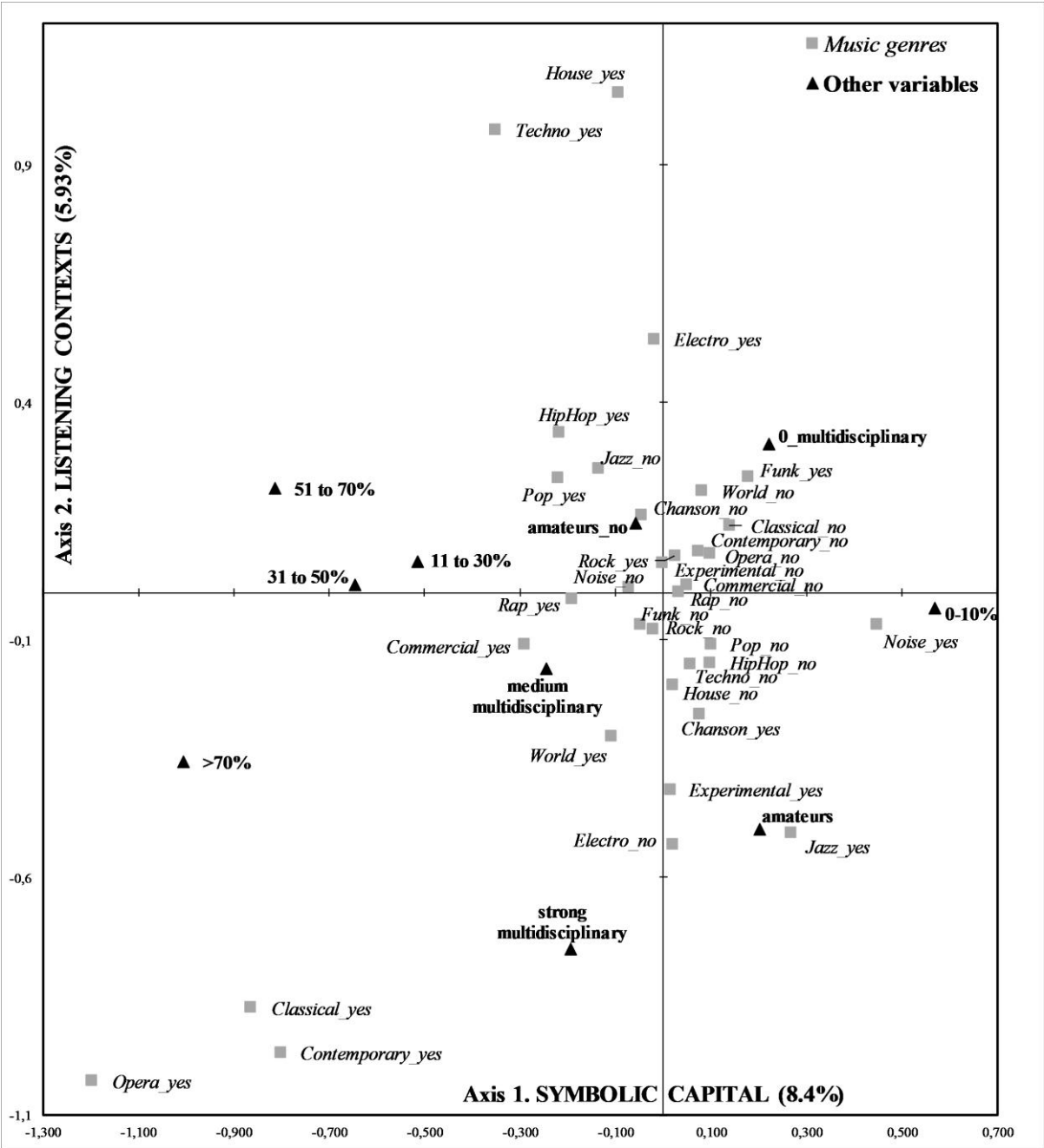


Fig. 2. Axis 1 and 2, supplementary variables

The pure/impure binary is not only drawn upon to hierarchize venues in the professional realm; it also distinguishes audiences' listening practices, as can be interpreted in the second principle differentiating music venues. The second factor represents 5.93% of the

$\Phi^2$  of the cloud. The performance contexts vary in terms of temporality and the physical engagement of audiences. At the top of the Axis, the venues receive no public subsidies, they stay open after 2:00 a.m., and their audiences must stand. On the bottom are very different types of venues: large public organizations and not-for-profit places which open during the day and close before 2:00 a.m. The disciplined, seated, and quiet experience they offer audiences has been linked to upper-class listening practices since the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Johnson, 1995).

This opposition between night and day venues is also found in the music genres they book. On the top are those genres most often heard at night while standing or dancing: house music, techno, electro, hip hop and to a lesser extent, funk. At these venues, the line-ups are relatively internationalized, and the program of events is strictly musical. Conversely, other genres are often heard while being seated, such as opera, contemporary music, classical, jazz and experimental music. Venues presenting these genres also organize a multidisciplinary program of events and remain open during the day to host events like exhibitions and meetings. Less institutional examples include cafes or restaurants offering different types of artistic activities. The unequal degrees of institutional recognition of venues, and the amount of public or private subsidies they receive, is not only linked to the music genres that are booked, but also to the venues' performance contexts. As noted, the pure/impure binary is mobilized by the venues with the most capital, and is supported by local and national government so as to give meaning to the listening practices according to their supposed distance from art and music. These serve to categorize venues that sometimes showcase the same musical genres. Indeed, electronic music appears both in clubs and venues that receive public subsidies. The performance context here is more akin to a traditional rock concert, with concerts ending by midnight. As a local head of cultural policies points out, "Now, nightclubs in Paris, [...] I don't see what public service missions, truly artistic, they address, so it doesn't

seem relevant to me for us to support this sector<sup>5</sup>". In addition to being ineligible for public subsidies, (night clubs: *discothèques*) were also charged a higher VAT rate (20%) until 2015. Concert and theatre venues benefited from a reduced rate (5.5%) by virtue of their cultural activities.

Furthermore, nightclubs have historically fallen under the jurisdiction of the police rather than cultural authorities because of their late opening hours. It was only after 2010 that Parisian public authorities integrated "nightlife" and its clubs into their policies; however, they are managed by the office of tourism, not culture. The political management of the COVID-19 crisis in the performance sector testifies to the persistence of these hierarchies between "pure" and "impure" in French cultural policies, and their differential effect on music genres. Indeed, only venues with seated audiences were allowed to reopen temporarily during the pandemic. There was no explicit scientific justification for this decision; instead, it was implied that only audiences frequenting venues with seats would respect the rules.<sup>6</sup>

The space drawn by the MCA shows the different interpretations of the pure/impure binary, and how collective representations—anchored in institutions, cultural policies, economic and legal models, and material layouts and architectures—structure the Parisian scene. It should be noted that this structure, and the meaning given to performance contexts and listening practices, are not uniformly perceived by all music professionals and audiences in Paris. The fact that they are strongly supported by cultural policies and by the dominant venues in the scene lends them an air of permanence, leading many bookers to abide by these "rules of the game." However, music scenes can change over time because each performance

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<sup>5</sup> Interview in Paris, May 21, 2014.

<sup>6</sup> See <https://www.culture.gouv.fr/Actualites/Reouverture-des-lieux-culturels-un-dispositif-general-et-progressif> accessed August 22, 2021.

is an opportunity to reenact, question, tweak, and contest the “rules of the game,” depending on the different elements that are central to the (re)fusion of performances.

### **Fusing performance: the part bookers play**

This section illustrates how bookers play with the elements of performance to transform their venue’s position. They draw on the pure/impure binary in novel ways to rework the traditional associations between material contexts, listening practices, and music genres. For example, bookers have been instrumental in severing the link between classical music and seated, contemplative contexts by encouraging new practices intended to renew this genre’s image. In so doing, bookers attempt to reposition their venue as avant-garde with an aim to attract younger and more diverse audiences.

I draw on ethnographic accounts of two performances that are representative of alternative booking practices presenting contemporary classical music in less traditional contexts. This is a relatively rare situation in Paris; there are probably fewer than 30 such events each year. Cultural policies in France have generally discouraged genre-mixing, especially contemporary and electronic music, which are strongly differentiated by the MCA. Indeed, although contemporary music has historically defined itself in opposition to classical music, both genres are usually presented in the same Parisian venues.

I selected these concerts for two reasons. First, they involve situations where bookers worked to bypass the “rules of the game.” These practices are unusual, since bookers often reinforce the status quo in professionalized venues. However, transformative practices reveal the choices some bookers make that twist some elements of performance. In these particular cases, the subversive practices take place in new venues seeking to establish themselves within an existing scene. Second, these events showcase the differences in achieving performance fusion. In addition to drawing on interviews with bookers and event organizers, I



classical music practices (at the bottom of Axis 2). Both venues are new buildings with unusual architecture, which is conducive to reinterpretations of listening practices. However, the Philharmonie, a new concert hall designed by star architect Jean Nouvel, was conceived and presented as Paris' new classical music venue, which inscribed it in those venues' long tradition and local history. This limited the booker's ability to change its position by tweaking the rules and reinterpreting the pure/impure binary.

*The Philharmonie: when performance misses out on the "rules of the game"*

The most visible classical music venues are large concert halls which sell expensive tickets and receive the most public and private subsidies. Newer venues, such as the Philharmonie de Paris, try to appear more socially and culturally open. Their bookers help to achieve this by selecting artists of other music genres, but these are presented in specific events rather than mixed with traditional classical music concerts. These events are perceived by many bookers in classical music venues as an effective way to democratize their audiences. In other words, it is a strategy to attract members of the working classes, those with lower levels of education, or young people. Cultural policies in France have focused on democratization for some time, but classical music concerts continue to draw an older and predominantly upper-class audience (Dorin, 2016). Bookers optimistically claim that audiences who discover a venue by attending a popular music concert will return to try concerts in other genres previously thought to be intimidating, thus fostering interest in classical music:

We are daring, in opening things up constantly [...]. We must leave the doors open so that a large draft comes in, and we may have, with a little luck, something unique, artistic, that will come in. [...] I like the idea of entertaining, don't we need entertainment in a society that replicates itself, reproduces its elites, tries to put culture in a category made for people who "think," while the others consume...? I try to break

barriers down and cross borders, and I've kept with this policy and multiplied the audiences here by four or five<sup>7</sup>.

This booker's venue regularly books jazz and pop artists, stand-up comedians, as well as musicals. Even if the audiences attending these different events never mix, the genres' performance contexts can still be transformed through the prescription of disciplined and silent listening practices that are alien to jazz clubs or pop venues. Rather than diversifying the venue's audiences, the mixing of genres transforms the image it displays—something that could be likened to individual “distinctive eclecticism” (Coulangeon and Lemel, 2007). This can in turn influence the “rules of the game” and the venue's position within the field, as well as the genre's place in cultural hierarchies. “Heritage rock” (Bennett, 2009), for example, has found its place in these classical music venues.

The first case presented here is an attempt to position a classical venue as an “avant-garde” space that only achieved partial fusion. Soon after its inauguration in 2015, the Philharmonie hosted the international exhibition “David Bowie Is.” The show *Low/Heroes, Un hyper cycle berlinois* by Renaud Cojo presented two symphonies by Philip Glass which were inspired by the albums Bowie created in Berlin, *Low* and *Heroes*. We will see how the pure/impure divide is reworked within the show and examine different elements of performance.

The Philharmonie opened amidst many political debates about its substantial cost. The massive building is situated within a park in the more popular Northeast area of Paris; all other classical music venues are situated in the Western, bourgeois part of the city. The building is visible from the highway encircling the capital, and its architecture was thought to represent an outstretched hand to the poorer suburbs on the other side. The building attracts

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<sup>7</sup> Interview with director of one of the main Parisian classical music halls, Paris, November 10, 2014, translation from French by the author. The interview excerpts presented here were selected because they are representative of the discourses of bookers interviewed.



attention from passersby and music aficionados alike. The main concert hall's design features the same vineyard-style seating arrangement as the Berliner Philharmonie, with the stage at the center, surrounded by seated audiences on all sides.

When audience members<sup>8</sup> arrive for the *Low/Heroes* concert, many become lost looking for the entrance of the Philharmonie because, unconventionally for a classical music venue, it is an escalator. It seems as though few have visited the hall before, or any other classical concert venue for that matter. They continue to seem lost after their tickets have been checked by ushers, even though the spatial organization is similar to other modern classical music venues and opera houses, with corridors leading to different balconies. Many audience members in their forties wear clothes associated with rock culture (e.g., rock band T-shirts). These audiences contrast sharply with the usual classical music audience in other venues in Paris, as well as those attending subsequent classical concerts at the Philharmonie. Some express surprise about the vineyard-style venue, which shows they were expecting the more traditional shoebox architecture. For others, this seating arrangement is less disorienting because it resembles big arenas. Audience members comment on the lavish surroundings: “We aren't used to this, are we?”

Onstage, a few instruments are set up in front of a very large screen. The musicians of the Orchestre National d'Île-de-France, the Philharmonie's main orchestra, occupy the stage beneath it. Although they usually dress in suits, tonight they wear long-sleeved black T-shirts printed with the show's logo. There is minimal applause when the conductor enters at the beginning of the show, as is the tradition for classical and lyrical concerts. Most seem unaware of this custom. During the concert, the orchestra remains dimly lit, unlike most philharmonic shows where the orchestra is center stage. In the first part of the concert<sup>9</sup>, the

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<sup>8</sup> Ethnographic fieldwork notes, Saturday, March 7, 2015 from 7:30 p.m. to 12:30 p.m., Philharmonie, Paris, as audience member.

<sup>9</sup> The show's promotional video can be found at: <https://vimeo.com/124932936> (accessed September 6, 2019).

musicians play Philip Glass' first symphony while a movie is projected on the screen showing scenes of a man roaming contemporary Berlin. The hall's architecture contrasts with the industrial, graffiti-covered wastelands shown on film, which are reminiscent of Bowie's years in Berlin. In the second part of the concert, the singer Bertrand Belin enters the stage and reads part of Bowie's text, "The Diary of Nathan Adler." Images onscreen, controlled by a VJ, illustrate the storyline. A dead woman appears in an abandoned swimming pool along with close-ups of Belin and the musicians occupying the stage above the orchestra. They accompany the reading with a cover version of Bowie's song "Art Decade" (*Low*, 1976) by musician Stef Kamil Carlens. In the final part of the concert, the orchestra plays Philip Glass' second symphony. This time, the screen shows contemporary dancers in an abandoned industrial space. The dance is choreographed by Louise Lecavalier, who worked with Bowie and whose hairstyle explicitly references the star.

During the intermission, many audience members explore the hall by visiting the different balconies on various floors, musing at the different beverages at the bar. At the end of the concert, enthusiastic applause greets the artists, and spectators seem happy as they leave the Philharmonie, discussing how the show offered different perspectives on Bowie. In this event, elements of performance were mobilized to contrast music genres, listening practices, and the venue's material layout. Firstly, the organization of this concert during the international exhibition on Bowie enhances its visibility among those unaccustomed to visiting such venues. These audience members arrive with expectations about the *mise-en-scène* that have probably been developed through previous concert experiences involving standing at rock concert venues. Although they enjoy this unusual event, conversations between them indicate that this concert comes across as an institutional tribute to Bowie. It is not interpreted as "avant-garde" compared to the traditional (rock) performance rules, and it does not necessarily encourage any psychological identification with the artists. Classical

music critics also insist on the continuity between this event and the contemporary and classical music tradition, rather than emphasizing any rule-breaking through the reinterpretation of the pure/impure binary. For example, one critic describing the show for a national radio broadcast inscribed Glass' homage to Bowie within a longer musical story:

Philip Glass was an artist who, at the beginning of the '60s, worked with dancers, with other types of musicians, people working with sound, you know, *overtones* as they say in English.... He smoked a lot of marijuana, that must also be said. [...] And that's the proof that this kind of music interests a quite diverse and large audience, there were loads of people at the concert, rather young people, people we don't usually see at classical music concerts. That's to say that the crossroads you'll be listening to tonight is something quite natural, it's not an artificial graft. (Machart, 2016<sup>10</sup>)

The *mise-en-scène* and means of symbolic production reinforce this view. Although the symphony orchestra is in the pit rather than occupying the center of attention, it is brought together with the screen, the singer, the cover band, and the VJ. Classical music thus seems relegated to a secondary position, as already suggested by the departure from conventional practices such as applauding when the conductor takes the podium, and orchestra members in formal concert attire. However, although David Bowie and non-classical musicians are at the center of the show, contemporary classical music remains central. Musical texts are no different from traditional concerts in such venues and remain divorced from audiences' expectations. Furthermore, these slight twists to listening practices are hardly transformative. Because the concert fails to attract either the regular Philharmonie (or classical music) audience or pop-rock critics, it cannot reposition the venue within the scene. The "rules of the game" remain intact, binding performance contexts and practices to specific music genres. As such, this performance fails to fuse all elements.

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<sup>10</sup> Transcribed and translated from French by author.

### *Gaîté Lyrique: repositioning a venue by playing on genre rules*

Bookers in popular music venues also try to reposition their venues within the scene by showcasing music genres normally presented in other performance contexts. For example, the publicly subsidized Gaîté Lyrique, a renowned mid-sized music concert venue, organized events mixing contemporary classical music (e.g., Terry Riley, Steve Reich) with electronic music (e.g., Carl Craig, Nathan Fake). Unlike the concert at the Philharmonie, this was not a tribute to a specific artist, but an encounter between two genres that are starkly opposed by performance contexts, as the MCA previously illustrated. These genres are combined during the same event, targeting the Gaîté Lyrique's regular audiences as well as aficionados of both genres:

A rather new thing is to make people listen to different musical genres that have artistic collusion, but that never meet at the same time, in front of the same audience. I mean, today, the person who wants to listen to electronic music will go to an electronic music festival; the person who wants to listen to pop music, he goes somewhere else, etc. Everything is very signposted in fact. And even the places that have a concert season with many musical genres, they have specific evenings for each. So there are ticketholders who will see different things, but overall, everything remains very, very signposted<sup>11</sup>.

By booking both genres together, the common artistic features are no longer concealed by the *mise-en-scène* and means of symbolic production of their standard venues. While the combined presentation of electronic and contemporary classical music rests on the “avant-garde” rhetoric suggesting that “no one has done this yet,” it also draws on the pure/impure binary in novel ways. It casts the separation between genres “that ‘official culture’ compartmentalizes in spite of common sense” (De Plas, 2016) as a social rather than musical one. In other words, it suggests these are impure justifications for artistic selection.

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<sup>11</sup> Interview with a booker organizing contemporary classical music events in popular music venues, November 14, 2014, Paris, translation by author.

These “rule-breaking” endeavors are facilitated by the Gaîté Lyrique’s recent entry into and unusual position in the Parisian scene. When the venue opened in 2010, it was dedicated to digital cultures and supported by a delegation of service contract for the City Hall. The building occupies the former site of the Théâtre de la Gaîté and retains its historic façade, entrance, and foyer. Inside the venue, the wooden floors and grand mirrors suggest the prestige of traditional classicism, but the large concert hall, which can accommodate 760 people standing, adopts the black box aesthetic. The four walls of the concert hall can be transformed into large screens for digital art exhibitions and VJs. The booker of an electronic music club describes the venue in these terms:

It’s quite bare. [...] Artists often tell me, there are no lights, it’s naked, it’s neutral...it *is* cold. And so the audience is also very cold at the Gaîté Lyrique, but really extremely cold, and it’s violent sometimes, because there’s no warm, spectacular side. But on the contrary, I thought it was great to see some artists, without anything, just the screens and no lights at the Gaîté, because it corresponded well. And it looked classy, it looked chic<sup>12</sup>.

During the event combining electronic and contemporary music, audiences go back and forth between the luxuriously furnished foyer, where many purchase refreshments, and the black box concert hall. I will describe one specific piece on the program, “In C” by Terry Riley,<sup>13</sup> to show how the booker’s handling of the *mise-en-scène* and means of symbolic production transformed the reception of contemporary music and thus repositioned the venue by slightly changing the scene’s “rules of the game.”

The concert begins at 8:00 p.m. with the Magnetic Ensemble taking the stage.

Although the event is sold out, the room is not as full as it becomes later that evening for the

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<sup>12</sup> Interview with the booker of a big club, April 16, 2014, Paris, translation by author.

<sup>13</sup> The concert took place on November 29, 2014 during the Marathon Impulse festival and included works or performances by Terry Riley, Nathan Fake, Carl Craig (who cancelled at the last minute), Collectif Warning, Magnetic Ensemble, Cabaret Contemporain, Steve Reich, Ligeti, Benjamin de la Fuente, Giani Caserotto, César Carcopino, HeptaTonia and Atom Heart.

headliners. Unlike at most classical music concerts, where refreshments are not allowed in the concert hall and photographs are forbidden, here audience members drink beer and place their sandwiches on the edge of the stage to take pictures. Some lean against the stage and look up at the musicians. Others talk, laugh, and kiss, but they do not dance—yet. The musicians, who are dressed in yellow overalls and illuminated by spotlights, are spread out on the stage and on the balconies on either side.

Ten or fifteen minutes after the beginning of the music, the sound increases, both in terms of rhythm and volume, resembling a build-up or climax in electronic music. Audience members have started to move: some are nodding or dancing, arms raised. Whistles and cries of “woohoo” are heard. The musicians, who are similar in age to the audience members, look at each other, smile, and are physically involved in their music. They sway in their chairs and twitch their legs, more in the style of a brass band than a philharmonic orchestra. Their enjoyment is expressed openly and in marked contrast to the ascetic and austere demeanor musicians adopt during contemporary music concerts in more traditional Parisian venues. As the piece reaches its conclusion, the music trails off. Several minutes pass before the audience realizes that the performance has ended, bursting into applause—shouts and whistles that last for over two minutes.

As they leave the room, several groups comment on what they have just heard. One man exclaims, “That rocked!” and his friend replies, “It was great!” A young woman explains to a friend, “I was scared at first when it was a little cacophonous, but actually... [I enjoyed it afterwards].” Although most audience members seemed unfamiliar with the work, there was a strong connection between audiences and musicians, made visible by exchanges of glances and smiles, and participants expressing the feeling that they had experienced something exceptional and rare.

This special atmosphere seems to testify both to psychological identification and to cultural extension between artists and audiences. The recognition of musical styles more familiar to this audience prompted lively behaviors (such as shouting, whistling, dancing, and drinking) typically found in clubs. By drawing on listening practices considered “impure” within classical music venues, the *mise-en-scène* and means of symbolic production contributed to the collective production of meaning even though few in the audience knew the music and struggled at first to situate and interpret it. These are important considerations for the booker who organizes these events. Rather than dismiss these practices as “impure,” he saw them as central to the performance:

80% of the people at the head of [classical] music institutions in Paris are musicologists. That says it all. It means that the only thing that interests them is what happens onstage. The problem is that what’s onstage is only part of the job. [...] In those [classical music] venues, they consider that they aren’t soda merchants. The problem is that they have a really lousy bar, you get kicked out of the venue ten minutes after the concert ends, nothing happens. I mean, you could pay people, young people, they wouldn’t even come! [...] Because those [managers of classical music venues] aren’t rockers<sup>14</sup>!

By programming a contemporary classical music repertoire with affinities to electronic music, and by choosing artists who can be staged within popular music venues, this booker transforms the listening practices associated with contemporary music.

It can be argued that the elements of performance were fused on this occasion, successfully enacting and transforming the “rules of the game” within the Parisian music scene. This fusion encouraged music critics to label the *Gaîté Lyrique* “avant-garde” when its position was unclear. This event was so successful that it has been imitated by other venues such as the *Centquatre* and it was subsequently developed into an annual festival that regularly sells out. One critic praised the festival as “eclectic, adventurous and sharp, where

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<sup>14</sup> Interview with a booker organizing contemporary classical music events in popular music venues, November 14, 2014, Paris, translation by author.

headliners with racy music share the stage with minimalist and audacious performances of contemporary artists.” (Branquart, 2016). The venue’s position at the crossroads of different genres<sup>15</sup> is also commended by commentators who describe it as “on the edge of all genres and generations” where “the future of culture” lies (Brimson, 2016). One fused performance is unlikely to be enough to establish a venue’s position within a cultural field. However, it is through fusion that shared meaning is developed between artists, audiences, cultural intermediaries, and critics about what the rules of the artistic game should be, and how venues relate to them.

## Conclusion

Exploring live music with a performance perspective sheds light on the centrality of venues and listening contexts in structuring local music scenes. In Paris, the pure/impure binary is used to hierarchize venues depending on their performance contexts, contributing to the definition of the scene’s “rules of the game.” In this situation, bookers who intend to position their venue as avant-garde by breaking the rules must rework the way this binary is understood, drawing on and mixing both “pure” and “impure” elements. Performances can be considered fused when cultural intermediaries successfully (re)interpret the systems of collective representation through arranging the *mise-en-scène* and means of production, when artists and audiences engage with this reinterpretation, and when fellow intermediaries, such as critics, recognize it as such. By engaging the Strong Program of cultural pragmatics with field theory, I have suggested that fusion can be understood as a moment when the scene’s (or field’s) “rules of the game” are enacted, perpetuated, or contested, as is the case for the *Gaîté*

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<sup>15</sup> The *Gaîté Lyrique* currently presents itself as follows: “With the development of the Internet, the 21<sup>st</sup> century has brought musical parochialism to a stop. A radical turn that we took from the very start.” (*Gaîté Lyrique*, 2020, p. 22), translated by author.



Lyrique. While Alexander (2004) considers fusion to be a fortuitous combination of elements of performance, this paper shows that contesting the “rules of the game” requires more than fusion: bookers must also draw on systems of collective representation in innovative ways that combine “pure” and “impure” elements. The Gaîté Lyrique’s position within the scene favored subversion because, in addition to having a high degree of symbolic capital, it had a material layout and organization that allowed for diverse listening practices. In contrast, the Philharmonie was too strongly tied to the traditional and institutionalized side.

This analysis opens fruitful paths for understanding the meso-level dynamics of different activities (artistic, economic, political, etc.) which influence and mediate between social performance and systems of collective representation. It also enabled me to explore how, within a specific scene, performance allows the enactment and transformation of the “rules of the game.” This offers a more dynamic analysis of systems of collective representation and how they relate to continuity and field-level changes. Studying cultural intermediaries such as critics and bookers illuminates their role in shaping performance. It also raises new questions: in other fields of activity, such as politics, who occupies the role that bookers play in music? Does performance fusion correspond more often with the perpetuation of existing “rules of the game,” or with their contestation? Must the element of “social power” be understood with regard to the position agents occupy within fields? These questions call for more empirical exploration that also engages critically with both theoretical perspectives. A mixed-method research design appears necessary for understanding how the various levels—micro, meso and macro—influence social performance, as well as the interplay between them. Advancing theoretical debates in cultural sociology ultimately demands that researchers diverge from well-beaten methodological paths.

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## **About the author**

Myrtille Picaud's research examines the links between music scenes, cultural intermediaries' work and urban transformations in Paris and Berlin. It was published in 2021 in the book *Mettre la ville en musique (Paris-Berlin)*. She has also studied the role music bookers play in gendered, national and racial inequalities among artists, for example in articles in *Sociétés Contemporaines* and *Jazz Research Journal*. Currently, she is exploring the development of digital policing practices and how this transforms lives in European cities for her postdoctoral fellowship at the Grenoble Alpes University.

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## APPENDIX. Variables and Tables

### Variables on the music venues

#### 1. Venue materiality (3 variables)

*Localization in Paris (13 active modalities)*: it is described using the city's institutional districts [*arrondissements*]. When the number of venues was insufficient, two districts were grouped, apart from the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> where venues appeared very isolated from the others, and are thus illustrative modalities (in italics).

Districts	Number
Arr11	39
Arr17&18	24
Arr10	19
Arr20	18
Arr19	16
Arr8&16	15
Arr2	13
Arr5et6	13
Arr1	12
Arr13	12
Arr4&12	12
Arr14&15	11
Arr9	10
<i>Arr3</i>	2
<i>Arr7</i>	1

*Venue seating capacity (7 active modalities)*: because more than half of Parisian venues have a seating capacity under 300, the very small venues are distinguished, contrary to the fewer, larger, ones.

Seating	Number
100 or less	58
101-200	37
201-300	30
301-600	42
601-1000	12
1001-1500	14
Seating>1500	15
<i>NR_Seating</i>	9

*Distinct premises (2 active modalities)*: venues in buildings with a distinct history (linked to culture, music, or for example the refurbishment of an industrial wasteland), visible in the architecture and emphasized by the venue's public communication, are distinguished.

Distinct premises	Number
Distinct	82
<i>NR_location</i>	135

## 2. Economic organization and legal status (3 variables)

*Legal status (4 active modalities):* Because public institutions are also those receiving public subsidies, this modality is illustrative to avoid entering the same information twice. Private companies are differentiated, as they do not function in the same way.

Legal status	Number
Not for profit organisations (Association loi 1901)	21
Other-stat	18
For-profit limited liability company (SARL)	104
For-profit simplified joint-stock company (SAS and SA)	44
<i>Public Organisation</i>	15
<i>NR_Status</i>	15

*Maximum ticket price (6 active modalities):* Ticket prices are a decisive element in the decision to go out. They also show how much audiences are ready to pay, depending on the artists booked and the venue. When there were several price categories, the most expensive ticket was retained rather than the mean price, to show differences in audiences expected by the venues.

Maximum Price	Number
0-10€	77
11-20€	57
21-30€	35
31-50€	13
>51€	19
>100€	12
<i>NR_Price</i>	4

*Possibility of privatizing the venue (2 active modalities),* for events organized either by individual people or public and private firms.

Venue Privatisation	Number
Privatization	133
No-privatization	76
<i>NR_privatisation</i>	8

### 3. Audience reception (4 variables)

*Daytime opening (2 active modalities):* when the venue is open to the public before 5 p.m., and therefore a place where other activities take place, or whether it only opens at night.

Daytime opening	Number
Closed_day	132
Open_day	85

*Night time opening hours (2 active modalities):* the venue closes after the event, or at the latest at 2 a.m. (standard closing hour in Paris); or it regularly closes after 2 in the morning and is a real night time venue.

Night time opening	Number
2H	145
5H	72

*Seating specificities (3 active modalities):* no or almost no seating possibilities (Standing); a seated venue (Seated); mix of standing and seated (S/S).

Placement	Number
Seated	69
Standing	46
S/S	102

*Restaurant (2 active modalities) in the venue.*

Restaurant	Number
No-restaurant	114
Restaurant	103

### 4. Venue's symbolic capital and visibility (5 variables)

*Venue lifespan (8 active modalities):* date of creation of the organization managing the venue. More venues opened after the 1990s, so the timespan division is tightened in the recent period. 1981 has been kept as a time block because it is a turning point in French cultural policies (Dubois 1999), with the broadening of public subsidies beyond highbrow culture, especially in music.

Opening date	Number
Before 1945	15
1946-1980	19
1981-1989	20
1990-1995	18
1996-2000	25
2001-2005	30
2006-2010	47
2011 +	35
NR_date	8



*Public subsidies (2 active modalities).* All types of public subsidies are grouped, whatever the amount or level of government that distributes them. Similar to private patronage, this variable is considered an indicator of symbolic capital.

Public subsidies	Number
Public_sub_no	169
Public_sub	44
NR_Public_sub	4

*The patronage of the venue by private partners (2 active modalities).*

Patronage	Number
Patron_no	143
Patron	53
NR_patron	21

*Following on social media Facebook (4 active modalities):* this variable concerns the venue's promotion strategies, its ability to use digital tools and its reputation and renown, but also testifies to how gratifying it is for individuals to declare publicly that they 'like' a venue. The variable counts the number of 'likes' on venues' pages (on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015).

Facebook 'Likes'	Number
No_Facebook	25
0-10000	129
10001-30000	40
More than 30000	23

*Use of social media Twitter, on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2015 (2 active modalities).* This variable informs on the venue's digital strategy, which partly overlaps with its renown as well as the type of audiences it targets (especially in 2015 France, with 2.3 million Twitter users, whose mean age was 22 years old, 61% being less than 35 years old, 55% male, 19% top executive managers and 33% living in the Paris region).<sup>16</sup>

Twitter account	Number
No_Twitter	121
Twitter	96

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<sup>16</sup> Figures drawn from the blog du Modérateur, <http://www.blogdumoderateur.com/chiffres-twitter/>, visited on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2016.

## Variables on musical genres (supplementary)

The genre categories are those featured by the venues themselves in their communication about events or artists, and which appear in at least 5% of the venues. To complete this variable (see Table 1), I examined the events booked over one month, between 2014 and 2016. If at least one concert during the month is labelled “rock”, the venue is listed as booking rock concerts. These genre categories remain comparable to those used in French surveys on cultural practices (Donnat, 2009).

Three other variables concern the venues’ artistic choices. First, whether the venue organizes multidisciplinary events (booking theatre, dance, exhibitions and public meetings or debates): 0\_multidisciplinary (n = 111); medium\_multidisciplinary, meaning that two out of the four artistic disciplines are presented (n = 76); and strong\_multidisciplinary, when three or four are presented (n = 30). The presentation of amateur practices (including jam sessions): yes (n = 49); no (n = 168). A final variable describes the internationalization of the venue’s events. Indeed, the opposition between foreign and national artists influences musical preferences (Meuleman and Lubbers, 2014). This variable has 4 modalities: 0 to 10% of artists booked come from abroad (n = 111); 11 to 30% (n = 39); 31 to 50% (n = 29); more than 50% (n = 25); unspecified (n = 10). This indicator counts the proportion of artists who live abroad and tour in Paris (it does not count artists according to their nationality)<sup>17</sup> and is also calculated over one month.

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<sup>17</sup> Individual artists and bands count for 1 alike. For collective works (musicals, operas, etc.), soloists, orchestras and choirs are distinguished, counting also for 1.

**Table 1. Music genres in the Parisian venues**

Music genre	Percentage of venues featuring the genre
Rock	49,8%
Electronic music	49,8%
World music	41,5%
French 'chanson'	39,2%
Jazz	34,1%
Pop music	30,9%
Hip Hop	30,4%
Funk and soul	21,7%
House music	15,7%
Noise, punk and metal	14,3%
Classical music	13,8%
French category for 'commercial'/top charts music [Variétés]	13,8%
Experimental music	13,4%
Techno	13,4%
Rap	13,4%
Contemporary classical music	8,3%
Lyrical music / Opera	7,4%

**Table 2. Modalities contributing over average to the formation of Axis 1**

Variables	Total volume of capital -- Axis 1 +		Total volume of capital ++ Axis 1 -		Variable's total contribution
	Modality	Contribution	Modality	Contribution	
Seating	100 or less	8,186	Seating>1500	4,096	17,497
			1001-1500	2,367	
			301-600	1,827	
Maximum Price	0.10€	8,172	21.30	1,787	14,763
			>100	1,855	
Privatization	No-privatization	5,375	Privatization	3,075	8,449
Patronage	Patron_no	2,595	Patron	5,787	8,381
Public subsidies			Public_sub	4,833	6,026
Twitter	No_Twitter	3,524	Twitter	4,442	7,965
Facebook	0-10000	1,956	More than 30000	4,329	10,897
			10001-30000	3,337	
Distinct premises	NR_location	2,171	Distinct	3,574	5,745
Opening date			Before 1950	2,822	5,272
Legal status			SAS and SA	2,356	3,928
District	Arr11	1,910	Arr8&16	1,902	7,601
	Arr20	1,647			

**Table 3. Modalities contributing over average to the formation of Axis 2**

Variables	Night-time / standing Axis 2 +		Seated / day-time Axis 2 -		Variable's total contribution
	Modality	Contribution	Modality	Contribution	
Night-time opening	5H	12,131	2H	6,024	18,155
Placement	Standing	6,566	Seated	7,990	14,921
Public subsidies	Public_sub_no	1,833	Public_sub	6,335	8,168
Daytime opening	Closed_day	3,087	Open_day	4,794	7,881
Opening date	2011 +	2,862	1990-1995	3,168	15,421
	1950-1980	2,107	1981-1989	3,034	
			Before 1950	1,808	
District	Arr8&16	2,414	Arr5&6	3,452	13,563
			Arr19	1,993	
			Arr20	1,709	
Legal status	SAS & SA	3,131	Not for profit organizations	2,769	8,750
			Other-stat	1,932	
Patronage			Patron	2,984	3,854
Seating	100 or less	1,646			4,301