

**Recognizing the “Art” in Artist Management:
An analysis of Artist Management as an
Artistic Practice**

**by
Shauna-Kaye Brown**

B.A., University of the West Indies, Mona, 2013

Extended Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

in the
School for the Contemporary Arts
Faculty of Communication, Art and Technology

© Shauna-Kaye Brown 2022
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Fall 2022

Copyright in this work is held by the author. Please ensure that any reproduction or re-use is done in accordance with the relevant national copyright legislation.

Declaration of Committee

Name: Shauna-Kaye Brown
Degree: Master of Arts
Title: Recognizing the “Art” in Artist Management:
An analysis of Artist Management as an
Artistic Practice

Committee:

Henry Daniel
Co-Supervisor
Professor, Contemporary Arts

Laura U. Marks
Co-Supervisor
Professor, Contemporary Arts

Ethics Statement

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

- a. human research ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics

or

- b. advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University

or has conducted the research

- c. as a co-investigator, collaborator, or research assistant in a research project approved in advance.

A copy of the approval letter has been filed with the Theses Office of the University Library at the time of submission of this thesis or project.

The original application for approval and letter of approval are filed with the relevant offices. Inquiries may be directed to those authorities.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

Update Spring 2016

Abstract

Artist Management is largely considered to be scientific in nature by people external to the practice. This essay proposes that artist management goes beyond the linear scope of traditional business management and should be considered as a process driven creative practice. Artistic administration is presented as a solution to some of the key issues plaguing the practice of artist management. This essay takes the position that artist management, and arts administration to some extent, should be situated as a creative practice. In fact, this essay proposes that artistic administration is performative in nature, and the exposition of artistic artist management is a performance in its own right. An artist manager's process driven work is their performance, and their 'stages' can be anything ranging from a cellphone or a webcam to a conference room.

Keywords: artist management; arts administration; artist manager's identity; artist identity; process; creativity

Dedication

This essay is dedicated to Owen, Shirley, Gavin, Monique and Shanique Brown (the Browns of Belvedere Manor) who have been my staunchest supporters through it all. This essay is also dedicated to the memory of my maternal and paternal grandparents. Their immense sacrifice is never forgotten and their teachings are still guiding us. I am because you were.

Acknowledgements

Words cannot express my gratitude to the co-chairs of my committee for their invaluable patience, knowledge, expertise, encouragement and feedback. Thank you, Dr. Laura U Marks, (Drip Queen) for creating an open and stimulating environment in my very first term at Simon Fraser University (SFU) in the School for the Contemporary Arts (SCA). My time in your Research Methods class in Fall 2021 created the core ideas that coalesced into this work. I am equally grateful for Dr. Henry Daniel, (Trini To De Bone), who also provided an enabling academic and social environment that fostered my academic growth. I am forever grateful to Dr. Daniel for encouraging risk taking like Dr. Marks. I will not ever forget Dr. Daniel's signature feedback to noteworthy ideas: "that would make a wonderful essay!". Dr. Marks and Dr. Daniel have anchored my experience in the SCA. It would have been exceedingly difficult to navigate this experience without them. I am also grateful to Dr. Christopher Pavsek for distilling a deep appreciation of Critical Theory in me and for helping me to streamline my approach to academic writing. Thank you also to Dr. Arne Eigenfeldt who introduced me to process art scholarship. This played a critical role in the development of my ideas in this paper. Additionally, this endeavor would not have been possible without the abundant resources at SFU. I practically lived at the Research Commons throughout the process of researching, writing and editing this essay. Thank you SFU for providing amazing work spaces that facilitate this kind of work. I am particularly grateful to Catherine Louie from the Research Commons who provided immense assistance with the formatting of this essay.

I am also grateful to my classmates and cohort members, for their moral support. I want to particularly thank William Latham and Joni Low. Will's theoretical aspirations and fixations are quite similar to my own. My conversations with Will played a critical role in my decision to propose my own theory and method for arts administration and artist management. I am abundantly grateful to Joni for her unyielding friendship and support.

Thank you to my green isle of the Indies, Jamaica. It is simply impossible to quantify the love and respect that I have for the lessons garnered in Jamaica. I could not have produced this work without my lived experiences in the Jamaican Music and Entertainment Industries. I am grateful to everyone in the Entertainment Cultural and Creative Industries that has played a role in my development. I must single out Mr.

Clifford “Desi” Young, Mr. Augustus “Gussie” Clarke and Mr. Lydon “Kinky” Lettman. Uncle Desi has been one of my biggest cheerleaders. I am immensely grateful for his support. Gussie Clarke is most popular as a veteran producer and gargantuan Reggae music publisher. To me, he is my ‘Work Dad’ who has significantly impacted my vocational and personal development. Gussie is also philosopher in my books and also has the most amazing repertoire of adages. One that I live by is: “all kinds ah people guh ah dance”. Lastly, I want to thank Kinky for giving me my first full time Entertainment Administration job. Kinky provided me with an opportunity to grow and develop in Jamaica’s contemporary Entertainment industry. I am abundantly grateful to Kinky for agreeing to participate in an interview when I approached him last year. This interview is now a monumental part of what I largely consider to be my life’s work at this point. I’m grateful for Kinky’s ongoing support.

Lastly, but certainly not the least, I want to thank my family. A huge and heartfelt thank you to: Owen, Shirley, Monique, Shanique, Gavin, Lanisha and Nasir Brown as well as Marcia Lewis, Godfrey and Janet Anderson whose support has greatly helped me to achieve every goal that I have set my sights on. Their belief in me has kept my spirits and motivation high during this process. Your voice and video calls, emails, messages, and texts have literally kept me going. I could not have reached this point without your immense support.

Table of Contents

Declaration of Committee.....	ii
Ethics Statement	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Dedication	v
Acknowledgements.....	vi
Table of Contents	viii
Introduction: “Everybody Can Dance...But A Nuh Everybody A Dancer”	1
Methodology: “Wha drop offa head drop pon shoulda”	11
Literature Review: “Every Mickle Mek a Muckle”	12
Interview: A Conversation with the King(y)	16
Artistic Administration versus Damaging Managing (Management as Damagement)	17
Theoretical Framework: “We don’t tek press, we judge we own concept”	22
Reflections.....	26
Works Cited	29
Other Resources.....	32
Appendix. A Conversation with the King(y).....	34

Introduction: “Everybody Can Dance...But A Nuh Everybody A Dancer”

“Everybody can dance...but a nuh everybody a dancer” is an adage crafted by prolific Jamaican dancer and dancehall and cultural tastemaker Gerald “Bogle” Levy also known as “Mr. Wacky”. Unfortunately, Bogle made his transition in 2005 under tragic circumstances. Mr. Wacky’s adages, fashion, broader cultural contributions and dances live on in their original and hybrid forms. Bogle is largely considered as a patron saint of Jamaican dancehall dance culture. During his time as a dancehall influencer, his slangs and adages were perceived as esoteric. This outlook greatly added to the allure of Mr. Wacky’s larger than life character. “Everybody can dance...but a nuh everybody a dancer” is one of Bogle’s most popular adages. This saying speaks to the fact that most people are physically able to produce a single move or series of rhythmic movements that could be described as dancing. However, not everyone can produce these movements in a way that conveys meaning and artistry in a similar manner as a skilled or professional dancer would. Professional dancing requires the embodiment of a *je ne sais quoi* that usually speaks to the presence of raw talent that can become optimized after years of practice.

In the key of Mr. Wacky, anyone can undertake some of the tasks associated with artist management. Does this mean that anyone can be an efficient artist manager who creates adaptive solutions to on-the-job challenges? The broader question is perhaps, what skills are required for efficient artist management? Experienced artist managers might suggest that the ability to think creatively is perhaps the foremost skill required. Onlookers external to the profession of artist management might wonder what creative skills are needed to render personal services such as expediting financial transactions for an artist or to make travel arrangements. Therefore, the difference lies in the process which alludes to the skill set, level of experience and the level of creativity that an individual has at their disposal. There is an age-old discourse within the arts that examines the significance of the process to the general activity of art making and arts-based research. The exaltation of artistic process over product has become a ubiquitous component of artist statements (Grant 1). However, this process does not end in a univocal work (Blumenfeld-Jones 323). There is a clear distinction between the method and the process as the method is the course of action one takes to complete a piece of

work (Blumenfeld-Jones 323). Whereas the process is defined as “the underlying dispositions and positions one enacts during the execution of method” (Blumenfeld-Jones 323). Interestingly, Blumenfeld-Jones postulates that a method can never singlehandedly reveal how work is truly done (323). However, accessing one’s method without their process is equally unfruitful as they are inextricably linked but distinctive (323). Similarly, I will argue that an artist manager with creative methods and a unique process may yield output consistent with their methods and processes thus differentiating themselves within the artist management market. This individual would be antithetical in nature to someone who does not seek to convey meaning or generate new ways of thinking through their duties. This person may also not be creatively inclined or consider themselves as process driven individuals. The variance in the types of creative practitioners is a testament to Bogle’s assertion that “everybody can dance... but a nuh everybody a dancer.” This discussion will not examine dancing and the skills therein but rather seeks to situate artist management as an artistic practice. This essay seeks to examine, through ethnographic methods, the ways in which artist managers use, what I argue are, their artistic faculties to carry out their vocational functions.

Arts related practices and vocations are largely situated in predominantly self-regulated gig economies. These gig economies tend to function as highly organized ecosystems and oftentimes become defining qualities of the geographic spaces they occupy. Jamaica is a prime example of this phenomenon. The Government of Jamaica’s Creative Industries Sector Plan for Vision 2030 suggests that there is inadequate data about the size of Jamaica’s entertainment, cultural and creative industries (ECCI). This could be a result of the lack of a dedicated satellite account for culture. The Canadian Government describes a Culture Satellite Account (CSA) as a mechanism that functions as an accounting framework that quantifies the economic impact of culture, arts, heritage and sport within the country’s economy. A satellite account for culture would, over time, quantify the economic contributions of cultural and creative sectors including entertainment. In lieu of a dedicated satellite account, there is great evidence of Jamaica’s ECCI economic significance as seen in the Economic and Social Survey of Jamaica (ESSJ) reports produced annually. In 2019 I proposed the theory of formal informality that seeks to explain the phenomenon whereby seemingly disorganized and underrepresented cultural sectors can leverage their agency and become hegemonic in their own right (Brown 11). Their hegemonic position is typically achieved through

varying degrees of cultural dominance internationally paired with spurts of vocational efficiency. My theory of formal informality (Brown 11), though dialectic in nature, is anchored in structuralism and serves to identify and survey the facilities that allow “*loosely organized creative industries to perform in a highly functional and economically viable manner*” (Brown 11). Self-regulated cultural ecosystems are not always regarded as inherently efficient and are largely maintained by industry standards (i.e., best practices) established over time as well as the general labour laws of the country of operation.

Jamaica’s music is the heartbeat of its vibrant culture. The Jamaican music industry is a constantly reorganizing pyramid of grandiose personalities who are frequently contending for the ‘top spot’. Jamaica’s music industry and tangential entertainment ecosystems are administered by characters who provide the axis that keeps the music industry turning. The range of services offered by artist managers in the Jamaican music industry encapsulates the core services offered as facets of the broader field of arts management. These services include but are not limited to business management, policymaking, contract preparation and management, fundraising and artist management. Artists typically require support to operate efficiently. Artists are generally unable to appropriately balance their artistic responsibilities in addition to the administrative tasks required to keep them operating efficiently. These tasks usually span across all areas of their lives (i.e., relational, social, financial and vocational responsibilities). An artist needs to be able to focus on their art, which is in this case, their music. Ideally, artists require an efficient artist manager to organize their life and affairs so that they can focus on the process of art making. Many Jamaican artist managers provide this service in exchange for twenty percent (20%) of an artist’s gross income. Jamaica has a strong tradition of producing masterful artist managers. Most of the artist managers that I have encountered throughout the last decade have no formal training in arts management. In some cases, some individuals may even lack secondary education. In Jamaica, it is typical for artist managers to gain practical vocational experience while on the job. In fact, Jamaican artist managers with degrees or institutionalized professional training in arts administration or management are the vast minority.

Successful Jamaican artist managers have blazed a trail of success that continues to generate new standards and thresholds. Examples of these trailblazers are

Robert Livingston (known for his work with Shaggy (1993 - 2011), Super Cat (circa 1989-1992) and Gregory Isaacs (circa mid - late 1980s), Lydon “Kingy” Lettman (known for his work with Christopher Martin 2005 - present), Romeich Major (known for his work with Shenseea 2016 - present), Sharon Burke (known for her work with Bounty Killa (circa early 2000s - 2010), Clifton “Specialist” Dillon (known for his work with Shabba Ranks (circa 1990 - late 1990s), Patra (circa early - 1990s) and Omi (2008 - present) and Copeland Forbes (known for his work with Bob Marley and the Wailers (circa mid - late 1970s), Peter Tosh (circa 1970s-1987), Dennis Brown, (circa 1980s - 1999) Gregory Isaacs (circa 1980s - 2010) and Jimmy Cliff (circa mid - late 1970s) amongst others). These characters resultantly burgeon into gatekeepers and influencers in the Jamaican, regional and sometimes international entertainment field and related industries. In some cases, artist managers identify, condition, train and refine musical talent. A key example of this is the case of Clifton “Specialist” Dillon and his global breakout star *Omi*. Specialist used his established process to condition, train and launch Omi into global stardom in 2015. Jamaican artist managers typically employ varying degrees of creative faculty to successfully function in an exceedingly competitive industry. Their creative faculty typically materializes in their unique methods and process of expediting their management services. An artist manager’s unique managerial process then becomes a crucial contributory factor to their success in the field of artist manager.

Artist managers typically must ensure that an artist’s spiritual, emotional, relational, physical, financial, social and vocational lives are balanced so that they can focus on art making. I argue that the aforementioned areas are the seven main categories within an individual’s life that, when balanced, allows them to live a healthy, happy and prosperous life. An artist manager is typically charged with creating a pseudo-solar system whereby the artist’s vocational life is the “sun”, the only star and the gravitational pull of their entire existence. The other six categories tend to revolve around their artistic practice. An artist manager has infinite opportunities for creative liberties in the process of delivering the required services to achieve this mandate.

Successful artist managers in the Jamaican music industry must possess improvisational skills akin to a masterful jazz musician in order to respond to the mercurial trends and changes in the hyper-fluid Jamaican entertainment industry. The aforementioned skills are administered through the manager’s unique process not only to the artist(s) they work with but to external customers. An artist manager’s prowess is

also made visible through the strength of the artist's supply chain. A supply chain is defined as "...a network of relationships within a firm and between interdependent organizations and business units consisting of material suppliers, purchasing, production facilities, logistics, marketing, and related systems that facilitate the forward and reverse flow of materials, services, finances and information from the original producer to final customer with the benefits of adding value, maximizing profitability through efficiencies, and achieving customer satisfaction" (Stock and Boyer 706). Considering this definition, I propose that an artist's supply chain is a network that connects an artist and the requisite suppliers/service providers that allows that artist to create and disseminate their art to the final buyers/consumers.

Efficient supply chain management is typically a hallmark of an effective artist manager. This process is typically heavily reliant on the manager's creative faculties and adaptability to market conditions. My experience has shown that the Jamaican context has historically called for immense creativity in artist management because of the country's socio-economic dynamics as well as our position within the global entertainment marketplace. Jamaica's music products and services have never been ours alone. The Jamaican market typically serves as opinion leaders for other markets that consume Jamaican music and entertainment products. Jamaican artists typically serve markets outside of Jamaica. In doing so, Jamaican artist managers are competing with artists who are enabled and supported by large teams who have dedicated individuals who manage different categories of an artist's life. Within the Jamaican context, a singular artist manager typically uses their creative faculty to balance the artist's life and affairs whilst focusing on business growth and development. Jamaican artist managers have successfully operated as vocational octopuses and have propelled Jamaican artists and Jamaican music to great success. This paper is largely written through a Jamaican diasporic lens. However, the Jamaican music industry is merely a microcosm of the global music industry. Jamaican artist managers generally spend most of their time working in markets external to Jamaica. As such the ideas presented are largely applicable to artist managers and related vocations in most Western music industries.

I strongly believe that it is time for the "art" in artist management to be recognized and respected amongst burgeoning artist managers as well as internal and external music industry customers. The level of artistry employed by an artist manager is a major

differentiating quality within the field of artist management. In my experience, artist management requires what I like to call great “heART-istry”. The music industry is a field that is rejection oriented. Professionals within this field will most likely face what will feel like unending rejection until they build a name for themselves. This process can take months or many years. Artist managers are required to be creative, efficient, bold and fearless in their quest for success for their own sake as well as for the sake of their artist(s). The variance in the intensity of these qualities typically separates the uber successful artist managers such as Specialist, Kingy, Robert Livingstone etc. from the masses.

Within the last ten years, artist management has become a more popular academic discipline that is usually situated under the general banner of cultural studies or arts management in the humanities. Interestingly, Yale University in the United States is widely credited as the creators of the first university program in arts management in 1966 (Evrard and Colbert 11). This program was introduced as a facet of the Master’s Degree in Fine Arts (MFA) (Evrard and Colbert 11). By 1969, three other universities in England, Russia and Canada had emerged with similar offerings. By the 1980s, thirty programs were available. This number tripled within that decade as over a hundred programs were available by 1990. Finally, Evrard and Colbert note that by 1999, over four hundred programs were available internationally (11). Prospective artist managers may read for degrees, diplomas or professional certification in this field. Some academic programs present arts management through a purely business lens and may even situate their artist management program as a management science and/or social science offering. Bishop’s University in Quebec Canada, Queen’s University in Ontario Canada and Boston University in Massachusetts USA are examples of this phenomenon.

While at its core there are business functions to be expedited, the most successful artist managers can perform their business functions through their unique processes that represent their brands and differentiate them from their peers. Music industry professionals may even be able to identify an artist manager’s work upon seeing materials associated with an artist manager’s process. For example, upon Omi’s emergence into the international popular music market, Jamaican managers saw Specialist’s imprint in Omi’s bespoke outfits and dramatic stage entrances. Specialist

became renowned for his ability to procure unique bespoke outfits for his artists¹ and his ability to engineer dramatic stage entrances². As seen in Specialist's case, an artist manager's stylistic qualities eventually become markers of their method and process and are affiliated with their brand and professional identity after years of practice. The density of Jamaica's music industry has produced very competitive conditions that require artist managers to quickly identify and develop their unique style or method and their process. This allows them to fast-track their differentiation in the marketplace.

An efficient artist manager will cover their "bases" by procuring and maintaining viable supply chain management for their artist. Contrary to popular belief, art making does not occur in a bubble. Community values are central to an artist manager's process. The efficient management of an artist's supply chain requires strategic diplomacy akin to governmental foreign policy activities. Artist management is certainly a team sport. It is at this critical juncture, that I will argue that the Rastafari ethos and colloquialism "each one teach/reach one" is a core philosophical underpinning for the practice of artist management. Artist management heavily relies on the strength of the community as the artist's process of becoming comes to fruition. Many, perhaps most, successful artist managers in Jamaica acquired their skills through internships or by understudying established artist managers in lieu of academic credentials or institutionalized training. Robert Livingston's protégé, and cousin, Lydon "Kingy" Lettman gained experience and exposure during practice. Kingy shared that he emerged in the music industry as a managerial understudy to Shaggy's manager until he was approached by an artist in our interview. The artist that approached him is Christopher Martin. At that point, Christopher had just emerged as winner of Jamaica's premier musical talent search competition, Digicel Rising Stars in 2005. Kingy has no academic credentials in artist management. However, this practical experience with Shaggy, who was a global sensation by the time Kingy was a member of his touring team, provided ample capacity building for Kingy's artist management career.

Up to two decades ago, there was no degree or program that would facilitate the exchange of artist management skills in an academic setting in Jamaica. By the time this program was presented, Jamaica had already produced superstar talent like Bob Marley

¹ As seen with Shabba Ranks and Patra

² For example, Shabba's historic emergence from a helicopter to perform at a Jamaican concert

and the Wailers, Dennis Brown, Shabba Ranks, Patra, Mad Cobra, Sean Paul and Shaggy. These artists all experienced varying degrees of international stardom and superstardom. All the artists mentioned did so under either full or partial Jamaican artist management. Their managers were all people who did not have formal or academic training in artist management at the time. A key example in this regard is Shaggy who rose from being a popular Jamaican dancehall artist to an international pop music superstar who is over six times platinum certified in the United States alone (“Shaggy, Enya, ‘N Sync Top 2001 RIAA Honors”) under the management of Robert Livingston. Shaggy’s success was so monumental that he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts by an American Ivy League University, Brown University in 2022. Robert Livingston does not have any tertiary educational experience, yet his leadership resulted in his client being awarded an honorary doctorate. How did they do it? Was it luck? Was it the jerk chicken or the ackee and saltfish³? At the end of the day, this largely speaks to Robert’s prowess as an artist manager.

In true Jamaican fashion, there is little textual documentation of the emergence of Jamaica’s first arts management program. The only known record is captured on the personal blog of Kamau Amen who is a Jamaican Business and Cultural Enterprise Manager with close ties to the academic leadership at the University of the West Indies, Mona. Amen was a key figure in the process of lobbying the academy at the university to establish a designated arts management program. The University of the West Indies, Mona is largely credited with the development of the first Jamaican program in this regard (Amen). The Bachelor of Arts in Entertainment and Cultural Enterprise Management was launched in 2007 and produced its first set of graduates in 2010 (Amen). I graduated from this program in 2013 in the fourth set of graduates to emerge from this training. The development of the practice of artist management is heavily reliant on an emerging artist manager’s ability to emulate skills acquired during their music industry initiation. An artist manager’s unique process typically emerges in the “becoming” stage of development and produces what is thereafter known as their signature style or their method.

³ Jerk chicken and ackee and saltfish are world renowned Jamaican dishes. This point is a tongue-in-cheek reference to the studies done on Usain Bolt’s diet when he started dominating the world track records. Analysts at the time hypothesized that it was a ground provision, locally known as yellow yam, from Trelawney that was responsible for his lightning speed.

The idea of the “becoming” stage of artist management is built on Cross Jr’s theory of Nigrescence which is rooted in Fanon’s process of becoming Black or developing a racial identity under conditions of oppression. I propose an appropriated model of Cross Jr’s Nigrescence model:

Stage	Description
Pre-encounter	The emerging artist manager idealizes the views and operations of the practitioner that they are understudying. They typically embody their mentor with the hopes that the embodiment of their values and attitudes will result in industry-wide acceptance that can result in their transition from emergence to establishment.
Encounter	The encounter stage is driven by the desire to develop one’s own identity as an artist manager. At this point there is a yearning to develop and practice their own style after an extended period of doing things in the style of their mentor. There is typically an event that results in the decision to branch out on their own and begin the process of charting their own course as an artist manager.
Immersion	The emerging artist manager becomes deeply entrenched in their mission of becoming an established and successful artist manager. This stage is characterized by immense personal sacrifices as the artist manager typically withdraws into a pseudo-solar system centered around their artist(s). This activity can result in personal fallouts as they work assiduously towards achieving large scale success, acceptance and establishment using their distinct style/method and process. At this point, the artist manager’s job is their entire life.
Emersion	In the emersion stage, an artist manager has experienced a breakthrough through the effort expended in the immersion stage. They are generally established at this point and can live and work comfortably. After this breakthrough, they begin to reengage with aspects of their life that they previously neglected in their quest for establishment and success.
Internalization	At this stage an artist is firmly established and is perhaps even renowned for their style/method and their process. They might have atoned for any variances between their emerging and established selves. At this point, they are deeply connected to their industry and have a very clear idea of what they do and how they do it. At this point, artist managers tend to adapt understudies who can then engage in their own five stage journey of becoming an artist manager.

These experiences heavily influence one’s trajectory to becoming a successful artist manager. In my own experience, my academic credentials have played a supporting role to the wisdom gained from practical experience with artist managers like

Kingy, Robert Livingston and Specialist during my process of “becoming”. My style of artist management (and arts administration to a greater degree) emerged after years of practice and through knowledge exchange and capacity building opportunities with established artist managers and administrators. I firmly believe that one’s unique method/style and process is exceedingly important to the practice of artist management as it separates the thrivers from the survivors.

Methodology: “Wha drop offa head drop pon shoulda”

“Wha drop offa head drop pon shoulda” is a Jamaican adage that speaks to the fact that it is possible to reap benefits from the efforts of others. This proverb aptly describes the systems of knowledge exchange and capacity development for artist managers in Jamaica. This proverb also hints at the value of the community and ways in which multiple parts can work together to achieve a singular goal. Similarly, this ethnographic examination of the ways in which artist managers use, what I argue are, their artistic faculties to carry out their vocational functions is triangulated in its approach. Triangulation facilitates an in-depth investigation into the recognition of “art” in artist management. In this research, triangulation unfolds as a combination of existing literature, my personal experiences as an artist manager and arts administrator as well as an interview with a professional artist manager. The ethnographic methods of field interviews and participant observation are also key components. This essay is essentially practice-as research as my own creative method/style and process are critical components of this essay.

This research is investigative in nature and looks to find the ways in which artist management can be viewed as an artistic practice. In doing so, primary and secondary data analysis is reviewed to provide support for the core arguments. An example of the secondary data evaluated is the academic literature used throughout this essay that textually supports the theoretical framework of this study. The textual resources also highlight the visible gaps in the academy regarding artist management in general and specifically artist management reviewed through an artistic lens. The primary data used in this study is from a Jamaican context. However, most of the secondary data is from a North American and European context. There is no dissonance between the primary and secondary data. This continuity indicates that the Jamaican music industry, which is a Black diasporic context in this scenario, operates in a similar manner to larger Western music industries. This study also hopes to dispel any existing myths about the scope of an artist manager’s role which might be propagated by individuals external to the practice of artist management. In its final, most comprehensive state, this research hopes to present a contemporary lens through which artist management can be viewed as an artistic practice.

Literature Review: “Every Mickle Mek a Muckle”

“Every mickle mek a muckle” is a Jamaican adage that means that small things add up a large quantity over time. There is also an Irish and Scottish iteration of this adage that says “many a mickle makes a muckle” that has a similar meaning. This adage is typically used in times of hardships when people must pool their resources for the best possible outcome. The process of reviewing the existing literature is a linear materialization of “every mickle mek a muckle”.

There is no singular substantial body of work that can respond to the issues at hand. However, there are several sources that have been stitched together to form the colourful fabric that provides a snapshot of the available knowledge in this field. Artistic administration is transdisciplinary in its approach and leans heavily on five established methods and/or concepts. These methods and/or concepts are process art, supply chain (management), Ubuntu, assemblage and rhizomes. These methods and/or concepts are well established and are relatively impregnable. Why not use these concepts as identifiers? I have selected these concepts as highly appropriate approaches to artistic administration. Process art is significant because my core proposition is that artist management is an art in its own right. Supply chain management is significant because I have appropriated this concept to signify the systems required to support an artist. Ubuntu is a philosophical underpinning that highlights the reciprocal nature of the relationship between an artist and their manager. Assemblage speaks to the importance of relational constructs in the artist manager-artist dynamic and the role that the artist manager plays whilst managing an artist’s supply chain. Whilst rhizomes are critical representatives of the intricacy of the network that the artist manager must maintain in a bid to effectively manage an artist’s supply chain. These concepts are borrowed from other fields and have been tailored to fit the specific nuances of the wider field of arts administration as well as the circumstances of artist management. They are not outrightly applicable in their original states without an explanation of how these concepts can be applied. These concepts will provide a sound structural foundation for my ongoing discourse.

Before diving any deeper, I propose going “back to basics”. The definition, and in some cases redefinition, of key terms such as art, creativity and artist management is

required to provide a solid foundation for the theoretical framework being developed. Now, “in come the ting called”⁴ art. Engaging on a quest to find a suitable definition of art is akin to opening Pandora’s box. There are a multitude of scholarly definitions of art. My review of these definitions suggests that scholars tend to either create a nuanced definition for their work or find the most appropriate definition for their work. As a solution to the issue of insufficient definitions of art, Maritain proffers that “*art is a habit, disposition of the mind or virtue of the practical intellect, which consists in making, the creation of objects*” (34). This definition could perhaps be the most appropriate definition of art (Haynes 58). This expansive explanation anchors the definition of art epistemologically instead of ontologically. The definition does not primarily focus on an object or presentation but is focused on an established way (or set of ways) of producing objects that requires dexterity. Maritain’s definition focuses on the process of how art is produced i.e., art’s process of becoming. This argument is particularly useful in the discourse of artist management as a process driven artistic exposition. In addition, this definition makes provisions for the categorization of art into groups: useful arts and the fine arts (Haynes 58). Useful arts have been traditionally regarded as crafts and exist for practical purposes. Useful arts typically add value to existing things or experiences (Haynes 58). Fine arts exist for aesthetic purposes, specifically its beauty. Based on this logic, Artist Management could be a useful art. Trapani posits that this logic is the reason Maritain favours labeling useful arts as 'subservient' arts (i.e., serving a practical purpose, performing practical functions) and the fine arts 'free' or 'self-sufficient' arts (79).

Creativity is the inclination to produce or identify thoughts or concepts that could be useful in the resolution of issues, the exchange of information and the provision of entertainment for an individual or their community (Franken 396). Originality or novelty is a critical aspect of the aforementioned definitions of creativity. This, of course, paves the way for epistemological concerns regarding the true novelty of any concept. However, in this context, these definitions are sufficient. Lastly, McPherson describes an artist manager as an individual who is primarily responsible for managing an artist’s business

⁴ Typical expression used by sound system operators (also known as selectors or DJs) during the introduction of a piece of music at a dancehall event (otherwise called a session).

(McPherson). The artist manager—or in the entertainment industry, simply the "manager"—is a very intricate role that could be compared to a marriage in some regards as argued by McPherson. It is important to note the variance in the scope of McPherson's response. In one breath, they note that an artist's manager is responsible for their business. However, they continued to note that the relationship between an artist and their manager is akin to a marriage. My experience has shown that the second scenario is the most accurate description of the relational dynamics. Artist managers are inextricably linked to their artists in a manner quite like a married couple. Herstand shared that Andrew Leib, of Red-Light Management describes an artist manager is someone who takes care of daily business dealings on behalf of an artist or band (Herstand). Leib notes that in an ideal working relationship, the artist is responsible for producing art as well as communicating a comprehensive goal for each project (qtd. in Herstand). However, the manager is tasked with expanding the artist's vision and generating an achievable strategic operational plan to be implemented in a timely manner. The artist manager is also an opinion leader and critical agitator on the artist's behalf. According to Herstand, Leib described a system where attorneys, agents, business managers, record labels, communications practitioners etc. typically await instructions from an artist's manager before taking action. These individuals or entities are critical links in an artist's supply chain network because artist managers represent their artists in every aspect of their lives.

Arts managers should have a distinctive style that must be protected and nurtured (Chong 11). It is important to note that Chong's text largely addresses the expansive field of arts management that includes artist management though the ideas presented as relevant to this essay. The image that an artist manager maintains is as critical as the artist's own image (Chong 11). It is crucial for artist managers to communicate their identity and distinctive style to specialist and non-specialist audiences (Chong 11). In this vein, an artist manager's style could perhaps be derived from their unique process. Arts managers must ensure that they maintain artistic integrity (Chong 11). In most instances, artist managers monitor and maintain business integrity by honouring commitments and agreements to secure the stable continuity of the artist's supply chain network. I argue that most texts simply do not consider the possibility that an arts manager might have to monitor their own artistic integrity by staying true to their process and resulting style.

In some academic environments arts management has been dissected to produce two singular discussions of the arts and management sciences specific to the arts. However, arts management is, in fact, not an oxymoron, arts and management are not opposing concepts (Brindle and DeVereaux 4). The very notion that arts and management could be antithetical in nature indicates the sort of disparaging historical outlook that has been afforded to the arts. Brindle and DeVereaux also sought to criticize the field by suggesting that though arts management is a burgeoning academic discourse, it is oftentimes considered a “borrower’s field” as arts management has failed to develop its own scholarly theories and methods (5).

Interview: A Conversation with the King(y)

On December 7th, 2021, at 4:40 PM Pacific time, I conducted a semi-structured interview with a thriving Jamaican artist manager. Mr. Lydon “Kiny” Lettman is the CEO of Kingyard Productions Limited and manager of internationally renowned reggae sensation Christopher Martin. Our conversation was transcribed for this essay. Like most of the conversations throughout our almost ten-year professional relationship, this conversation took place via telephone. Kiny is largely regarded as an extroverted introvert or ambivert within the Jamaican music industry. He is socially reserved yet professionally outgoing. Kiny typically allows his work to speak for him. It was a “Big Deal”⁵ to even get a long form interview with Kiny. Quotes from this interview are interspersed throughout this essay. The entire interview with the twenty-two-year artist management veteran can be examined in the appendix. Quite a few revelations were conversationally unearthed during our interview. These revelations support the existing scholarship. Some of the most noteworthy revelations are Kiny’s response to how he became an artist manager as well as his emphasis on Ubuntu principles and the value of creativity in artist management. Kiny shares that he got started in artist management by understudying an established and successful manager⁶. His experience mirrors the assertions of other practitioners, myself included, who opined on viable methods of entry to the artist management market. Kiny also frequently reiterates the importance and value of the creative faculty of artist managers. He shares that experience has taught him that it takes a proverbial village to raise an artist. Their success is inextricably linked to the strength and efficiency of their community (i.e., their supply chain) that provides them with the support that allows them to produce their best unhindered work. These values are an exposition of the Ubuntu ethos, though Kiny does not describe it as such. His supply chain management of Christopher’s life and affairs is expedited through methods consistent with his style of management.

⁵ “Big Deal” is the internationally acclaimed album by Christopher Martin who is managed by Kiny.

⁶ It is widely known that Kiny emerged in the music industry under the guidance of Robert Livingston

Artistic Administration versus Damaging Managing (Management as Damagement)

I propose that artistic administration is a process driven interpolation of arts administration. Artistic administration typically produces work that is reminiscent of the administrator's style. Their results may also bear witness to their process (i.e., their distinct way of expediting the duties related to their vocation which emerges from their "becoming"). I argue that the exposition of artistic administration can be seen as a performance in its own right. A performance is "all the activity of given participants on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants" (Goffman 8). The rhizomatic nature of this role requires the artist manager to embody setting-specific versions of the same character. In doing so, the manager maintains a pseudo-double consciousness where they are required to think as the artist whilst also maintaining their own logical thoughts throughout the production of their process. Their process driven work is their performance, and their 'stages' can be anything ranging from a cellphone or a webcam to a conference room. However, their audience is typically the other points within the artist's supply chain. I argue that artistic administration is an entirely creative practice. Artistic administration can also be applied in a wide spectrum of administrative support roles that allows artists to produce works without the cumbersome burden of organizational tasks in addition to art making. The broader spectrum of artistic administration may include careers such as: arts policy analyst, artistic director, grant writer, event planner, producer, festival planner and artist manager. However, this essay and the ideas therein continues to maintain a granular focus on artist management.

I argue that artist management is one such role that can be an exposition of artistic administration. I propose that artist management can also be referred to artistic artist management when categorized as a facet of artistic administration. Artistic artist management can be defined as the creative rendering of expansive (spiritual, relational, emotional, physical, social, financial and vocational) organizational support to an artist in exchange for a percentage of the artist's gross income. An artistic artist manager will use their creative faculties to generate novel and perhaps ingenious ways to adaptively respond to challenges in the various areas of an artist's life or career. Each of the seven aforementioned areas of an artist's life (i.e., spiritual, relational, emotional, physical,

social, financial and vocational) may have several offshoots that develop rhizomatically. I argue that the rhizomatic nature of the seven key areas is the main reason why an artist manager can be likened to a commercial supply chain manager. The artist manager is responsible for the optimization of the artist's life and affairs so that they can produce art. I also argue that an artistic administrator may have the following characteristics:

- Strong communication skills
- Organizational skills (including productivity & time management)
- Timeliness
- Intuitiveness (the ability to solve problems that have not emerged yet)
- Numeracy
- Confidence in managing budgets
- Negotiation skills
- The ability to work well under pressure
- Ability to pivot quickly
- Public relation sensibilities (without being a Public Relations practitioner)
- Information technology skills (including familiarity with popular social media platforms and word processing software)
- Team skills
- Confidence/assertiveness

This list is by no means exhaustive. However, this list highlights the rhizomatic nature of the practice of artist management and the general vocation of arts administration. Artist managers typically balance all these areas until the artist experiences a level of commercial success that allows them to hire competent professionals to manage separate areas of an artist's life. Unsurprisingly, it was exceedingly difficult to locate a scholarly work that supports my assertion. Most of the sources that list the qualities of an ideal artist manager are self-help resources for emerging artists. However, one scholar alluded to the vitally rhizomatic nature of the role of artist manager by stating that "the artist manager is the only other individual, besides the artist, who gets to see and touch all the jigsaw puzzle pieces that fit together to create the artist's career, and therefore they have immense influence over every aspect

of an artist's career" (Morrow 10). Even in that scenario, the artist manager must keep their finger on the pulse, operating in a quasi-omnipresent manner. In my experience, I have encountered artist managers who consider this vocation as a potentially lucrative but thankless job. This concept acknowledges the non-linear nature of artist management whilst proposing a list of non-exhaustive- qualities that seek to combat the existing invisible axis issue for artist managers. Artist managers are typically the axis that keeps the artist's world spinning. However, in their line of work, the spotlight is reserved for the artist's manager who typically only emerges into the light to speak on the artist's behalf when instructed to do so. Most of their work takes place off of the traditional stage and in the wings. As a result, many onlookers external to the practice are clueless about the scope of this role.

Artistic management seeks to describe a process driven, engaged and creative approach to artist management. Damaging managing or management as damangement is antithetical in nature to artist management. This concept describes or explains scenarios where artist managers lack the ability to generate novel and adaptive solutions that will aid in their artist's career. The use of cookie cutter methods instead of bespoke novel methodology in the artist's affairs is also another characteristic of this configuration. Management as damangement may also describe a scenario whereby the artist's manager neglects to identify the rhizomatic nature of their role and only focuses on certain aspects which results in a structural imbalance. In a damaging managing relationship, the artist manager may not be in tune with the artist's life and affairs (which includes their spiritual, relational, emotional, physical, social, financial and vocational relations). Artist managers who are operating in a damaging managing capacity typically hinders an artist's growth and or development. Famous examples of damaging managers are Allen Klein, who managed to damage working relationships with both the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, Sean "Diddy/Puffy" Coombs who is the known purveyor of the "Bad Boy Curse"⁷ and Albert Grossman who inspired his artist, Bob Dylan to write and release two scathing rebukes of about his management skills, or lack thereof (Kohn). The arts world is cyclical in nature. New artists are continuously emerging as the proverbial wheel keeps turning. As a result, artists have a limited "shelf life" and an even

⁷ The Bad Boy Curse is an urban legend within the US music industry where it is largely believed that getting signed to Diddy's label, Bad Boy Records, is the end of an artist's career and sometimes life as they know it.

more limited time in the “top spot”. Artists typically tend to disengage with managers whose styles are consistent with management as damage management. This disengagement can be amicable though it can also be hostile and costly. Overall, the lack of creativity in the artist’s favour, that grows and develops their career, is typically a defining characteristic of damaging managing.

Interestingly, there is incessant contentious public discourse within the Jamaican music industry regarding the scope of an artist manager and the types of artist managers in the Jamaican music industry. Shane Brown, renowned artist manager and producer noted in an interview with *The Jamaica Gleaner* that the Jamaican music industry is saturated with hustlers parading as artist managers (Brooks). According to Mr. Brown, these individuals lack any sort of training in the craft of artist management and are reactionary at best in the expedition of their artist management duties. Mr. Brown also noted that artist managers should be able to not only market but nurture the talent they represent. Marketing is a skill that requires great creativity. The act of training or nurturing talent requires creative dexterity. In the first instance the nurturer must have a holistic understanding of the craft before they can impart any knowledge in a meaningful manner so that the person being nurtured can benefit from knowledge exchange and capacity building opportunities. Ideally, practitioners who opt to nurture should have already experienced their process of “becoming”.

In lieu of practical nurturing, some modern emerging artist managers opt to consult textual resources for guidance. After all, things and times have changed. However, texts about artist management are usually created for the benefit of artists and describe the ideal traits, roles, capacities, skills and duties of managers (Brkić and Byrnes 15). Brkić and Byrnes assert that though a corporate manager focuses entirely on making profits for their entity by assisting with meetings, creating or anticipating the demands of existing or potential clients and customers (15). In contrast, the artist manager must also undertake these activities whilst considering and respecting the wishes of the artist (Brkić and Byrnes 15). This assertion highlights the dynamic scope of the work of an artist manager. Failure to adaptively manage this dynamic scope typically results in damaging managing.

Artists have been managers for many years throughout history though they were not always referred to as such (Brindle and DeVereaux 3). Interestingly, William

Shakespeare is presented as a well-rounded impresario, who did everything from writing plays, training actors, running rehearsals, and writing playbills to promote his productions as well as coordinating distribution while anchoring set design and stage management (Brindle and DeVereaux 3). Shakespeare was essentially the dramaturg, the director and the head of production as he managed or was heavily involved in almost every aspect of his theater's operations. Their example led me to consider Robert Livingston who was known to micromanage every moving aspect of Shaggy's career. Robert was integral in the selection of musicians for the touring band, he wrote and produced music for Shaggy, he organized rehearsal, selected touring wardrobe, coordinated marketing campaigns whilst managing the business of music. I can easily think of at least four or five contemporary Jamaican examples who are known to provide these types of services. Brindle and DeVereaux used Shakespeare's historical example to ground their argument that some artists can doubly function as effective arts managers while in the process of art making (3). This idea is highly controversial in the field of artist management. The most obvious conflict is that if artists can do everything themselves then they can save the twenty percent of their gross income that goes to their management. Practitioners like Shane Brown have branded this type of activity as ill-advised and inefficient operation that can cause artists to experience varying degrees of different types of burnout (Brooks).

Theoretical Framework: “We don’t tek press, we judge we own concept”

Bogle created the slang “we don’t tek press, we judge we own concept”. Bogle’s adages were largely considered esoteric. Growing up, I struggled to uncover the real meaning behind Bogle’s sayings. In this vein, it was ideal to seek an explanation from Bogle’s mentee, Boysie. In an interview with Buzz Magazine, Boysie translates “we don’t tek press, we judge we own concept” to “you judge your own concept... you do you” (Gardener). Boysie’s translation was done in Jamaican dialect. The standard English translation would be: people should neither allow themselves to be othered nor for their value (or the value of their movement) to be determined by external parties. However, no concept or methodology is exempt from scrutiny. After all, the academy thrives on the examination of existing literature, ideas and concepts. Brindle and DeVereaux’s assertion that arts management is a borrower’s field provided a key opportunity to create a theory to fill a gap (5). However, their assertion also provides an opportunity for greater scrutiny of anything that emerges in this space. Arts management as a field has been unsuccessful in its quest to develop its own scholarly theories and methods (Brindle and DeVereaux 5). The field of arts management should not be quantified by its relation to other fields in lieu of dedicated theories and methodologies unique to the field. In constructing a theoretical framework for a “borrower’s field” per Brindle and DeVereaux (5), it is critical to generate and assemble concepts relevant to the practice of artist management. I argue that artistic administration is a reasonable bridge for the gap in existing knowledge. When the new and existing theories and methods are strung together, they speak to the vocational nuances that embody the role of an artist manager and provide a sound underpinning structure.

The preceding sections have made a case for a process driven exposition of artist management that re-presents an artist manager as an adaptive supply chain manager. There has been a significant amount of discussion about the differentiating qualities of successful and efficient artist managers. The aforementioned gap in the existing knowledge has meant that scholars have generally avoided publishing lists of ideal qualities that artist managers need for success. Even scholars like Morrow whose research is practice as he was an established artist manager whilst engaging in research about artist management, shy away from listing qualities of an ideal artist manager (12).

My professional assumption is that most practitioners avoid it because it is a list that would quite likely be lengthy without being exhaustive. However, there is no specific method or theory that has been presented as a solution. This essay seeks to break the mold whilst desisting from propagating the existing standard of knowledge gaps by presenting artistic administration as a solution as well as by offering a non-exhaustive artist manager job description. Artistic administration is a concept that seeks to remedy the existing conceptual deficiencies in the arts administration field. My theory of artistic administration is underpinned by several existing theories. The first on the lineup is Ubuntu. Ubuntu has several translations (Murove 36). Ubuntu is a humanist South African philosophy where the idea of community is one of the foundations of society and individuals are examined in relation to each other (Murove 36). Additionally, common humanity and oneness are key features. This concept recognizes the importance of the community and recognizes that people do not exist in isolation, i.e., they exist in relation to other people. The ethos of this concept mirrors the core values of artist management. The Ubuntu concept represents the bonds required for an artist to have a viable supply chain that is managed by their management. This ethos is similar to the Rastafari “each one reach/teach one” concept. As the name suggests, these values are known to effortlessly foster community values and team spirit. In an ideal configuration, artists should have support systems that allow them to focus on their core artistic practice. These specialist services are typically outsourced by providers who are functional links in an artist’s supply chain. It is said that a person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others and is self-assured because they are a part of a greater whole. These values are core characteristics of artist managers. The importance of the community was a point that Kingy reiterates during our interview. Kingy shares that an artist manager’s ability to build a solid team is almost as important as their ability to think and work creatively. This is especially true in setups like Kingy’s where the artist’s only responsibility is tending to their artistic craft. This means that a support system is required to take care of all the other aspects of the artist’s life and prevent any distractions as Kingy describes.

Artistic administration is anchored by Deleuze and Guattari’s notions of assemblage and the rhizome. Deleuze and Guattari’s present the notion of a rhizome from their seminal work “*A Thousand Plateaus*”. This post-structuralist concept illustrates a nonlinear network that “connects any point to any other point”. Deleuze and Guattari

used rhizomes to explain phenomena in which connections are established and maintained within networks that have no obvious sequence or consistency. The authors created this analysis to examine these conditions specific to the arts, sciences and societal conditions. Rhizomatic networks have been described as lattice-esque in nature (Deleuze and Guattari 171). There is a strong tradition of rhizomatic thinking in the Caribbean. The socio-political complexities and resulting conditions of transatlantic slavery and colonialism resulted in varying degrees of cross migration in the Caribbean region. As a result, there has been cultural cross pollination and the emergence of multiple manifestations of the same or similar cultures. Caribbean academic pioneer Édouard Glissant's ideas about identity are created in relation and not in isolation (Wing xii). As a student of Deleuze and Guattari and outstanding academic in his own right, Glissant deeply analyzed their ideas. In doing so, Glissant pointed out that the rhizome is presented as an "enmeshed root system, a network spreading either in the air, with no predatory rootstock taking over permanently" (11). This concept is a suitable description for the intricate nature of the role of an artist manager. Glissant also builds on the rhizomatic thinking by proposing the poetics of relation whereby each identity is extended through a relationship with the Other (11). This concept can be likened to the dynamics within an artist's supply chain. There are nuances and challenges within the network, but the intricacy and complexity of an artist's supply chain are the qualities that require an artist manager's creative faculties to experience success. Artist management is a practice that is deeply rhizomatic in nature. An artist manager's role is ubiquitous in nature while requiring varying degrees of invisibility. The artist's manager must be consistently heard and felt even without even being continuously seen. The artist must always maintain the most prominent position of visibility. Center stage is always reserved for the artist.

Assemblage recognizes the fluid nature of relationships amongst the various parts of an organism. Assemblage seeks to highlight the nuances of social complexity through the focus on fluidity, interchangeability and multi-purposed units that generate their interconnection (Phillips 108). Assemblage theory posits that the links between micro working units or components of the larger body are not immovable or unchangeable (Phillips 108). Instead, the relationships amongst the micro units that form the greater entity can be "displaced and replaced within and among other bodies" (Phillips 108). This approach analyzes systems through a lens that examines relations of

exteriority (Phillips 109). The management of an artist's supply chain requires an artist manager to "wear many hats" in a bid to provide ultimate representation of the artist in a multitude of spheres. An element in an assemblage is never a standalone or individual item that evokes a certain response (Rødje 86). Artist managers are similarly almost always inextricably linked to their work i.e., the talent they manage. Artist managers can then be considered to be relational constructs. The role and responsibilities tend to vary on a case-by-case basis though the functions are almost always interconnected. The opportunities for fluidity and diversity in roles and responsibilities are immense. Writing about films as assemblages, Rødje goes on to state that an actor, in a dramaturgical sense, portrays a role without ever becoming the character (94). This is overwhelmingly similar to the role of artist managers. Their role as managers of their artist's supply chain requires them to embody varying degrees of artist representation. In some cases, the only task that some artist managers cannot do is to deliver the talent rendered by their artist (i.e., deliver their artistic services that their charge is known for and/or usually hired to deliver). They employ a double consciousness that requires them to think like their artist for the sake of efficient decision making in their role as artist manager.

Reflections

The aim of this essay has been to provide a greater understanding of the role and responsibilities of artist managers. My main goal was to situate artist management as an artistic practice. In doing so, I have proposed a theory of artistic administration that seeks to explain how artist managers are able to function as vocational octopuses by using their creative faculties to balance multiple roles at once. I argue that the manifestation of their creative faculties materializes as process art in what I have called artistic administration. These creative faculties materialize in what I have called their process of “becoming”. Artistic administration is a process driven interpolation of arts administration whereby an artist manager uses their unique methods to coordinate seven key areas of an artist’s life (i.e., spiritual, mental, emotional, physical, social, vocational and financial) in the management of an artist’s supply chain. Management as damage is antithetical in nature to artistic administration whereby an artist manager lacks a process driven approach to the administration. A damaging manager typically fails to efficiently and effectively manage an artist’s supply chain. These relationships tend to end acrimoniously.

Artistic administration is interdisciplinary in nature as it equally relies on contemporary art, management sciences and philosophy. These disciplines provide the five established methods and/or concepts that grounds artistic administration. These methods and/or concepts are process art, supply chain (management), ubuntu, assemblage and rhizomes. I argued that the review of existing literature highlights the need for a designated theory and method for artist management, and arts administration to a greater extent. Artistic administration seeks to fill an existing scholarship void by playing on the notion of arts administration being a “borrower’s field” (Brindle and DeVereaux 5). It plays on this notion by borrowing theories and concepts from other fields to generate a designated approach for artist management. It is important to reiterate that this research is written in a diasporic context, as my perspective as well as the perspective of my interviewee, Kingy, are based on our experiences in the Jamaican music industry. However, the existing literature contains accounts from North American and European practitioners whose experiences and ideas mirror my own experiences and even Kingy’s. In that vein, I argue that artistic administration and management as damage are not limited to the Jamaican context. After all, all the Jamaican artist

managers that I have cited have largely practiced in global markets including North America, Europe, Africa, Australia as well as obviously, the Caribbean and Latin America. These ideas are not restricted to the Jamaican context and can be applied in any arts administration jurisdiction.

Kingy's story is the quintessential Jamaican music industry success story. Kingy's career is a linear manifestation of my artistic administration theory. His career begins as an understudy to an established artist manager. His experience of "becoming" takes place during this experience as Robert Livingston's understudy. Kingy's approach to artist management highlights the benefits of a process-based approach to artist management. Kingy also positively contributes the cycle of "becoming an artist manager (and arts administrator to an extent) by passing on skills to younger artist managers and administrators like myself. I was offered the opportunity to work with Kingy after I was recommended to him by a veteran Jamaican producer. This job was my first fulltime job in Entertainment. I was privy to the magnanimous effort that it takes to support a thriving artist. There are no days off. Kingy's reliability, efficiency and creativity have allowed him to maintain an almost twenty-year relationship with Christopher Martin who has grown exponentially under his management. His relationship with Chris has even surpassed the length of the relationship that his mentor had with his then artist, Shaggy. This is no small feat in an industry largely regarded as fickle due to its high turnover rates. Kingy alludes to the rhizomatic nature of his job when he shares that his job is to cover every possible moving part of his artist's personal and professional lives so that they can focus on their art. He vividly describes the mechanisms he configured and optimized over time to support Christopher Martin's meteoric rise to stardom. Kingy's method/style and process is fully functional artistic administration in practice.

Artist management heavily relies on the manager's ability to produce novel ways of differentiating both their artist's and their own creative process. Having worked with Kingy in the past, I have seen him craft dramatic stage entrances, choreograph performances for live concerts at festivals and even produce music. None of these activities occurred in isolation. These activities are an exposition of the Ubuntu philosophy. Kingy's artists are because his is. Likewise, Kingy is because his artists are. These relationships thrive on reciprocity. Kingy maintained his position as head cook and bottler whilst perfectly balancing his core and tangential duties as an artist

manager. As an artistic artist manager, Kingy continues to play a rhizomatic role as he is integrally involved in every moving part of his artist's life though, in some scenarios, he does not physically deliver any of the services himself. A key example of this is the way that Kingy controls almost every moving part of Christopher Martin's performance and is typically in the wings on stage during performances. However, he does not participate in the public presentation of the performance.

I have argued that artistic administration is a performance, and the exposition of artistic management is a performance in its own right. I have also argued that the rhizomatic nature of this role requires the artist manager to embody setting-specific versions of the same character. In doing so, the manager maintains a pseudo-double consciousness where they have to think as the artist whilst also maintaining their own logical thoughts throughout the production of their process. In doing so, artist managers can also be considered as artists in their own right. I have also proposed that an artist manager's process driven work is their performance, and their 'stages' can be anything ranging from a cellphone or a webcam to a conference room. However, their audience is typically the other points within the artist's supply chain. I argue that artistic administration is an entirely creative practice. I believe that it is exceedingly difficult to experience success as an artist manager without a process and method/style. This is the core idea behind Bogle's "everybody can dance but anuh everybody a dancer". It is likely that most people external to the practice of artist management can do some of the tasks on an artist manager's job description. However, they likely lack a process-based approach to balancing the expansive gamut of responsibilities associated with this vocation. Most people are able to be either predominantly critical/analytical thinkers or creative thinkers. However, I have found that artist managers, and arts administrators to a greater degree, must always be equally creative and critical/analytical. This comes with practice and is typically finetuned during one's "becoming". This was certainly my experience and Kingy shares similar sentiments. While artist management is the focus of this essay, these ideas can be expanded to other forms of arts administration. Is it a one size fits all solution for the entire arts administration field? Certainly not. However, it is my hope that this work is considered as a serious lobby for the situation of artist management as a creative practice.

Works Cited

- Amen, Kam-au. "Entertainment and Cultural Enterprise Management: An Account of Its Becoming." *Kam-Au Amen & Co*, 16 Apr. 2011, https://www.kamauamen.com//2011/04/entertainment-and-cultural-enterprise_16.html.
- Blumenfeld-Jones, Donald S. "The Artistic Process and Arts-Based Research: A Phenomenological Account of the Practice." *Qualitative Inquiry*, vol. 22, no. 5, June 2016, pp. 322–33, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800415620212>.
- Brindle, Meg, and Constance DeVereaux. *The Arts Management Handbook: New Directions for Students and Practitioners*. Taylor and Francis, 2015, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315700243>.
- Brooks, Sadeke. *Experts Needed - Growth of Jamaican Music Stymied by a Lack of Knowledge*. 30 Sept. 2012, <https://jamaicagleaner.com/gleaner/20120930/ent/ent1.html>.
- Byrnes, William J., and Aleksandar Brkić, editors. *The Routledge Companion to Arts Management*. Taylor and Francis, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351030861>.
- Chong, Derrick. *Arts Management*. Taylor and Francis, 2010, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203865347>.
- Cross Jr., William. "The Negro to Black Conversion Experience." *Toward A Psychology of Black Liberation*, 1971, <https://canvas.umn.edu/courses/125595/files/8036854>.
- Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Translated by Brian Massumi, Bloomsbury Academic, 2004.
- Evard, Yves, and François Colbert. "Arts Management: A New Discipline Entering the Millennium?" *International Journal of Arts Management*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2000, pp. 4–13.
- Franken, Robert E. *Human Motivation*. 3rd edition, Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1994.

- Gardener, Sade. "Decoding Bogle: Boysie Breaks Down Slangs from Late Dancer." *Jamaica Observer*, 20 Jan. 2020, <https://buzz-caribbean.com/hot/decoding-bogle-boysie-breaks-down-slangs-from-late-dancer/>.
- Glissant, Edouard. *Poetics of Relation*. Translated by Betsy Wing, University of Michigan Press, 1997.
- Goffman, Erving. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Penguin Books, 1978.
- Grant, Kim. *All About Process: The Theory and Discourse of Modern Artistic Labor*. Penn State University Press, 2017. *Project MUSE*, <https://muse.jhu.edu/book/58791>.
- Haynes, Anthony Richard. "Jacques Maritain's Definition of Art." *New Blackfriars*, vol. 96, no. 1065, 2015, pp. 527–41, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24766354>.
- Heritage, Canadian. "Culture Satellite Account." *Www.canada.ca*, 14 Dec. 2017. Accessed July 24, 2022.
www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/corporate/publications/general-publications/culture-satellite-account.html.
- Herstand, Ari. "Red Light Manager on When and How to Get Management with Andrew Leib - Ari's Take." *Ari's Take*, 20 May 2020, <https://aristake.com/red-light-manager-andrew-leib/>.
- Kohn, Daniel. "Top 10 Music Managers Who Fucked Over Their Clients." *LA Weekly*, 13 July 2011, <https://www.laweekly.com/top-10-music-managers-who-fucked-over-their-clients/>.
- Lettman, Lydon "Kingy. *A Conversation with the King(Y)*. 7 Dec. 2021.
- Maritain, Jacques. *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*. New American Library, 1953.
- McPherson, David. "What an Artist Manager Does, and What to Look for in Finding One." *SOCAN Words and Music*, 15 June 2013,

- <https://www.socanmagazine.ca/sound-advice/what-an-artist-manager-does-and-what-to-look-for-in-finding-one/>.
- Morrow, Guy. "Regulating Artist Managers: An Insider's Perspective." *International Journal of Music Business Research*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2013, pp. 8–35.
- Murove, Munyaradzi Felix. "Ubuntu." *Diogenes*, vol. 59, no. 3–4, Nov. 2012, pp. 36–47, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0392192113493737>.
- Rødje, Kjetil. "Blood Assemblages." *Images of Blood in American Cinema: The Tinger to The Wild Bunch*, Ashgate, 2015.
- "Shaggy, Enya, 'N Sync Top 2001 RIAA Honors." *Billboard*, 21 Dec. 2001, <https://www.billboard.com/music/music-news/shaggy-nya-n-sync-top-2001-riaa-honors-77368/>.
- Stock, James R., and Stefanie L. Boyer. "Developing a Consensus Definition of Supply Chain Management: A Qualitative Study." *International Journal of Physical Distribution & Logistics Management*, vol. 39, no. 8, Jan. 2009, pp. 690–711, <https://doi.org/10.1108/09600030910996323>.
- Trapani, John G. *Poetry, Beauty, and Contemplation: The Complete Aesthetics of Jacques Maritain*. The Catholic University of America Press, 2011.
- Phillips, John. W.P. "Agencement/Assemblage." *Theory, Culture & Society*, vol. 23, no. 2-3, 2006, pp. 108–109., <https://doi.org/10.1177/026327640602300219>.

Other Resources

- Abramović, Marina. "Quote by Marina Abramović: "It taught me that the process was more important..." *Goodreads*, <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/8140248-it-taught-me-that-the-process-was-more-important-than>. Accessed 10 July 2022.
- Abdi, Ali. A, *The Humanist African Philosophy of Ubuntu: Anti-colonial Historical and Educational Analyses*. In: Takyi-Amoako E., Assié-Lumumba N. (eds) *Re-Visioning Education in Africa*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. 2018.
- https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-70043-4_2
- Boettinger, Henry M. "Is Management Really an Art?" *Harvard Business Review*, January 1975, <https://hbr.org/1975/01/is-management-really-an-art>. Accessed 15 July 2022.
- "Brown to Confer Nine Honorary Degrees during Commencement and Reunion Weekend." Brown University, 11 Aug. 2022, <https://www.brown.edu/news/2022-05-06/honorary>.
- Chaitoo, Ramesh. *The Entertainment Sector in CARICOM Key Challenges and Proposals for Action*. Inter-American Development Bank. 2013. Accessed on December 2, 2021. Retrieved from: <https://publications.iadb.org/en/publication/11860/entertainment-sector-caricom-key-challenges-and-proposals-action>
- Du Bois, W. E. B. (1999). "The Souls of Black Folk. Critical edition". Gates, H. L., Oliver, T. H. (Eds.). New York, NY: Norton (Original work published 1903).
- Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sports. *Understanding the Value of the Cultural and Creative Industries*. 2017. Accessed November 19, 2019. <https://mcges.gov.jm/index.php/home/minister-s-office/item/218-sectoral-presentation-2017>
- Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sports. *Entertainment, Cultural and Creative Industries Covid-19 Economic Impact Report*. June 2020.

Planning Institute of Jamaica (2010) Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan: Planning for a Secure and Prosperous Future. Jamaica Creative Industries Sector Plan for Vision 2030 pp 54-55. Retrieved from: [Popular Version of the Vision 2030 Jamaica: National Development Plan.](#)

“Process.” *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/process>. Accessed 19 Dec. 2021.

“Process art.” *Tate*, <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/process-art>. Accessed 15 July 2022.

Szatkowski, Janek. *A Theory of Dramaturgy*. 1st ed. Taylor and Francis, 2019. Web. 25 Sept. 2021.

Van der Klei, Alice. “Repeating the Rhizome.” *SubStance*, vol. 31, no. 1, 2002, pp. 48–55. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3685805>. Accessed 15 Jul. 2022.

Yokochi, Sawako, and Takeshi Okada. “The Process of Art-making and Creative Expertise: An Analysis of Artists' Process Modification.” *The Journal of Creative Behavior*, vol. 55, no. 2, 2021, pp. 532–45, <https://doi.org/10.1002/jocb.472>

Appendix. A Conversation with the King(y)

Name: Lydon Lettman

Professional Moniker: Kingy

Company: Kingyard Productions Ltd.

Talent on roster: Christopher Martin, D- Major

No. of years in practice: 22 years

How did you become an artist manager?

I used to tour with Shaggy as a Roadie with Shaggy. I understudied Shaggy's manager until one day I was approached and asked to manage an artist. I then took on the task

How would you describe your role as an artist manager?

My role is very important. It allows the artist to focus on his talent, his craft. He leaves all the outside doings and happenings, things to me. The artist is not supposed to be distracted by these things. I deal with all these so that he can focus on his talent his craft

What are your typical duties as an artist manager?

My duties involve a lot of things... aaah My main duty is to keep the artist focused and on a steady growth trajectory. I negotiate agreements, look for opportunities, look for and negotiate deals..overall keep the artist on a steady growth path

Do you have a job description (i.e., a formal document outlining your duties)?

There's not a formal job description but we both know the goal we're trying to achieve

Are your entire job functions typically included in the contractual agreement between yourself and the talent being managed?

Yes, there is an understanding, the artist knows the role I am trying to play

Is the talent you manage fully aware of the scope of your job?

Yes, I'd say the artist is fully aware.

In your words, what does your talent expect of you?

My artist expects me to keep him relevant in the marketplace plus help him to develop in the marketplace and expand his reach into marketplace

Are you required to think creatively (i.e., use your imagination to create original ideas) in your role as an artist manager? If yes, can you provide examples?

The marketplace is always evolving so you definitely have to be creative in order to get attention for your artist in different market.. And to allow him to get introduced to other markets. For instance, I remember there was a year when there was a major influx of visitors to Negril to a particular weekend.. I think it was Dream Weekend. I got sponsorship, wrapped a vehicle with the artist's image displayed and put the car in a strategic location so that those who did not know of him would have seen the car and the car would've sparked some interest... and thought "who is that guy? Why is his face on a car... that is just one example of the creative things I've done throughout his career

Another example is to create skits and use his newly released songs in the background. So, the skit is getting attention and the song is being played. If you're watching for the skit, you'd hear the song and if you're interested in the song you would still see the skit. This was another creative way of attracting attention to the artist.

How important is your ability to think creatively on the job as an artist manager?

The ability to think creatively is very important to a manager as I said before, the artist is just focused on his talent, his craft, while it is up to the manager to do his best to ensure that the material gets out there and the artist image gets out there and the artist stays relevant. So, it is very important for the manager to build a team and do what it takes to have the artist's presence be felt amongst his fans

Do you think your creativity differentiates you as an artist manager? If yes, How?

I think my creativity differentiates me as an artist manager. My artist is the first artist to break through after winning Rising Stars (popular talent show). My creative management skills helped to make this possible

Do you have a style (or way of doing your duties) as an artist manager?

My style is straightforward. I take my job very seriously. I treat it as a business and not a hustle. I definitely don't take it for granted. I don't get complacent. I always know that this is my way of life, this is what I do so I have to take it very seriously. I don't joke around with it.

Do you alter your style according to the talent you manage?

Different artists are at different levels in their careers and they have different understandings. They see things differently. There are some things you have to alter in order to get the artist out there and to get the artist to understand where they are and what the plan is. Yea I do alter depending on the artist that I'm dealing with and the level of their career.

What would you say is the best (or are the best) part(s) of being an artist manager?

The best part of being an artist manager is to see the artist grow and develop into a household name internationally, that's the best part for me. The other good part is traveling around the world meeting interesting people.

Lastly, is there anything you think people should know about being an artist manager?

Being an artist manager for some people seems like a glamorous job...which it can be. It has that image. It has that look. But it is way more than that. That's just the surface. It is a job that is very serious, very intricate. It takes you to places that you have been for the first time. Far, far, far away from your comfort zone to interact and deal with people that you're seeing for the very first time. Far, far, far away from home again, you're out of your comfort zone. So, it is a job that can be challenging at times depending on who you're dealing with and how you deal with situations but it is (on the surface) it seems glamorous but it is very very..way more intricate than that. That's just the surface.

Kingy:

And a very important thing, the team you choose to have around you is so important. The team that you choose is very important. If you have an artist that you believe in. Stick with the talent. Once you think the talent has potential, stick with them. Don't just jump ship because nothing seems to be happening. This is where you get to think out of the box and create opportunities for the artist. Many artists and managers separate because either party loses faith in the mission. But once you believe in the artist, hold on to that belief and be creative.