

## Dublin calling: Challenging European centrality and peripherality through jazz

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### Abstract

Each year, Dublin based 12 Points European Jazz Festival<sup>1</sup> opens calls for young European artists. Although jazz has been peripheral to the official rhetoric of the European Union, the Festival promotes debates with the various jazz sectors around the state of jazz in the context of cultural production in Europe; and while Dublin has been peripheral to the European jazz scene, the festival has grown to stand as a symbol of the Irish will to be at its core. Drawing from my three-year research experience with 12 Points — from 2011 to 2014 — and with the network of actors around it, I suggest that jazz is created and reinvented in the process of its dissemination and practice, and that jazz identities in Europe result from the negotiation between discourse and practice and in the interstices between the formal and informal networks that support them. In the narratives around jazz produced by its actors, both jazz and Europe are featured mainly in their ideal interpretations, with common values of cultural diversity, mobility and of a pan-European reality. 'Jazz' and 'Europe' serve as white canvases where the diversified notions of what both ideals of what jazz and Europe should or could be are projected.

### 1. 12 Points

12 Points takes place as an annual itinerant showcase for 12 ensembles, each from a different European country. Established in 2007, from 2010 on and in alternate years, the festival has been rotating between Dublin and a network of partner organizations in other European cities, such as Stavanger, Western Norway in 2010; Porto, Portugal in 2012; Umea, Sweden in 2014; and San Sebastian, Spain in 2016. As an integral part of the festival, themed debates take place around the state of jazz and cultural production in Europe with the participation of musicians, cultural programmers, jazz promoters and music journalists. By exchanging experiences and debating common issues, 12 Points provides an interesting perspective of how correlations and variances occur between the local and the global; and how local networks, rather than global

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<sup>1</sup> See more details in <http://www.12points.ie/>.

networks, have unique dynamics that are linked to distinct geopolitical, cultural, social and economic factors within Europe.

Crucial factors convey 12 Points a pan-European meaning: the small scale of the Festival, which provides greater interaction between participants and greater exposure for each band; the notion of equal opportunity for young European musicians, regardless of their countries of origin; and the notion of diversity, by requiring that the Festival will present participants from different countries. By operating on a bilateral logic, dialoguing with local and national host institutions, but also on a multilateral logic, positioning Dublin and the other hosting cities within a pan-European jazz project, the festival becomes adjustable and permeable to the various ways in which music and culture is made, produced and consumed in different parts of Europe. By alternating between Dublin and other European peripheral cities, the festival claims centrality for debating and making European music.

## 2. Jazz peripheral to the European narrative

Former US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, once said: "To understand Europe you have to be a genius — or French"<sup>2</sup>. Being neither of these, I sympathise with Albright's frustration before such a complex reality. Both Europe and jazz in Europe are intricate frameworks where different cultures, identities and negotiations coexist. In fact, one could argue that there are several 'Europes', where numerous kinds of jazz are being made.

On *Nationalism and the Making of the New Europe*, Philip Bohlman argues that the process of building national identities is the key to understand European music, in the sense that it "contributes fundamentally to the ontology of European music, that is, to music's 'way of being' in Europe" (Bohlman, 2004: xxii). Drawing on Bohlman's notion that music-making articulates values and attitudes of social groups and, therefore, it contributes to celebrate or challenge identities; I found it particularly relevant to question whether jazz in Europe represents a celebration and/or a challenging of European identity. Moreover, Bohlman suggests that national identities are constantly being defined and redefined by different people in different places, even if the music that sets the process in motion is originally from someone and someplace else.

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. *The Economist*, Oct. 21, 1999.

Both Europe and European jazz take on different meanings depending on the context in which they are being contemplated. In the political arena, the official discourse of the European Union often stresses the notion of 'Europeanness' as a set of fundamental abilities. Promoting open trade among Member States, mobility of its citizens, multicultural peaceful coexistence, and a European common foreign policy are key aspects to that ideological trail. Moreover, these characteristics seem to ultimately inform the notion of a Pan-European ideal.

Also the Americanisation of Europe plays a decisive role in understanding jazz practices in Europe, and the narrative around it. The mutual fascination between the US and Europe has, particularly during the twentieth century, nurtured that process. On the one hand, Europe has been largely influenced by American cultural products, of which jazz is an important part. On the other, Americans welcomed (and to some extent craved) the legitimization of jazz by European enthusiasts.

Europe is, *per se*, a cultural network. It has developed as a constant flow of people and cultural products between different European cities which have become, throughout history, more or less important actors of that network (Bohman, 2004). Over time, defining Europe has proved to be an arduous task and the subject of extensive academic dispute. However, it is safe to say that today Europe's cultural identity results from a long line of adjustments to an ideal set of social and political values — participatory and pluralist democracy, liberal humanism, freedom of thought, belief, speech and association. This set of values is very close to — and inspired by — the democratic model inherited from the United States of America (USA).

From the beginning of the twentieth century — not least due to the growing exposure to American culture through imported film, literature and records — Europe would ultimately embrace the myth of America as the paragon of modern democracy. From its early reception in Europe, jazz has been embraced as a symbol of the exotic (Gioia, 1989) and elevated by Europeans to 'serious music' during the interwar period (Prouty, 2010). In post-WWII the desire for consuming American cultural products increased even more. However, over the course of time, Europeans seem to have gradually incorporated American cultural symbols and products as their own and have abstracted them from many of their American foundations. Denise Dunne and Ben Tonra (1998) observe how American cultural icons in Europe today are "essentially value neutral", perceived as "icons of a global youth culture" (Tonra, 1998: 13).

Europeans not only seem to incorporate such products as their own, they also appear to adjust those products' application and reception to better suit their own way of life, whenever it is felt to be at risk from 'cococolafication'.

On the other hand, the European legitimization of jazz as a western art form has been very appealing to some Americans. Marshall Stearns's (1956) *The Story of Jazz* was primarily aimed to establish a clear division between jazz and 'other' genres that were posing a growing threat at the time — especially Rock and Roll. Stearns's work was maybe the first attempt to create a cohesive jazz narrative that bonded all of the stylistic trends that had emerged up to that point. The fact that Stearns was an historian, an outsider to the academic world of music, may have helped to validate his conception of jazz as "America's Classical Music" (Prouty, 2010: 21). His approach is heavily rooted in creating a time path for the development of jazz that is very close to the canon of western classical music.

Indeed, European authors have not only subscribed to the 'official narrative of jazz', they have also contributed largely to its creation. During the interwar period, essays such as Robert Goffin's (1932) *Aux Frontières du Jazz*, Hugues Panassié's (1934) *Le Jazz Hot* and Charles Delaunay's (1936) *Hot Discography* embodied the birth of jazz criticism and historiography. In the preface to the first American edition of Goffin's (1944) *Jazz: From the Congo to the Metropolitan*, Arnold Gingrich<sup>3</sup> wrote categorically: "Robert Goffin was the first serious man of letters to take jazz seriously enough to devote a book to it." (Gingrich, 1944: ix). Goffin himself seemed very confident of that same idea when he wrote: "Il serait prétentieux de dire que j'ai découvert le jazz, mais peut-être puis-je revendiquer d'avoir été le premier à m'en préoccuper critiqueusement." (Droixhe, 2007: 2) Yannick Séité<sup>4</sup> went even further: "De sang-froid, il me semble juste d'exprimer la chose ainsi: si c'est l'Amérique qui a créé le jazz, c'est l'Europe qui l'a inventé, c'est la Belgique qui était en pointe dans cette invention et c'est Goffin le premier parmi les Belges." (Droixhe, 2007: 2). The distinction between 'creating' and 'inventing' seems to denounce a Eurocentric vision of music criticism. It seems to declare that only European criticism could legitimise jazz as 'serious' music by 'taking jazz seriously enough'. This European presumption, which is well illustrated in titles such as Delaunay's (1946) *La Véritable Musique de Jazz*, was very well received in America. In the early-twentieth century, at a time in western history when the US was still struggling for worldwide recognition as an essential

<sup>3</sup> Editor of *Esquire* at the time.

<sup>4</sup> (21 May 1898 – 27 June 1984) Belgian jazz enthusiast.

nation, the legitimization of jazz by Europe, the secular centre of western culture, allowed Americans to look at a genuinely American cultural product on par with other art forms from the Old Continent.

Post WWII, that legitimization became dyed-in-the-wool by a series of occurrences that definitively established the American jazz narrative in Europe. One of the most significant examples is Norman Granz's Jazz at the Philharmonic (JATP) tour in Europe from 1952 to 1959. The JATP was partially intended to promote bebop at a time when it was being vigorously criticised by jazz revivalists. Granz not only presented bebop musicians to Europe, he promoted New York's jazz as a symbol of the American myth: of exceptionalism, of outstanding individual artistic skill and, as Nicholas Gebhardt suggests, of the "progressivism of the American exceptionalist ideology" (Gebhardt, 2001: 77) and the 'liberal capitalist' dynamics of the metropolis. Bebop became central to the narrative and practice of jazz in Europe as a representation of modern America's ideological foundations: US expansionism, its national cultural autonomy and the promoting of New York as the ultimate embodiment of modern metropolitan creativeness (Gennari, 1991; Stowe, 1994; DeVeaux, 1997; Gebhardt, 2001; McGee, 2011). Kristin McGee (2011) suggests that jazz's reception in Europe also implied the importing of the American jazz narrative: academic jazz programmes were included in several European conservatories' curricula; its music education models were adopted; American jazz anecdotes were disseminated among European jazz musicians and fans; and the American jazz festival template was imitated across numerous European cities. Simply put, Europe embraced the American jazz canon. Ultimately this established the way in which the Europe jazz network came to function in the twentieth century. Also, in post WWII Europe, musicians began to perform at international jazz festivals in Europe, side-by-side with American jazz stars. Apart from prompting European jazz musicians to discover a greater sense of autonomy in the music, events like these helped to create the idea that Europe had not only legitimised American jazz, it had made it global.

In other words, once jazz is performed, recorded, studied and researched, and its dissemination negotiated worldwide, it is also constructed globally, and therefore it should be considered a global music product. Johnson's draw of attention to the importance of the negotiations between local/global, cultural practices/processes, culture/mediations stresses what seems to be a crucial point in that construction — jazz seems to be created in numerous ways, depending on a variety of outcomes from those negotiations (Johnson, 2002).

In contrast to American jazz musicians, most European jazz musicians I interviewed think of themselves as free from the weight of the jazz tradition. However, at the same time, when asked to elaborate on why they choose to play jazz, they often engaged in a discourse very close to the American narrative, justifying their choice through their assertion that jazz is a symbol of multiculturalism, pro-active democracy, and struggle for the individual voice.

This seemingly ambivalent discourse — and puzzling, at first — between rejecting a parallel with the 'other' while adopting his narrative is ultimately the core of theories developed around the notion of identity from authors such as Jacques Derrida, Stuart Hall and Simon Frith. Derrida's (1982) principle of 'constitutive outside' establishes that it is impossible to draw an absolute distinction between interior and exterior — every identity is irremediably affected by its exterior. In a markedly similar approach, for Hall (1996) identity is built through the relation to the 'other' — the relation to what it is not, to precisely what it lacks and to what it does not want to be. While elaborating on the reasons for their choices to play jazz — as Europeans —, the musicians quoted herein may have done precisely that: they reject jazz as their musical tradition but they take its idealised narrative — thus projecting their own ideal of what jazz should or might be. In fact, as Frith argues, "an identity is always already an ideal, what we would like to be, not what we are" (1996: 121–123). And for European jazz musicians, in the face of a musical genre that is traditionally assumed as not their own, jazz may work as a white canvas on which they impose their own narrative on musical identity. The fact that events like 12 Points, as journalist Marcus O'Dair<sup>5</sup> puts it, "help create a sort of cohesion" (Interview O'Dair, 2012), places that 'cohesion' in the realm of possibility. That act of will would result in a "Pan-European something" (Interview O'Dair, 2012), which by definition we can assume as beyond the realm of fact, or as an ideal.

Jazz's official narrative has been largely built by instituting differences and finding similarities between jazz and other music genres. Moreover, the narrative around music may verbalise social and political ideals, thus providing music its meanings. The European jazz narrative is deeply rooted in its historical reception of American jazz and the appropriation of its anecdotes, styles, and its glorification of individualism — simply put; the European jazz narrative is deeply rooted in absorbing the American liberal capitalist metropolitan ideology. The official discourse uses 'jazz' as an idealised notion that can channel distinctive

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<sup>5</sup> In interview in Porto, February 18, 2012.

— and, in some cases, contradictory — ideological messages: it can be as much a symbol of national cultural heritage, as of Europeanist policies, or of international trading partnerships. EU official institutions not only construct different narratives around ‘jazz’ at will — they also interpret those narratives according to their agenda. ‘Jazz’ is just a small part of an immense jigsaw of assembled narratives that promote an ideal. And ‘jazz’, as an ideal, legitimises and authenticates national and European constructed idiosyncrasies: an inherent engagement to culture; a natural talent to generate economic relations; a long history that certifies its ability to sustain long term external alliances and domestic policies.

Any official narrative is the construction of a myth, which may or may not concur with practice. It is a goal, constantly in construction — as is the case with the myth of Europe. As Tim Rice argues, the construction of identity is a “form of self-understanding” that is “accomplished when identities are being changed” (2007: 26). Perhaps jazz actors tend to construct their discourses around their *métier* as a form of better understanding it and defining their role within it. Europe’s identity, as Bohlman (2004) debates, is ever-changing. Maybe jazz actors in Europe create narratives around what jazz in Europe is by projecting their idealised notion of what Europe should be. Within that context, jazz is peripheral to the European narrative; it serves as a recurrent metaphor to help understand what Europe is and what it means to be European.

### **3. Dublin: peripheral to Europe but central to the European jazz scene**

On May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004, several initiatives were taking place all over Europe in order to celebrate the implementation of the 2003 Treaty of Accession. The European Union welcomed ten new member States that day: Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. In Dublin, European leaders met at the Irish Presidential Palace, the *Áras an Uachtaráin*, for a flag-raising ceremony. In the evening, the programme included fireworks and, in Bray, a concert by Polish jazz trumpeter Tomasz Stańko at the Bray Jazz Festival. In its production team was Gerry Godley, who three years later would establish the 12 Points European Jazz Festival.

As a European jazz promoter, Gerry was concerned with detaching 12 Points from the American jazz predominance on European jazz festivals; as an Irish jazz

promoter, he was concerned with endorsing young Irish artists who did not see any upcoming opportunities to perform at an international level. This last concern seems to have triggered a wider ambition. According to him, 12 Points was created as a pan-European jazz festival from the start, but, most importantly, it began as an exercise to identify young jazz artists, not only those from European countries with a strong jazz scene, but also, and in equal terms, those from peripheral European countries with less opportunities to play abroad.

12 Points seems to have resulted from the will to disrupt the establishment within jazz festivals across Europe. At a time when Dublin had no longer a jazz festival, 12 Points seems to have been created as one that would not conform to the same model of others before it or in other parts of Europe. The need to search for 'what is out there' and scrutinise which were the new European jazz actors seems to have been crucial. The pan-European notion seems to have been present from the early start, including the choice for the Festival's name, which was inspired by the spirit of the European Song Contest — where 12 points are maximum score; but mostly, the concern with musicians coming from European countries that have fewer resources to promote their artists, or with no platforms that could allow them to access the international context, appears to underline the Festival's pan-European integrationist orientation. The very process of selecting the applicants, musicians and bands, seems to favour positive discrimination, and diversity above quality.

The application process aims, above all, to 'tell an honest story', that is, to serve as showcase for the existing variety of the different jazz scenes across Europe. For this, and in addition, the Festival draws reporters' and former participants' suggestions in order to access musicians with less exposure. The restraint to the motto 'twelve bands from twelve different countries' seems to ensure the Festival, though mandatorily, a sense of equal opportunities for young European musicians. Data collection does not only serve the selection process. On its website, the Festival has been displaying the information on its participants over the years. This way the Festival positions itself as an institution that provides relevant data on the emerging generation of jazz musicians in Europe.

In addition to its promotional and integrationist roles, the Festival was designed to perform a number of purposes that, together, aim to offer jazz actors in Europe an exposure platform, but also a debate forum. The fact that each year the Festival calls high profile European jazz promoters for debate sessions seems to transport two important impact factors: on the one hand, the



Festival positions itself above others as one of the most important European debate forums for cultural policies on jazz made in Europe; on the other, the Festival is not limited to bilateral dialogue with the institutions who welcome it, but it also creates a multilateral platform for dialogue between the various actors, including the media and the artists themselves. The issues that were debated in the Festival extend to a wide variety of areas in which jazz in Europe operates: from education, audiences, investment in cultural infrastructures, the diversity of cultural policies between the various Member States of the EU, to the role of musicians, promoters and the media. The starting point, not only for the debates that have been taken place throughout the various editions of the Festival, but also for the origin of the Festival itself, was to question the very concept of 'European jazz'. Subsequently, during these debates, when addressing their most persistent concerns, the participants are in fact negotiating the meanings of the concepts behind those issues. The Festival was born not only out of the need to promote larger exposure to the emerging generation of jazz actors in Europe and to foster dialogue between them, it was also created as a way to question concepts, debating and negotiating them by putting them into practice.

Jazz consumption in Europe was one the most debated subjects. Considerations around who consumes jazz and how it is consumed led to other topics, such as cultural policies, the music industry, the change in consumer habits and the way jazz education has been conducted. The different kinds of relationships that audiences in Europe have established with culture and with jazz in particular inform jazz consumption. Cultural policies of each country have a substantial role on how audiences perceive and consume culture, and therefore on how they consume jazz. Accordingly, it can be assumed that particular cultural policies inform particular cultural habits, and that different policies shape different kinds of relationships between European audiences and jazz.

According to some of the promoters that were present at the 12 Points debates, the way people consume jazz has gone under deep changes over recent years. Like other cultural products, jazz has been increasingly perceived by audiences as part of a larger system of their cultural and life experiences. It was also discussed how audiences seem to gradually seek, above all, new experiences, rather than feeding their devotion to niche cultural products. Attending passively to a concert, for instance, is being gradually replaced by promoters offering jazz concerts as part of a set of an immersive cultural

experience. Also, a new generation of promoters, more than the musicians, are making use of social networks, which is believed to bring a positive outcome in reaching new audiences and promoting jazz festivals as part of the peoples' daily lives' cultural experiences. Drawing from their experiences, many promoters feel that the categorisation between high and low culture has become obsolete. Many addressed the need to attend the audiences' interests, and their concern with creating a close consultation and dialogue with audiences, as part of an undergoing restructuring process. The European jazz sector seems to feel the need to rethink the relationship between those who make music or enable it to happen and audiences.

Audiences' morphology, however, seems to differ from country to country. If, on the one hand, the impression that jazz audiences are ageing considerably does not apply to all of Europe, on the other, across countries and age ranges, the very perception of what jazz is seems to find different meanings. Audiences are ageing substantially. Before a predominantly ageing jazz audience and the difficulties to retain new ones, promoters feel that a new way to understand those potential new audiences needs to be undertaken, especially by communicating in a way in which jazz would be more appealing to them. At the same time, etiquette for attending a jazz concert is still unknown to some segments of the audiences, which indirectly indicates that there are in fact new comers at jazz events.

Like in the live music sector, consumer habits in the recorded music sector are going under disruptive changes. A parallel with classical music consumption can be drawn: consumers seem to have lost the habit of buying records on a regular basis. However, new ways of consumption seem to have become increasingly popular. Vinyl records seem to have regain market value, as is the case for European jazz. As it happens in other areas, the effort of attracting jazz audiences finds itself at different stages throughout Europe. Historical, social, economic and cultural dimensions of each country have led jazz consumption to be carried out differently from country to country.

The realities of each European city largely determine the way in which investment strategies are carried out in order to attract audiences for jazz. In Porto, because Casa da Música is relatively recent and the first regular jazz offer in the city, this investment is still at a very early phase of a process that will take decades to reach its goals. On the other hand, in countries such as Finland and Norway, the process is at subsequent stages. Jazz in Finland begins to penetrate large scale pop music festivals, thus reaching potential audiences which

otherwise might never consume jazz. In Norway, a specific age group — from thirteen to nineteen — is less exposed to jazz, a fact that has led the West Norwegian Jazz Centre to engage in a project to attract that specific audience cluster. A combination of factors seems to be crucial in attracting new audiences. The question seems not to lie only on which kind of jazz is offered and in what context, but also on who are the musicians who play it. The gender factor can be decisive in attracting more female audience members; and in some European cities, such as Bergen, jazz made by young beginner artists have been attracting young music students who are interested in new music.

Although the promotional sector is widely regarded as one that has a more active role in the development of communication strategies with audiences, other sectors such as education and the media are considered to be key elements to that process. European jazz journalism seems to create some division among jazz actors regarding the way it communicates with its consumers. Specialised jazz magazines are often seen as unappealing to new readers, by making use of an excessive emic approach, unattainable to the potential jazz consumer. The view on how engaging partnerships between promoters and the media can be largely positive for strengthening jazz scenes at both local and international level is largely shared. The media seems to be perceived as an essential partner in jazz networking in Europe. Its role, though sometimes criticised in the way it communicates to potential jazz fans, seems to be decisive in the dissemination of local and international jazz scenes. In some cases, as in 12 Points, the close relationship between promoter and journalists is seen as an asset which allows young artists international exposure. In other cases, such as in Norway and Germany, the media seems to be fully integrated within the jazz sector, and perceived as having a decisive role in its sustainability.

Undoubtedly regarded as a core area to the European jazz sector, the relationship between artists and audiences during performances is one of the most pressing concerns. Most of the sector understands that is necessary to break with a specific performative tradition in jazz, which is, in the view of many, passive, and inexpressive. The way in which most of the musicians perform on stage is regarded by many as the one most responsible for the difficulties associated with attracting new audiences. Breaking with an established perception of the performative act amongst musicians seems to be one of the most difficult to surpass. It seems to be one of the issues with a greater number of interconnections with other concerns of the European jazz sector. Changes in jazz consumption are obviously associated to changes in music consumption, as

part of a broader variation in the way people relate to culture. The live music sector, the one addressed the most during both interviews and debates, seems to struggle with attracting and retaining new audiences. The long established roles performed by the various actors of the sector seem to be now under discussion. The ways in which the media and artists communicate with audiences are perceived by most as crucial factors for a changing process. Poor communication skills and low ambition are pointed by promoters as some of the inadequacies that most detain musicians from reaching larger audiences. Artists' engagement with audiences seems to be largely anticipated by the entire sector. There is consensus around the concept that jazz needs to become appealing to younger audiences. The kind of relationship that had been established with audiences in the past no longer suits the interests of a new generation of potential jazz fans. For that, jazz has to be part of an immersive cultural experience, which is multiplied through social media and interlinked to other daily lives experiences. A generational reform on European jazz promotion appears to be already happening. However, as we have seen, the way in which jazz education is conducted seems to be the key element for the kind of change that is desired by everyone, particularly in the relationship between artists and audiences and, consequently, in the way musicians conceive the performative act itself.

Jazz education is often pointed as the main cause for the musicians' lack of communication skills. For both promoters and musicians, there has not been made an investment by jazz education institutions in this particular field. The most pointed consequence of that is the increasing difficulty in attracting new and larger audiences. Jazz education in Europe has developed widely over the past three decades. Institutions offering high education in jazz performance have multiplied. Some have established themselves as important references to European jazz and became young international talent attraction poles. The mobility provided by Erasmus exchange programmes and the growing demand for higher education have created a new generation of musicians who seem more integrated within Europe and who more naturally develop collaborations with musicians from other countries. However, significant differences between the kinds of education each country offers seem to exist, which appears to be closely linked to each country's cultural and educational policies. Nordic countries are considered to be exemplary in the way they have developed strategies and policies that favour a close relationship between music and its citizens from an early age. Consistent policies have allowed those countries to

develop pioneer curricula. By detaching themselves from the American tradition and by consolidating an academic path that is substantially focused on the interests of each student, those institutions have largely contributed for the consolidation of very characteristic and eclectic jazz scenes. Still, the criticism to European jazz education emphasises two main factors: the deficiency in training the musicians' communication and performative skills on stage, and the lack of investment in developing the students' practical abilities which would allow them to manage their careers. Because the outcomes of European jazz education are increasingly visible on the ground, they offer many diversified considerations.

The exponential growth of jazz education in Europe has caused the sector to work most of all as a self-sustainable and profitable business. This fact may have conditioned the investment strategy for jazz in Europe, which, to his view, has been focused excessively on educational opportunities and less than desirable on both the quality and variety of the infrastructures where jazz is presented to the public. Europe is composed of many different economic realities. The investment each country makes in its cultural policies is obviously dependent on its economic context. While the 2008 economic crisis has reached across Europe, it has taken its toll in different ways, according to each particular economic context. However, beyond the amount of money that is injected into cultural investment, cultural policies also comply with the various ways in which each government and each society perceives culture. Music is part of that whole, and the share intended for jazz is variable. Historical, cultural and social factors determine that variance.

The sustainability of the music industry seems to come from different forms of investment. The economic crisis and the increasing constraints on music support have also caused debate around the impact it may have on jazz in Europe. Public institutions, arts centres and jazz associations are key players in the field. The role each of those actors plays in local, national and international cultural policy covers not only the objectives established for their specific activity, but, when developed on the ground, becomes the visible face of jazz networking and public cultural service. Jazz festivals can assume deep social, cultural and political meanings.

#### 4. Final remarks

12 Points, according to Gerry Godley, has managed to establish itself as a symbol of the Irish entrepreneurship in Europe. At the same time, because of its unorthodox characteristics, has led to question settled concepts within the jazz sector and European culture. It not only seems to follow the change in the way musicians are using mobility opportunities in Europe, it positions itself as a major actor in consolidating equality of opportunity. Although Central European countries have geographical advantage in mobility, peripheral countries seem to begin blurring their disadvantage. The mobility of jazz actors within Europe can bring consequences at various levels that will be interesting to observe in the future.

Jazz networking in Europe seems to reveal many of the differences of which Europe is made. The history of jazz in Europe was made largely on the mobility of its actors. The mobility provided for EU Member States by the Schengen Area has exploded the ways in which European perceived each other. At the same time, Scandinavian countries outside the EU seem to promote cultural policies based on exporting national culture and engaging collaborations between musicians across Europe. European jazz players seem to acknowledge that greater mobility has increased their awareness to the others. Mobility seems to be increasingly commonplace for both musicians and promoters. Contrasts between countries may be perceived as an important asset to the European jazz scene, in the sense that exchanging experiences may contribute to generalised improvement. However those contrasts also bring frictions to the fore — different conceptions of cultural policy making, of public cultural service, funding, entrepreneurship, of the commercial aspects of music promotion and dissemination, of educational policies, of audiences' consumption, of the role of the media.

As a European jazz festival, 12 Points seems to show that ground practices challenge official narratives around jazz and European identities. Players' mobility, informal collaboration and formal networking are crucial to that process. Music, national and European identities are a result of the interaction between people from different cultural, political and musical backgrounds. 12 Points assumes the mission of bringing artists from peripheral countries closer to the opportunities available in Central European and Nordic countries. The Festival may contribute to re-define the European jazz musician's identity and his place in Europe, which is characterised by being flexible, entrepreneurial and

informal. 12 Points confirms that there are creative young people around Europe, regardless of their countries of origin, and confronts the narrative conveyed by the European Union around each of its Member States.

There is not a monolithic sonic representation of European jazz. Apparently, each country's jazz scene has developed a different level of dependency towards American jazz. The variants may be strongly connected to the role that traditional music has assumed in each country. However, as we have seen, cultural, political, educational and national identity elements seem to play a determinant role in establishing the form in which jazz is made and performed in each European country.

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