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Brian Kane

While the ontology of musical works is a venerable theme in the philosophy of music, works of classical music have been the primary focus of study. This essay displaces that focus by considering the ontology of musical works in relation to jazz ‘standards’. Responding primarily to realist conceptions of musical works for performance, the essay outlines an emergent, non-essentialist, network-based ontology of jazz standards. By focusing on two key operations—replication and nomination—a philosophical and musicological argument is presented where ‘work-determinative’ properties are shown to be sufficient but not necessary. Under this concept, works are corrigible and subject to mediation. Not only do subsequent performances change the nature of the work, the very act of ‘replication’ (or musical reproduction) requires social mediation. After presenting the argument, a series of broad contrasts are drawn between the network-based concept of musical works and the realist view.

Keywords: Jazz; Ontology; Popular Music; Works; Performances; Realism; Anti-Essentialism; Stephen Davies; Bruno Latour

Works of jazz and popular music, especially those considered ‘standards’, appear in an astonishing variety of forms. The same song performed by Guy Lombardo, Bing Crosby, or Glenn Miller might also appear in versions by Charlie Parker, Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk, or Cecil Taylor. These versions differ radically in their properties, some sticking close to scores and sheet music, others incorporating wild flights of improvisation or daring re-harmonizations. Often little seems to link the more adventurous jazz versions of these tunes with those heard on original cast recordings, in Hollywood films, or in the popular music of the 1930s to 1950s, the era in which many of the tunes now considered ‘standards’ were composed.

Given the wide-ranging performances of these tunes and the difficulty of determining exactly why (or if) these performances are renditions of one and the same song, standards provide a genuine philosophical problem in the ontology of music. While works of classical music typically have been the focus of the ontology of music, there is far less variability in the way that works of classical music are performed

today than in jazz and popular music. Yet works of classical music have received the lion's share of attention by philosophers. This is odd, since the challenges of the ontology of standards are greater and, thus, present a more robust philosophical problem—a problem, I will argue, that cannot be solved without attention to the practices of the musicians involved and broader socio-cultural issues of musical mediation.

1. Music and the 'Realist Framework'

Among philosophers who have considered the ontology of standards, one commonly held view is that two divergent performances of a standard are identified through a shared but minimal set of invariant, work-determinative properties. Stephen Davies has dubbed this kind of minimal structure a 'thin' musical work, and contrasts it with 'thick' works, typical of classical music (2001). 'Works for performance can be "thick" or "thin" in their constitutive properties', Davies writes.

If it is thin, the work's determinative properties are comparatively few in number and most of the qualities of a performance are aspects of the performer's interpretation, not of the work as such. The thinner they are, the freer is the performer to control aspects of the performance. (p. 20)

The thickness or thinness of a musical work depends on the degree of determinative properties that a performance requires in order to be a performance of a specific work. 'If a work is thick', writes Davies,

a great many of the properties heard in a performance are crucial to its identity and must be reproduced in a fully faithful rendition of the work. The thicker the work, the more the composer controls the sonic detail of its accurate instances. (p. 20)

The difference between thick and thin works is reflected in various musical traditions and their performance practices. For Davies, every performance of a musical work invariably contains two kinds of properties: properties of the performance ascribed to the musician's interpretation, and properties ascribed to the work itself. Works of classical music—where detailed scores prescribe numerous (but not all) properties heard in the performance—tend to be thick. In contrast jazz standards tend to be thin works, with only minimal work-determinative properties. 'Pieces specified only as a melody and chord sequence are thin', writes Davies. 'Some tin pan alley songs are of this kind. For them, the player creates the larger structure of the performance by deciding on the number of repeats, variations, elaborations, links and the like' (p. 20). Clearly, Davies has in mind something like the 'lead sheets' that one might find in a 'fakebook', where songs are 'specified only as a melody and chord sequence'.¹ Figure 1, a lead sheet for the standard 'Body and Soul', might stand in as representative of this notational practice. This particular chart comes from one of the earliest illegal fakebooks, entitled *Volume 1 of Over 1000 Songs*, popular in the 1950s. Jazz musicians might have used such charts as an *aide-mémoire* on the bandstand, reminding them of

BODY AND SOUL

Molto moderato (slowly)

The image shows a lead sheet for the song 'Body and Soul'. It consists of six staves of music. The first staff is the melody in G major, 4/4 time, with a tempo marking of 'Molto moderato (slowly)'. The lyrics are: 'My heart is sad and lone-ly for you I sigh, for you dear, on-ly. I spend my days in long-ing, And won-dring why its the you're wrong-ing'. The second staff continues the melody with lyrics: 'Why have-n't you seen mean- it? I'm all for you Body, and soul!'. The third staff has lyrics: 'Soul! I can't be-lie it, It's hard to con-ceive it That you'd turn a-way ro-mance'. The fourth staff has lyrics: 'Are you pre-tend-ing it looks like the end-ing Un-less I could have one more chance to prove, dear,'. The fifth staff has lyrics: 'My life a wreck you're mak-ing, You know I'm yours for just the tak-ing; I'd gladly stir-'. The sixth staff has lyrics: 'ren- der my-self to you, Body and Soul!'. Chord symbols are written above the notes on each staff.

Figure 1 Lead sheet for 'Body and Soul', from *Volume 1 of Over 1000 Songs*.

the tune's melody and providing a rough harmonic framework on which to base their solos and improvisations.

Davies's account concerning the difference between thin and thick works rests upon a basic metaphysical framework—what I will call the 'realist framework'—that comprises three main commitments.²

- (1) A musical work is a *real* thing or object. Its reality or objectivity can come in a variety of different guises: forms; substances; types, instanced in tokens; abstract objects; sound-structures or patterns; concrete, physical sounding events; or some variant of the above. In all cases, disclosure of this object is the terminal point of the ontological inquiry; it is the basis or foundation upon which properties and predicates are added. In most cases, these ultimate objects are not (or cannot be) further investigated or analysed into smaller components. They are ontologically elementary.
- (2) Musical works, whatever their form of reality or objectivity, have essential properties. Distinct musical works are identified and individuated by virtue of their essential properties. Competing realist ontologists will select different properties as essential. Much of the debate between realists (like those between Kivy (1993) and Levinson (2011)) involves arguments for determining and distinguishing essential properties from accidental ones. Some candidates for essential properties are: properties of ordering and arrangement in a structure, properties that are shared between a type and its tokens, properties that define a particular natural kind, prescriptions of instrumentation, and so forth. Such properties are present in both the work and its performances, or such properties are specified by the work; performances and scores align with

- musical works because their properties are shared with, or specified by, musical works.
- (3) If musical works are real things, it follows that there is a difference between how musical works are and how they are perceived. If there were no split between the two, then there would be no possibility of being mistaken about a musical work, since a mistake trades on the difference between *how something is* and *how it is taken to be*. In realist musical ontology, this difference appears in debates about the nature of the compositional act: does a composer create or discover a musical work? While the intuitive answer is that a composer creates a musical work, some realists (such as Levinson (2011)) claim that works are discovered. Works, for the realist, are distinct from their representations by listeners or performers. How they are is different from how they are perceived.

By situating Davies's ideas about thick and thin musical works within the realist framework that subtends them, three key features become legible. First, a musical work, no matter how thickly or thinly specified, is a real structure that *determines* its performances. Second, this structure is the bearer of specific properties. The totality of properties that it uniquely possesses or determines is its essential (or 'work-determinative') properties, those in virtue of which works can be identified or individuated. No matter how well- or ill-formed a performance might be, if it instances essential, work-determinative properties then it counts as a performance of the work. Because a performance must instance such properties, works always *precede* their performances, not just a temporally, but logically. Third, listeners can be wrong about a work's properties since there is a difference between how things are and how they are perceived. What is taken for an essential property might turn out to be inessential or vice versa. However, such mistakes are simply matters of fact and have no impact on the work itself. The actual properties of works are *indifferent* to our representations of them.

In sum, Davies's realist commitments encourage a hierarchical conception of the relationship of works to performances: works *determine*, *precede*, and are *indifferent* to their rendition in performances. Thus musical works are wholly inoculated from performances, meaning that performances are *de jure* excluded from altering, changing, or affecting the works they instance. Davies's view permits no mediation between works and performances since logical and causal relations always flow from works to performances, never in the other direction. But there are strong counter-arguments to be made against realist musical ontology. In the next section, I will present a counter-argument that challenges Davies's account by focusing on the mediation of works by performances, arrangements, and forms of musical inscription.

2. Thin Works, Mediation, and Emergence

I will introduce the counter-argument with an example. 'Body and Soul', written by Johnny Green, was commissioned by the British singer Gertrude Lawrence around

the beginning of 1930. Green's original manuscript is no longer extant, nor is Lawrence's arrangement of it. Lawrence performed the song—in some specific arrangement—on the radio in January 1930, but did not record it at the time. We also know that she lent her manuscript, or a copy of it, to Benjamin Ambrose, the violinist leader of Ambrose and his Orchestra, who re-arranged it and recorded it in February 1930. In the interim, the competing bandleader Jack Hylton began performing the song as well. How exactly he got the song is uncertain—perhaps from Lawrence, or Ambrose, or perhaps lifted by ear. Hylton recorded two very different arrangements of the song in February 1930, one for dance band and the other an elaborately orchestrated concert version. Within three months of Lawrence's first performance, nine distinct, competing recordings of the tune were in circulation—all of them appearing before a published score or sheet music were available. Due to the song's success in Britain, publishers approached Green and produced various arrangements—for military band, for novelty piano, and the like. The most familiar is an arrangement for piano and voice, with ukulele chord symbols written above the staff.³

About a decade later, the melody, lyrics, and chords from this arrangement were excerpted onto index cards, known as Tune-Dex cards (Kernfeld, 2006). George Goodwin originally created Tune-Dex cards as a subscription-based service for radio producers and entertainers, who needed a way of finding the appropriate popular music for live shows, radio programmes, and recordings. On one side of the card was printed the melody and chord changes of the song's refrain; on the other, information about the publisher, stock arrangements in various keys, orchestrations, and, so forth. The cards helped those in the popular music business quickly find music to perform—a reference library of popular music. To make a long story short, these cards were used (illegally) to make the first jazz fakebooks in the 1950s (see Figure 1). Three cards could be reproduced per page, and a single spiral bound volume could be carried from gig to gig—a much better arrangement than lugging around a set of index cards. These fakebooks became the model for other famous—or should one should say infamous?—illegal fakebooks, like the *Real Book*.⁴

The historical vicissitudes of 'Body and Soul' are like those found in many other popular standards. When these historical vicissitudes are considered philosophically, they pose a challenge to Davies's realist ontology of musical works. While we might think of standards as thin works, as 'songs specified [by] only a melody and chord sequence', we cannot accurately say that they always were this way. If these works are indeed thin, the practices of jazz musicians, arrangers, and popular singers *made* them so. Instead of arguing that a thin work *precedes*, *determines*, and is *indifferent* to its performances, it is more accurate to say that a thin work *emerges* from its performances and inscriptions. The social and historical use of these tunes, their manner of performance, their institutional context, their connection to issues of memory and consumption, their way of organizing both micro- and macro-social relations—these and other issues of musical mediation contribute to the emergence of a thin work.

3. Toward a New Ontology

Within musicological circles, I want to acknowledge two previous attempts to sketch an ontological model of musical works that are both appropriate for jazz performance and attentive to issues of musical mediation. First, José Bowen, in an article from 1993, considers the role of tradition and memory in establishing musical works. Bowen claims that the musical work itself is a ‘social construction’, one whose organizing principle depends on historical and cultural processes of reproduction (Bowen, 1993, p. 166). Works are understood to be historically variable, tradition dependent ways of grouping together individual performances. In Bowen’s model, performances are represented by dots whose proximity to one another depends on the degree to which two performances share properties. Similar sounding performances cluster together. Works are represented by a boundary drawn around a cluster, or multiple clusters of performances. While various listeners may draw such boundaries differently, depending on their knowledge and familiarity with the body of performances, tradition helps to define approximate boundaries that are more than simply subjective. Yet tradition is not unchanging; as new innovations are added, and new performances accrue that reproduce prior innovations, traditional boundaries will alter over time. For example, Bowen discusses Thelonious Monk’s ‘Round Midnight’ and how its ‘traditional’ eight-measure introduction and coda came to be. They were not included in Monk’s original composition or in the song’s first recording (by Cootie Williams), but were only added later by Dizzy Gillespie. Since the introduction and the coda have been widely (even canonically) reproduced in later performances, they have become part of the composition. In that respect, Gillespie’s innovation has redrawn the boundaries of the work, reinforced by tradition.

More recently, Georgina Born has sharply contrasted the classical ontology of the musical work with the ontology of jazz. The classical ontology of the musical work presents a stratified, hierarchical assemblage, where the work stands above the performance—and, in so doing, stands outside mediation. ‘In its idealism’, Born writes, ‘manifest in the conviction that the work is not instantiated in any particular material or social form, the philosophy of the work insists that neither music’s objectification in recording ... nor music’s sociality form any part of the creative process’ (Born, 2005, p. 27). Thus, classical musical ontology ‘disavows’ mediation.⁵ In contrast, jazz is a ‘lateral and processual’ assemblage, where there ‘is no final, untouchable work that stands outside history’ (p. 27). Born describes an ontology of jazz carried along by a two-phased process of performance and recording. Performances are dialogical in nature, grounded in creative acts of collaborative improvisation in which the specific interactions are simultaneously musical and social. Recordings objectify performances such that they can be disseminated beyond their original time and location and become the means for educating, training, and thus socializing other musicians. Performances and recordings are linked into long chains and networks of relations. The interrelation of performance and recording brings together musicians, instruments, social relations, commodities, institutions (of distribution, of culture, etc.) into a complex assemblage

of ongoing transformation and alteration. Jazz embraces mediation since ‘dialogical creative and performance practice, the encompassing realities of race and class, [and] jazz’s dependence on commodity exchange ... are experienced as integral to jazz’s aesthetic operations and its socio-musical being’ (p. 28). Thus jazz exemplifies Born’s claim that music is ‘the paradigmatic multiply-mediated, immaterial and material, fluid quasi-object, in which subjects and objects collide and intermingle’ (p. 7).

For the remainder of the essay, I will offer my own sketch of an ontological model appropriate (but not unique) to jazz—one that aims to show how thin works can emerge from a thick socio-historical context. My model is indebted to and inspired by the work of Bowen and Born, in particular their refusal to inoculate musical works from social mediation and historical change. But my account also differs from theirs. Rather than foregrounding issues of tradition or the multiple levels of social mediation assembled together in the work of jazz, my argument centres on work-determinative properties and how they are discerned. I focus on properties of musical works because that is what most philosophers of music have focused on in their own ontological accounts.⁶ However, I will challenge the tacit assumption that work-determinative properties are essential properties, and thus argue for a non-essentialist ontology of jazz where performances have the potential to alter works. My model depends on two key processes: *replication* and *nomination*.⁷

3.1. *Replication*

Davis (1996) defines replication as ‘the sequential production of similar material morphologies ... that are substitutable for one another in specific social contexts of use’ (p. 1). The concept is best introduced through an example. Imagine that you are typing up a set of notes from a famous author’s handwritten journal. As you transcribe those notes, an electronic letter appearing on a computer screen represents each handwritten letter. If you transcribe accurately, and the goal is the readable transcript of the text, the electronic version is a replication—the two documents count as substitutes for one another. However, if you are researching the author’s ‘creative process’, or techniques of composition, various marks in the journal that are not transcribed in the electronic document might be worthy of study, such as words crossed out, or annotations in the margins, or the legibility of the handwriting. When the context of use changes, the two documents might no longer be considered adequate substitutes for each other.

‘Substitutability’, writes Davis, ‘varies with the changing ways of using artifacts or reasons for doing so’ (p. 1). We cannot know if one artefact is an adequate substitute for another without also knowing how the artefact is used; that is, we cannot know if something is a replication without appealing to the practices and thus to questions of mediation. If a community accepts an object as a substitute for certain purposes, then it is one. The social context, as it were, provides the ‘grammar’ of replication.⁸ Thus,

REFRAIN

Dmi (slowly, with expression) *p-mf*

G7 C G+

My heart is sad and lone - ly, For you I sigh, for

p-mf

S² S⁶ S² D⁵ T¹

Figure 2 Refrain, first three measures, 'Body and Soul' (Green et al., 1930).

the substitutability of an artefact is, in Davis' words, 'an emergent, not a given, property of a tradition of production' (p. 1).

The practice of replication is central to jazz musicians. In creating arrangements or improvising on standards, jazz musicians employ various strategies for substituting one chord with another, improvising upon and altering melodies, and rearranging musical forms. Jazz theorists have often analysed the harmonic and melodic aspects of such practices (Levine, 2011; Terefenko, 2014), and ethnomusicologists have described its social, cultural, and even cognitive aspects (Berliner, 1994; Monson, 1996). Cultural theorists have connected these acts of substitution to practices that exist more broadly within African-American culture, such as 'signifyin(g)', 'repetition with a difference', 'transformations', and the like (Floyd, 1995; Gates, 1988; Nealon, 1998). However, I want to underscore that the philosophical importance of a practice such as chord substitution has not received adequate attention. Listeners expect to hear the 'same progression' of some standard harmonized in different ways. They are hearing acts, and instances, of replication.

I will develop this point by considering a few recorded performances of 'Body and Soul'. Figure 2 reproduces the opening measures of the refrain, from the published sheet music. (Green, Heyman, & Sour, 1930) These three measures follow a basic scheme in jazz, the chord progression: ii-V-I. Each chord in the progression is associated with a different harmonic function: subdominant, dominant, and tonic. All three functions are represented in the passage. For the sake of clarity and efficiency, I will represent this progression according to a system of 'functional bass' analysis.⁹ In this system, each chord is labelled with a symbol composed of two parts.

- First, a letter label representing the chord's function (S, D, or T, for subdominant, dominant, and tonic) is noted. If the chord is an embellishing chord

(typically a neighbour, passing, or applied chord) it will receive a letter label noting this fact (N, P, or A). Since embellishing chords are harmonically non-functional chords, they are placed in parentheses. Applied chords (or secondary dominant chords) will be connected by an arrow (\rightarrow) to the chord that they embellish.

- Second, the scale degree of the chord's bass note is appended to each letter label. For example, the opening three measures of 'Body and Soul' in the sheet music are represented by Roman Numerals in one manner, [ii ii64 | ii V7 | I], and in functional-bass notation differently, [S2 S6 | S2 D5 | T1].

In Figure 2, the S6 chord is an artefact of the bouncing bass line. Surrounded by two S2 chords, it is a neighbour chord and thus makes no additional harmonic contribution. More important is the pattern: [S2 | D5 | T1]. For the purposes of my discussion, I will refer to *these* opening measures, with *this* harmonic interpretation, as the *model* that gets replicated.

1. In 1938, Art Tatum recorded 'Body and Soul'.¹⁰ Figure 3 is a transcription of the opening three measures.¹¹ The harmonic progression is nearly identical to the published sheet music. Tatum ornaments the d-minor chord in measure 2 with descending inner voice: $d^1-c^{\#1}-c^1-b$. The notes c^1 and b are supported in the left hand by G and f, which outline the root and seventh of a G-dominant-seventh chord. In measure 1, Tatum excises the A-natural from the bass line, opting to keep the root sounding for the entire measure, but, in measure 2, shifts the chord into first inversion by sounding an f in the bass. In terms of 'functional bass', the passage is analysed as: [S2 | S4 D5 | T1]. In measure 2, Tatum's alteration changes the melodic contour of the passage's bass line, but it does not alter the harmonic function of the passage since both chords are subdominant in function. Tatum's small change, while producing a phrase that is morphologically distinct, is a replication of the first. Because the two versions possess nearly the same harmonic-functional pattern, in the context of jazz performance, the two phrases are substitutable.

2. Fifteen years later, Art Tatum recorded another version of 'Body and Soul' with—as one would expect—a new harmonization (Figure 4).¹² Tatum sets the opening

Figure 3 Art Tatum, 'Body and Soul' (1938).

measures with a series of root-position chords. In measure 2, the A-dominant-seventh chord (V/ii) initiates a chain of applied chords; A-dominant-seventh is applied to D-dominant-seventh which is applied to G-dominant-seventh (the dominant chord in the home key) which resolves to the tonic, C-major, on the downbeat of measure three. The functional bass analysis is: [S2 | (A6) → (A2) → D5 | T1]. Since applied chords do not possess primary harmonic function—they are ‘secondary dominants’ which embellish the chords to which they are attached—they are reduced from the analysis. Tatum preserves the same harmonic-functional progression as seen in the model, [S2 D5 T1]. Again, Tatum has made a valid substitution, and thus a replication.

3. Figure 5 reproduces a more challenging case, Teddy Wilson’s performance of ‘Body and Soul’ from 1941.¹³ Wilson sustains the opening Eb-minor-seventh for the first measure and a half, but replaces the Ab-dominant-seventh chord at the end of measure two with C7b9, before resolving to Db-major-sixth on the downbeat of measure three. The C-dominant-seventh harmonizes the bb in the melody and places the leading tone in the bass. Given the tendency of the leading tone (7) to ascend to the tonic (1), there is little difficulty in hearing this chord’s function as dominant. In jazz contexts, the use of this chord as a dominant-functioning harmony overrides the more classical interpretation of this chord as V/iii.¹⁴ Since there is no standard name for this kind of chord in the jazz theory literature, I will refer to it as a *leading-tone dominant-seventh chord*, and define it as follows: a dominant-seventh chord whose bass note is one half-step below the chord to which it resolves. In this case, the root of the C-dominant-seventh chord is one half-step below its resolution, Db-major-sixth. Since the chord substitutes for V7, it is included in the family of dominant-functioning chords. Thus, this progression is represented in functional-bass terms as [S2 | S2 D7 | T1]. Comparing Wilson’s progression with the model, it is apparent that the dominant chord is no longer D5 but D7. Wilson’s substitution does not preserve the model’s pattern wholly intact. Rather, it turns the pattern into something more general, where one of a variety of dominant-functioning chords could be substituted as needed.

4. However, there may be limits to how far our substitutions can go. Figure 6 reproduces Thelonious Monk’s version of ‘Body and Soul’.¹⁵ Like many of Monk’s performances of standard repertoire, his harmonizations are often quite radical. In

Figure 4 Art Tatum, ‘Body and Soul’ (1953).

Figure 5 Teddy Wilson, ‘Body and Soul’ (1941).

these harmonizations, it can be difficult to recover the patterns they share with earlier versions. In such cases, we may not know if they constitute replications or if they go beyond replication altogether, more akin to a revision.

Monk extends the use of the leading-tone dominant-seventh chord. The opening C-dominant-seventh is a leading-tone dominant-seventh; however, by altering its projected resolution, Db, into a dominant-seventh chord, it too becomes a leading-tone dominant-seventh chord, resolving up to D. Monk’s harmonization explores the possibility of using a leading-tone dominant-seventh chord as an applied chord. The opening three chords form a chain of applied leading-tone dominants that ascend to D-dominant-seventh; then, the D-dominant-seventh chord at the end of measure 1 is applied, in the typical way, to the G-dominant-seventh of measure two; that, in turn, is applied as a dominant to the C-dominant-seventh chord at the end of the measure. Here, C-dominant-seventh, the same chord that began the whole progression, functions not as an applied chord but as a leading-tone dominant-seventh chord that resolves, properly this time, to Db-major-seventh on the downbeat of measure 3. In a functional bass analysis, the passage is represented as: [(A7) → (A1) → (A1#) → | (A4#) → D7 | T1].

It is as if Monk has embellished Teddy Wilson’s version of ‘Body and Soul’. But what is missing from this harmonization is an initial subdominant-functioning chord. There

Figure 6 Thelonious Monk, ‘Body and Soul’ (1961).

is no substitute for S2. That part of the pattern has simply been removed. By excising the subdominant, Monk's reharmonization might challenge one's intuition to immediately accept it as a replication. The presence of the melody keeps the tune in the ear of the listener, even as the harmonization stretches the model's pattern to a near breaking point. Monk's version of the tune is distinctive. It may not be substitutable in the same way that other harmonizations were. Perhaps it is morphologically too remote to count as a replication. The only way to know for certain would be to consider the social context of use.¹⁶ Given the turbulent world of jazz in the early 1960s and Monk's own reputation as part of jazz's *avant-garde*, the criteria for substitutability might be quite forgiving. That is, we might describe the culture of replication in which Monk participated as extremely permissive.

If the broader jazz community was willing to accept Monk's harmonization as a replication—and, historically, they did—this would simply make explicit what the previous two examples have shown: that not all of the features of the model's pattern [S2 D5 T1] must be preserved for successful replication (see Figure 7). Thus these features can in no way be considered as essential or necessary properties. They are simply *sufficient* to produce a replication.¹⁷

Acts of replication ultimately depend on social relations. This is an important feature of my account, since it opens the ontology of the musical work to issues of mediation. Replication offers a non-essentialist way to account for the relationship between two musical artefacts, like the sheet music of 'Body and Soul' and Monk's daring performance of it. The situation can be usefully represented as a network (Figure 8). Each performance or inscription functions like a node and new nodes are added whenever replication is successful. Each node is connected to another by a distinct edge. Each edge would define a unique relation. Some edges would associate nodes through the model's pattern, [S2 D5 T1]; others would associate nodes through a different pattern, like [S2 D7 T1]; others still would forge an association through a third pattern, [D7 T1]. Across an entire network there need be no single relation that holds between all nodes, no essential property or pattern distributed equally among all its members. Rather, the network has innumerable links and connections between its nodes, each of which is sufficient and perhaps indifferent to the rest. This networked view affords an alternative model for the ontology of standards.

Johnny Green 1930:	S $\hat{2}$ S $\hat{2}$ D $\hat{5}$ T $\hat{1}$
Tatum 1938:	S $\hat{2}$ S $\hat{4}$ D $\hat{5}$ T $\hat{1}$
Tatum 1953:	S $\hat{2}$ D $\hat{5}$ T $\hat{1}$
Wilson 1941:	S $\hat{2}$ D $\hat{7}$ T $\hat{1}$
Monk 1960:	D $\hat{7}$ T $\hat{1}$

Figure 7 Summary of replications for 'Body and Soul'.

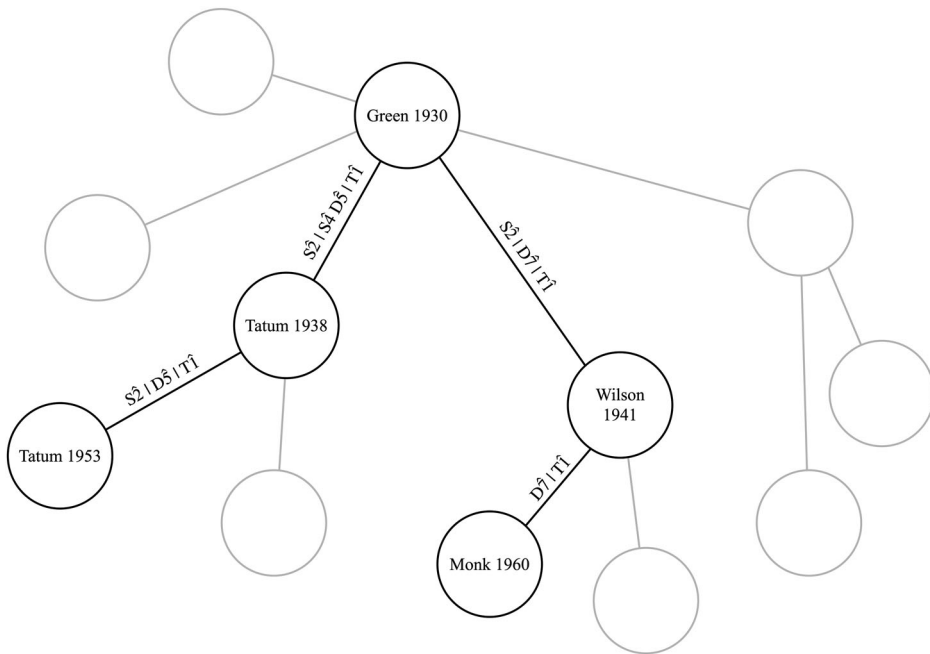


Figure 8 A model network for ‘Body and Soul’.

Instead of seeking out a thin work, to understand what a particular standard is we must traverse its network of performances. To follow a standard is to trace its network of replications.¹⁸

In a case like ‘Body and Soul’, replication of the song’s harmony or its melody helps to differentiate it from other musical works. And yet, within the culture of jazz performance, we simply do not know ahead of time how a standard’s harmony or melody will be transformed, or (broadly speaking) what features of a model are sufficient for replication. In other words, *for any given standard there may be features about the standard that help determine which standard it is. But that does not entail that those determinative features are essential or necessary since, in other versions of that standard, we cannot count on them being present.* All one can say is that the current work-determinative features of a standard depend on its history of successful replication and, thus, on their ever-changing social contexts of use. Work-determinative features emerge. Thus, the notion of a work-determinative property must be revised in the following manner: *work-determinative properties are not necessary properties; rather, they are properties that are sufficient for the purpose of replication.* Work-determinative properties are those properties to which one appeals when making a new replication. In virtue of them, a community of listeners decides whether to include a new replication among a set of previous replications. Work-determinative properties are, in fact, network-determined properties.¹⁹

3.2. *Nomination*

Acts of naming are crucial to the ontology of standards. A name is an assertion. To call a performance ‘Body and Soul’ is to assert that it should be included in a specific network of performances. Beyond making such an assertion, a name does no additional work. A name is not a disguised description, nor could it be ‘cashed out’ or replaced with a description of work-determinative properties. It is simply an assertion about the inclusion of a performance in a network, but specifies nothing further. While replications link musical properties of performances with each other, names assert that some performance be included in pre-existing networks. Where replications forge node-to-node associations, nominations forge node-to-network associations.

Historically, nomination comes early in the development of a network. There is a moment of public ‘dubbing’ or ‘baptism’, where a performance, score, or recording is given a particular name. Legally, this happens at the moment of copyright, but may occur earlier or later depending on the community discussed. Listeners typically learn names from others, from reading a record sleeve, from a radio announcer, from sheet music, or in any number of ways. Once the song is baptized, listeners become accustomed to the use of its name. Through these acts of *nomination*, musicians and listeners learn to apply the name to different performances. The proper use of a name to pick out a ‘work’ depends on familiarity with the ways that others use that name.

The utility of nomination only appears when it is considered in conjunction with replication. Typically replication and nomination will mutually support one another, or converge. For instance, I may encounter a new version of ‘Body and Soul’ by reading the name off the back of the record sleeve, or hearing a radio announcer state it. The music I hear presents a cluster of associated replications sufficient for me to identify or individuate the tune. Even without the name being announced, if I was already familiar with the song and its name, I might have said, ‘That’s “Body and Soul”’. The name reinforces the judgment I make based on replication alone. Or I may not have known that the song was called ‘Body and Soul’ until I heard the announcer state it, even though I might have heard the tune before and even been familiar with its determinative features (*that* must be the name of that ballad all the tenor saxophonists play). When nomination and replication converge, judgments of identity and individuation seem well-grounded. However, these two operations can also diverge, pointing in different directions. In those cases, I am less secure in my judgments of identity or individuation. If the announcer had played the same music as above but called it ‘The Song is You’, I might think that either they announced the incorrect tune, or that I have been confusing what I thought was ‘Body and Soul’ for another song.

The interaction of replication and nomination can be diagrammed on a small matrix (Figure 9). One axis of the matrix traces the similarity and dissimilarity of two artefacts in terms of replication. The other axis traces the similarity and dissimilarity of the same two artefacts in terms of their nomination. In case 1, two artefacts are morphologically similar and have the same name, e.g. they sound quite similar and both are called ‘Body and Soul’.

Here, it is unproblematic to identify them. In case 4, just the opposite holds. Two artefacts are morphologically dissimilar and have different names. Here, it is unproblematic to individuate them. Cases 2 and 3 represent the challenging cases. In case 3, two similar artefacts are given different names. This describes the case of *contrafacts*, where a new melody is written over a pre-existing chord progression. For instance, ‘How High the Moon’ and ‘Ornithology’ both have morphologically similar chord progressions, but different names. We might wonder if they are ‘the same tune’ or not. In case 2, morphologically dissimilar artefacts are given the same name. Here is a case of radical revision, a claim to include a performance within the network of a standard that seems, at first, remote. More adventurous versions of standards would fall into this category, such as Cecil Taylor’s performance of ‘This Nearly Was Mine’ from *South Pacific*.

What is interesting is that in cases 2 and 3—cases of *contrafacts* and *revisions*—listeners may lose their secure intuitions concerning the identity or individuation of two performances. Despite the great differences in their names or morphology, should these two performances be identified? I do not have a clear-cut answer to such a question. In fact, I think there can be no clear-cut answer to such a question. The reason is that the answer depends on balancing numerous, competing factors all at once: the properties of the individual performance, the performance’s position and relation to a network of replications, and the social context of use in which the performance is situated. In other words, determinations about identity and individuation—basic for any ontology whatsoever—are not independent of the ways that music is socially and temporally mediated. Philosophers like Davies and other realists about musical works typically appeal to essential properties as a way of offering a clear-cut rule for determining when a performance is an instance of a work and when it is not: *if performance p has such-and-such essential properties then it is an instance of work w*. But the network-based ontology modelled above does not support that kind of rule.

		Replication	
Nomination		1. Similar replications, similar names (<i>identity</i>)	2. Dissimilar replications, similar names (<i>revision</i>)
		3. Similar replications, dissimilar names (<i>contrafacts</i>)	4. Dissimilar replications, dissimilar names (<i>individuation</i>)

Figure 9 Matrix of replication and nomination.

While some philosophers may think this is a disadvantage of a network-based ontology, I disagree. An ontological theory that automatically provides a rule for the discrimination and differentiation of musical works cannot be a theory that is sensitive to the actual performance practices of improvising musicians, arrangers, and performers. In other words, it is a theory of musical works inoculated from mediation. If musical works change (and do so in relation to their network of performances) then we should expect cases where one cannot simply rule, independent of social context and mediation, where one work begins and another ends. There are *always* difficult cases; yet, the network-based ontology sketched above can both *provide an account of the difficult cases* and *show why they are difficult*. When nomination and replication diverge, judgments about the identity and individuation of musical works are challenged. Where the network-based theory can account for this challenge and describe what is challenging about it, realist ontologies of the musical work fall silent. This is a virtue of the network-based approach.

Difficult cases illustrate the issue of ‘ontological politics’—where one discovers conflicts among communities of listeners over basic ontological propositions (Mol, 1999). For instance, there was controversy in the jazz literature about whether Ornette Coleman’s version of ‘Embraceable You’—which threw out the chord progression of the tune while preserving some aspects of its melody—was really an instance of the song. The saxophonist Herb Geller, along with other critics and writers in the press, denied that it was.²⁰ In this controversy, I see a dispute about what exactly this performance is a performance of. Is it an instance of George Gershwin’s song, or does it need some other epithet to differentiate it? (Something like ‘Ornette Coleman’s “Embraceable You”’.) What is interesting about the dispute is that the ultimate decision rests neither with Herb Geller, nor the jazz critics, nor Ornette Coleman, nor George Gershwin. It rests with the larger community of musicians, listeners, critics, producers, composers (and their estates), the legal system, copyright laws, and a slew of other actors and institutions. It is to this court of appeals that the ontology of music ultimately stands trial, not some transcendental rule. To name a performance is to associate it with a network, and not everyone in that messy court of appeals will accept the association. Any ontology of music should be robust enough to reflect this situation.

4. Beyond the ‘Realist Framework’

It is worth revisiting the three rubrics that comprise the realist framework in order suggest how the network-based model offers an alternative to realist musical ontology.

1. The realist view typically sees sound-structures as providing the ‘substance’ of musical ontology. That is, a musical work *is*, at bottom, *a structure* and structures are the ground of the musical work. However, if a standard is a cluster of replications, perhaps they are best understood as, in the words of Bruno Latour, a ‘black box’. For Latour, objects are not integral and fixed; rather, objects are assembled into temporarily integral units through the association of distinct parts. Each part is, in turn, assembled from other parts. Thus, for Latour, there is no ultimate foundation or

ground. Rather, everything—from scientific reports, to microbes, to ‘Body and Soul’—is a black box, capable of being opened up, analysed, tested, and reconfigured. Black boxes are assemblages that, when functioning smoothly, are treated as if they are solid and integral and, thus, have no need to be cracked open or reassembled. A black box is an alternative to the traditional metaphysical notion of a substance.²¹

American popular songs are composed of small, often interchangeable parts. Even before their premieres on radio, film, Broadway, or recordings, songs from the era of Tin Pan Alley were never integral. They would go through many alterations: a verse might be added or cut; new lyrics might be written, or re-written; the melody line may be altered to accentuate the strengths of one singer and hide the weaknesses of another. Once in the public, the song might circulate in performances by a wide variety of musicians, each ‘testing’ the tune, making alterations or additions to it. When musicians, singers, lyricists, arrangers, and improvisers rework songs, they unhesitatingly open up a black box and begin to fiddle with its parts. They pop open the box, rearrange and reassemble its form, add introduction or codas, include or exclude a verse, re-harmonize and improvise, then close it back up and pass it on. Those features of the tune that are distinctive enough and common enough to be sufficiently work-determinative give solidity and stability to a black box. If a version of a standard becomes famous enough, if it is gets replicated enough, if it circulates widely enough, then the black box is passed on as if it were integral and intact. But someone, some Teddy Wilson or Thelonious Monk or Cecil Taylor, might come into the picture and crack it open once again. This leads to a proposition: *the durability of a standard is the durability of a black box, not anything platonically real.*

2. Realist notions of identity and individuation appeal to a set of essential properties that are ‘work-determinative’. However, I have argued that these properties should not be identified with essential properties; rather, work-determinative properties are emergent. They are the properties sufficient for the recognition and specification of the work. Such properties emerge and shift in relation to the whole set of replications that constitute a song (as a black box) and in relation to the history of such replications. When someone opens up the black box of a standard and fiddles with it, work-determinative properties are likely to change. Such properties are fickle; they are sufficient to specify a work, but make no transcendental guarantees. That is because at no point is there an appeal to anything transcendental; the whole operation takes place on the plane of social and temporal mediation. This leads to a second proposition: *for any standard that possesses property p, there are versions (actual or potential) that are instances of the work and lack p.*

3. The realist locates a work and its performance on opposite sides of a gap. On one side, there is the work as such, a sound-structure with essential properties; on the other, there is a performance full of accidental properties of its own. The musical work is given logical and ontological precedence over the performance. In contrast, I have argued that thin works emerge. Each performance is akin to a node in the network; it relays some properties forward, adds new properties of its own, and excises others. The work emerges from the steady growth of the network and

from the associations that accrue. In fact, when it comes to standards, I would assert that *the musical work is a network*.²²

Arrangers, improvisers, and performers intervene in the work by adding new performances to its network. In no case is a performance a distortion of the work, or unfaithful to it. Nobody is distorting anything; there are simply replications and nominations. These can be successful or unsuccessful, esteemed or rejected. Standards exemplify the networked nature of jazz and American popular music. Standards require multiple performances by multiple performers. They never exist as a single node. Nobody can will a standard into being. Its fate is always in the hands of others, least of all its composer.²³ Often, the performers and audiences of standards may have no idea who the composer was. Standards have been so often replicated, have circulated so far and wide, that they become reflexive to jazz musicians, having honed their skills on these tunes while carrying them far from their origins. Yet even in performances of standards by those who have forgotten the composer the performer is always playing a dual role: on one hand, they function as the representative of the standard, on the other, they appropriate the standard to their own ends. Thus, a third, and final, proposition: *A standard requires that others participate in its perpetuation and stabilization. By reproducing the standard, it is transformed at the same time that it is transmitted. As a corollary: a standard is not (or not simply) a thin work but rather a thick musical network*.²⁴

Notes

- [1] A fakebook is a volume of commonly performed songs, typically notated in a reduced form as a melody and chord symbols, and often produced without attaining proper copyright or licensing.
- [2] My discussion is indebted to Harman (2009, p. 72) and his discussion of ‘traditional realism’.
- [3] For the history and early discography of ‘Body and Soul’ see Johnny Green’s interview in Hall (1991) and Bowen (2011).
- [4] For an ethnographic account of the use of fakebooks see Faulkner and Becker (2009).
- [5] As we have seen with Stephen Davies’s realist account. Of classical musical ontology, Born observes that,

The sociality of music-making, the embeddedness of the work in broader social relations of class, gender, race and nation, its dependence on patronage or market exchange: none are understood as immanent in the musical object; all are disavowed or denied. (Born, 2005, p. 27)

- [6] In other words, I seek to challenge realist musical ontology on its own terms.
- [7] In the larger project from which this essay is culled, I situate acts of replication and nomination in a broader social, historical, and material context (Kane, Forthcoming).
- [8] I mean ‘grammar’ in the sense that Wittgenstein (1953) employs it, as an expression of norms or a description of our typical usage of an utterance. Here, the social context provides the norms by which a replication is judged successful or unsuccessful.
- [9] I borrow this system from Ian Quinn, but any faults in the exposition of it are solely attributable to the author.

- [10] For discographical information on this recordings, see Laubich and Spencer (1982, p. 12).
- [11] This transcription of 'Body and Soul', and the ones following it, are reproduced from Krieger (1995). However, I have made emendations and alterations to the transcriptions as I see fit.
- [12] For discographical information on this recording see Laubich and Spencer (1982, p. 75).
- [13] Note that the key has now been shifted up to Db from C, a consequence of Coleman Hawkins' famous recording of the tune. For discographical information on this recording see Bruyninckx (1990, p. 4441).
- [14] I think one would be hard pressed to find a jazz musician or acculturated listener who heard this chord as implying motion toward F-minor, or iii.
- [15] This was originally released on the Riverside RS 9443, *Thelonious Monk in Italy*. For more discographical information see Krieger (1995, p. 31).
- [16] Later in this paper, I return to this issue—the social determination of replication and the possibility of dispute within the jazz community over the limits of replication—in my discussion of Ornette Coleman's recording of 'Embraceable You'.
- [17] Although my analysis of 'Body and Soul' has focused wholly on harmonic issues, like that of chord substitution, I am in no way assuming that harmony is more important in the ontology of standards than melody, form, or other musical features. Harmony has simply been used to argue that replication relies on sufficient, but not necessary, properties. *Salve veritae*, the same conclusion would hold if the argument were based on melodic or formal properties. In a more comprehensive account, like the one provided in Kane (Forthcoming), one could trace the history of replications of the melody of 'Body and Soul', as in Bowen (2011). Alternatively, one could follow formal replications, tracing the appearances and modifications of the song's verse and refrain through early recordings by Ambrose and his Orchestra, Jack Hylton, or Louis Armstrong, up to the famous 1939 recording by Coleman Hawkins. After Hawkins's recording, which functions as a significant node in the song's network, one could trace formal replications to John Coltrane's recording—which adds vamps, expands the internal duration of the song through the use of half-time, significantly re-harmonizes the song's 'bridge' through the use of so-called Coltrane changes, and alters the melody to fit the new chord progression. (Although this performance was recorded in 1960, it first appeared on the 1964 LP *Coltrane's Sound*.) In principle, *all* musical aspects are available for replication. New performances of the work often replicate multiple musical aspects *simultaneously*.
- [18] My language here is intended to echo that of Bruno Latour. In Latour's exposition of Actor-Network Theory, it is worth emphasizing that he typically uses the word 'network' to describe entities and objects that would not intuitively be considered as such. "The network does not designate a thing out there that would have roughly the shape of interconnected parts, much like a telephone, a freeway, or a sewage "network"" (Latour, 2005, p. 129). Rather, the term is intended as 'a tool to help describe something' (p. 131), namely 'the trace left behind by some moving agent' (p. 132) or the intersection of such traces by various agents. By describing an object as a network, Latour explodes a presumably static entity or object into a web of constitutive forces and relations, of interactions between agents, of conflicting forces, and of temporary compromises. Latour refers to such presumably static entities as 'quasi-objects' or 'black boxes', and writes, 'we shall say simply say that they trace networks' (Latour, 1993, p. 89). I follow Latour in using the descriptive term 'network' to explode a static conception of the 'musical work'—like the one found in Davies and other realist philosophers—and to trace the emergent ontology of the jazz standard by means of chains of replications and nominations. Such chains cannot be understood apart from their functioning within specific social contexts of use.
- [19] One problem with the use of the term 'network' to describe the ontology of the standard is that a network as such (comprised of nodes and edges) may not adequately represent the complex

historical relations that link performances to other performances or recordings. As Latour notes, ‘Visual graphs [i.e. network diagrams] have the drawback of not capturing movements and of being visually poor’ (Latour, 2005, p. 133). Figure 8 suffers from this drawback, flattening a dynamic temporal process of replication into a static connection of nodes and edges. However, Figure 8 should be read for what it intends to show: a depiction of the fact that inclusion in a network does not require that some essential property be present in all of its nodes or edges. My graph is less dynamic than comparable ones found in Bowen (1993) and Born (2005). Bowen’s graph, his ‘performance dispersion map’, represents historical change by comparing different groupings of performances at distinct time points. Born illustrates the idea that the work of jazz is an object distributed in space and time by extending a graph produced by the anthropologist Alfred Gell. Gell’s graph connects nodal points (representing individual artworks) with arrow-tipped, directed edges (representing varying degrees of protention and retention between nodes) in order to depict an artist’s oeuvre as a distributed object. With its complex web of protentions and retentions, it does not simply trace out the chronological development of an artist’s oeuvre. As Born (2013) observes, Gell’s work can be interpreted as showing how the production of works mediates time, that is, how time is both produced by and produces aesthetic formations. I am in complete agreement with Born’s ongoing focus on the importance of temporal mediation, in particular on the longevity of aesthetic formations, and the ways that artists both reproduce and transform them through acts of artistic production. The temporal mediation of the jazz standard is a central issue in the larger project from which this essay is drawn (Kane, Forthcoming).

- [20] In addition to Geller’s critical comments (Jack, 2004, p. 93), see: Larkin (1985, p. 66), Carter (1961, p. 39), DeMichael (1961, p. 25), Morgan (1961, p. 284), and Thacker (1973, p. 19). For Coleman’s defenders see: the liner notes to *This is Our Music* (Coleman, 1960), Atkins (1973, p. 20), and Williams (1964, pp. 83–84).
- [21] In a commentary on Latour’s work, the philosopher Graham Harman observes, ‘While traditional substances are one, black boxes are many—we simply *treat* them as one, as long as they remain solid in our midst’ (Harman, 2009, p. 34).
- [22] The broad picture that I am painting—where the jazz standard *qua* musical work is corrigible, emerges from an extensive network of performances and recordings, and where the ongoing relay (and transformation) of musical properties from older to newer performances shapes the standard’s sufficient ‘work-determinative’ properties—aligns with the ontological reflections on the work of jazz in Born (2005). While there are differences in our terminology and the focus of our arguments—for example, I focus on the jazz standard as the central repertory of study, engage specifically with Anglo-American philosophers of music and philosophical realism, and rely on nomination and replication to provide an analytic of the emergence of the musical work—I draw inspiration from Born’s foundational articulation of the ‘jazz assemblage’ and its ontology. In the larger project from which this paper is culled (Kane, Forthcoming), where there is more space to engage these issues, both the differences and underlying commitments between Born’s work and my own are more perspicuous.
- [23] Latour speaks often of a statement’s fate being in the hands of others (Latour, 1999, p. 95).
- [24] This view aligns with a similar statement from Lydia Goehr. ‘I can never get down to a thin enough or simple enough version of the compositional condition without feeling I am putting aside the thickness that gives the thin ontological condition its significance in the first place’ (Goehr, 2007, p. xlix).

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Notes on Contributor

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