

The Evolution of Music Production, from Large Studios to Home Studios: Professional Reframing or Precarious Work?

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Abstract

This paper aims to examine the precarization of work in light of the transformations affecting the music industry's productive activities. The study begins by exploring the new modes of music production and consumption shaped by 21st-century technological advances and piracy, moving toward a discussion on the growing influence of "prosumers." By consulting critical literature on people management, we establish a foundation for addressing precarious work relationships and their implications for the careers of professional musicians. The precarization and "uberization" of work have now extended into the music profession, making it essential to consider labor relations and the musician's position within this structure. Consequently, class consciousness and collective organization are vital to securing improved working conditions.

Keywords: precarization; music; uberization; prosumer; piracy.

Introduction

This paper aims to examine the increasing precariousness of work in the music industry in light of changes affecting musicians' productive activities, specifically through the lens of new methods of music production and consumption driven by 21st-century technological advancements. While production was once dominated by major labels with exclusive control over technical, marketing, advertising, technological, distributional, and economic resources, as well as skilled professionals (Di Fátima, 2012), today's landscape has shifted. The accessibility of knowledge on digital platforms, combined with affordable technology, has made home studios and social networks central to music recording, teaching, and distribution. Importantly, this analysis does not seek to evaluate music produced in home studios as inherently good or bad; rather, it views music as a field of work, focusing on the precarization of production tools and employment conditions.

According to Di Fátima (2012), thousands of new works are uploaded and distributed online daily by diverse users, resulting in significant variations in quality. Initially, we can consider the varying levels of equipment used in recording, as well as the various stages of the artist's development, as they release their work independently and without the support or guidance of specialists in the music industry. While limitations in production, recording, and distribution once constrained musicians, these barriers have diminished, and this variability can now serve as a differentiating factor, valued for either aesthetic authenticity or production quality. However, challenges persist in terms of the reach and circulation of this music.

Another crucial point to highlight is the low-friction coexistence among multiple genres, explained in part by the various stages in the lives of music creators and consumers. The diversity and exchange between these groups ultimately prove beneficial, as greater access to various cultures inspires "sensitive creators and listeners to explore dimensions and sound languages that were until recently practically unknown" (Carvalho, 1999, p. 56). Meanwhile, expanded recording possibilities now allow a single environment to accommodate artists across diverse segments – such as jazz, pop, opera, full symphonies, educators, or even *none of these*. In the latter case, software may be used to simulate instrumentalists, with each part transferred to recording programs via computer programming or manually through keyboards or synthesizers.

When considering major record labels, however, the situation becomes somewhat more complex for their business model, which traditionally relies on physical media sales. The decline of physical records and the rise in music consumption, particularly through streaming, represent the key issues compromising these companies' activities and revealing contradictions within traditional business models. Consequently, advances in global connectivity within the music market have created a landscape that has drastically transformed the industry. Yet, record labels struggled to adapt quickly, finding themselves "unable to keep up with the revolution in customs brought about by technology" (Di Fátima, 2012, p. 34).

In response, major labels have adopted two core strategies to ensure their survival. First, they have expanded into broader music companies, incorporating activities beyond physical media production and distribution. Second, they have sought new talent through 360 contracts¹, which allow labels to capture revenue from all aspects of an artist's work. These agreements involve negotiations with new intermediaries, including film studios, mobile operators, TV programs, multimedia and mobile device manufacturers, social media platforms, internet providers, radio-based social media, streaming platforms, and more (Kischinhevsky; Herschmann, 2011). In addition to records, the artist's brand is monetized through merchandise such as shirts, hats, and accessories.

¹ The 360 contract requires thorough review and careful negotiation between the parties before signing. Under this contract, the record label gains a stake in all of the artist's activities, allowing for more diversified and long-term revenue streams. Although this arrangement involves an investment in the artist, it also entails a larger share of profits for the label.

This article is divided into three parts: the first explores market innovations that have influenced music production in the 21st century, highlighting shifts in artists' work and creative processes. Next, we examine the impact of piracy, which operates without the authorization or consent of composers. Finally, we offer a reflection on entrepreneurship, new models of labor precarization, the consumer-producer relationship, and their relevance to the music industry. Drawing from administrative sciences, we aim to discuss, reflect upon, and analyze the technological advancements shaping the music sector, its production practices, and the parallels between musicians' work and other platform-based occupations.

From Major Labels to Home Studios – Home Production and Social Media Promotion

Technological advancements have profoundly transformed the nature of work, and the music industry is no exception. The ways music is taught, and new productions are released have evolved significantly. Artists now have the choice to produce entire albums for release or focus on an audiovisual approach, issuing highly produced singles on a frequent release schedule determined by the artist. The current market dynamics, driven by the platformization of work and content dissemination over the internet, indicate that the latter approach is often the most effective.

Indeed, this single-focused strategy involves individualized attention to each track, opening up diverse promotional opportunities beyond the audio, such as music videos, social media posts, well-developed visual branding, collaborations with influencers, tailored content formats for each social platform, and pre-sale campaigns, among others. This work model excludes the traditional "lead single," which was typically given special attention as the album's main track, responsible for promoting the record, concerts, and the artist as a whole. This track often appeared in the programming of music television channels like MTV.

Indeed, by leveraging social media for distribution and adopting accessible production tools like hardware and software, musicians have disrupted the conventional artist-label relationship. Today's technology enables high-quality recordings using small, flexible, and low-cost setups. Additionally, digital recording software allows for the simulation and recording of various instruments without the need for physical equipment. These factors, combined with the internet's vast distribution potential, have reshaped interactions between artists, record companies, and audiences (Di Fátima, 2012).

In this new landscape, independent artists often overlooked by traditional media have succeeded in carving out niche markets online, establishing dedicated fan bases eager to engage with their work, download music, listen to podcasts, and attend live performances, both in person and online (Di Fátima, 2012). As Cortês (2008) notes, a wide array of products once

deemed unviable has now become feasible, a phenomenon Anderson (2006) describes with the concept of the “Long Tail”.

The spread of the internet, coupled with technological advances, has transformed traditional retail models. Previously, there was an economy of scarcity, constrained by the limited shelf space of physical record stores. To maximize profits, retailers prioritized top-selling artists and current hits. Now, however, we see an economy of abundance: without the constraints of physical space and other distribution bottlenecks, niche products are as viable as those targeting a broad audience. This shift has increased both the quantity and variety of products offered on digital platforms, where reduced costs make it feasible to reach diverse audiences. In this model, production, distribution, and storage expenses can often be treated as fixed costs. This cost reduction has led to a “long tail” effect, where previously overlooked, low-volume artists can now participate in the market (Anderson, 2006).

Anderson (2006) also explores the “98% rule”, showing that on major platforms like Netflix, Amazon, and iTunes, even rarely purchased items still generate demand. For instance, 95% of all DVDs in the Netflix catalog were rented at least once per quarter; 98% of Amazon’s most important books sold at least once every six months; and every one of iTunes’ 1 million tracks had been sold at least once. By 2022, iTunes’ catalog included over 90 million songs (Ribeiro, 2022), and in 2006, when Anderson’s *The Long Tail* was published, Netflix’s catalog held 55,000 DVDs (Anderson, 2006, p. 9). It can be said that the funding model for storage and distribution on virtual platforms allows for an unprecedented scale of offerings. In this context, a product that sells even once remains attractive due to the potential for repeat sales.

This shift has increased consumers’ bargaining power, as the extensive catalog – available via purchase or piracy – drives prices down. “The range of available options has never been so broad or at such a low cost” (Di Fátima, 2012, p. 35). This new consumption model demands more speed and consistency from artists, who often diversify their content to stay relevant. Strategies may include frequent releases, behind-the-scenes content, a strong social media presence, collaborations with other musicians, appearances on reality shows, and even personal-life engagement tactics. This environment reinforces the value of 360 contracts for major labels and extends the reach of niche offerings within the long tail.

In this context, the YouTube platform deserves particular attention, as it is one of the most popular social networks among Brazilians. Globally, YouTube boasts over 2.56 billion active users, with more than 1 billion hours of video consumed daily (Volpato, 2022).

According to Burgess (2009), platforms like YouTube have reached the pinnacle of image-based media, where users themselves become the message. This dynamic makes YouTube an attractive platform, allowing individuals to act as their own media. Today, platform users known as “YouTubers” are treated as digital influencers, possessing the potential to shape the realities and worldviews of their audiences. In 2016, research by Snack Intelligence

revealed that among the top 20 influencers for young people aged 14 to 17, half were YouTubers, and the other half were from broadcast TV. This profession has even become an aspiration for children when asked about their future careers (Costa; Miranda, 2019).

YouTube also provides options for free access, revenue opportunities for content creators, and a new form of paid career for musicians. Artists like Justin Bieber, Luan Santana, Boyce Avenue, Manu Gavassi, Lana Del Rey, and Restart have gained real-world notoriety due to their success on the platform. Additionally, YouTube's Content ID tool effectively detects copyright violations, offering creators greater control over content production and distribution. The next section will delve further into the impact of the internet and piracy on music careers, highlighting the relevance of tools like Content ID for contemporary music production.

New Formats, Technological Advances, the Internet, and Piracy – Catalysts for Change

The growing accessibility and affordability of personal computers and media like CDs have exponentially fueled the illegal trade. By 2006, unauthorized copies represented 48% of the record market, making piracy a significant issue for record companies and artists alike (Kischinhevsky; Campos, 2015, p. 206). Supported by the internet, download and recording software facilitated a new commercial landscape.

In recent decades, podcasts, web radios, and peer-to-peer (p2p) audio-sharing networks like Napster, LimeWire, eMule, and BitTorrent have emerged, creating a market beyond the control of record companies and artists. These platforms allowed free music downloads and sharing worldwide across various formats, including self-made cassette tapes and CDs produced on home stereos and personal computers – severely impacting record companies, which had once profited from physical media sales (Kischinhevsky; Campos, 2015).

As Lima (2013) notes, these technological advances enabled personal computer users to record their own albums, with the ability to download and store music on CDs, it became possible to create stock for commercial use. These homemade CDs could contain either the original content or a personalized mix of songs. Additionally, this recording practice exceeded the conventional limits offered by record labels, allowing up to 700MB or roughly 700 minutes of audio on a CD-R. This produced a product distinct from those sold by record labels, which contained only the album's original tracks and lacked customization options. In response, the Brazilian label Som Livre, for example, released compilations such as *Summer Eletrohits*, soap opera soundtracks, and the greatest hits of renowned artists on a single CD – products resembling homemade piracy but differing from traditional album formats.

Subsequently, storage media like USB drives appeared. These compact devices offer storage capacities measured in terabytes, making it possible to store not only an artist's full discography but potentially the entire catalog of a record label.

Digital technologies, using bit inscription and error-correction schemes, allow for duplication without degradation. Thus, copying one CD onto another essentially produces an exact replica of the original. This process allows copies to effectively fulfill the role of originals. While every artistic expression in oral tradition is inherently unique, in the digital domain, every product becomes a potential copy (Iazzetta, 2001, p. 207).

For those with internet access, the web brings profound changes to patterns of consumption, interaction, work, and status, reshaping perceptions of social relations and society itself. It also influences reactions to various stimuli encountered online. Within this environment, a new form of commerce driven by artificial intelligence algorithms is emerging, powering virtual radio platforms such as Spotify, Last.fm, SoundCloud, and Deezer. These platforms store music in the cloud² and use algorithms to “prescribe” and dictate musical tastes, influencing millions of users by tagging, categorizing, and making recommendations based on browsing history (Kischinhevsky; Campos, 2015, p. 216). These platforms can be described as “computer systems for classifying, organizing, and recommending cultural products on digital networks, based on user preferences” (Kischinhevsky; Campos, 2015, p. 208).

Essentially, these radio-based social media platforms offer not only a space for the distribution and consumption of audio content but also for negotiating identities and representing social and cultural values. To fully benefit from platform features, users are often encouraged to create profiles. From there, their consumption of audio files generates data that fuels content recommendations and, frequently, connections with other users. These services are effectively structured as social networks, enabling users to exchange messages, share files, tag and collaborate on content, view statistics, circulate news, and announce events and promotions (Kischinhevsky; Campos, 2015, p. 209).

Under this model, platforms generate revenue through third-party advertising and subscriptions, while artists are compensated per play. The platforms also act as intermediaries between artists, record labels, and consumers, handling distribution, negotiations, and copyright payments – though such payments are typically subject to the platforms’ terms and conditions.

Between its launch in 2008 and mid-2014, the service generated over 1.5 billion playlists, equating to 5 million creations or updates per day, and paid out more than \$1 billion in royalties (Kischinhevsky; Campos, 2015, p. 212).

It is important to recognize that platforms are private, profit-driven enterprises focused on growth. This, in turn, creates inherent conflicts between stakeholders. Many artists feel under-compensated, which aligns with the reality that capital expansion relies on an unequal relationship between those who hire the service and those who provide it. Specifically, this

² The term “cloud” has served as a metaphor for the internet since the 1970s. Cloud storage refers to storing files outside of one’s personal device. Third-party hardware is used, and all processes – downloading, uploading, and handling – are conducted via the internet. Your file may even be stored in a different country. Servers enable communication between personal devices and data centers located around the world (Costa, 2020)

relates to Marx's (2010) concept of surplus value. In other words, artists are dependent on platform owners – the controllers of (re)production –since they rely on these platforms to promote and monetize their work. Furthermore, since artists do not own the platforms, rules and algorithms can shift without their knowledge or consent, leaving them vulnerable to undervaluation or even the potential to “give away” their work. Yet, as noted, leveraging these consumer-oriented media has become essential for artists to advance their careers.

According to Malvezzi (1999), rapid scientific development continually alters economic dynamics across sectors. In this regard, sustaining and expanding businesses and jobs depends on the speed at which modern technologies are adopted, as these affect costs, production times, and value alignment with consumer needs. For Malvezzi, the complexities of 21st-century globalization have pressured workers to embrace entrepreneurship – despite its challenges – as a model for employment stability, regardless of profession.

Artists' careers are also deeply affected by these changes, which disrupt the traditional concept of a linear career. Career can now be understood as “mobility between professional activities over a lifetime, reflecting an individual's psychological, professional, and economic growth, stagnation, or marginalization” (Malvezzi, 1999, p. 66) Traditionally, career progression was more linear and based on organizational hierarchies, allowing for some degree of planning. However, the “borderless” career model today directly impacts musicians, characterized by irregular, unpredictable mobility in both challenges and compensation. Musicians must now reinvent their roles by drawing on their own skills and incorporating activities from other fields, such as video production and the complexities inherent in recording, editing, and related processes, alongside the sound and music that constitute the core of their work. Additionally, artists are now responsible for managing their own careers and promotional channels through platforms, shouldering the costs of production, such as home studios and marketing campaigns.

This often controversial path has led to a work model that is more precarious and susceptible to external pressures. The following section will critically examine the precarious nature of this work model, the role of the consumer-producer, and their impact on musicians' work.

The Precarization of Musicians' Work via Platforms and the Consumer-Producer Role

The phenomenon known as “uberization”³ of work, here understood as inherently tied to precarization, spans various sectors globally, affecting occupations, skill levels, working

³ “Uberization” of work, a term that references Uber's pioneering role in establishing its unique model of work organization (Franco; Ferraz, 2019, p. 845).

conditions, and income. This emerging model represents a broader trend in labor relations (Abílio, 2020), extending the dynamics initiated by the flexible accumulation of the 1970s. Today, driven by technology, it enables a new space-time configuration that accelerates demands, communication, and the decentralization and distribution of workers and services beyond company headquarters. This has become pivotal in maintaining the subordination of workers to capital (Filgueiras; Antunes, 2020; Souza, 2022).

Franco and Ferraz (2019) conceptualize the “uberization” of work as a mode of capitalist accumulation, where the responsibility for key production means shifts to the worker. This shift marks a departure from traditional factory models, where capital owners held control over production means while workers provided labor. In the platform model, the tools of work are no longer instruments of direct control, exploitation, or domination but rather “means of work that digital platforms⁴ can offload, thereby reducing their production costs” (Abílio; Amorim; Grohmann, 2021, p. 46). This approach allows companies to bypass formal employment relationships, enabling services to be provided without workers receiving the rights secured by labor laws such as the CLT.⁵

“Uberization” is reshaping the definition of informal work, representing an expansive process of labor informalization and furthering the flexibility of work structures. This shift removes regulatory constraints on labor exploitation, preventing the state from actively enforcing the rights recognized by law (Abílio, 2020).

Eliminating the need for physical presence at company headquarters reinforces the perception that artists are not subordinate to any organization, bolstering the idea that they control their work hours and potential earnings (Souza, 2022). In this setup, the absence of an employment relationship and the lack of investment in production means or physical space, which constitute constant capital, allow capitalists to appropriate surplus value at unprecedented levels. This precarious model, therefore, is rapidly replicated and adapted by other organizations (Franco; Ferraz, 2019). Moreover, the discourse of entrepreneurship legitimizes, normalizes, and legalizes the transfer of costs and risks to workers, who must independently manage their own survival (Abílio, 2020).

This has led to the rise of just-in-time workers, who appear to be self-employed by setting their own hours, locations, tools, and strategies, but in reality, remain available to work solely on demand, in line with company needs. Their income is strictly tied to actual production time

⁴ When we refer to digital platforms, we are looking beyond a mere technical medium; we are describing app-based companies that “control digital infrastructures powered by data and organized by algorithms” (Abílio, Amorim, and Grohmann, 2021, p. 33).

⁵ The Consolidation of Labor Laws (CLT) regulates labor relations in Brazil, covering both urban and rural work. Labor rights include a maximum 8-hour workday and a 44-hour workweek, paid overtime, vacation, FGTS (Severance Indemnity Fund), and extend to benefits such as unemployment insurance, transportation allowance, meal vouchers, among others.

or an on-demand work model. Here, we might redefine “entrepreneur” as subordinated self-management (Abílio, Amorim, and Grohmann, 2021).

Franco and Ferraz (2019, p. 846) also highlight critical points. Firstly, “labor power is the only element in production capable of generating more value than its own.” This means that the time workers spend producing for others exceeds what is needed for their survival, with this surplus benefiting the capitalist. If this exchange were equitable, either remuneration would be higher or working hours shorter, resulting in neither surplus-value nor capital accumulation.

Fontes (2017) explains that in this labor model, companies do not directly own the means of production but exercise tighter control over the workforce, production means, and consumer market without the intermediary of formal employment. Effectively, they control the social means of production. This strategy grants capital owners greater power over the labor process to boost surplus value. This movement is not only rooted in rationality but in a social imperative conditioned by the need to sustain capital, which requires constant expansion to endure (Franco, Ferraz, 2019, p. 46).

Abílio, Amorim, and Grohmann (2021), in their observations on emerging work arrangements, note a dispersion of labor paired with centralized control. This discussion centers on the centralization of capital and control, which coincides with the dispersal of labor. Globalized production chains and Toyotist organizational models exemplify how work can be decentralized while control remains centralized. Additionally, modern app-based companies – presented to both consumers and workers as mere applications – have successfully adopted capitalist accumulation strategies that decentralize work and promote contract informalization.

While mapping and identifying the control and subordination within app-company and worker relationships may be challenging, it becomes apparent upon recognizing that work is valued and compensated according to organizational directives rather than worker autonomy, with the organization retaining control over distribution (Abílio, 2019; Souza, 2022). This precarious form of work is made possible only by digital platforms and connectivity technology, both of which are widely implemented by productive organizations and broadly accessible to large segments of the population (Franco; Ferraz, 2019).

The adoption of digital platforms, beyond what has been previously described, also enables companies to transfer various activities to consumers. In this way, consumers have gradually become more integrated and active in production processes. This phenomenon, known as “prosumption” or “prosumerization,” merges production and consumption into a single process (Ferraz; Franco; Maciel, 2019).

Some view this consumer-producer role as a form of empowerment and convenience for the consumer, while others see it as exploitation, “with little distinction between the activities of consumers and those of salaried workers who directly sell their labor power” (Ferraz; Franco; Maciel, 2019, p. 2). The digital environment further reinforces this consumer-worker

alienation, underpinned by narratives that celebrate their role as engaged participants in co-producing products, meanings, and identities (Fonseca, et al., 2008). Consequently, it becomes clear how this movement increases the potential for surplus value, as the company appropriates this labor without cost while simultaneously strengthening customer loyalty.

In the music industry, the role of producer-consumers is evident in its purest form through the active involvement of fans. Their contributions are increasingly recognized and incorporated into strategic and creative processes, resulting in cultural products, emotional connections, community building, data sharing, and collaborative content creation (Costa; Leão, 2019). Drawing on Marx, Ferraz, Franco, and Maciel (2019) argue that consumption itself is an act of production, where each consumed commodity generates demand for new production, thus giving rise to the consumer-subject, who is shaped through the act of consumption.

In this sense, consumption is a social practice that (re)produces a specific way of life, shaping the social and individual consciousness of those who appreciate a commodity's use value, mediated by its exchange value. Thus, each of these acts – production, and consumption – are immediately their opposites: production mediates consumption, while consumption mediates production (Ferraz; Franco; Maciel, 2019, p. 5).

Platforms also enable the performance of each artist or production to be measured and tracked numerically and in real-time using specific performance metrics. It is possible to view an artist's number of followers, likes, views, positive reviews, and negative reviews, among other data. This information is visible to any user on the network and directly influences the creation of new content and the remuneration of each artist, thereby impacting their livelihood. Importantly, there is no pre-set agreement on pricing or long-term distribution between artists and platforms, creating instability and a lack of transparency, as companies can alter parameters at any time without formalized terms (Abílio; Amorim; Grohmann, 2021). Working on a digital platform requires only registration – there is no recruitment process, selection criteria, predefined vacancies, or contracts. Upon registration, “the employment contract becomes a contract of adhesion” (Abílio; Amorim; Grohmann, 2021, p. 38).

It is important to highlight certain historical principles that have shaped the way workers' pay has been calculated over the centuries. Both Marx and Taylor – despite their differing ontological perspectives – recognized two primary wage models: time-based and piece-rate pay. Marx noted that wages could be determined either by the time taken to complete a task or by the number of pieces produced within an agreed period, representing the sale and purchase of labor power. Taylor, in contrast, aimed to control all aspects of time and movement to maximize productivity, thereby determining pay based on completed tasks (Souza, 2022). The platformization of musicians' work, however, introduces a different mediation between work and remuneration that extends beyond time, productivity, records sold, performances given, or the transactional sale of labor power. As platform-based workers, musicians not only

bear the costs of producing and broadcasting their work but also lack any guarantee of payment for the work delivered. Earnings rely on the time invested by the consumer; in other words, beyond the relationship between artists and the owners of the means of production, financial returns are driven by the time spent consuming content, measured in playback hours, view counts, content interactions, and similar metrics.

This model of capital accumulation and expansion is even more extensive. Beyond owning the means of production, such as home studios and recording equipment, artists are subject to constant evaluation and feedback from “prosumers” throughout the composition, release, and consumption phases. Often, artists must also invest their own money to promote their work on social media, effectively funding and managing their own promotion. Additionally, artists seeking widespread distribution must contract with distributors, who standardize their work according to each platform’s guidelines and serve as intermediaries with digital platforms. Each distributor has a distinct monetization model – whether through monthly fees, annual payments, or revenue percentages – leaving artists to shoulder these additional costs.

As the roles of consumer-producer and platformization converge, artists’ earnings increasingly hinge on the level of interaction with their audience. In this sense, this introduces even stricter demands, as consumers now have a direct influence on production alongside record labels. To remain visible, viable, and profitable, artists often resort to reproducing and refining familiar models that are already popular with audiences. For instance, in today’s country music market, many songs share similar themes, structures, and aesthetics, reflecting an abundance of music produced within a recognizable and appealing framework.

In recent decades, as work has become more flexible and neoliberal policies have gained ground, “workers are becoming solely responsible for managing their own social reproduction” (Abílio; Amorim; Grohmann, 2021, p. 41). Subordinate self-management – where individuals pursue and manage opportunities that provide minimal security – can also shape ways of life. Thus, survival management weaves together personal life trajectories with broader labor market dynamics and structures (Abílio; Amorim; Grohmann, 2021).

This new worker profile emphasizes self-testimony, self-efficacy, self-management, self-control, and individual responsibility for health, housing, education, and retirement. By accessing vast amounts of data, companies deploy algorithms to predict, measure, and enforce work patterns and rhythms, maximizing labor use as direct productive output (Abílio; Amorim; Grohmann, 2021). In this context, we see the intersecting forces that drive the precarization of today’s music workers and their impact on job security, employability, and the tools and means of music production. Rather than assessing home studio audiovisual production as inherently good or bad, our focus is on highlighting the circumstances that make such production not only possible but often essential for artists’ survival. As Nelson Faria aptly notes, “In music, there’s plenty of work, but few jobs” (*Um Café Lá em Casa*, 2018, 3 min).

Concluding Remarks

This article analyzes the changes influencing the productive activities of music workers, examining the relationship between new modes of music production and consumption. Although this sector may not directly align with traditional administrative sciences or conventional labor patterns, similar trends in structuring emerge, driven by technological advances and evolving management models, including in the arts and the music industry at large.

We recognize the complexity of this phenomenon, involving self-managed, multitasking artists; shifts in the consumer market from piracy to streaming; modern technologies; and algorithm-driven distribution methods. We also consider the accessibility of production tools, such as home studios, which further complicates this landscape. Although this study does not cover the production chain in live performances, we must consider the influence of platform-driven advertising campaigns aimed at ticket sales and other cultural products, adding to the managerial responsibilities that musicians increasingly bear.

Principles of “uberization,” precarization, and platformization were observed in musicians’ daily work, transferring the cost of production to the artists themselves, intensifying work individualization, and promoting entrepreneurial models that shape the music career path.

Illegal commerce and digital platforms have transformed the way musical works are marketed, placing greater emphasis on the release of polished singles, often accompanied by music videos, social media previews, and more. These works are produced at the pace and frequency demanded by the networks. Platforms, algorithms, and producer-consumers act as new supervisors of labor, dictating production pace, and product quality, and shaping the artists’ autonomy.

Today’s artists face the challenge of sustaining a career marked by constant hard work and resilience. Navigating the demands of the current market requires much more than composing or producing hits. Financial returns are contingent upon consumption time, adding a third dependency beyond artist and platform. Additionally, musicians must find new ways to engage with audiences and the industry while also fulfilling managerial roles.

The need for constant connectivity and the fast-paced digital landscape push artists toward an accelerated production cycle. Metrics on artist-platform-audience interaction continuously influence the creative process, affecting creative autonomy. Work that goes unconsumed cannot financially sustain the artist. In this sense, co-creation processes emerge, involving the artist, consumer, and other stakeholders. This dynamic reinforces the need for a home studio, offering flexibility, rapid response capabilities, and immediate access to production tools.

Furthermore, coupled with the discourse on entrepreneurship – despite its controversies – the home studio represents a means of survival for the artist, whose primary activities may now be tied to home production, as seen with content creators on platforms like YouTube.

The advent of 360 contracts introduces a new earnings-sharing model that requires careful consideration and thorough review before signing, as these agreements entail sharing revenue from all of the artist's activities. Additionally, record labels can manage and negotiate opportunities on the artist's behalf.

This work makes an important contribution to expanding the discussion on labor relations in the cultural sector, particularly in music. As we have demonstrated, musicians are not immune to the transformations in the labor market. For collective resistance organizations to gain traction, it is essential to understand the underlying factors driving their formation. Our intention is not to assign a positive or negative judgment to the consolidation of production stages under a single artist, but to reflect on the lack of safeguards in this model. Despite extended work hours and accumulating roles as a musician, a manager, a videographer, a teacher, and an influencer, there is no guarantee of increased financial reward or visibility to secure a livelihood.

Though the struggle may appear isolated, it is not. In an interview for *Meteoro Brasil* (2022), Paulo Galo, a prominent figure among app-based delivery workers, expressed regret for not standing in solidarity with striking taxi drivers, recognizing that this fight extends beyond any particular group. This is a collective struggle for all who sell their labor, impacting countless professions and career paths.

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