

Musicians' Mental Health in the "Second Happiest Country in the World": Findings from the Danish 'When Music Speaks' Project

Keynote:

"Dreaming, Believing and Grieving: Our Music Students and Their Mental Health"

Recent studies have highlighted high incidences of anxiety, depression, suicide, and other mental health conditions amongst career musicians, with psychosocial features of the contemporary music industry working environment cited by some as a contributory factor. Despite these reported affective challenges of musical work, music industry education within higher education (HE) has never been more popular with young people who dream of working in 'the music industry', evidenced in the growth of courses dedicated to music business management, music industry studies and, relatedly, popular music and music production. This popularity has consequently led to an increased interest in how graduates of these programmes manage their transition from education into the music industries. This keynote asks: how meaningfully are broadly defined music graduates being prepared for the emotional challenges they might face in their careers? Furthermore, how realistically are we confronting the harsh realities that data on the economics of music suggests many music students will not earn a sustainable living as a musician?

Bio: Dr. George Musgrave is an interdisciplinary sociologist of culture, researching musicians' psychosocial working lives. His specialism concerns the psychological experiences and working conditions of creative careers, with a focus on mental health and wellbeing in the music industry. He has collaboratively undertaken major funded research projects on mental health and the music industry both in the UK and internationally. His research has been published in world-leading journals across multiple disciplines including medicine/health (The Lancet, The Lancet Psychiatry, Frontiers in Public Health), music psychology (Musicae Scientiae, Psychology of Music) and social sciences/cultural studies (Poetics, Cultural Trends). He is regularly invited to speak internationally on the subject and has appeared on media including BBC News, BBC Radio 4, Times Radio and the Financial Times. He is also a Fellow of the Royal Society of Public Health.