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KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT

Since 2001, the London Borough of Lewisham has been site of many aggressive “regeneration” schemes, which Lewisham Council justifies with narratives problematising the area and people within it. Three music videos, however, offer alternative perspectives on how air pollution, policing, and “regeneration” impact the existing public life of residents there.

Research conducted in summer 2021 sought to understand how and why Black Atlantic music culture practitioners use particular spaces, and how these uses are impacted by the Council’s regeneration. Charles’ (2018) musicological discourse analysis (MDA) methods were adapted, which have not yet been applied in the field of urban planning. In-depth interviews and analysis of interviewees’ music were contextualised by discourse analysis of a 20-year catalogue of planning and regeneration texts by Lewisham Council and the Greater London Authority. Findings indicated that contrary to Council narratives justifying “regeneration,” existing Lewisham residents have a cohesive community borne of communal use of spaces and shared experiences.

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“Regeneration” and Black Atlantic Music in the London Borough of Lewisham

INTRODUCTION

Musicians reflect their locale through sonic and visual aesthetics. In Lewisham, an outer London borough with a rich music history, many creative practitioners of Black Atlantic (alternatively Black British, African-Caribbean, or Afrodiasporic) music culture represent various neighbourhoods as the Council “regenerates” and gentrifies them. In the past 20 years, the Council has initiated and led aggressive “regeneration” schemes entailing estate demolition, new high-rise apartments, transport construction, and efforts to rehabilitate the Borough’s image through various “cultural” initiatives to attract private investment and new residents.

Research conducted in summer 2021 sought to understand how and why Black Atlantic music culture practitioners use particular spaces, and how these uses are impacted by the Council’s regeneration. Charles’ (2018) musicological discourse analysis (MDA) methods were adapted, which have not yet been applied in the field of urban planning. In-

depth interviews and analysis of interviewees’ music were contextualised by discourse analysis of a 20-year catalogue of planning and regeneration texts by Lewisham Council **Fig. 1** and the Greater London Authority. Findings indicated that contrary to Council narratives justifying “regeneration,” existing Lewisham residents have a cohesive community borne of communal use of spaces and shared experiences.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Labelle offers compelling reasons to understand a place through its sound. Sound is legislated, policed, and politicised by government authorities, yet “brings bodies together. It forces us to come out, in lyrical, antagonistic, and beautiful ways, creating connective moments and deepening the sense for both the present and the distant, the real and the mediated.”¹ Sound’s ubiquitous and “disruptive spatiality” facilitates “opportunities for dynamic sharing – to know the other.”²



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Sound and noise provide a way of both knowing and merging with the other. "Noise... can be heard not merely as a symptom of symbolic vulnerability or theoretical disorder, but as... the occasional catalyst of dynamic cultural change operative across the urban topos" which morphs over generations.³ For over a century, musicians from across the African diaspora (as well as other backgrounds) have converged in London to form new kinds of music like lovers rock, grime, and garage.⁴

Rather than segment music by commercial genre, music herein meets Gilroy's description of the Black Atlantic (alternatively, Black British or Afrodiasporic). European governments and companies perpetrating the transatlantic slave trade created trafficking routes between Africa, America, Europe, and the Caribbean, which created a shared history and lineage amongst people forced into slavery and their descendants.⁵ Black Atlantic music shares aural features like distinct basslines, "low-frequency drum, polyrhythm, call and response, interactivity, improvisation, and montage in communication."⁶ Musicians sample and remix, as well as "criticize and comment on each other's work, or extend a narrative."⁷ The content of Black Atlantic music is explicitly political:

The struggles for civil rights, black power, racial equality or freedom from police harassment...generate demands

which cannot be contained within the structures of the contemporary British political system as it stands... Distinct and explicit anti-capitalist themes, some utopian, some pragmatic and immediate, recur repeatedly... and provide a source of affinity with black cultures elsewhere.⁸

For these reasons, within each generation of the past century, Black music spurred "moral panic" of the white establishment.⁹ Given the role Black Atlantic music has played in this consciousness and resisting oppressive and racist social frameworks, the British state and media have consistently censored, surveilled, criminalised, and repressed Black Atlantic music expression.¹⁰ The Metropolitan Police repressed grime and drill through surveillance and administrative operations like Form 696, which was only put out of use in 2017: "Black cultural life is patrolled by hunting down artists who speak their minds or sound their rhymes as courageous truth-tellers about their life in a socially and racially unequal Britain."¹¹

LEWISHAM

Lewisham, in southeast London, is the capital's third-largest borough (13.4 square miles) and home to over 300,000 residents. Its northern border is formed by the River Thames and has an industrial and maritime history stretching back



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hundreds of years. The borough has several major town centres including Lewisham, Deptford, New Cross, Catford, and Brockley. The latter three are depicted in the music videos.

Anim-Addo found evidence of Black residents in Lewisham going back to the 17th century. By the mid-1800s many Black residents had been born there. An established “Black presence” was further cemented after World War 2, when the British government opened its borders to British subjects to rebuild the country. Immigrants from the Caribbean and West Africa settled in southeast London because of its cheaper rent (albeit due to substandard housing and poor transport connections).¹² Today, Lewisham has one of the UK’s highest concentrations of African-Caribbean residents. In 2020, 48.3% of the population was “BAME,” a term the British government uses to racialise people as “Black, Asian and Minority Ethnicities.” About 25% of Lewisham residents are racialised as Black African, Black Caribbean, or a mix of these with other racialised groups.¹³

The local authority, entrepreneurs, landlords, the white supremacist group National Front, Metropolitan Police, and white Lewisham residents actively created an environment of everyday, systematic racism for Lewisham’s Black residents. This took form in extortionate rents, denying access to music venues, arson, murder, and excessive force. The Metropolitan Police and private venue owners

repressed Black musical expression, yet Black residents formed their own networks, businesses, and organisations, such as self-build housing schemes and parties in private homes. The Metropolitan Police maintain an outsized presence in Lewisham. In the late 1990s Chiesmans, an important department store, was demolished for construction of the largest police station in Europe, and the Metropolitan Police conduct a number of covert operations and pilot schemes in the Borough.¹⁴

A variety of different music styles comprise the local culture in Lewisham, including punk, reggae, and jazz. Many of the 21 interviewees, regardless of their heritage, pointed to the outsize influence of Jamaican culture on their everyday life and creative development. Sound systems with enduring lineages, such as Saxon and Shaka, were founded in Lewisham in the 1970s and 1980s. Youth clubs, like the Lewisham Way Centre and Moonshot Centre, as sources of education and empowerment for young Black Lewisham residents. These centres had their own sound systems on which young people could learn to operate and assemble the equipment, DJ, and MC (the Council, however, has closed all but five of its youth centres).¹⁵

In the past two decades, Lewisham Council has used the idea of “culture” to promote regeneration schemes that focus on the built environments. In 2001, Lewisham Council hired the consultant Charles Landry to write



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“Creative Lewisham,” a report that repurposed Richard Florida’s “creative class” ideas to suggest how Lewisham could “regenerate” itself.¹⁶ For the next 20 years, a variety of the Borough’s planning and regeneration texts discussed how attracting private investment, new businesses, and new residents may be achieved through culture-centric urban regeneration. In recent years, lifestyle and property blogs have credited Lewisham’s improved reputation from 2013, when the Institute for Economics and Peace named it the “least peaceful” place in the UK, yet its overall negative reputation persists.

Council, developer, and consultant texts dating back to 2001 leverage these negative depictions and representation of Lewisham as justification for regeneration and introducing “culture.” The Council refrains from condemning its own residents but points to negative outside perceptions, mostly relating to crime and safety, that likely discourage outside investors and would-be residents from settling in the area. The 2002 Cultural Strategy, for example, noted

a tension between Lewisham’s emergence as a recognised centre of cultural provision and a place where people choose to live. Lewisham...has not been generally perceived as being culturally exciting. While it

suffers from all the problems associated with the inner city...there is still much to celebrate.¹⁷

METHOD: MUSICOLOGICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND INTERVIEWS

Over summer 2021, I conducted 18 in-depth interviews with 21 people either from, currently residing in, or with otherwise close ties to the London Borough of Lewisham. Most took place in Lewisham’s public realm or small businesses. Three were conducted on the move as interviewees walked me through their neighbourhoods. I asked about the places important to musical development and how this has changed over time, as careers progress or in response to changes in the built environment. Their commentary was contextualised with a review of Lewisham’s planning and cultural policy between 2001–2021, which enabled me to parallel interviewees’ descriptions of Lewisham to the Borough’s planning policies.

Charles developed musicological discourse analysis (MDA) as a framework for analysing music of the African diaspora. MDA rejects commercial genres and the individual focus on composers and performers in Eurocentric music analysis methods. MDA accounts for the “specific place, time, historical, social, political, and technological context” in

which music is created.¹⁸ Sonic landscapes are organised using the acronym PPICS: “Public (e.g., the street, inner city), Private (e.g., homes and domestic spaces), Informal Community (e.g., youth centers, churches, school playgrounds, raves) and Semi-public spaces (e.g., the top of tower blocks, precincts).” The sounds heard in one’s surroundings are translated into music, pointing to how grime musicians used “peculiar sound combinations (and soundscapes) are found in the hidden PPICS spaces of densely populated inner cities.”¹⁹

The three interviewees’ music videos were predominantly filmed in public spaces and address what it is like living in New Cross, Brockley, and in Catford near the South Circular road. These include Kayowa’s “Based” (2021),²⁰ Koder’s “Why you in the Endz?” (2018),²¹ and Love Ssega’s “Our World (Fight for Air)” (2021).²² **Fig. 2-3**

Kayowa started making music as a child through extracurricular and church programmes and is now an independent artist. “Based” was produced by Regan Jordine and filmed by Jaffar Aly, and has a lo-fi beat, R&B harmonised vocals and production elements that warp sound as the camera follows Kayowa on a bus and walking through the neighbourhood to an off-license and friend’s house. Her lyrics comment on issues like new high-rise towers, air quality, and homelessness in a familiar place.

Ssega began making music in university but credited Lewisham’s multiculturalism as a creative influence. “Our World” sounds like alternative/electronic pop with a stark, driving beat dominated by Ssega’s powerful call to improve the air quality surrounding the South Circular (a large arterial road trafficked by heavy trucks and lorries), which disproportionately harms Black people. In 2013, the Southwark Coroner’s Court found that air pollution was a significant cause of death for nine-year-old Lewisham resident Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah, who lived 25 metres from the South Circular. In “Our World,” footage of vehicular traffic through the South Circular is juxtaposed with people moving through the local neighbourhoods it cuts through.

Koder started making music as a child and was influenced by relatives in hip hop groups and sound systems. He founded Undeniable Records, which has a studio in Brockley. “Why You in the Endz” is a grime track that forcefully challenges narratives surrounding crime and unemployment in Brockley. It depicts policing and criminalisation of Brockley’s young people concurrent to its gentrification. **Fig. 4**

DEPICTIONS OF LEWISHAM: EXTERNAL THREATS TO COHESION

Whereas Lewisham Council texts point to “culture” as a way to regenerate the area, implicitly problematizing people already there, the music videos depict a cohesive community threatened by outsiders like developers, the Council, and police whose actions are violent, patronising, and disconnected from the realities of existing residents. The music videos sound and look distinctly different from each other but share certain qualities. Whereas Lewisham Council’s planning texts, which stress attracting outside investment and new residents as crucial to its “regeneration,”

the songs focus on who is already in Lewisham, what they are doing, and how they are negatively impacted by regeneration.

The videos situate themselves through identifiers like postcodes, road signs, Lewisham’s municipal logo, murals along pavements that say “Brockley” in Koder’s video, and landmarks like the Catford cat in Ssega’s. Although videos include scenes in homes, they are mostly shot in public spaces like local businesses, parks, estates, buses, and the street as Lewisham residents go about their everyday lives. In contrast to the Council’s regeneration and planning texts, which problematise the built environment, the lyrics and visuals cover themes like inequality, gentrification, policing, air quality, and homelessness. The videos presented an overarching narrative about cohesive networks threatened by external actors like the Metropolitan Police, Council, and new residents. First, facets of the local cohesiveness will be explored before turning to how it is threatened by regeneration and gentrification.

COHESION

Music videos were filmed in places frequented by the artists, like Caribbean takeaways, off-licenses, and barbers and show close, intimate shots of residents’ faces. Kayowa and Koder both use slang created by young Black British people, another indicator of cohesion. Kayowa opens “Based” with

SE14, the ends I be repping,
so you best keep it steppin
or I’ll teach you a lesson...
Where my bad B’s from the south side, where you at?

Kayowa’s video has a homemade, DIY aesthetic, which reinforces the easy familiarity with New Cross she expresses:

When I’m in the offie [off-licence shop] after picking up
a bag
I pop up to the road and see what’s happening
in the south side, where I’m based, where I’m at.

It films spring flowers in bloom and Kayowa singing on a bus stop bench and a friend’s balcony. In Ssega’s video, over footage of Lewisham residents working, exercising in leisure centres, and rollerblading in parks, he obliquely addresses negative perceptions about Lewisham that discount the importance of the place to the people already there and feed into apathy about the air quality. This cohesion is despite-or perhaps because of- Lewisham’s negative external reputation. In the opening verse he sings,

Welcome to our world, this is the place, the South London
voiceless speak
'Cause I can’t see them past the non-existent headline.

In the third verse, he sings,

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A mix of old and new housing in Lewisham, taken from the balcony of a Council flat in a new building with privately rented and Council flats (author's own, 2021).

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Image taken from a fragment of the video "Our World (Fight for Air)" by the Author Love Ssega, present on YouTube (author's edition, 2021).

3

Image taken from a fragment of the video "Based" by the Author Kayowa, present on YouTube (author's edition, 2021).

4

Image taken from a fragment of the video "Why you in the Endz?" by the Author Koder, present on YouTube (author's Edition, 2021).

Welcome to our world, South Circular is more than a thoroughfare
 But people work and live, breathe and reside here...
 We don't need hyperbole or distractions
 Give us the facts, we don't want the factions
 We have the people, we have the stories
 Show us the pictures, not allegories
 More than just posters on the street
 This is where we live, die and eat
 So if you wanna break bread with me then
 Come and take a seat.

Similar to Ssega's video, which is interspersed with portrait-style shots of residents, Koder's video films him and his friends up-close in familiar surroundings, like on the steps and roof of an estate. Yet he also acknowledges outsiders' gaze and scrutiny. In his video, a news anchor reports from Brockley with the satirical headline "ECLIPTIC URBAN STAR – GRIME STAR: WHY YOU IN THE ENDZ?"

INEQUALITY, POLICING, AND VIOLENCE

Koder, Kayowa, and Ssega all address various forms of inequality. The main theme of Ssega's track is the dangerous air pollution around the South Circular, but Kayowa also has a line about it: "Air polluted lungs, you

get for free." Ssega distinguishes that although the air quality disproportionately impacts working class and Black residents, it still threatens the "well to do." Kayowa also notes inequality by commenting on the rate of homelessness, and juxtaposing "Concrete buildings tower over me, palaces and kingdoms in your dreams."

Government texts talk about culture as a way to raise residents' ambition.²³ This narrative about a lack of self-esteem or ambition strongly contrasted with interviewees' commentary. They did not lack drive but resources lost to government disinvestment, such as youth clubs (where many young Lewisham residents had their first musical experiences). Koder describes the systemic nature of poverty, and how hard people work to get out of it despite "gentrification raising the rent price:"

Why you in the endz, can't you see that man just tryna
 make both ends meet
 Everyday doors get kicked off, sirens wake me up out of
 my sleep
 JSA [Job seeker's allowance] tryna make man come in
 every single day of that week
 Back when I had no p's [pounds], had those dreams, whip
 that government cheese



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Koder alludes to both social cleansing and cultural appropriation in the rapid-fire closing lines of “Why you in the endz,” and calls for his friends and neighbours to claim public space (this is not just artistic posturing-Koder put on a free show at Hilly Fields in summer 2021):

Gentrification, Caribbean shops get closed, nice eggs
 benedict and bacon
 A man feels alien, community fadin’,
 Shops play soul when the soul’s been takin
 Please, time to set up speakers on the streets
 We’re undeniable so we don’t ever take the feet [he
 pantomimes running away]

Lewisham’s existing ecosystem is threatened by various agents of gentrification, such as the Metropolitan Police, the council, developers, and new residents. Interviewees differentiated areas gentrified or not gentrified in their areas at the hyper-local scale. For example, Kieron Morris, who runs youth record label Rezon8, said he films his artists’ freestyles in a tunnel under a footbridge separating two pieces of public space outside Deptford Station. Of the side closer to the station (over which looms a new apartment building widely disliked), he said, “When I walk through [Deptford Market Square], I’m like, why is this here? None of

these shops are directed towards anyone in this area. None of them, not one. But I like that tunnel because it’s between the gentrified part of Deptford... it’s right in the middle.” The square on the opposite side of the tunnel is frequented by long-term residents, who play music and socialise in warmer weather.

Kayowa and Koder’s music videos both include skyline shots of London, which both situate them within the city yet separate their everyday experiences from the capital’s iconic towers. Outsiders are shown from a further distance away. In Koder’s video, from across the street, the camera pans over new cafes patronised by mostly white, middle-class residents outside Brockley Overground station. I met several interviewees at this station who all suggested we conduct the interview elsewhere.

In Ssega’s music video, vehicles are portrayed as a nuisance, particularly the heavy trucks on long haul routes elsewhere. Although most of the video feels familiar, friendly, and intimate, it is interspersed with the heavy polluting vehicles driving through the area amongst schoolchildren. When Ssega is singing on a traffic island, passing trucks obscure the view of him.

A recurring theme in many interviews was that new residents were scared of or hostile to long-settled residents, yet felt entitled to the place. Interviewees discussed gentrification

as a violence akin to colonisation and war. Koder said, "There's a battle where we're walking down the road and people are looking at you like you shouldn't be here. And you're thinking, 'this is my ends though.'"

In Koder's video, friends hang out on the steps and rooftop of an estate and he asks,

Why you in the endz tryna make the mandem beef
Why you in the endz tryna shepherd, we ain't sheep
Why you in the endz, never show up when there's grief
Why you in the endz, we don't need no more police
Why you in the endz, tryna tap into devices
Why you in the endz I can see you're so divisive
Why you in the endz, I aint running from no sirens
Gave us all the guns then try and blame us for the violence.

Whereas many interviewees discussed Lewisham's external reputation as being unsafe (its crime rates are similar to the rest of London), Koder depicted the police as his neighbourhood's main source of violence and divisiveness. For many male interviewees, the Metropolitan Police were the most direct manifestation of this violence and an omnipresent threat. Within and beyond the study years of 2001–2021, the Metropolitan Police have led a number of operations and initiatives that by their own accounts disproportionately target Black people.²⁴ In an interview, Koder described what it was like being a young Black man in Brockley in the early 2000s, and that the constant threat of stops and searches (sometimes multiple in one day) "just makes you want to stay in your house." Koder's video mostly explicitly addresses the relationship of policing to the gentrification of Lewisham. The video depicts a cop, his face concealed behind a white mask, removing a fork from Koder's pocket and replacing it with a butterknife while he is handcuffed facedown on the street. He addresses this duplicity with the lines:

Why you in the endz tryna disrespect the ting
Tryna bring my war to my queens and my kings
Why you in the endz tryna wash away your sins
Nickin us for drugs when it's you who brought them in.

CONCLUSION

Kayowa, Ssega, and Koder critique oppressive capitalist and racist processes impacting their lives and surroundings in Lewisham. Their videos offer insight into how locals perceive their neighbourhoods in the face of state-led policing and gentrification. Although they have different styles, they depict New Cross, Catford, and Brockley as cohesive at least partly because of shared experiences and spaces like parks, estates, and local businesses. As opposed to Council regeneration plans, which propose real estate and transport interventions to improve the built environment, attract new residents and more outside private investment, these videos depict air pollution, the Metropolitan Police, and gluts of private new unaffordable housing as threatening and dividing the local community.

Artistic representations of place are valuable in the context of aggressive regeneration and policing, which are often initiated and justified by state and developer discourses that demonise an area and criminalise its inhabitants. Perhaps the starkest divide between the music and planning texts' representations is the focus on people versus place. Kayowa, Koder, and Ssega frame their experience in Lewisham through the people there and what they are doing, whereas Council texts prioritise space, its appearance, and capitalist activities occurring within it. This lack of specificity about future users of space perhaps makes it easier to obscure if the existing population is displaced.

The biggest "regeneration" schemes in Lewisham are large mixed-use developments catering to young professionals. Despite the Council's own assessments that existing Lewisham families need affordable 3 and 4-bedroom homes, most of the new buildings are studios, 1 and 2-bedrooms.²⁵ This private housebuilding and regeneration mechanisms are wealth-extracting. Rental and sale profits will be diverted out of Lewisham to the private consortiums financing them. Koder and Ssega both allude to this draining, extracting nature of gentrification. Ssega sings:

You can fight and conquer, grow up here
But oil prices are your fear
'Cause black gold is not the people, it's your mineral extraction
We don't need hyperbole or distractions.

Similarly, Koder asks:

Why you in the ends tryna take away the gold
Why you in the ends tryna take away the souls.

MDA offers a multidisciplinary framework to interpret music made by people from a particular area, better understanding their heritage, creative practices, and surroundings. Musicians provide alternative insights beyond official narratives by conveying the features and experiences comprising their everyday lives, and how they are impacted by practices associated with state-led capitalist, neoliberal "regeneration" strategies, such as rebranding, policing, and private real estate development.

- ¹ Brandon Labelle, *Acoustic Territories: Sound Culture and Everyday Life* (London: Continuum, 2010), xxiv–xxv.
- ² Labelle, *Acoustic Territories*, xxi.
- ³ Eric Wilson, "Plagues, Fairs, and Street Cries: Sounding out Society and Space in Early Modern London," *Modern Language Studies* 25, no. 3 (1995): 1–42, 12.
- ⁴ Lloyd Bradley, *Sounds Like London: 100 Years of Black Music in the Capital* (London: Serpent's Tail, 2013).
- ⁵ Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic* (London: Verso Books, 1993).
- ⁶ Monique Charles, "MDA as a Research Method of Generic Musical Analysis for the Social Sciences: Sifting Through Grime (Music) as an SFT Case Study," *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 17 (2018): 1–11, 5.
- ⁷ Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack* (London: Hutchinson, 1987), 209.
- ⁸ Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack*, 198.
- ⁹ Hilary Moore, *Inside British Jazz: Crossing Borders of Race, Nation, and Class* (London: Routledge, 2007).
- ¹⁰ Bradley, *Sounds Like London*.
- ¹¹ Lambros Fatsis, "Policing the beats: The criminalisation of UK drill and grime music by the London Metropolitan Police," *The Sociological Review* 67, no. 6 (2019): 1300–316, 1311.
- ¹² Joan Anim-Addo, *Longest Journey: A History of Black Lewisham* (London: Deptford Forum Publishing Ltd., 1995).
- ¹³ Lewisham Observatory, 2020 Population Projections, accessed January 28, 2024, https://www.observatory.lewisham.gov.uk/population/#/view-report/9df901355f4b4c11bb9d09d277001261/___iaFirstFeature.
- ¹⁴ Anim-Addo, *Longest Journey*.
- ¹⁵ William Henry, *What the deejay said: a critique from the street!* (London: Nu-Beyond Ltd., 2006).
- ¹⁶ Charles Landry, *Creative Lewisham: the report of the Lewisham Culture & Urban Development Commission* (London: Lewisham Culture and Urban Development Commission, 2001).
- ¹⁷ *London Borough of Lewisham* (London: Lewisham Local Cultural Strategy, 2002), 16.
- ¹⁸ Charles, "MDA as a Research Method of Generic Musical Analysis for the Social Sciences," 2.
- ¹⁹ Charles, "MDA as a Research Method of Generic Musical Analysis for the Social Sciences," 7.
- ²⁰ Based, "Kayowa," prod. Regan Jordine. Video, 1:51, June 1, 2021, Youtube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jcIFc0lkssl>.
- ²¹ Koder, "Why you in the endz?," prod. BlameJay. Video, 3:16, August 7, 2018, Youtube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bCeul3c3FgE>.
- ²² Love Ssega, "Our World (Fight for Air)," video, 3:28, April 29, 2021, Youtube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZZKQ_kqwPE.
- ²³ Greater London Authority, *Cultural Metropolis: The Mayor's Culture Strategy 2012-Beyond* (London: Greater London Authority, 2010); Jennifer Crook, *Culture On the High Street* (London: Greater London Authority, 2013).
- ²⁴ Metropolitan Police (2020). Stop and Search by Borough January 2010-December 2018. I. R. Unit.
- ²⁵ Richard Brecknock, Margie Caust, Charles Landry, and Andy Howell, *City Intercultural: Making the Most of Diversity* (London: Comedia in association with Brecknock Consulting, 2007). Michael Bullock, *Strategic Housing Market Assessment* (London: London Borough of Lewisham, 2019).

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"Rigenerazione" e Black Atlantic Music nel distretto londinese di Lewisham

Christine Hannigan

PAROLE CHIAVE

rigenerazione; gentrificazione; Black Atlantic Music; analisi discorsiva musicologica

ABSTRACT

Dal 2001, il distretto londinese di Lewisham è stato teatro di numerosi e aggressivi progetti di "rigenerazione," che il Lewisham Council giustifica con narrazioni che problematizzano l'area e le persone che vi abitano. Tre video musicali, tuttavia, offrono prospettive alternative su come l'inquinamento atmosferico, la vigilanza e la "rigenerazione" incidano sull'attuale vita pubblica dei residenti.

La ricerca condotta nell'estate del 2021 ha cercato di capire come e perché gli operatori nel campo della Black Atlantic Music utilizzano determinati spazi e come questi usi sono influenzati dalla rigenerazione attuata dal Council. Sono stati adottati i metodi dell'analisi discorsiva musicologica (MDA) di Charles (2018), che non sono ancora stati applicati nel campo della pianificazione urbana. Le interviste approfondite e l'analisi della musica degli intervistati sono state contestualizzate dall'analisi del discorso di un catalogo ventennale di testi di pianificazione e rigenerazione del Lewisham Council e della Greater London Authority. I risultati hanno indicato che, contrariamente alle narrazioni del Council che giustificano la "rigenerazione," gli attuali residenti di Lewisham hanno una comunità coesa che nasce dall'uso comune degli spazi e dalle esperienze condivise.

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