

The Production of Liveness: Television Concerts on Danish Television (1964-1978)

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Abstract

This chapter investigates the development of audiovisual media through the prism of popular music performance on television, as it developed in the rich music environment around and within the Danish Broadcasting Company (DBC) during the 1960s and 1970s. The focus is on the relation between the institutional setting and the preferred program formats' visualization of music. On the one hand, music on television influenced the relationship between musical genres and visual (re)presentations, and helped to shape the (changing) visual genre conventions. On the other, generational discussions of music programming, choice of repertoire and not least how the various concert formats were (or were not) linked to a notion of liveness can be seen as a changing agent for the institutional approach to audiovisuality. The study draws on archival television program material and interviews with former employees from DCB, and discusses television concerts as the prevailing programming ideal for Danish television in the period 1964–1978.

Rock Culture on Television — A Biased History

In March 1977, the nationally acclaimed Danish rock band, Gasolin', performed in the last episode of the popular and long-running television program series *Musikhjørnet* (The Music Corner, DR, 1970–1977). On Saturday evening during prime time, they performed alongside a variety of other acts such as the Danish Radio Chamber Orchestra and a boy scouts' choir, intertwined with interviews with artists as well as live audience members.

Gasolin's two tunes were performed in play back. It was the first and only time during the show's existence that any group was allowed to use play back for their performance. Gasolin' used this opportunity of live transmission as they played their first song, 'This Is My life', to make fun of the televised concert format and of classical performance conventions, exchanging instruments and, for example, borrowing the chamber orchestra's harp while acting with overtly exaggerated gestures and mimicking opera singers. By doing so, Gasolin'

distanced themselves both from the concept of television performance and from the attempt to break down the boundary between different musical genres, which was the cornerstone of *Musikbjørnet*. This live broadcast series had run more or less regularly since 1970 with music performance as its core, presenting many upcoming as well as established (primarily Danish) artists across various music genres who performed for a live studio audience, and insisting on addressing musicians and audiences across these genres and across these professional levels in a common language. This incident introduces key discussions that are central to the argument of this article.

On the one hand, this episode confirms well-known anecdotes of rebellious rock performances on television, in which live music performance is used to extrapolate an uncomfortable relation between subversive popular music and conventional television entertainment. Dismissive conclusions, such as the idea that ‘the effect of fitting rock’n’roll into a medium like television is to make it safe, to deprive it some of its significance’,¹ continuously haunt the combination of music and television, and subsequently the history of popular music on screen is often seen through the prism of avoidance, provocation and scandal. Emphasizing how inspiring musical experience has often been associated with the television screen, Keith Negus quotes the rock critic John Walsh remembering Jimi Hendrix’ performance in *The Lulu Show* (BBC, 4 January 1969) as an example of one such memorable programme, exactly because it ‘brought the inherent anarchy of rock music into the living room’.² This experience was made possible by the live transmission of much early television, and thanks to the conceptualization of television in early popular music studies as toothless entertainment. In his historical account of BBC’s *Top of the Pops* (1964–2006), Paul Fryer explains the issue of lip syncing, as the music

was to be portrayed as safe and deodorized; the packaging of that music also had to be shown as harmless, a process requiring constant supervision. The insistence on miming served that purpose, restricting the possible occurrence of physical and lyrical spontaneity, the loss of control by the show.³

The need for harmlessness relates to the very idea of television entertainment. As formulated by John Mundy in his historical overview of popular music on screen, the shows that introduced rock’n’roll on American television were

¹ Simon Frith, *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure and the Politics of Rock ’n’ Roll* (London: Constable, 1983), p. 153.

² Keith Negus, ‘Musicians on Television: Visible, Audible and Ignored’, *Journal of the Royal Music Association* 131.2 (2006), 310–30, (p. 317).

³ Paul Fryer, ‘Everybody’s on Top of the Pops: Popular Music on British Television (1960–1985)’, *Popular Music and Society*, 21.3 (1997), 153–71 (p. 166).

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catering for what was still regarded within the entertainment business as a largely undifferentiated audience, and served to perpetuate a definition of popular music which, whilst it included country music as well as black artists like Nat King Cole, was essentially targeted at white, northern, urban tastes.⁴

Subsequently, the episode reflects ideas of authenticity and rebellion. Such stories of provocative television performances can be seen as an example of what Sarah Thornton has described as a ‘dogged ideological opposition’ between subcultures and the media.⁵ Media scandals has been seen as a crucial part of the ‘seductive *modus operandi* of popular music’,⁶ and, as exemplified by The Beatles’, The Rolling Stones’ and The Doors’ performance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* (CBS, 1948–1971), television becomes a main location for the unfolding of such scandals.⁷

On the other hand, the episode shows that the story of rock on television obviously is more complex than this. The urge to use playback in this situation was not a restriction made by the broadcasters. On the contrary, it was a condition set by the band in order to participate, a condition that, according to producer Marianne Albrechtslund’s recollection, did not suit the production team but was accepted since the participation of Gasolin’ had great symbolic value for the program’s intention to bring together high-quality performances from both high culture and popular culture, and to make this last program in the series ‘something special’. And this provocative performance was perhaps the only one of its kind in the history of the show. In other instances, the urge to provoke came from within this DBC itself, such as when the producer and host in a program on the music of *The Pack* (27 January 1978) announced in the introduction that ‘for all the moralists watching, who are waiting for something to be upset about, I promise you that it will come at the end of the program’ and eventually spelled out the number to call in order to file a viewer complaint. One might speak of entangled histories, as television and popular music emerged and simultaneously in Denmark, and just as music has played a pivotal role in the development of DBC, television broadcasts of music help to legitimize rock(’n’roll) as “serious” music.

Others have disclosed this bias when writing history, demonizing television in rock mythology. Norma Coates, for example, shows how the scholarly emphasis on censorship neglects the fact that Elvis, prior to his famously restricted performance on *The Ed Sullivan Show* (6 January 1957), in which he was only

⁴ John Mundy, *Popular Music on Screen. From Hollywood Musical to Music Video* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), p. 184.

⁵ Sarah Thornton, *Club Cultures* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1995), p. 116.

⁶ Javier Santiago-Lucerna, ‘Pushin’ it to the Limit. Scandals and Pop Music’, in *Media Scandals*, ed. by James Lull and Stephen Hinerman (New York: Columbia University Press 1998), p. 24.

⁷ For the negotiation of The Rolling Stones’, The Doors’ and Bob Dylan’s (missing) appearances on that show in relation to television’s production ethics, see Ian Inglis, ‘*The Ed Sullivan Show* and the (Censored) Sounds of the Sixties’, *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 29.4 (2006), 558–75.

shown from the waist up, had performed several times on television under far less restrictive conditions.⁸ In her comparison of *Top of the Pops* and ITV's *The Chart Show* (Channel 4, 1986–1989), Sarah Thornton recognizes the way in which different programme formats called for a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between mainstream and niche, pointing towards how the aesthetics of *The Chart Show* made it sufficiently narrowcast to escape the negative symbolization of mainstream television.⁹ 'To hear music is to see it performed, on stage, with all its trappings', Simon Frith suggests,¹⁰ and investigating music on television relies on this idea that music as well as television are inherently audiovisual phenomena. This article takes on this line of enquiry, acknowledging the moments of growing interest in the various ways in which television has played a role in spreading and developing rock and other popular music (subgenres).¹¹

Finally, the episode illustrates a transition point for popular music performance on Danish Television. As a one-channel public service broadcasting monopoly, DBC was the sole provider of daily audiovisual media until as late as 1988.¹² Hence, the discussions, ideals and concerns around and about the development of new audiovisual formats were therefore somewhat different to the commercial American and multi-channel British contexts of much research on television music, even if the overall development lines share certain characteristics. Coates discusses rock'n'roll performances of the 1950s, Thornton comments on music television of the 1980s. I suggest that the presentation of rock on Danish television from the mid-1960s and throughout the 1970s provides an example of a vibrant relationship between the developing genre of rock and public service television. This is a version of what VanCour describes as 'the continual reinvention of long-standing formats such as [...] broadcast symphonies',¹³ which in the context of this article is labelled "television concerts".

While popular entertainment music (or "light music", sporadically including rock'n'roll) was a constitutive part of broad television entertainment from its inception in the 1950s, jazz and beat became key signature for the development

⁸ Norma Coates, 'Elvis from the Waist Up and Other Myths: The Impact of 1950s Music Television on the Masculinization of Rock and Roll', in *Medium Cool: Music Video/Music Television/MTV*, ed. by Roger Beebe and Jason Middleton, Duke University Press 2007, pp. 226–51.

⁹ Thornton, p. 125.

¹⁰ Simon Frith, *Performing Rites. On the Value of Popular Music* (New York: Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 211.

¹¹ Cf. research literature such as James Deaville, 'A Discipline Emerges', in *Music in Television*, ed. by James Deaville (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), pp. 7–33; Coates, 'Elvis from the Waist Up and Other Myths'; Keith Negus and John Street, 'Introduction', *Popular Music*, special issue on 'Music and Television', 21.3 (2002), 245–48; Anja Mølle Lindelof, 'Look! It's Rock'n'Roll! How Television Participated in Shaping the Visual Genre Conventions of Popular Music', *Music, Sound and the Moving Image*, 1.2 (2007), 141–59; Simon Frith, 'Look! Hear! The Uneasy Relationship of Music and Television', *Popular Music*, 21.3 (2002), 249–76.

¹² For those living close enough to the Swedish and German borders, television channels from these countries were available.

¹³ Shawn VanCour, 'TV Music and the History of Television Sound', in Deaville, pp. 57–79 (p. 69).

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of a targeted youth programming in the mid-1960s. Around 1968, rock culture became television program content in its own right under the label “rhythmic music” and these television concerts remained central to the programming even as a change in preferences in favour of a return to a broader notion of popular music became prevailing around 1977–1978. By then, the prevailing ideal of ‘genre-less high-quality music performance’, epitomized by *Musikhjørnet*’s urge to break down established barriers between different music genres, and the process of legitimizing progressive rock as an art form triggered new program formats, institutional changes, technological developments, new musical sounds and performing ideals. These paved the way for a less “serious” conception of television entertainment, adopting a more inclusive attitude towards the commercial and competitive aspects of music.¹⁴ This change was underlined by the fact that at the same time DBC re-entered the Eurovision Song Contest, from which it had withdrawn in 1966.

Having sketched out positions in existing research on popular music on television and hinted at characteristics of the specific Danish, historical context, the rest of this article will trace how the DBC engaged with “rhythmic music” on television from 1964 to 1978. “Rhythmic music” is a general and pragmatic term that has been

used in several Danish cultural and artistic battles to delimit and legitimize different kinds of so-called “serious” popular music. The term was coined in the local jazz debates in the 1930s, further developed in the late 1960s and in the 1970s when rock fought to become artistically respectable and became fully institutionalized in the 1980s when the Rhythmic Music Conservatory opened in the Danish capital, Copenhagen. Rhythmic music is an ideologically informed genre rather than one based on specific stylistic traits and has greatly influenced the organization and values of Danish musical culture since the 1970s.¹⁵

Based on archival television programme material and conversations with former employees, and in order to understand the ways in which this specific combination of an institutional framework and aesthetic considerations has helped to define the audiovisuality of rock culture in a Danish context, the questions this article raises are: at the level of production, how were these new music genres inserted into the production mentality of the institution and discussed by producers and executives? At the textual level, how was music

¹⁴ For a detailed account of this historical development, see Anja Mølle Lindelof, *Rockens rulletekster. Populærmusik på dansk tv (1951–1988)* (The Roll-up Titles of Rock’n’Roll. Popular Music on Danish Television, 1951–1988), Ph.D. dissertation (Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen, 2007).

¹⁵ Morten Michelsen, ‘Rhythmic Music’, in *Encyclopaedia of Popular Music of the World*, vol. XI, ed. by David Horn, John Shepherd and Paolo Prato, p. 644–45. The idea of “the serious” is central for the conception of rock as different from pop. See e.g. Keir Keightley, ‘Reconsidering Rock’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Pop and Rock*, ed. by Simon Frith, Will Straw and John Street (Cambridge University Press 2001), pp. 109–42.

presented and performed and what kind of ideological negotiations can be found in this programme output? To do so, I will start by sketching out the importance of liveness for the production mentality of the DBC.

DBC and Liveness

Music performance is inextricably bound to the institutional context in which it appears, and the way in which popular music is presented, visualized and performed relies on the prevailing production culture.¹⁶ Institutional analysis serves as a framework to understand the rich music environment around and within the national public service monopoly of the DBC during the 1960s and 1970s. This includes the overall programming policies and organizational structures as well as its production mentality — *i.e.* the dispositions, values, and working “practical consciousness” of people at various points within the production process. Production mentality concerns the cultural and social exchanges inside the organization, it can be defined through the notion of cultural intermediaries¹⁷ and includes the belief that institutional structures and beliefs are not fixed, but rather dynamic and continuously developing in exchange with society.¹⁸

That live music has been pertinent to the production mentality of DBC should come as no surprise. Live music has been an integral part of public service broadcasting corporations in Western Europe from the very outset. The very notion of “the live” is historically contingent, as it relies on processes of mediatization, and it developed alongside early radio broadcasts.¹⁹ The fact that most broadcasting corporations did establish and keep their own ensembles was just as much a result of the various interests subsumed in a production mentality favouring live music, whether played by “in-house” radio orchestras or otherwise hosted and produced under circumstances controlled by the broadcasting corporations. In fact, many radio orchestras lived on long after records became the primary source for music consumption.²⁰ Even if ‘the many desirable features

¹⁶ See Diane Crane, *The Production of Culture: Media and the Urban Arts* (London: Sage, 1992) and John Caldwell, *Production Culture: Industrial Reflexivity and Critical Practice in Film and Television*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008).

¹⁷ The term production mentality is coined by John Corner, *Critical Ideas in Television Studies* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press 1999), p. 71. For elaborations on the Bordieuan idea of cultural intermediaries, see Keith Negus, ‘The Work of Cultural Intermediaries and the Enduring Distance Between Production and Consumption’, *Cultural Studies* 16.4 (2002), 501–15.

¹⁸ André Lecours, ‘New Institutionalism: Issues and Questions’, in *New Institutionalism: Theory and Analysis*, ed. by André Lecours (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 3–25 (p. 7).

¹⁹ Philip Auslander, ‘Digital Liveness: A Historico-Philosophical Perspective’, *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art*, 34.3 (2012), 3–11.

²⁰ As late as 1963, the Danish Radio Big Band and an experimental jazz and fusion orchestra were established inhouse DBC. See also Anja Mølle Lindelof, ‘Why Do Radios Have Orchestras? Understanding the Production Mentality of DR through the Case of the Danish National Chamber Orchestra’, in *Tunes for all? Radio, music and relations*, ed. by Morten Michelsen *et al.* (Aarhus:

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of liveness²¹ can be described as a specific quality of broadcast technologies, the tension between live and recorded (“mechanical”) music was central at a time when early radio developed a sharp institutional positioning in favour of live music broadcasts.²² This it remained so, even as the amount of recorded music overgrew live music on air. In Denmark this happened in 1963, with DBC’s launch of a third radio channel – the first broadcast channel to address a specific audience group, targeting especially young people through the use of music.²³ Subsequently, by the mid-1960s the notion of liveness was no longer a question of technology alone, rather it also emphasized an “eventness” (whether of television or of musical performance), that included the sociability of the event as a combination of aesthetic, commercial and social interests.²⁴ The discussion of television concerts taps into this, because television — “radio for the eyes”, as it was labelled just 30 years after radio made it possible to listen to music that was visibly detached from its apparatus of production — grew out of that same institution and became, without much ado, subject to the same jurisdiction and public service ideals. Ideals based on a “transmission aesthetics”, most explicitly in the visual puritanism of television news, but also more broadly as a process of naturalizing the new medium as a channel for dissemination,²⁵ even if most music television actually came from studio productions.

The television studio and its technical staff were readily available. This made possible, for example, the launch of the first regular program series presenting rock(’n’roll) and beat in concert, *Klar i studiet!* (*Ready in the studio!*, 1965–66). The show reflected the local, national music scene, explicitly focusing on music performance by local and a few international (mainly British) acts in live, on stage performances. It was produced in the late evening hours when the television studio was otherwise not in use, and as an example of the engaged spirit among the television staff, sound technician Bjarne Hermansen remembers how he and other technicians often helped the young musicians repair and improve their

Aarhus Universitetsforlag, 2018), pp. 251–68.

²¹ Andrew Crisell, *Liveness and Recording in the Media* (Basingstoke: Palgrave 2012).

²² See Steens Kaargaard Nielsen, ‘The Cautionary Tale of Emil Holm and the Gramophone’, in Michelsen *et al.*, pp. 259–83. According to Auslander, ‘Digital Liveness’, the earliest example of the use of the word ‘live’ in relation to performance appears in the BBC Yearbook for 1934 and reflects listeners’ complaint that the amount and use of recorded material was “too liberal”.

²³ As a reaction to Radio Mercur, a private, commercial radio station broadcasting from a ship in international waters outside of Copenhagen (1957–1963). Legislation made Radio Mercur come to a stop in 1963, and instead DBC launched a new, third, channel. A story that is in many ways similar to the challenges made to the BBC by Radio Caroline from 1964. See David Simonelli, ‘BBC rock music programming on radio and television and the progressive rock audience (1967–1973)’, *Popular Music History*, 2.1 (2007), 99–100.

²⁴ See *e.g.* Martin Barker, *The Remarkable Rise of Live Cast* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan 2013), Paul Sanden, *Liveness in modern music* (London and New York: Routledge 2013), Matthew Reason and Anja Mølle Lindelof (eds.), *Experiencing Liveness in Contemporary Performance: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017).

²⁵ See Henrik Søndergaard, *DR i tv-konkurrencens tidsalder* (DBC in the era of competing television channels) (København: Samfundslitteratur, 1994) for the broad history of DBC.

music gear. This became even more apparent as DCB's television production grew; it became physically detached from radio and the amount of broadcast hours rose markedly: 'Now we have the studios to be used, and then we had to make a studio program. It was also often cheaper to use the studio, because we had the technical staff prepared for it', as producer Carsten Fischer explains, and — even if several producers in dialogue emphasise OB-transmissions as their favourites — studio-produced television concerts became the norm. The impetus for *Musikhjørnet* was to fill a newly introduced timeslot from 6 to 7 p.m., live from the studio and, accordingly, to present a content of "broader interest" — which was at least one of the reasons for including a variety of artists and amateurs performing classical, folk and beat.

The technical staff were organized in an independent department, in order to secure the highest possible professionalism in the production apparatus across the various program categories. This, on the other hand, complicated the possibility of building up more permanent teams around specific program series and the influence of specific program aesthetics on, for instance, the camera work. 'We were young, we were excited, and we could also excite the technicians, and it was really important to get them engaged', Per Møller Hansen explains, and both Edmond Jensen, who became one of the leading producers of television concerts in the period, and Marianne Albrechtslund, producer of *Musikhjørnet*, emphasize the importance of this cooperation, explicitly addressing that the camera aesthetics was a joint venture between the producer and those behind the cameras. Marianne Albrechtslund describes this work as 'the inspiration of the moment. It was certainly about getting the good camera men, those who were responsive to the music in question and developed visual impressions from the music they heard'.

This focus on pragmatic spatial and material concerns as well as on technically high-quality productions has a certain explanatory power, but it cannot alone account for the specific puritanism of the television concerts. Another issue that was central to the production mentality was the perception of the television audience. Because of the non-commercial monopoly, targeting audiences was not an issue. Without a need to deliver audiences to advertisers, Danish television viewers could basically be conceived of as an undifferentiated audience, with only children's television as the exception. The politically mandated aim for the public service, to deliver programs "for everyone", was only implicitly defined, partly by the current and politically conditioned interpretation of the balance between the educational and the entertaining and partly due to by a silent re-production of the values and beliefs of the different production teams. Changing ideas about the criteria for good television entertainment are central to Danish broadcasting history, and for the period in question at least two developments are important in that regard. The first is that in 1966 there was a radical reorientation in the entertainment department, away from "popular entertainment" based on variety show with catchy tunes and relaxational purposes and towards entertainment that was explicitly socially and politically engaged — or to use the wording of the

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time: 'Seriousness, attitude and opinions'. This was mainly due to a new head of television entertainment from 1966–1976, Niels Jørgen Kaiser. The other, partly related development was the affiliation of a new generation of producers due to increased airtime, who engaged with television and with the new musical sounds in different ways than the older generation of radio-trained television pioneers. The relatively few programs presenting beat and rock ('n'roll) until then had been produced in the children and youth department (B&U), launched in 1964, but from 1967–68, rock ('n'roll) — now labelled jazz/beat — was departmentally "promoted" to television for adults. Production thus moved to the entertainment department, with its more prominent timeslots and larger budgets. According to Jensen, Kaiser explicitly argued that he wanted 'us to be able to compete with the foreign producers and that is only possible, if you are allowed to try to work with the acclaimed, international artists'.

The first production was a television concert with The Doors (30 October 1968). The importance of new music interests among the staff is suggested by this anecdote told by Hansen: while the young, and (in relation to television production) in-experienced Edmond Jensen was ecstatic about the possibility of producing The Doors in-house, the two more experienced music producers from the older generation, both passionate jazz fans were less enthusiastic, and they played dice to decide who had to produce the program (the loser of the game). In the years that followed, internationally renowned groups were occasionally presented in concert, including Country Joe & The Fish (30 April 1969), Led Zeppelin (18 May 1969), Randy Newman (8 February 1973) and Dr. Hook (11 April 1975). On a more regular basis jazz and beat formed an alliance resulting in a comprehensive broadcast series, *Jazz/Beat* (1969–73, produced by Edmond Jensen and Per Møller Hansen) and drawing on the already well-established conventions for jazz on television, including a preference for television concerts — jazz/beat became its own content area. During these years, Copenhagen had a well-established jazz scene.

In B&U, on the contrary, the number of concerts decreased, partly due to the department's rejection of the commercialization of youth culture, and popular music's part in this. As an alternative, most music performed in programs led by B&U in the following years was written and performed by the hosts and other employees themselves — a situation which somewhat paradoxically in a broader historical view made DR the main contributor to the production and sale of music for children in Denmark.

Live in Concert

And how did these negotiations behind the screen come across in the actual program output? Common for the majority of these programs and series, whether they belong to B&U, the entertainment department or the music department, is that they were focused on live music performances, produced

live in the television studio. Television concerts might rely on one single band in concert or on the interchange of several shorter pieces by changing bands, thereby making the border between this latter form and the variety show format potentially fluid. What characterizes the television concert, though, is its transmission aesthetics, the way in which the performance as a live event is balanced with the urge to “let the music speak for itself”. Describing his visual intentions, Edmond Jensen states:

I rarely used those wild camera pans that you often see today, I prefer to see the protagonist. I like extreme close-ups and I think television is a close-up medium. Especially when you picture people who are really good at what they are doing — and that’s not anyone! Especially if you’re lucky to cut to... if there is a significant solo going on and you hit it on the beat... That’s just great! And it means taking chances. Of course, the fear of any producer is to cut to a soloist the moment he stops playing. That goes for the audience as well: to get the right clips in order to show their reaction.²⁶

While the melodic and formal structures of the music define the visualization — simply speaking, you see what at any time seems to be the most prominent audible part — the quote clearly articulates a double consciousness in the production regarding the specific performance situation. On the one hand, the camera work privileges the television viewer through the use of visuals that allow for perspectives that are otherwise not possible at a concert. This is not exclusive to television concerts, but accounts for music films as well. For example, as suggested by Alessandro Bratus, *Pink Floyd: Live at Pompeii* (Adrian Maben, 1972) also uses extreme close-ups and other visual effects as a way to construct a privileged position for the viewer. The concert video constructs a textual combination of effects that “authenticates” the video for the cinematic viewers.²⁷ This is done through postproduction, but as many of the textual effects are the same in the live, edited television concert, the authentication is arguably not depended on the editing process. On the other hand, the concert audience is explicitly not television viewers; rather, they are understood as part of the performance as well. The productions were recorded live but most of them scheduled for broadcast later, and the presence of the live studio audience emphasizes the idea of liveness as an autopoietic feedback loop of bodily co-presence between audience and performers in the performance event.²⁸ As described by Karen Lury with regard to the role of the audience in shows like *Top of the Pops* and *Ready, Steady Go* (ITV, 1963–1966), ‘the audience’s presence, their proximity and affective reaction was used to try to fill in the gap between the performer separated — in time and/

²⁶ Interview with Edmond Jensen (1943–2004), by the author (12 February 2004).

²⁷ Alessandro Bratus, ‘In-between Performance and Mediatization: Authentication and (Re)-Live(d) Concert Experience’, *Rock Music Studies*, 3.1 (2016), 41–61.

²⁸ Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 38.

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or space — from the television viewer'.²⁹ But while Danish television concerts, with a few exceptions, did integrate a live studio audience, it remains on the margin of the show, sitting rather than dancing, literally on the edge of the frame.

Another way of characterizing television concerts is by alluding to what they are not. One thing that is striking across the various programs is the lack of experiments with specific televisual elements. If not a regular break with emerging practices, then it was at least a deliberate choice to pursue an established format which developed independently of television but which had already been pursued regularly in the context of DBC, first and foremost for symphonic concerts but more lately also for jazz on radio as well as television. New formats for presenting music on television had started to develop as television slowly became part of everyday life during the late 1950s.³⁰ In particular, the highly popular programme series *Record Parade* (1957–63) investigated new television specific formats by lip syncing the artists' record hits in short music films. It included various music genres, presenting for example Tommy Steele and Cliff Richard, as well as their Nordic pendants Little Gerhard and Otto Brandenburg, and made early rock'n'roll become a part of the broader evening entertainment.³¹ The mid-1960s, characterized by the search for media specific program formats in relation to television entertainment³² as well as for classical music as in the case with television opera,³³ saw some formal experiments with popular music programming. B&U portrayed a popular band in the documentary *48 timer med Belli og Rivalerne* (48 hours with Belli and the Rivals, 30 April 1966), which was clearly inspired by the crazy comedy *A Hard Days Night* (Richard Lester, 1964), and it produced a handful programs in the 1968-season of *Toppop* (1967–69), in extraordinary outdoor locations. Within the entertainment department, a couple of studio performances were produced in 1967–1968 that experimented with scenography, kaleidoscopic lighting and unconventional, skewed camera angles, inspired by the psychedelic universe of the music played. It is worth noting that these productions were almost exclusively made by one specific producer from each of the two departments, pointing towards the relative freedom of individual choice — as long as it coordinates with the overall values of the department.

A second thing 'missing' is dance. This is noteworthy, not least when compared to *American Bandstand* (ABC, 1952–1987, Syndicated 1987–1989) or *Top of the Pops*, for instance, which even had its own dance troop; shows in which dance was an important element of the program content, and a way to construct and

²⁹ Karen Lury. *British Youth Television: Cynicism and Enchantment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001), p. 63.

³⁰ Regular television broadcast began in Denmark in 1954.

³¹ For a detailed analysis of the music performances of this show in relation to emerging audiovisual genre conventions, see Lindelof, "Look! It's Rock'n'roll!"

³² Hanne Bruun, 'Tv-Underholdning' (Television Entertainment), in *Dansk Fjernsyn fra 1951-2008*, ed. by Stig Hjarvard (København: Samfundslitteratur, 2006), p. 230.

³³ Agnete Mei Hytten, 'Opera For Fjernsyn' (Opera For Television), in *Fluktuationer. Et Festskrift til Ib Nørholm*, ed. by Eva Hvidt et al. (Frederiksberg: MA Musik, 2001), pp. 139–57.

influence dance styles and consumption patterns.³⁴ *Ready in the Studio!* sought to create an interior and an atmosphere that ‘imitated places where the young typically would go’ with small café tables where invited young audiences were seated and interviewed, but there is no evidence that this included dance as well.³⁵ Its successor, *Toppop* did not have an audience in the studio. One of the very few programs from this period in which dance played a role, *Krobal (Dance at the Inn, 1965–1970)*, had nothing to do with youth or with rock culture. On the contrary, it signalled old school television because it transmitted traditional dance and local community atmosphere from local inns and dancehalls around the country and because of its host, the grand old man of early television entertainment, Otto Leisner, who had also hosted *Pladeparade (1957–1963)*. Interestingly, this was also one of the few shows that according to some of the sporadically available viewing figures had more viewers than the daily news. It was not until much later, especially with the launch of *Eldorado (1983–84)*, that dance in connection to rock culture appeared as central to studio produced music entertainment. At that time, jazz/beat had turned into rock/pop as the prevailing genre label in relation to television entertainment, and DBC was preparing for the unavoidable television competition bound to come. Interesting in this regard are the many similarities between *Eldorado*, the first and highly popular hit list-based program — nationally praised for its use of new technologies and post-editing possibilities to create a new visual aesthetics for music on television — and the much earlier British program *Six-Five Special (BBC, 1957–1958)* as described by John Hill,³⁶ especially with regard to the programs’ way of addressing its audience. They were both based on the popular music of their time, oriented towards the youth but with explicit strategies to appeal to various ages — and both were a result of the competition from other broadcasters to an established public service monopoly.

Concluding Remarks

By way of the production mentality of Danish monopoly television during the 1960s and 1970s, the analysis of the television concert challenges traditional assumptions in popular music about television’s institutional reluctance towards rock culture as it shows how tensions between divergent genre conventions and generational splits were just as operative inside the DBC as they might have been outside. Through its music broadcasts, DBC actively participated in positioning rock as culturally valuable, “serious music” and at the same time took part in

³⁴ See Fryer; and Mundy, p. 7.

³⁵ None of these programs have survived in the archive, so my knowledge of the show is based on interviews and remarks found in memoirs and newspapers.

³⁶ John Hill, ‘Television and Pop: The Case of the 1950s’, in *Popular Television in Britain*, ed. by John Corned (London: British Film Institute 1991), pp. 90–107.

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the gendering of a rock discourse³⁷ and — through its emphasis on rhythmic music — in institutionalizing the rock/pop-split that became pertinent in the rock music history of the 20th century. As such, interest in Denmark’s public service broadcasts of popular music is inextricably linked to a complexification of rock history³⁸ and its nuancing of the heroizing of rebellion, album canonization and sales figures in established rock historiography, in favour of an everyday presentation of music in audiovisual performance. The aesthetics and ethics of music production served to legitimate the new popular music genres with their changing names, including rock(‘n’roll) and beat under the umbrella genre label “rhythmical music”, and to allude seriousness and quality through television concerts as the main TV format for popular music during this specific period, naturalizing the production apparatus of television in order to transmit seemingly universal ideals of live music performance.

³⁷ Norma Coates, ‘Filling in Holes’, *Music, Sound and Moving Images*, 1.1 (2007), 21–5.

³⁸ See eg. Morten Michelsen, ‘Histories and Complexities: Popular Music History Writing and Danish Rock’, *Popular Music History*, 1.1 (2004), 19–36.