



Ethnomusicology and music enterprise in catastrophic times

**Annual BFE One Day Conference 2020
University of Lincoln**

Saturday 7 November 2020

<https://bfeoneday2020.weebly.com>

Programme Committee

Dr Cassandre Balosso-Bardin (University of Lincoln), Dr Rob Dean (University of Lincoln), Dr Lonán Ó Briain (Nottingham University), Dr Stephen Wilford (Cambridge University).

Keynote Speaker: Dr Ioannis Tsioulakis (Queen's University, Belfast).

The 2020 Covid-19 crisis has brutally affected the musical world as the diversified earnings that musicians and the related industry roles relied upon have dried up, including the live music industries and teaching. This has led to a surge of online performances and alternative digital solutions. At the same time, the complete dissolution of live in-person concerts - that most musicians relied on to make a living since the demise of the recording industry brought on by the democratisation of music production - has been a huge shock to musicians around the world. This is not the first time that musicians have faced such dire circumstances, provoking change in the musical world. During the Great Depression, for example, radio broadcasting became ubiquitous and changed the public's listening habits, promoting new recording techniques that consolidated the popularity of specific genres such as 'crooning' (Young and Young 2005). Nearly a century later, in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis that led to the implementation of severe austerity measures in several countries, many musicians lost all their streams of income as culture was drastically cut from government budgets (Balosso-Bardin 2016) and both individuals and large companies were forced to rethink their economic models (Baym 2010). What ensued was a surge of inventiveness to keep music going despite dire circumstances. Then, as now, the emergence of DIY activities led musicians to reconsider their roles and develop new ways to offer their skills to the world (Tsioulakis 2020).

The current pandemic has highlighted on a global level the fragility of social and economic systems based solely on services without any state-organised safety nets for the performing arts industries such as those found in France and Belgium. However, this pandemic has also provided opportunities for the music industries to reassess their position in the world, just as it has amplified social justice movements spearheaded by Black Lives Matter, bringing to the fore the immediate need for change. Ethnomusicologists are now rethinking our research and teaching practices, looking towards our colleagues who

have been doing digital fieldwork or creating new ethnomusicologies in a world where in-person social gatherings are severely limited. Building upon the concept of 'economic ethnomusicology', this conference is an opportunity to examine and discuss the mechanisms in place to support the arts, innovative ways that performing artists have been responding to the complete annihilation of their livelihoods, and alternative creative outlets which can be used to maintain artist profiles and/or attempt to generate some income. Last but not least, this pandemic provides us with an opportunity to reflect upon our practice as ethnomusicologists in difficult times.

This BFE One Day conference will examine how musicians and the various roles in the music industry shift and adapt in catastrophic times. It seeks to highlight the resourcefulness of the music industries through a range of ethnomusicological, historical, geographical and methodological lenses.

The programme committee welcomes submissions from any discipline that address the following or related areas:

- Innovation and resilience of musical worlds during times of extreme austerity.
- Grassroots digital and DIY solutions and innovations in the music industries
- The role of music in times of crisis (e.g., coping strategies, alleviating crises, political responses).
- Ethnomusicological research and teaching practices following lockdown and social distancing guidelines.
- Digital platforms and music-making during contemporary crises (e.g., limitations, empowerment, development, transgression)
- Rebranded and innovative musical practices in times of crises (e.g., health, financial, environmental, political).
- Politics of opportunity in times of absence of activity.

We invite proposals for individual papers (15 minutes) and for panels of three related papers (45 minutes). Abstracts for individual papers should be no more than 300 words. For panels, send three abstracts of no more than 300 words each, as well as a panel description of no more than 100 words.

The One-Day conference will be held entirely online. The format will vary slightly from usual in-person conferences, with shorter papers. Ample time will be made for questions and interactive participation between all delegates.

We are delighted to announce our keynote speaker as Dr Ioannis Tsioulakis (Queen's University Belfast) who will present a paper entitled: 'From Austerity to Covid-19: the Struggle of Work in Music'. Dr Tsioulakis will also be launching his new book, *Musicians in Crisis: Working and Playing in the Greek Popular Music Industry* (Routledge, 2020).

Abstracts should be sent to bfeoneday2020@gmail.com by **5pm on Friday 14th August 2020**. Notifications of acceptance will be sent out in early September.