

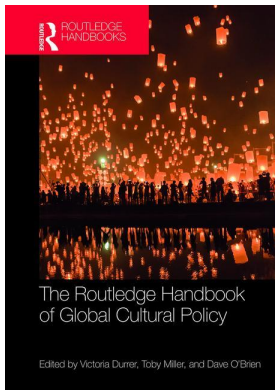
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Uneasy alliances

Popular music and cultural policy in the 'music city'

*Catherine Strong, Shane Homan,
Seamus O'Hanlon and John Tebbutt*

Introduction

Administrators and policy makers in a number of cities worldwide (for example, Austin, Berlin and Liverpool) are increasingly seeking to utilise local music to promote their cities' cultures and increase tourism and trade. Designation as a 'music city', 'sonic city' or indeed as a formally recognised UNESCO 'City of Music' is seen as a means of harnessing local music cultures for the purposes of city branding and economic development. The concept of the 'music city' clearly has utility for governments and policy makers; however, a critical understanding of its parameters and usage has yet to be developed. In this chapter, we draw on a range of disciplinary traditions to examine the concept of the 'music city' with a view to understanding how cultural policy is changing in relation to popular music and how in turn the process of formally recognising music as a driver of cultural policy may be changing the relationships of governments, those working in the music industry, musicians, and the wider community.

In concentrating on Melbourne, Australia, as a useful contemporary music city case study we will assess the role of popular music in the city's dual status as music and cultural capital of Australia. The chapter will address how localised cultural and media industries intersect with state and federal strategies and discourses of popular culture and heritage. Beyond local music economies, Melbourne has become part of global music city circuits, in terms of both promotional discourse and policy intervention. For example, in November 2015, the City of Melbourne Council hosted *We Can Get Together: Melbourne Music Symposium* with national and international academic, industry and government workers to discuss global music city policy issues. Melbourne leads global debates in noise complaint mechanisms for live venues.¹ Coupled with the recent Victorian state government² funding package for popular music, the city represents an intriguing case study where future industrial growth is dependent upon the reconciliation of stubborn local problems (especially urban planning issues) and the ability to more forcefully enter into global branding and trade networks.

After giving an overview of the development and use of the concept of the 'music city', we concentrate on three aspects of popular music in Melbourne: government policy, media

(in the specific form of radio), and heritage, as a way of illustrating how Melbourne has staked its claims as a music city. We will demonstrate how this claim has developed in a haphazard and uneven way, with government policies never clearly mapping out a path in this direction. Indeed, even at the current moment when policies are clearly in support of promoting Melbourne as a music city there are contradictions in, and unintended consequences of, policy decisions that work against the city securing its position in this regard. In presenting this case study, we contribute to international debates about the role of the neoliberal city and state in protecting or supporting popular music making. We also interrogate the role of the broader community in the creation of the music city and question the extent to which the competing imperatives of the two are compatible. In discussing ‘popular music’, we are referring to music that traces its development back to the rock and roll of the 1950s, in terms of its musical structure, embeddedness in mass production processes (although not always mass produced) and cultural signifiers, particularly in relation to youth culture (see Regev 2013).

Framing the music city

As the most sophisticated configuration of human existence, the city enjoys obvious advantages, primarily density (of peoples, structures and networks). Particularly since the 1700s, the experience of city life has been layered with governmental, social and corporate developments that attest to modernity, incorporating an increasingly global interdependence in finance, trade, transport, communication and other systems of the ‘modern’ city. While the continuing implications of half the global population residing in cities cannot be discussed in depth in this chapter, it is clear that cities are in fierce competition with each other in ways that proceed well beyond specific economic impacts and incorporate concerns about the symbolic and cultural. This is evident, for example, in the various ways in which administrators seek to produce distinctive brands for their cities for national and international consumption (see, for example, Dinard 2015), which are then harnessed to attract workers, artists or tourists.

It has been argued that the contemporary city will anchor “increasingly global and mobile culture, with locative dynamics that secure culture’s real-time, life embodiment” (Hartley et al. 2013, p. 44). This marks a distinct turn from previous understandings of the relationships between arts, culture and the city. The first tranche of work on this topic in media, cultural/urban studies examined how cities can exploit a mixture of arts and culture in order to position themselves as global leaders (e.g. Landry 1990; Landry and Bianchini 1995; Hall 1998). In this way, in specific historical periods, cities such as Berlin, London and Vienna defined themselves through distinctive mixtures of design, art, music or literature, which in turn added impetus to their existing strengths in cultural and other trade networks. This allowed us to conceive of the ‘literature city’, the ‘information city’, or the ‘film city’ (Hall 1998), where “flexible specialisation” (Scott 2006, p. 3) enabled regional and global advantage.

The second tranche of work took up the challenge of exploring the implications of this from cultural geography, economic geography, cultural studies and urban planning perspectives (e.g. Kong 2000). Much of this work has focused on the particular roles of culture and creativity in the new urban economy; the geo-spatial patterns of creative work (networks and clusters); the unique geography and infrastructure of successful cities; and the proper role for government (Scott 2006). It also paralleled a shift in urban planning studies, where a focus on ‘quality of life’ and the construction of the ‘right’ infrastructure to attract the creative workforce (Florida 2002) were emphasised as cities competed to build effective brands.

Ignoring many of the dubious claims in modelling and in relation to outcomes, ‘creative’ or ‘cultural’ city discourses have been adopted by local and national governments to an astonishing extent. This raises questions about the role of the state in promoting creativity and in establishing governance platforms that enhance cultural production and consumption, as well as about how individual cities – and cultural industries – literally find their place within larger national, regional and global networks.

Popular music is associated with a useful set of cultural industries and activities through which we can examine how artistic creativity operates in contemporary cities and whether music as creative practice offers anything more to city administrators than an instrument of employment and/or urban regeneration. The concept of the ‘music city’ has entered the cabinet rooms of all tiers of government in the last two decades. This represents more than an offshoot of creative industries discourse. Music has become a prominent vehicle for staking claims about how culture can construct unique civic, industrial and individual identities, evident in the histories (and current touristic myth-making) of cities such as Detroit, Liverpool, London, Nashville, New York, Manchester and Berlin. Some of these older music cities, foundational sites for particular genres and subcultures, remain “global music cities” (Watson 2008) yet are being challenged by others seeking their own industrial niche. For example, Seville, Glasgow, Bogota, Gent, Bologna, Brazzaville, Hamamatsu, Mannheim and Hannover have all been designated as ‘Cities of Music’ by UNESCO as part of its ‘creative city’ networks.

What does the music city mean within local and international contexts? Key UNESCO criteria include the visible promotion of festivals, music education, genres and the prominence and prevalence of the cities’ music industries (UNESCO 2014). A recent report – which described itself as “a universal ‘roadmap’ to create and develop Music Cities anywhere in the world” – from the International Federation of Phonographic Industries (IFPI) and Music Canada argues that “a Music City, by its simplest definition, is a place with a growing music economy” (IFPI/Music Canada 2015, np). This includes “[a]rtists and musicians; a thriving music scene; access to spaces and places; a receptive and engaged audience; and record labels and other music-related businesses” (along with state support, infrastructure and education programs) (ibid. p. 13). Part reassurance about the need for music in healthy creative cities and part primer for emerging music cities, the *Mastering of a Music City* report makes recommendations for fostering a city’s music strengths that include “music-friendly and musician-friendly policies; a Music Office or Officer; a Music Advisory Board; engaging the broader music community to get their buy-in and support; access to spaces and places; and audience development” (IFPI/Music Canada 2015, pp. 13–15). In making these suggestions, it is implied that governmental support will be repaid in various ways, including through an increase in employment, tourism, urban regeneration and technological innovation, as well as other less tangible benefits.

Unsurprisingly, industry calls to (re)direct governmental resources to music tend to gloss over the more complex implications and consequences. First, the discourse is often one of inevitability –that constructing the music city is a natural outcome of organic structures and the ‘already there’. Yet rarely are competing cultural claims (why not the film city, or the literature city?) made or tested, while the benefits claimed for local and national economies remain a very inexact science. Second, including music in urban planning in the name of ‘vibrancy’ can produce very mixed outcomes. The mix of planning, zoning and heritage discourses has always been controversial in terms of live music venues (e.g. Chevigny 1993). The original Florida (2002) thesis (the creative class reinvigorating ‘lapsed’ cities in both lifestyle and economic terms) in some cases has worked too well. Gentrification in urban

CBD areas is now a common global problem for live music venues facing closure from noise complaints and rising land rent; and for musicians unable to afford to live near their live performance spaces. In this outcome, we see the positioning of the artist as “shiny prophet (evidence of new populations of middle class consumerism) or villain (evidence of new populations of middle class consumerism!)” (Homan 2016, np). Indeed, Florida has slightly revised his original thesis to acknowledge that “the benefits of highly skilled regions accrue mainly to knowledge, professional and creative workers”; the non-creative and non-professional classes are particularly affected by rising land and housing costs due to the more intensive clustering of talent within cities (Florida 2013).

Third, the global preoccupation with licensing, noise complaint mechanisms and land use planning attests to the fact that often a more correct label for music cities is ‘live music cities’. Austin (the self-proclaimed ‘live music capital of the world’) remains the best example in terms of leveraging their collection of music bars, honky tonks and nightclubs as global markers of difference, reinforced by their annual South by SouthWest music industry gathering. However, a few cities are developing other specialisations, with Mannheim, Montreal and Groningen exploiting strong music education networks and high youth populations (de Rook and Nasra 2015; Rauch 2015). Berlin has also highlighted the role of music ‘tech start-ups’ within its Smart City Berlin initiatives (Zimmer 2015).

Fourth, even as music city policies are increasingly globalised, driven by the growing number of music city conferences, policy summits and inter-city visits by administrative leaders, local contingencies must still be taken into account. For example, the Chinese and Shanghai governments are determined to construct the city as an emerging music capital; yet the music capital’s substantial advantages in education and high art performance venues are more than offset by highly restrictive state control of recording production and media exposure for local musicians. Finally, the music city is an interesting means by which to dissect cultural funding discourses. Its rise has proven to be an effective way for popular music industries to gain governmental attention and largesse within local and national budgets where classical music retains considerable privileges and funding. Continually mindful of the competing demands upon their annual budgets, state and city governments are often receptive to regulatory reform, but not to increasing financial allocations. These global trends all inform the way Melbourne has been framed as a music city, and we will now turn to a more in-depth consideration of the local conditions.

The historical context: deindustrialisation, urban crisis and the ‘cultural turn’ in Melbourne

As with many of the international cities that have sought to leverage their cultural and musical assets for economic advantage, in Melbourne the turn to culture as economic ‘sav-
iour’ was a product of crisis rather than a grassroots evolutionary movement. In line with other would-be ‘music cities’ such as Liverpool, Manchester and Detroit, the end of the Fordist era of manufacturing production was not kind to Melbourne (O’Hanlon 2009). As in those other cities, Melbourne’s postwar prosperity was based on manufacturing, especially of low-value added consumer goods. But in the face of reductions in tariff protection and the emergence of the new manufacturing economies of Asia and elsewhere, these industries – mostly inner city based – went into severe decline in the 1970s and 1980s. Concurrently, Melbourne’s other major economic strength as a national business and financial centre came under strain as Sydney emerged as Australia’s major gateway and regional financial centre. The relocation of a number of media and cultural organisations to Sydney in the 1980s saw

Melbourne struggle for a defining role in the nascent post-industrial global era. The world-wide recessions of the early 1980s and again in the early 1990s were felt particularly hard in Melbourne, especially the inner area, which had suffered significant job losses and population declines from the mid-1970s onwards (O'Hanlon 2009).

Again in line with international trends, local and state government responses to these crises involved both a commitment to free market, neo-liberal economic restructuring. Along with a withdrawal of financial support for declining manufacturing industries, there was, contradictorily, a mostly publicly funded policy of transforming the economic and cultural profile of the inner city through major programs of cultural and morphological change (O'Hanlon 2010). In Melbourne, first a social democratic government in the 1980s and then a more radical free market regime in the early 1990s oversaw major cultural projects designed to enhance the city's vitality and tourist appeal, including the construction of a new museum, a new concert hall and recital centre, new and refurbished art galleries, and the redevelopment of the State Library as a key locus of the city's and state's literary heritage. The library now hosts the Wheeler Centre, which since 2008 has been the headquarters of the city's UNESCO 'City of Literature' office. The early 2000s also saw the opening of Federation Square, a government-funded, architecturally striking arts, leisure and cultural hub adjacent to the city's main railway station (O'Hanlon 2012).

These same governments sought to revitalise the inner city's economy and 'vibe' by committing resources to the cultivation of an arts and creative industries agenda through the support of major official and more grassroots cultural activities and events. At a state level, official support involved among other things the inauguration of an annual writers' festival and sponsorship of an annual 'international festival of the arts'. At a grassroots level, funding was made available for a range of community festivals, mostly in local 'ethnic' shopping strips and neighbourhoods, mainly in the inner city (O'Hanlon 2009). The grassroots cultural policy also recognised and provided funding to more 'street-based' endeavours, including Melbourne's then-emerging national strength in stand-up comedy. The major outcome of this was the inauguration of an annual Comedy Festival in 1987 – now the third largest annual comedy festival in the world. Perhaps most importantly for the purposes of this chapter, various governments – although mostly at that stage at the municipal level – recognised and sought to capitalise on the importance of rock and pop music to the creative and night time economy of local streets and neighbourhoods. A series of street festivals celebrating local music scenes was inaugurated in a number of declining inner city areas.

The St Kilda Festival was once such early initiative, inaugurated by the local municipal council in 1980 in recognition of the musical and cultural vitality of a suburb that was home to musicians and a series of important local and national live music venues including the Crystal Ballroom, the Esplanade and Prince of Wales hotels, and the glamorous but fading 3000-seat Art Deco-era Palais Theatre (Upton 2001; Aizen 2004). In the three decades since, the St Kilda Festival has become one of the largest street gatherings in Australia, a week-long carnival that culminates in 'Festival Sunday', where more than 400,000 people regularly gather to watch bands and DJs perform on numerous public stages and multiple other venues around the neighbourhood (St Kilda Festival). Similarly, council-sponsored local festivals, such as the Darebin Music Feast, have become common across inner suburban and wider metropolitan areas, as we shall see below. As a consequence, gentrification and rising property values have priced musicians and other artists out of their old haunts in inner-city neighbourhoods such as St Kilda (Shaw 2013).

More recently, both conservative (the Liberal Party in Australian parlance) and social democratic (the Labor Party) state governments, as well as the formally politically unaligned

City of Melbourne municipal council have sought to recognise and harness the music industry for economic (and political) purposes. The City of Melbourne's Music Strategy 2014–17 was, for instance, developed in recognition that “Melbourne is a city where music matters” and where “music makes a huge contribution to the social, cultural and economic fabric of the city” (City of Melbourne 2014, p. 6). The strategy thus seeks to harness the city's music cultures and concomitant economic impact in order to “promote Melbourne's strengths as a music destination” that can “take its rightful place alongside some of the great music cities of the world including Austin, Berlin, Nashville and Toronto” (City of Melbourne 2014, p. 6).

In the state of Victoria, a long-term Labor government developed a policy called ‘Victoria Rocks’ in 2007, which provided support and grants for emerging and more established musicians ‘to break into the industry to further their careers’ (Creative Victoria 2007). The same policy sponsored the launch of the annual Melbourne Music Festival and the free ‘Victoria Rocks’ concert in October 2010, which was designed to showcase artists who had received funding through the program. The festival was held, however, in the lead-up to a state election campaign where the contrasts between these initiatives and the effect of other government policies on live music were becoming obvious. Melbourne's live music cultures appeared threatened as venues struggled to keep operating in the face of new liquor licensing and crowd control measures introduced by the state government in 2009. Those concerns were most vividly shown when 10,000–20,000 people attended a protest rally in the city centre in February 2010 in response to the imminent closure of a long-standing venue, The Tote, in inner urban Collingwood (Donovan 2010). SLAM (Save Live Australian Music), a lobby group that organised the rally along with Fair Go 4 Live Music (organised by venue owner Jon Perring), became an important driver of policy change. This has particularly been the case in relation to the introduction of ‘agent of change’ regulations by the state parliament. These regulations work to reduce the impact of noise complaints on venues by putting the onus on new developments to ensure their residents will not be affected by noise, rather than requiring pre-existing venues to change their practices or install expensive soundproofing. The fact that the government felt a need to respond to the concerns of musicians and fans is perhaps indicative of a growing political recognition of the importance of music to the culture and economy of Melbourne, especially for its inner region where constituents are increasingly voting for the more left-wing Greens political party rather than Labor.

Having lost the 2010 election, in the lead-up to the 2014 poll Victoria's then Labor Opposition Leader (now Premier) Daniel Andrews sought to present himself as a champion of Melbourne's music scenes by reintroducing the ‘Victoria Rocks’ program that had been defunded by the Liberal Party government. More specifically, in recognition of Melbourne's place as the ‘music capital of Australia’ Andrews promised to create a ‘Music Market’ as a ‘one-stop-music hub for recording and distribution, open to artists, venues, managers and industry development organizations’ (ALP Victoria 2014). The Music Market was also to be “the headquarters of a new Victorian Music Development Office, providing leadership on investment, grants, exports and music business development” (ALP Victoria 2014). More substantially, and perhaps harking back to older policies of combining grassroots funding for artists with a commitment to a spatial outcome, the Music Market was to provide “space for performances, skills development and recording assistance, and facilities for industry peak bodies, not-for-profit industry organisations and support the values of contemporary music”. And perhaps most importantly it was to house a proposed Australian Rock and Roll Hall of Fame (ALP Victoria 2014). Most of these proposals were announced in mid-2015 as part of what has now become known as ‘Music Works’, a “\$12.2 million investment in Victoria's contemporary music sector” (Creative Victoria 2015).

In Melbourne, as in other post-industrial cities internationally, the success of such government-sponsored cultural initiatives has been a dual-edged sword. Aside from the question of whether popular music should ever allow itself to become hostage to mainstream politics and politicians, there is also the question of whether there is a place for such music in the new, more wealthy and gentrified inner city of the post-industrial era. In Melbourne as elsewhere urban renewal and cultural industry policies have seen once-declining areas that were home to various waves of immigrants, working class people and students, or in the case of Central Business District (CBD), virtually resident-free, become increasingly economically prosperous and culturally vibrant – and very expensive. One result of this rapid uplift in land and residential value has been a major influx of new and wealthy residents; they move especially into thousands of new and highly visible apartment complexes that have been built inside of or instead of defunct former factories (O’Hanlon 2016). A result of this development is in the displacement of the creative communities that played a part in making these areas attractive (Shaw 2009). Additionally, as cultural planner Kate Shaw has extensively documented, many of these new developments are adjacent to existing live music venues, some decades old. As she notes, gentrification means formerly under-utilised spaces “are under pressure from the raft of issues ... that affect gentrifying cities the world over”, such as noise complaints or simply being located on increasingly valuable (and developable) land (Shaw 2013, p. 337). As will be seen again below in relation to music heritage, this highlights the contrast between Melbourne as a music city where culture is valued and Melbourne as part of a neoliberal, free market economy where the benefits that musicians bring to a community are not generally rewarded financially.

Community radio and the music city

While the previous section looked at the political aspects of how music policy relating to Melbourne has developed over time, including how it has been shaped by global economic trends, such top-down accounts can fail to take into account specific local forms of music making and dissemination. In Melbourne’s case, we suggest community radio has been a crucial marker of the city’s musical vitality and will use this as a way to unpack some of the specificities of Melbourne’s music scene, thus adding depth to our analysis. Music of course is a critical global cultural product that has emerged with media technologies and the electronic packaging of entertainment. Given the almost symbiotic link between music and radio, it is surprising that this medium has often been overlooked when infrastructure is studied regarding the formation of music cultures in local areas. The 2015 IFPI/Music Canada *Mastering of a Music City* report found that “[s]trong community radio supporting local independent music” was often mentioned with regard to elements that support a music city’s success; however, it was not ranked as ‘essential’ or ‘important’ (p. 17).

There are several reasons media and specifically radio are not factors in music city analysis. First, contemporary commercial radio has generally forgone badging content as ‘local’ in the search for larger audiences driven by demographic data. National markets can mean that radio interests are antithetical to city-based cultural industries. Further, music as a global industry prioritises ‘band brand manufacturing’ rather than growing a solid fan base through local audiences. Finally, the study of radio has always suffered from the suspicion that it is nothing more than a technical distribution method that has no role in the affective aggregation that underpins a fan base in music. More recently the introduction of a range of digital formats for music distribution – from on-demand access to ‘celestial jukeboxes’ to personalised Internet radio where a listener ‘seeds’ a service by providing a single artist or

genre to develop a customisable online music stream – led many to foretell the imminent death of radio, particularly local radio. In not giving media serious consideration, however, many of these analyses were unable to address alternative forms of cultural contributions that sit outside the mainstream circulation of music. In doing so they contribute to legitimising particular forms of music as relevant to music city cultures only if they are commercially successful. With this, policies that address success in terms of playlists and audience numbers tend to support industrial forms of music distribution and contribute to the tensions between music cultures and corporate outcomes.

If death is a characteristic of radio, then the medium is the pre-eminent zombie media: always on the verge of extinction but never finally buried. While networked, commercial, formatted audio broadcasts may well have nothing ‘live’ about them, radio also provides the limit case of music for the development of paradigmatic city-based music scenes. Nashville was initially placed on the music map by its radio program *Grand Ole Opry*. In the early days of radio in the United States music that came to be known as ‘country’ was broadcast across the nation by the Nashville-based radio program. It was originally one of many programs based on American ‘barn dance’ formats, but *Grand Ole Opry* had the benefit of a powerful transmitter that provided a clear signal to listeners. The popularity of the program helped propel ‘country music’ into a nation-wide genre and facilitated the development of Nashville as an important music ‘scene’ (Florida 2002). Now Nashville ranks as one of the most successful operations in ‘branding’ a city through music (IFPI/Music Canada 2015, p. 86).

In Australia, the radio industry’s role in promoting culture has been recognised in federal policy. The potential for national popular culture markets to be flooded by products from overseas, initially Europe and Britain and then from the 1950s America in particular, has motivated policy-makers to support Australian cultural production. Australia has legislated for locally composed music in radio broadcasts since the 1940s. The 1970s saw, as we noted earlier, pop music secure an increased importance for the recapitalisation of Australian urban cultural economies. This was reflected in cultural policies that led to the introduction of a performance quota for local music compositions that contributed to what the regulator described as an “efflorescence in Australian popular music” (ABT 1986, p. 9; Wilson 2013, pp. 102–103). Still, the larger cities of Sydney and Melbourne were the key to a successful local music industry even while significant music scenes were developing in other Australian cities (see Stafford 2004; Brabazon 2005).

The 1970s saw a rapid expansion in Australian radio. A reformist federal Labor government, elected in 1972, opened up the FM band to radio broadcasting for the first time and introduced a range of ‘experimental’ broadcasters including limited commercial stations in Sydney and Melbourne, specialist youth and multicultural broadcasters and not-for-profit public (later community) broadcasters. While a number of these experiments faltered (notably the limited commercial stations), others, such as the community broadcasting movement, grew, or in the case of the youth and multicultural broadcasters, were integrated into the government-funded public broadcasting system. The introduction of FM competitors to the commercial sector led to a significant shake out in the industry with a number of long-standing stations closing within 12 months of the new FM music broadcasters coming to air. While community broadcasters and the government-funded youth station drew on the burgeoning suburban and inner city live music scenes to engage new listeners and develop important relationships with urban subcultures, commercial broadcasters began to withdraw from the field.

By the early 1980s Melbourne community stations had achieved a significant grassroots base and strong links with the city’s music scenes, in part because the government-funded

youth station, 2JJ (Double J), only broadcast in Sydney. Whereas Melbourne community stations such as 3RRR and later 3PBS relied on subscribers and listener support for both capital and volunteer labour, Double J was able to secure salaried staff and access to public broadcasting equipment and technicians. It became the focus for a dynamic youth culture in Sydney while metropolitan-wide community stations focused on fine music and education. Meanwhile in Melbourne, without a government-funded youth broadcaster in the city the economically precarious community stations developed an extensive volunteer-based gift economy (including music give-aways and performance tickets) to support their operations. By the time Double J developed a national network in 1989 (as FM station triple j), RRR in Melbourne was so well established it held its own in audience share (Phillips 2006, pp. 214–17). Competition and consolidation in the commercial radio industry saw that sector move away from ‘new music’ (at this time largely punk, new wave and emerging hip-hop artists) into safer Gold and Adult Contemporary formats. Straitened economic times in the 1980s led to the commercial radio industry lobbying against the Australian music quota, which was eventually rolled into a self-regulatory system.

While commercial broadcasters can be crucial to the long-term sustainability of specific artists, commercial cultures, with their aversion to risk, often find it difficult to link with local, independent music cultures that do not necessarily rely on mainstream success. Melbourne community radio presents a special case for a music media that has a significant integration of artists, radio presenters, labels, promoters and programs. The city has one of the longest-standing continuous community sectors, with 2016 marking 40 years of licensed broadcasting. 3RRR was one of the first stations licensed and while ostensibly under an educational licence, the broadcasts adopted contemporary music and “quickly became identified with the punk/new wave sound” (Phillips 2006, p. 16). Soon after the first community licences were awarded the community-based Progressive Broadcasting Society (PBS) formed to broadcast “specialist, quality and unrepresented music” (Middlemast 2004). After gaining a licence in 1979, the cooperative that managed the station moved to a venue in St Kilda, the Prince of Wales Hotel, where they broadcast live concerts of local and touring bands for six years before moving to a cooperative-owned building in 1985. Along with 3CR, which began as a commercial broadcasting experiment in the early 1970s but was maintained as a federation of community organisations, and ‘fine music’ broadcaster 3MBS (also licensed in 1976), these community stations form an ecology of media that supports local cultural events and music broadcasts.

The commitment to new music in the case of 3RRR and under-represented music at 3PBS has in particular allowed these stations to develop loyal listeners, who provide a core subscriber base for ongoing financial support and volunteer labour. The stations developed close relationships with music promoters and venues, with RRR becoming an important Melbourne-based media partner for touring bands in the 1980 and 1990s. City music businesses and cultural institutions became important sponsors attracted by the station’s youth base (Phillips 2006, p. 102). A number of local city-based musicians became program presenters on both of these stations. PBS attracted aficionados of various musical styles who tuned in to their specialist programs. Moreover, its arrangement with the Prince of Wales Hotel gave it access to a 300-seat theatre from which it broadcast live music under the title of PBS Radio Theatre. The cooperative formed an Outside Broadcast (OB) group that drew in technicians, sound engineers and music mixers who became crucial to the ongoing commitment to live music at the station (Paine 1989). The longevity of both stations demonstrates the value for music of media that incorporate active audience participation into their programming strategies. In this way, community radio, working within a ‘gift economy’ at

the margins of mainstream cultural enterprises, was able to graft onto and reflect local music cultures of the city. The strength of RRR enhances Melbourne's claims to be a music city, and despite the station's independence from government structures it can still be deployed as part of arguments for the city's music city status. In this way, grassroots and community activity can align with policy objectives. However, as will be demonstrated in the following section, this is not always the case.

Laying claim to music heritage

One important way in which music comes to be seen as central to the identity of a place is through the way it can create a connection to the past. The idea that a city is a 'music city' will be strengthened through demonstrations that music is not only important to the city now, but has been for a long time and is central to how the identity of the city has been shaped (see Bennett 2010; Roberts 2014). Indeed, one of the recommendations made in the first report commissioned by the Melbourne City Council (MCC) when developing their music strategy highlighted "improv[ing] information relating to music heritage and tourism for city residents" as a key factor in supporting music (Homan and Newton 2010). This connection of heritage and tourism reflects the way music heritage is increasingly being used as a tourist drawcard around the world, as official processes replace or complement the fan-driven pilgrimages that had been taking place for decades. Unlike somewhere like Liverpool, where the music heritage of the city has been a main driver behind its designation as a 'music city' and key to many of its tourism successes, in Melbourne, on the local and state levels, this aspect of the music city agenda has been developing only slowly. However, there are ways in which Melbourne is moving towards the greater incorporation of popular music into heritage discourses, mainly due so far to the activities of members of the community rather than because of official actions.

The most notable development has been a move towards naming public places, particularly laneways, after (usually) deceased Australian musicians. To date there have been four such namings. AC/DC Lane in the CBD, dedicated in 2004, was the first of these and as such was the most controversial, with a long process and some community opposition leading up to its establishment (Frost 2008). Paul Hester Walk followed soon after in 2005. Hester was the drummer from Crowded House who committed suicide in that year, and the walkway named after him is near where he lived in the suburb of Elwood (under the auspices of Port Phillip Council). More recently, in 2015, Chrissy Amphlett (1959–2013), singer from the band The Divinyls, was commemorated with Amphlett Lane in the Melbourne CBD, and Rowland S. Howard Lane, situated in the seaside suburb of St. Kilda, was named after the late Birthday Party guitarist (1959–2009) (for an extended discussion of these namings, see Strong 2015). Given that street names are for the most part reserved for significant historical figures, this trend (also observed in other western cities) gives a clear indication of the growing importance of popular music in constructing the identity of a city or nation. Melbourne's laneways are also seen as being a unique aspect of the city's landscape, promoted as tourist destinations in ways that tie specific local music histories that also reinforce the centrality of music to the city.

The processes leading up to the naming of these lanes generated much publicity and eventually attracted political interest. In the 2014 Victorian state election campaign, Labor candidate Martin Foley became involved with the Rowland S. Howard Lane initiative. This was in the context of support for music being a key policy area for both major parties in this election (see Music Victoria 2014). The victory of the Labor Party saw considerable funding provided for other measures relating to music heritage. This included \$400,000 for a project called 'Rocking the Laneways' that was about furthering the connection between music and

public spaces not only in Melbourne but throughout Victoria. A further \$1.3 million was earmarked for an Australian hall of fame (as mentioned above).

These limited moves towards celebrating Melbourne's popular music history put it somewhat behind, for example, Brisbane, which already has a music 'Walk of Fame' in its music precinct near the CBD, as well as much more prominent public spaces named after musicians such as the Go-Between Bridge and Bee Gees Way. The latter is perhaps an exemplar of how public spaces can go beyond simply being named after musicians, in that it incorporates a permanent display about the career of the band, as well as bronze statues of the musicians. Currently the Melbourne lanes have little in the way of drawcards in the laneways beyond the name itself. The question of the utilisation of the laneways, and particularly in ways that strengthens the music/Melbourne nexus they are designed to create, was not previously considered and is only now being researched further (see Strong et al., 2016).

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that until the Labor Party commitments, the heritage activities relating to popular music have been driven by the community, rather than being initiated by councils or state governments. All of the laneway namings have come about as a result of campaigning by fans or family members and friends of the musicians. This reflects the fact that until recently only fans were preserving popular music's past and are still working in huge numbers as unofficial archivers and curators (Baker and Huber 2013). Given the nature of popular music, it is considered vitally important that audiences and fans be taken seriously and be consulted (Leonard 2010). However, the fact that there has been no consideration of process in relation to the construction of heritage sites in Melbourne means there is a possibility that heritage-related activities are left in the hands of a small group of active members of the Melbourne music community, people who have particularly high levels of cultural capital in the city or who are adept at drawing attention to their causes. The campaigns for AC/DC Lane and Amphlett Lane, for example, were driven by people with strong connections to the media and to key figures in Melbourne's music scenes. This raises questions about how to ensure that, with the new schemes, community and audience input continues and in a way that incorporates as many different voices as possible. When music heritage is used as part of a story about a 'music city', there can be a tendency to emphasise certain types of music that suit an official narrative (see Cohen and Roberts 2014). The community-driven nature of the street namings may place Melbourne in a position to continue on this inclusive path, but more questions still need to be asked about how decisions are being made about music and heritage, and who makes them.

Such decisions need to be made in a context where heritage making is happening independently of official processes and where at times the idea of Melbourne as a music city can be deployed as a way of challenging decisions made by people in positions of power. The championing of music by the various councils and state government has also been used as a way of opposing decisions they make and drawing attention to ways in which governments are working against, rather than for, popular music-making. One example of this is the threatened demolition of the Palace Theatre, a mid-sized venue in the CBD. In 2012, it was sold to a property development company who planned to replace the building with a high-rise luxury hotel. This proposal met with vehement community opposition, and a 'Save the Palace' group was established to try to save the venue. This group has deployed a number of strategies, from vigils and demonstrations through to administrative appeals. A key defence has emphasised the heritage aspects of the building itself rather than its purpose as a venue. However, the group has also focused on the disjunction between the rhetoric of the 'music city' and the closure of key venues such as the Palace. In arguments put forward by Palace supporters at Melbourne City Council meetings where the fate of the venue was debated, the

damage that the loss of the venue would do to Melbourne's international reputation as an important music hub was raised often, as was the apparent contrast between the Council's stated support for music and their willingness to let venues like this close. Although the final fate of the Palace has yet to be decided, this case shows how a commitment to building Melbourne's image as a 'music city' can be utilised – in conjunction with ideas about heritage – by community members with a stake in the local music scene to put pressure on governments to actually follow through on their statements about supporting music.

Conclusion

There are many important factors in considering what makes a music city, how it develops and how it is maintained. This chapter has only had space to consider how Melbourne was consciously developed as a cultural hub in the post-industrial era and how radio and heritage have been located within discourse around the concept of the 'music city' that has developed in the last decade or so. While limited in scope, these case studies are a way of demonstrating the role policy has played in framing Melbourne as a music city, but also how music-making at the grassroots and community levels in the city often exists separately from, and sometimes in opposition to, its positioning as an economic and branding good. As such, while current policy-makers at local and state levels clearly recognise the value of popular music in making the city economically competitive and culturally distinctive in a global marketplace, the intersections between policy and the development of a music city are far from clear-cut. While the infrastructure developments designed to reinvigorate Melbourne in the 1980s laid the groundwork for a focus on culture in the city, the way that an economically thriving city can be counter-productive to cultural activity, as demonstrated through the problems associated with the gentrification of the inner city, is still being grappled with by policy-makers. Melbourne's music city status is bolstered by the presence of stations like RRR, which, although originally created in response to government initiatives, have long been self-sustaining. The way that cities can benefit from the activities undertaken in communities and the extent to which those benefits are enjoyed by those who create them is a question that has rarely been considered to date (the position of musicians needs to be considered in this regard also). Popular music heritage is something that can be used by or against policy-makers and where the difference between the rhetoric and the reality of a music city can become apparent.

As Melbourne seeks to consolidate its position as a global music city in the late 2010s, and as popular music is increasingly on the radar of its policy-makers, we are presented with a unique opportunity to gain a greater understanding of how policy interacts with culture. While more partnerships are being forged between governments and those representing the music sector, it cannot be taken for granted that such outcomes will work to the advantage of music makers and audiences in the city. More research is required to understand how such alliances shape music-making in the city and the extent to which the community and musicians feel their voices are being fully heard in an environment where music is increasingly framed as an economic good rather than as a fundamental aspect of social life. Incorporating more information about how different aspects of Melbourne's music scene have helped to shape its identity as a music city – for example, venues, important bands, other types of media such as street press and so forth – will provide greater depth to our understanding and knowledge of the relationship of policy, actual music-making practices and the global image of the city. Similar detailed case studies of the experiences and practices of other music cities in different social and cultural contexts globally have clear potential for future research collaborations among scholars of the contemporary city.

Notes

- 1 Cities such as Edinburgh are examining Melbourne's recent Agent of Change noise law for possible local implementation (City of Edinburgh 2015, p. 13).
- 2 Australia has three levels of government: federal, state and local.

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