

26 Singer-songwriter authenticity, the unconscious and emotions (feat. Adele's 'Someone Like You')

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This study addresses how singer-songwriters engage with emotion, unconscious processes, and effect, and therefore embodiment, feelings, and experiences. It also considers reception and various forms of mediation. This involves a discussion of authenticity of various types, of inscribing and ascribing authentication. It questions the use of the term singer-songwriter, what it means to use this term to refer to popular music composition, and whether it relates to a set of practices or a genre. Adele's song 'Someone Like You'¹ is used as a case study that illustrates these issues. Additionally, this chapter will also draw upon interviews with successful musicians in order to answer these questions. While such an approach raises the issue of authorial intent as valuable to the study of texts,² popular music, as a highly performative text, requires a differing approach. Even if one cannot be certain of the veracity of the opinions expressed by musicians in interviews, these reported opinions, as well as the other ways musicians present themselves to audiences, form an important element of their performativity, and greatly affect its reception. Whether or not addressing authorial intent is thought of as problematic or useful, it is in this situation certainly relevant, as it forms part of the artist's field³ of activity, the artist acting as or constructing a frame⁴ around the music.

Defining the singer-songwriter

The term singer-songwriter implies three key activities, singing, writing songs, and performing one's own material. Singer-songwriters are usually thought of as singing songs they have composed themselves, so some would argue that one would think of Paul Simon's solo work, rather than his work with Art Garfunkel, and exclude a songwriting team such as Burt Bacharach and Hal David; some identifiable singer-songwriters, however, are also associated with more overt collaborative work. One thinks of singer-songwriters as writing both the music and the lyrics, such as Bob Dylan rather than Elton John, as the latter seldom writes lyrics. They are usually solo artists, rather than performing in a band or writing collaboratively, so one might suggest John Lennon in his solo career, but not with

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The Beatles. They tend to use simple arrangements, with a focus on the voice, thus perhaps Suzanne Vega, but not Frank Zappa.

There is a focus on songs that appear stripped-down and on their own rather than that are wrapped up in complex layers of recording and production, for example, Leonard Cohen rather than Danger Mouse. They usually play instruments, most typically playing guitar (Bob Dylan or Joni Mitchell) or piano (Carole King, Tom Waits, or Tori Amos), rather than only singing and writing songs. They are usually able to accompany themselves and perform on their own if required, so one thinks of Norah Jones rather than Jessie J. Finally, they often are perceived as writing principally about themselves, their experiences and their emotions, or at least as presenting themselves as if their songs are about themselves, for example Johnny Cash or Joni Mitchell. Most important perhaps is the idea of individually writing original material for performance, rather than performing compositions written by someone else, thus Elvis Costello rather than Elvis Presley.

There are a number of difficulties with this use of the term singer-songwriter to define a (usually single) popular music performer. Singing and songwriting are often quite separate and collaborative processes, not a merged holistic activity. The term 'song' itself is problematic in this context, for example Cone suggests it implies a number of creators, pointing out that the processes related to singing and accompaniment, and composition of both, are all to some extent separate and separated.⁵ Even the use of 'writer' within songwriter is questionable, implying a paper-and-pen-based approach to composition. Singer-songwriter conventions draw from and rely on oral traditions and methods, whereas writing songs scored on paper is an approach more commonly associated with the commercial, professional songwriting teams that dominated popular music writing before the 1950s, or with art music composition.

A further issue is that many popular musicians call themselves composers rather than singer-songwriters. Joni Mitchell for example is often presented as an archetypal singer-songwriter, associated with similar artists such as Bob Dylan and David Crosby. However Mitchell's website avoids the term singer-songwriter, calling her a poet and songwriter, and 'singer, composer and lyricist';⁶ she separates these activities.

It was in the 1950s and 1960s that writing original material began to become the dominant mode of creation for popular music performers. Buddy Holly and Chuck Berry were two prominent US popular musicians who became well known writing and singing their own original material. They both influenced The Beach Boys and The Beatles,⁷ these latter groups firmly establishing the practice of singing of original compositions within popular music. From 1965, The Beach Boys' main songwriter Brian Wilson began to increasingly write specifically and overtly about his own emotions, and to deal with issues he considered had gravitas, to begin to consciously focus on authenticity of experience. This is reflected in writings about the

album: 'Early Beach Boys lyrics about surfing and cars were celebrations of youthful hedonism. However such simple ideas, expressed in straightforward forms, though commercially desirable, no longer satisfied Brian ... he rejected hot dogging and hot rodding in favour of writing about his own emotional experience.'⁸ 'Brian's *Pet Sounds*⁹ songs were different. They preserve the innocence of youth, speaking eloquently of love gained and love lost and all the emotional nuances in between. The message was personal rather than social, prodding us to analyze and reassess the way we interacted with each other, not how we interacted with the outside world.'¹⁰ Although The Beatles and The Beach Boys certainly influenced one another, in *The Beatles Anthology* DVD, Paul McCartney tells us that he was inspired to compose by Buddy Holly and Chuck Berry, describing the latter as someone

who was in the tradition of the great blues artists but he really wrote his own stuff ... One of the main things about The Beatles is that we started out writing our own material. People these days take it for granted that you do, but nobody used to then. John and I started to write because of Buddy Holly. It was like, 'Wow! He writes and is a musician.'¹¹

Both groups wrote their own songs and started to focus the subjects of their songs on their own experiences, on expressions of their own feelings, about their emotions (a subject we will return to later in this chapter). The most successful popular music stars before this time, such as Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, or Elvis Presley, sang other people's material. The Beatles became the most successful recording act of all time in the UK as well as the USA, and played a key role in making the singer-songwriter a dominant model within popular music.

The singer-songwriter has developed significantly from this 1960s model, from the individual activity of a solo-performing guitar and voice performer, to something that is often and increasingly a team activity. Singer-songwriters often collaborate with producers, band members, co-writers and an army of backroom music industry staff. There are many other layers of process involved, all of which are linked and related. Sting tells us 'I'm committed to that goal, that lifetime search. I still study music, I still want to be a better composer, a better songwriter, better singer, better performer.'¹² He separates out composition, songwriting and performance as disparate but coordinated activities. For Gary Barlow, the main songwriter of the band Take That, 'it's more than just the composition, I have to see it right through the whole recording procedure.'¹³ Robin Gibb of The Bee Gees states that (his brother) 'Barry and myself, we always see it that way, composers first, recording artists second, and performers third. We've always loved the studio too, as it's like a painter's studio. You walk in, it's completely empty, it's like a clean canvas, or an altar.'¹⁴ Composing the music may be the primary activity, but this is mediated through arrangement in the recording studio, and performance live to an audience.

Gibb, Barlow and Sting describe themselves as composers. For Gibb there are clear reasons why this might be. Although known in particular for writing songs he performed, he also wrote songs for others, including Diana Ross, Tina Turner, Barbara Streisand, Dionne Warwick, Celine Dion, and Frankie Valli. Thus his songwriting is not wedded to his singing. Like Gibb, Nattiez¹⁵ neatly divides music into three areas, the poietic (creation of the music/songwriting), the neutral (immanent final product/recording), and the aesthetic (audience reception/performing). Including the poietic affords¹⁶ the opportunity to discuss what Tagg and others see as an under-represented subject in the field, the “music” in “popular music studies”.¹⁷ For the singer-songwriter these three fields form an interactive, enmeshed triangular frame (see Figure 26.1).

Unlike the term composer, the singer-songwriter is not defined solely by creative practices, such as singing and songwriting, but by a range of conventions. The singer-songwriter might be more usefully thought of as framing/forming a musical genre, rather than as a description of a type of music-maker, bearing in mind Fabbri’s definition of a genre as the ‘set of music events regulated by conventions accepted by a community’.¹⁸ A singer-songwriter is an accepted and descriptive popular cultural term for a composer/performer working within a specific genre. Its definition as a genre is in part what allows it to contain and integrate a range of conflicting elements. Within this frame, binary opposites such as lyrics/music, composer/performer, black/white or recording/live become negotiations¹⁹ between interacting fields (such as poietic/neutral/aesthetic or

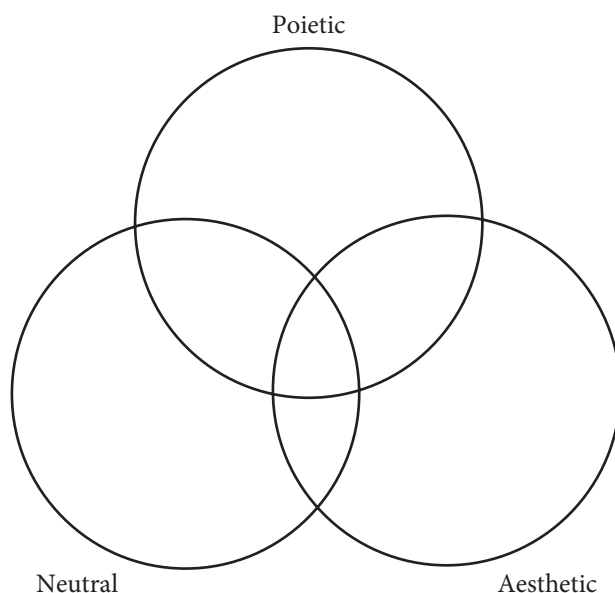


Figure 26.1. Nattiez’s semiotic levels, applied to the singer-songwriter.

recording/composition/oral) that interact across the singer-songwriter spectrum within its range of conventions. This conception falls into the category of a non-representational theory (NRT),²⁰ avoiding binary oppositions using a fusion of discrete methodologies; NRTs are useful for addressing embodied cultures involving physical activities and direct experience, and have the potential for increasing inclusivity by eroding barriers that may lead to discrimination.

Jacques Attali discusses four codes or stages of music, of ritual (oral traditions),²¹ representation (scored music), repetition (recordings), and composition. The contemporary singer-songwriter has roots in performative oral traditions of folk and African American music, but its texts exist primarily today as recordings. Performing original compositions places the singer-songwriter in this most recent stage, although only after popular music was defined as a recorded form. Integration of the folk singer-songwriter into an institutionally controlled music recording industry has seen it adopt hegemonic characteristics, and perhaps as a result, the relationships of the singer-songwriter tradition to issues of race has become somewhat problematic, the term usually referring to white musicians. African American musicians such as BB King, Chuck Berry, Ray Charles, Muddy Waters, Otis Redding, Stevie Wonder, James Brown, or Nina Simone are usually described as within a genre, such as soul, funk, rhythm'n' blues or jazz, rather than as singer-songwriters. The term singer-songwriter, if conceptualised as a genre rather than activity, is a frame readily able to bridge such complex issues and interactions. In addition its use can be political, by avoiding the use of existing terminology, taking pride in a language that is specific to a popular music context. The singer-songwriter frames many roles together within what Gelbart calls the composer-singer-instrumentalist-protagonist persona,²² a number of participants often being embodied and represented by a publicly facing focus.

Popular music and authenticity

The term singer-songwriter separates those who sing their own songs from the professionalised approach of having a separate music composer, lyricist, performer and producer. The latter approach is received as more commercial, as somehow inauthentic, exemplified by commercially focused acts performing within talent shows such as *X Factor* or *American Idol*, in which performing original music is seen as in some way exceptional, rather than the norm. Popular music fandom generates an 'intensely felt desire for authenticity as compensation for the feeling that nothing escapes commerce'.²³ Allan Moore states that such authenticity is 'ascribed, not inscribed',²⁴ that it is principally given to a work by an audience, rather

than being built in to the music. He suggests that ‘the term has frequently been used to define a style of writing or performing, particularly anything associated with the practices of the singer-songwriter, where attributes of intimacy (just Joni Mitchell and her zither) and immediacy (in the sense of unmediated forms of sound production) tend to connote authenticity.’²⁵ The singer-songwriter genre, or style, is in particular defined by an ability to convince the audience that such self-authenticity is itself authentic. Authenticity is a defining aesthetic of the singer-songwriter genre.

Moore delineates three types of authenticity: first-person authenticity, or expressive authenticity, which arises when a composer or performer succeeds in conveying the impression that their work has integrity, and that it represents an attempt to communicate in an unmediated form with an audience;²⁶ second-person authenticity, or authenticity of experience, which occurs when a performance succeeds in conveying the impression to a listener that the listener’s own experience of life is being validated;²⁷ and third-person authenticity, authenticity of execution, when an authentic mode of expression is acquired from another individual or community, arising ‘when a performer successfully conveys the impression of accurately representing the ideas of another, embedded within a tradition of performance.’²⁸ The creation of first-person authenticity, suggesting the performance is unmediated, is a key aim of singer-songwriters, presenting their experiences through song, or giving that impression. Gelbart suggests that ‘the musical qualities of “sincerity” or “directness” (as opposed to “mediation” or “artifice”’) were ... valorized for their ability to create a “communal” experience.’²⁹

Elvis Presley was ascribed third-person authenticity by audiences, as a result of his use of African American blues and rhythm ‘n’ blues music, but also through his abilities as a performer to connect with audiences and generate second-person authenticity. His lack of first-person authenticity to some extent undermined his overall authenticity and credibility, becoming regarded as someone who profited from African American culture.³⁰ In comparison, Adele, another white musician singing music of black origin, has the advantage of writing her own music, being thus ascribed greater first-person authenticity by fans and critics alike, through (re)presenting feelings and problems from her life in her songs.

Popular music and the unconscious transmission of emotion

One of the primary requirements of a song, especially for young people, is the need to listen to lyrics dealing with ‘feelings and problems.’³¹ Emotion and feelings, and their relations to music, are subjects that are much debated with little consensus. Juslin and Laukka conclude that there is now overwhelming evidence that music is primarily listened to

for emotional reward, it is valued because it expresses and induces emotions.³² Both Prinz³³ and Laird³⁴ describe emotions as unconscious processes. Further, 'Music is a sensory phenomena that elicits perceptual and emotional responses'³⁵ and 'appropriately structured music acts on the nervous system like a key on a lock, activating brain processes with corresponding emotional reactions'.³⁶ As Nettleton puts it, 'at the level of the id it (music) puts us in touch with primitive affective states'.³⁷ Music is able to express and induce emotion in an unconscious fashion.

In interviews, many singer-songwriters discuss presenting their unconscious emotions through their music. John Lennon tells us 'I'd struggled for days and hours, trying to write clever lyrics. Then I gave up, and "In My Life"³⁸ came to me – letting it go is the whole game'.³⁹ Lennon described this song as his first serious piece of work.⁴⁰ Ehrlich interviews a number of artists who address a similar approach, one of letting go, engaging with unconscious processes. Mick Jagger states songs 'rise to the surface if you give them the right atmosphere to come out'.⁴¹ Billy Bragg says, 'you are trying to create a common bond with the listener ... If you can reach inside yourself and find a metaphor to conjure up these deep human feelings, you will strike a common chord with a lot of listeners. Of course, you don't do this consciously'.⁴² Perry Farrell: 'I might have written a particular song, but it might have been automatic writing done on behalf of all of us. That's what I kind of hope when I write a song'.⁴³

Zollo interviews a number of songwriters who discuss this subject. Songwriter Hal David tells us 'it's in the subconscious somewhere',⁴⁴ and Lamont Dozier suggests, 'when I'm at the piano coming up with melodies and ideas, I'm somewhat in a trance ... you learn to just shut out everything around you. I focus in on what I'm doing and nothing else can really penetrate my psyche at that particular time'.⁴⁵ Harry Nilsson states 'It happens so quickly it happens without you being aware of it, that's why it seems like it's coming from a different place ... It's just that you're not that conscious of it all the time. You start studying it or analyzing it, it goes away. So I don't spend much time doing that'.⁴⁶ Randy Newman: 'When you get something going, that's what I love. When I don't know what time it is. When I know that time is going. When you got something, it's a great feeling'.⁴⁷ Neil Young: 'I don't force it. If it's not there, it's not there and there's nothing you can do about it ... It's a subconscious thing'.⁴⁸ David Crosby: 'My songs emerge from my life or whatever they do unbidden and unplanned and completely on a schedule of their own'.⁴⁹ Jackson Browne: 'It almost feels like I'm not there when it happens, so it's hard to talk about it. Yeah, there's sort of a descent into a place below your conscious mind, a place where words have resonances and they have meaning and they don't necessarily make a kind of conscious sense'.⁵⁰ Todd Rundgren: 'I have this tendency sometimes to dream songs completely written'.⁵¹ Madonna: 'I don't remember the name of my first song, but I do remember

the feeling that I had when I wrote it. And it just came out of me. I don't know how. It was like somebody possessed me'.⁵² David Byrne comments:

I tend to believe that it comes from something within myself. But it comes from the collective unconscious, from a part of myself that's also very similar to other people, so it becomes a part of myself that's no longer me. It's not I any longer. It doesn't reflect my petty concerns or desires or problems, It's tapping into something universal.⁵³

KT Tunstall says that 'I kind of feel that they're done already and they're just waiting ... it was very automatic writing ... it's a bit of a lightning bolt and it'll just go and go and it will come very quickly'.⁵⁴

All discuss trying to remove as much mediation as possible in the song-writing process, by tapping into unconscious processes. This affords the expression of internal emotions when singing, further affording a direct connection with the emotions of the audience and a resultant ascription of first- and second-person authenticity. These comments are from interviews, and are in part performances, and one must be cautious not to uncritically accept such assertions as 'truth'. However numerous other examples could be given, and this evidence strongly suggests that both dealing with emotions and accessing unconscious processes are important areas of the work of the singer-songwriter, whether one believes this to be part of the culture surrounding the genre, or a fundamental part of the creative process.

The singer-songwriter model of popular music-making is able to address and afford ascription of all three types of authenticity, which is one of the factors that marks out the singer-songwriter from other types of popular music creation. This authenticity is enhanced through and framed by association and interaction with unconscious emotional processes. Adele provides an interesting example of this type of singer-songwriter.

'Someone Like You'

In the UK, Adele performed the song 'Someone Like You'⁵⁵ at the 2011 Brit Awards. She was introduced by host James Corden.

There's nothing quite like the feeling when you're listening to a song written by someone you don't know, who you've never met, who somehow manages to describe exactly how you felt at a particular moment in your life. This next artist is able to do this time after time. For that reason she is currently number one in an astonishing seventeen countries. If you've ever had a broken heart, you are about to remember it now.⁵⁶

This exemplifies what Cone⁵⁷ would call Adele's persona, the image presented of her, of being someone like you, where you is the listener (See Chapter 16 for more on Adele). Following this performance the song went to the top of the UK charts, going on to sell over a million copies. In a

Billboard magazine interview Columbia records chairman Steve Barnett says that the “long tail” sales theory fundamentally shaped the label’s 21 campaign.⁵⁸ Adele’s manager James Dickins explains:

When she won the BRIT Award and the BBC poll, what came with that [in England] was a tremendous amount of hype ... But no one cares about the BRIT awards in the US, so Columbia was brilliant in thinking, ‘Right, OK, let’s build this record at a grass-roots level.’ It wasn’t about flying the record out and going for the jugular. It was a slower process, looking for the right TV looks, building at triple A and hot AC,⁵⁹ generally snowballing through multiple platforms. Consequently people bought into her, not into a song.⁶⁰

The appearance of marketing was minimised, though carefully planned, in order not to create an appearance of commercial focus and inauthenticity. Adele’s team suggests: ‘the key to great singers is believing every single word they sing ... And I think you believe every word that comes out of Adele’s mouth’⁶¹

I saw Adele’s song ‘Someone Like You’ (from the album 21), performed at the O2 Academy in Leeds, UK (14 April 2011). It is an interesting example of emotionality in popular music. She preceded the performance by discussing the subject material of the song, describing how difficult it was to travel around Europe singing songs about a relationship break-up that was still fresh in her mind. As the song progressed, Adele paused, seemingly overcome in the moment, and invited the audience to take over singing for a few lines. The audience’s emotional response and empathy for her had a corresponding emotional response in the singer. Tears rolled down her cheeks onstage, as well as throughout the audience, as a thousand voices sang the lyrics of her song. Still in tears Adele told the crowd, ‘I think that might have been the best moment of my life, ever, thank you’.

In *The Independent* newspaper, reviewer Enjli Liston writes of the performance,

Fists clench, voices crack, hairs stand on end and tears stream down cheeks as Adele weaves hopelessness, fragility, desperation and defiance into her timeless tale of the pain of unrequited love – recent No 1 single ‘Someone Like You’. The notes come easily, underlined with the gentle rise and fall of simple keys, but she strives to hit them with every ounce of her strength before, as with her Brit awards performance, she is overcome by emotion.⁶²

Audience members also posted reviews online:

She gave you goosebumps when she sang ‘Make You Feel My Love’ and ‘Someone Like You’. I don’t think there was one person in the audience who didn’t have a tear in their eye.

The best bit was when the audience made Adele cry!! It was a very emotional gig. When she got upset and the audience took over, Was a spine tingling moment.⁶³

The emotional response of the crowd was set up by the frame placed around the song by Adele, the audience members themselves, and by the music industry activities of her marketing team.

Adele began 'Somebody Like You' in Leeds playing the guitar, she then stopped after the first section, and was accompanied for the rest of the song by a keyboard player, as on the recording (the electronic keyboard onstage was clad in wood to make it look like a piano, to make it look authentic). The pianist in both cases was professional songwriter Dan Wilson, who also co-wrote the song:

I was dead set on making the song sound great but very natural, very vulnerable, very devastated ... For the next many months, I would hear sporadic reports from people who heard it, and everybody would tell me that it made them cry. It's kind of funny, it seems like a very common response to the recording. At first, I thought people were crying because they know Adele and they felt the pain of her break-up and were being empathetic. But then after a while, I kept hearing the same report from people who heard the song but don't know Adele personally. They were crying too.⁶⁴

It seems that the song brings feeling to the fore for many listeners, and that they respond unconsciously, crying perhaps on remembering their own experiences of heartbreak, in response to Adele's evocation of her own feelings.

In DVD concert footage from the Royal Albert Hall, as in Leeds, Adele also sings 'Someone Like You' as her first encore. She tells the audience:

When I was writing it ... I didn't have that one song that I believed myself on, and that one song that moved me, and it's important that I do feel like that about at least one of my songs ... I was a bit scared that I wasn't going to have that song, which just would have made the album not very believable I think, because I would not have had that much conviction when I was talking about it, and singing about it.⁶⁵

At the end of the song she is again crying. The DVD shows her wipe away tears, then cuts to a shot of a member of the audience also wiping away a tear. What was inscribed in this piece of music by Adele and the music industry machinations behind her, was sign after sign to encourage the audience to believe that this was a song that was true to life, was authentic. For the singer-songwriter, that music is considered authentic is an important part of the set of accepted conventions⁶⁶ that establish it as a genre.

The singer-songwriter in the twenty-first century

Moore is correct that artists cannot ensure that an audience will choose to ascribe music with authenticity, but something has to be created to be authenticated, the process of authentication is a negotiation between

audiences and performers. The music industry can choose to present an artist as authentic, and this is usually the approach within the genre of the singer-songwriter. Music industry professionals, as well as audiences, encourage singer-songwriters to develop characteristics that will lead to ascription of authenticity, and to resultant sales. The conventions of the singer-songwriter genre also afford the development of these attributes. Inspiring people to consider you authentic is a skill performers develop, in part through learning not to become too caught up in processes of mediation, and to trust instincts, emotions, and unconscious processes. It is my contention, and the experience of the many artists I have referenced in this chapter, that a performer is able to make it more likely that an audience will ascribe music with authenticity using this approach. The musician has a choice whether to attempt to be opaque, true to what they consider to be themselves, whether or not it is possible for the audience to know whether the musician is being honest. Just as we unconsciously perceive untruths or untrustworthiness in other situations, such 'keeping it real' can contribute greatly to a performer's success, but more importantly perhaps, to their own happiness, to how they feel about themselves in the moment of performance. When musicians embrace this choice they comply with the conventions of the singer-songwriter genre.

The term singer-songwriter is useful as it addresses not just a type of popular musician, but a genre, an attitude, an ethos. A singer-songwriter is a subset of a term like composer or composer/performer. Artists are framed by the persona of the singer-songwriter, drawing down its authority. Individually framed moments of performance are empowered and ascribed with authenticity by audiences, affording a moment of community, releasing unconscious emotional responses in performer and audience alike. Frith describes such moments:

Clearly one of the effects of all music, not just pop, is to intensify our experience of the present. One measure of good music, to put it another way, is, precisely, its 'presence', its ability to 'stop' time, to make us feel we are living within a moment, with no memory or anxiety about what has come before, what will come after.⁶⁷

In such moments we are entrained to what the Greeks called *kairos*, qualitative time, rather than *chronos*, quantitative time. Musicians are well aware of the power of such emotional moments: 'Basically I think if you sort of put them all in one bag, I think my songs are all under the label emotion, you know, it's emotional feeling, I write songs that a lot of people have written before, it's all to do with love and emotion' (Freddie Mercury).⁶⁸ 'As composers, Barry and myself and Maurice, it's a labour of love. It's about emotional values, about human relationships, it's not a fashion thing. There will always be the mainstay of popular music songs

about human relationships, and the human condition lasts forever' (Robin Gibb).⁶⁹ Gary Barlow describes the subject particularly effectively:

Just touch them, give them a message no matter how complex it is or how simple it is as long as you touch people with it that's the job done right there ... that's beautiful that is, that's changing the world right there. That's the power we've got. Work at it, be serious about it, put time in, because the more time and more effort, the more of your heart and soul you get into there, the more chance you've got of touching people. I think that's my opinion, that's the one I live by.⁷⁰

The aesthetic priorities of singer-songwriters include issues of emotion, the unconscious and authenticity. The term also provides an alternative to the professionalised model of separation of the roles of producer, composer, lyricist and performer that is more common within other musical genres. The term singer-songwriter provides a frame for a popular music cultural field of activity that is both specific and highly developed. It is a frame that is unique to popular music, has its own history, power, and authority, and differentiates from the conventional aesthetic and tradition of the composer.

The singer-songwriter tradition draws upon folk and blues histories, suggesting a definition of popular music in terms of music of the populace, and connecting it with orality and issues of authenticity. In an era of composition⁷¹ where computer music technology and online distribution have made more accessible the creation, performance and distribution of popular music, the singer-songwriter model of popular music creation is gaining attention from those who recognise its increasing relevance and importance within musical culture. It is also being reinvented and revived, from bedroom electronic music producers to new folk musicians, and continues to be highly relevant within contemporary musical culture. For these latter examples, its conventions of authenticity keep it untainted by the greatest extremes of music industry control and manipulation, framing, negotiating, and balancing a range of conflicting priorities, and allowing this tradition to maintain a spirit (or appearance depending on one's perspective) of unmediated emotional transmission born of oral traditions and unconscious processes.

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Notes

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