

# **NATURALISTIC ARTISTIC DECISION-MAKING AND METACOGNITION IN THE MUSIC STUDIO**

**DR PAUL THOMPSON**

# OUTPUT INFORMATION

Title:  
Naturalistic artistic decision-making and  
metacognition in the music studio

Output Type:  
D - Journal article

DOI:  
10.1007/s10111-018-0497-8

Title of journal:  
Cognition, Technology & Work

First page:  
543

Volume:  
20

Issue:  
4

ISSN:  
1435-5558

Year of publication:  
2018

Authors:  
Dr Paul Thompson & Nyssim Lefford

Output allocation:  
Ethnomusicology

CTW

Vol: 18 No: 1 February 2016

Cognition,  
Technology & Work

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION STATEMENT**

This research output explored the metacognitive aspects of decision-making during the record production process. This interdisciplinary investigation was split into two distinct parts that were related to the authors' respective specialisms; cognitive psychology and popular musicology. The cognitive psychology portion of the research was undertaken by Nyssim Lefford and Dr Paul Thompson conducted a socio-cultural analysis of the decisions taken by the producer in the recording studio. Responsibilities for planning, writing, designing, analysis and writing of the study for publication were undertaken equally by both authors. The article was published in Cognition, Technology and Work.

# ABSTRACT

Professional artistic contexts, such as studio-based music production, are rarely investigated in naturalistic decision-making (NDM) research, though creative work is characterised by uncertainty, risk, a lack of clearly definable goals, and in the case of music production, a complex socio-technical working environment that brings together a diverse group of specialized collaborators. This study investigates NDM in the music production studio. In music production, there is a professional role explicitly tasked with taking decisions—the (record) producer. The producer, as a creative collaborator, is differentiated as a problem-solver, solution creator and goal setter. This investigation looks at the producer's metacognitive abilities for reflecting on the nature of problems and decisions. An important challenge for this study is to develop methods for observing decision-making without unrealistically reducing the amount of uncertainty around outcomes or creative intention within a studio production. In the face of that, a method is proposed that combines socio-cultural musicology and cognitive approaches and uses ethnographic data. Preliminary findings shed light on how the producer in this study self-manages his decisions and his interactions with, and in response to, the production environment; how decisions and actions sustain collaboration; how experience is utilized to identify scenarios and choose actions; and the kinds of strategies employed and their expected outcomes. Findings provide evidence that exercising producing skills and performing production tasks involve metacognitive reflection.

Keywords:

Record production

Music production

Musicology

Links:

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10111-018-0497-8>

Email:

[p.a.thompson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:p.a.thompson@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

**[WWW.LEEDSBECKETT.AC.UK/LARC](http://WWW.LEEDSBECKETT.AC.UK/LARC)**

**LEEDS  
ARTS RESEARCH  
CENTRE**



**LEEDS  
BECKETT  
UNIVERSITY**