

**Institution: University of Salford**

**Unit of Assessment: D35 Music, Drama, Dance and Performing Arts**

**Title of case study: *Rhythm Changes: Jazz Cultures and European Identities: Promoting the cultural value of jazz in Europe***

**1. Summary of the impact**

*Rhythm Changes* is Europe's largest ever jazz research project to date, examining the inherited traditions and practices of European jazz cultures, engaging audiences, performers, the creative industries and arts agencies in the collection, interpretation and sharing of cultural experiences, resources and data, demonstrating the following impact:

- Establishing networks that encourage trans-national co-operation and collaboration, enhance festival programmes, bring economic benefit and lead to new sources of funding;
- Increasing audience engagement with jazz as a cultural form through developing new models for Knowledge Exchange, in partnership; and
- Collaborating with the Europe Jazz Network (EJN) in contributing to the design, implementation and delivery of the first social and economic study of its 80 strong membership over 22 countries, enabling the promotion of the value of jazz to policy makers.

**2. Underpinning research**

The key researchers and positions they held at the institution at the time of the research are as follows: Professor Tony Whyton, Director, Salford Music Research Centre, (from 2007), Professor George McKay, Director, Communication, Cultural and Media Studies and AHRC Connected Communities Fellow (from 2005) (submitting to UoA D36) School of Arts and Media. *Rhythm Changes: Jazz Cultures and European Identities, promoting the cultural value of jazz in Europe* is underpinned by the following research:

- **2005:** In *Circular Breathing*, McKay considered jazz as export culture, seeking to refigure British jazz history and more comprehensively include its ideological assumptions, uncovering the often surprising ways jazz has accompanied social change during a period of rapid transformation. Focusing on Great Britain, McKay offered detailed explorations from jazz of the relation between culture and politics, between the global and the local, between the imperial and the postcolonial, white and black, male and female. [1]
- **2010:** In a study of *Jazz Research in Britain* Whyton demonstrated how jazz research is central to realising its value in Britain, serving to broaden the representation and understanding of jazz cultures past and present, and its role in bringing significant value to the British creative economy. Whyton identified a growing range of practical and theoretical methodologies being developed by scholars of different generations and interests, contributing to understanding of the value of jazz in Britain. [2]
- **2010:** In *Jazz Icons* Whyton offered a critical appraisal of established jazz practice and representations, concluding that "one of the major challenges for New Jazz Studies over the coming years is to discover ways in which the discursive methods of both theory and practice can interact." [3]
- **2010-2013:** Findings from *Jazz Icons* fed into the development of the transnational cross-disciplinary *Rhythm Changes* project. Led by the University of Salford with Whyton as Project Leader and McKay as Senior Researcher, part of the Humanities in the European Research Area's (HERA) theme, 'Cultural Dynamics: Inheritance and Identity', *Rhythm Changes* is funded by 13 national funding agencies to create collaborative, trans-national research opportunities that will derive new insights from humanities research in order to address major social, cultural, and political challenges facing Europe. [5]
- By exploring the cultural dynamics of jazz in different European contexts and the way in which the music contributes to cultural change, *Rhythm Changes* undertook several quantitative and qualitative studies of national jazz scenes and European arts organisations, as well as into the transnational nature of jazz. The *Rhythm Changes* team engaged directly with stakeholder groups, delivered public engagement events and published materials in partnership with arts organisations that are of relevance to both academic and non-academic users.

- As the largest research project ever funded for jazz in Europe, *Rhythm Changes* filled a gap in existing research provision at the European level, with the following aims:
  1. Understanding concepts of national thought and identity in jazz;
  2. Collating jazz-related data, moving from specialist analysis towards interdisciplinary and transnational synthesis;
  3. Showing how jazz venues and festivals preserve, reflect and inform a sense of cultural memory;
  4. Furthering pan-European humanities research by establishing networks that encourage transnational collaboration.
- Through the Rhythm Changes project, Whyton et al have published work on the value of jazz in national settings and developed this research for festivals, venues and arts promoters; from ethnographic explorations of individual festival settings to online resources for jazz, from an appraisal of cultural policies and the work of national jazz agencies to practice-based engagement with professional development schemes.
- **2012:** In *Europe and the New Jazz Studies* Whyton observed, based on the development of *Rhythm Changes*, that as a research area still its infancy, the European New Jazz Studies offers further potential for groundbreaking insights into cultural politics of jazz past and present, resisting essentialist ideologies and examining the way in which jazz cultures obtain their meaning in the function that the music has for its musicians, audiences and industry. [4]

### 3. References to the research

#### Key outputs

1. McKay, G *Circular Breathing: The Cultural Politics of Jazz in Britain*, 2005, Duke University Press, Durham NC, USA. [URL](#)
2. Whyton, T 'Jazz Research in Britain', 2010 November *Jazzforschung* 42, pp.131-146 ISBN 9783201019354 (**REF2**)
3. Whyton, T *Jazz Icons: Heroes, Myths and the Jazz Tradition*, 2010, Cambridge University Press ISBN 9780521896450 (**REF2**)
4. Whyton, T 'Europe and the New Jazz Studies' 2012 in: Cerchieri, L., Cugny, L. and Kerschbaumer, F., *Eurojazzland: Jazz and European Sources, Dynamics and Contexts*, Northeastern University Press, 2012, pp.366-380 ISBN 9781584658641 (**REF2**)

#### Key grants

5. Award Holder: Professor Tony Whyton, *Rhythm Changes: Jazz Cultures and European Identities*, Sponsor: Humanities in the European Research Area, Period: May 2010 – May 2013, Value of grant: £855,947.00
6. Award Holders: Professor Tony Whyton and Serious, Title: *The Time and The Place*, Kings Place London, Sponsor: Humanities in the European Research Area, Period: August 2012- June 2013, Value of grant: £52,277.00

### 4. Details of the impact

*Rhythm Changes* has capitalised on jazz's centrality to European cultural discourses, using theoretical and practice-led research methods to answer questions about the changing Europe, inherited culture and national identity. Graded 'outstanding' by HERA evaluators following each of their reporting cycles, *Rhythm Changes* demonstrates the following impact:

- *Rhythm Changes* has provided a voice for jazz research at the European level, developing several collaborations and public engagement events with high profile national and international organisations: In addition to JazzDanmark, Bimhuis Amsterdam, MaiJazz Stavanger, Jazz Fest Wien and the Copenhagen Jazz Festival; Serious/London Jazz Festival has been a Knowledge Exchange partner of *Rhythm Changes* since 2010. *Rhythm Changes* hosted a public event at the Barbican in London as part of the main programme for the 2010 Serious/London Jazz Festival entitled '*Another Place? Why Jazz Festivals Matter*', which included contributions from a range of international festival directors. The *Rhythm Changes* project contributed to new programming directions and enabled the

organisation to secure additional funding: Serious received funding from the EU Culture Fund in 2012 to curate a 'Jazz and the New Europe' strand as part of the 2012 London Jazz Festival programme. The central themes of the strand mirrored the work of the *Rhythm Changes* research and Whyton was invited to chair the first public debate on Jazz the New Europe at the Royal Festival Hall.

- Joint funding was received in August 2012 to develop a festival of the humanities in London, in June 2013. This event, entitled '*The Time and The Place*', provided a new opportunity to build capacity, commission new works and develop pan-European collaborations. The three-day festival showcased the work of the first HERA Joint Research Programme, developing insights into cultural dynamics and questions of inheritance and identity in Europe, and reached new audiences through combining the themes of leading European humanities research projects with new arts commissions, public events and high profile concerts. The success of the *Rhythm Changes*' ongoing Knowledge Exchange activities has led to a partnership with the London Jazz Festival for its 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary year in November 2013.
- The 2013 Rhythm Changes Conference, '*Rethinking Jazz Cultures*' celebrated the cross-disciplinary strength of international jazz research. Perrier Jazz Award and BBC Innovation winner Matthew Bourne was featured as artist in residence for the event and the 2009 National Portrait Photography prize winner Paul Floyd Blake was commissioned to respond to the core questions of *Rhythm Changes* through 3 European festivals associated with the project, with work premiered in Manchester in April 2013 as part of Rethinking Jazz Cultures in London in June 2013.
- In 2011, Salford-based *Rhythm Changes* post-doctoral researcher Dr Christophe de Bezenac participated in the prestigious *Take Five* professional development programme led by Serious and funded by the Arts Council and Jerwood Foundation, which was used as a case study and model of good practice in the Europe Jazz Network study.
- In partnership with Music Centre Netherlands (MCN) Rhythm Changes is developing an online resource of jazz works composed in the Netherlands, the 'Dutch Real Book' with the objectives of making historic and artistic important material available and visible, facilitating the performance of Dutch jazz compositions, new research, analysis, and educational resources.
- In 2012, the Europe Jazz Network (EJN) undertook a social and economic impact study of its membership, covering over 80 organisations in 22 countries. The EJN is the principal Network for the professional jazz community in Europe and includes members ranging from Music Information Centres, National Jazz Agencies, large scale international festivals (such as North Sea, Copenhagen and London), famous venues and promoters. As a member of the Europe Jazz Network steering group responsible for designing and implementing the study, Whyton wrote the foreword to the final published report. '[\*Strength in Numbers: A Study of Europe Jazz Network\*](#)' represented a significant step change in the Network's ability to build capacity, enabling the network to make the case for jazz across the European cultural industries and to make the case for jazz in their national settings as well as benchmark their activities against other members and share models of good practice.
- The report offers a strategic overview of the contribution in economic and social terms of members' activity to national policy makers and the European Union, drawing directly on *Rhythm Changes* interview data and project findings. Whyton provided advice and guidance on the design and content of the survey. The report is currently being used by the network and its members as a key strategy document, enabling organisations to make the case for jazz in their national settings, benchmark the activities of organisations against other members and share good practice. *Rhythm Changes* research, and the subsequent Strength in Numbers report, marks a sea-change in European collaboration and a blurring of boundaries between academic and non-academic communities. Moreover, the report and *Rhythm Changes* data is currently being used by the network in its bid for future EU network funding.

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

The following external sources provide corroboration of specific claims made in the case study:

- a) Strength in Numbers report and EJN website:  
[http://www.europejazz.net/strength\\_in\\_numbers.htm](http://www.europejazz.net/strength_in_numbers.htm)
- b) Festival Brochure for The Time and The Place, 30 May – 1 June 2013
- c) HERA annual reviews of the *Rhythm Changes* project including comments about stakeholder engagement (confidential)
- d) Corroborative statement from the Director, Serious/London Jazz Festival
- e) Corroborative statement from the author/steering group lead of EJN research project.
- f) Jazz and the New Europe brochure, London Jazz Festival 2012
- g) Ongoing documentation of *Rhythm Changes* can be found at  
<http://www.rhythmchanges.net>
- h) All About Jazz's (AAJ is the largest and most influential international resource for jazz online) review of Jazz Icons which states that the book '*will no doubt change the way many of us perceive our relationship with jazz*':  
<http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=38363#.UUjclzfPyFA>  
and more recent view where Whyton's work is heralded as part of a new wave of influential scholarship – there's also mention of Whyton's work on festivals:  
<http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=43973&pg=3>
- i) All About Jazz's review of Jazz Icons which states that the book '*will no doubt change the way many of us perceive our relationship with jazz*' and their recent review of the *Rhythm Changes* project and *Rethinking Jazz Cultures* Conference. For example, the journalist Ian Patterson states, '*Jazz needs academia and more projects like Rhythm Changes to help make sense of the picture, to provide greater understanding, and no doubt, too, greater appreciation of jazz music, wherever it is played and listened to.*' See  
<http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=44442#.UX99MUo-qFA>
- j) London Jazz Festival brochure 2010.