

# Identity in creative communities

## *Introduction*

Creative processes sometimes result in a tangible thing or object, such as a new chair. Although people can see it, touch it, and it is relatively stable as a physical object, it will patinate over time and may eventually collapse beneath an unfortunate dinner guest. However, a creative process may also result in an ephemeral and intangible outcome (e.g., a live concert). A concert with a rock, rap, or pop artist at a major music festival is obviously very different in terms of its material qualities when compared to a chair. It comprises a broad variety of constituent parts that all contribute to the realization of the event. These parts include musicians on stage, active and engaged audiences, and technicians, but also non-human elements such as instruments, tents, lighting, and other tangible materials that contribute to the creative result (i.e., a musical event). A creative musical practice can be perceived as a socio-material effort because it makes “things” come together to form a “living whole” that cannot be reduced to the mere sum of—nor understood from the knowledge of—its individual constituent parts. A musical performance on stage is not projected from the stage and into the ears of the audience, but rather created “in concert”—collectively or in a type of community—with many constituent elements (see also e.g., Small 1998). Hence, in our previous work on processes of emergence and creativity seen as socio-material practices, we argued that when musical communities succeed, they attain intrinsic value in themselves—an organic, living phenomenon that is difficult to predict and hard to prepare for in reality. However, much can be practiced and pre-produced before the musicians come on stage.

In a previous analysis of musicians’ creative practices, we focused on analyzing creative processes perceived from the stage and thus how musicians contribute to the continuous development of creativity as an “emerging phenomenon” (Hvidtfeldt 2018; Hvidtfeldt and Tanggaard 2018). Moreover, we discussed how the Roskilde Festival in Denmark, Scandinavia—developed by 130,000 audience members in a concerted effort—can be understood as a creative product in which the event (seen as an emergent phenomenon) functions as a material reference in the creative processes at various lower levels of the organization (Hvidtfeldt and Tanggaard 2019).

The present article seeks to bring these ideas together using a new perspective on emergence in creative and musical communities. The article is a theoretical exploration of a new trajectory in our understanding of how emergent phenomena arise and how they function in creative processes when viewed as socio-material practices. In our initial work (presented above), we mainly view musical performances as primarily

evolving from creative engagements with the event by the *musicians* on stage or the festival audiences working together *musically* to create a major event. However, sometimes performance situations become relevant to audiences based on other qualities than those we usually ascribe to musicianship. Social situations sometimes “emerge” into a musical and meaningful phenomenon because we fundamentally perceive them as being saturated with meaning. This sense of meaning drives the performance toward a euphoric state, no matter how unmusically and poorly it is performed. The mere rendition or even mention of specific songs can bring people to tears since they can “mean” so much to them. In other words, what we seek to explore is how the emergence of a musical situation can be driven by musical *identity*. We ask how identity “plays into” processes of emergence in musical communities. Moreover, we seek to facilitate the theoretical development of a model describing the relationship between identity and musicality in emergence processes to contribute new knowledge about musical communities and how they become valuable and meaningful to us.

Creativity is often defined as “novel, valuable, and appropriate” (see e.g., Sternberg and Kaufman 2018; Amabile 2018). Notably, a simple and open definition is particularly relevant when analyzing tangible products. Based on the discussion presented above, we argue that a narrower definition can shed light on some of the particularities of working with and analyzing creative processes in musical communities. Social and complex material situations (e.g., music festivals) are inevitably “novel” in a sense because the world is “always in the making” (Jackson 1996, 4). As such, festivalgoers cannot immerse themselves in “*the same river twice*” (Hvidtfeldt 2020). Therefore, this article will primarily focus on the latter aspect of the definition of creativity, namely how ephemeral, live music events become “appropriate”—or perhaps more relevant—in the context of musical communities being meaningful, valuable, or simply *musical* (Hvidtfeldt 2020, 33).

Firstly, we further outline the socio-material perspective on creativity and how creative processes surrounding the development of musical communities can be seen as “emergent.” Secondly, we explore how the musical identities of audience members contribute to processes of emergence in creative musical situations.

### *Communities as creative processes of emergence*

One aspect of music that is independent of genre and contributes to making it so intriguing to most people is the fact that it is impossible to pin down and describe music directly using written and spoken words that we can define and attribute specific meanings to. What makes music “music” is a (delightfully) unsolvable mystery—what elevates sonic qualities from absolute cacophonous tonal “chaos” into a harmonious meaningful “cosmos” cannot easily be described.

What we *do* know is that practice and apprenticeship teach aspiring musicians a lot. For example, we can spend hours behind the piano and, over time, learn how to read music, play harmonies, master scales, comprehend musical progressions, and keep time. Additionally, we can listen to and learn from the masters who created vari-

ous genres and shaped musical cultures (see e.g., Sloboda et al. 1996). When learning how to play, there will be specific starting points and routines, and—in that sense—everyone who so desires can become a better musician, while those who are talented can become excellent performers. However, there is an obvious and giant leap from one's first attempts to perform a song—perhaps in a group with some friends at a local music school—to a professional live performance. In an interview with a Danish online music magazine, the Danish professional musician Peter Bastian described how he saw this movement from chaos to cosmos in music:

When things are not working out, you have chaos. Chaos is not death, it is a potential death or a potential life. It can go either way. Chaos means that there is diversity, but disorder. The aspiration when creating music is a tremendously complex articulated unity, and that is the cosmos. Chaos is a great place to be. It is the border between the old and the uncreated. It can go either way—towards death or towards life. As a creative person, you do everything you can to go in the direction of life. Towards greater intimacy, towards a situation where things start to play together or emerge (...). (Lyhne 2011, translation by the authors)

Here, Bastian speaks of the type of improvised music that was close to his heart: when skilled musicians meet on stage, play, listen, and improvise. He often vividly described how they started out just playing, with no previous plans. Sometimes, the cacophony of sound gradually moved on to become meaningful, ultimately starting to make sense and thereby making the music come alive. Sometimes nothing made any sense at all. That was the risk they had to—and wanted to!—take since the energy they strived for with their music demanded that kind of courage and engagement. If everything had been planned out and produced beforehand, nothing would be at stake for musicians and their concerts would become tame (Hvidtfeldt and Tanggaard 2018).

The argument presented by Bastian can also be raised differently: music is not math. Though performing music is (obviously) a task requiring a mathematical understanding of time, pitch, harmony, etc., a live musical performance and genuine engagement with a specific social situation (which we address here with Bastian) cannot be described in cold causal calculations where one action necessarily leads to a specific result. Who would ever be moved by a good musical performance if it were simply the result of causalities and cold calculations? Furthermore, the result of a creative musical performance cannot be described as a “synergetic” process in which two plus two equals “more” than the sum of its parts—it is unpredictable in the sense that “musical strategies” can be prepared that will always work. Within the performance domain, nothing “always” works since the musicality of the situation demands a certain presence and improvisational capacity. The movement from chaos to cosmos, as described by Bastian, is unpredictable and complex, yet nonetheless a wonderfully fleeting goal for musical performance (Hvidtfeldt 2018). While we can express an understanding of music and its components and teach aspiring musicians certain “dos and don'ts,” the core of musical expression described by Bastian is not easily described. Sometimes it happens. Sometimes it does not.

If musical performances are neither math nor synergy, then what exactly are they? How can the results of musical creative processes be described and explored if we are only able to speak about the phenomenon in a roundabout way and not describe or define it accurately? Initially inspired by the previous quote from Bastian (*ibid.*) as well as by creativity scholar Keith Sawyer (1999) and musicologist Christopher Small (1998), we suggest that the notion of “emergence” can be useful for understanding the creative result of musical performances.

### *Emergent phenomena*

A socio-material perspective on creativity has emerged in line with a more general “material turn” in social and human sciences (Hastrup 2011; Tanggaard 2011; 2013; Hvidtfeldt 2020) in reaction to the emphasis on intra-psychological factors, cognition, and psychometrics that previously dominated research on creativity. In the earliest studies within this field, much attention was paid to the creative individual and theories on factors such as personality traits, divergent thinking, and cognitive processes. In particular, Paul Guilford’s (1950) article introducing the separation between convergent and divergent thinking started a trajectory within the field and paved the way for new perspectives on intelligence, personality, and the general attributes of creative individuals (see e.g., Amabile 1996). From the 1980s onwards, more social and systemic psychological approaches emerged that paid more attention to the communities surrounding creative individuals. Csikszentmihalyi (1988; 1999) deserves a mention here as one of the leading scholars who emphasized that nothing is intrinsically creative since a new idea is always new in relation to an old one, just like no individual can work creatively in a vacuum. Based on this logic, we are all positioned somewhere, at a specific time in history. Thus, new and appropriate ideas are highly dependent on, and always developed in, context. In other words, “creativity” was already understood as a social phenomenon at this stage in the history of ideas. However, research on creativity is about more than what occurs in isolated processes within the brains of individuals.

The socio-material perspective on creativity adopted in this article specifically insists on “the knowledge” we find in the world outside our brain. As such, this perspective on creativity takes a fundamentally novel standpoint in adopting the theoretical ideas of scholars such as Latour (2005), Ingold and Hallam (2007), and Hastrup (2007) when arguing that research seeking to understand creative work processes must highlight the value of things, objects, artifacts, bodies, and nature while generally considering the material and social surroundings. This perspective emphasizes that creative processes are distributed in a responsive world that inspires people, tells them stories, motivates them, challenges opinions, and fundamentally shapes the way people view themselves and each other. Additionally, the physical materials we use to engage in creative work processes are not static objects but rather historical and cultural artifacts that—more or less consciously—impact how we work, what we think, and what we do. In this context, anthropologist Tim Ingold stated:

The properties of materials, regarded as constituents of an environment, cannot be identified as fixed, essential attributes of things, but are rather processual and relational. They are neither objectively determined nor subjectively imagined but practically experienced. (Ingold 2007, 14)

From his perspective on materiality, the world in which we live and work is not a reality consisting of fixed objects that exist in one objective form, but rather of social and cultural materials that evolve meaning over time. In the words of James Gibson, "*The affordances of the environment are what it offers the animal, what it provides or furnishes, either for good or ill*" (Gibson 1979, 127). In this understanding, our mental processes are not delimited by our skin (Ingold 2002, 3). In the words of Gibson, the material world *affords* specific action. Thus, materials do not directly dictate—but rather shape, alter, and inspire—creative action. As formulated by Tanggaard elsewhere:

This socio-material rethinking of creativity implies a research perspective that consists of following not only the individual thinking processes or the influence of context on the individual creative process but more precisely the movements of ideas and the continuous and productive re-associations found in relational spaces during a creative process. (Tanggaard 2015, 111)

For example, when musicians engage with the work leading up to a musical performance, they participate and react in a situated and materially complex creative process. They do not export brilliant ideas out of their brains and into an unresponsive and passive world. In reality, we argue that musical performances are always developed "in concert" by a community made up of the contributions of many different actors.

In our work to describe the creative processes of popular musicians, we realized that research on creativity required a more holistic language since music itself and musical performances are achieved by the concerted effort of so many creative contributors that it makes little sense to speak of the musician on stage as the sole creative person in the performance space. Furthermore, we questioned the transferability of conclusions made about socio-materiality that stemmed from empirical studies focused on the development of tangible products. In seeking to understand musical communities and performances, we required a language for the "intangible products" we understood musical events to be. The theory on emergence guided us in this direction with the work of Keith Sawyer as key inspiration over and above the earlier quote from the music practitioner Bastian.

Processes of emergence have been described by Sawyer and, in line with an overall understanding of cultural psychology, as a simultaneously top-down and bottom-up process (Sawyer 1999, 465)—the musical performer creates music, which subsequently influences the continuous creative process. In this sense, the "music created" functions as "material," albeit highly fleeting and organic (Hvidtfeldt 2018). Simply defined, an emergent quality can be seen as a "whole" that is *other* than the sum of "its parts." From our theoretical perspective, "musical performances" as a creative product have intrinsic value in themselves, arising out of musical and creative contributions

from a multitude of actors. As previously mentioned, live musical performances cannot be reduced to “math” or “synergy.” Emergence theory views the complex collections of sound, lighting, people, tents, etc., as elements that *collectively* contribute to the realization of a musical, communal, and creative product. Through these theoretical lenses, musicality is thus understood as the special ability to make music come alive, to make music or musical settings “emerge” (Hvidtfeldt 2018; 2020).

Based on our work to develop an understanding of how creative processes can be viewed as processes of emergence, the perspective on identity creative, musical performances presented in this present article was born out of one specific question: Is “cosmos” – as poetically described by Bastian—always the purpose of musical performances? The music industry is highly diverse, and people attend concerts for many different reasons. Perhaps the goal of some concerts at music festivals is the exact opposite of a “musical cosmos.” Within certain genres, such as punk, rock, or experimental jazz concerts, the exact goal of the creative efforts seems to be CHAOS! Bastian’s statement of “Chaos is a great place to be” would seem to indicate that the process toward cosmos is (perhaps) just as important to both performers and audiences as the fleeting and unspecific goals they pursue. This perspective gives rise to a number of questions that deserve greater analytical attention, with a central question being how concerts are “performed collectively” as musical fellowships based on the cultures and rituals associated with certain genres. This essentially asks how collective history and culture develop genres and shape participation in concerts and how ritualization shapes processes of emergence in social situations, which is a relevant analytical perspective developed from a communal rather than individual perspective.

Related to the discussion, yet more narrowly defined, another perspective appeared to us as key to understanding musical emergence. Within popular genres and performances, audience identification often seemed to be a highly relevant element in the creative process. For example, some euphoric moments at musical performances seem to be borne out of sheer identity issues—an emotional connection to a performed song that sometimes even outshines the relevance of how it is performed. This perspective led us to explore how musical identity and processes of emergence are connected in this article: Does identity support or overrule the emergence process? Are identification and creative musical engagement two elements or two different types of emergence processes? The following sections initially describe theories on variations in musical identity based on musicologist Even Ruud’s (1997) commonly used classification and then discuss their embeddedness in musical and creative processes of emergence.

### *Identity in music*

As an everyday term, the notion of identity emerged in earnest around the Youth Rebellion in 1968, where the questions of who you were, where you belonged, which direction your life was taking, and why, became central—both as an individual project and as a collective social and political movement (see e.g., Brinkmann 2008). In today’s fluid, digital, and globalized world, the question of different versions

of identity plays a role in most peoples'—more or less deliberate—decisions in life. Within psychology and the social sciences, scholars such as Erikson (1968) and Sennett (1997) were key to the emergence of the term identity. Briefly, Erikson summarized and defined identity as a juxtaposition of “what a person *wants* to be” and “what the world *allows* him to be”; in this sense, identification is understood as a *relational* concept (Sennett 1997, 107). To highlight the diversity of positions on the subject, Erikson presented various positions and wrote about national identity, collective identity, historical identity, workplace identity, and many other identities. Thus, it is clear that the conception of “who we are” can be understood from a variety of perspectives.

At both an individual and collective level, music has been key to cultural development over time and serves as a resource for identity construction (Bonde and Koudal 2015; Ruud 2013). Depending on our definition of music, sounds, rhythms, singing, and musicality can be understood as parts of a primordial force that is part of human life since one's fetal existence in the womb close to a heart rhythm. From this early stage, the role of music becomes multifarious throughout people's lives, and psychology has been studying these varied engagements with music since Seashore's (1919) early studies on objective measurements of musical ability. We find comfort in remembering the songs we know from our childhood. We belong to certain groups based on our musical preferences. In particular, young people perceive music as an identity marker (Ruud 2013) since young boys and girls use music to illustrate who they are, which groups they do and do not belong to, and who they want to be (Bonde and Koudal 2015, 6). In this sense, music can rightfully be seen as a metaphor for identity (Ruud 1997).

In the late 1990s, Norwegian music psychologist Even Ruud collected written musical biographies from 60 music therapy students (Ruud 1997). They were all asked to reflect upon and note their most significant experiences with music in their lives. In total, Ruud collected approximately 1000 stories, which were analyzed and compiled into four narratives on “spaces” where musical identity is located and develops—almost as if the identities of the informants were topographically divided into different physical places.

The following theoretical discussion is based on Ruud's distinctions between (1) personal space, (2) social space, (3) space of time and place, and (4) transpersonal space. We use Ruud's categorization to initiate a broader discussion of how musical identities contribute to the emergence of creative processes around performed music.

### *Identifying with music based on personal background*

Ruud's first “space” is concerned with personal memories of connections to—or often early experiences with—music. Sometimes, we identify with a specific song because it provides a direct link to our childhood or family. In the empirical data analyzed in Ruud's (2013) article, the informants often described memories of situations involving comfort, confidence, or strong family connections; for example, a situation where one informant's mother used to sing lullabies at bedtime. Such songs can stick

with you for the rest of your life. Here, music is not deliberately chosen as one would choose a pair of glasses, pants, or a T-shirt, which we may like for a specific reason. Here, identity construction is not “a project,” but rather something we “receive” from our parents, siblings, extended family, or those close to us, who shape the development of our identity at a personal level. The personal space represents experiences of trust, safety, and intimacy with music as the source.

The question is then how this narrative, which describes how our personal background shapes our identity, will influence which musical performances we attend later in life. The personal space represents a good example of how music contains individual emotions at a fundamental and personal level. For example, if audience members joining in the creative realization of a major music festival concert are emotionally connected to, and identify with, the songs performed on stage for personal reasons, then the emergence of the creative situation is less dependent on “traditional musicality.” Audience members will connect with the song spontaneously based on emotional memories and identification. Thus, a mere rendition of the lyrics of a certain song might be enough to create an emotional reaction. Hence, some audience members need no convincing that the musician on stage performs well, plays the song in tune, or acts convincingly in any other musical way since they are already engaged in the processes of emergence because the song “resonates” with their identity.

## **(2) Identification based on social bonds**

In contrast to the aforementioned personal space, Ruud labeled the next type of identification as the “social space,” which specifically describes identification with music as a communal concept. Music often gathers people in schools, music schools, choirs, bands, and festivals. Notably, this analytical space is developed based on stories told by informants about how music makes people come together in social groups or cultures. While fellowships around music can build strong emotional bonds from early childhood, many people use music to socialize with friends and family throughout life. Moreover, Ruud argued that the music performed or listened to can have a strong impact on identity development.

In particular, young people often experiment with and try out different identities by adopting music idols to see how an artist or genre fits in with the social group they belong to or wish to belong to. Being part of a social group centered on music is a way to position oneself socially within society as a member of a specific class or subculture representing specific values, norms, or political ideologies. Being part of a group and listening to certain music genres can be seen as a communicative tool in establishing boundaries with other social groups. Who we are and where we belong can—especially in the case of adolescents, who no longer simply listen to the music their parents like and are taking their first steps into the musical landscape—be represented in the musical culture we identify with. Young people attending music festivals are good examples of young concertgoers that are closely bonded to their musical taste “like glue.” Imagine a group of young festivalgoers leaving their camp, tents, and beers behind to head toward a stage to take part in a concert with an artist they all agree is the



best. This is a good basis for a live euphoric or “emergent” performance since the audience members are already “halfway there,” which implies that the social bond based on their musical preference has brought them together and opened their engagement in the creative process of emergence.

### (3) Identification based on time and space

One of the authors of this article, Dan Hvidtfeldt, once played a series of concerts in a Copenhagen music theater based on music written by the Danish folk singer Sebastian. Each night for six months, the orchestra performed a song called *Rose* on stage in a highly emotional manner. None of the musicians on stage were aware of the strong emotional impact the lyrics were to have on the audiences each night. However, they soon realized that this song is often played at funerals, not just in Denmark but throughout Scandinavia. As a musician and researcher, it was both an intensely emotional rollercoaster and an opportunity to conduct a small field study on the identification and processes of emergence in musical settings.

Musical identity is tightly connected to where we are in time and space. Notably, musical identity can provide concrete examples of important situations in life where individuals are connected to defining moments and where music plays a part in connecting people to geographical places or historical moments. Good examples include the music people listen to at important moments in their lives, such as when they fall in love or marry, or when people die. Also, places can be understood more broadly through musical identity. At international music festivals, all the Swedes go to concerts featuring Swedish artists because they like the music and because a natural part of being abroad is to go to concerts with music that they identify with from their home country. Sometimes attending a concert—and thereby contributing to the creative processes associated with realizing the concerted event—is shaped by how we identify with the music based on specific experiences that can be narrowed down to specific episodes in our lives. Moreover, the identification can be very strong (evident in people’s aforementioned reactions to *Rose* in the theater) since music connected to life-and-death situations can be definitive.

### (4) Identifying with the emergent phenomenon

Ruud labeled the final variation as “transpersonal space.” This space in our identity is likely the closest connection to the type of musical identity Bastian wrote about. Here, identification with music points to the transcendent aspect when the music takes us to new places, makes us forget who and where we are and provides a universal feeling of the musical community. Here, the music speaks for “itself,” and is not based on memories of specific episodes of parents singing lullabies, social or cultural connections with music as a social phenomenon, or stories of life-changing moments connected to musical experiences. Instead, music has its own intrinsic value with energy and language that speaks to a fundamental human musicality.

To provide a specific example, Roskilde Festival can be viewed as both a culturally produced ritual representing a specific identity and audiences bringing all kinds of

connections to the musical performance. However, its value also lies in its quality as a “free space” where people forget who and where they are. A space where music is allowed to speak for itself. Often, people do not know the music they hear at the festival—they attend the concert because of the transcendent, surreal, “out-of-this-world” feeling they experience if the music is good, well-produced, and well-presented. This is an exceptional identification with music that is difficult to pin down since its roots are not based on any specific history with musical genres or songs. As such, it leaves no personal musical biographical trails and depends on sheer musicality. In this sense, it must be regarded as a central aspect of the emergence processes of musical performances that is directly linked to the fundamental argument of creativity as being dependent on elements of both novelty and musicality. Sometimes, what we identify with is exactly the concert at Roskilde Festival itself—not just the music or the specific song we listened to as teenagers, but the music and all of the other constituent elements of the emergent phenomenon. This represents the communal product of musical creative performances generated via concerted effort.

#### *Identity in musical processes of emergence*

Imagine a concert where the audience knows the music and musicians so well that they only have to play perhaps one note of a song to tell the whole story and hold the audience in the palms of their hands. It is a powerful moment. At this point in the “lifespan of the song,” the musical creative process of emergence is mainly driven by *the audience*: the artist puts out a song, the radio plays it, audiences grow, people listen to the song day in and day out, merge with the sound, and make it part of their lives and identities. Now, the audience waits impatiently for the artist to recreate that feeling in them. The artist only has to remind the fans of the song and they will do the rest. At this stage, the process of emergence is driven by the audience joining in rather than by the musicians on stage. In most situations, we presume that the singer on stage is the best singer in the room or tent, which is why the musical processes should perhaps be led by him or her. However, these types of arguments are no longer valid since what matters is identity and the feeling of being part of the musical community. While the emergent process is directed by the musicians on stage, it is realized by an engaged audience that ritually expresses its identification with the music, which was originally written and performed by the musicians on stage. Hence, the process of emergence is driven by individual and collective identification with the song rather than musical craftsmanship from the musicians on stage.

As described in the earlier introduction of Ruud’s four spaces, identification with music can originate from various personal experiences, social associations, landmark episodes in life, and from musical engagement that has been labeled as the transcendent qualities of music. No matter the origin, our identity with music influences our emotional state and expectations when entering a performance space, which—apart from the fourth category—is generated from personal experiences throughout our lives and then brought into the performance space. In this sense, the impact of

audience members' identification with certain music has nothing to do with what occurs in a specific performance situation—it is ready when we get there. It could even bypass audience expectations of musicianship and musicality since the process of emergence is driven by identification in this sense. Jam bands—i.e., cover artists who perform famous artists' catalogs of hit songs—base their business model on this idea: when audiences identify with the group over whose work the jam band is performing cover songs of, they enjoy the concert and sing along even though the original artist is not present, (almost) irrespective of how well the band performs the songs. What matters most to this creative process of emergence is how we identify with the song.

Now, imagine the opposite situation where audience members have no personal associations with the music performed. Perhaps they ended up attending a concert at a music festival because some friends brought them along, or because the band was essentially new, or new to the specific audience. Based on the fourth space, it can be argued that having no relationship with the specific song performed is not a barrier to letting identification drive the musical process of emergence. However, now the artist on stage, the members of the audience, and all the other constituent elements of the creative process need to bond in a far more musical manner. The emergent phenomenon, the transcendent living energy, depends on collaboration at a higher level, which brings the elements together into an irreducible and living "whole." The energy that musical human beings strive toward is described as collective and universal. Ruud (1997) suggested that we identify with "love" so that we seek the energy of emergent situations as a universal element of life, something most—if not all—people identify with.

Furthermore, artists do not typically present genuinely "new" music since music always draws on previous music and the complete catalog of music history since music is not created in a vacuum. However, what they present through a song might be performed for the first time both by the band on stage and to the audience listening, which is a new representation of music within a genre that may have been around for 50 years. Even the artists we agree to be revolutionary within music history drew on the work of earlier artists since processes of creativity—as viewed from a socio-material perspective—always come from "somewhere." We may directly identify with a specific song we know from earlier and indirectly identify with a genre that has been developing over several years. For example, a genre can indirectly "resonate" with audiences' "personal spaces" since their parents may have listened to a certain genre when they were young and the kids now listening to it are five years old. Therefore, we argue that identification with musical performances is infiltrated in a complex manner with audience members' direct connections to a specific song being performed, the genre it represents, and their identification with the emergent process as a transcendent musical phenomenon.

### *Conclusions*

The overall aim of this article was to contribute to the developing understanding of creativity seen as a socio-material practice. We sought to explore creativity in musical communities and how "musical identity"—our relationship to the music performed

on stage—infiltrates the complex, creative, and emergent processes leading to meaningful and living events. From the perspective of cultural psychology, we have been developing a theoretical understanding of creative processes over the past three to four years in which musical practices (e.g., music productions in the studio, musical concerts, or musical social situations and events more generally) are understood to be embedded in, developing in, and dependent on a process of emergence. In other words, we have described the creative result of musical engagement as an ephemeral living and vibrant phenomenon arising from a concerted socio-material effort. Through these theoretical lenses, musical concerts are fundamentally social and developed in a musical community.

Based on Ruud's identification of the four spaces of musical identity, we conclude that audience members take part in musical performances and contribute to musical processes of emergence based on their personal background, social identification with music, and experiences with music, which can be directly linked to geographical and time-specific experiences (e.g., weddings, birthdays, funerals, etc.). Thus, audience members navigate in the socio-material chaos of musical processes of emergence and identify with emergent wholes based on emotions, previous knowledge, and musical experiences. We argue that the traditional understanding of the "musicality" of musicians performing on stage can even be "bypassed" if the emotional connection is strong since identification with the music being performed can drive processes of emergence. Finally, we argue that audience members can identify with and contribute to the emergence process by identifying with the emergent phenomenon itself as a transcendent emotional state that audience members strive toward.

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