

The Heritagisation of Popular Music: Current Practices and New Challenges

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In recent years, there have been several social and cultural developments that have encouraged an understanding of popular music as intangible heritage by museums worldwide - most of all is the ratification by UNESCO of its *Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage* in 2003. Meanwhile, the digital revolution in the music industry has simultaneously motivated very current debates on the ethical, aesthetical and philosophical dimensions to sound-related phenomena within the realms of several overlapping academic fields, such as science and technology studies, and, most significantly, popular music studies, ethnomusicology, and sound studies. Within this framework, museums and temporary exhibitions specifically assigned to the subject of popular music have started to develop around the world. As to the scholarly reflections about these initiatives, in general terms they clearly demonstrate its discursive routes to lack representational adequacy when posed in the light of the research stemming from anthropology, ethnomusicology, popular music studies and sound studies.

In this paper, I will provide an overview of the current practice of the popular music heritagisation across three main parameters of discussion - the representation of the phenomena; the museum relationship with its visitors; and the exhibiting practices – and will tentatively envision further avenues for the practice to become of heightened cultural and social relevance.

(211 words)

Short bio

Alcina Cortez is the Head of Research and Development of Moment, Museum of Music and Entertainment in New York. She has a longstanding experience as an executive producer of exhibitions, mainly at Calouste Gulbenkian foundation, Lisbon, Portugal and Expo'98, Lisbon. A Musicologist graduated from Universidade Nova de Lisboa, she holds a Master's degree in Ethnomusicology and Museum Studies focusing on the heritagisation of popular music and is now working on her PhD, which aims at developing the heritagisation of music by drawing on notions of sonic epistemologies. She runs the blog www.objectsofsound.com in which she shares her thoughts on the exhibitions and museums focusing music and sound. The blog was jury-selected by the publisher MuseumsETC to integrate the upcoming publication *The Blog Book*, which shows the publisher's selection of the best blogs on museum studies. She has published in significant journals, presented profusely in scientific conferences, and been invited to give talks worldwide.

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