Handing the Mic to the Mosaic: Lessons on Race from Canadian Music Artists of Colour

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ABSTRACT

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One of Canada's most notable traits as a nation-state is its policy of multiculturalism or its national identity as a "cultural mosaic". In this research-creation project, 11 music artists of colour from Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver were asked how multiculturalism affects their cultural identities and music-making practices. This research builds on existing work that has lauded music as a valuable site for studying race relations within Canada. Investigating Canadian multiculturalism as an active political ideology, this project comprises both a written analysis and podcast series. Multiculturalism is mediated diversity which distracts away from the inherent whiteness at the centre of the colonial settler-state. As an ideology and dominant discourse, it filters down into infrastructures and everyday interactions. This project points to some of the ways that this occurs for artists of colour, namely through the static and single-layered dimensional framings of their work. On top of this, this research shines a light on how discourses around traits for a sellable and successful music, act i.e. "authenticity" and "relatability", are also informed by this brand of Canadian race politic. More importantly, this thesis showcases how artists in their music-making practices navigate these nuanced barriers as well as how their works and perspectives offer robust alternate understandings to state multiculturalism.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In light of Black Lives Matter protests around the world that began spring of this year, CTV interviewed Canadian singer and songwriter Jessie Reyez about the lack of diversity in Canada's music industry. Jessie Reyez has, by definition, hit major success. She has garnered millions of views on her music videos online, has worked with the likes of Calvin Harris and Eminem, and perhaps most importantly, is signed to big-label Universal Music (Pareles, "Jessie Reyez Is Yelling and Loving at the Same Time"). However, in her chat with interviewer Tyrone Edwards she was not afraid to call out her label as well as other large labels in Canada for the lack of diversity in their staff (CTV Television, 3:00-3:16). She added that many internationally successful Canadian Black artists have had to find their routes to success in the United States (CTV Television, 1:50-2:40). She also criticized labels for not financially backing the large amount of Black music talent in Canada (CTV Television, 1:50-2:40). For many, the lack of support for music artists of colour in Canada, both in industry infrastructure and attitudes, is not new knowledge.

Canada is the first country to introduce multicultural legislation and define multiculturalism as a central feature in its national identity (Brosseau and Dewing 5). Therefore, it is important to ask why such disconnects exist. We must dare to ask, why is it that a nation that defines itself in contrast to its western counterparts as a "cultural mosaic" lacks in supporting its artists of colour? I posit that, in order to understand dissonances in Canada's "multicultural" reality, we need to re-evaluate state multiculturalism and its manifestations in everyday society.

More specifically the question I explore in this two-part project is *how does multicultural ideology affect the cultural identities and music-making practices of music artists of colour?* I sought my answer by talking to 11 music artists of colour based in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver: Hua Li, Narcy, Kae Sun, Ian Kamau, April Aliermo, Noyz, DijahSB, Tariq, Farnaz Ohadi, Kimmortal and DJ On. Who better to answer this question than music artists of colour themselves? In this thesis I show how multiculturalism as a political ideology and dominant discourse factors into how artists of colour choose to present their music projects and how it also informs music industry values of "relatability" and "authenticity".

During my interviews with the music artists I explored this question in-depth and relay my findings in two formats: a written analysis (which can be found in this thesis) as well in a three-episode podcast series. As the title of my project alludes to, I wanted to literally hand a microphone over to those that make up Canada's cultural mosaic. The research-creation side of my work is a demonstrative effort to recentre narratives about multiculturalism on people of colour in Canada.

The main inspiration for my research creation project is Tara Rodger's book *Pink Noises* where she attempts to make the inaudible (i.e. "pink noise") audible by interviewing women in electronic music, a genre that has historically erased its women's contributions (19). I was drawn to Roger's work for the critical framework she applies to the "behind the scenes" workings of music. As Rodger's remarks, her interviews are "sonic interventions from multiple sources, which destabilize dominant gendered discourses and work toward equal power

distributions in the cultural arenas where sounds reverberate" (19). She uses a number of methods to make erased groups visible in the presentation and carry out of her interviews. In the Methodology chapter I discuss how I achieve this in my own work.

I chose to do a podcast series not only because of my past experience with disability justice radio, but also because of the intimate ways that audio engages with its audience and the DIY appeal of podcasts as a media format.

Prior to conducting this research, I was a radio collective coordinator for a spoken word show on disability. One of our mandates was to talk about current affairs from a disability perspective. Leading and producing content for the show for two years I was constantly confronted with the question of how do we better represent marginalized groups in meaningful ways. The team and I tried to do this by considering who was being validated as sources of knowledge and in the editing, choices made during post production.

My time in radio emphasized to me the effectiveness of understanding societal issues through personal stories, especially from perspectives outside the dominant narrative. For example, when discussing the poor representation of people with disabilities in film and TV, we chose to interview an actor and actress with disabilities working in Hollywood.

In this role I saw the curatorial power that the media maker had in forming news stories about marginalized perspectives. Simple cuts in audio editing could emphasize or de-emphasize points made in an interview. Indeed within post production there are many ways to bring marginalized perspectives into the public conversation and in the Discussion chapter I discuss such editing choices made in this podcast series.

My time at CiTR 101.9FM prompted me to consider effective methods for bettering representation in spoken word audio pieces. Therefore, doing a podcast was a natural choice for my thesis project because I had already started to think about how audio pieces can act as counter narratives.

Audio Intimacy and Race Narratives

As a number of scholars have pointed out, there is a certain affectual power when an audience's attention is focused on the voice. Susan Douglas states in her book *Listening In: Radio and the American Imagination* that radio as an audio medium "imparts a sense of emotion stronger than that imparted by looking'' and that "sound envelops us, pouring into us whether we want it to or not, including us, involving us'' (30). Not only by featuring recordings of music artists of colour speaking about their experiences are POC voices centred, audio allows us to take in the personal intricacies of individuals' experiences.

As Stacey Copeland points out, audio's intimate engagement with its audiences can do productive work to better media representation of those outside of dominant culture. In her study of lesbian radio and podcast shows in Canada she discusses how audio media from subcultures not only disrupts stereotyping through presentation of "realistic individuals", but what's more:

Radio becomes an empowering nonvisual content catalyst for queer women as well as other subcultures to develop and share ideas and stories in which the listener, regardless of their own identity and social position, must focus on the voice, ripe with the power and intimacy engrained in human connection. (219)

Eva-Sabine Zehelein work, "Mummy, Me and Her Podcast: Family and Gender Discourses in Contemporary Podcast Culture: Not by Accident as Audio (Auto) Biography" builds on Copeland's work. In her analysis of the podcast documentary series *Not by Accident* about single motherhood she provides specific examples of how the potency of audio storytelling can speak "against a set of master narratives" (148). She praises the podcaster's sharing of both the idealized moments of motherhood as well as the hard times that contradict the traditional nuclear family model (148) (151). Zehelein argues that listening bridges "both the realm of sensory, embodied experience and the political realm of debate and deliberation" (147).

This project aims to play on the intimacy of the audio format to centre POC perspectives. Not only does it utilize the medium's intimate audience engagement, as an audio piece it garners a certain type of audience attention to the stories that make up these artists' experiences. Stories that may not necessarily align with dominant discourses of multiculturalism.

"DIY appeal": Podcasting as Counter Format

Podcasting as a media format itself is rich in its potential for counter narration partly due to its DIY and counterculture qualities. As Zehelein puts it, "This aspect hints at the highly personal nature and intimacy of many podcasts that are not professional large-scale corporate funded enterprises, but individual, private storytelling reaching out to the world of the similarly minded" (145).

Richard Berry argues it is the "de-professionalization" of its production process that has been podcast's "biggest disruptive influence" against traditional broadcast radio. Berry explains that "While a radio broadcaster may spend heavily on studio construction and equipment, a podcaster does not need to do so and may often make a virtue of their domestically situated 'studio'" (15). Here, Berry points out how podcasters have taken advantage of the fact that their listeners are drawn to their content for its "lo-fi" production. The notion that "anyone can make a podcast" is a driving reason for its prominence today.

This reason for the podcast's popularity can even be seen in the birth of the term "podcast" itself. In an article published in the Guardian in 2004 Ben Hammersley joined the words "iPod" and "broadcast" to make the term "podcast" to describe media that was part of the burgeoning ''audible revolution'' of independent online radio (qtd in Bottomley 166). In Andrew Bottomley's article "Podcasting: A Decade in the Life of a ''New'' Audio Medium: Introduction" he notes that much like Hammersley, early media critics that applauded the growth of the audio medium as it viewed podcasting as independent and amateur productions that originated from "outside the traditional media industries" (166). While today's top-ranking podcasts are heavy in production, as Berry and Bottomley point out, this listener affection towards podcasts for its DIY and counterculture qualities still remains as a desired audio aesthetic (Berry 8) (Bottomley 165).

Scholar Sarah Florini examined podcasts that have taken advantage of this appeal and utilized the audio medium towards an exploration of racial "others" perspectives. Florini studied Black podcasters in the US who were a part of the independent digital media platform TWiB!. She remarks on how these Black podcasters enjoyed the freedom of not needing to please corporate sponsors, opting out of the 'polished' and tightly formatted character of most mainstream corporate media and instead for an informal, flexible approach that allows for free-form conversation and embraces a range of Black vernaculars and regional accents" (212) (210). Her study shows the ways in which this DIY quality can be used to redirect how media is created specifically in regards to who gets to be validated sources of knowledge. Podcasters like those from TWiB! are examples of how the podcast format itself welcomes a sense of liberty in how issues can be spoken about from the margins. As an interesting side note rapper Noyz, who was a part of this project, also co-hosts his own podcast Immigrant Hustle where they feature and speak to creatives who are also immigrants.

This appeal of podcasts as being outside of mainstream and corporate media infrastructure makes it a well-fitting medium for my research that aims to speak against, and be a counter narrative to, state discourses of multiculturalism. Much like my work with disability justice radio programming, interventional choices can be made both in pre and post production that shift who is considered to be valid sources of knowledge.

Bengali-Canadian scholar Himani Banner i's critiques Canadian multiculturalism and urges us towards "counter hegemonic interpretative and organizational frameworks":

> The problem is no matter who we are - black or white - liberal acculturation and single-issue oriented politics, our hegemonic 'subsumption' into a racist common sense, combined with capital's crisis, continually draws us into the belly of the beast. This can only be prevented by creating counter hegemonic interpretative and organizational frameworks that reach down into real histories and relations of our social life, rather than extending tendrils of upward mobility on the concrete walls of the state. Our politics must sidestep the paradigm of "unity" based on "fragmentation or integration" and instead engage in struggles based on the genuine contradictions of our society (120)

In this thesis project I attempt this both in my written analysis and my use of podcasting. A look into how multiculturalism affects the cultural identities and music-making practices of music artists of colour reveals that perhaps we need to step away from state multicultural dialogue and towards a messier, more complex and by no means homogenous framework.

To begin, in the following chapter I provide a review of the existing research on music artists of colour that connect to greater analysis about race relations in Canada. Specifically, I include research that helps make sense of how greater race dialogues affect artists of colours' music making practices. These sources touch on what kind of dissonances in multicultural discourse can be seen in Canada's music scene for people of colour. I focus on three scholars Kim Chow Morris, Francesca D'Amico and Faiza Hirji whose analyses were also based on qualitative interviews with music artists of colour. I identify where the current discussion sits and

ways in which my own work builds on this. I also reference a number of media works that inspired the format of my research-creation project.

Next in Chapter 3 I get into the theoretical framework that forms the basis of my project. Here I dive more into the origins of state multicultural ideology and more importantly, discuss how these origins connect to current dissonances felt by artists of colour today. I reference scholars Himani Bannerji, Rinaldo Walcott and Critical Race Theory to show not only why we must move away from state ideas of multiculturalism but also how counter narration is a method for addressing its insufficiencies for folks of colour in Canada.

In Chapter 4 on methodology I discuss my approach to answering my research question including my interview style, interview questions and how my interviews then informed my media creation process. In Chapter 5 and 6 I discuss what findings this approach led to as well as reflect on my process of making an audio piece as a counter narrative to state multiculturalism. Based on past research and my own interviews I show the ways in which state multicultural discourse has filtered down into the music making practices of the 11 artists and how they navigate dialogues about race in the industry that oftentimes do not reflect the intent of their music projects. I also discuss how conversations around "reliability" and "authenticity", which are both seen as key traits for a music artist's success, are informed by state multicultural discourse as well. On the media production side, I elaborate on the specific ways that I attempted to make the podcast series be a counter narrative and how recentring the narrative about multiculturalism to artists of colour disrupts the monolithic master narrative of Canada being a cultural mosaic.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Currently there is a lack of comprehensive literature connecting the experiences of music artists of colour to greater discussions of race relations in Canada. At the same time, lack of infrastructural support for artists of colour in Canada's music landscape is another reason why more research needs to be carried out in this area. Further, additional research needs to document the developments in artistic expression by music artists of colour in Canada.

A number of scholars including Faiza Hirji, Kim Chow Morris, Jeremy Strachan, Karen Pegley and Francesca D'Amico draw connections between Canada's multicultural ideology and music artists of colour. The following literature review provides an overview of the current academic discussion, identifying places of further investigation and providing helpful conceptualization to direct my interview process.

Addressing Diversity Musically

When starting to think about how multiculturalism affects music what may come to mind first is the literal performance of difference, i.e. having people of different ethnic backgrounds performing together. Hirji's article "Jamming in the Third Space: South Asian Fusion Music in Canada " compares the political anti-racist alliances between brown and Black artists in the United States and the UK. She explores whether the same is the case for South Asian fusion music artists and industry professionals in Canada. Hirji found that subjects were consistently influenced by "the official Canadian ethos of pluralism", that is, they were open minded when it came to musical influences from other cultures (334). However, these same subjects did not "uniformly express a strong sociopolitical consciousness", nor did they have the same types of alliances with Black artists as their American and British counterparts (326).

Morris's work on a small cluster of traditional Chinese musicians in Montreal also had findings on artists of colour collaborations. In "'Small Has No Inside, Big Has No Outside': Montreal's Chinese Diaspora Breaks Out/In Music" musicians from very geographically and culturally different regions of China and Taiwan often played and composed music together. Morris found that the traditional Chinese musicians, who described feelings of being othered by the mainstream Francophone society, put aside possible cultural conflicts to play together "to connect to Quebec society at large" (59). While Hirji and Morris arrived at different findings and studied different groups, what we can draw from the studies is that Canadian regional and national race politics can inform possibilities of collaboration between artists of colour from different cultural backgrounds. As well, Hirji's work highlights the importance of applying a critical lens specific to Canada's history and current politics when looking at racial discourse in music artists of colours' practices.

Morris and Strachan go even further in their investigation of collaboration as a way of "working through" diversity. Their analyses offer a look into how differences between different cultural music practices are mediated in composition. In this quote Morris explains what is occurring compositionally in the piece titled "Three Pieces for Pipa and Guitar" performed by Liu Fang with Japanese composer Toshiyuki Hiraoka, Irish guitarist Michael O'Toole:

The highly syncopated and disjunct pipa line that drives the opening and ending of the third movement, "Twisted Illusion," presents a delicate atonal motif which slowly transforms, while supported by a homophonic guitar accompaniment. The B section in the ternary form piece brings the guitar to the forefront with a contrasting recurrent motif, while the pipa strums sparse dissonant chords beneath. The three-movement composition bears no resemblance to traditional Chinese repertoire or pipa techniques, which utilize neither atonality nor chordal writing, but works effectively as a contemporary composition in the Euro-North American tradition that has impacted Japan's contemporary music so heavily. (64)

Morris also gives the example of Chih-Lin Chou's collaboration with music partner Yang Li:

the two musicians began to create their own new works by at first stringing together large sections of other pieces, and then gradually learning to improvise compositions of their own that create a new transcultural musical language. Like other conservatory trained Chinese musicians who constantly seek the development of iconic new styles, the ensemble has recently worked to create their own unique "extended techniques" on their traditional Chinese instruments, such as double stops on the erhu played by using a wider bow fixed between the two strings in traditional Chinese fashion. (66)

Racial politics in Montreal, manifested in Quebec's version of multiculturalism— interculturalism— and the exclusion of Morris's subjects from mainstream Francophone society, affect these musicians as it drives them to collaborate, carrying out the intricate work of composing together instruments that have different playing styles as well as merging it with western music tradition. Morris asks her readers to focus not solely on their limitations but instead on the musicians' ingenuity and exercises of agency as they create new "aesthetic tropes" and "act from a globalized platform that permits unencumbered movement across cultural traditions in pursuit of aesthetic satisfaction and economic recompense" (68)(64).

Strachan discusses the logistical challenges that arise from composing different instruments that were not originally made to be played together as well as instances of overt racism that occur in an orchestra setting. Strachan's article titled "A Survey of Intercultural Music in Canada" looks at how multiculturalism and interculturalism is quite literally performed in multi-ethnic multi-instrument groups. He asks: "what are the valences of intercultural music performance in Canada in the twenty-first century? What politics do they address, and in what ways can interculturality in music reveal a layer of Canada's social and political fabric that is marked by tension, dissonance, and potential?". Strachan details the logistical challenges faced by the Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra (vico) as expressed by founder Moshe Denburg:

For example, Denburg remarks that along with percussion instruments such as tabla, darbuka, and other hand drums, the presence of plucked strings (such as pipa, zheng, oud, and others) are the audible markers of difference in vico. In contrast to Western symphonic instruments, which are constructed to maximize projection in larger performance spaces, the sonic intimacy of a sitar, for example, imposes its own aesthetic circumscriptions on the practical matter of arranging for mixed ensemble. (Strachan)

To work through such differences some ensembles in Strachan's work choose musicians who were able to play their comfort zones as well as those in support of a foundation of a "root culture", i.e. a "discrete complex of knowledges and practices that could fuse with several others" to produce experimental and innovative musical expressions". Strachan uses the case of intercultural music performances to argue for Quebec's legislative term of choice "interculturalism" over multiculturalism as a description for the racial dynamics in Canada. To Strachan "interculturalism" is not a contribution towards coherence of a diverse nation, but rather an irreducible condition "the feeling of placelessness and dislocation experienced by those whose difference Canadian tolerance does not actually accommodate".

With Morris being a musician herself and Strachan writing from the field of musicology, their works offer invaluable insights for this project as I write from a communications and feminist studies background. Their research, along with Hirji's, help to shine a light on how collaboration between artists of colour is a valuable area of inquiry for studying race discourse in artists of colours' work. After reviewing their findings, I made sure to include questions in my own artist interviews about collaboration. In Chapter 5, I discuss artists in my project that collaborated with other artists of colour as a way to reroute existing industry infrastructures and create new support networks.

Structural Implementation of Multiculturalism

Strachan and Pegleys' work show the ways that music in Canada has been structured to be an extension of the national multicultural project. As Strachan points out, all the ensembles mentioned in his article relied (at least partially) on "a merit-based public funding infrastructure" which "operates as an extension of this particular vision of nationalism, and one that accords visibility and cultural legitimacy to its beneficiaries". Furthermore, he states that through the nation's multicultural policy "as early as 1973, ten million dollars had been allocated to events and programming, such as folk festivals, to "promote cultural harmony" amongst 500 ethnic groups".

Apart from federal funding, another way that Canada's multicultural policies are directly forwarded in music is in the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC). Pegley's case study found that the CRTC is a large part of why more people of colour appeared on Canada's MuchMusic TV station versus MTV from the United States (111). She studied a one-week simultaneous sample of both TV channels from the Fall of 1995 for the amount of times that Black folks appeared. She found that MuchMusic not only had more appearances of Black people, but that it also aired artist music videos by such artists as Dream Warriors (Canadian) and Queen Latifah (American) which directly spoke to African diaspora experience in North America (101) (111). She cites CRTC's policies on cultural diversity:

> I would argue that these videos served another purpose: their heavy rotation pleased shareholders through the inclusion of mainstream performers while— intentionally or not—they simultaneously furthered the station's "multicultural rhetoric." If MuchMusic can implement the CRTC's imperatives like the mosaic rubric—thanks in part to a

complex multicultural rhetoric as I have suggested here—MTV's desire for entrance into the Canadian marketplace will be perpetually frustrated (111)

While Pegley's quantitative study took place more than two decades after my research project, what is worth noting is how the Canadian music TV station MuchMusic performed better than its US counterpart when it came to airing music programming with people of colour because of its multicultural policy. Her study shows how Canada's own brand of cultural diversity, i.e. multiculturalism, has a direct effect on its public music programming. More importantly that visibility of people of colour in music, including music videos by the Dream Warriors that challenge notions of national belonging and speak on feelings of exclusion, is one that makes sense and fits within Canada's multicultural rhetoric (Pegley 99)

Despite the legal and financial measures that aim to extend multicultural policy to music, Strachan and Pegley argue that support of music expressions by music artists of colour are simultaneously brought to attention and contained. Strachan gives the example of synthpop Columbian Canadian artist Lido Pimenta and "psychedelic noh-wave" group YT//ST. In his article he mentions how both have been outspoken in their music and media about racialization, exoticism and marginalization that occurs in Canadian concert and festival programming, arts funding, and music criticism.

On a similar note, Pegley noted that both MuchMusic and MTV exhibited nationally informed "systemic modes of multicultural and multiracial containment" (111). Given that one of CRTC's primary purposes is to protect Canadian media from hegemonic US culture, she argues that the greater number of appearances of people of colour on MuchMusic speaks again to a desire of the station to reflect a Canadian multicultural rhetoric (98). Her findings revealed that MuchMusic aired more music videos by American artists of colour than MTV. Pegley hypothesizes that the frequent inclusion of videos by American artists of color (that did not satisfy the Canadian content quota) occurred because it fit within the station's understanding of itself as a place for "distinct, complex, and contradictory" Canadian multicultural narratives (111). Despite this, Pegley also asks her readers to question what methods of control and containment are occurring in "multicultural" societies where diversity is encouraged (95).

The works of Strachan and Pegley get us to reconsider measures in place to enforce cultural diversity in Canada's music scene such as federal funding and CRTC broadcast laws and their role in managing visibility. Hence, they make clear a dissonance in multicultural policy, or as Strachan puts it that "difference is recognized, tolerated, and celebrated as much as it is institutionalized and managed".

Narrowcasting and Pigeonholing Artists of Colour

Another way that multiculturalism works to both celebrate cultural difference while simultaneously managing it can be seen in the ways that music projects by people of colour are often pigeonholed. Morris, D'Amico and Hirjis' studies locate a number of sites where music artists of colour face limitations in how their music is perceived. In some cases, pigeonholing and stereotyping was also done by communities of colour or the artists themselves.

Central to Morris's investigation of how her musicians navigate Canadian Francophone society is how both admirers of their music and the musicians themselves drew from a monolithic static understanding of Chinese culture (57). In reviewing advertising content of performances Morris noted that both audiences and event organizers engaged in a discourse that supported that music because it was culturally "pure" and therefore "authentic" (61). This discourse is indeed a construction as Morris explains that Chinese Conservatory trained musicians, such as her subjects, were trained in western-influenced recompositions, a style that became popular in the late twentieth century for its ability to appeal to Chinese audiences as a "modernization" of folk music as well as to international audiences who perceive it as "traditional" (62). This discourse, beneficial for the promotion of traditional Chinese music performance in Montreal, is not without its own issues. Morris states that it promotes stereotyping as a way to understand the racialized "Other" (64). What's more, this imagery is seen as separate from the actual local Chinese community in Montreal—a community whose presence is often seen as infringing "in a province set on protecting its 'own' cultural traditions" (61).

Similar to Morris's findings, Hirji's qualitative interviews with South Asian fusion music artists and industry professionals found that subjects came across stereotyping that was not only upheld from those outside their South Asian communities, but from inside as well. Hirji's subjects shared how they were turned away from opportunities to perform in South Asian events because they weren't "Indian enough (329). They were also turned away by mainstream venues for being "too ethnic" (Hirji 333). Out of frustration with this issue one subject even went on to create his own festival for Canadian South Asian talent (329). In Chapter 5 I explore how artists Narcy and April Aliermo spoke of similar efforts they undertook in their own communities out of a desire to create cultural spaces that they themselves did not have at the start of their music careers.

Some of these instances amongst Hirji's interviewees were more explicit than others. One artist discussed how big record labels discourage new artists from speaking about racial politics. While the artist did note other South Asian artists, who did it; she also mentioned that political music doesn't receive wide success (331). Internalized racism within South Asian communities also worked the other way with some older generations suggesting to the artists that they make themselves 'whiter' in order to achieve commercial success (333). It is worth noting that the subjects that shared these experiences in Hirji's study also spoke positively about Canada's cultural diversity, such dissonances and limitations to how artists of colour can express themselves musically must be taken note of. Similarly, heterogeneous experiences can be heard in the podcast series. In chapters 3 and 5 I attempt to understand such dissonances further.

Very similar to the sentiment expressed by Hirji, voicing political views especially in the realm of race was not always welcomed for artists in D'Amico's study. D'Amico noted that for some Black Canadian rap pioneers they were discouraged by industry executives to voice "the true nature of the Black experience in Canadian society" or instances of oppression as it was not seen as authentically reflecting polite Canadian society (264).

In her article "'The Mic Is My Piece': Canadian Rap, the Gendered 'Cool Pose,' and Music Industry Racialization and Regulation" D'Amico unravels multicultural policy and points to another site where related dissonances occur: in the CRTC and the use of the "Urban music" category. She focuses on Black Canadian rap artists in the 1980s and 1990s, many of whom were second generation Caribbean immigrants (255). As she explains, the "urban music" category groups a number of genres of music considered to be Black into one (D'Amico 268). The term and its radio format were created by US broadcaster Frankie Crocker as a marketing tactic to draw in advertising with the "ambiguity" and "palatability" of the term (269). The continued application of this organizational term in the Canadian market had an effect on those discussed in D'Amico's work. This instance of narrowcasting to boast a so-called niche audience, as she argues, was incredibly disruptive as it not only erases the wide diversity of music genres such as reggae and rap, it also codifies the palatability of Black music. D'Amico brings up the CRTC to highlight the contradictory nature of the "urban music" category. Despite CRTC implementing a 30% Canadian content radio quota as a way to support Canadian music artistry over US culture hegemony, the "urban music" category still stifles recognition of Black Canadian music artistry (261).

Much like Pegley, D'Amico addresses the complicated and contradictory nature of multicultural discourse. She states that this is evident when taking a look at the lack of mainstream praise and exposure rap and other genres that fall within "urban music" receive. D'Amico cites anthropologist Remi Warner stating that while the creation of the "urban music" category "satisfied the political concerns of employing culture as a nation-building tool intent on reflecting the same diversity of choice and access that multiculturalism prided itself on," it also evidences the nation's history of white hegemony and managed visibility (269). D'Amico is direct in her critique of Canada's multicultural politics which, she says, desires "to purge while simultaneously incorporating Blackness" (270). D'Amico's work is an excellent entry point for my research area as it touches on the ways stereotypes and instances of pigeon-holing seep into industry infrastructure and manage access for artists of colour. Findings from this project shine a light on this further and I discuss this in chapter 5.

Pigeonholing limits artists by dictating who their music can be for. Morris, Hirji and D'Amico reveal how the ongoing stereotyping and pigeonholing of artists of colour is complex. Such stereotyping can cause frustration for those who do not fit into the perimeters of these expectations. As Morris found with her subjects "Such simplifications of the heterogeneous activities and output of Quebec's Chinese community act to restrict both cultural and creative agency and to simplify and limit the individuation of identity reflected in the contemporary performances of Montreal's diasporic Chinese musicians" (57). Similarly, Hirji suggests that the popularity of "Bollywood-flavored South Asian culture" in the West, while it may have given her subjects recognition, it "has worked against some of the artists who would like to push the boundaries of what it means to be South Asian in diaspora" (335). This was a sentiment expressed throughout my interviews with artists. These arguments regarding the pigeonholing and narrowcasting of artists of colour in the Canadian music industry guides my own research to help pinpoint what is implicit, the less known workings of multiculturalism, why they persist and, what purposes they may serve.

Plural identities

As it would, this limited imagined potential for people of colour in Canadian music can cause issues when artists express a sense of plural identity. What the works of Morris, Hirji, and D'Amico do so eloquently is focus on the navigations that their subjects undertake in spite of (and because of) larger racial discourses relating to multiculturalism. When looking at such navigations by artists of colour these scholars address the question of whether we should view artists as limited by these material and immaterial barriers related to race, or - to see these navigations as practice of their creative agency (qtd. in Pegley 101).

Conversations regarding artists expressing mixed identities in their music and music projects is incredibly topical for this research. While some of the artists in this project spoke of clear plurality in their identities and music, I would like to posit that all of the artists in this project have plural identities one way or another. Attempts to simplify the creative output of artists of colour to static, monolithic and particular ideas are indeed bound to come across issues. In the following chapter, I explore why this unrealistic expectation persists.

Morris, Hirji and D'Amico unveil how their subjects' music-making practices can be read as reflections of their "plural" or "hybrid" identities. Morris's subjects employ their keen understanding of being "outside" and "inside" of mainstream Francophone Canadian society to use "an adaptive and collaborative musical language of communication" as shown in their choices for musical composition and collaboration (51). Meanwhile, Hirji concludes her findings by underscoring fusions' music ability to foster and voice "hybrid identities" (334). She states the music created by the South Asian fusion artists "filled a vacuum in terms of cultural expression in Canada" (334). Furthermore, it allowed musicians "to connect with their heritage but in a modern context, in a way that worked for them" (Hirji 334).

Hirji and D'Amico also touch on artists whose works were a direct addressal of limitations connected to multiculturalism. With the continued violent disenfranchisement of Black people in Canada, D'Amico shows how first-generation youth used artistic expression to "write Black Canadian stories into the larger framework of the Canadian state", making a "platform to critique the limitations of multiculturalism" (262). The artists studied did this by appropriating the "Cool Pose" archetype from Black rap in the US and adapted it to voice their own "plural" identities of being Black and Canadian (D'Amico 258). Some examples she uses are the merging of "Cool Pose" with Caribbean slang, references of geographic sites in Canada and sampling of Canadian rock music which make visible Canadian Black experiences (D'Amico 274). Rappers also expressed their feelings of disenfranchisement and called out racism in Canadian society in their lyrics (D'Amico 280).

While not as direct, Hirji found that her artists' work was situated in "a place in between pride and protest that was still political" (331). She gives the example of a singer who put out a song and music video criticizing those in the older generation of her South Asian community who said that her English lyrics made her white-washed (333). Meanwhile some of Hirji's female musicians expressed pride in being a contemporary South Asian role model (333). In both studies these artists created in reaction to limitations they face.

Motives to be economically viable can also be seen as navigations of multiculturalism. In both Hirji and Morris's work they write that their subjects are highly aware of their positions as racial minorities and that this is exemplified in how they present their music. One of Hirji's subjects shared how the production of her music, which she describes as "exotic pop music", was done in order to tailor to her different audiences (327). Observation of western-influenced composition by musicians in Morris's study also shows an awareness of what types of cultural presentation will bring economic viability for their Canadian audience (54).

Whether it's finding the best mode to voice their identity, or directly speaking against limitations in their industry or adapting their expression to best suit their audiences - what was found in all three studies was that artists were constantly breaching boundaries of socially constructed notions of otherness in ways that suited them. I find Hirji's citation of journalist Gautam Malkani regarding his sentiments on cultural crossovers in music in the UK context rather productive. Malkani boldly suggests loosening rigid understandings of what "good multiculturalism" looks like and to see fusion creations in music by second- and third-generation immigrants as successes of multiculturalism (Qtd in Hirji 323). I would like to entertain this notion in my own work. Hirji argues that hybrid musical forms have the potential "to adapt to the needs of the next generation, including the desire for identity and belonging", we can see the navigations detailed in these three works by artists of colour as having similar potential (320). Much like what I am attempting to do, Hirji, Morris and D'Amico not only centre music artists of color as primary sources of knowledge, but all point to the richness of artist navigations as ways for us to better understand a contemporary, robust and more nuanced notion of Canadian belonging.

We can locate these navigations as coming from the 'third space', or defined by Homi Bhabha as the "hybrid gap, which produces no relief, that the colonial subject takes place, its subaltern position inscribed in that space of iteration" (Qtd. in Hirji 319). Bhabha's concept of the 'third apace' recurs in both Pegley and Hirji's work. While Bhabha's description of the "third space" is quite abstract in its definition, I prefer Hirji's simplification of the concept as in "an in-between or interstitial theoretical space that emerges out of the shadows cast by more dominant forces" (319).

Pegley and Hirji utilise Bhabha's theoretical concept to discard the notion that artists simply either have agency or are subject to greater political power schemes. More importantly, they use the concept to refute the notion that people of colour either speak from the dominant culture or that of their "origins". Pegley argues that "This rich, hybrid space of the 'in between' is where Canadian youth carve out a piece of their identity not despite but because of the contradictions and tensions that they have inherited" (111). Hirji acknowledges as well that while the "third space" may not be "a space of promise and potential", to some even an oppressive space, hybridity that informs the subject position here has the ability to disrupt "our critical strategies" (319).

This framework has its drawbacks. Morris challenges Bhabha's theory and asks her readers to reconsider the construct of hybridity itself. Similar to Pegley and Hirji, Morris

acknowledges the complex racial dynamics faced by her subjects however she also argues for the inquisitive creativity of artists:

> Importantly, the "organic energy and open-endedness" of individual agency must not be shunted to the side by the realistic recognition of the larger societal constraints against which such individuals act, for to do so is not only unduly (but popularly) pessimistic, but also presents an incomplete, unfair, and inaccurate model of transcultural interactions (66)

As Pegley, D'Amico, Hirji and Morris all show, their subjects are not simply limited by larger racial discourses nor are they completely able to create away from them. She criticizes the cultural studies' understanding of hybridity as "hegemonic" in its nature because hybridity still describes a meeting of "Self and Other" or notion of duality (51). Morris contends that in reality the musicians that took part in her study yielded an "organic aesthetic result", creatively and playfully "piercing" such boundaries (72). One that is new and its own "unified whole of nestled parts in an endless process of becoming nothing other than its own organic and authentic self" (72) (74).

Morris's reconsideration of this framework should be noted in the context of this project. The interviews carried out in this thesis reveal how artists create, specifically how their creation process in conversation with larger discourses is indeed complex, dynamic and not always straightforward. Such complexity cannot be adequately understood solely applying ideas of a "third space". While application of Bhabha's term has been productive to this subject area, for my own research I will be moving away from his concept and applying a similar to Morris to better understand the "organic aesthetic results" of artists' work. In Chapter 5 I demonstrate how Morris's framework can help us better understand how cultural identity informs creativity and the influences of dominant race discourses.

Contributions to the Literature by Handing the Mic to the Mosaic (HMM)

As these scholars have shown, there are a number of ways that multiculturalism comes up in music artists of colours' cultural identity as well as music-making practices. The above-mentioned literature also shows us how the experience of multiculturalism largely varies from artist to artist. After reviewing these works, I found that there are still a number research questions that have yet to be investigated within this subject area.

The aim of my work is to contribute to the conversation on how music artists of colour are affected by Canada's multicultural ideology by looking into some areas that I believe will further enrich our understanding. I will be introducing the following sites of research to the current academic discussion: music artists of colour in white-predominant genres, widened multi-city focus, and lastly modern modes of music promotion and distribution including work done by artists related to music but not directly a part of music production itself. Broadly, I am interested in how music artists' understanding of themselves, specifically the racial and cultural aspects, affects how they go about their music making practices. Furthermore, how state discourses of multiculturalism permeate these processes.

The scope of this project in regards to subject demographics is wider than past works that also focused on individual artist experience via qualitative interviews. This aspect proved to be fruitful because it widened the exposure to music artists from a variety of different ethnic backgrounds as well as music genres. In addition, some of the artists were in genres typically labeled as white. As well in some cases the artists intentionally or unintentionally did not mention race in their music projects. In Chapter 5 I explore how these different factors affected how multicultural discourse came up in artists works.

My project adds to the available analyses by connecting insights across Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. At the same time, it acknowledges that, due to its qualitative approach, it is difficult to accurately compare how the effects of multiculturalism vary between the three cities. With this in mind, in Chapter 5 I focus on the complexities and nuances of the navigation of individual artists and their relation to their specific music scenes.

After my review of the existing literature I had pressing questions regarding the changing ways that music is shared today. While works like Pegley's and D'Amico touched on TV broadcasting and radio exposure, I wondered how my findings would differ given the emergence of music streaming services as well as social media as means for accessing music and promotion. While this was not the primary focus of my study some artists did speak about aspects of their music making process not covered in past works such as revenue earned from music streaming services and as well as collaborations, they were a part of with other artists of colour that had started over social media.

Another area not touched on in the literature reviewed above is work artists do outside of the actual music production itself. A couple of the artists I spoke took part in initiatives that were still music related. For example, some had formed music collectives with other artists of colour or did informal mentoring to young artists of colour. In the chapter 5 I show how these efforts also reveal much about how multicultural discourse functions within Canada's music industry.

Perhaps most importantly my work seeks to answer what kind of critical analysis work can be achieved through research-creation versus using a more traditional research approach.

Mediography

There are a number of media pieces as well as literary works that oriented my own audio media project. These pieces exhibit a thoughtful presentation of narratives by underrepresented voices. They offer an indirect and demonstrative critique of multiculturalism.

As mentioned previously, my choice to focus on musical artists was influenced by the works of Tara Rodgers. Rodger's book *Pink Noises* features a collection of interviews with women in electronic music. She begins her work by pointing out the lack of women represented in the musical genre and the ongoing erasure of their historical contributions (Rodgers 6). The interviews were documented in their conversational context and she allowed for her subjects to have editorial oversight (Rodgers 4). I find these choices rather productive in her goal to make audible the ignored and erased (or "pink noise"). The format of this podcast series is heavily

influenced by the methods of Rodgers, first and foremost in how I also offer my subjects editorial oversight.

My media piece follows a very similar format to the two-part segment by The New York Times podcast Still Processing titled "Asian-Americans Talk About Racism, and We Listen". In this segment the show's hosts wanted to explore anti-Asian racism. To do so they broke away from their regular talk-show format to feature a montage of Asian Americans speaking about their own experiences (Morris and Wortham "Asian-Americans Talk About Racism, and We Listen"). Commentary on racism and cultural identity is compelled through audio recordings of personal narratives, a method deployed in my own podcasts. The stories are edited in a way that creates a coherent narrative arc, yet intentionally leaves the listener with nuanced and complex ideas about American identity. In chapter 5 I discuss my own process of compiling interview responses together and some of the challenges I faced when trying to form a narrative arc in my podcasts.

Building from Past Works

The works of Faiza Hirji, Kim Chow Morris, Jeremy Strachan, Karen Pegley and Francesca D'Amico demonstrate that indeed the music industry is a rich site for studying the effects of multicultural ideology. Through their respective studies they not only show the ways that music artists of colour can be affected by racial politics but also draw critical attention to the idea of Canada being a welcoming, culturally diverse yet unified state. In the following chapter I dive deeper into the historical beginnings of this notion.

This being said I am inspired by the critiques carried out with a more research-creation approach such as in Rodger's book and Still Processing's series. I believe much can be commented on through bringing off-centre voices to the forefront of my work.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

This podcast series and interview analyses are guided by Himani Bannerji's book *Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Racism*, Rinaldo Walcott's book *Black Like Who?* as well as Critical Race Theory (CRT). These works attempt to make sense of the phenomenon that is Canadian multiculturalism, more importantly the dissonances within it. These works address questions such as *how can Canada be a white and a multicultural state all at once?* And in regards to Canada's music scene: *How can there be multicultural policy supporting multiculturalism yet artists find themselves subjected to pigeonholing and stereotyping through the very same policy?*

Multiculturalism as an Active Political Ideology

The Canadian Parliamentary Information and Research Service defines multiculturalism in three ways: descriptively, "by the presence of people from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds," as policy that manages diversity, and lastly, in an ideological sense as "consisting of a relatively coherent set of ideals on the celebration of Canada's cultural diversity" (Brosseau and Dewing 1). Bannerji and Walcott work's dig deep into the roots of Canadian multicultural ideology, explaining that instead multiculturalism is rooted in colonialism and therefore it was not made to serve people of colour. Rather it was made to control their visibility and in extension, their conditions of belonging to the nation-state.

As case studies in the previous chapter show, multiculturalism seldom matches with the lived realities of people of colour in Canada. Bannerji calls multiculturalism in Canada "a central pillar in its ideological state apparatus", necessary to make sense of the deep fissures in the population (96). She asks us to face the "dark side" of multiculturalism, an angle that, for those who are on the receiving end of the state's power, is "all too central to be pushed aside" (105). Canada is a nation-state started as a white settler colony that aspires to be a liberal democracy (Bannerji 94). Such an ideology was necessary to legitimize Canada as an authentic nation and to regulate sentiments of Quebec separatism (Bannerji 104).

A key aspect of multicultural ideology is the nation's "origin story", or as Walcott refers to it, "discourse of heritage". This is the notion that "because community is understood as the public qualities of language, culture and ethnicity, official multicultural policies at both the federal and provincial level support this idea through a discourse of heritage—in Canada heritage always means having hailed from somewhere else" (Walcott 118). As CRT scholar Milner S. Ball points out, there is a "sensitive dependence upon initial conditions" when it comes to a nation-state's narrative (2317). With the peoples of Canada lacking in the joined same-ness of these qualities, they are joined under a different story: one of the two Founding Peoples. These two Founding Peoples (the French and English) are themselves from somewhere else and racialized "Others" are written as off-centre. Walcott argues that the discourse "functions as one of the most important points of governmentality of Canadian national identities" as it attempts to define an individual's belonging to the nation (135).

Multiculturalism is used as a way of "making sense" of the Anglo-Franco hegemonic struggle for power all whilst also attempting to soundly incorporate the original peoples whose land was taken and the 'rest of us' (Bannerji 92). Unifying over difference- multiculturalism becomes our "identifiable ideological core" or "national identity" making the visibility of non-

white people as intrinsic to its very definition (Bannerji 109). As Bannerji puts it for people of colour: "on the one hand, by our sheer presence we provide a central part of this distinct pluralist unity of Canadian nationhood; on the other hand, this centrality is dependent on our difference" (96).

Multiculturalism as a political ideology is incredibly persuasive. I posit that its most effective maneuver is the way that it neutralizes our perception of power inequalities. This is seen in the way cultural diversity is worked into multicultural language. The Canadian Parliamentary Information and Research Service definition is an excellent example of this. Multiculturalism in Canada is often conflated with the sheer presence of people from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Bannerji cautions her readers against this very conflation which tries to equate "difference" to harmonious "diversity" (96). Evoking the image of Canada as a cultural mosaic ignores the inferiority that is attached to those that are different and othered (Bannerji 97).

If we consider the arguments of Bannerji, Walcott and Ball, suddenly the definition provided by Canadian Parliamentary Information and Research Service seems heavy with implications concerning the conditions of this celebration of diversity. For myself, theorists such as Bannerji and Walcott offer a sense of healing for conflicting feelings towards pro-multicultural attitudes via their explanations that ideological violence enacted on racially marginalized folks is normalized with the very same narrative of "Canada as a benevolent, caring and tolerant country that adapts to "strangers" so that strangers do not have to adapt to it" (Walcott 119). Such acknowledgments lead the way for rejections of these popular attitudes on multiculturalism and towards seeking new ones that better answer to the experiences of people of colour.

Multiculturalism and its Dissonances in Music

As I was completing my interviews in Montreal and preparing to head to Toronto, a theme of limitation expressed by artists when it came to venues and record labels understanding their music projects arose. Specifically, artists in Montreal spoke of interactions they had had in the industry in where their projects were not understood completely or deemed not marketable. Such findings on limitations were similar to those of D'Amico, Hirji and Morris. I knew that this was important but at the time had difficulty understanding how it fit in the larger realm of multicultural ideology.

To make sense of why such barriers exist, I draw on Walcott's use of diasporic sensibilities and his idea of "elsewhere," where he theorizes the source of dissonances in multiculturalism:

> When the narratives of the nation-state lead one outside the borders of the nation, the tensions of belonging, of not-being-quite-citizen are significantly different from a diaspora sensibility producing an elsewhereness. The nation-state's heritage discourse, which is steeped in static, transparent discourses of cultural artifact, are simultaneously relevant to my argument and to why folks choose an elsewhere. A desire for elsewhere is conditioned by a partial refusal of nation-state ethnic governmentality. (134)

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Here Walcott provides two definitions to his term "elsewhere". The first is the one that comes from diasporic sensibilities- where people in the diaspora creatively imagine an "elsewhere", that is greater than the confines of the nation-state. The second elsewhere is where the nation-state imagines racialized "others" are from, a place that is outside of its borders.

This unpacking of multiculturalism and its terms of belonging can help us postulate why music artists of colour are faced with audiences and industry professionals that do not understand their music. If the dominant Canadian narrative is one that is white, where racialized others are written as off-centre, this could partly explain why such areas in the music industry lack an infrastructure that knows how to recognize and support their projects. As Bannerji states, the "whiteness in the "self" of "Canada's" state and nationhood," it is unnamed and accepted as universal (111). A direct example of this can be found in Hirji's study where South Asian artists were turned away from mainstream venues for being "too ethnic" (333). Similar to Hirji as well as D'Amico's findings, some artists in this study faced barriers from cultural gatekeepers for reasons of being not "palatable" or "relatable" enough. While such terms may seem vague at first glance, my theoretical approach identifies them as part of an unquestioned white framework for understanding musical artistry. In other words, they result from a trickling down of nation-state imaginings of what is default, and therefore, recognized and able to be understood.

Walcott's work also makes sense of static representations of people of colour that lead to stereotyping and narrowcasting in music. Building off the ideas of Gayatri Spivak, he argues that multiculturalism as a nation state narrative creates "ethnic static performance" of belonging in which "English and French Canada continue to change while others fictitiously remain the same" (138). This reasoning also helps us understand why instances of pigeon-holing for artists of colour occur in D'Amico's and Morris's study. Walcott's descriptions of how culture is treated in multiculturalism also draw similarities with Morris's findings on traditional Chinese musicians:

> Culture is not something that can be preserved nor conserved. Multiculturalism offers two kinds of positions: reverence and conservation/preservation of culture. Such positions are deeply implicated in identity politics. Sacred temples of culture are fabricated and used to conceal our "cross-cultural resonance."° Us/Them positions are articulated and imagined communities made pure and uncontaminated by their heritable traits. (139)

A static view of culture becomes means for recognizing the other in multicultural Canada and hence shapes how we perceive music by people of colour. People of colour are made visible with heritable traits that further the view that they are- "Others" and eliminates the possibility of "cross-cultural resonance". This manifests in a socially constructed difficulty to recognize plural identities that are anything besides static, (in some cases as simple as just being non-white and Canadian) as having the necessary traits to be sellable, i.e. authenticity and palatability. In Morris's study, both those creating and promoting the music as well as its admirers relied on the appealing static recognized image of traditional Chineseness. As previously discussed, we can see multicultural moves as also being present in the implementation of multicultural policy in the CRTC and its "urban music" category. Administrative categories such as these objectify the groups they were made for and more importantly make a niche for "those who are otherwise undesirable, unassimilable and deeply different" (Bannerji 117).

Much like what my research project aims to demonstrate, Walcott brings his readers to appreciate the "pleasurable impurity of Caribbean/black popular culture in Canada" and note the political subversions in it (133). He provides examples of how Caribbean artists use cross cultural references and states that this set of practices calls to question "origins and heritage as foundations for identity claims" (139).

Why research the cultural identities and music making practices of music artists of colour for political meaning, especially considering that not all music artists of colour are political or even discuss race issues in their work? As Walcott answers in the case of Caribbean/Black popular culture in Canada, given the impossibility of its very existence by multicultural ideology, this means that its possibility is one we can read as speaking to a political realm (135). As Walcott and Bannerji have elaborated, the current discourse of multiculturalism was not one created to voice the lived realities of racialized "others" in Canada. Through this project I hope to showcase a version of multicultural reality that has been, as Walcott puts it, "conditioned by nation-state governmentality" as well as diasporic sensibilities (142).

Applying Theory to Podcast Creation

The creation aspect of this project applies the Critical Race Theory (CRT) method of counter storytelling or "naming one's own reality" (Delgado and Stefancic 462). CRT originated from the United States in the 1970s, following the civil rights movement as a way to intersect analysis of race, racism and the American Law (Delgado and Stefancic 461). Very broadly, it argues that "structures and institutions are primarily responsible for the maintenance of racial inequality" (Berry and Candis 3).

In CRT counter storytelling is seen as a method for resisting, challenging, and "supplementing" America's dominant and monolithic story of origins (Ball 2281). Furthermore, many CRT theorists consider the main obstacle of racial reform to be majoritarian mindsets. Counter-storytelling reveals the "contingency, cruelty, and self-serving nature" of dominant ways of thinking (Delgado and Stefancic 462). By highlighting multiple stories, i.e. othered accounts of "Canadianness", my work aims to indirectly disaffirm the singular story of Canadian multiculturalism.

As mentioned, my podcast series hands the microphone to specifically to voices that explained are othered and not audible in state multiculturalism. The interviews in this series are prominent examples of contradictions in multicultural ideology: one hears some that are discontent with multiculturalism, some that are indifferent while others speak of a love of Canada's embrace of cultural diversity. These seemingly contradictory accounts bring out my creative intent.

I wanted to employ the intimate medium of podcasting to add to the bank of media works that are counter narratives, to state multiculturalism. Telling an account of race relations in Canada hosted by racialized "Others" immediately lends itself to complexity. In this sense, this project is also informed by my own personal (often challenged) desire to accept and recognize my own identity being a mixed-race second-generation immigrant. A rejection of static understanding of race or not essentializing myself to just a collection of heritable traits is something that has happened overtime. In fact, an acceptance of plurality - of an identity that is

all "Canadian" but not-so "Canadian" at once is one that is still morphing and will continue to develop.

Chapter 4: Methodology

For my methodology I wanted to build from personal experiences dealing with racism and coming to terms with popular ideas of multiculturalism in Canada. Both my interviews and the podcast series are meant to be demonstrative. By centering people of colour as sources of knowledge on multiculturalism I am forcing both my readers and listeners towards a critical re-evaluation of a concept that is too often accepted as "common sense" (Bannerji 115).

Chapman and Sawchuk's modes of research-creation somewhat describe how my methods answer my research question. The first half of this project involved qualitative interviews of music artists of colour and recording the audio for both the analysis and podcast series. The second half was the production of the podcast series; mixing the responses together and determining what narratives I wanted to foreground talking to these 11 music artists. Together these processes can be considered "research-for-creation" *and* "creative presentations of research" as they involve both the gathering of ideas and concepts as well as a "presentation of traditional academic research in a creative fashion" (Chapman and Sawchuk 15;18).

Interviews

Interview style

I chose to centre my thesis project around qualitative interviews because I felt it best suited my research question. My choice to do interviews also came from my past experience as a radio coordinator for a show on disability justice. In my previous work I was consistently reminded of the importance that personal narratives had in understanding societal issues.

To understand how multiculturalism affects the cultural identities and music-making practices of music artists of colour the interviews were done in a "semi-structured life world format" (Kvale 8). This format is defined by Kvale as having "the purpose of obtaining descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena" ("Introduction to Interview Research" 8). In this project I wanted to see what we could learn about multiculturalism from reflecting on the experiences of music artists of colour. Some of the leading questions I posed include, "How do you feel about Canada being described as a cultural mosaic?" and "What is it like to make music cultural spaces for yourself and others?". I used the "Rodgerian approach" for my follow-up questions, which Kvale describes as encouraging subjects to further elaborate in cases where they express mixed feelings by repeating their statements in the form of questions ("Conducting an Interview" 5).

Aside from the recorded main interview portion, I also carried out pre-interviews and debrief afterwards with my subjects. In the pre-interview subjects were debriefed on the nature of the project, ethics procedures and then asked if there was anything they did not want to be discussed as well as if they consented to being asked about their cultural background in the recorded interview portion. These questions were important to me to further align with the project's aim to focus on the narratives of people of colour, specifically allowing them to identify themselves culturally.

For the purpose of my research, I chose to interview artists that met following four criteria:

I. Identify as a person of colour.

II. Must be based out of Montreal, Toronto or Vancouver

III. Must have established their music career enough that to have made significant interactions with local music scenes and the music industry

IV. Must not identify as Indigenous to Canada. This was done to focus the project's scope on diasporic people of colour

Included in the project were also individuals that identified as half-white as well as those who were white-passing (could be perceived as "white" even though they are not). The third criteria, refers to individuals who have developed their music career enough that they have some awareness of how they are perceived as a music artist by their audiences. Indigenous artists were not covered in this research in order to focus the scope of the project. While the topic of Indigenous music artists and Canadian multiculturalism is an invaluable one, it is one that deserves to be covered in a whole other project on its own. Below is the list of participants. If the participant was a part of a band their role in the band is listed in brackets:

Montreal

Subject	Musical act(s)	Genre	Interview duration
Peggy Hogan	Hua Li	R&B, Rap	57:47
Yassin Alsalman	Narcy	Rap	30:11
Kwaku Darko-Mensah Jnr	Kae Sun	African alternative, synth-pop, indie folk, R&B and afrobeat.	30:12

Toronto

Artist Name	Musical act (s)	Genre	Interview duration
Ian Kamau	Ian Kamau	Rap	1:09:55
April Aliermo	Hooded Fang (bassist)	Indie Pop/Rock	37:38

	Phèdre (band member)		
Amrit Singh	Noyz	Rap	37:23
Khadijah Payne	DijahSB	Hip Hop/Rap	20:55

Vancouver

Artist Name	Musical act(s)	Genre	Interview duration
Tariq Hussain	Tariq Hussain	Folk-rock	39:50
Farnaz Ohadi	Farnaz Ohadi	Persian Poetry, Flamenco, "Persian Flamenco"	33:51
Kim Villagante	Kimmortal	lyrical flow rap experimental hip-hop electronic soul	38:06
Dan On	Non La (bass & vocals)	QPOC punk, post punk, queercore	22:55

Interview questions

Like the works of Morris, Hirji and D'Amico I looked to the experiences of music artists of colour to investigate how larger discourses about race colour Canada's music scene. My focus on personal perceptions of cultural identity seeks to illuminate: one - how and if multiculturalism affects the artists perception of their cultural identity, two- how it then affects how they express themselves in their music projects, three - how multiculturalism affects their interaction with the music industry and finally how all of these blends together and inform one another.

The interview format therefore reflects these inquiries as well uses the works of Strachan, D'Amico, Pegley, Morris, Hirji and Walcott to address specific areas. The interview had four sections as follows:

    I. General Introduction

   II. Cultural Identity and Multiculturalism

 III. Multiculturalism and Music

 IV. Artist's Specific Works

Interviews began with the artists introducing what they do with music and then, if they consented to it, their cultural background. Beginning with general introduction this allowed for subjects to be eased into the conversation as well as give context for my podcast listeners. "Cultural identity and Multiculturalism" questions allowed me to get context on their own understanding of their identity within Canada. This section was partially informed by the works of Walcott as well as D'Amico and their discussions on feelings of belonging in the nation-state. In the "Multiculturalism and Music" section, I inquired about limitations they found in the music industry related to race and these questions built on D'Amico, Pegley, Morris and Hirji's findings in their own studies.

The works of Strachan, D'Amico, Pegley, Morris, Hirji and Walcott were most useful at directing me to likely sites that multiculturalism effects could be found in the works of the artists. In the "Artist's Specific Work" section they were asked on the specific work that each artist did, especially if it related to race. In this section artists were asked about taglines they used that described themselves or their music racially, collaborations they had with other people of colour, racial content in their lyrics, instances of music "mixing", finally what their thoughts were if they had won any big accolades and if they related it to being a person of colour.

From Interviewing to Podcast Production

While I was not able to look into how multiculturalism affects audience's perception of artists, given my focus I gathered invaluable data on the thought processes that go into how artists understand and present their so-called "cultural selves" in their music (or chose not to) as well as whether or not multiculturalism played a role in this.

The interviewing portion of this project shaped my podcast creation process in a number of ways, namely the decision to add narration and a desire to balance a wide spectrum of viewpoints. With 11 people all answering the same set of questions as well as the large variety in topics covered, I decided after recording the interviews to add narration to guide the listener through the various responses as well as orientate the listener back to the main project question. The artists also varied greatly in their responses and afterwards I wanted to make sure that I compiled the answers in a way that highlighted this heterogeneity.

Chapter 5: What talking to music artists of colour taught me about race in Canada

Music is politically informed and music informs politics. In this project I wanted to show how multicultural policy seeps into our everyday realities as well as focus on the artistic maneuvers by those I spoke to who continue to challenge this hegemonic (and even violent) political ideology. While it has its shortcomings, multiculturalism has, thus far, stayed relevant in spite of changing racial politics in Canada.

How does multiculturalism affect the cultural identities and music-making practices of music artists of colour? As those that have studied this area before me have pointed out, we must first understand what is Canadian multiculturalism and how it functions in society. Multiculturalism on the surface may be defined as a descriptive term, a political ideology and policies that protect and celebrate diversity. If we are to look at its formation and specificities, we learn that state multiculturalism is a discursive and structural method for mediating individuals' place in Canadian society. As discussed in previous chapters, research also suggests that extensions of multiculturalism such as multicultural policies in the CRTC do less to showcase people of colour in Canada and more to frame them in static ways.

Acknowledging this allows us to make sense of why music artists of colour, including those that participated in this project, often come across blatant barriers related to race in their industries. These blockages exist despite occurring in a nation-state that has pride in its multicultural identity and one that provides financial and legislative support to racial diversity in its music.

Prior to starting this project, I predicted that one of the primary ways that multiculturalism would affect music artists of colour was through processes of tokenization. Having personally enjoyed the works of contemporary Canadian music artists such as Lido Pimenta, Cartel Madras, the Weeknd, Nav, Jessie Reyez, Daniel Caesar to name a few and not being a music artist myself, I assumed the issue had less to do with access to popular markets. Rather, I predicted that music artists of color in Canada were essentialized for their racial representation as a kind of "feel-good celebration" and a framing of their national and international success as proof of Canada's acceptance of racial diversity. With this, I hypothesized that major barriers had to do with a hyper-focus on artists' racial identity. However, what past studies and my own show is that answering this research question is much more complex than I anticipated.

In this chapter I discuss how those I spoke to navigated their hyper-(in)visibility as people of colour creating art, how multicultural ideology permeates music industry language around "palatability" and "authenticity", how some artists addressed dissonances of multiculturalism within music infrastructure, how my own positionality came up in this project and lastly how I applied academic criticisms of multiculturalism into my media making process.

Interview Analysis

Analyzing my dataset was indeed a challenge. One of the primary challenges was that unlike the investigations carried out by Hirji, D'Amico and Hirji, I did not focus on a specific ethnic group or genre. The artists that participated in this project varied greatly across a number of factors including ethnicities, genre, age and amount of time they'd been releasing music. While this did mean they did not share some of the same methods of navigation, I found that this

made the similarities between artists even more pronounced. In this chapter I detail these similarities and reflect on what they say about larger discourses of multiculturalism and race relations in Canada.

Moving away from the "Third Space"

In order to understand my findings, it is helpful to build on theoretical tools that address the complex negotiations of identity and subjectivity of music artists of color. Specifically, I depart from seeing music artists of colour in Canada as creating from the "third space" or from a "hybrid" perspective. While I find Bhabha's concept of the "third space" helpful in understanding that artists can create from a place that is not the dominant one, Morris's challenge of hybridity urges us to take an even further step to recognize the "organic energy and open-endedness" in their navigations. As Bannerji and Walcott detail, recognition of an adjunct and allocated place for ethnic "others" by nation-state is rooted in Canada's colonial beginnings. Thus, locating my understanding of negotiations in such a space would legitimise the colonial epistemological underpinning of the multicultural project. Moreover, under this reasoning, naming an off-centre "third space" may cloud our ability to fully reflect on the understood cultural identities and music-making practices of artists of colour.

Morris argues that hybridity is colonial because of the ways that it presents two "pure" halves joined together. The non-west "side" being one that is unchanging, mystical and originates from far off lands (Morris 57). Such an imagery provoked by this idea of hybridity also leaves no space for "cross-pollination" (Morris 51). I latch onto Walcott's sentiment that multiculturalism was not meant to articulate the racial realities of people of colour in Canada. Therefore, to best make sense of these interviews I take on the notion that "mixed" or "hybrid" is not a condition that some people of colour in Canada have but rather all do. This is because the state version of multiculturalism relies on an unrealistic depiction of people of colour that is static and unchanging. Works touched on in the Literature Review show that people of colour's understanding of their cultural identity is complex and made up of several dynamic layers of cross-culture interactions.

The findings from prior research support the notion that racism is masked by multicultural thinking in music through a set of expectations of how artists should create based on stereotypes and pigeon-holing. My own interviews show a number of ways that artists of colour chose to engage with these expectations.

Navigating Expectations in Multiculturalism

An area which drew a lot of insight was the ways in which artists chose (or chose not) to touch on race in their music-making practices. While I was not expecting every artist to be vocal about race-related topics, what I found interesting was the large variance in this. Amongst the 11 artists I spoke to some did not bring up race at all in their works, some expressed a need to assert themselves to avoid parts of their identities being erased, and others produced works that were a direct addressal of race-related pigeonholing. While these so-called "navigations" looked very different from artist to artist, reasoning behind this had common threads. In this section elaborate further on these stances and the artists' motivations.

When asked how relevant their cultural identity was to their music both folk-pop lyricist composer Tariq (Vancouver) and rapper DijahSB (Toronto) answered similarly. Tariq responded

that his cultural identity hasn't played much of a part in his music and noted that when listening to his music you wouldn't know he was "of the cultural background". He went on to say that while he notices nowadays people are more willing to put "it" at the forefront, he grew up in a small town in Quebec and felt that he had to blend in. He postulated that this in part contributed to lack of cultural identity aspects in his music as the mentality was hard to shake off. DijahSB shared that while cultural identity was relevant to their music, they didn't want it to be their "staple". They explain:

> "I am proud that someone that looks like me or has the same feelings as me can look at me and be proud that I am doing my thing and that gives them the lane to do their thing, but I don't want it to be the reason that people consume my music or why people will be on my side. I want it to be because they legitimately enjoy my music. Then it becomes a politics thing and then you get put into a box and there is no way to be outside that box"

When asked if he thought about race after winning certain music accolades, Tariq clarified that he wouldn't want to think that he earned an award because he was "of a diverse background" and that awards should be recognized for his art and music.

Relating these responses to larger frameworks of Canadian multiculturalism, I reference the works of D'Amico and her concept of hypervisibility. Hyper-(in)visibility refers to the simultaneous including and purging of Blackness in national memory (258). D'Amico mentions that rap practitioners have criticized the "Urban music" category for allowing "the surveillance and hyper-visibility" of Black bodies while at the same time "authorizing their hyper-invisibility by ambiguously ghettoizing" (269). This can help us understand the "acknowledgment" of artists' racial identity that those in this study were aware of and their wish to avoid being hyper visible. While not limited to just Canadian artists, D'Amico's concept of hyper-(in)visibility is productive in helping us understand, how this over acknowledgment can be understood as related to Canada's brand of racism (expressed through various forms of othering) and mirrors a history of national discourse that "sees" and recognizes people of colour without actually *seeing* them.

Tariq's mentality to "blend in" or not act in ways that would render his race more visible than it has to be, in a sense, is a push away from a perceived hyper-(in)visibility. We can see this also with DijahSB's desire for race not to be the reason people support their music. Both artists voice a hesitance to make their race more visible to avoid an over-focused attention on race and away from their performance as artists.

While taking a very different stance on including race in their work, rapper Hua Li from Montreal also commented on this over focus on race when discussing the unexpected ways that race comes up in her work:

> It (race) really starts to colour everything. Which I am okay with, on many levels, because I think obviously my cultural identity colours everything in my life but there is that sense of rearticulated difference that happens each time that occurs, because again - a white artist gets to just sit around and talk about their creative genius. Which I think is very important about my art too, but my creative genius is always couched in like, 'wow look at this very special way you're combining cultures' and it's also like, 'Yea well I am also like a great musician' [laughs]...In short answer I don't know that there's anything

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that not obvious that I do, but that people don't think of this other work that comes with presenting ideas around cultural difference"

Multiculturalism is not directly referenced in these instances however we can see its effects if we are to think about the ways that multicultural framing of people of colour is one that overemphasizes race. What these artists highlight is why one may choose to not engage as a way to showcase their complexity as an artist in general.

When talking to rapper Kimmortal in Vancouver they were considering not mentioning their race when providing their artist bios for events. Despite wanting to go into music after meeting Filipino political activists who shared their stories as well as writing raps that told of their experiences as a queer Filipinax settler, they pondered what it would mean if they did not write anything at all. They explained that while they did not want to be "so boxed in" but on the other hand they did not want to "deny" they are who they are. Kimmortal, Ian Kamau (Toronto), Kae Sun (Montreal) and April Aliermo (Toronto) all spoke of the necessity to assert their cultural identity. Rather than completely disengage with it, these artists explained how talk of cultural identity arises in their music-making practices, whether they like it or not, and how they address it. Singer-songwriter Kae Sun spoke of his discomfort with notions of identity. When asked what was the relevancy of his cultural identity to his music he mentioned:

> "It only is [relevant] when you're opposed. It only becomes necessary because there is something wrong. It only becomes something to emphasize because there's...because the opposite is happening. Someone is trying to strip you of something, of your humanity, based on the way you are culturally constructed or racially constructed. That's when it stands out. In that sense I do experience it quite a bit in the music industry and within wider society"

The frankness in Kae Sun's tone demonstrates how disruptive forced mentions of cultural identity can be. Likewise, when asked about the significance of speaking about race in his music, artist Ian Kamau answered that it was not important other than the fact that "you can get erased" and added that he felt that that shouldn't be the case. These sentiments show how static frameworks and hyper-(in)visibility can feel inescapable.

By looking at these artists' work we can see ways that they problematize popular multicultural discourse both intentionally and unintentionally. An excellent example of this is the lyrics of Kimmortal's song "K I am mortal" which they recite in the Vancouver episode:

> "Never got an invitation to settle in flannel, my people working overtime - pattern of survival, white feminist rhetoric embedded in the fabric, fashion hand-crafted by these colonized habits. You like me at 100? How you like my 0? This fire like your fire, but this my sun in flight mode"

They explained that the song problematizes Filipino Canadian identity, the notion of "taking up space" from queer coloured communities and the borrowing of Black culture as a rapper. They explained that this technique of layering was done with humour to show a complicatedness. "K I am mortal" is interesting to view as a counter narrative as it not only voices a racialized narrative that is far from static, Kimmortal is unapologetically critical of their own communities of colour as well as their relationship to Black culture. Such a commentary speaks alternatively to the

image of "distinct pluralist unity of Canadian nationhood" and the romanticised idea of Canada's cultural mosaic unified in its diversity (Bannerji 96).

In a less overt example, Ian Kamau explained that race came up in his music organically. He stated that he never made a decision to talk about Blackness in his work but when he decided to talk about his personal experiences it came up naturally. Growing up in a Caribbean household where his parents were two of the first Black filmmakers in Canada, he told me how this influenced him:

> "Watching stories being made about people who were like me and not like me made me think a lot more about who I was... if you watch people speaking about themselves a lot then naturally you will begin to think about yourself in that way"

Ian Kamau explained that it was only when he went back and listened to his old music did, he realize that he did not have any music that spoke specifically about being Caribbean and from there decided to incorporate it. Ian Kamau's reasons for mentioning race in his work are complex and reflect more closely processes of becoming and developing in one's subjectivity. They contradict the static depictions of people of colour in Canada's cultural mosaic imagery (Sheikh 1). Not only does Ian Kamau talk of how his work reflect changing understandings of his cultural self, but also in this response he speaks of a sense of awareness of himself in relation to others.

"K I am mortal" and the ways that cultural identity comes up in Ian Kamau's work shows how we must move past describing artists of colour as expressing themselves from the "third space". As Morris found with her own subjects, what Kimmortal and Ian Kamau mention are works that speak from both the so-called "inside" *and* "outside" of white western dominant culture. However, to frame it again in spatial metaphors would be to leave the complexity as partially explained. The artistic works of artists like Kimmortal and Ian Kamau are better described as an "aesthetic organic result" (Morris, 72). When we start to reject the notion that people of colour are unchanging and fixed figures in Canada's cultural mosaic, we can better to note the ways they intentionally and unintentionally move across socially constructed modes of existence.

April Aliermo addressed race and culture with a slightly different attitude. April Aliermo, who is the bassist for rock band Hooded Fang and member of electronic duo Phèdre, explained that subtly infusing her Filipinax Canadian identity into her work was important to not only "make it hers", but also so that other Filipino Canadians could relate to her work. Such examples of this attitude can be found in her use of sampling Phèdre's songs as well as in showing her grandma playing mah-jong with Filipina dancers in one of her music videos. She shared that her need to be assertive about being Filipinax Canadian is largely due to a lack of representation in music scene she is a part of:

> "But for me just being a Filipina woman on stage in that particular environment is already like a statement, is already saying, 'oh! even though your relationship to this genre and audience is complicated, you can do this too!' When I see a younger Filipina woman moshing in the front, I'm like, "okay this is what I'm doing, I'm doing this for them and this is great." ... When you see that person on stage and you can see they're are looking up to you or relating to you and they are that other odd person of colour in the rock scene, it just like motivates you and drives you"

Therefore, much like Kae Sun, Ian Kamau and Kimmortal, engagement with conversations around race and culture through her work is spurred by external factors. In this case a lack of Filipino representation in the Canadian rock scene. This is rather important to note as the motivations for these artists to speak on their cultural identities in their work are for reasons related to discrimination, exclusion and lack of representation rather than harmonious pluralist unity that is the basis of state multiculturalism. Alongside this, April Aliermo also tries to better representation through her involvement with Kapisan Art Centre as well as mentoring young Filipina artists, queer people of colour and women of colour. Sentiments shared by April Aliermo offer a look into how genre plays into the relationship between an artists' cultural identity and music making practices.

Much like April Aliermo, DJ On described the Vancouver DIY music scene[1] he is a part of as predominantly white but also largely heterosexual. When I spoke DJ On, he was preparing to release his first solo album under his project Non La. He stated that the project was about reclaiming and pushing to the fore his Asian queer identity. Such genres with little to no representation of people of colour expands on the notion of hyper-(in)visibility. Their conversations shed light on racial discourse in music from genres and scenes where there is no representation to begin with. For April Aliermo and DJ On a lack of presence of people in their scene that look like them drives them to challenge it themselves.

Meanwhile the rap genre played into how Noyz (Toronto) and Hua Li (Montreal) expressed their cultural identity in music in a different way. These rappers spoke of how they were drawn to the genre because of its methods for voicing the specificity of one's perspective. Hua Li mentioned that while exposure to hip hop music was sparse at home growing up, the exposure she did have stood out to her:

> "There was a part of me even as a young person that I was like 'oh, here's something in these stories that I identify with more than any other music I've heard. There's something about what's being spoken about here and sonically the way that they are dealing with it that I connect to.'"

Noyz spoke about how he admired the way that rappers like Immortal Technique and Narcy were able to speak about their experiences in an "raw" and "honest" manner. He shared that he was also inspired by rappers such as Nas and Public Enemy that carried out social commentary by linking the past and present to relay what it meant to be Black in America. Noyz has incorporated these techniques into his own work, which he sees as a "natural translation", employing his lyrics to address intergenerational trauma in his Sikh community and to reframe it for the younger generation. Also, a mental health youth educator, Noyz draws on music as a way to highlight and process these repressed and unprocessed traumas. Scholars have long applauded rap's ability to embrace complex and racial identities which is what seems to be a main draw for these artists to create in this genre (Fraley 39).

On the opposite end to Tariq and DijahSB - artists Noyz, Hua Li, Narcy (Montreal), DJ On and Farnaz Ohadi (Vancouver) had overt instances of engaging with race and culture through their work. Similar to Noyz, Narcy spoke of wanting to tell a narrative of his racialized

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[1] Vancouver's DIY Scene, or underground music scene, includes a variety of genres from post-punk to indie-rock to electronic and is most notably known for its challenges finding venues in the city's costly and competitive real estate market (Streeter)

experiences that was both for those in his community and those outside of it. Narcy started out making music that was a reaction the narrative around Muslims in the West during the Iraq War. He explained that since developing as an artist his work has grown into also talking about his experience in the diaspora as "one person in that one larger *non*-monolith group of people". Aside from music, Narcy also directed the music video for the song "R.E.D" by Tribe Called Red, in which he is also featured alongside Yassin Bey (formerly known as Mos Def). In one scene he had a woman give a man a niqab, using humour to confront the viewer with stereotypes. When asked why bring up race in his music, he explained that at the start of his career he felt like he needed to do it and later he did it to set a "template" for Arab youth that he hadn't had at the start of his music career.

Such deliberate reorienting of public narrative based on specific racialized experience can be both seen and heard in the works of Hua Li and DJ On. Both artists express this via their music, musical personas, and accompanying visuals. When I spoke to Hua Li, she had recently released her album *Dynasty,* which she described as an acceptance of her Chinese-ness that she had grown up trying to push away. Throughout Hua Li's project there are a number of ways in which she makes her mixed-race identity visible: from the visuals for *Dynasty,* to her lyrics to the branding of her musical persona. When asked about the tagline she includes in many of her artist bios, "the only half-Chinese, half-militant, half-rapper of your heart" she responded it was a thought-out commentary on understanding dualities:

> "So, what's interesting about the three things in the tagline, is that when I say 'half-Chinese' there is a very real assumption on what the other half is. I would say that most people would tend to assume that the other half is white. There is an interesting implicit bias there already… but then the other two, that's when you start to question duality. 'Half-militant', well what does that mean...and then 'half-rapper', that's just because I sing in a lot of my songs but then people wonder about that too."

Hua Li's deliberate play on people's assumptions about dualities is an excellent example of moving past cultural studies' notion of hybridity. Her tagline not only pokes fun at these assumptions but, with it, she asserts her own understanding of herself. Both Hua Li and DJ On projects' not only address, but disrupt dominant discourse framings of people of colour in the way that they intentionally force the complexities in their identity into the forefront of their musical projects. Such imagery in their projects - being mixed race, queer and Asian unsettles the notions of understanding music artists but also makes mess of the mono-dimensional image of people of colour in Canada's cultural mosaic.

For DJ On Non La carries a similar significance. In line with the project's purpose, the name comes from the Vietnamese word for conical hat and on the album cover the title *Not in Love* is written in Chinese and Vietnamese. DJ On brought up two song examples that related to race from *Not in Love.* One was about the sexual fetishism of Asians he encountered while dating in Vancouver. The second song was about coming out as a person of colour and the lack of understanding from white folks in the queer community about his experience. Such expressions of complex and intersectional perspectives can be seen as going against race-related pigeon-holing. Through their music, artists are able to put out depictions of people of colour that refuse single layered and static understandings. Artists like Noyz, Narcy, Hua Li and DJ On directly challenge these in cheeky and critical ways.

While also discussing topics of race overtly in her work, Farnaz Ohadi's approach was much different than others I spoke to. She created her own genre of music Persian Flamenco, a combination of Persian poetry and Spanish Flamenco. Having been a cover singer prior, she decided she wanted to do something that felt more "authentic" to her. She explained that the genre came from reflecting back on what it means to be Iranian while listening to Iranian music, as well as from her father's love of Flamenco. While the two genres had "exceptional roots between them", the logistics of composing them together took much effort. She explained that the reason for this was that while Flamenco is almost entirely focused on rhythm, Persian poetry is focused on the words. To Farnaz Ohadi, creating these compositions was important because she herself is "half and half". She describes her music as "racial expression" and this can also be heard in her lyrics. In her first album *Bird Dance* she uses the metaphor of a bird in a cage who wants to fly to touch on themes of freedom and tell her personal stories of being a woman in Iran where women weren't allowed to sing in public, immigrating to Canada, race and language issues she faced as well as feelings of depression and belonging.

The spectrum of ways that the artist's touch on race tells us a lot about how dominant state multicultural discourse filters down into everyday society. More importantly we see how it manifests in these artists' relationships with their own creative process, in the industry and their music scenes. While with some artists these lessons on multiculturalism and race are much clearer, these interviews have shown that there is also much to learn from those who choose not to put race at the forefront of their music projects. Departing from not only state definitions of multiculturalism, but also notions of the "third space" allows us to study artists of colour in Canada in their complex and always changing subjectivity.

Racial Implications in "Authenticity" and "Relatability"

"Authenticity" has long been a valued trait in the music industry. What is interesting is how authenticity functions alongside another term associated with the marketability of music acts: "relatability" (other related words mentioned in the interviews were "comprehensiveness" and "palatability"). From my conversations with artists we hear how these traits can carry heavy racial implications. I argue that by the workings of multicultural discourse, these implications are glossed over by such neutral wording, drawing attention away from the fact that, when it comes to race, the Canadian music industry is built on unequal power relations.

Authenticity has long had symbolic value as a way to gauge the quality of a music act alongside the obvious processes of heavy production and commercialization in the music industry. Authenticity sits as a determiner in perceived dichotomies of art versus commerce (Shuker 21). Therefore, the construction of authentic identity by artists and its perception are incredibly informative points for reflection (Coupland 81). When speaking to DijahSB they emphasized its importance, stating their belief that long-lasting success comes from a place of "genuineness" as audiences can "sense it" in the art. Meanwhile, Farnaz Ohadi and Hua Li shared that they were both content with their music projects because of their project's achieved level of "authenticity". In the Montreal episode you can hear Hua Li explaining how her album *Dynasty* signified a place in the development of her music where the connection to her cultural identity had become "authentic and profound".

The pursuit of expressing oneself authentically in music isn't always straight forward especially when it comes to race and culture. Morris cites Sarah Weiss to show how audiences perceive the authenticity of those creating "culturally hybrid music":

> "Sarah Weiss suggests that performers of culturally hybrid music are frequently scrutinized with regard to their perceived "authenticity," and questions "our assumptions about the nature of cultural boundaries and how we feel not only about the results of blending, blurring, de-centering, or otherwise shifting them, but how we use the cultural authenticity of those doing the hybridizing to help us assess the 'quality' or at least our reception of the production" (2008:218)." (74)

In my interviews we can see that this is true not only for audiences but also performers. As well, sentiments shared in my interviews suggest that this also applies to artists of colour not explicitly making "hybrid" music. During my interview with Tariq he talked about wanting to possibly incorporate elements of his cultural background into his music. However, he worried that this would come off as "contrived" and that such an artistic choice would feel "inauthentic" to him. Meanwhile, both April Aliermo as well as Kimmortal voiced a distaste for including aspects of Filipino culture in their art that did not reflect who they were. April Aliermo explained that in doing so Filipino artists can run into the issue of appropriating culture from their own homeland. Kimmortal's song "Jungle" samples the Kulintang, an instrument used by indigenous groups in the Philippines. They explained that at the time of making track the sample was significant in their search for producing an "authentic" sound, but since then felt that the sample exoticizes indigenous Filipino culture. The arguments of Sarah Weiss apply well to these sentiments. As the ones creating Tariq, April Aliermo and Kimmortal are critical in assessing not only how their art will be perceived, but also whether or not such artistic choices would be authentic to themselves.

Connecting Sarah Weiss's argument to Tariq, Kimmortal and April Aliermo's comments bring up valuable points as to what kind of authenticity standards music artists of colour are held up to versus their white counterparts. Standards can have less to do with what feels authentic to the artist, and more to do with what audiences and industry gatekeepers perceive to be authentic artistic output. This also connects to Walcott's notion of multicultural ideology relying on the fact that what makes people of colour distinguishable in multicultural society is their "heritable traits". These comments show how there is an overarching discourse and expectation that artists display heritable traits in their music and that this expectation is oftentimes at disconnect with what feels authentic to them.

Alongside authenticity, reliability was also touched on extensively in the interviews. Tariq's sentiments about success due to being able to resonate and connect with audiences ties in well with the concept of relatability:

> "As an artist you're always trying to figure out how you can make something resonate with people and I think that's always a challenge, especially in a world where there is so much music. Why are there things that really resonate with people and why do other things seem harder to make resonate? I feel like I can make things resonate, to a certain degree. Would I want more resonance? Sure. If I could have more success, I mean success in a way means more people are connected to it. Doesn't always mean that. I think sometimes there are a lot of other elements to success. But I think when you really nail it, when something really resonates it catches on."

Building on Tariq's comment, when I asked Ian Kamau if there were any limitations he faced as a musician of colour that most people wouldn't expect he said that people outside of music don't realize how much tactical efforts are put into getting music to a consumer, for instance targeted advertising and market research. He added that in regards to pop music's mass market, enjoying musical acts needs to be "accessible with as little barriers as possible to most people". Ian Kamau brings up an excellent point by addressing the infrastructures that are between the artist creating the music and the consumer receiving it. His remarks also highlight that within the music industry infrastructure there are processes of selecting, packaging and the presentation of a "relatable" act. Furthermore, that they impact the definitions and outcomes of what is relatable.

While this notion may seem a-political at first glance what some artists pointed out to me was that ideas around what constitutes "relatability", or is considered effectively and easily accessible, can actually be quite exclusionary. When asked about limitations in his music making practices related to race Kae sun responded:

> "There is a deliberate confusion which is violent to me. It's bizarre because in my decade of making music professionally I've been having the same conversation. I've become better at navigating it. I've become better at surviving despite of it, but I don't want to see it exist for other artists. I don't want to see it for exist for women of colour, I don't want to see it for black woman, I don't want to see it for queer folks. It just doesn't need to exist. The deliberate confusion and the question whether art made by people that aren't white can be truly universal, like that's a ridiculous question"

He went on to explain that this "confusion" included artists being told they should make a certain type of music or that their work was not going to resonate. He also named places where subtle limitations occurred, listing publications, the language used by reviewers and bookings as examples. Kae Sun's encounters with this "confusion", i.e. a failure to see marginalized folks' art as universally consumable, adds a layer to understanding this term "relatable" in the music industry. What should be noted is that in the case of Kae Sun, his music project did not include aspects of race and culture, suggesting that this barrier is not just limited to artists of colour who put race and culture at the forefront. Hua Li and Kimmortal's experiences finding proper label representation point to another site in music infrastructure where such "confusion" occurs.

"Confusion" as a barrier in the industry was also touched on in my interviews with Kimmortal and Hua Li. Kimmortal spoke highly of their record label Coax Records, praising the ways that the label's artists were "queering the music industry". Kimmortal stated that finding management that could represent their layered identity had been an "ongoing struggle" and therefore they had been independent for eight years before signing to Coax. Likewise, in the Montreal episode Hua Li can be heard sharing how she had a hard time reconciling with the lack of understanding that the industry had of her music project. She shared that while industry gatekeepers were willing to acknowledge the strength of her work, she has also been told that as a Chinese female rapper her project is too "risky" to market. Sentiments shared by Kae Sun, Kimmortal and Hua Li show how seemingly neutral language of desiring "relatability" and ability to resonate with audiences carry deeper meaning and reveal real issues at the heart of Canada's music industry.

Data from this project expands on the work of D'Amico, pointing to other places where barriers occur. D'Amico demonstrates in her work how, when it comes to Black rappers, the Canadian music industry falls short in providing a conceptual framework and that this translates

to lack of material infrastructure. What some of the sentiments in my interviews suggest is that these industry shortcomings may also extend to those outside of rap as well as to other artists of colour. Despite the few notable internationally successful rappers, D'Amico's argues that they are the anomaly and calls the applauding of Canadian rap success a "smoke screen celebration" clouding the fact that Black music receives "uneven" support (281). Some areas she points to are lack of supporting funds, barrier to industry knowledge and lack of specifically trained industry professionals. These are just some of the reasons that factor into a negative cycle that ultimately equates to an unsustainable urban music structure (D'Amico 281). When chatting with Ian Kamau he stated that Black people are both inside and outside of music citing that while they historically have had influence, those with power making the financial decisions are predominantly white. In our conversation, Noyz told the story of when he was on the jury for a music granting body:

> "There just seemed to be this big blind spot. So, there was a jury of five of us. It seemed like, I was able to contribute when it came to classical music, jazz, rock...but anytime it came to a hip-hop or RnB applicant nobody else on the panel had anything constructive to offer. They kind of would defer it to me."

This story demonstrates how a lack in conceptual framework for understanding artists of colour work can equate directly to a lack in infrastructure support. Similarly, Kae Sun stated that while he was taught industry knowledge such as booking and obtaining funds by a white manager he had had, not having access to such knowledge continues to be a barrier for Black artists. Kae Sun added that the industry is missing "middle" people, such as managers, who carry the same "intent" and understanding as the artists of colour they work with.

Echoing the bafflement expressed by Hua Li on this so-called "confusion", as a researcher with an outside-looking-in perspective, I too wondered how it was possible that music artists of colour still faced such barriers in a nation who celebrates cultural diversity as a central trait. To take apart the issue and ponder it further I refer back to Walcott and Bannerji's arguments on whiteness in multiculturalism. According to Walcott and Bannerji whiteness is in the centre of this nation-state's formation and those that can be grouped and named as "visible minorities" are written onto the periphery (Walcott 118;119) (Bannerji 119). Whiteness is accepted and unquestioned as the universal narrative (Bannerji 111). When artists of colour projects are deemed as not relatable enough or not universally consumable, what is at play in the industry is a template of whiteness hidden by what seems neutral. These artists' remarks highlight an overarching discourse in the industry in a number of areas, revealing the not-so inclusive aspects of Canadian multicultural society.

Perhaps one of multiculturalism's greatest workings is how Canada's central whiteness is consistently unacknowledged. While stories and sentiments shared by project participants concerning barriers, they faced may resemble those shared by music artists of colour in other western nation-states, it is important to understand under what conditions they occur in Canada in particular. One thing that I want to draw both my readers and listeners attention to is that terms like "palatability" and "relatability" are racially charged terms and align with a national history of white supremacy masked by celebrations of cultural diversity. D'Amico argues that preferences to make Black music more "palatable" reflected "the contradictory negotiation that undergirds Canada's goals of inclusiveness: the desire to purge while simultaneously incorporating Blackness" (269). It is from listening to these artists speak about their interactions

with industry professionals and about their creative processes that we learn of the subtle (and not so subtle) instances of managed diversity.

The interviews also touched on how this discourse of appealing to "universal" tastes can pose a barrier to the audiences that artists are trying to attract. For example, DijahSB stated that their target demographic is youth, Black queer youth and Black youth with mental health issues. They voiced frustration over the fact that those in power in the music industry are majority white and that these white industry professionals have many blind spots when it comes to knowing what consumers want. Building off of Kae Sun's comments, they added that more money needs to be put into black labels because, "we're the only ones that kind of get it". Kimmortal and Kae Sun both mentioned in their interviews how bringing in the right audiences can add time and labor that artists must also juggle with economic viability and perfecting their craft. Kae Sun stated that as a Black artist gaining economic viability you must learn to be okay with not only white people "invading your space", but also audiences that are not connected to the cultural experience who are "consuming it and making it obvious that they are consuming it". He explained that for himself and other Black artists this was a losing battle because of the country's "hostility" to Black art. He added that because of this, artists end up catering to such audiences in order to bring in the revenue to sustain artistic intents.

Kae Sun's sentiment also adds layers to traditional notions of "authenticity". While usually an artist is seen as being a "sell-out" and their authenticity fraught when creating for the mainstream, we see in his case how multiple factors are at play. In order to sustain the creation of art that is "authentic" to the artist, in Kae Sun's case, it can become necessary to pay heed to more "corporate" or "universal" tastes. Noyz also spoke to how race can complicate creating authentically. He explained in his interview that while authenticity is a desired trait for one's music project, artists of colour run the risk of being deemed not "relatable" and therefore unlikely to sell if they bring up race. He also shared that after his experience serving on the granting body he now often wonders if certain experiences expressed in his work will be seen as having merit when writing his own grant applications. As my interviews have shown, there is deep irony in this because while naturally an artist may touch on race when sharing their experiences, this could cause them to be pigeon-holed and labeled as only being able to sell to a "niche" market.

In our interview, Hua Li touched on how genre further complicates the role of race when being "authentic". Hua Li spoke of her awareness of being a Chinese artist in hip hop and her personal reflections on creating authentically:

> "The deeper I got in terms of understanding the history of hip hop and what's possible with this culture, it made me engage with my family's culture even more. I think that was the most authentic way for me to present myself in this genre and is the thing that will allow me to *not* Blackify myself to be a hip-hop participant. Which is not something I believe anyone should do to participate in hip hop, but I think is something that can so easily happen and I see this often in East Asian rappers. Where it is kind of like... where is that line between being an authentic joyful participant in hip hop culture and cultural appropriation? And it can be quite blurry."

For Hua Li the balancing act of creating authentically and being economically viable is further informed by the desire to not emulate Blackness. She added that this also came up as a nuanced industry barrier as what is understood as "comprehensible" and therefore marketable for

audiences of this genre, is one of Black performance. Ultimately, what these interviews suggest is a lack of conceptual frameworks in the music industry to understand music artists of colour projects and furthermore that this lack is mirrored in actual infrastructure.

Holes in Music Infrastructure and Taking Matters into Your Own Hands

My focus on music works outside of exclusively music production illuminates the ways that some artists were building infrastructures (in some cases rerouting existing ones) and support networks within their artist of colour communities. Kae Sun preferred not to disclose what groups and projects with artists of colour he was a part of but did share that it felt exciting to make cultural spaces. He told of how he and those he worked with used funds earned from federal grants to go on tour in venues that were Black specific and better reflected the artists' intent. He advised that the key to sustaining artistic intent and economic viability was to maintain a sense of "borderlessness" and "morphing quickly", adding that "survival of Black culture is a testament to how quickly it morphs".

Meanwhile April Aliermo and Noyz had done work in their communities to provide support networks for developing young artists that they did not have at the start of their careers. April Aliermo oftentimes act as a "informal mentor" to Filipina youth, queer youth of colour and young women of colour; doing things such as using her connections to provide them with exposure. Before he had created his own workshop program teaching youth about mental health through hip hop, Noyz helped to host performance spaces for young creatives who did not have a platform in his Brampton community. These efforts also address a gap in terms of the sharing of industry knowledge to music artists of colour.

Another example of the artists building infrastructures and support networks that I would like to highlight is Narcy and Kimmortal's involvement in creating collectives with other artists of colour in their respective cities. Narcy is the co-founder of We Are The Medium collective which was made as a "bouncing point" and networking support community for artists of colour. Kimmortal formed the 333 Collective with fellow Vancouver music acts Missy D and JB the First Lady after they noticed they were all getting booked for the same gigs. Together they started writing raps that were in conversation with each other.

By no means are these interventions a one fix solution to the barriers I have discussed here. Greater systemic changes are also necessary to better support artists of colour. However, these initiatives are excellent examples of what interventional infrastructural changes should be occurring, ones that maintain artist intent and are carried out with a deep understanding of industry barriers that artists of colour face.

(Unsuccessful) Attempts to Remove Subjectivity

Besides the artists, questions of what my own subjectivity had to do with the project arose during the interview and editing process. Having been confronted by race-related pigeonholing in my own life I was worried that I would accidentally do the same to those I spoke to. I also worried that I would be projecting my own conceptual frameworks onto others and run the risk of not fully allowing the artists to elaborate on their perspectives.

It may come as no surprise that I soon realized that I could not remove myself from this project. This first became apparent to me when I was interviewing the artists and a couple times

the artists addressed me specifically. I realized that I myself am continually reacquainting myself with my own changing cultural identity and this too is informed by mechanisms of multicultural discourse. An example of this is when I asked Kimmortal if their cultural identity has changed since they started making music and before getting into their response, they asked me what is cultural identity. I then scrambled to define for myself what a term I had used repeatedly throughout my research really meant to me. Since my desire to study this research topic originates personal place, it was important that I do not try to completely erase myself in the project especially in the podcasts themselves. As a couple of the artists pointed out before or after interviews these were conversations, they were comfortable having with another person of colour.

Therefore, I would like to point out the layers of audio intimacy in this piece, not only through the medium being solely audio but also in its personal narrative format as well as the content itself. As a listener you are "over-hearing" these conversations between not only two people of colour, but between the artists and myself the researcher who is also a person of colour living in Canada. This relates back to the audio intimacy of podcasts which I touched on in the Introduction chapter, as well as the social positioning and personal journey of those speaking.

This realization was also the reason for the introduction commentary in the Toronto episode and part of the reason I chose to include my own voice in the podcast (a creative decision I had originally not planned). The Toronto episode opens with the moment after I finished asking Ian Kamau my list of interview questions and asked him if he had any questions for me. In doing this I attempt to make clear my own subjectivity as the media creator and as someone who has stakes in finding answers to the questions posed.

Podcasting as Political Critique

As I have mentioned, the goal of this podcast was to be a counter narrative to the dominant understandings of racism and multiculturalism in Canada. As those who have studied this area before have shown, highlighting people of colours' experiences that are dynamic, complex and intersectional is a method for refuting dominant race narratives. As the researcher, I tried to think of ways to forward this notion in this research creation project. The primary ways I tried to do this was mixing the episodes in a way that conveyed heterogeneity, considering how the artists wanted to be introduced, as well as not hesitating to include some of the more unapologetic remarks that I thought might make white listeners uncomfortable. As I mentioned in the theoretical framework, I wanted to purposefully contrast opinions so as to unsettle the listener and not provide a homogeneous narrative about artists of colour in Canada. To do this, I mixed the artists responses in way to convey heterogeneity in opinions and experiences. To move away from surface level framings of people of colour, or as Walcott writes, relying on "heritable traits," I considered what would be the best way to introduce my listeners to each artist and opted for having each artist explain their own cultural identity. I also checked in during the pre-interview with the artists if they wanted to provide this information in the first place. I did this to further forward the media piece's intent of centring artists of colours' perspectives and to counter the static ways in which people of colour are framed in state multicultural discourse.

This podcast series is about multiculturalism and racism

As for the audio production I ended up settling on a more produced sound and informal conversation to carry out my political critique. This format also comes from my audio production experience in both current affairs reporting and pop culture conversation podcasts. I had planned to have no narration or structure with just the artists' responses mixed together. This was to forward the concept of this media piece being a counternarrative as told by the artists. However, because there were so many interviews and every artist were asked the same set of questions, I realized this did little to draw interest for the listener across eleven interviews. Instead I opted for highlighting central topics in each artist's interview and included those responses so that each episode said something different from the other. For example: DJ on spoke of his desire to be vocal about his experiences as a queer person of colour in Vancouver's predominantly white DIY scene which can be heard in the Vancouver episode. I still wanted to leave the artists responses to speak for themselves so that is why there is no added narration over the interviews themselves.

Given that this is a podcast series I wanted to make sure each episode could be listened to on its own but at the same time tied to the rest. To link the episodes, I included introduction segments at the beginning of each episode. After the general podcast series introduction for the Montreal episode, the Toronto and Vancouver episodes start off with a little preview or "hook" to draw the listener in. All three episodes open with the theme montage of Astro Mega's song "Runs" mixed with quotes related to relations in Canada along with opening narration comments to orientate the listener back to the research question of how multiculturalism affects the cultural identities and music making practices of people of colour. The introduction music montage features a quote by Justin Trudeau in a press conference addressing the 2015 Paris Attacks, the second is from the opening to the CBC documentary on multiculturalism titled *Multiculturalism in Canada debated* and the final quote is Quebec Premier François Legault from a press conference following this year's Black Lives Matter protests. In it Legault states that he does not think that systemic racism exists in Quebec. This montage was done as a cheeky commentary on state multiculturalism.

Both the podcast and written analysis offer a critique of multiculturalism in different ways. In this chapter we are given a look into considerations that artists take relating to their hyper-(in)visibility as people of colour. The 11 artists I spoke with all had their own ways of navigating this. Some intentionally or unintentionally did not mention race in their work, wanting to keep their audience's attention on their music artistry or felt that more overt references to race and culture in the music would be inauthentic to themselves. Others saw a need to reference discuss race because of the risk of having parts of their identity erased. Meanwhile, some artists such as DJ On and Farnaz Ohadi had race at the centre of their music. For some, reason for this included lack of POC visibility or desiring to create works that felt authentic to them. D'Amico's notion of hyper-(in)visibility helps to thread these different artists' stances together. I have argued that a major similarity between these different artists is that they are all navigating a discourse around race that values and overemphasizes racial difference. Their interview responses show how this emphasis can be disruptive and the reasoning behind why some music artists of colour in Canada chose to inject aspects of their cultural identity into their work and others do not.

Directly touched on in both this chapter and the podcasts is what it means for music acts to achieve "authenticity" and "relatability". More importantly how this can mean different things for artists and industry gatekeepers. What I have argued in this chapter is how drawing connections between this language and state multiculturalism can help us better understand these seemingly neutral terms and the issues that some of the artists I spoke to had with the terms. Bringing in the works of Walcott and Bannerji, we can see how whiteness as an unquestioned and unacknowledged default framework underscores how these terms often get used by industry gatekeepers to deem artists of colours' music projects as not universally consumable.

Highlighting the work that some artists did that was not directly a part of music production provides us with interesting insight into how artists reroute existing infrastructure frameworks and create new ones. Such work also gives us insight into ways that the current music industry can better support its artists of colour.

Both in the interviews and podcast creation process I've had to consider where am I positioned in this research area. While I was reluctant to insert myself into the project at first, I realized this was impossible and that the podcasts narrative structure could benefit from sharing my motivations for making this project. As heard at the beginning of the Toronto episode, the subject area relates very closely to my own perspective and I was driven to put together a research creation project that questioned ways we can make media pieces that better represent people of colour perspectives in Canada. In both the written portion and media piece I have questioned how do we go beyond simply acknowledging cultural diversity and what are the messy, uncomfortable and tense parts that go behind having a racially diverse population.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

The notion of the cultural mosaic has long been a distinct trait to define itself as a nation-state. It is the image of a diverse array of cultures living alongside each other, not assimilating towards national unity, but achieving through its diversity. While I have discussed multiculturalism in its policy form, I chose to foreground the ways that it filters down into everyday interactions and infrastructures, limiting our ability to understand our "multicultural" society more fully. The surface level understanding of Canada as a cultural mosaic fails to acknowledge internal tensions as well as changing conditions. Handing the Mic to the Mosaic is my attempt to challenge readers and listeners to go beyond this notion.

As a person of colour, you often accustom yourself to a personal story that does not align with the dominant narrative on race relations in Canada. As scholars Rinaldo Walcott and Himani Bannerji detail, our current dominant narrative of multiculturalism was not made to narrate people of colour's realities and therefore such dissonances exist. They ask us to refute ideas based on state multiculturalism. As the Bannerji quote referenced in the Introduction chapter of this project states: "Our politics must sidestep the paradigm of "unity" based on "fragmentation or integration" and instead engage in struggles based on the genuine contradictions of our society" (120). Taking on the suggestions of both Walcott and Bannerji my project aims to appreciate the "pleasurable impurity" of music artists of colours' work and in doing so brings to the fore contradicting aspects of "multicultural" society (Walcott 133).

Indeed, Canadian music is not exempt from such dissonances. In this project I have discussed how artists of colour chose to present their racial and cultural selves in their work with considerations of what is expected of artists of colour. These expectations reflect a Canadian multicultural discourse on race which relies on static depictions of people of colour who are recognized by their "heritable traits". Artists spoke of a keen awareness of this and navigated these expectations, drawing attention to certain aspects of their music projects and artists personas. As some artists explained, genre adds another dynamic to how race affects their music making practices.

Throughout my written analysis I have argued that we must move away from concepts of the "third space" when understanding music artists of colours career practices. I depart from Bhabha's concept by showing how artists create as well as interact with their music scenes, industry and audiences reflects processes of subjectivation that are ongoing

Being critical of language used within the music industry can also illuminate reasons why there is a lack of support for music artists of colour. Most notably as I have shown here, the desired traits of "authenticity" and "relatability" can have racial implications that manifest in a number of obstacles in the artists' careers.

My podcast series carries out critical analysis demonstratively. Listening to these 11 artists, all with varying accounts of how race comes up in their work leaves listeners with a contradictory and nuanced idea of how multiculturalism is experienced. While my media piece is not the first of its kind, I believe it is important to add to the bank of media works that showcase Canadian POC experiences and destabilize the monolithic narrative of state multiculturalism.

Within academia itself (where I perhaps ironically am creating this counter narrative media piece) there is a lack of literature written on music artists of colour and what they can tell us about race relations in Canada. As I have demonstrated, perspectives of music artists of color offer many valuable insights to the study of Canadian multiculturalism. An area I suggest for further research is how multicultural ideology affects the promotion and exposure of artists of colour in Canada given changing technologies such as streaming services and social media. Another research suggestion is to carry out qualitative interviews with industry professionals such as label executives, music journalists and marketing professionals in order to find out the affects of multicultural ideology from a different standpoint. A deeper look into Canada's government art funding system and how it forwards Canada's national multicultural project I believe could also add valuable contributions to current critiques of multiculturalism in academia. I am hopeful that more research will help us understand further the complexities of the "cultural mosaic" nation.

Appendix

Interview Questions

Subjects had the option to do a 30-minute or -hour interview depending on their availability.

30 min interview

General Introduction
- I wonder if you could describe your music to me and the work that you do relating to music?
- Can you tell me a little bit about your cultural background? (Only asked if the subject agreed prior in the pre-interview)

Cultural Identity and Multiculturalism
- What kind of person do you think of when you think of a Canadian?
  - Follow-up question: Do you think of yourself as Canadian? Why or why not?
- What does multiculturalism mean to you?
- Do you think that there are any correlations between multiculturalism, or people's perception of Canada being a multicultural country, people's own understanding of their cultural identity?

Multiculturalism and Music
- How relevant is your cultural identity to your music?
- How does your background enrich your creativity?
- Have you faced any limitations in your music making practices because of your race?
  - Follow up question: Have you ever found that the topic of race has come up in media coverage of you?
- Do you think that people's perception of race in Canada, specifically multiculturalism, affects how you make music or how your music is perceived?

Based off artist's individual work
 (questions here were only asked if they applied to the specific subject)
- You describe yourself as "(insert description)". Why?
- Are you part of any diasporic or POC music communities, events or projects?
  - Follow-up question: what drew you to be involved? How does it feel to make cultural spaces for yourself and others?
  - Follow-up question: What kind of work goes into it? What is some work that people wouldn't typically expect? Which parts of this work do you take pride or have passion in?
- For you, why is it important for you to speak about your racialized experiences in your music?
  - Follow-up question: Can you give some specific examples in your work of this?
  - Follow-up question: Why do you think it is important to speak about racism in Canada in your music? What do you want listeners to understand about race relations in Canada?

- o Follow-up question: Are there other ways that you express your experience through your music or music practices?
- To you what kind of significance does this musical "mixing" does this have?
- What does it mean for you as an artist of colour in Canada, to be awarded certain music awards?

Conclusion
Is there anything you would like to add?

1-hour interview

General Introduction
- I wonder if you could describe your music to me and the work that you do relating to music?
- Can you tell me a little bit about your cultural background? (Only asked if the subject agreed prior in the pre-interview)

Cultural Identity and Multiculturalism
- What kind of person do you think of when you think of a Canadian?
    - Follow up question: Do you see yourself as Canadian? Why or why not?
- What does multiculturalism mean to you? How do you feel about Canada being described as a cultural mosaic?
- Do you think that there are any correlations between multiculturalism, or people's perception of Canada being a multicultural country, people's own understanding of their cultural identity?

Multiculturalism and Music
- How relevant is your cultural identity to your music? You described yourself as "(insert description)". What kind of things factor into how you present your race or cultural self in your music?
    - o Follow-up question: How much is your personal cultural identity and your music identity in conversation with each other?
    - o Follow-up question: Is race something you think about when promoting your music?
- Do you think that people's perception of race in Canada, specifically multiculturalism, affect how you make music or how your music is perceived?
    - o Follow-up question: If yes, what are some ways that race and culture affect your work that most people wouldn't think?
- Have you ever found that the topic of race has come up in media coverage of you?
- Has your own perception of your cultural identity changed since making music?
- Have you faced any limitations in your music making practices because of your race?

Based off artist's individual work
(questions here were only asked if they applied to the specific subject)
- Are you part of any diasporic or POC music communities, events or projects?
    - o Follow-up question: What drew you to be involved? How does it feel to make cultural spaces for yourself and others?

- o Follow-up question: What kind of work goes into it? What is some work that people wouldn't typically expect? Which parts of this work do you take pride or have passion in?
- For you, why is it important for you to speak about your racialized experiences in your music?
  - o Follow-up question: Can you give some specific examples in your work of this?
  - o Follow-up question: Why do you think it is important to speak about race and racism in Canada in your music? What do you wish to convey to your audience about race relations in Canada?
  - o Follow-up question: Are there other ways that you express your experience through your music or music practices?
- To you what kind of significance does musical "mixing" does this have? Why mix two cultures of music?
- What does it mean for you as an artist of colour in Canada, to be awarded certain music awards?

Conclusion
Is there anything you would like to add?

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