

Editor's Preface

Research on pop music and subcultures no longer occupies the fringes of contemporary musicology. Both these areas have also been met before in the pages of *Res Musica* (see, for instance, *Res Musica* 10, 2018). In the current issue, the authors offer a broad perspective on these topics, often combining the academic gaze with that of the practitioner. They observe phenomena, some of which fall directly under the umbrella of pop music, while some which lie outside the field of pop can be explained through the concept of subcultures. In this way, the authors demonstrate the connections between music and broader societal topics such as gender roles, identity construction, activism, and mental wellbeing. In all of these, we see how cultural expressions that may often appear marginal can pose significant societal challenges and initiate change.

The great value of these approaches lies in their methodological interdisciplinarity and geographical scope. Several articles balance the boundary between mainstream and alternative culture in both local and global contexts. **Kerli Kirch** and **Katrin Tiidenberg's** article, "Force of Nature, Forced by Nature? *Esthonus Silvanus* Inspired Femininities in Popular Music", connects musicology with gender studies. The authors explore the portrayal of femininity in Estonian pop music. They analyse how female musicians are associated with nature through both music videos and their personal narratives, and how these associations relate to ecofeminism and discourses of national identity. **Jaana Davidjants'** article, "Stefania for Identity, Affinity, and Disruption: The Role of Sound in TikTok War Activism", combines social media studies with the topics of national identity and activism. The author analyses the role of Ukraine's 2022 Eurovision-winning song "Stefania" on the TikTok platform. She reveals how sound acts as a powerful tool for activism when the country is at war, but how it can also be hijacked by Russia for its propaganda war.

Several articles focus more narrowly on subcultural scenes. **Polina Holitsyna's** article, "Authenticity and the Subcultural Network of the Estonian Pagan Metal Scene", examines the local

pagan metal subculture, combining musicology with an ethnological perspective. The author reveals the complexity and multifaceted nature of authenticity and how both visual and social factors influence it. In **Natalie Mets'** article, "Club Culture as an Integrator of Estonian- and Russian-Speaking People: The Case of Sveta Baar", the author combines subculture studies with cultural sociology and highlights the unifying potential of club culture. The famous Sveta Baar was more than just a space for entertainment – it fostered social connections between Estonian- and Russian-speaking people who might not otherwise have interacted.

Jānis Daugavietis and **Arnis Balčus'** article, "Riga's New Underground Scene in Arnis Balčus Documentary Photographs", introduces Riga's underground punk and DIY music scene. Drawing on documentary photography, the authors offer an experimental perspective on interpreting the story of an underground scene through images. Several articles delve into the connections between music and mental wellbeing. For instance, in his article "Music and Personal Well-Being in the Life of a Rap Musician", **David Čelakovský** combines musicology with the positive psychology PERMA model. Through the example of Czech rapper Meiton, the article reveals how the process of music-writing helps the artist cope with challenges to his mental wellbeing. **Marju Raju** and **Brigitta Davidjants**, in "A Case Study of Changes in the Mood and Anxiety Indicators Among Members of the LGBTQ+ Mixed Choir *Vikerlased* in Rehearsal and Concert Situations", analyse how choir singing can reduce anxiety and improve mood, as demonstrated by the LGBTQ+ mixed choir *Vikerlased*.

In addition to peer-reviewed articles, this issue includes a discussion on Theodor Adorno as a continuation of *Res Musica* 15, "Stravinsky as Devil: Adorno's Three Critiques" by **Max Paddison** (translated by **Jaan Ross**, originally published in 2003 in *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky*), as well as traditional reviews – the first by **Aare Tool** (Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Case of Wagner. Nietzsche Contra Wagner*), and the second by **Aimar Ventsel** (Artemi Troitsky, *Back in the USSR: The History of Rock Behind the Iron Curtain*).

Res Musica articles are published in English with Estonian summaries, or in Estonian with

English summaries. All articles undergo anonymous peer review. The editor is grateful for the collaboration with the series' managing editor,

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