

# ADAPTING MUSIC BUSINESS TO THE DIGITAL AGE: GRIME MUSIC, YOUTUBE ALGORITHMS AND NEW NETWORK CULTURES

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## INTRODUCTION: GRIME, ECONOMICS AND NETWORKS

**M**USICAL ARTISTS, THEIR FANS, and business executives form an unstable triumvirate within the hypercompetitive world order of neoliberal capitalism. Trevor Pinch and Karin Bijsterveld's observation that musicianship and sound technologies have «dramatically changed» in recent years highlights how the aforementioned parties are inextricably linked to the globe's technological advancements<sup>1</sup>. The internet's relentless growth combines with the constant development of new digital technologies to present new chances and challenges, demanding that stakeholders within music business(es) react and adapt to times of rapid, unpredictable change in order to survive and thrive.

As figures within the music industries continue to adapt to the societal conditions of our Digital Age and «the new music economy»<sup>2</sup>, new waves of music industry entrepreneurs are negotiating the various opportunities and obstacles facilitated by the internet's global framework. Analysing the recent emergence and sustained development of a key contemporary musical form, this chapter will explore the ways in which a contemporary wave of entrepreneurs has generated remunerative possibilities by circulating and promoting a complex postmillennial musical form — Grime — through smart usages of the video-sharing website YouTube. I argue that the ways in which certain Grime musicians have adapted to challenges set by the internet's prevailing forces disprove the notion that «the development

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<sup>1</sup>. PINCH – BIJSTERVELD 2004.

<sup>2</sup>. WILKSTRÖM 2009, pp. 118-170.

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of [music] fan support and consumer demand requires an enormous amount of capital»<sup>3</sup>. Instead, I reason the tactics adopted by Grime musicians when sharing their work on YouTube may blur stable boundaries between musicians and fans, thereby fostering new levels of engagement in commercially viable ways.

GRIME IN THE SKY: EMERGENCE OF A STYLE

It all began in London's Tower Hamlets. Grime is a style of electronic, rap-based music that emerged from the Bow E3 area of England's capital city. The skyscrapers of Canary Wharf's neighbouring commercial district represent to many a controversial «gleaming paean of financial power», looming over the neighbourhood's council estates as a constant reminder of Britain's uneven distributions of capital. Almost as if challenging the status quo that these behemoth constructions in Canary Wharf came to signify, one of the first recorded Grime music events took place atop the dizzying height of one of Bow's very own windswept rooftops<sup>4</sup>. This particular event — a showcase of Grime's emerging talents in 2003 for an amateur DVD project entitled *Conflict* — was located in a small, messy room at the highest point of Bow's EQ Club. However, rather than mimicking in physical form the unrestrained machismo connected to bursting wallets, competitive inner-city finance culture, and manifestations of the global free market's imbalances, the secret studio of radio station Deja Vu FM was positioned on a tower for protection. Musical projects in the vein of *Conflict* needed to change on a regular basis in order to evade British law enforcement. The notion of 'underground' culture captures the manner in which many British pirate radio stations attempted to challenge the domination of mainstream broadcasting outlets. While this particular 2003 event was positioned high above street-level in a literal sense, Deja Vu FM's studio offered a vital platform for UK-based artists who were otherwise marginalised and ignored at the time, living in the shadow of Canary Wharf rather than peering down at the street from above.

In an age before the prevalence of keyboard-less smartphones (let alone the social media phenomenon YouTube), the camera on which *Conflict* director Troy Miller filmed the performance had to be borrowed from the media department of his girlfriend's university. After all, homemade and self-distributed DVDs were one of the most effective ways to both see *and* hear the genre's latest offerings. Approximately twenty members of various East London music crews crowded into the dingy EQ Club studio — at once scrambling to glimpse the live performances, competing to showcase their own rapping and singing skills on the shared

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<sup>3</sup>. FENSTER – SWISS 1999, pp. ??? (add the page of the quotation). 225

<sup>4</sup>. COLLINS – ROSE 2016, pp. 10-188.

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microphone, and trying to stay as far away as possible from the nauseating drop beyond the precarious rooftop's edges.

Dan Hancock observes that these young participants and part-time MCs were here witnessing, «without realising it, a seminal moment in the history of British music» as the raw elements of Grime music started to emerge and coagulate into complex forms<sup>5</sup>. Grime's aural properties developed from a range of influences, drawing from «the sonic models of the reggae sound system, jungle and garage» while, crucially, «placing the MC — the rapper — at the centre»<sup>6</sup>. The sophisticated web of musical influences which shape Grime — as well as its predecessors Jungle and UK Garage — have been articulated as strands of «Techno hip-hop» through the manner in which artists alter the tempo of hip-hop's breakbeats in an intense yet danceable fashion<sup>7</sup>. Mischaracterisations of the genre as «innately provocative... fiercely independent» echo the combative, individualistic energies at the heart of Punk music<sup>8</sup>. Indeed, the way a range of electronic sounds and instrument combinations are harnessed by musicians in an eclectic and innovative manner illustrate how artistic autonomy features at the music's 'centre' in terms of delivering vocals *and* experimenting with formal musical structures. From the rhythms of Dancehall music and intense, repetitive percussion elements of Drum and Bass to polyphonic mobile phone ringtones and samples extracted from videogame soundtracks, Grime captured global London's underlying multicultures, mixing sounds in new, breath-taking ways.

While many examples of Grime include a «darker side» to communicate an artist's displeasure towards contemporary Britain's expanding social schisms<sup>9</sup>, Caspar Melville argues that «the genre's restless inventiveness *and* adept colonisation of the digital space allowed it to transcend the grim circumstances of its gestation... build a global following and become, by 2018, an established pop genre» (my emphasis)<sup>10</sup>. As well as providing opportunities for Black British Grime artists to subvert prevalent forces of capitalism — which are perceived to be historically grounded in global slave trading systems — for financial (re)gain, the spirited creativity and «colonisation of the digital space» exhibited by Grime figures in terms of both musical production *and* entrepreneurial nous have thus expanded and consolidated the genre. In turn, the genre's consolidation is connected to its commodification, facilitating myriad new career pathways within the music industry.

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<sup>5</sup>. HANCOCK 2018, pp. 1-78, p.1

<sup>6</sup>. MELVILLE 2020, pp. ??? (add the page of the quotation), p.238

<sup>7</sup>. NOYS 1995.

<sup>8</sup>. See COLLINS – ROSE 2016, pp. 10-188.

<sup>9</sup>. See BRAMWELL 2011, pp. 113-120.

<sup>10</sup>. MELVILLE 2020, pp. ??? (add the page of the quotation), p.238

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WHAT'S YOUR NUMBER?

GRIME NETWORKS BEFORE THE INTERNET

Since websites have permitted de-territorialized possibilities for growth, Grime has expanded from South London postcodes and now reaches a worldwide audience, extending to Australia, Korea, Japan and beyond. However, Darren Joseph, who produces under the name DJ Target, observes that the earliest manifestations of Grime — perhaps best exemplified by the video shoot for *Conflict* as well as the growing prevalence of pirate radio stations — emerged «before the birth of social media or YouTube, or even the internet at all for that matter»<sup>11</sup>. At school, handing out bootleg DVDs or sharing flyers for upcoming events played key roles in the early formation of the cliques or 'scenes' associated with the genre. In certain areas of London, the hand-to-hand sales of bootleg DVD compilations such as *Conflict* and *Lord of the Mic* at street-level were key networks for the dissemination of Grime-related content in the pre-digital epoch.

One of the most effective ways of interacting with other fans of Grime music was facilitated by rudimentary file-sharing options on mobile phones, whereby one could send a song to a friend for leisurely listening or to assign as their ringtone. Through the mobile phone texting option on music video television station Channel U, filtered songs requests or 'shout outs' would appear on the television screen if one sent a text message to a specific number. Although the channel's text function was designed to let fans request their favourite songs, it also created various unforeseen outlets for the younger generation, such as confessing one's love for that special person from Science Class, or even affirming one's allegiance or dedication to a particular postcode area. Channel U thus allowed young fans of Grime music to engage with the genre when sitting at home, beyond school gates and the streets.

GRIME AND YOUTUBE: THE BIRTH OF DYNASTIES

Gradually, in the mid-2000s, Grime started to emerge sporadically on video-sharing digital spaces such as YouTube, as well as unofficial websites and forums with specific threads dedicated to the genre. In 2007, however, as Grime started to shift from the physical world to the digital, commentators observed that the genre felt «everywhere, and yet nowhere», orbiting on the peripheries of the mainstream through a handful of breakthrough acts and occasional features on official chart hit compilation CDs such as the NOW That's What I Call Music! series<sup>12</sup>. A small group of entrepreneurs recognised the issue of representation

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<sup>11</sup>. TARGET 2018, pp. ??? (add the page of the quotation), p. 8

<sup>12</sup>. ABIADÉ 2017.

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that Grime artists faced. On the streets, many were creating music at shared or home studios, organising shows and themed nights, selling DVDs and merchandise, experiencing Grime in person. At the same time, in the most popular digital spaces and the general media, Grime remained an enigmatic musical genre.

Moving away from the early YouTube models wherein amateur musicians uploaded songs to their personal accounts without possessing particularly large fan bases, the figures who created the first channels dedicated to the Grime genre were trying to find alternative ways to broadcast and showcase their favourite musicians. While Jamal Edwards MBE initially set up a YouTube account for platforming his own music, the amateur rapper soon sought ways to discover his favourite artists' releases and their new demos. When no such platforms materialised, Edwards started to expand his personal YouTube account — known as SBTV, or Smokey Bars TV — by circulating Grime-related media (which included footage of freestyle performances, as well as interview clips and parts of live shows).

In his own words: «There wasn't anything online I could find that covered the artists I wanted to film. They weren't being represented in mainstream media or platforms; I just saw a gap in the market and wanted to fill it»<sup>13</sup>. For Edwards, YouTube focuses on the individual, or 'You', in the same manner that Channel U attempted to centre televisual broadcasting around 'U' before its closure in 2018, when the company could no longer compete with its online competitors. In stark contrast to Channel U's demise, SBTV has developed and grown, now covering a series of genres and even featuring the musical performances of mainstream acts (from British artists Ed Sheeran and The Wanted to American hip hop musicians Tyler the Creator and Nicki Minaj).

SBTV platformed music for marginalized sections of British society, earning its founder myriad awards (including a knighthood). As well as empowering Grime musicians who were once neglected by established media frameworks, the project became a multimillion-pound business, emphasising the economic potential of the genre. In many ways, SBTV's popularity soared during YouTube's early years because there was little competition. A notable rival, LinkUp TV (which operated in a similar fashion to SBTV, circulating amateur footage during the embryonic stages of its development before developing a more professional and memorable style) has likewise become a key platform for the genre. The two media sources competed against each other and, consequently, pushed one another to new levels of success. In the words of LinkUp TV's Ena Tanku, who co-founded the brand with a small group of friends: «At the start it was just a few [separate] channels on YouTube... We all had different names, like I had Red Rock Pictures, one guy had New Age Vision»<sup>14</sup>. As their media outlets converged and overlapped, LinkUp TV was born.

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<sup>13</sup>. Jamal Edwards cited by ABI/DAE 2017.

<sup>14</sup>. TANKU 2014.

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GRIMETUBE ACROSS THE WEB:  
FANSITES, ALGORITHMS AND CONVERGING MEDIASCAPES

In the context of the contemporary mediascape, Grime music websites GRM Daily and Grime Forum are shaped by similar processes of media convergence. However, rather than relying on the gradual unification of separate YouTube channels under one common banner, GRM Daily and Grime Forum are indebted to YouTube's dependence on network crossovers. While channels, mixes and prearranged playlists on YouTube are vital for the dissemination of underground or marginalised musical genres as well as the development of their respective online audiences, the updated mechanics of YouTube's contemporary algorithm system for Recommended Video Lists means that YouTube channels and mixes promote new music by working in tandem with various coteries of dedicated fans across social media platforms. This network environment encourages the development of new YouTube audiences by exploiting personal information sourced from accounts all over the internet as people click on links, share and criticise songs, and move from one social media platform to the other.

Grime music's partnership with YouTube is crystallised by a reflexive, two-way relationship with various online platforms which is in turn exemplified by a key Facebook group known as: UK Hip-Hop/Grime & Underground Music Promotion. The group's moderators — a handful of music fans and aspiring producers; a microcosm of the page's general membership — attempt to police antisocial behaviour, discouraging aggressive commenting and 'trolling' associated with unregulated music forums and chat threads. By creating both a welcoming community for like-minded music fans as well as an effective incubating environment for emerging artists with fresh material, this model in certain ways mimics the non-hierarchical relationships between artists and consumers within Grime's core community. Established musicians' latest releases are intended to shape impassioned, well-mannered discussions, while fresh pieces of work produced by unestablished artists are met with constructive criticism. The seriousness with which the page's moderators uphold these views pervades many elements of the Facebook group, shaping the attitudes of its members and the essence of their conversations on topics within and beyond the scope of Grime music.

Facebook group pages such as the UK Hip-Hop/Grime & Underground Music Promotion Group operate in tandem with YouTube's platform because the latter's Recommended Video algorithm relies on two main neural networks consisting of gargantuan amounts of data: Candidate Generation and Ranking. For Candidate Generation, the website's large corpus of potentially relevant videos is reduced from millions to hundreds by analysing the user's personal information<sup>15</sup>, thus the algorithm takes the user's age, gender, search history and geographical location into account, hunting for trends and behavioural patterns within

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<sup>15</sup>. COVINGTON – ADAMS – SARGIN 2016.

particular demographics before finding a selection of videos deemed relevant to the user<sup>16</sup>. Once hundreds of video have been selected as potential candidates for viewing, the Ranking algorithm is activated. During this secondary stage, YouTube uses a neural network with a similar structure to the Candidate Generation model but, importantly, the system analyses the intricacies of the user's relationship with specific videos — predicting which styles of thumbnail users prefers to click, calculating the time spent watching certain styles of video before moving to something else — in order to «calibrate candidate predictions» most accurately, thereby reducing the secondary pool of potential videos from hundreds to dozens<sup>17</sup>.

Although the UK Hip-Hop/Grime & Underground Music Promotion page on Facebook functions primarily as a welcoming community for burgeoning artists to share tracks, tips and experiences while honing their craft and developing a fan base, the group's relationship with YouTube's network technology accelerates the circulation of tracks — and, in turn, the growth and development of Grime artists' audiences — by providing large quantities of data for algorithms to harness. The likelihood of a video being selected by the first neural network and then promoted by the second increases exponentially with the amount of information used by YouTube's algorithms. As SBTV, Link Up TV, GRM Daily and Grime Forum's impassioned users share the newest YouTube links on the Facebook group page with untrammelled speed and enthusiasm, YouTube's algorithm system benefits from data accumulated during the embryonic stages of a song's release as fans initially start to click, view and share content, thereby augmenting the potential reach of new songs by a) rapidly building YouTube views as soon as the song is released, and b) using the data harvested from these views to increase the rate at which Grime music is circulated in the future, developing an online network operating across social media platforms.

Grime artists increase the likelihood of their music being detected by YouTube's neural networks through anchorage to divergent elements of popular culture. In the early years of Grime, before these algorithms facilitated such levels of exposure to niche parts of YouTube, the rudimentary version of Grime's presence on amateur forums and unpopular chat threads was less influential than the genre's street-level distribution and viewing networks. However, now that YouTube has developed and enhanced its algorithm-based recommending system, Grime musicians can track titles which latch onto popular references. The artist Dave, for instance, has songs entitled *Question Time* (2017) — a direct address to the former Prime Minister Theresa May named after the eponymous political question show — and *Thiago Silva* (2016), named after the talismanic Brazilian footballer who signed for Chelsea FC.

Adopting various cultural reference markers in this manner inadvertently encourages online discovery by piggybacking popular search terms imbedded in the YouTube community's

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<sup>16</sup>. PATEL 2017.

<sup>17</sup>. COVINGTON – ADAMS – SARGIN 2016.

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psyche. While detractors lambast artists' ironic track names and aliases as transparent, insincere veneers designed to deflect attention away from issues surrounding 'serious' music and the controversial, complicated notion of 'authenticity', the practical value of these purportedly-innocuous, light-hearted naming systems belies an entrepreneurial shrewdness — specifically, a business-minded savviness tailored to the digital age's online methods of music circulation — that manipulates the data-driven networks of YouTube's algorithm system to ensure recognition in exceedingly-competitive online environments of content circulation. Reflected by millions of views for *Question Time* and *Thiago Silva*, Grime musicians are publicising and promoting their music with accomplished efficiency, eschewing «the domination of the music industry by multinational corporations» by exploiting digital systems themselves for their own self-defined purposes, causing domino effects which can create free marketing opportunities across YouTube and other social media platforms<sup>18</sup>.

DIY GRIME: A NEW PUNK VIRTUAL SCENE?

During the pre-internet era of the 1970s, Punk artists relied heavily on fanzines, independent labels and other alternative distribution networks<sup>19</sup>. Rather than paying excessive amounts of money for conventionalised marketing techniques in the form of PR stunts and advertising arrangements, the channels and social media pages across today's intensified digisphere serve as a powerful method for circulating tracks and sparking discussion, keeping marketing costs at an absolute minimum yet instantly presenting new material to a hungry, adventurous audience. Comment sections and open threads on SBTV, Linkup TV and associated promotional pages thus allow the exchange of ideas and songs with fans all over the world in Punk-esque fashion. The individualistic, Do-It-Yourself attitude encapsulated by the online circulation strategies of Grime's online communities is mirrored by the autonomous nature with which amateur artists use downloadable and hacked music production software — Ableton Live, Logic Pro and Pro Tools — to create Grime music, swapping tips and technical advice with likeminded creators on pages such as Facebook's UK Hip-Hop/Grime & Underground Music Promotion and the comment-enabled sections of other prime Grime websites.

Whether taking place in garage or bedroom studios, proponents of Grime *and* Punk Rock emphasise Do-It-Yourself music-making techniques and strategies in addition to or indeed instead of sharp, polished production methods in plush recording environments, thereby encouraging the creation of serious, meaningful works of art through limited means. Vitality, Punk and Grime complicate the issue by moving between other genres and rejecting

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<sup>18</sup>. HESMONDHALGH 1998, pp. ??? (add the page of the quotation). p. 235

<sup>19</sup>. TRIGGS 2006.



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totalising definitions of their music, the latter oscillating between Hip Hop, Jungle, UK Garage and many others. Despite many artists operating without the luxury of plush music studios, Grime's operative measures across online spaces illustrate how Ezra Pound's famous rallying for modern artists to «Make it new» still offers value for today's digital music artists — even during the highly intense and often overwhelming exchange of ideas made possible by the disruptive powers of the internet era.

As previously discussed, Grime emerged offline in pirate radio stations across different parts of London before its dissemination through online networks amplified and in turn globalised its overall reach. Now, Stephen Bennett's notion of a «virtual scene» is particularly useful for describing the online social phenomena which have facilitated the development of remunerative business strategies revolving around contemporary Grime. «Scene» offers «the possibility of examining musical life in its myriad forms, both production and consumption-orientated»<sup>20</sup> and a large majority of Grime's online community both produce *and* consume this form of music, emblematising a «participatory culture» whereby the online audience «not only passively consumes culture but also participates in the production of that culture»<sup>21</sup>. The «virtual» nature of this online scene emphasises the group's displacement of «the boundedness of social interaction within the restrictions of time and space»<sup>22</sup>, engendering a digitally connected network of music fans engaging in instantaneous communication, circulating tracks across divergent social media platforms. In terms of ensuring the development and growth of Grime's 'virtual scenes', geographical territory and physical spaces remain vitally important because many elements of Grime's philosophy argue for knowing one's roots, never forgetting about the journey one takes<sup>23</sup>. While the musician Stormzy produced mesmeric performances at the 2018 Brit Awards and during his Glastonbury Festival 2019 headline slot, on both occasions he namechecked the key figures who have shaped his career's skyward trajectory.

## GRIME'S DISRUPTION: PANDEMICS AND PATHWAYS

With Grime's former position on the margins of the mainstream in mind, major tensions still exist for Grime artists in our digitised era. Industry revenues for recorded music have drastically declined since the disruption caused by online streaming services, thus musicians across many genres must rely on live performances at public shows and international music festivals as the main source of their income, translating online popularity into the physical

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<sup>20</sup>. BENNETT 2004, pp. ????. (add the page of the quotation). p.226

<sup>21</sup>. WILKSTRÖM 2013, pp. ????. (add the page of the quotation). p.149

<sup>22</sup>. BENNETT 2004, pp. ????. (add the page of the quotation). p.230

<sup>23</sup>. See HANCOCK 2018, pp. 1-78.

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realm of ticket and merchandise sales<sup>24</sup>. The COVID-19 pandemic further complicated matters since festivals and face-to-face events were temporarily replaced by Zoom screenings and pre-recorded shows.

While unable to avoid entirely the precariousness inherently tied to operating within a gig economy, Grime musicians who post materials on YouTube and other such sites are harnessing a «global flow» that «facilitates extensive touring for DJs and their particular brand of club event»<sup>25</sup>. Before the pandemic, clubs and festivals accommodating Grime musicians varied in size and locality, and such physical environments would actualise «a particular state of relations between various populations and social groups, as these groups coalesce around specific coalitions of musical style»<sup>26</sup>.

As per the case of many genres, Grime's core mission to critique the societal imbalances from which it was conceived has been undermined by a small number of musicians who enact racist, classist and sexist worldviews in their music and across social media platforms. However, certain underground clubbing cultures have «produced new forms of gender relations due to the non-violent and non-sexist sensibilities which underpin the scene»<sup>27</sup> and, within the context of Grime specially, the first openly gay Grime artist Karnage Kills could emerge as a very important figure, his performances at Dalston Superstore's queer-friendly environment illustrating new possibilities for proponents of the genre which openly and actively challenge certain stereotypes and prejudicial understandings of race, class and sexuality<sup>28</sup>. After all, as Melville observes, if one digs sufficiently deep it is clear that Grime's roots in dance and house music illustrate how aspects of the genre were «born in the black and gay clubs of the US in the early 80s».

In addition to forming important new physical spaces in a post-COVID 19 world, social media platforms have also slowly established underground, de-territorialised Grime «virtual scenes» that form the backbone of the genre's success, materialising all over the world after having originated in specific localised areas in East London. Without the Facebook and YouTube networks which feed from and circulate their music, Dizzee Rascal, JME, Lethal Bizzle, Skepta and other notable artists would have a considerably smaller fan base, fewer international followers, and less negotiating power when formalising terms with booking agents for performances locally and globally. Simultaneously, consumers can play an important role in building Grime artists' careers through their consumption in terms of monetary exchanges *and*

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<sup>24</sup>. MOORE *et al.* 2007.

<sup>25</sup>. BENNETT 2001, pp. 120-134, pp. ????. (add the single page of the quotation), p.122

<sup>26</sup>. STRAW 1991., pp. ????. (add the single page of the quotation), p.379

<sup>27</sup>. BENNETT 2001, pp. 120-134., pp. ????. (add the single page of the quotation), p.134

<sup>28</sup>. MELVILLE 2000. p. 228

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viewing habits. By choosing to engage with YouTube videos from artists who do not willingly promote their statuses as «commercial products... in the popular music marketplace»<sup>29</sup>, fans can attempt to make choices between models of «big business» which threaten music's «profound, magical form»<sup>30</sup>. Now, more than ever, it is vital to negotiate «the ongoing tension between music's role as a form of cultural expression and music's position within an economic and industrial context»<sup>31</sup> and support musicians in the unstable and unknown post-COVID 19 situation who, at the «expense of greater commercial success», strive to reject the business models framed by industry conglomerates, maintaining the autonomous elements at the Grime mode's core<sup>32</sup>.

### CONCLUSION: FUTURE TRAJECTORIES FOR GRIME MUSIC IN THE DIGITAL ERA

Pressure makes diamonds — and Grime too. From windswept rooftops in inner-city London to screen-based interactions connecting Bow and Bilbao to Berlin and Budapest, the disruptive potential of YouTube has transformed Grime over the years. Stepping beyond the shadows of Canary Wharf's towers, the style is now a global phenomenon with millions of YouTube views across myriad global locations.

The indefatigable spirit of entrepreneurial nous which characterises the actions of the *Conflict* organisers became channelled by media pioneer Jamal Edwards and his innovative use of YouTube. By taking advantage of algorithmic infrastructures and their interconnected relationships with other social media platforms, contemporary digital circulation models uphold the Do-It-Yourself approach to the music business which has underpinned Grime since its inception, long before the YouTube era.

Echoing the ways in which Grime must be understood as a hybrid musical form blending different cultures and influences, we cannot understand YouTube as an isolated technology. In allowing international audiences to see *and* hear different perspectives from all over the globe, YouTube's convergence with various other digital platforms offers opportunities for financial gain while, at the same time, disrupting neat compartmentalisations that traditionally separate fans from artists, audiences from creators. Although this form of disruption might at first seem chaotic and unruly, it is imperative to remember that the remunerative potential of musicmaking opens up new opportunities for everyone.

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<sup>29</sup>. FENSTER – SWISS 1999, pp. ????. (add the page of the quotation). p.225

<sup>30</sup>. HANCOCK 2003. Lesley Garrett cited by HODGKINSON 2003.

<sup>31</sup>. FENSTER – SWISS 1999, pp. ????. (add the page of the quotation). p.225

<sup>32</sup>. MADRO 2017. p.159

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This chapter therefore concludes that Grime's dissemination strategies across YouTube and its interconnected digital platforms illustrate how contemporary digital circulation models — for artists and fans alike — are loaded with the potential to empower all members of society. This disruptive and innovative business model offers new opportunities to counteract the world system's unevenness, transforming the more complicated imbalances of our global economic framework for the better. From homemade DVD compilations to YouTube's new economy of algorithms, these entrepreneurial breakthrough moments stem from the belief that something brighter, something diamondlike, can always emerge from the most unlikely places, shining and gleaming through the Grime. Such lessons are precious for the music industry — and beyond.

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