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# The Illusion of Reality and the Reality of Illusion

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# Recorded Reality and Artifice

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- ❖ Early “high fidelity” recordings: “transmitting a performance which has taken place elsewhere in real time” (Blake 2004, 478)
- ❖ Stokowski had “no qualms about ‘enhancing’ classical music...[and] gleefully embraced...audio tricks” (Leydon 2001, 99-100)
- ❖ “Real” sound of UK recordings vs. “artificial” sound of US recordings in 1970s (Zagorski-Thomas 2012)
- ❖ Glam rock “forced attention on the notion that a performer can inhabit a persona” (Moore 2001, 202)

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# Academic Perspectives

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- ❖ *How* is the impression of realism captured and conveyed in a recording?
- ❖ Authentic persona: “every example, can conceivably be found authentic by a particular group of perceivers and that it is the *success* with which a particular performance conveys its impression that counts, a success which depends in some part on the explicitly musical decisions performers make” (Moore 2002, 220)
- ❖ Sonic cartoons: imitative of reality, but distorted to guide the listener to specific meanings (Zagorski-Thomas 2014)
- ❖ “Naturalised” sonic environments dependent on historical and cultural context of the listener (Brøvig-Hannsen and Danielsen 2013)
- ❖ Recorded music as a “magic science” (Clarke 1983, 195)

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# The Illusion of Reality and the Reality of Illusion

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- ❖ How are the concepts of “reality” and “illusion” engaged by musicians, composers, and producers?
- ❖ Long: reality in live recordings of the 1960s
- ❖ Braae: illusion of Freddie Mercury’s vocal characters
- ❖ Mayall: a continuum between reality and illusion for recording artists
- ❖ Macpherson: the “Chopin Project”—is it real?