**TWENTY FIRST CENTURY MUSICAL GENRE: A REFLECTION OF MUSICOLOGISTS DISCONTENT**

 Olufemi Akanji Olaleye PhD

 olufemi.olaleye@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng.com

 Music Technology Department

 Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro

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**Abstract**

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**Introduction**

At various times in the history of human race, one of the means through which humanity expresses the deeper, if not the deepest, part of their souls and feelings is through music. Music expression goes beyond what words, pictures, sculpture and painting among others can do. That is why music in its various forms and versions due to human diversity continues to attract attention and the engagement of human reasoning, intellect, and potentials or talents. A number of general trends complement the characteristics diversity of music in different centuries, and they do not form a clear chronological sequence, instead, they are overlapping in development. Each generation of composers expresses different ideas, and within each generation several styles existed concurrently, while some important composers exploited and adopted more than one style during the course of a productive lifetime. In the various epochs in the history of music, each era seems to have developed general musical styles that constituted a sort of synthesis of what that age is believed to be the norm, or model, for the music of that time. However, this is not so for the twentieth century, because there are web of mixture of musical styles born out human discontents and experimentation of strange ideas in music. Such bewildering and mystifying variety of styles includes; avant garde, atonal music, electronic music, neo-classicism, chance music, impressionism, expressionism, computer generated music, aleatonic, and musique concrete.

 This paper takes a voyage into the humanity discontent of the old music or tonal music and the resultant musical genres of the 21stcentury music. Music is found in every known culture, past, and present, varying widely between times and places. The new wave of the twenty first century music encompasses an extremely diverse range of musical styles and approaches and societal attitudes. As a category, it most accurately describes the new field of young musicians open to experimentation and different musical forms. It has become evident that in the twentieth century the condition of art music in Western culture has undergone a transformation that few could have envisaged in previous years. The reasons for this transformation are many and varied including the influence of technology, the media, multiculturalism, and commercialism, the increased emphasis on visual media and various philosophical, ideological, social changes and humanity discontent. In musicology, the development of the various genres previously an abomination was as a result of humanity discontent, hence, the heartbeat of the present research.

A revolution occurred in 20th century musical listening, as the radio gained popularity worldwide and new media and technologies were developed to record, capture, reproduce and distribute music. Because music was no longer limited to concerts and clubs, it became possible for music artists to quickly gain fame nationwide and sometimes worldwide. Conversely, audiences were able to be exposed to a wider range of music than ever before, giving rise to the phenomenon of world music. Music performances became increasingly visual with the broadcast and recording of music videos and concerts. Music of all kinds also became increasingly portable. Headphones allowed people sitting next to each other to listen to entirely different performances or share the same performance. Copyright laws were strengthened, but new technologies also made it easier to record and reproduce copyrighted music illegally.

Modernism, a movement of self-conscious innovation, is the key factor that aid humanity discontent in the music of the 20th century. In musicology, composers of this period got tired of tonality which has been dominating the music scene since Middle Ages till Romantic period. The 20thcentury music started when the composers started drawing on an ever wider range of sources, including nature for inspiration and developed a wide variety of techniques. Music generally became more and more diverse in style as the century progressed. This trend has continued into the 20th century and no particular style is favoured and that, individuality is encouraged and open to a great many different styles. This musicological discontent and insatiability led to a variety of musical genres during 21st century. Therefore, music composers saw the need to invent what will be more relevant to the society. To achieve this most the previous music tonality rules were rejected and modified some of the few ideas that they found relevant to modern music. For example, chromaticism was brought into the music of the 21st century and harmonic basis of the 17th century was rejected with the adoption of new harmonic structures. This experiment and innovations can be seen in the works of Claude Debussy, Stravinsky, and Arnold Schoenberg. Perhaps the most significant philosophical change in attitudes about art music (and art in general) is that religion, for so long the "moral compass" of society, is no longer the potent force in guiding society in the matters of morality and ethics, resulting in what educator and writer referred to as a condition of "moral and cultural relativism." One result of an increasingly secular society has been that artists are less aware of the moral and ethical power of art and in many cases have slipped into a relativist mindset regarding their creative endeavours.

Music history across centuries and periods has shown a relative consonance in the occurrences of people’s way of life, events, ideas, and the likes. As a matter of fact, arts-related work, creativity and innovations are relatively a reflection of the changes or societal transition across periods. Music and all artistic and creative expression, is intrinsic to and an essential characteristic of human species-being. In humanity, including the most isolated tribal groups, have a form of music, it may be afar that music is likely to have been present in the ancestral population prior to the dispersal of humans around the world. Music is a form of language, a type of communication, a spiritual force, an aesthetic or artistic expression, social ritual, entertainment and recreational activity, and is socio-politically catalytic. The nature of socio-politically catalytic of human species that gave birth to web of assorted twenty first century music is the focus of this academic endeavour.

 Two major paradigm shifts in the very nature of music itself happened at the end of the 19thcentury and into the beginning of the 20thcentury, originating from the oppressed African-American nation. The African-American proletariat emerges with an attendant proletarian music that alters the vary parameters of music: time and pitch. This transformation naturally contributed and led to several musical genres that sprang up in the 21stcentury. Most importantly, the excessive use of chromatic tones and unconventional chords and harmony also contributed to the emergence of 21st century music. The resultant musical genres reflect human discontent to the previous tonal music. Experiment and diversity was the order of the day of the 21st century music with radicalism in the use of musical elements; creation of new scales, non triadic harmony and many eccentric techniques. This in essence brought more ‘musical-noises’ than music and in fact the 20th/21stcentury is revolutionary.

The revelation of musical art genres during the 20thcentury gave birth to the creative strategy of the 21stcentury. During the 20thcentury, composers started drawing on an ever wider range of sources for inspiration and developed a wide variety of techniques such musicians like Debussy, Schoenberg, Reich and Steve, Glass, Verese, Stockhausen and Xenekis. The works of each of these composers represent different aspects of the music of the 21stcentury and their music is too diverse to categorise or limit. Post-modernism continues to exert an influence on composers in the 21stcentury. These composers combine elements of diverse musical genres and compositional techniques, often alien to the composers own culture, into a unified and coherent body of works. In some cases, a composer labelled ‘classical’ may have started out in another discipline. For example, John Zorn started out as a performance artist and moved through various genres including jazz, hardcore punk, film and classical. All of these diverse styles appear in his works. Besides, Julian Anderson combines elements from many different musical genres and practices in his work. Elements of modernism, spectral music and electronic music are combined with elements of the folk music of Eastern Europe. Several composers are influenced all over the world. The influence of electronic music, numerology, unusual instrumentation and improvisation techniques are also apparent. Composers find inspiration from other sources too, especially nature, such as climate change, architecture, timbres and woods.

Furthermore, extended techniques such as over-pressure bowings coexist with lyrical folk songs and synthesises sounds. ‘Mashups’ created music were also common among composers; that is, the draws of music from Handel, Vivaldi, Rameau, and other baroque composers to create a combination of ‘pasticcio style’ and musical collage which also combines the baroque and the modern in its staging and costume. Mashups and musical collage of different periods calls into question ideas of authorship and originality, aiming it a thoroughly postmodern work. Interestingly, the music of Osvaldo Golijoy often combines the classical, modern and popular traditions with a single work juxtaposing contrasting styles – an important trend in the music of the 1960s onward. In the twentieth century, many composers continued to work in forms that derived from the nineteenth century, including Rachmaninoff and Edward Elgar. However, modernism in music became increasingly prominent and important; among the first modernists were Bartók, Stravinsky, and Ives. Schoenberg and other twelve-tone composers such as Alban Berg and Anton von Webern carried this trend to its most extreme form by abandoning tonality altogether, along with its traditional conception of melody and harmony. The Impressionists, including Debussy and Ravel, sought new textures and turned their back on traditional forms, while often retaining more traditional harmonic progressions. Others such as Francis Poulenc and the group of composers known as Les Six wrote music in opposition to the Impressionistic and Romantic ideas of the time. Composers such as Milhaud and Gershwin combined classical and jazz idioms. Others, such as Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Hindemith, Boulez, and Villa-Lobos expanded the classical palette to include more dissonant elements without going to the extremes of the twelve-tone and serial composers.

Composers were quick to adopt developing electronic technology. As early as the 1940s, composers such as Olivier Messiaen incorporated electronic instruments into live performance. Recording technology was used to produce art music, as well. The musique concrète of the late 1940s and 1950s was produced by editing together natural and industrial sounds. Steve Reich created music by manipulating tape recordings of people speaking, and later went on to compose process music for traditional instruments based on such recordings. Other notable pioneers of electronic music include Edgard Varèse, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Pauline Oliveros, Luigi Nono, and Krzysztof Penderecki. As more electronic technology matured, so did the music. Late in the century, the personal computer began to be used to create art music. In one common technique, a microphone is used to record live music, and a program processes the music in real time and generates another layer of sound. Pieces have also been written algorithmically based on the analysis of large data sets. Process music is linked to minimalism, a simplification of musical themes and development with motifs which are repeated over and over. Early minimalist compositions of the 1960s such as those by Terry Riley, Steve Reich, and Philip Glass stemmed from aleatoric and electronic music. Later, minimalism was adapted to a more traditional symphonic setting by composers including Reich, Glass, and John Adams. Minimalism was practiced heavily throughout the latter half of the century and has carried over into the twenty-first century, as well, with composers like Arvo Pärt, Henryk Górecki and John Taverner working in the more popular "mystic minimalism" variant.

## Folk music

Folk music, in the original sense of the term, is music by and of the people. Folk music arose, and best survives, in societies not yet affected by mass communication and the commercialization of culture. It normally was shared and performed by the entire community (not by a special class of expert or professional performers, possibly excluding the idea of amateurs), and was transmitted by word of mouth (oral tradition). During the twentieth century, the term folk music took on a second meaning: it describes a particular kind of popular music which is culturally descended from or otherwise influenced by traditional folk music, such as with Bob Dylan and other singer-songwriters. This music, in relation to popular music, is marked by a greater musical simplicity, acknowledgment of tradition, frequent socially conscious lyrics, and is similar to country, bluegrass, and other genres in style.

## Popular music

Popular music, sometimes abbreviated pop music, is music belonging to any of a number of musical styles that are broadly popular or intended for mass consumption and propagated over the radio and similar media—in other words, music that forms part of popular culture. Popular music dates at least as far back as the mid-nineteenth century. In the United States, much of it evolved from folk music and black culture. It includes Broadway tunes, ballads and singers such as Frank Sinatra. The relationship (particularly, the relative value) of classical music and popular music is a controversial question. To quote: "Neat divisions between 'folk' and 'popular', and 'popular' and 'art', are impossible to find... arbitrary criteria [are used] to define the complement of 'popular'.’Art' music, for example, is generally regarded as by nature complex, difficult, demanding; 'popular' music then has to be defined as 'simple', 'accessible', 'facile'. But many pieces commonly thought of as 'art' (Handel's 'Hallelujah Chorus', many Schubert songs, many Verdi arias) have qualities of simplicity. Moreover, composers such as Scott Joplin and George Gershwin tried to cater to both popular and high brow tastes, and for the most part succeeded at both. In addition, the argument is not new—composers as varied as Mozart and Arthur Sullivan had no difficulty in catering to popular taste when it was required, although their credentials as serious composers are also unchallenged. Classical music influenced popular music in movie scores, theater (see rock opera), popular songs (5th of Beethoven) and in the instrumentation used in popular music. Likewise, electronic instruments and styles were incorporated into some classical pieces.

### Blues

Blues is a vocal and instrumental musical form which evolved from African American spirituals, shouts, work songs and chants and has its earliest stylistic roots in West Africa. Blues has been a major influence on later American and Western popular music, finding expression in ragtime, jazz, big bands, rhythm and blues, rock and roll, and country music, as well as conventional pop songs and even modern classical music. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century’s, W.C. Handy took blues across the tracks and made it respectable, even "high-toned."

 **Country music**

Country music, once known as *Country and Western music*, is a popular musical form developed in the southern United States, with roots in traditional folk music, spirituals, and the blues. Vernon Dalhart was the first country singer to have a nation-wide hit (May, 1924, with "The Wreck Of Old '97"). Some trace the origins of modern country music to two seminal influences and a remarkable coincidence. Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family are widely considered to be the founders of country music, and their songs were first captured at an historic recording session in Bristol, Tennessee on August 1, 1927, where Ralph Peer was the talent scout and sound recordist. It is considered possible to categorise many country singers as being either from the Jimmie Rodgers strand or the Carter Family strand of country music. Country music also received an unexpected boost from new technologies. When ASCAP, which was dominated by Tin Pan Alley composers, feared competition from broadcast music, they stopped licensing their copyrights to radio stations. Their replacement, BMI, was dominated by country artists and gave the genre a much wider audience.

Country music is fairly controversial, with fans and detractors feeling strongly about the music's worth, values, and meaning. President George H. W. Bush declared October, 1990 "Country Music Month" commemorating United States characteristics present in country such as, "our faith in God, our devotion to family, and our appreciation for the value of freedom and hard work." Implied in the evocation of these conservative values is a view often held by detractors of country as conservative, (poor white), sexist, and racist music. Professional country guitarist Aaron Fox explains that, "for many cosmopolitan Americans, especially, country is 'bad' music precisely because it is widely understood to signify an explicit claim to whiteness, not as an unmarked, neutral condition of lacking (or trying to shed) race, but as a marked, fore grounded claim of cultural identity—a bad whiteness...unredeemed by ethnicity, folkloric authenticity, progressive politics, or the noblesse oblige of elite musical culture."

### Jazz

Jazz is a musical art form characterized by blue notes, syncopation, swing, call and response, polyrhythms, and improvisation. It has been called the first original art form to develop in the United States of America and partakes of both popular and classical music. It has roots in West African cultural and musical expression, in African American music traditions, including blues and ragtime, and European military band music. After originating in African-American communities around the beginning of the twentieth century, jazz gained international popularity by the 1920s. Since then, jazz has had a profoundly pervasive influence on other musical styles worldwide including classical and popular music. Jazz has also evolved into many sometimes contrasting subgenres including smooth jazz and free jazz.

**Rock and roll**

Rock and roll emerged as a defined musical style in America in the 1950s, though elements of rock and roll can be seen in rhythm and blues records as far back as the 1920s. Early rock and roll combined elements of blues, boogie woogie, jazz, and rhythm and blues, and is also influenced by traditional Appalachian folk music, gospel and country and western. Chuck Berry, Fats Domino, and Elvis Presley were notable performers in the 1950s. The Beatles were part of the "British invasion" in the 1960s. In 1951, the words "rock, roll" were used in a song called "60 Minute Man," which was banned due to its implications. By 1953 such ballads as "Earth Angel" and "Gee" were played by notable disc jockeys in Cleveland and New York as Allen Freed and Murray the K. By 1956, Dick Clark had one of several popular Television programs "American Bandstand" to show teenagers dancing to the new kind of music aimed especially at teens and adolescents. Though mocked by older generation as "jungle or the devil's music," its popularity grew through the next 10 years until by the end of the century it was arguably the most popular form of music on the planet, with fans from every age group in virtually every country of the world.

However, attempting to classify Rock and Roll as a single genre continues to be difficult as it can encompass a wide variety of musical forms. It can be as carefully crafted as a song by Queen, or an album produced by Phil Spector, or as straightforward as a three-chord composition by The Ramones, or as poetic as a song written by Bob Dylan. Although it is clearly defined by the use of guitars and drum kits, virtually no instrument can now be excluded from a rock band, including the piccolo trumpet used in The Beatles' Penny Lane, the cello that graced most of the work of the Electric Light Orchestra, or even "Weird Al" Yankovic's accordion. Rock revolutionized theatre. See rock musical and rock opera.

### Progressive Rock

Progressive rock was a movement to incorporate the more complex structures and instrumentation of jazz and classical music into the limitations of Rock and Roll. Mainly a European movement, it started in the United Kingdom in the 1960s with bands like Pink Floyd and Genesis, and reached its peak popularity during the early 1970s, when albums like Pink Floyd's "Dark Side of the Moon" and Mike Oldfield's "Tubular Bells" dominated the charts. Major characteristics were long compositions, complex lyrics, a wide range of instruments, unusual time signatures, and the inclusion of long solo passages for different instruments.

### Punk rock

Punk rock was originally a style of hard rock played at fast speeds with simple lyrics and fewer than three chords, which originated in the mid 1970s, with bands like Television, the Ramones, and the Sex Pistols. The main instruments used were electric guitar, electric bass, and drums. It evolved into punk (even faster songs with shouted lyrics), New Wave (more pop influenced and used electronic keyboards) and post punk (originally sounded more, evolved more into new wave) in the 1980s, and these evolved further into punkabilly (a fusion of punk rock and rockabilly), ska punk (a fusion with ska), grunge (a mix of punk rock and alternative rock), pop punk (a development of punk rock with cleaner sounds), Emo (emotionally-charged punk rock), gothic rock (introverted lyrics), and many more genres.

### Heavy metal

Heavy metal is a form of music characterized by aggressive, driving rhythms and highly amplified distorted guitars, generally with grandiose lyrics and virtuosic instrumentation. Central to this genre is the use of riffs as a melodic and narrative element. Heavy metal is a development of blues, blues rock and rock. Its origins lay in the hard rock bands like Led Zeppelin, Aerosmith, Deep Purple and Black Sabbath, who between 1967 and 1974 took blues and rock and created a hybrid with a heavy, guitar and drums centered sound. Heavy metal had its peak popularity in the 1980s, during which many of the now existing subgenres first evolved. Though not as commercially successful as it was then, heavy metal still has a large worldwide following. Some subgenres brought about through either natural evolution or the convergence of metal with other genres include, but are not limited to Thrash, Death Metal, Industrial, and Black Metal.

### Disco, funk, hip hop, salsa, and soul

Madonna, one of the most influential disco and pop artists of the twentieth century Soul music is fundamentally rhythm and blues, which grew out of the African-American gospel and blues traditions during the late 1950s and early 1960s in the United States. Over time, much of the broad range of R&B extensions in African-American popular music, generally, also has come to be considered soul music. Traditional soul music usually features individual singers backed by a traditional band consisting of rhythm section and horns, as exemplified by Aretha Franklin. Funk is a distinct style of music originated by African-Americans, e.g., James Brown and his band members (especially Maceo and Melvin Parker), and groups like The Meters. Funk best can be recognized by its syncopated rhythms; thick bass line (often based on an "on the one" beat); razor-sharp rhythm guitars; chanted or hollered vocals (as that of Cameo or the Bar-Kays); strong, rhythm-oriented horn sections; prominent percussion; an upbeat attitude; African tones; danceability; and strong jazzy influences (e.g., as in the music of Herbie Hancock, George Duke, Eddie Harris, and others). Salsa music is a diverse and predominantly Caribbean rhythm that is popular in many Latin countries. The word is the same as the salsa meaning sauce. Who applied this name to the music and dance and why remains unclear, but all agree that the name fits, metaphorically referring the music and dance being "saucy" and "tasty." However, the term has been used by Cuban immigrants in New York analogously to swing. Disco is an up-tempo style of dance music that originated in the early 1970s, mainly from funk, salsa, and soul music, popular originally with gay and black audiences in large U.S. cities, and derives its name from the French word discothèque (meaning nightclub). Hip hop music is traditionally composed of two main elements: rapping (also known as MC'ing) and DJing, and arose when DJs began isolating and repeating the percussion break from funk or disco songs.

### Electronic music

The twentieth century brought the first truly innovative instrument in centuries—the theremin. For centuries before, music had either been created by drawing hair across taught metal strings (string instruments), constricting vibrating air (woodwinds and brass) or hitting something (percussion). The ‘theramin’, which operated by interrupting a magnetic field around the instrument, did not even have to be touched to produce a tone. Although its inventor (Leon Theremin) originally developed it for classical music as a way to prevent the repetitive stress injuries that often plagued musicians, it found use both as an instrument for scoring movies (Forbidden Planet) and in rock and roll (The Beach Boys' Good Vibrations). In the years following World War II, electronic music was embraced by progressive composers, and was hailed as a way to exceed the limits of traditional instruments. Although electronic music began in the world of classical composition, by the 1960s Wendy Carlos had popularized electronic music through the use of the synthesizer developed by Robert Moog with two notable albums *The Well-Tempered Synthesizer* and *Switched-On Bach*.

In the 1970s musicians such as Tangerine Dream, Suzanne Ciani, Klaus Schulze, Kraftwerk, Vangelis, Brian Eno, Jean Michel Jarre, and the Japanese composers Isao Tomita and Kitaro further popularised electronic music, and the film industry also began to make extensive use of electronic soundtracks. From the late 1970s onward, much popular music was developed on synthesizers by pioneering groups like Heaven 17, The Human League, Art of Noise, and New Order. The development of the techno sound in Detroit, Michigan and house music in Chicago, Illinois in the early to late 1980s, and the later new beat and acid house movements of the late 1980s and early 1990s all fuelled the development and acceptance of electronic music into the mainstream and introduced electronic dance music to nightclubs. Subgenres include, but are not limited to, a variety of dance oriented music (Techno, Trance, Goa, House, Drum and Bass, Jungle, Break Beats) as well as IDM, Trip Hop, Ambient, Dark Wave, and Experimental. Because of the recent explosion of electronic music, the lines between electronic subgeneres can be fuzzy and some of the above mentioned may be considered redundant or further subgenres themselves.

### World music

All the various music’s listed in the 1980s under the broad category of world music were folk forms from all around the world, grouped together in order to make a greater impact in the commercial music market. Since then, however, world music has both influenced and been influenced by many different genres like hip hop, pop, and jazz. The term is usually used for all music made in a traditional way and outside of the Anglo-Saxon world, thus encompassing music from Africa, Latin America, Asia, and parts of Europe, and music by not native English speakers in Anglo-Saxon countries, like Native Americans or Indigenous Australians. World music radio programs these days will often be playing African or reggae artists, crossover Bhangra, Cretan Music, and Latin American jazz groups, etc.

### New Age music

Electronic and world music, together with progressive rock and religious music are the elements from which new age music has developed. Works within this genre tend to be predominantly peaceful in overall style but with an emphasis on energy and gentle vibrancy. Pieces are composed to aid meditation, to energise yoga, tai chi and exercise sessions or to encourage connections to the planet Earth (in the sense of a spiritual concept of Mother Earth or, perhaps Gaia). There are also new age compositions which sit equally comfortably in the world music category. New age music has developed from genre-crossing work like Neil Diamond's soundtrack music for the film Jonathan Livingston Seagull, from alternative jazz/rock/classical bands like Third Ear Band or Quintessence and experimental work in general. One advantage of this category is that it enables musicians the freedom to do work which might have been stifled elsewhere. Enthusiasts of new age music generally share a set of core common understandings including a belief in the spirit and in the ability to change the world for the better in peaceful ways. Popular new age artists of the twentieth century include Suzanne Ciani, Enya, Yanni, Kitaro, George Winston (solo piano), and many more. Labels include Private Music, Windham Hill, Narada, Higher Octave among others. Private Music and Windham Hill later merged into the BMG group and reorganized under RCA/Victor, while Narada joined with Higher Octave and EMI.

## Conclusion

## Humanity insatiability for good music and the voracious consumption of modern technology has expanded the scope of musical genres. Twentieth century was a period of extraordinary changes in which great inventions like radio and television were invented. The epochal event of the First and Second World War during the period naturally reflects in the music composed during the era. This radical change in the modernist movement could be link to the fact that a century that witnessed two wars at it early days cannot produce music of calm and peace effect, the reasons for the so man dissonance, anger and violence in modernist compositions. There have been numerous theories and interpretation of generational shift and humanity discontent. The contemporary youth have tended to generate their own meanings and responses to human issues. The correctness of the insistence on the distinctions of each new generation seems to lie in the fact that each generation matures in a new set of political, economic, social and ideological conditions. Thus, they share in some degree or other various common experiences but were never certified. In musicology, the development of the various genres previously an abomination was as a result of humanity discontent, hence, the heartbeat of the present research.

Twentieth century music brought new freedom and wide experimentation with new musical styles and forms that challenged the accepted rules of music of earlier periods. The invention of electronic instruments and the synthesizer in the mid-twentieth century revolutionized popular music and accelerated the development of new forms of music. Eastern, Middle-Eastern, Latin, and Western sounds began to mix in some forms. Faster modes of transportation allowed musicians and fans to travel more widely to perform or listen. Amplification permitted giant concerts to be heard by those with the least expensive tickets, and the inexpensive reproduction and transmission or broadcast of music gave rich and poor alike nearly equal access to high quality music performances.

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