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**MAKING BOTH ENDS MEET:
A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE ON
BECOMING AN ARTIST IN THE
NEW CULTURAL ECONOMY**

MEGAN WILLIAMS

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Masters in Education (Music) University of
Auckland, 2005.**

ABSTRACT

Artists dwell in a negotiated space between art and commerce. To survive as an artist in the new cultural economy, various aptitudes, skills and capital are required. Diversification, collaboration, self-subsidization, and aptitude towards risk are necessary, alongside the accepted norms of technical artistic ability and original material. Pierre Bourdieu's model of the two-sub fields (autonomous and heteronomous) of cultural production sustained by habitus and forms of capital provide a way to understand the complexities of cultural production. In this thesis, New Zealand contemporary artist's work and the limits of this polarized model to take into account transformations in the field of cultural production such as post-market institutions and interaction between the two sub-fields are considered. The artistic habitus that emerged in Bohemian times, still informs attitudes to commerce in autonomous universes of production, which means the sacrifices the artist has 'made to their art' serve only to make the work even more unique and culturally valuable. However, modifications have occurred in the habitus of the artist. The artist's position in society as 'cultural entrepreneur' requires large amounts of self-reliance, commitment and dedication to work that is 'self-work.' The artist inadvertently becomes the 'pin-up' for the discourse of enterprise culture. Such are the complexities of the economies of the arts. Research is presented from a collection of critical voices from a cultural studies and sociological perspective, as well as cultural economics, to debate what has come to be termed the cultural economy or creative industries. Following a critical tradition in music education, I explore the effect of this thinking on the education of the artist/musician in contemporary society.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Vaughan James Williams, our dearly loved brother, builder and musician.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the following people and organisations that have assisted me in the writing of this thesis:

David Lines for his encouragement and guidance in the development of ideas and writing process throughout this thesis.

Manukau Libraries for making provision for part-time hours so that I could complete this thesis.

My family - Lisa, Barry, Lyn, Delwyn, and Campbell for their generous support and encouragement.

My friends and colleagues- Kirsten, Linda, Terry, Brenda, and Jane for their assistance in proof reading my first draft.

Setareh for lending me her laptop.

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