

Music and / as Cultural Labour

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“musical practice in particular...has been extremely important in imagining a freer society than the one we inherited”

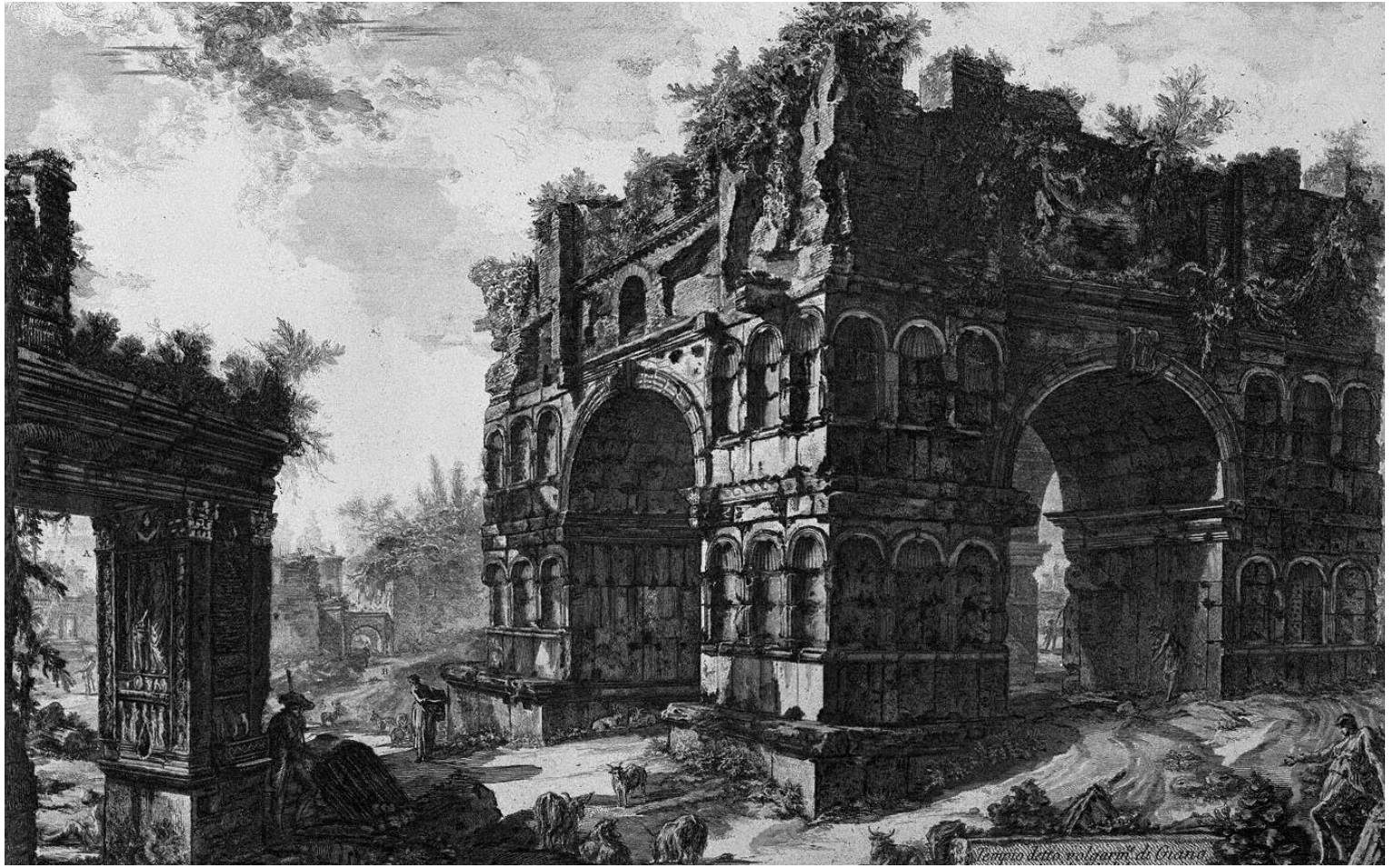
Ingrid Monson, *Freedom Sounds* (2007)

“the musician is often regarded as a member of the servant class”

Bruce McLeod, *Club Date Musicians* (1993)

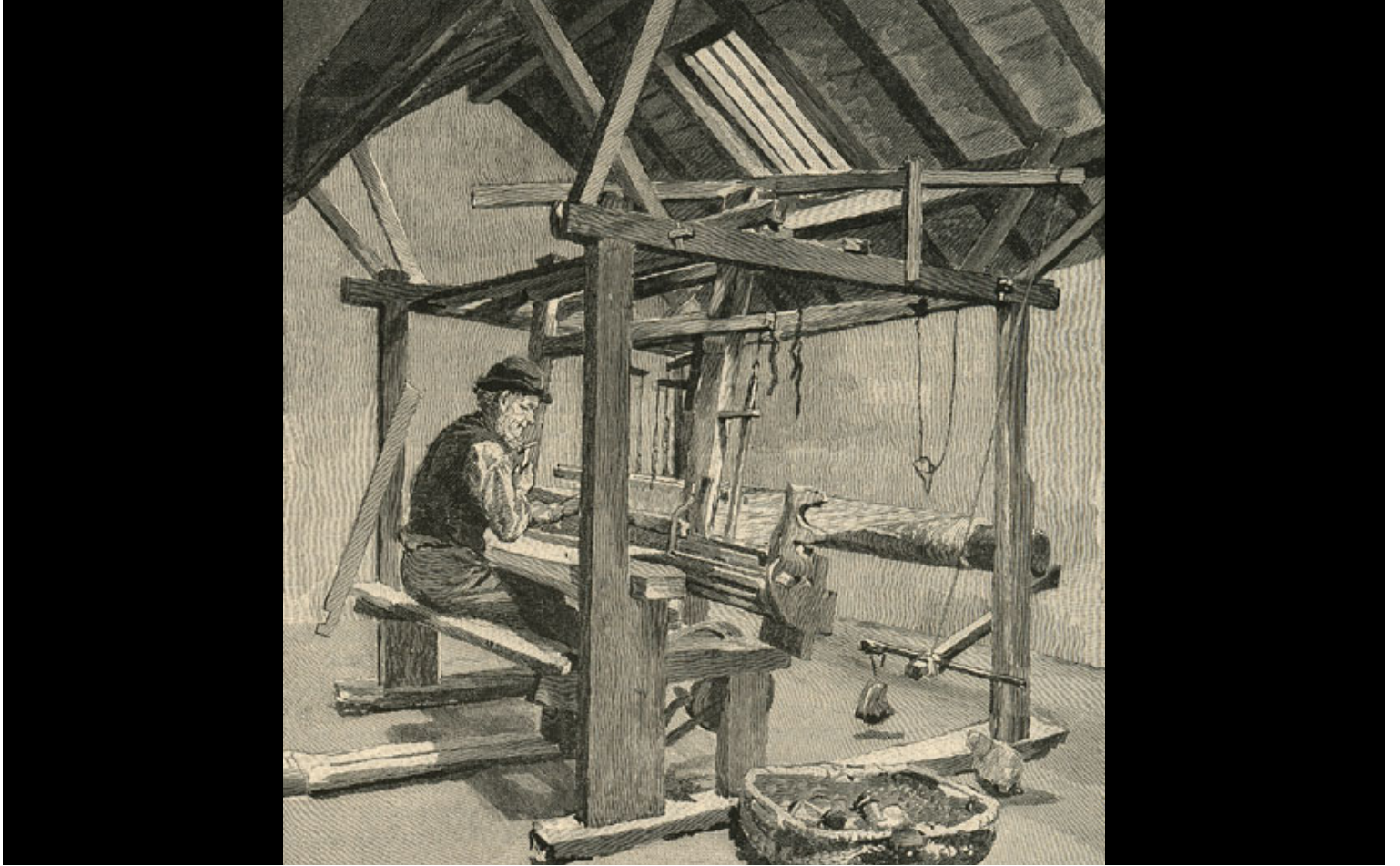
I. Concepts of (Cultural) Labour



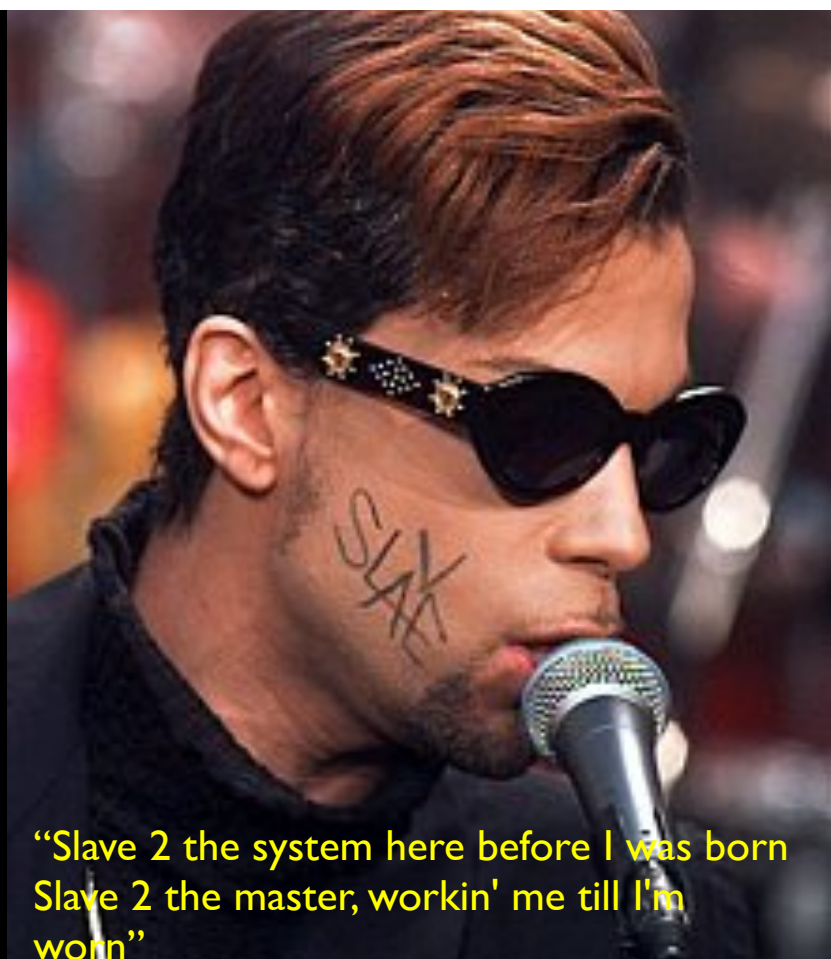


“art” vs.
“commerce”





employment vs. democracy

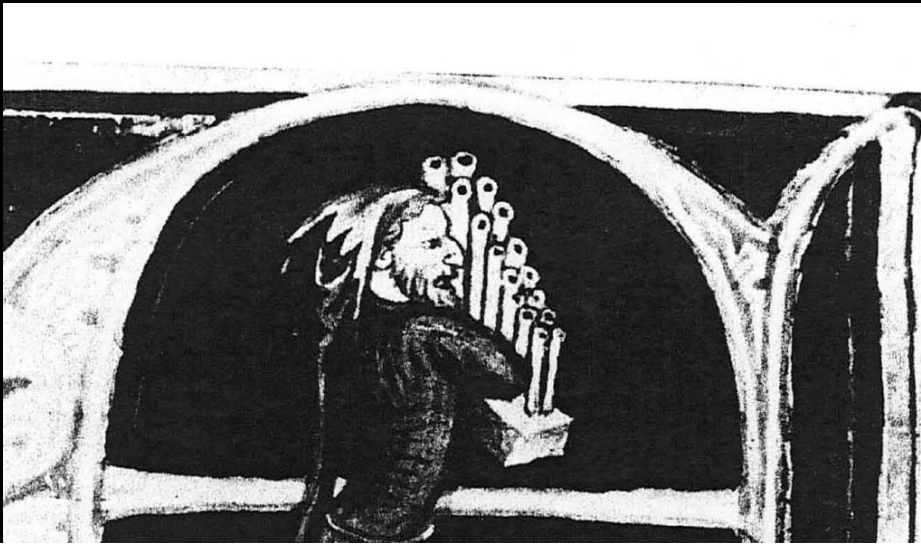


“Slave 2 the system here before I was born
Slave 2 the master, workin' me till I'm
worn”

“we cannot separate literature and art from other kinds of social practice, in such a way as to make them subject to quite special and distinct laws. They may have quite specific features as practices, but they cannot be separated from the general social process.”

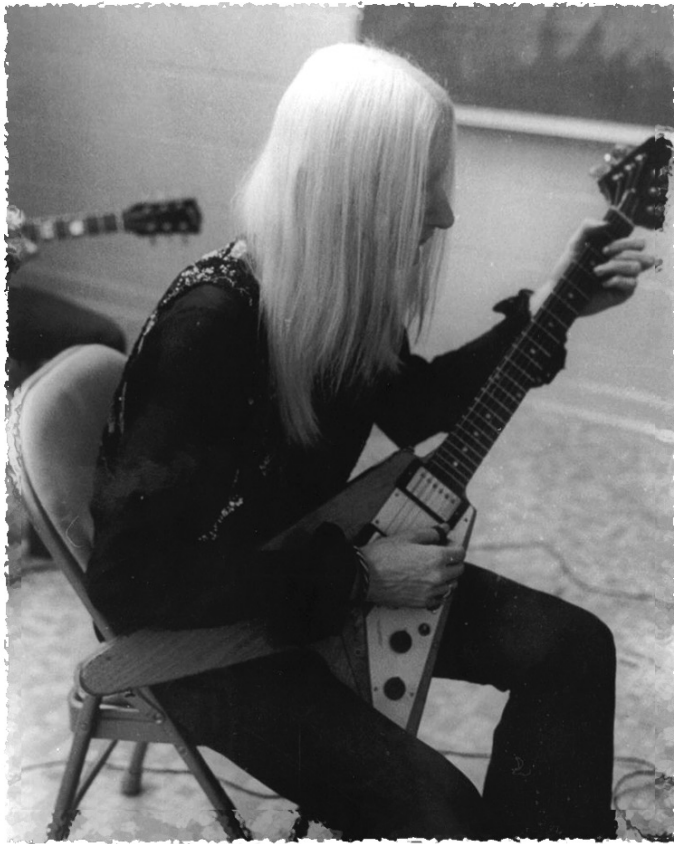
Raymond Williams

II. Marginality, Autonomy, Vulnerability





III. Emergence of the Modern Recording Artist



some factors

1. Rise of the vocalists
2. Segmentation, age-grading, formatting
3. AFM self-sabotage
4. Vertical disintegration, independent producers, studios
5. From “A & R” to “artist development” model



IV. Back to Work

“exploitation is possible because [employment contracts] place right of command in the hands of one party to the contract.”

Carole Pateman

“Wage slavery is not a consequence of exploitation--exploitation is a consequence of the fact that the sale of labour power entails the workers’ subordination. The employment contract creates the capitalist as master; he has the political right to determine how the labour of the worker will be used, and--consequently--can engage in exploitation.”

Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, 7.

was always taught that
Lincoln freed the slaves, and I
didn't realise that he
excluded recording artists
from that list."

Latitia Austin, testifying before the CA
state legislature, 2001

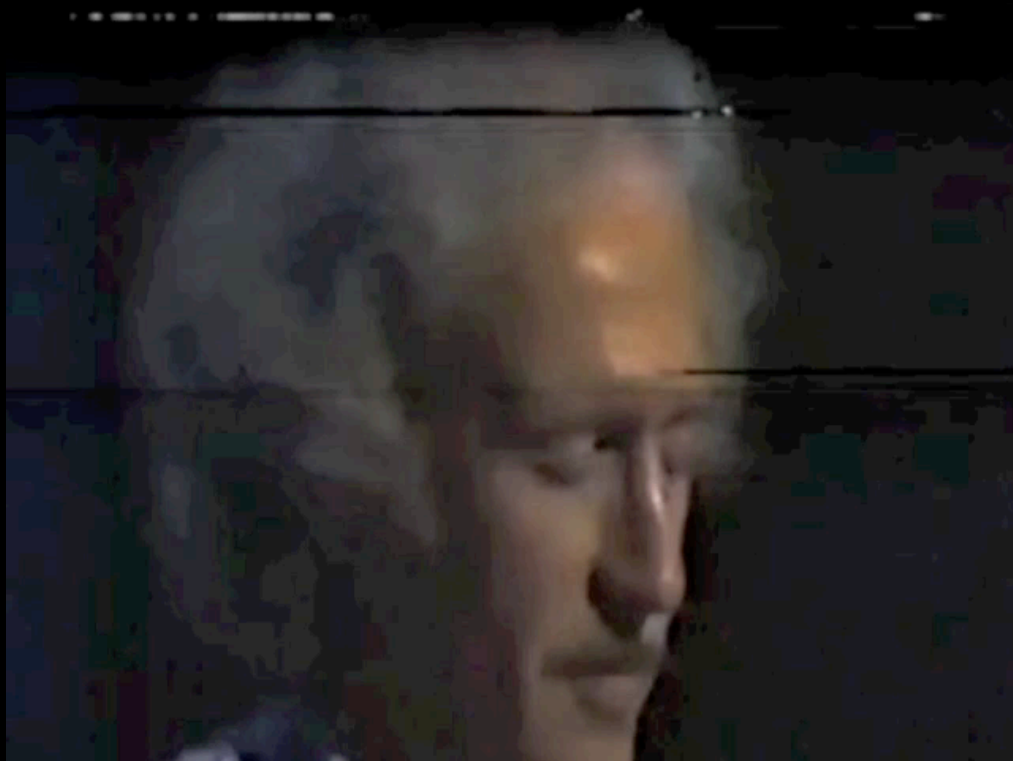


V. Conclusion

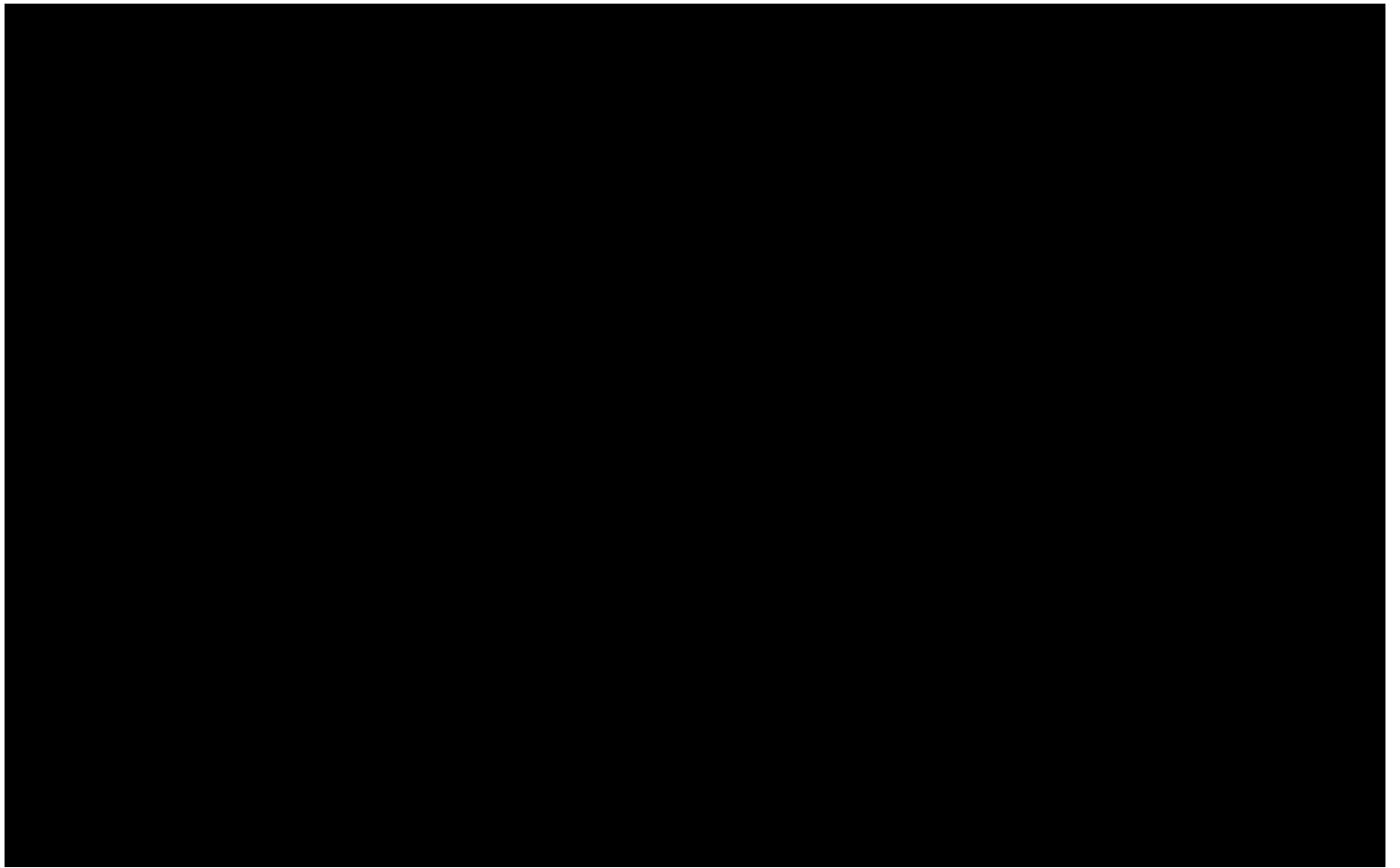
everybody's

crying

justice



just as long as there's business first



“[T]he musician’s position in the majority of civilizations [is] simultaneously *excluded* (relegated to a place near the bottom of the social hierarchy) and *superhuman* (the genius, the adored and deified star).”

Jacques Attali, *Noise*, p. 11.



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