

The Sound of the Digital Global City

Héctor Fouce

(Universidad Complutense de Madrid)

hfoucero@ucm.es

Madrid has been the centre of the Spanish musical scene and industry since the 1980s, when *la movida* became a metaphor for the new colourful, young and cosmopolitan country that was established with the arrival of democracy. The city is basically a place, but this sense of place started to crash with the arrival of digital music. In the new paradigm, intermediaries were supposed to disappear and music was something contained in networks and computers. The question now is how to integrate digital music — a nonphysical, individual experience — with the way in which Madrid is lived in musical terms. With the advent of digital music, concerts became the primary source of income for musicians. The centrality of the gig can be understood as confirmation that we are living in an economy of experience. This centrality also reorganized the way in which music is produced and consumed. Records are produced in order to create the opportunity of a musical event that can be promoted in social networks and media; concerts are the places where musicians construct their fans' communities and are the places where records are sold, not a way to know the band but to demonstrate the support for the band. I suggest that to study the place of music in the process of metropolization in Madrid we need to understand music as a field of tension.

Keywords: Global city, Madrid, digital music.

Introduction: Digital, Urban, Global

Urban anthropology has changed the way in which we observe and understand the city. For decades, the city was considered just a space, a territory full of buildings, streets, transportation and economic dynamics that determined the way people lived. Now, we know that the urban experience is something more than inhabiting a city and we know that although many urban dynamics cannot be observed in the streets they are intrinsic parts of city life.

Let us consider the case of music. For many people, the only way to see the relation between music and city life is to watch live music, including musicians playing in the streets or parks, observe the venue scene, the music festivals and the youth subcultures related to particular neighbourhoods. Most listeners will disregard the link between city life and their consumption of music played on the computer or the mobile phone. Right now, music is non-material, ethereal and invisible. There are no records anymore; there are less record shops and they do not have the social relevance that they had in the past. It seems we now live a digital life and a different, material life, and that only the latter links us to the city.

Digital practices are modelling how we experience music in the city. All the records shops that have recently closed were incapable of competing with piracy and i-tunes. Street musicians recorded and sold their own the CDs. The ways they rehearse and communicate with their fans have a digital footprint, although these activities are performed in an urban, material environment.

In the present discussion I try to identify the link between digital music and urban life on the basis of my ethnographic research in Madrid's independent (indie) music scene. Although Madrid was represented as a global city (Sassen 2001) at the time of the economic crisis of 2008, it became a truly global node only when protesters camped in Puerta del Sol on 15 May 2011. Madrid's identity is being determined by the tensions between two economic and social models — that of intensive capitalism and that claiming to represent the needs of

the ‘99 per cent of the population’.¹ I will argue that the music scene has made visible some contradictions of the new urban model and has anticipated discourses and arguments that appeared in the *15-M* protests.

Local Space in the Age of Digital Music

In November 2011, a focus group with 12 youngsters was organized in the framework of a research project on youth and urban culture (García Canclini, Cruces and Urteaga 2012) in order to discuss the ways in which these were connected to music. Since most participants were music lovers, it is not possible to generalize their experience, but it was clear that they preferred to invest their money in attending live music events rather than in listening to recorded music. Although many recognized that ‘when I download music from the web is like I’m missing something’ and said that their ideal would be ‘to buy a record player and make a wide collection’, they concluded saying, ‘I have not the proper budget’. Then, they made a list of options for listening to music for free on the web, from Spotify or YouTube to classic P2P programmes, such as Emule or Ares. The group praised the advantages of the mobile phone (as opposed to the computer) for storing digital music, and recognized that ‘everything is now digital, but there are things that you want to own’. At one point, a male participant rummaged through his backpack, took out a USB device and said to the other members of the group, ‘look what a friend gave me today; it’s full of music. It makes me laugh.’ Everybody broke out in laughter, which grew in intensity as another respondent showed an even smaller USB device. The high-tech gadgets of some years ago are now risible. The dematerialization of music and its digital consumption is now a reality that marks the enjoyment and exchange of music, although nostalgic or purist positions do call for attention to the record as an object.²

The dematerialized consumption of music has created a monumental crisis in the phonographic industry worldwide, a crisis that is particularly felt in Spain. The end of 2014 marked a high point for the record companies, as the yearly sales data showed that for the first time in 15 years, the sales of records were higher than those of the previous year. The business is increasingly moving towards digital consumption, but the sale of CDs and DVDs reached 31.3 billion euros; that is, 7.9 per cent more than the previous year (29 million euros). This growth took place despite the radical fall in the volume of sales of DVD (30 per cent less than the previous year). The digital realm showed a similar trend, sales went from 24.5 to 25.9 million euros, an increase of 5.85 per cent (Promusicae 2014).

Corporate balance sheets apart, these figures reflect a change in the consumption of music. That records are sold and money is generated by downloads suggests that legal access grows with the increased offer of platforms. The physical market is based on a growing purchase of Premium products, and it seems that this sector is supported by adult consumers (SGAE 2014). But the growth in the consumption of music is mainly explained by the increase in subscriptions to streaming services (such as Spotify and Deezer). A new

¹ This is a motto of the Occupy protests around the Western world.

² Records are always intended to be in vinyl, since it is generally assumed that CD is a dead technology.

generation of listeners, who never knew the pre-Napster models of production and consumption, has adopted streaming as a form of consumption. This generation does not value possession of musical media; it is interested in the immediate consumption; it wants to have access to the entire catalogue here and now. The diffusion of smartphones has provided the technological basis for this new kind of consumption, at the same time contributing to limiting illegal access. In this line, the correspondence should be noted between the growth of streaming music and the growth of subscriptions that allow access to music with no advertising interruptions and with other additional benefits (Fouce 2014).

It seems that, after three decades, the first great crisis of the music recording industry, generated by the arrival of digital services, has come to a close. To get an idea of the depth of that crisis, it should be noted that in 2001 600 million euros worth of records was sold in Spain. The 'celebrated' 2014 data show sales little over 100 million euros. Few economic sectors have suffered a comparable earthquake, although cultural sectors such as the cinema and, more recently, book-publishing, are experiencing a similar crisis.

However, a second crisis of the music sector is not yet over, as it is part of the general crisis that has affected Spanish society since 2008. In September 2001, VAT on cultural activities was increased to 21 per cent and during the first 12 months, 'the income from concerts of popular music in Spain went from 206.5 million euros to 147.4 million euros: a decrease of 28.63 per cent. While state revenue increased by 13.3 million euros, the loss of revenue generated by personal income tax, corporate tax, Social Security... fell by 42.3 million' (APM 2014: 17).

The dominant discourse during the rise of piracy argued for a new productive model that musicians should adopt in order to earn a living; they had to accept that record selling would not provide enough resources anymore and that live music would be the paradigmatic form of music business. A new environment was growing, far from the centrality of the recording.

As former EMI Executive Simone Bose pointed out, new bands used to record their first album without real musical skills, often hiring session musicians (Fouce 2006, Cruz 2015); only later, playing live gigs, they developed real skills. Musicians matured in front of the audience. Today a good live performance is essential to start and maintain a career in popular music, although the record retains importance as a way to organize time in popular music bands because it allows bands to mark milestones in their career and generate events to promote new productions that can then be published on social networks. These seem to be good reasons to keep playing live, now under the 'new record tour' label (Fouce 2011).

The reconstruction of the music industry through streaming services has not meant a return to the old model. There is no direct income from record sales that allows musicians to earn a living. The artist Le Parody made public the sales figures from different digital music platforms: 3067 reproductions of a song made 26.49 euros (0.007 euros per listener). We should consider that musicians cannot upload their music but need the services of an aggregator to do so; as in this case the aggregator charged 11 euros, the artist made about 15 euros. However, despite the poor economic results, the artists do not abandon these services.

As an artist said to me, ‘I knew that Spotify is a scam, but you have to be there because you have to be visible’. There is a problem of transparency, for there is no way to know the number of reproductions of a song. As Nando Cruz’s assessment of the Spanish indie rock shows (2015), this is a classical problem in the relationship between musicians and intermediaries of any kind. It is the fragmented digital consumption of songs as opposed to music records that generates these low profits. As Merino suggests, ‘The current system is aimed at the exploitation of large funds catalogue, not to promote new talents’ (Merino, quoted in Lenore 2014a).

The 1429 downloads of Le Parody’s record in digital format through Bandcamp generated 407 euros. Bandcamp allows listeners to fix the price they want to pay but they can also listen for free. In contrast, record selling at her concerts generated 700 euros (7 euros per disc). But the music activity of Le Parody is supported basically by revenues from concerts, amounting to 5,550 euros a year (Corroto 2013). These figures seem to support Anderson’s concept (2008) of a long tail economy in which the future is selling less of more and popularity no longer has the monopoly of profitability. The exploitation of those niches of consumption can be profitable for the owners of large catalogues, not for the artists.

The way out from the digital crisis was analogue, face to face and spatially located, but in intimate harmony with digital tools, allowing musicians to avoid record labels, recording studios, agents, promotion and so on. The musician Abel Hernández, who goes by the stage name El Hijo, points out that ‘right now, because of internet and communications in general, a musician can be much more effective as a booking agent or as his own manager. In older times you needed a specialist. I try to figure out how this work was done before, without mobile phones or internet access. One really needed to be a professional in order to access all resources’ (personal interview, 25 October 2011).

The disappearance of the contractual relationships with record companies or managers has been celebrated to exhaustion by musicians. The word ‘indie’ has indeed been used to describe the decision of some bands to publish their work outside the channels controlled by the industry. Historically, independent labels were born in Spain every time that a new musical scene emerged without support from the industry. This happened at the time of *la movida* (new wave) with labels such as DRO, GASA and Twins (Fouce 2006) and in the following decade (Cruz 2015), and it is happening today with the emergence of a new underground scene in Madrid (Gil 2015a). Independence is defined as a production model that works in perfect harmony with art’s aspiration to autonomy. It is also the centrepiece of a new creative class that rejects secure jobs (Florida 2012) based on established schedules and routine occupations to embrace self-employment; a creative class more concerned with their own vital interests than with having a fixed income.

Florida (2012) argues how this creative class emphasizes the fact that no large company or any other kind of institution will take care of creative workers. ‘Freelancing’, he points out, ‘carries considerable risk. The kinds of work you want might not be widely available, especially in a deep recession, and the assignments may not always pay well. Assuming you’re in demand, you have a choice: be selective about what you do and settle for less

money; or do a lot of things you don't really like, much as employees often have to do, and make more ... It takes more than a home office and a temporary badge to build a worker's paradise' (Florida 2012: 91).

To a good extent, independence is not an option; it is, instead, a necessity to make one's own way in a situation in which old intermediaries (managers, record companies, concert promoters and the media) have increasingly less weight. There is, however, still room for intermediaries in the musical world; they continue to be powerful actors. Also, disintermediation is not necessarily good news. In his review of the creative process of the record *Una semana en el motor de un autobús*, the album that launched the career of the band Los Planetas (a milestone in Spanish indie scene), Nando Cruz looks at the central role played by David Lopez, the AR responsible for the artistic management at the record label RCA. At least on two occasions the group wanted to travel to New York to record their new songs. David Lopez said no, believing that the new songs were not good enough to justify the expense. The band, who were having a difficult time both personally and creatively, were not happy but 'the only one who was meant, by contract, to speak clearly to J (singer and composer) was David Lopez. That was the art directors' main job: manage their groups, guiding their albums to success and, if necessary, be a contrary voice' (Cruz 2011: 94).

The absence of intermediaries places the artists directly in front of the public and reveals their creative processes, but sometimes the relationship between musician and listeners requires a certain level of intermediation. Musical creation and the decisions on how to manage it often require a point of view less immersed in the creative process in order to put things into perspective. The do-it-yourself model that is now widespread in the world of music has eliminated all those echoes that are needed in the musical voice. As the musician Manuel Sanz (of Cosmosoul) points out, 'musicians tend to be very involved in their inner world, in their own experience ... Apparently a very social person, a musician spends most of his or her time in a room, experimenting, researching ... and there is a very physical part: to study, to play in order to master your instrument, to be trained ... I think that artists also reach a level of detachment and of disconnection from reality. In fact, managers looked like strange people who were unrelated to the artist and the music, but who most times used to play the role of parents, friends ...' (personal interview, 20 October 2011).

So, the digitalization of music has produced a change in consumption and a decline in record companies' sales. It also has produced a radical reorganization in the relationship between musicians and listeners. Digital is no longer just a way to circulate the music; it is also the way in which music is recorded, managed and communicated. As I have said elsewhere (Fouce 2012), music has been the laboratory of a new culture, a mirror for other cultural industries, such as the film industry and book publishing. The new model that seems to work for musicians — entrepreneurial, autonomous, independent, multi-tasking; in one word, precarious — anticipates a production model that over the last ten years has become widespread. The uncertainty associated with this new model of life (Cruces 2012, Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2011) goes beyond the field of cultural production. Most of the

political movements that have over the last five years marked the social and political agenda in Spain are rooted in the critique of this new social model.

As Esteban Hernández (2014: 14) explains in his analysis of the end of the middle classes, ‘in the last century, culture pointed out the fears, desires and beliefs of the common people in a very precise way and before any other social field. Culture was a tool for anticipation’. The style of life of the musician and the artist, who ‘seemed opposed to the productive world ... has become the inspirational centre of the new capitalism’ (Hernandez 2014: 14). In the same paradoxical way, because of its way of reorganizing the role of actors and the steps of the production chain, the digital domain has come to mark the experience of live music in the city.

Urban Life and Musical Practice: Inside the Madrid Independent Scene

During the 1980s, when Spain embraced modernity after nearly 40 years of dictatorship, Madrid attracted some worldwide attention in popular music because of *la movida*. Heavily influenced by the punk and new wave fashions, the colourful hedonism of those years is a historical milestone, as pop and rock music was seen as an important part of living under democracy. Debates on what should be the role of music in the life of Madrid are based on nostalgia of *la movida*. It seems that, more than three decades later the city has not yet been able to develop an alternative musical imagination. Much of the discourses on music refer to an ideal confluence of different groups and musical styles that enjoy with plenty of spaces to play music, great media exposure and institutional support from the City Council. Against this nostalgic ideal (Méndez and De Cozar 2013), the reality is marked by music places monitored by the authorities and by a disinterest of the media in the local scene.

Two very different events have marked Madrid’s musical life in recent years. On the one hand, the death of five teenagers during a music party in Madrid Arena has served as an excuse for the local authorities to intensify control over live music in the city. On the other hand, the *15-M* camp in Puerta del Sol brought together the experience and aspirations of different groups, including some linked to music, and projected them into a process of imagination of a new urban reality. On 1 November 2012, during the celebration of a great festival of electronic music, five teenagers died at the exit of the Madrid Arena in a stampede following the collapse of a multi-purpose pavilion that was owned by the city of Madrid and managed by a private company. The sale of more tickets than allowed and insufficient security measures caused the collapse. Since then, the City authorities have implemented particularly strict policies on the use of all public buildings, and especially of concert venues. As manager Carlos Mariño said, ‘in Madrid we live in an atmosphere of paranoia. The Mayor didn’t solve the problem, but sought culprits quickly to put the issue to rest. They wanted him to do in a few days all the work he hadn’t done over the years’ (Lenore 2013). The restrictions put on music venues by the local authorities were not new in Madrid, but they reached their peak after the Madrid Arena’s tragedy. Since the city authorities are aiming to limit live music performances in central areas, there is no way to open a new venue or organize a concert in bars that are regulated by more limited licenses.

Javier Olmedo, manager of La Noche en vivo, the organization representing live music venues in Madrid, points out that these measures are creating empty spaces in the music venues. ‘We have the best network of concert halls in Spain; good spaces, highly qualified professionals and the most strict regulations ... We are constantly under the eye of the City authorities’ (personal interview, 20 March 2014). In 2012 it was decided not to have a new edition of The Primavera Club festival in Madrid despite its success because of the municipal restrictions that forced promoters to carry out safety studies of the municipal space Matadero. The director of the festival, Alberto Guijarro, complained that the popular music was ‘marginalized and criminalized in a new way. We feel that music is not considered as a part of the culture. To have a festival you have to feel involved, and here in Madrid things do not flow’ (Barranco 2012; online source)

Because of the administrative difficulties imposed on opening a legal venue a new music underground generation is emerging in Madrid which is largely inspired by the libertarian spirit of *15-M*. It should not be forgotten that the management of concerts has also changed radically in the last decade; most bands rent the venue and take the risk. As the musician Mario Zamora of the Luger said, ‘People who attack the record companies often do not have a clue on how the mafia of the rental of venues works ...’ (personal interview, 22 November 2011). Faced with this reality, some new venues have arisen in the underground spirit.

The journalist Pablo Gil has documented the dynamics and the actors of this new underground scene. He writes, ‘Tickets cannot be purchased in advance. In some cases, prices are established by the listeners. It is sometimes impossible to find information on the web. The place, the day and time are announced by email or through WhatsApp. Concerts take place in warehouses in the periphery; these are broad and cheap spaces where no neighbours can be disturbed. No one knows exactly what one is going to find there, but while the official agenda of rock gigs is becoming shorter, the number of clandestine concerts in Madrid is increasing’ (Gil 2015b). Place like La Faena II, located in a garage in the Suances district, the Planeta de los Watios in Tetuan or the Vaciador34 in Carabanchel are nodes of a network that disdains both public spaces and the privately-run venues.

All these new venues are located outside the city centre, where live music historically took place. As Fernán del Val (2014) has documented in his doctoral dissertation, there is a historical tension related to music venues in Madrid. During the 1980s the acclaimed *movida* took place mainly in central neighbourhoods, like Malasaña, one of the trendiest areas of Madrid city centre. The sound and discourses of *la movida* belonged to the same celebration of modernity as the discourse of the new Socialist Party, which was elected to both national and city government at the beginning of that decade. In contrast, the hard rock and heavy metal scenes developed in peripheral neighbourhoods of South Madrid, like Vallecas and Carabanchel. The discourse of heavy metal band emphasized the dark side of modernity, including unemployment, unrest, drug consumption and bad living conditions. Today, the tension between centre and periphery is higher as the central quarters (Malasaña, Chueca and Conde Duque) are criticised for being gentrified and full of hipsters while Vallecas and

Carabanchel continue to be identified with resistant discourses. However, the new underground music scene and the alternative political movement cannot be understood without considering the key role of places located in the city centre, like the Patio Maravillas (in Malasaña)³ or the Tabacalera (in Lavapiés). Most of these spaces are self-managed and non-profit, and it is precisely in their management model that we found the *15-M* footprint.

On 15 May 2011 the protest of indignados in Puerta del Sol took place, establishing a new political climate marked by a critique of the traditional parties, the emergence of new parties rooted in the 2011 protest and the demand for more transparency and participation in the decision-making process. The origins of this new flow of opinion can be traced in the alternative and resistant movements that have emerged in Madrid over the last ten years, from teachers to medical staff and other public servants resisting budget cuts and restrictions on public services (Alvárez 2015). The *15-M* also contributed to inspire these new political actions. As it has been argued (Fouce 2012, Sanz and Mateos 2011), popular campaigns against digitalization were the first opportunity for young generation to engage in political participation, and the Puerta del Sol event is where it all started for most of them.

One of the achievements of *15-M* has been to re-establish, both ideologically and in practice, the importance of the collective. Part of the success of the 2011 protest is explained by its appeal to people with different political, generational and social backgrounds. As the artist Le Parody put it, ‘What cultural roots have I? As white middle class accommodated in a consumer society... there is nothing. But *15-M* gave me that, that view that there is a collective, that something new and strong is happening, something that influence that group I belong to and that configures me as a person’ (Lenore 2014b; online resource). This new identity is linked to a new set of practices and social relations.

The return to the underground in Madrid is related to where music is performed rather than to what the songs say. People set up music performances in garages, self-manage festivals, organize raves on empty plots; performances that vary from flamenco to *bakalao*⁴ are organized in warehouses located in the periphery. The boundaries between musicians, DJs and the public are diluted. After *15-M*, everyone is doing something. Perhaps people are doing the same things they were doing before, but with a new forcefulness and urgency (Le Parody, in Lenore 2014b)

While the official discourse neglects both the existence and the impact of this underground scene on Madrid, these events — along with others not focused on music, such as the aforementioned Tabacalera and Patio Maravillas — are indeed generating new dynamics that contribute to reconstruct the cultural field in the wake of a deep crisis. While the reports on the state of culture in Madrid make no reference to the alternative spaces that I have described, they are incorporated in the practice of the city government. The recovered municipal cultural centre, Conde Duque, makes an exemplary case. After years of inactivity due to building work and the resignation of its director, the City Council appointed Isabel Hernandez, a public worker, as director of the centre. Corroto reports her saying, ‘To work at

³ Fernando Monge’s article in this Special Issue deals with this neighbourhood.

⁴ This is a kind of electronic music generally associated with the working class.

Conde Duque is to work with what's happening in the neighbourhood... I'm in a neighbourhood and I have to work with it and give it the importance that it deserves' (2015; online source).

One line of collaboration is with the choir Orfeon de Malasaña. This choir was created to give a yearly outdoors concert during the self-organized Festival of Malasaña. It is formed by the two choirs of the Patio Maravillas in Madrid, but is open to any choir or individual singer who wants to join the experience. As the Patio Maravillas is an occupied building in the heart of the neighbourhood, the Orfeon is based in a space at the margins of the public and the commercial. On 7 February 2015 the Orfeon de Malasaña met outside the usual dates to give a concert in the Auditorium of the Conde Duque, as part of the GastroFestival 2015, an initiative of the City Council organized in the private premises of Madrid Fusion. Malela Durán, one of the directors of the choral society, presented the event saying, 'it is a pleasure and an honour to play in a well-appointed Auditorium, where the voices do not have to be forced, where they do not compete with the urban noise. It is also a way to restore a public space to the district. Amateur singers also have the right to sing in top quality facilities, because these facilities belong to everybody' Isabel Hernandez declared that the Orfeon's presence 'dignified the Auditorium'⁵. The choir rehearsed on several evenings in the Auditorium (at other times they rehearsed in the courtyard of the building) in the presence of children and fans. The introductions to the songs included several allusions to the rise of new political alternatives and to the corruption of the Partido Popular,⁶ as well as tributes to Siryza's electoral victory in Greece and criticism to the privatization of public services. All this happened in a festive atmosphere in which the chorus was generally listened to in silence. Thus, here was a self-managed initiative linked to an occupied centre and using public facilities in the framework of a privately-managed festival.

In spite of the emergence of new spaces and innovative dynamics, the live music scene in Madrid is marked by the two crises of music which I have mentioned. The yearbooks of the music industry (SGAE 2014, APM 2014) indicate an increase in the audience of live music performances. However, it is important to stress that the live music market includes venues and festivals, which work in very different ways.

Venues are feeling the weight of the crisis. In a context marked by the reduction of the number of concerts, and consequently of the number of spectators (in 2013 there were 393.297 less attendees than in 2012), the live music scene has lost quality and diversity. A venue manager explained, 'Obviously, when you reduce your programming from seven to three days, you ensure that in those three days you have good concerts, and that they are sold out. We try desperately to avoid risk' (SGAE 2014: Mpopular 7).⁷ The lack of public is a problem that has grown over the years. Darío González, the owner of the El Buho Real venue explained that 'the real problem is the public, the word of mouth fails, there is no curiosity to discover new musicians'. He went on to say, 'This is a problem for musicians. The artist

⁵ This is a quote from the choral director speech to present the concert. I attended the performance.

⁶ This party rules both in Madrid and nationally.

⁷ This report has been published online and each part has a title.

needs the feedback of the audience. He presents his music to a live audience but at the same time he needs to get something back; he needs to check the response of the audience to continue composing. There is no such a thing as a bureaucratic artist.’ (personal interview, April 2009).

In various focus groups conducted in the last five years, young people identified the concert with the festival or the big event. ‘People I know attend these big concerts, the Viñarock,⁸ for example’, said Miguel in 2011. In that conversation he mentioned also festivals such as Getafe en vivo — which took place in one of the biggest cities outside Madrid — Sonisphere — different editions take place in Switzerland and in Italy — and Wacken, in Germany. A venue manager said, ‘We are realizing that young people, who are our main audience, save money to pay 200 euros to see 200 groups in a festival but do not attend the daily schedule of the venues’ (SGAE 2014: Mpopular 3). The generation that grew up in an environment in which recorded music was free have not relocated their music consumption in small live music venues; they try to maximize their investment in the economy of experience.

So, one of the objectives of both public policies and of the various actors in this market will be to promote live music. It seems necessary to spread among young listeners the idea that a live music act is not necessary synonymous with a big event, that it can just be shared cultural experience in their daily life. Since the explosion of rock and roll in the 1950s, youngsters have been the main consumers and producers of popular music. Alaska, the great icon of Spanish musical modernity since the 1980s, was little more than a girl when she started to perform with her punk band Kaka de Luxe (Fouce 2006) and most independent bands of the 1990s were formed by teenagers (Cruz 2015).

However, bands like Grushenka, June y los Sobrenaturales and Mourn have not been allowed to perform at Madrid venues like Sirocco and Dick (both located in city centre) because of local regulations; people who are under 18 are not allowed to attend shows in places that serve alcoholic drinks. In the case of Mourn, people younger than 18 ‘shared the stage with the band of the father of two of them, but apparently in Madrid the presence of adults, parents or legal guardians, is not enough’ (Saavedra 2015; online source). It is strange that this prohibition of access only applies to live music venues in a country where bars are places for family and intergenerational socialization.

As an example, Javier Olmedo, Manager of LNEV, said, ‘a musician comes to give a concert accompanied by his under-age child who cannot enter the venue because alcoholic beverages are served there. Where can he leave the kid? No problem, he can leave the child in the bar opposite the venue, which also serves alcohol but does not have rules banning children’s entrance. Do you think that makes any sense? Would not be easier to allow in minors accompanied by adults or organize a colour-bracelet system indicating who can ask for a beer and who cannot?’ (personal interview, 20 March 2014).

In recent years concerts for teenage audiences in places such as the Palacio de los Deportes (now BarklayCard Centre) have proliferated. These places do not sell alcoholic

⁸ This is a popular festival of hard rock and rap music that takes place in Villarobledo, a village in rural South Spain.

drinks and their programmes include boy bands, like One Direction or Justin Bieber, that ensure profitable box-office sales. However, as ticket sales do not generate sufficient income both the venues and the bands depend largely on bar sales to make a good profit. As Saavedra points out, 'Minority and underground places are suffering from these restrictions. There, a pop and rock gig is not understood as a cultural or even recreational event, but as a purely criminal act' (2015; online source).

Although for some time this problem has not been on the music scene agenda, the debate has been recently reactivated. As part of the Mad Mad festival held in June 2015, Radio 3, the public radio linked to minority music, has called a U18 competition for bands with members who are under 18. The website <http://entradasinedad.blogspot.com.es/> has been collecting support from musicians to promote a change in the rules. Many voices link this kind of youth leisure with a urban and social model that must be changed. As noted by the anthropologist Muñoz (2010), these policies work as systems of equalization; as ways of managing the urban space by eliminating difference.

It is unacceptable, I argue, that in this city 14-year-old children are unable to attend concerts when their hormones are asking for rock and roll. The authorities want to reduce rock to a cliché, to a kind of Cola-Cao advertisement or to an afternoon playing Guitar hero. They want to soften the rebellious part of young people; as the Godfathers (Sex Museum musicians) said, they want us to be born, study, work and die.

In contradiction to this, a rock-and-pop concert scene aimed at family audiences is being created. The Malasaña neighbourhood celebrates the family festival Malakids twice a year, including rock concerts held in public squares and streets. At various times of the year, close to the start of school holidays, Menudo Fest brings together rock bands for family audiences. They are fathers and mothers encouraging their children to enjoy a live music experience away from children's shows. They are working on the musical culture of their children while enjoying musical experiences that cannot normally be included in the family schedule.

The old conception of youth as a problem appears to underlie the aforementioned regulations. Youngsters are seen represented as people unable to adapt to the city regulations on time and space. Carles Feixa (2015) understands that the youth temporalities fit with difficulty in the time-management schemes of today's society. According to him, the great contradiction in our society is that young people want to be adults but are not allowed to, and adults want to be young but cannot. Feixa proposes to understand young people through the metaphor of the *Blade Runner* from the Ridley Scott film, a hunter fascinated by replicants who must be eliminated. He writes, 'Adults hesitate between the fascination for youth and the need to exterminate the root of any deviation from the norm. The result is a hybrid and ambivalent model of adolescence, riding between a growing social infantilization, translated into economic dependence and lack of responsibility, and a growing intellectual maturity, expressed in access to new technologies of communication, to new aesthetic and ideological currents' (Feixa 2015: 32).

In contrast with visions of youth which considered the young man as a kind of noble savage whom adult society should civilize, this model fluctuates between a fascination with the young and blaming them. Returning to music, this ambivalence is observable in the fact that while institutions are not sparing efforts in avoiding concentrations of young people, media speeches exalt and celebrate the success of young artists, classic models such as Pablo Alborán (the best-selling pop icon in Spain, right now) or modern icons like Justin Bieber.

Conclusions: Music, Creativity and Disappointment

I have described how music has been a laboratory for the new culture. There are several voices that amplify this idea by pointing out that culture has been the space in which huge transformations in the way life is conceived have been anticipated, which include transformations in the fields of leisure, work, consumption and sociality. For a long time, musicians (like many other creative performers) were considered to be at the margins of society. Playing music was something good to do while you were young, but it was not real work. It was something for bohemians, crazy geniuses and romantic personalities. It was not a job that would allow people to integrate fully into society. When compared to a proper job, playing music was regarded as too irregular, insecure and risky. However, as Florida explains (2012), creative persons are no longer seen as iconoclastic; they have become 'mainstream'. Therefore, the analysis of the ways in which music is produced allows us to understand how the experience of modern life is changing and how this affects urban living.

The experience of young creators is marked by a 'self-construction effort'. Most of them share the 'ability and the effort to construct themselves through continuous deployment of creativity, knowledge and invention ... rooted in strong values of autonomy, in opposition and rejection to alienated labour' (Cruces 2012: 157). In this sense, young creators and by extension musician fit in Richard Florida's (2012) description of the creative class.

Those trying to make their way in music are not waiting to be discovered by a big label that will take care of their career through recording, promotion and managing a concert agenda. Now the musician pursues various projects and performs several tasks: Abel Hernández, a musician of El Hijo, plays and composes for his own band, produces for other musicians, composes soundtracks, writes a music blog, works for a national paper and publishes as an art critic in various magazines. His latest album was financed through crowdfunding, organized by him and his girlfriend. He remarked, 'I am a professional amateur. 80 per cent of my time is spent on logistics; organizing concert dates and rehearsals with musicians, preparing documents with the technical specifications for concerts, managing travel, hotels and promotion, and so on. This has a cost, because the time and effort I put into these things could be invested in harmony or piano lessons.' (personal interview, 25 October 2011).

The music producer Laura Organa combines her salaried work in musical production with work as a freelance producer and translators (personal interview, 2 November 2011). Manuel Sanz, the bassist of the CosmoSoul, has a company that manages his own band and others and also manages a venue for concerts and exhibitions in the Lavapiés neighbourhood

(personal interview, 20 October 2011). By being their own bosses, they take the risks inherent in their work and make their daily life come second to their professional requirements. As Lorey (YProductions 2009: 70). pointed out commenting on the experience of the creative class ‘not only work, but also life would be subject to economic exploitation: it would not be possible to separate work from life, production from reproduction’ It is the cost of being able to flee from alienating work, the price of independence; as if such a course of action had been chosen and not imposed by new forms of organization in post-industrial society.

Workers’ freedom disguises the precariousness involved in cultural production (Cruces 2012, Rowan 2010). Since the main capital of a musician is his own skill, work and creativity, a process of self-exploitation takes place which is celebrated in the public discourse as a conquest of independence but recognized as exploitation in reflexive discourses. Once again we observe the ambivalence between rebellion and conformism, risk and safety, resistance and challenge to integration which characterizes both the experience of youth (Feixa 2015: 42) and cultural creators (Cruces 2012: 157).

This way of organizing the process of creative work is anchored in a chronotope that seems to exclude both the past and the present. It is not a festive way of living the present, like that experienced during *la movida* (Fouce 2006), but an agonistic one. Hernández (2014) uses the example of the American band Drive-by Truckers, a band that is well recognized by critics, has over a decade of experience, has produced a dozen discs and is constantly engaged in international tours. He writes, ‘A couple of bad choices when planning your career or the publication of low quality material can relegate you to that land where it is hard to close contracts and fix dates for a tour’ (Hernández 2014: 265). As Cruces (2012: 164) remarks, acceleration, immediacy and the control of trends contribute to create a climate of uncertainty which though common among artists has come to permeate the experience of an entire generation. Hernandez argues that, ‘This peculiar perception of pathways, full of moments of acceleration and long downtimes, agitated periods when finish projects on time and eternal delays waiting for new labour opportunities, are starting to be a common experience for all sorts of workers’ (2014: 264). The solution to uncertainty, he goes on to say, is to ‘focus on doing the work correctly and ... live in a continuous present, away from concerns’(2014: 266). In this world of uncertainty, he adds, ‘it is not surprising that we return to solid ground, to the community, to what we perceive as real; rather than to the many options of the virtual and the intangible’ (2014: 268).

In recent years, the romantic heroism that has marked the way artists have been seen throughout the 20th century has changed. The uncertain life trajectories, based on the capitalization of one’s own abilities, have replaced the old guarantees of a bourgeois life where individuality was sacrificed to gain the security that was the heritage of the majority of adults. The former admiration or demonization of the artist has become mere disappointment.

The celebratory discourse of the creative class has been hegemonic, but the buzz of discordant voices is heard more and more. These voices advocate recognition of existential exhaustion, disappointment, suffering and frustration, and the tenacity to endure it all, as shown by Cruces (2012: 165). On such a tenacity rests the self-exploitation of a creative work

that has finally become the dominant model in the productive areas of post-industrial capitalism. This criticism of the life-style of the creative subject has fuelled movements advocating social change starting from the local level and that at the time of writing are part of local government in many Spanish cities. It is exemplary that Madrid Regional Deputy, Pablo Padilla took office wearing a t-shirt of the movement *Juventud sin futuro* (Youth without future) carrying the motto 'no home, no job, no pension, no fear'.

If at other historical moments music anticipated dramatic transformations in the forms of production, work, consumption and enjoyment, it does not seem too risky to suggest that reflexive reaction against the consequences of these transformations can provide a basis for the new processes of change that are becoming visible in Spain after the *15-M*.

References

- Alvárez, D. (2015). *Lo que hicimos fue secreto.: influencias subterráneas en la ciudad de Madrid*. Master thesis. Universidad Rey Juan Carlos. Unpublished.
- Anderson, C. (2008). *The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business is Selling Less of More*. London: Random House Business Books.
- APM (2014). *Anuario de la Música en Vivo*. Madrid: APM
<http://www.apmusicales.com/anuario-de-la-musica-en-vivo-2014/>
- Barranco, J. (2012). El Primavera Club deja Barcelona y Madrid por el IVA y por la criminalización. *La Vanguardia*, published online 10 December 2012.
<http://www.lavanguardia.com/cultura/20121210/54357168158/primavera-club-deja-barcelona-madrid-iva-criminalizacion.html> Accessed 20 June 2015.
- Bustamante, E. and Rueda, F. (eds) (2014). *Informe sobre el estado de la cultura en España 2014: la salida digital*. Madrid: Fundación Alternativas.
- Corroto, P. (2013). Le Parody: Spotify es un timo. *ElDiario.es*, published online 24 October 2013. http://www.eldiario.es/turing/Spotify-timo_0_187232052.html Accessed 20 June 2015.
- Corroto, P. (2015). Concha Hernández ‘Conde Duque nunca va a estar en manos privadas’. *ElDiario.es*, published online 19 April 2015.
http://www.eldiario.es/cultura/entrevistas/Concha-Hernandez-Conde-Duque-privadas_0_378662407.html Accessed 20 June 2015.
- Cruces, F. (2012). Jóvenes y corrientes culturales emergentes. In N. García Canclini, F. Cruces and M. Urteaga Castro Pozo (eds).
- Cruz, N. (2011). *Una semana en el motor de un autobús*. Madrid : Lengua de Trapo.
- Cruz, N. (2015). *Pequeño circo. Historia oral del indie en España*. Barcelona : Contra.
- Feixa, C. (2015). *De la generación @ a la #generación. La juventud en la era digital*. Barcelona: NED.
- Florida, R. (2012). *The Rise of the Creative Class*. New York: Basic Books.
- Fouce, H. (2006). *El futuro ya está aquí. Música pop y cambio cultural*, Madrid: Velecío.
- Fouce, H. (2011). Experiencias memorables en la era de la música instantánea. *Análisi Monografic*: 97-109 <http://www.analisi.cat/index.php/analisi/article/view/m2012-fouce/m2012-fouce>
- Fouce, H. (2012). Crisis, reinención y conflicto social en la industria musical. In J. Noya (ed.).
- Fouce, H. (2014). El sector musical: leves esperanzas al borde del abismo. In: E. Bustamante and F. Rueda (eds).
- García Canclini, N., Cruces, F., and M. Urteaga Castro Pozo (eds) (2012). *Jóvenes, culturas urbanas y redes digitales: prácticas emergentes en las artes, las editoriales y la música*. Madrid: Ariel - Fundación Telefónica.
- Gil, P. (2015a). La ciudad de los mil grupos subterráneos. *El Mundo*, published online 28 February 2015.
<http://www.elmundo.es/madrid/2015/02/27/54f05d92ca4741c91e8b456b.html>

- Accessed 20 June 2015.
- Gil, P. (2015b). Conciertos clandestinos. *El Mundo*, published online 25 April 2015. <http://www.elmundo.es/madrid/2015/04/25/553bcf30e2704e88138b456f.html> ,
Accessed 17 June 2015.
- Hernández, E. (2014). *El fin de la clase media*. Madrid: Clave Intelectual.
- Hesmondhalgh, D. and Baker, S. (2011). *Creative Labour. Media Work in Three Cultural Industries*. New York: Routledge.
- Lenore, V. (2013). Consecuencias culturales de la tragedia de Madrid Arena. *El Confidencial*, published online 1 November 2013. http://www.elconfidencial.com/cultura/2014-01-11/la-industria-musical-oculta-la-muerte-del-disco_74830/ Accessed 20 June 2015.
- Lenore, V. (2014a). La industria oculta la muerte del disco. *El Confidencial*, published online 11 January 2014. http://www.elconfidencial.com/cultura/2014-01-11/la-industria-musical-oculta-la-muerte-del-disco_74830/ Accessed 20 June 2015.
- Lenore, V. (2014b). Orgía en Intereconomía. El indie español pierde el miedo a la política. *El Confidencial*, published online 10 March 2014. http://www.elconfidencial.com/cultura/2014-03-10/orgia-en-intereconomia-el-indie-espanol-pierde-el-miedo-a-la-politica_98746/ Accessed 20 June 2015; and: http://www.elconfidencial.com/cultura/2013-11-01/consecuencias-culturales-de-la-tragedia-del-madrid-arena_48930/ Accessed 20 June 2015.
- Méndez, R. & De Cozar, Á. (2013). La decadencia de Madrid. *El País*, published online 5 October 2013. http://politica.elpais.com/politica/2013/10/04/actualidad/1380911735_707943.html
Accessed 20 June 2015.
- Muñoz, F. (2010). Urbanization: Common Landscapes, Global Places. *The Open Urban Studies Journal*, 3: 78-88.
- Noya, J. (ed.) (2012). *MUSYCA. Música, sociedad y creatividad artística*. Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva.
- Promusicae (2014). *Mercado de la música primer semestre 2014*. Madrid: Promusicae. <http://www.promusicae.es/documents/viewfile/111-mercado-de-la-musica-1er-semestre-2014> Accessed 20 June 2015.
- Rowan, J. (2010). *Emprendizajes en cultura*. Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños.
- Saavedra, D. (2015). Juventud sin acceso, música sin futuro. *LaFonoteca.net*, published online 7 April 2015. <http://lafonoteca.net/juventud-sin-acceso-musica-sin-futuro/>
Accessed 7 June 2015.
- Sanz, J. and Mateos, O. (2011). 15–M. Apuntes para el análisis de un movimiento en construcción. *Revista de Fomento Social*, 66: 517–544.
- Sassen, S. (2001). *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*. Princeton, N.J. and Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- SGAE (2014). *Anuario SGAE de las artes escénicas y musicales*. Madrid: Fundación SGAE <http://www.anuariosgae.com/anuario2014/home.html>
- Val, Fernán del (2014). *Rockeros insurgentes, modernos complacientes. Juventud, rock y*

política en España (1975-85). Ph.D. Dissertation. Universidad Complutense de Madrid. <http://eprints.ucm.es/29411/1/T35941.pdf> Accessed 7 September 2015.
YProductions (2009). *Innovación en cultura*. Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños.