

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Research is a process of inquiry and investigation that involves a continuous questioning and rethinking of previous assumptions, arguments and beliefs. As such, it involves learning that has to and can only remain unfinished. Although external and internalized pressures often obscure these important moments of questioning and doubt by presenting a strong narrative of scientific and intellectual progress, in the main body of this text I try to do justice to the tentative nature of research practice by explicitly acknowledging not only the strengths but also the limits of my argument and by regularly posing questions that I — at least at this stage — cannot answer. In doing so, I aim to adopt a ‘question and answer’ approach that understands knowledge production as an ongoing process dependent on discussions with many other people as well as the creative appropriation of a wide variety of previous publications. The publications, not surprisingly, will be referenced in and listed at the end of the text. Here, I want to acknowledge the contributions of various friends and colleagues whose names do not always appear in the list of referenced literature, but without whom this book would have remained a mere collection of fragments. Although not everyone commented directly on the contents, they have helped me think through empirical and theoretical problems during the period in which I worked on the dissertation that forms the basis for this publication.

The project started with the idea to analyze music in relation to contemporary urban transformations and was very much influenced by a number of publications by Adam Krims on music and urban geography. Through his work and in his role as a second supervisor he provided much inspiration for my own efforts to analyze music in relation to political economic processes, even though I increasingly moved away from popular music studies and cultural studies towards a cultural political economy that keeps to a minimum the reflection on ‘the music itself’. First thoughts for this project were developed during a teaching stint at the Institute of Media and Representation, Utrecht University. After one year in Utrecht, I moved to the Department of Media and Communications of Goldsmiths

College at the University of London. Thanks are due to the Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds in Amsterdam for partly funding this opportunity. I also thank Angela McRobbie for her supervision and her thoughts on the role of creative but precarious labor in contemporary cities and many other colleagues for enthusiastic discussions. It was the move to Berlin that enabled me to work full-time on research and writing; for this I am grateful to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) and the Center for Metropolitan Studies (CMS). At the CMS, I found a transdisciplinary home that enabled me to improve many of the arguments I had developed so far. Not only could I discuss my work with critical colleagues, I was also given the freedom to co-organize a number of conference sessions and workshops closely related to my research topic. I am also very much indebted to my first supervisor Gerhard O. Braun at the Department of Earth Sciences, Freie Universität Berlin, who has been so kind and tolerant to accept a nongeographer as a doctoral candidate in the first place.

Many parts of this publication have been presented at conferences, seminars or workshops and without the various deadlines for and discussions at these events, this text would have certainly taken much longer to write. For this, I would like to thank the organizers of and audiences at these occasions. Previous versions of chapter four have been published in the journal *Urban Studies* (van Heur 2009a) and in the edited volume *Spaces of Vernacular Creativity*, edited by Tim Edensor, Deborah Leslie, Steve Millington and Norma Rantisi (van Heur 2009b). Parts of chapter five have been published in the edited volume *Culture and the City*, edited by Frank Eckardt and Louise Nyström (van Heur 2009c).

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