Discography, Preservation, and Cultural Crossings. The Role of the World Wide Web in the Underground Dissemination of Nordic Jazz Recordings

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Abstract

Jazz emerged around the same time that recording technology was being developed. Despite demand for recordings by jazz collectors, record companies have always treated jazz as an ephemeral genre, with only the best selling recordings staying in print. In addition, jazz is often presented as an American form of music, ignoring the tremendously important and original contributions coming from European counties, including Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. This marginalization has contributed to the lack of comprehensive and widely available discographies of Nordic Jazz artists. Despite this, Nordic Jazz is alive and well on the World Wide Web. This research investigates the role that the World Wide Web is playing in the global dissemination and preservation of Nordic Jazz recordings, including illegally circulating commercial recordings, non-circulating out-of-print recordings, and non-commercial live boot-

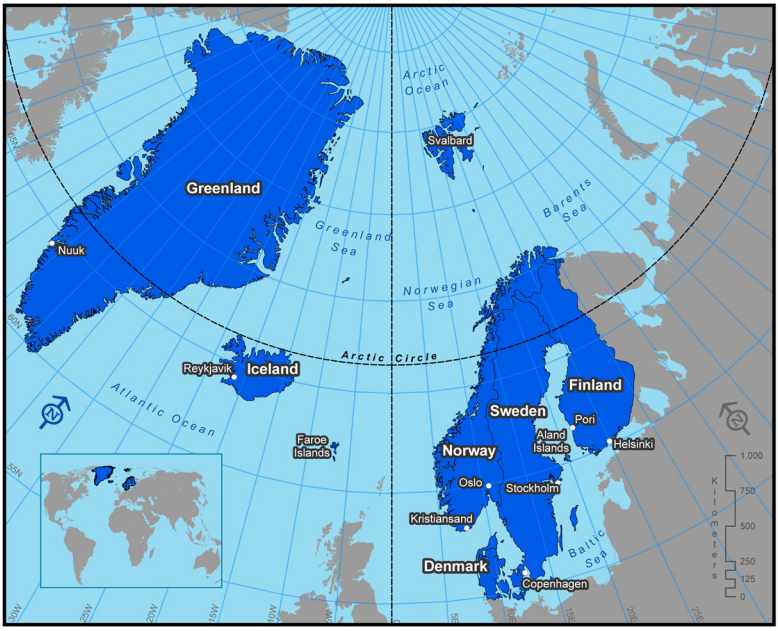
leg recordings. Data were collected from online file sharing sites and mapped using geographic information systems technology. Discographies discussed include legendary Nordic Jazz artists Jan Garbarek and Edward Vesala, as well as Tomasz Stanko, a jazz musician with strong Nordic connections. The results provide insight into the global impact that the World Wide Web is having on the underground dissemination and preservation of Nordic Jazz discographies.

Introduction

The World Wide Web (WWW) has radically changed the way in which music recordings and other aspects of culture are spread around the globe. While a large portion of the music recordings that are available on the WWW are official commercially available recordings, during the last decade the world has seen incredibly rapid growth in the dissemination of unofficial music recordings utilizing unofficial, non-commercial web sites. This "underground" dissemination involves not only the unauthorized (and in many countries illegal) circulation of in-print recordings, but also the circulation of out-of-print recordings and unofficial live recordings. The result has been that people engaged in the downloading of music from the WWW have unprecedented opportunities to accumulate quite large and comprehensive collections of music recordings by artists, which often include rare out-of-print and bootleg recordings of great historic interest to both collectors of music and traditional discographers. This paper investigates the role that the WWW is playing in the underground global dissemination and preservation of Nordic Jazz recordings.

Defining Nordic Jazz

The term Nordic Jazz has been used to describe jazz music coming from a geographic region of northern Europe that includes the nation-states of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden; as well as the Faroe Islands, Greenland, and the Aland Islands; and the archipelago of Svalbard.



The term "Nordic Jazz" has also been used to describe a certain sound that some jazz artists from Nordic countries possess and convey in their music. This "Nordic Tone" (Nicholson, 2005) has been described as a sparse, cold, open sound, evoking the moods of long nights and short days (Knauer, 2009) in the northern landscapes of the Nordic countries. Unlike much traditional American jazz with it urban qualities, the Nordic tone instead evokes internal emotions and a sense of open rural landscapes through the use of traditional Nordic folk tunes (Nicholson, 2005; Knauer, 2009), the inclusion of space, and long sustained notes.

A good example of the Nordic Tone is the music produced by Norwegian saxophonist Jan Garbarek. Nordic jazz musicians have a long history of openness with regard to international influences. This is evidenced by the manner in which Garbarek has incorporated American and other global musical influences into his sound over the years (Tucker, 1999; Knauer, 2009). Yet, rather than producing a hybrid jazz, Garbarek's music remains instantly recognizable as having the Nordic Tone, and thus can be seen as a product of glocalization rather than hybridization (Habib, 2004). Another aspect of Nordic jazz, and Garbarek's music in particular, is the idea that the Nordic Tone is a product a marketing concept created by the Munich based ECM records and

perpetuated by musicians in order to market Nordic Jazz to overseas audiences (Conrad, 2009). Different opinions exist as to whether the "Nordic Tone" is a worthwhile description or simply a marketing concept, though what is certain is that all jazz from Nordic countries does not possess this "Nordic Tone". For the purposes of this paper then, the term "Nordic Jazz" is used in the geographic sense.

Discography as both Documentation and Collection

Starting in the 1920s music recordings became widely available and since then they have played a vital role in the dissemination of jazz (Gioia, 1997). Along with the rise of recording technology came a growing interest in the collection of music recordings. As early as the 1940s it was known that collectors needed to purchase a jazz record when it was first issued if they wanted to avoid potential problems with obtaining a given recording (Miller, 1945). In order to fulfill the need for a guide to available recordings, discographies began to be produced that included documentation about the musicians, music, location, and dates of music recordings (Morgenstern, 2004).

While the WWW has radically changed the manner and speed in which music recordings are disseminated, it also changed both the definition of discography and the practice of collecting music recordings. The term "discography" is defined in Merriam Webster's online dictionary (n.d.) as "(1) a descriptive list of recordings by category, composer, performer(s), or date of release or (2) the history of recorded music". However, this traditional definition has changed with the advent of online file sharing, and the term "discography" has been redefined when utilized on file sharing websites to include "the complete collection of recorded music of a specific artist" (Urban Dictionary, n.d.). Put another way, over time the definition has changed from what can be described as the traditional documentation of music recordings to now also include a collection of recordings by an artist or artists.

In addition, the rise of file sharing on the WWW has expanded the definition of a discography to include not only officially released commercial recordings but also unofficial bootleg recordings as well as both official and unofficial video recordings. The result is that today a "discography" can mean both a list of recordings and a collection of recordings

which can include officially released commercially available recordings, non-circulating out-of-print recordings, and non-commercial live bootleg recordings. This has, in turn, created a need for an expanded documentation of music recordings to include both official and unofficial (bootleg) recordings as well as both audio and video recordings. An outstanding example of this type of comprehensive discography that includes the documentation of both official and bootleg audio and video recordings is the Miles Davis discography found on Peter Losin's "Miles Ahead" website (Losin, 2011).

The digitization of music, coupled with its dissemination via the WWW, has now transformed the cultural industry of music recordings because there is now the widespread ability to make exact copies of music that are easily stored and redistributed (Hesmondhalgh, 2007). In addition, recordings are now available outside the traditional marketplace. As such, the collection of music recordings can be viewed as a continuation of the old activity of record collecting, but one that has been transformed by the information society in such a way that the very idea of what constitutes material culture must be re-examined. While music still exists as the fundamental thing being collected, the traditional materiality of the recording medium and packaging (be it vinyl, tape, or compact disc along with covers and liner notes) has been replaced by a hard drive containing digitized music, imagery, and text.

Globalization, Jazz, and the World Wide Web

Globalization has been described as including at least two phenomena: (1) political, economic, and social activities becoming world-wide in scope and (2) an intensification of interaction and interconnectedness between states and societies (Held, 1999). In his book *Is Jazz Dead (or Has It Moved to a New Address)*, Nicholson (2005) devotes a chapter to the globalization of jazz. He describes globalization of as a "tearing down trade barriers, collapsing distances, spreading information, (and) a world without walls" (163). He goes on to describe the agents of globalization as "international trade routes and the flow of communication in a global cultural economy" (171). While he mentions television and radio, Nicholson's only mention of the WWW in his globalization chapter "Jazz and the Global Village" is in regard to the impact file sharing

has had on the recorded music industry (80–81). This is a bit surprising due to the fact that the WWW offers unprecedented opportunities for the dissemination of both culture and commerce and can be seen as a primary agent of globalization in the late 20th and early 21st century (Friedman, 2007).

In fact, the WWW provides the chance for musicians, music collectors, and music researchers to hear, study, and receive influence from music around the globe on a scale never before seen in the history of music. For musicians the WWW can provide exposure to music and musical cultures that they might otherwise not encounter providing for influences beyond more local ones. This interaction of global with local musical culture has been called "transculturation" (Wallis & Malm, 1984) and has been defined as occurring when global cultural influences mix with local culture and act to create not a homogenized result but a hybrid one (Gross, McMurray, & Swedenburg, 1994; Bakriges, 2003; Nicholson 2005). This creation of a local version of a global phenomenon has also been referred to as "glocalization" (Robertson, 1994; Robertson, 1995; Nicholson, 2005). However, an important distinction has also been made between "hybridization" and "glocalization", with the latter by definition including a meaningful local element that is not necessary for a hybrid form to exist (Habib, 2004).

For music collectors and traditional discographers the WWW also provides opportunities for musical recordings, as well as album art, liner notes, and other information about music and music recordings. As such, the WWW provides unprecedented opportunities for cultural crossings with regard to music and musical influences, including of course Nordic Jazz. These opportunities come in large part from the democratizing and decentralizing effect of the WWW through the removal of physical space and lowering of entry barriers (Sparks, 2004). However, it is important to remember that these opportunities must be situated within a context of inequity of access commonly referred to as the global digital divide (Lu, 2002). As the WWW becomes increasingly central in areas of cultural activity it also acts to marginalize those with little or no access, or without the ability to utilized the technology effectively (Castells, 2001). This creates and perpetuates a knowledge divide (UNESCO, 2005) that includes the cultural diversity and influence found at the heart of musical cultural crossings.

The Global Dissemination of Nordic Jazz on the World Wide Web

The underground file sharing of music on the WWW generally involves one of three file sharing models. In the first, Peer to Peer (P2P) or direct file sharing, specialized software programs such as eMule and Soulseek allow online users to share digital music files directly between the computers of online users. In the second or decentralized type of file sharing, specialized software such as Bittorrent allow users to connect to multiple users at once and to download music files by accumulating pieces or "bits" from various users resulting ultimately in a complete set of digital music files. In the third or third party type of file sharing, file hosting sites such as Rapidshare and Mediafire allow users to upload digital music files to a third party server from which other users may download the files. Often websites are set up whereby users will upload links to file hosting sites providing users an easy centralized place from which they can query and locate digital music files. These websites are often established on internet blogs which can also allow multiple users to upload links to a single site. This research project examined five such websites, each of which contained a large quantity of digital music files by Nordic Jazz musicians. Due to the possibility of these sites being in violation of various copyright laws around the world these sites will not be identified by URL or other means in this study.

Data were collected from these sites using Geolocation technology. This technology allows for the identification of the geographic location of website visitors by various methods, and can provide data on a website visitor's country, region, city, postal code, longitude/latitude, or time zone. The most common method involves the translation of an internet protocol (IP) addresses into geographic locations (Muir & Oorschot, 2009; Svantesson, 2004) and was used in this study. While the accuracy of this technology can be somewhat difficult to gauge, the general consensus puts it at 97–99 % with regard to the recognition of the country of a website visitor, around 90 % for identifying a website visitor's state within the United States (US), and somewhere between 80–92 % with regard to the recognition of a website visitor's city on a global scale (Svantesson, 2004; Van Leeuwen, 2001). Using this technology data were collected from the file sharing websites between December 2009 and March 2010. A total of 432,420 user visits to these websites were recorded from users in 180 different countries (table 1). This data

Afghanistan	Djibouti	Kuwait	Qatar
Aland Islands	Dominica	Laos	Reunion
Albania	Dominican Republic	Latvia	Romania
Algeria	Ecuador	Lebanon	Russian Federation
Andorra	Egypt	Lesotho	Rwanda
Angola	El Salvador	Libya	Saint Kits and Nevis
Anguilla	Estonia	Lithuania	Saint Lucia
Antarctica	Ethiopia	Luxembourg	Saint Pierre and
Argentina	Faroe Islands	Macao	Miquelon
Armenia	Fiji	Macedonia, the Former	San Marino
Aruba	Finland	Yugoslav Republic of	Saudi Arabia
Australia	France	Madagascar	Senegal
Austria	French Guiana	Malaysia	Serbia
Azerbaijan	French Polynesia	Maldives	Singapore
Bahamas	Gabon	Mali	Slovakia
Bahrain	Georgia	Malta	Slovenia
Bangladesh	Germany	Martinique	South Africa
Barbados	Ghana	Mauritius	Spain
Belarus	Gibraltar	Mexico	Sri Lanka
Belgium	Greece	Moldova, Republic of	Sudan
Belize	Greenland	Monaco	Suriname
Bermuda	Grenada	Mongolia	Sweden
Bolivia	Guadeloupe	Montenegro	Switzerland
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Guam	Morocco	Syria
Botswana	Guatemala	Mozambique	Taiwan
Brazil	Guyana	Namibia	Tanzania, United
Brunei Darussalam	Haiti	Nepal	Republic of
Bulgaria	Honduras	Netherlands	Thailand
Burkina Faso	Hong Kong	Netherlands Antilles	Trinidad and Tobago
Burundi	Hungary	New Caledonia	Tunisia
Cambodia	Iceland	New Zealand	Turkey
Cameroon	India	Nicaragua	Uganda
Canada	Indonesia	Nigeria	Ukraine
Cape Verde	Iran, Islamic Republic of	Norfolk Island	United Arab Emirates
Cayman Islands	Iraq	Norway	United Kingdom
Chile	Ireland	Oman	United States
China	Isle of Man	Pakistan	Uruguay
Colombia	Israel	Palestinian Territory	Uzbekistan
Cote d'Ivoire	Italy	Panama	Vanuatu
Costa Rica	Jamaica	Papua New Guinea	Vatican City
Croatia	Japan	Paraguay	Venezuela
Cuba	Jersey	Peru	Virgin Islands, US
Cyprus	Jordan	Philippines	Yemen
Czech Republic	Kazakhstan	Poland	Vietnam
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	Kenya	Portugal	Zambia
Denmark	Korea, Republic of	Puerto Rico	

Table 1: List of Countries of IP Origin for Jazz File Sharing Site Visitors

was then integrated into a geographic information system in order to examine spatial patterns with regard to the dissemination of Nordic Jazz on the WWW. It should be noted that while the data were collected during the above stated time period many of these visits actually had occurred prior to this time period. In addition, it must be noted that the data collected represents total number of visits by country, not the number of unique individuals visiting the sites. As many users likely visited the site numerous times these visits would increase the number of visits recorded.

Country	*Total*	*Percentage*
USA (1)	106,378	24.6%
UK (2)	37,862	8.8%
Germany (3)	29,058	6.7%
France (4)	24,064	5.6%
Brazil (5)	23,750	5.5%
Sweden (20)	4362	1.0%
Finland (28)	2251	0.5%
Denmark (30)	2192	0.5%
Norway (39)	1313	0.3%
Iceland (54)	549	0.1%
Faroe Islands (131)	9	0.002%
Aland Islands (144)	5	0.001%
Greenland (164)	2	0.0005%
Svalbard (181)	0	0%

Table 2. Jazz File Sharing Site Visits by Country (Top 5 and Nordic Countries)

Of the 432,420 visits recorded (table 2) the highest percentage was by far from the US (24.6 %), with the United Kingdom (UK) having the second most at 8.8 % and Germany the third most at 6.7 %. As far as the Nordic countries are concerned the highest number of visits belonged to Sweden who had the 20th most (1 %), followed by Finland with the 28th most (0.5 %), Denmark with the 30th most (0.5 %), and Norway with the 39th most (0.3 %). Other Nordic areas such as Iceland, the Faroe Islands, Åland Islands, Greenland, and Svalbard all had 0.1 % or less of the total visits recorded (table 2). When this data was mapped using GIS the spatial patterns that emerged showed that most visits originated in the Americas and Europe while Asia and particularly Africa had far less. This is undoubtedly the result of the global digital divide. Antarctica was even recorded as having one visit, more than several countries in both Asia and Africa. While this is no doubt in large part a function of connectivity to the WWW and general economic conditions and technological infrastructure in various regions of the world, it is also obvious from the data that Nordic Jazz has great appeal to people in Europe, but also in both North and South America.

In order to provide some context for these results with regard to global connectivity to the WWW the collected data were compared to the overall global distribution of IP addresses with regard to general world regions (table 3). By far North America contains the highest percentage of IP addresses with 55 %, followed by Europe (21.5 %), Asia

(14 %) and South America (3.5 %). In order to make comparisons the collected data was then aggregated into these general world regions (table 4). This aggregation revealed that with regard to world regions Europe had the highest percentage of visits (37.9 %), followed by North America (29.1 %), South America (10.9 %), and Asia (6.7 %).

Region	*Number of Addresses*	*Percentage*
North America	1,481,754,661	55.9%
Europe	569,838,903	21.5%
Asia	371,297,015	14.0%
South America	93,409,304	3.5%
Oceania	76,417,711	2.9%
Africa	40,241,664	1.5%
Middle East	12,011,131	0.5%
Central America	2,557,340	0.1%
Caribbean	1,681,866	0.1%
Antarctica	15,620	0.001%

(Source: IPligence 2009)

Table 3: IP Addresses by World Regions

Region	*Number of Visits*	*Percentage*
Europe	163,795	37.9%
North America	125,969	29.1%
South America	47,313	10.9%
Asia	28,948	6.7%
Oceania	11,267	2.6%
Middle East	7,812	1.8%
Africa	1,434	0.3%
Caribbean	1,025	0.2%
Central America	1,006	0.2%
Antarctica	1	0.0002%

Table 4: Jazz File Sharing Site Visits by World Regions

Case Studies: Vesala, Garbarek, and Stanko on the World Wide Web

In addition to the geographic location of users, the content of the file sharing sites was investigated in order to assess the opportunities provided for both traditional discographers (discography as documentation) and music collectors (discography as collection) with regard to the dissemination and preservation of Nordic Jazz.

The global connectivity that is evidenced by the data demonstrates the enormous opportunities for people interested in the historical preservation of music and discography related information associated with music. As part of this research project the content of the five websites from which Geolocation data was collected, as well as several additional music file sharing websites, was examined in order to identify the degree to which opportunities for the preservation of historic recordings was present. This included an examination of the availability of circulating commercial recordings, non-circulating out-of-print recordings, and non-commercial bootleg recordings on underground file sharing websites. The musicians that were examined for this portion of the project included legendary Finnish drummer Edward Vesala, Norwegian saxophonist Jan Garbarek, and Polish trumpeter Tomasz Stanko who has a long association working with Nordic jazz musicians.

On the websites that were examined eleven albums were located for which Edward Vesala was credited as leader or co-leader and eleven more were found for which he played as a sideman. Among these recordings was the out-of-print *The Winners: Pori Jazz Festival Composition Contest* which has significant historical value in terms of Nordic jazz history. Of these all contained scanned album artwork and liner notes which provided a wealth of discography related information pertaining to the musicians that played on the albums, the recordings dates and recording locations, as well as song titles. Most of this information was also found to be readily available on Dan Kurdilla's wonderful online discography page "Edward Vesala: Drummer, Composer, Bandleader" (Kurdilla, 2008).

Another artist that was examined was Jan Garbarek. A total of twenty-nine albums were found on file sharing sites for which Garbarek was credited as leader out of thirty-two documented on discography sites. A total of forty-five recordings for Garbarek as a sideman were found on file sharing sites out of ninety-seven documented on discography sites. As with Vesala most of these shared music files contained scanned album art and liner notes providing a wealth of information for preservationists and traditional discographers. Finally, a total of sixty bootleg recordings were found on file sharing sites out of 141 bootleg recordings documented in online discographies. Of the numerous online Garbarek discographies available, none were found to contain a complete listing of all his official and/or bootleg recordings. While most contained more than 90 % of his official recordings as leader or co-leader, none of the online discographies contained more than 70 % of his recordings as a sideman. Finally, the most comprehensive listing of Garbarek bootleg recordings were the seventy-nine found listed on Fred Bauer's "Nils Petter Molvaer Fan Community" website under the "other Nordics" link (Bauer, 2010).

Finally, the Polish trumpeter Tomasz Stanko was examined. While not a Nordic musician himself Stanko has a long history of playing with jazz musicians from Nordic countries. This list includes Edward Vesala (discussed above) as well as his current band on the tour for the album *Dark Eyes*. While thirty-seven recordings were found listed on discography web sites, a total of forty-four albums were found on file sharing sites including rare recordings such as the album *Fish Face* which was only released to PSJ record club members in 1973 (Polish Jazz Net, 2008). A total of thirty-five recordings as a sideman were found on file sharing sites

while forty-five were documented in online discographies, and a total of thirty-two bootleg recordings were located on file sharing web sites while sixty-six were documented in online discographies. Again, many of these recordings contained a wealth of discography related information in the form of scanned album artwork and liner notes.

Conclusions

Jazz is often presented as an American form of music (Atkins, 2003), ignoring the tremendously important and original contributions coming from European counties, including Finland, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. This marginalization has contributed to the lack of comprehensive and widely available discographies of Nordic Jazz artists. Despite this, Nordic Jazz is alive and well on the WWW.

This research has examined the role that the WWW is playing in the global dissemination and preservation of Nordic Jazz recordings, including illegally circulating commercial recordings, non-circulating out-of-print recordings, and non-commercial live bootleg recordings. The results of this study show the tremendous level of connectivity that the WWW has created, as well as the abundance of content that is being disseminated both in terms of digital music recordings and associated information documenting traditional discography related items such of the names of musicians involved in recordings, the dates and locations of recordings, and the song titles. The availability of this content is truly global in scale with 180 countries shown to be connected to just five of the numerous file sharing websites currently in operation. The inclusion of scanned album art and liner notes, in combination with the availability of out-of-print recordings, offers unprecedented opportunities for those that collect and/or document music. In addition, the WWW has tremendously changed the manner in which unofficial bootleg recordings are disseminated. File sharing web sites, unofficial fan sites, and centralized database sites are providing amazing opportunities for the preservation of historic recordings both in terms of out-of-print recordings and unofficial bootleg recordings, as well as providing opportunities for cross-cultural musical influences to be realized on a level never before seen.

This study has provided insight into the global impact that the WWW is having on the underground dissemination Nordic Jazz discographies and shed light on opportunities for music preservation and cultural crossings. However, the transformative nature of the WWW on the dissemination of Nordic Jazz exists within the traditional culture of collecting jazz recordings. Jazz studies are necessary which situate the sounds and people of jazz within this transformed world of the network society. Nordic Jazz has indeed moved to a new address (Nicholson, 2005) and it starts with "WWW".

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