Music, Creativity and the Cultural Economy Research Group



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Welcome to the November 2026 newsletter of the Music, Creativity and the Cultural Economy research group.

In this edition of the newsletter (our 10th) we continue to celebrate the academic, policy, and creative practice work of our members.

What is the Music, Creativity and Cultural Economy research group?

- An inclusive and interdisciplinary group with a broad understanding of research (traditional, practice, knowledge exchange, public engagement, policy).
- Open to all, no matter your pre-existing experience of research.
- Celebrates and promotes the work of our members.
- Fosters collaborations, peer support and capacity building.

To join the Research Group, promote your research and knowledge exchange activities or get involved in any other way, please email Dr. Chris Anderton (Research Group lead) at chris.anderton@solent.ac.uk

Researcher updates

Matt Brombley (Lecturer in Music, and Creative Practice Researcher (Sonic, Digital and Immersive Arts))



On Saturday 19 September 2026, Matt premiered a live, cross-form performance of '*Vultures*' at the British Science Festival, having been commissioned by Mayflower Studios and kindly supported by the University of Southampton.

'Vultures' was developed as a creative response to new research by Chiying Lam, Jennifer Williams and Sarah Kiden. In their research project Deepfakes and Society they worked with the Cross Culture hub, engaging migrant women in conversations about deepfakes, digital trust and their experiences of encountering manipulated media.

At the heart the performance is a custom-coded, biodynamic system that turns drawing into sound, sound into movement, and movement into drawing. Gestures and marks on the canvas stretch vocoded voices of words and phrases from the research participants. Their voices move the projected image, generating overlapping grains of video to create motion. The movement of the figure is translated into new marks and gestures on the canvas. This is weaved together with vocals, samples and other sonic elements into a semi-improvised performance, guided by a one page score.

The piece takes its title from the words of one participant's reaction to deep fake video: "very convincing, they're like vultures". Emerging from that central metaphor, the piece draws in themes from the research and their resonance with my Matt's own practice and identity, exploring tensions inherent in the relationships we have with, and the relationships between, technology, family, and the environment; relationships with and between doubt and belief; progress and reflection; identity and belonging; relationship with and between life and death.

Matt has been invited to perform '*Vultures'* again at the University of Southampton's Arts and Humanities festival on Saturday 14 November 2026. Free tickets are available online.

Researcher updates

Dr Jennifer Skellington (Lecturer in Music)



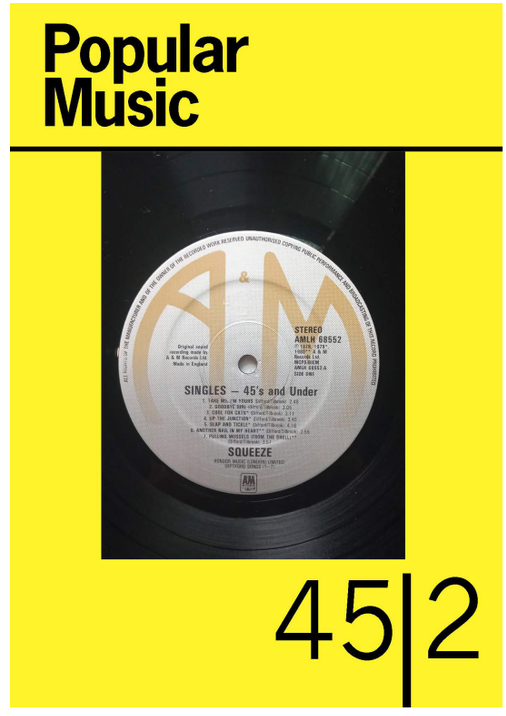
In June, Jennifer presented “Writing in the Margins: Centre–Periphery Dynamics in Digital Age Music Writing” at the IASPM UK & Ireland Biennial Branch Conference at the University of Aberdeen.

Drawing on research with music journalists, marketing professionals and digital content creators, the project examines how contemporary practitioners understand their professional identities, values and relationships with the music industries they mediate. It further seeks to support more sustainable and inclusive approaches to music journalism, audience engagement and artist discovery, while demonstrating the continuing importance of independent critical voices in an increasingly fragmented digital media landscape.



Jennifer recently co-authored a journal article with Dr Dai Griffiths and Dr Jan Butler of Oxford Brookes University entitled “Spotting the Difference in Squeeze: ‘Formalism’, ‘Physicalism’ and the Lure of Strict Re-recording”.

The article is available in the journal *Popular Music* (Cambridge University Press), and examines the distinctions and tensions involved in strict musical re-recording and the migration of music copyright over several decades. A visual reference to the article was also selected for prominent placement on the issue’s front cover!



Finally, Jennifer’s forthcoming article, “The Pop World Discovers Africa: Sociological Reflections on World Music Journalism in the 1980s English Broadsheet Press”, will appear in issue 116 of the journal *New Formations* (published by Lawrence & Wishart/SAGE). The article offers a sociological analysis of representations of World music in the English broadsheet press during the 1980s.

Jennifer has integrated insights from her research into her teaching practice, enabling students to take a historically informed and critically reflective approach to the ways media narratives shape the marketing, promotion and reception of music across cultures.

Researcher updates

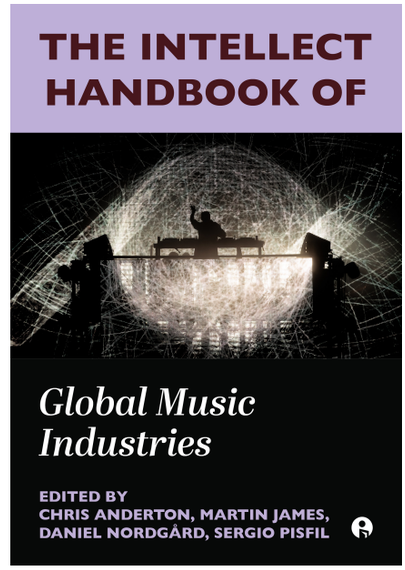
Dr Chris Anderton (Associate Professor)



In September Chris presented at the 17th International Music Business Research Days conference at the Institute of Cultural Management and Media at the University of Music and Theatre in Munich. The talk was a collaboration with Patryk Galuszka, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Economics and Sociology at the University of Łódź in Poland.

The talk, titled "Afterlives of popular music: conceptualizing the music franchise in the contemporary era" extends on our earlier work about legacy rock bands, contemporary copyright concerns, and artistic authenticity to develop the concept of the 'music franchise', which extends on concepts drawn from film, media and popular music studies. The talk was a synopsis of a journal article which is currently under review, and follow-on work is currently under discussion.

More recently, Chris has submitted the final proofs of the *Intellect Handbook of Global Music Industries*. It was co-edited with Martin James, Daniel Nordgård and Sergio Pisfil, and consists of 37 chapters by international contributors who examine music business topics ranging from songwriting camps, artist management, and music policy, to copyright, the impacts of AI, and the realities of working in the music industries. It is due to be published in March 2027.



Chris has also submitted the inaugural issue of the *Journal of Live Music Studies* (published by Intellect), which is due to be published in January 2027. The journal will be published twice a year, and seeks to bring together the broad scholarship about live music into one place.





Finally, in November, Chris was the feature interviewee for the *Can We Have Your Attention?* podcast, in an episode entitled "Is Monoculture Dead? Rein Me In, Algorithms and Music." You can hear it HERE, or watch it on YouTube.



Researcher updates

Matt Sanger (Senior Lecturer)



Matt Sanger and Solent colleague Tomasz Lasek completed an independent evaluation of Basingstoke Festival 2026 for Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council this summer.

Combining thematic analysis of stakeholder interviews (artists, councillors, council officers, educators and businesses) with a survey of festivalgoers, it provides the first new evidence in a decade.

Audiences rated it highly (98.1% good or very good), and stakeholders described life-changing opportunities for young people. Indicative gross audience spending was about £307,000.

The study identified a newcomer awareness gap and fragile funding ahead of local government reorganisation, and set out 18 staged actions, including student placements with Southampton Solent University, demonstrating direct civic impact for the research.

Researcher updates

Louise Morrell (Senior Lecturer)



In August 2026, Louise presented her research at the International Conference on Cultural Policy Research (ICCPR) in Ottawa, Canada as part of the panel "Mapping regional cultural ecosystems across countries: Comparing Poland, the Netherlands and the UK."

The panel brought together perspectives from the UK, Poland and the Netherlands, with contributions from colleagues Dr Rudolf Wawrzyniec from the University of Lodz, and Djamila Boulil and Dr Quirijn van den Hoogen from the University of Groningen. Together, they explored approaches to understanding how creative and cultural ecosystems operate across different regional and national contexts.

Louise's presentation introduced a research project that investigated how social capital is exchanged during live events. While conferences, festivals and professional gatherings are often valued for their networking opportunities, there is currently limited understanding of the specific value exchanged through these interactions. The project proposes a prototype research tool that enables participants to record meaningful exchanges in real time, generating data on how information, opportunities, advice, support and collaborations move through professional networks.

Drawing on Social Capital Theory, Social Network Analysis and Social Exchange Theory, the project aims to provide new insights into how relationships contribute to the development of creative ecosystems. By capturing interactions as they occur, the research seeks to move beyond measuring attendance and towards understanding the social value generated through events.

The conference provided valuable opportunities to discuss the project's development and explore future international research collaborations in this area.