EFFECTS OF SELECTED MODES OF DIGITAL DISTRIBUTION ON MUSIC CONSUMERISM, WITH REFERENCE TO THE ALBUM FORMAT

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EFFECTS OF SELECTED MODES OF DIGITAL DISTRIBUTION
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FORMAT

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Abstract

In this digital age many listeners of music now purchase albums from online digital music stores instead of buying a physical album from the record store. This has created a concern with many regarding the future of the album as a physical medium. This study investigates the impact of the possible death of the album on certain listening habits, the activity of record collecting, the creation of large-scale musical works, music consumerism, and its implications for the creative process on music as art and sound-recording quality.

Three realisations have led to the problem statement. Firstly, the album might not have a future in the digital age. Secondly, downloadable songs might not be able to recreate an album experience. The third realisation is that the possible death of the album could create new, exciting challenges to artists as they strive to create art.

This study is exploratory in nature - and no hypothesis was generated. The research necessitates qualitative, exploratory, descriptive and contextual approaches. Furthermore, the investigation has led to the collection of mostly new data, constituting a “primary data design” through the implementation of qualitative listening experiments and a focus group, using full-time NMMU students between 18 and 25 years of age.

It is herein argued that digital distribution might possibly have an effect on the perception of the album format and might possibly still be a relevant listening experience, valued by young people. Singles and albums are collectable; and good albums are considered artistic and comparable to the large-scale musical works of the past. If the concept of an album does not die out, then high fidelity formats should be able to re-invent the album experience. Listening experiences other than the album experience do exist, and they could generate new ways for artists to create musical art.
Key Words and Phrases

Death of the Album
Digital Distribution
High-fidelity Formats
Listening Experience
MP3
Music Consumerism
iPod
Record Collecting
Single
Tangibility of Music
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

1.1 Introduction

“At a time when we’re led to believe iTunes and file swapping will eventually bring about the death of the album, why is it that more and more artists seem to be bucking that system by releasing lengthy works that demand prolonged attention?” – Ben Wener

1.1.1 Death of the album

Steve Jobs is the CEO of Apple Inc. and he is responsible for re-inventing the company’s vision. Jobs, when creating iTunes, described his communications with record companies to Steven Levy as follows: “When we first approached the labels, the online music business was a disaster … And we walked in and we said, ‘We want to sell songs a la carte. We want to sell albums, too, but we want to sell songs individually’. They thought that would be the death of the album”.

Passman (2003:378), writing in All You Need to Know about the Music Business, attempts to predict the future of the music industry: “What else might come out of the current storm? Well, possibly the death, or at least serious disabling, of the album format. Record companies like to sell albums, even if the consumer only wants one or two of the songs, because of the large profit margin. However, I’m convinced that a lot of people who won’t shell out the expense of an album just to get one or two songs might well buy those songs separately. The idea would be to sell enough [downloadable] single songs to make up for what’s lost on albums, which I think is very do-able”. In 2003 (the same year in which the fifth edition of All You Need to Know about the Music Business was published), Apple Inc. popularised the online music retail industry with its introduction of the iTunes
Music Store in the United States, even though other online music stores existed prior to the introduction of Apple’s iTunes (IFPI 2004: 3).

With over 47 900 Google hits for the phrase “death of the album”, it is clear that the topic is a popular one. Wener (2006), Byers (2009) and Campbell (2003) are amongst the writers using this phrase. Yet, very little scholarly work has been written on this subject, as will be shown in the literature study.

Jeff Leeds, a New York Times journalist, once noted that the opinion of many music executives was that, “fans of jazz, classical, opera and certain rock (bands like Radiohead and Tool) will demand album-length listening experiences for many years to come”. He elucidates why, according to him, the album could be in danger: “But for other genres – including some strains of pop music, rap, R&B and much of country – where sales success is seen as closely tied to radio air play of singles, the album may be entering its twilight” (Leeds 2007).

In the early stages of the research, it appeared that the genre of the music is a factor worth considering in listening and consumer habits. Many agree that the album has no function in the 21st century. Steve Jobs has described the album as “obsolete” (Gundersen 2003). It is necessary to clarify that this dissertation is devoted primarily to the traditional album in popular music and the sections dealing with Western classical music serve a peripheral purpose only.

Keith Jopling, the director of Market Research for the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI), disagrees with Steve Jobs. He (Jopling) writes in Music Ally’s The Report³ (Issue 150) in 2006: “There is no doubt about the

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¹ Number based on a Google search conducted on 23 December 2010 for the phrase “death of the album”. This number has dropped significantly since February 2010 when 14 500 000 Google hits were available.
³ The Report is available for purchase at http://musically.com/cgi-bin/newsletters.cgi?np=2. Music Ally is a digital music business information and strategy company that has been providing publications, consulting, research, events and training to the music and technology industries since 2001.
value of the CD for music fans ... Now we are fortunate in that consumers are
telling us how they want to buy – how some of them value the physical product
for all kinds of reasons: collection, tactile qualities and – a clear signal here –
compatibility!” (Jopling 2006).

Other writers (for example, Gunderden 2003) realise that some artists wish to
create an album experience. Michelle Fordice (2006), columnist for The Observer,
says that “downloading is making the acquisition of music easier, but
it’s also denying artists the ability to present a unified and multi-sensory vision to
their audiences”.

Those who believe that the album is in danger of disappearing should consider
whether the album is worth saving. The reader needs to ask whether he/she
thinks that the album is a relevant listening experience in the digital world. One
should ask whether the album still fulfils the needs of the modern listener. If the
album is worth saving, I wish to survey alternative high-fidelity physical formats,
such as DVD-Audio, Blu-Ray and SACD, as a strategy for re-inventing the
album by emphasising higher sound fidelity and tangible characteristics. If the
album is not worth saving, the reader should ask whether the alternative
experience could be considered artistic and collectable. Those who do not
believe that the album is dying out should ask whether the album is the only
worthwhile listening experience. It needs to be emphasised that I do not wish to
predict whether the death of the album will occur. I wish to determine whether
digital distribution has had an effect on the perception of the album format.

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4 A definition of an album experience will follow on page 6.
5 DVD-Audio is a high fidelity surround sound medium and the abbreviation DVD stands for
Digital Versatile Disc.
6 Blu-ray Disc is an optical-disc storage medium. It stores high definition video, data and audio.
7 Super Audio CD (SACD) is an optical audio disc medium that can provide higher fidelity digital
audio reproduction than an audio CD.
1.1.2 Definitions and examples

In the digital age, music is becoming closely identified with the Internet. An increasing number of consumers purchase albums from online digital music stores, such as iTunes, instead of buying a physical album from the record store. This can be regarded as a serious threat to the future of the album as a physical medium. The following phenomena derive from the categories created for the data-analysis process and could have some impact on the notion of the projected death of the album:

- Consumerism (this refers to a sense of ownership, collectability, quantity, tangibility, discovery of new music or new artists, supporting an artist, choice, price, taste, convenience, accessibility, familiarity, variety and a changing retail space);
- Listening habits and experiences (this refers to music as a either a distraction, or music as a primary activity);
- Values (this refers to order, sound quality, discovery of new music, artistic expression, timelessness and exclusivity).

Keightley and Straw (2003:779) define a single as “the smallest unit of popular music available in the retail marketplace.” A “track” refers to a separate song or musical unit that forms part of an album. A single is created to sell as a separate unit, while an album track is created as part of an album.

*The Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Crawford 2003: 31) defines the album as “the commercial unit for distributing recorded works longer than the approximately 6-minute maximum established by the two-sided, 10-inch, 78-rpm recording”. The 78 rpm shellac disc thus does not fall under this modern definition of an album. The *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World* defines an album as

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8 Tangibility in music refers to the extent to which the physical recorded media, such as vinyl records, cassette tapes and CDs, can be explored using the other senses.
9 The use of the term “track” in this study should not be confused with the use of the term in a recording studio, which refers to the different instruments recorded to create one song.
“a work of popular music of extended duration, usually a collection of songs” (Keightley 2003a:612).

Crawford (2003: 31) mentions that the term “album” also applies to the package in which more than two song-length performances are sold. He highlights the three initial purposes of the album:

- To reproduce larger works from the classical repertoire, such as symphonies, operas and sonatas, without having to shorten them drastically due to the limitations of the 10-inch shellac disc.
- “… to gather and reissue collections of records available only singly or no longer in circulation”. This was specifically apparent with jazz records from the 1920s and 1930s; and one record would feature a variety of artists. Crawford (2003:31) mentions that many long-playing records (LPs) from the 1950s through to the 1980s were compilations of various song-length selections, either new or re-issued.
- “… to make a unified artistic statement”. Frank Sinatra, in the mainstream popular music of the 1950s, released his concept album *Frank Sinatra Sings Only the Lonely* on a vinyl record. Concept albums were popular in the mid-1960s as collections of songs organised around one central theme (Buckley 2001:326).

Concept albums are more than collections of unrelated songs. Cover art and liner notes encouraged the production of concept albums. Keightley (2003c: 614) also mentions that it “calls attention to its ‘conception’ as an organic whole, with a deliberate coherence across its component parts”. These components may include cover art, track sequences and/or sleeve notes, as well as music, lyrics, performance style and production.

Keightley compares the concept album to other so-called high art forms, such as the symphony, opera and song cycle. He explains why the concept album is significant: “The concept album is an important part of rock culture’s attempt to
move beyond the constraints of the romantic pop song”. Concept albums thus contribute to the legitimisation of performers as serious artists (Keightley 2003c:614).

It might be convenient to categorise albums into two distinct camps, though these would often overlap. The first, and probably most obvious, would be the creation of a work where the tracks represent a suitable grouping of recordings made at one time or place. The second is a large-scale production, where tracks may be related by subject, mood or even sound. In the case of a concept album the tracks in their specific order could express a unified message or tell a story.

This study will refer to the act of listening to an entire album (as an entity, presumably at one sitting) with extra-musical features (such as liner notes and cover art), as an *album experience*. This is a broader notion than the concept album, and refers to the physical form of all albums judged worthy of listening to as entities, rather than as individual tracks. The phrase *album experience* could refer to concept albums, but it is not limited by this definition.

Examples of famous concept albums are *Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band* (1967), recorded by The Beatles, and *The Dark Side of the Moon* (1973) recorded by Pink Floyd. Many other artists, such as Frank Sinatra, Jethro Tull, Miles Davis and The Fugees, have created significant concept albums. More recently, The Killers, Jay-Z, My Chemical Romance, Greenday and Coldplay, have all created concept albums, significant in a time where the album’s future is apparently under threat, as discussed at the beginning of the chapter.

These are mainstream artists, and their albums, such as *Century Child* (2002) by Nightwish, *American Idiot* (2004) by Greenday, *The Black Parade* (2006) by My Chemical Romance and *Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends* (2008) by Coldplay, enjoy popular support. This might raise the question of whether the
album experience, including but not limited to the concept album, can save the album from extinction.

**1.1.3 Formats and Media**

In its physical format, the album has been produced and distributed as vinyl discs, cassette tapes, MiniDiscs and CDs. With the advent of digital distribution, the album is available as collections of individual MP3 files, AAC files and WMA files, to name a few. Albums in the physical form typically include extra-musical resources, such as cover art, liner notes, photographs of the artist(s), information on the recording itself and song lyrics. An album in a purely digital, virtual environment does not typically include all of the above-mentioned extra-musical resources currently found in albums in their physical forms. iTunes, the online digital music store developed by Apple, allows the user to preview the tracks of an album and skip the filler tracks when purchasing music. As of 16 May 2009, Amazon.com offers *Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends* by Coldplay for $9.49 as an MP3 download, making particular mention of the $2.40 you will save for buying it as a unit rather than buying the songs separately. This is a notably rare example of an incentive for the continued distribution of albums.

The MP3 single has gained popularity over the past few years as an acceptable way of “consuming” music. Since the MP3 is a compressed format, it is a more

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10 CD is the accepted abbreviation for “compact disc”.
11 MP3 is the accepted abbreviation for MPEG-1 Audio level 2 layer 3. The term MP3 herein will be used as a generic term referring to all compressed and lossy formats. Lossy compression refers to the removal of data from the original file to decrease its file size, yet still creates a supposedly faithful reproduction of the original uncompressed file. Levy (2006:15) and Sherman (2008: 96) uses MP3 players as a generic term for digital music players. Harley (2004: 246) uses the term MP3 to represent lossy compressed formats.
12 AAC is a compressed audio format and stands for “Advanced Audio Coding”.
13 WMA stands for Windows Media Audio which is a compressed digital audio file format developed by Microsoft.
14 *Cover Flow*, for example, is a feature on iTunes which enables the user to scroll through their virtual album art in a slideshow format closely resembling CD covers.
15 Filler tracks are songs included on an album, surrounding tracks of greater relevance or quality, and used to fill out the volume of the medium in question.
16 The link to this section of the online store is: [http://www.amazon.com/Viva-Vida-Death-All-Friends/dp/B001VWBFTG/ref=sr_i3_3?ie=UTF8&s=dmusic&qid=1242494335&sr=103-3](http://www.amazon.com/Viva-Vida-Death-All-Friends/dp/B001VWBFTG/ref=sr_i3_3?ie=UTF8&s=dmusic&qid=1242494335&sr=103-3)
terse representation of the physical waveform, as opposed to that of CD’s PCM (Pulse Code Modulation) encoding. There are other compressed formats available like WMA, AAC and Ogg Vorbis. In the 1990s, users of peer-to-peer file-sharing networks needed audio files to be small enough to distribute over a slow dial-up Internet connection, but without any perceptible loss in sound quality.

The popularity of legal downloadable digital units has increased every year since its introduction, as shown in Figure 1.1. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) 2007-2009 End-year Shipment Statistics show that, although declining, the number of physical CD albums sold exceeds the number of downloaded albums (Figure 1.2). When downloading music, people now tend to download singles. The statistics show that the CD single is almost irrelevant (RIAA 2007b, 2008, 2009).

It could be argued that the downloadable album will never be as popular as the downloadable single. Data collected by the RIAA show that the downloadable single has boosted interest in the single format, as CD singles never attained this level of popularity. These figures suggest that the album in its physical form could soon be facing extinction, ostensibly due to the growing popularity of the MP3 player and the iPod.

iPod is a brand of portable media players designed and marketed by Apple Inc. The iPod is more than just a portable media player; it is a cultural phenomenon (Levy 2006). As the iPod does not only play compressed audio formats, it is incorrect to refer to it as an MP3 player alone.

17 Ogg Vorbis is an open source, compressed audio format.
Figure 1.1: RIAA Percentages of physical and digital units shipped between 2005 and 2008 (RIAA 2008, 2009)

Figure 1.2: Shipments of physical CDs and downloadable copies between 1997 and 2009 (RIAA 2007b, 2008, 2009)
Through conversations with my peers (both music students and non-music students), I have noticed that many would rather have more music in compressed formats than less music of high sound quality (even if this constitutes hours of music) on their computers. It is possible that the consumer could have a mindset of quantity over quality. This mindset could have changed the way we listen to music, thereby threatening the future of the album experience.

With an increase in Internet bandwidth, will quality or quantity increase? There are undoubtedly many reasons for why the MP3 and other compressed audio formats are so popular. The availability of books such as Leander Kahney’s *The Cult of iPod* (2005), D.E. Wittkower’s *iPod and Philosophy* (2008), Michael Bull’s *Sound Moves: iPod Culture and Urban Experience* (2008) and Steven Levy’s *The Perfect Thing* (2006), wherein they investigate the iPod as a cultural phenomenon, could suggest that the iPod is largely responsible for popularising the MP3 and the tradition of portable music.

Levy does not disregard the original portable music player, the Sony Walkman. A different experience created by the iPod became apparent when reading *The Perfect Thing*. It is important to note that the iPod experience is not necessarily relevant to other digital media players, such as MP3 players. On a secondary level, the study will explore the iPod experience as a possibility for exciting, creative and new opportunities for artists, as they attempt to create art in the digital age.

On a secondary level, this study will compare the album experience with the iPod experience, highlighting their differences and similarities, and will examine whether they can co-exist in the digital age.

Steven Levy (2006:1) calls the iPod the “most familiar, and certainly the most desirable, new object of the twenty-first century. You could even make the case
that it is the twenty-first century”. It is small enough to fit in your pocket and fits comfortably within your hand. It “describes an entire generation”, and it is “a metaphor for the future, great design, short attention span, or just plain coolness” (2006:3). He further refers to the iPod as “the coolest thing in the world” (2006:86), and raises the question of the extent to which the iPod’s “coolness” is responsible for its commercial success.

It is possible that the iPod’s “coolness” is a factor in the popularity of the MP3 and other compressed audio formats. Levy (2006:236) mentions the following: “So dominant was Apple in the portable digital music player field that only one word could be used to generically describe such devices: iPod”.

The iPod is considered a status symbol and has been featured on TV Shows, motion pictures and as one of Oprah Winfrey’s “Favourite Things of 2005” (Levy 2006: 96-97).

In this study it is important to take note of how the iPod (and the MP3 in general) changed the way we listen to music. People are now able to listen to music in their cars without having to store CDs in the car. You can listen to music while exercising in the gym, by choosing your energetic playlist on your iPod.

The compressed audio file is perfectly suited to our busy lifestyle. Very few people today will actually sit on the couch after a long day at work and just listen to their favourite album. Elborough (2009: 366) blames gaming consoles and video recorders for “edging out those hour-with-an-album moments”. The compressed audio format is not the only musical format to change the way we listen to music. Technological advances will always change the way in which music reaches its audiences.

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18 This study will not use iPod as a generic term for all portable music players.
19 Shows include Sex and the City, The OC, Scrubs and 24
20 Movies include The Italian Job, Blade:Trinity, and War of the Worlds
One cannot only ascribe responsibility to the MP3 for this change: our fast-lane society demands a portable, cost-effective way of listening to music; and this is in direct contrast to the values of the album experience. These values are briefly identified under “Motivation for this Study”.

1.2 Motivation for this Study

This study is driven by a notion that the album format has a dubious future as an integral part of society and as an artwork. Indications are that this problem will become even more relevant in the years to come; and the outcomes of this research could create awareness on how the industry and artists should approach the commercialisation of music, whether in single or album format.

After reading many reports (such as the IFPI digital music reports), books and online forums, it became clear that people care about the media used to distribute music. Some people\(^{21}\) feel passionate about the freedom created by individual, purely digital tracks, while others\(^{22}\) believe that the album represents music as art.

1.2.1 Values of the Album (positive and negative implications)

This study seeks to create an awareness of what could be lost as a result of the predicted death of the album:

- **The album experience**\(^{23}\): the album in its physical format, including cover art, liner notes, overall design and printed lyrics create, together with the physical disc and the order of the tracks, an event in which the listener not only hears or listens, but engages multi-modally. All of the above create what some might consider a coherent whole. The term *album experience*

\(^{21}\) Examples include artists like David Bowie and Keith Richards (Gundersen 2003)

\(^{22}\) Examples include artists like Rob Thomas, Alanis Morisette and Ryan Adams (Gundersen 2003)

\(^{23}\) Others such as Fordice (2006), Schramm (2007), Cheng (2008) and Campbell (2003) have been using the phrase *album experience*. 
invites further research and will thus be explained later. There is a need to interrogate the differences and similarities between the album experience and iPod experience, and whether they can co-exist in the digital age.

- **Music as art**: the album, although created to function as a commercial unit, has been used by some artists to create an artistic statement. Album tracks follow a certain order and a musical or literary theme usually connects the tracks to form a coherent whole. Keightley (2003a:612) mentions that albums could be issued on recording media yet to be invented. He defines the album in opposition to the idea of a single: “Where the single is disparaged as commercial, ephemeral and inexpensive, the album can stand for the artistic, the permanent and the valuable”.

- **Record collections**: as in the case of visual art, good albums are collectable. Can MP3s and other non-tangible formats be considered collectable?

- **Albums as large-scale works**: the album is similar in structure and complexity to the large-scale musical works of the Western Classical Music tradition, such as symphonies, concertos, suites and string quartets. Keightley (2003c:614) compares the concept album to other so-called high art forms, such as the symphony, opera and song cycle.

- **Sound quality**: physical formats, such as the CD, DVD-Audio, SACD and Blu-Ray, offer higher sound quality than the popular compressed downloadable formats currently competing with the physical formats.

- **The loss of “great” songs**: songs that will not be able to function as singles, but can be used to function as great album tracks, could be lost as they hold no financial benefits for the record company any more. Jennings (2007: 5) said the following about these album tracks: “Most of us like some popular hits, but we also like quite a lot of ‘non-hits’ (it’s just that we all like different non-hits which is why they are non-hits)”.

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24 Record collecting will be defined in the literature review.
This study also aims to create an awareness of what can be gained as a result of the possible death of the album:

- **The iPod experience**: this could create more fresh creative outputs from artists and could serve as a new experience not possible with the album experience. Steven Levy believes that the iPod’s tangibility makes it desirable: “With all your music at hand, in an enclosure to die for, the personal experience with the iPod goes beyond mere listening, it’s almost a relationship (2006:142)”.

- **Consumerism**: For the consumer there are numerous benefits. Consumers are currently fortunate enough to have the best of both worlds: their favourite album is probably available both as a physical unit and also as separate downloadable singles. Many are blissfully unaware that this is possibly an interim arrangement.

The following could be gained if this dissertation is read:

- **Music Industry**: The music industry could benefit from this study. By determining whether consumers value the album, the music industry can determine whether it has a commercial function in the future, or whether the industry should rather invest money in producing individual tracks. If there is still a need for albums, but not as a commercial unit, albums could be sold as collector’s items at higher prices. An example in print is an article in the 10 January 2008 issue of *Time* magazine, by Kristina Dell (2008), about the increasing popularity of vinyl LP discs. A growing number of what Dell calls the “iPod generation” are now buying turntables or rediscovering an old one previously belonging to a parent. The youth are even buying vinyl records for their association with a “retro-rock aura”. Listening to their parents’ record collection, youngsters are discovering the warmer sound and loving the elaborate album covers and liner notes. Dell (2008) also mentions that the different shapes of newly released vinyl records, the bright colours and even sparkles on the records appeal to the youth.
• **Music Technology:** Despite steady gains in Internet bandwidth, it remains unlikely that the majority of consumers would buy a larger uncompressed audio file when given the option to download a small compressed one instead; presuming that limited space on portable playback devices make it desirable to own a larger quantity of audio files in compressed formats, rather than a smaller amount of uncompressed audio files. The lengths to which the engineer typically goes in order to maintain excellent sound quality would presumably be limited by the availability of a suitable format to represent such quality. Ultimately, the consumer is denied this quality.

This study will contribute to the body of knowledge on the discipline of Music Technology, as not much has been formally written on this particular topic. What has been said is largely to be found in online forums and in articles published in popular newspapers and periodicals such as the *New York Times* and *Time* magazine.

I suspect that consumers generally fall into two opposing camps. Some are not prepared to discard the album format. Others favour the online distribution of music for its convenience and economic benefits. I suspect that these consumers value the album as a collector’s item (in a physical format), but not as the primary source of music distribution. This study might inform efforts to encourage more people to buy albums in higher fidelity formats, such as DVD-A, SACD, Blu-Ray and even vinyl discs. In all probability, the album will no longer be the consumable unit it once was. It will likely increase in value.

**1.3 The Problem Statement and Research Question**

By reflecting on the motivation for this study, one can identify the realisations that led to the problem statement. The first is a realisation that the album might not have a future in the digital age. The second realisation is that the digital
downloadable songs might not be able to recreate an album experience. The third realisation is that the death of the album could create new, exciting challenges for artists as they strive to create art.

The research question of this study is: Does the digital distribution of music have an effect on the perception of the traditional album format? The following primary and secondary research objectives will assist in answering the research question.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1.4.1 Primary Objective of the Study

This study seeks to investigate whether the digital distribution of music has an effect on the perception of an album in its physical format.

The secondary objectives identified in this study originated largely out of a need to address the values in possible gains and losses listed in section 1.2. These secondary objectives will, in turn, be utilised in addressing the primary objective.

1.4.2 Secondary Objectives of the Study

- **Secondary Objective 1:** To consider certain listening habits in the digital age as factors in the possible disappearance of the album format
- **Secondary Objective 2:** To explore whether young consumers value the album format
- **Secondary Objective 3:** To explore the perspective of certain commentators who claim that the album is culturally and technically superior\(^{25}\) to individual songs

\(^{25}\) Some might feel that the album as a large scale work is superior to individual tracks due to the album’s complex nature (2003a:613).
• **Secondary Objective 4:** To investigate to what extent the physical album is the only recorded musical format worth collecting, or to what extent downloadable singles and albums are worth collecting as well

• **Secondary Objective 5:** To explore whether the album can be described as a work of art

• **Secondary Objective 6:** To determine whether the physical attributes of the album are necessary to reproduce the album experience

• **Secondary Objective 7:** To explore comparisons made between the album and large-scale works in the Western Classical Music repertoire

• **Secondary Objective 8:** To explore whether the disappearance of the physical recorded formats could lead to the demise of the album and/or a decline in sound quality, as well as investigating the possibility of a link between the album format and superior sound quality.

• **Secondary Objective 9:** To explore the iPod experience as a worthwhile listening experience other than the album experience

### 1.5 Outline of the Study

Following this introductory chapter, in which the purpose of the research, the motivation, the problem statement, as well as objectives of this study, have been discussed, the remainder of this dissertation is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 describes the research methodology for the empirical part of this study in terms of the tradition, research design and role of the researcher, as well as the research tools needed on the basis of the literature. It also discusses the sampling strategies, data collection and data analysis. Additionally, this chapter includes a description of the measuring instruments, as well as measures employed to ensure reliability and validity, while describing the design process of the experiments, as

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26 More will be said in the literature study on why people collect music. Sources on this topic are Shuker (2003) and Cunningham, Jones & Jones (2004).
well as the actual experiments. The criteria that informed the design of the experiments will be mentioned in this chapter.

- Chapter 3 features a literature review of primary and secondary sources.
- Chapter 4 describes the implementation of the measuring instruments.
- Chapter 5 analyses the findings from the listening experiments and focus group, in accordance with the aims of the study. Here, possible weaknesses of the study are highlighted.
- Chapter 6 discusses the implications of the results and their relation to the literature. Suggestions for further research will be made. Scenarios for the future will also be discussed.
- References and appendices follow.

1.6 Summary

The preceding discussion has surveyed the problem, the motivation for this study, and has stated the primary and secondary objectives. This study will attempt to address questions raised in the light hereof.

Will the shuffle\(^{27}\) function of the iPod be a suitable replacement for the album experience? Will new high-fidelity formats be able to provide suitable platforms for the delivery of the album experience? Will the iPod experience replace the album experience as a new form of musical art?

Preliminary reading underscores the “death of the album” as being symbolic of a small, but very real voice of dissent, in the face of the technological onslaught. That voice urges us to reconsider the musical implications of the revolution at hand.

The following chapter will feature the research design of this study and will describe the measuring instruments.

\(^{27}\) The iPod randomly creates a playlist for the listener using its shuffle function.
CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

In many studies, the second chapter usually takes the form of a literature study. In this study, however, the literature review forms part of the methodology, as I will compare the findings from the experiments to the literature in the final chapter. The literature review functions not only as background information, but also as a crucial part of the research.

2.1 Research Design

The research design of this study consists of a critique of literary sources on the topic, collating data from various databases (RIAA and IFPI figures amongst others), and then interpreting that information, along with further data gathered in focus group interviews and listening experiments conducted by myself.

This study is exploratory in nature and a hypothesis was not generated. The research necessitates qualitative, exploratory, descriptive and contextual approaches. Furthermore, the investigation leads to the collection of mostly new data, constituting a “primary-data design” through the implementation of qualitative listening experiments and a focus group. These experiments are described under “measuring instruments”.

The qualitative nature of this study calls for participants to be asked open-ended questions requiring detailed descriptions. It might seem, from the inclusion of a criteria form resembling a quantitative questionnaire, that this study employs a “mixed methodology”. Despite that resemblance, this study remains qualitative in nature, as even the listening experiments required detailed answers to open-ended questions.
Information was gleaned from existing literary sources, databases and personal opinions relating to listening and consumer habits. Literary sources consisted of texts from the NMMU and the University of Mississippi libraries. Journals, as well as other appropriate periodicals, assisted me in understanding the different views on the research topic. Online databases were used to compare album sales in all formats over the last few years.

The following research design objectives are typical of a qualitative approach, and were of specific relevance to the proposed listening experiments (accompanied by interviews) and a focus group. For this, the qualitative researcher:

- Gathered the opinions of the participants by using open-ended questions in focus groups and semi-structured interviews after the listening experiments (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 289-293). Rather than using questionnaires, the researcher wished to gather data by interviewing participants and hosting a focus group discussion in order to gather personal opinions.

- Acted as the “main instrument” (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 270), was not isolated from the study; and could therefore, not be completely objective, though striving for objectivity as the ultimate goal (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 276).

- Attempted to be “unbiased in his or her descriptions and interpretations” (Babbie & Mouton 2001:273). To enhance validity and reliability, triangulation was implemented. Other methods used to enhance validity and reliability included the writing of extensive field notes, member checks and peer reviews (Babbie & Mouton 2001:275). Interpretations were made of the data gathered through interviews and these observations were made available to participants. They were asked whether my interpretation of their words and actions was valid. The participants were thereby involved in the interpretation of the data.
• Conducted exploratory research (Neuman 2006:34). I am exploring whether digital distribution has an effect on the perception of the album format.

• Studied human action from the participants’ point of view and tried to describe and understand their thoughts, feelings and behaviour in terms of the participants’ own beliefs, history and context (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 271). The participants in this study are young and probably did not grow up with the idea of an album experience.

• Followed a contextualist or holistic research strategy by describing and understanding the events within their specific context, rather than attempting to generalise to some theoretical population (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 272). In this regard it seems to prudent to use what Bassey (1999: 12) refers to as “fuzzy generalization”, thereby referring to “the kind of statement which makes no absolute claim to knowledge, but hedges its claim with uncertainties”.

“Fuzzy generalization” is therefore very appropriate in case studies. Similarly, conclusions in this study can only be considered possible if “… what was found in the singularity will be found in similar situations elsewhere”.

The criteria for achieving rigour in grounded theory, according to Chiovitti and Piran (in Corbin & Strauss 2008: 299), were used in this qualitative study. “Grounded theory” refers to “a type of inductive social theory often used in qualitative research. This builds towards abstract theory, often by making comparisons of empirical observations” (Neumann 2006:60).

“Grounded theory” thus “develops theory during the data-collection process” (Neumann 2006:157). This study does not use grounded theory per se, but rather the criteria of Chiovitti and Piran for achieving rigour in grounded theory. The list appears as follows:
1. “Let the participants guide the inquiry process”: This was achieved by asking participants to provide detailed answers to questions asked during listening experiments, and during the focus group discussion.

2. “Use participants’ actual words in the theory”: This was achieved in this chapter by frequently quoting the words of participants in relation to the literature.

3. “Articulate the researcher’s personal views and insights on the phenomenon explored”: this was achieved in Chapter 6 by incorporating my own thoughts into the analysis of the data.

4. “Specify the criteria built into the researcher’s thinking”: An attempt will be made to explain why the participant had a specific opinion.

5. “Specify how and why participants in the study were selected, delineate the scope of the research, describe how the literature relates to the category which emerged in the theory”: Participants were selected for specific reasons and findings from the listening experiments and focus group were compared with the findings from the literature study.

This list of the criteria can be further enhanced using Charmaz’s categories for “evaluating constructionist grounded theory” (2006: 182-183). The list follows:

1. Credibility: One should ask whether the categories cover a wide range of empirical observations, and whether there are strong logical links between the gathered data, the researcher’s argument and the analysis.

2. Originality: The researcher should ask whether his/her categories are fresh, and whether they offer any new insights.

3. Resonance: One should ask whether the categories portray the fullness of the studied experience.

4. Usefulness: The researcher should ask whether the analysis offers interpretations that people can use in their everyday lives (Corbin & Strauss 2008: 299-300).
As the expected research procedure originally discussed in the research proposal changed as the research progressed, this study had an emergent research design.

2.2. Ethical Issues

Qualitative focus group interviews and listening experiments (accompanied by semi-structured interviews) were conducted. During these experiments and interviews, participants were asked questions requiring honest, detailed answers. Audio and/or video recordings were made of all interviews, the focus group and listening experiments. It was therefore crucial to ensure that all participants were aware of the possible ethical issues.

Participants were guaranteed anonymity and were informed when they were recorded. They were made aware of the fact that, in a focus group, anonymity amongst focus group participants could not be guaranteed, but that their names would not be published or shared with any other party. Participation was voluntary and participants were free to withdraw at any stage. After each participant had been identified, a request was sent, via e-mail or phone call, to each participant to ask for their willingness to participate. A personal letter of introduction was given to each participant.

The letter explained the nature of the topic, and provided assurance to the reader that information given by the participant would remain confidential and would only be used for research purposes. All interviewees and respondents were made aware of their right to decline participation in this study. Great care was taken in assuring that no participant was coerced and that no institution or individual was placed in a position of power, in which any kind of pressure to participate could be applied. Access to findings was also offered to all participants.
Ethics clearance was granted by the NMMU Research Ethics Committee for Humans (REC-H) in April 2010 at the NMMU. Other precautions included a visit to the NMMU Statistics department to make sure that the research should not involve quantitative statistics. Dr Jacques Pietersen was consulted in the Statistics Department at the NMMU North Campus on 21 July 2010 regarding the qualitative sampling procedure. He did not raise any objections.

A complete engagement of ethical issues was assured, and treated by considering the following:

1) Beneficence: No benefit that might have accrued to the participants could be identified.
2) Malificence: No negative effects, such as potential health hazards or long-term side effects were identified.
3) Human rights: All human rights were respected in this study, and no possible violation thereof could be identified.
4) Justice: No specific benefits to those who contributed to the study were identified, as the main beneficiaries of this study did not include any specific individual or group of people.

2.2.1 Trustworthiness, validity and reliability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985: 301), credibility can be improved by the following five techniques:

(a) Activities increasing the probability that credible findings will be produced:

_Prolonged engagement, persistent engagement and triangulation_

Prolonged engagement is the “investment of sufficient time to achieve certain purposes ...(Lincoln & Guba 1985: 301)” The following purposes mentioned by Lincoln and Guba (1985: 301) were relevant in this study : “... testing for the misinformation introduced by distortions either of the self or of the respondents” and “building trust”. For the qualitative focus group, an equal amount of time was spent on each, and breaks were offered by the interviewer.
To prevent listener fatigue during the qualitative listening experiments, every participant had to complete three phases (of about 40 minutes each) of the experiment. These were held on different days. Interviews were about 10 minutes long – to create a listening experiment phase of 50 minutes (60 minutes at most). The same person was thus observed for three 40-minute sessions. I was present at all interviews, listening experiments and focus groups. “Prolonged engagement” should not be confused with what some researchers reportedly do in blind listening tests, where they increase “the number of successive trials … in an attempt to get a greater statistical sample” (Harley 2004: 567). According to Harley, the experimenter of a blind listening test is able to control the “number of successive trials without regarding the listener’s fatigue, increasing the number of trials if a trend indicating reliable identification appears”.

In the last chapter, triangulation was used to correlate the findings from the interviews with the literature study and the observations made from the videos taken of the listening experiments.

(b) Peer debriefing
According to Lincoln and Guba (1985: 308), peer debriefing is “the process of exposing oneself to a disinterested peer in a manner paralleling an analytic session, and for the purpose of exploring aspects of the inquiry that might otherwise remain only implicit within the inquirer’s mind.” Prof. Zelda Potgieter, who is the head of the Department of Music at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, assisted in this matter. She was not involved in the research in any way, but is a respected musicologist in her field of study. Prof. Potgieter read through the first draft of the findings.

(c) Negative case analysis
As no hypothesis was generated, this technique was not applicable. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985:308), negative case analysis refers to the continuous
refinement of a hypothesis “until it accounts for all known cases without exception”.

(d) Referential adequacy
Referential adequacy refers to the recording of data through sound and video recorders. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985:313), “recorded materials provide a kind of benchmark against which later data analysis and interpretations (the critiques) could be tested for accuracy”. A video recording was made of the focus group and listening experiments themselves, and participants were informed about this prior to the experiment. The focus group was recorded on video to distinguish the voices of participants from one another. Audio recordings were made of the focus group session and listening experiment interviews, and the focus group participants and interviewees were informed of this prior to the focus group or interview. All sound recordings, video recordings, transcripts, and interpretations attaching to a specific participant, along with the final report, were made available to that participant.

These recordings are now archived, but can be made available upon request.

(e) Member checks
Lincoln and Guba (1985:314) describe member checks as checks that test the data, analytical categories, interpretations and conclusions “with members of those stake-holding groups from whom the data was originally collected”. I e-mailed my interpretation of the data, as well as the interview transcript, to the specific participants. Responses were incorporated into these interpretations.

2.3 Pilot study

The pilot study is a method of testing the questions and expected responses, and of determining whether the duration of the focus group and listening experiments are appropriate, and also whether the right questions are being asked. The
participants of the pilot study were asked to comment on the nature of the questions, and whether they understood the instructions of the listening experiment. All questions and suggestions were written down and used to design the final research tools. The pilot study also served as a test for the efficiency of the criteria form.

The pilot study contributed to interviewer reliability, and amounts to a “mini-version” of the final experiments. The design of the final research tools was selected after the results of the pilot study had been analysed. An initial small group of participants was chosen during a pilot study to assist in the construction of the semi-structured interviews.

The “Music in History and Society 103” class at the NMMU served as participants for the pilot study listening experiment, as they represent students from sufficiently diverse backgrounds. They were, however, not interviewed individually, as they were a large group of students. Instead, a group discussion accompanied the listening experiments. These students were approached before the pilot study was initiated.

Two music genre choices for the listening experiments were originally chosen, but after the pilot study, it was decided that more choices should be made available to the participants.

Researcher effects on the data collection process were considered. I am qualified as a recording engineer and classical musician, and have a broad knowledge of Western Classical Music, as well as in the popular music repertoire. As a Music Technologist, I value sound quality and appreciate the role played by technology in the musical value chain. I am, however, also a music lover aware of the many roles that music can play in a person’s life.
2.4 Data Collection

2.4.1 Population and sampling method

Participants were selected from undergraduate and postgraduate students at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in Port Elizabeth. Only full-time undergraduate and postgraduate students at the NMMU South Campus and NMMU North Campus were asked to participate. Participants were limited to students on these campuses for logistical reasons. Only full-time students between the ages of 18 and 25 years were considered. Students in this age group were targeted, as they form part of a population that did not grow up with the concept of an album experience. All participants were relatively accessible to the writer.

The following limitations were applied:

- As all the participants were University students, only the age group 18-25 was considered in the study. Jennings (2007: 185-186) said the following about this age group: “Several commentators and futurists argue that the generation born after 1985 have only ever known the interconnected world of the [N]et and mobile communications, and that as a result, their approach to media as ‘digital natives’ is qualitatively different from that of older generations”.

- The population did not include part-time students, as their time on campus is usually limited.

- The exclusion of the illegal online distribution of music excluded data on certain listening habits. This subject is worthy of a research report in its own right. Its exclusion from this study may encourage other researchers to expand this research by including this aspect of music consumerism. While Devroop (2007) goes into a detailed discussion of illegal as well as legal downloading, it is important to focus on legal downloading, as it
excludes the “free” factor. If we pay for both, why do most people appear to still prefer the digital downloadable single?

The study has not dealt with copyright issues and methods of copy protection. Passman (2003: 379) shares his view on music piracy: “It’s my sincere belief (some would say foolishly) that most people are honest, and given a legitimate, easy-to-use, high-quality alternative, they’ll take it over piracy”. Gundersen (2003) holds that piracy is “not the only culprit in the potential demise of the album”. The intention here is not to predict whether the album might disappear or not, but to investigate the positive and negative implications of the possible death of the album. These implications will be discussed separately.

- During the pilot study, I was able to test whether this limitation (to exclude illegal downloadable songs) might cause certain problems, as it is unclear how many students at the NMMU would buy music online instead of copying it illegally. There were enough participants in the pilot study to deduce that some students at the NMMU are legally downloading music.

With respect to focus group interviews and listening experiments, the constituency of the proposed group of participants sought to characterise young people between 18 and 25 years of age who listen to music. Twelve participants were chosen for the final focus group. For the listening experiments, which took much longer and were implemented in three distinct phases for each participant, there were eight participants in each group. An attempt was made to be as neutral as possible with the participants.

The non-probability sampling method of purposive sampling was used in all cases based on the researcher’s judgment and the needs of the research (Babbie & Mouton 2001:166). The size of the group of participants thus changed from the original research proposal, as the study progressed. Using purposive sampling, the researcher selects information-rich cases for in-depth study. As
preferred in qualitative research, the group of participants used in this study was small (Babbie & Mouton 2001:287). All the participants were selected once the criteria form had been completed.

2.4.2 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The criteria form used to select participants has been included as Appendix E. If the participant answered “No” to question numbers 1 and 2 on the criteria form, they were not eligible as participants for this study. For question number 8, I wished to establish whether the “coolness” of the Apple iPod specifically had any effect on the popularity of downloadable music. For question number 9, it was suspected that someone who performs music professionally might have different, economic reasons for their choice of the recorded medium.

I showed an interest in a particular participant because of the different combinations of the following characteristics:

- Bought any combination of CDs and/or MP3s;
- Listened to any combination of CDs and/or MP3s;
- Was either a music student or not;
- Either performed music or not; and
- Either owned an Apple iPod or not (even if he or she owned another portable music player).

This list of criteria might, once again, seem quantitative in nature, but it is important to note that the different combinations of answers provided above would offer a variety of participants. Each participant was coded by indicating whether he or she would participate in a focus group (FG), or a listening experiment (LE), as well as a number for the participant (1 etc.); and these codes were separate from the initial numbers (C01-36) given to the different opinions as found on the criteria forms. These initial codes were used to simplify the participant-selection process.
2.4.3 Chronology of data collection

The study focused on students from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). Before any data could be collected, the measuring instruments were formulated. The questions to be asked in the focus group were designed after the listening experiments and the aims of this study had been finalised. The listening experiments and focus group took place on the NMMU South Campus in Port Elizabeth, South Africa in August 2010.

The names and contact numbers entered by the potential participants on the criteria form (handed out prior to the study) were used to identify and contact the participants to inform them that they had been chosen, as well as when the listening experiments or focus groups would take place. It was made clear to possible participants that participation in this study would be voluntary, and that they need not feel pressurised to participate. Their details were not published or shared with any other party.

Similarly, the focus group was made up of 7 participants (12 were intended) and the meeting’s agenda consisted of predetermined items with an equal amount of time spent on each. The focus group was recorded on an audio recorder and the discussion was transcribed into a Word processor document. The discussion was recorded on video to distinguish the voices of the participants from one another. Participants were informed about this prior to the experiment, and all recordings were available to anyone upon request.

The listening experiments happened in three distinct phases for each participant during August 2010. Eight participants were chosen to participate in the listening experiments, but only six kept to their commitment. Interviews were about 10 minutes long to create a listening experiment phase of 50-60 minutes. Interviews were recorded using an audio recorder for reference and the listening experiments were recorded on video for observation of the participants’
behaviour. The audio was transcribed into a Word processor document. Participants were made aware of the fact that they would be recorded on video and audio.

2.4.4 Measuring instruments

Data collected from the qualitative focus groups and qualitative listening experiments (accompanied by interviews) were used as primary sources. As little has been formally written on the subject, these sources were of the utmost importance in bringing validity and value to this study.

All focus groups and interviews were semi-structured in nature, thereby allowing the interviewer to embellish where needed. The next section of this chapter will discuss the measuring instruments in greater detail.

Qualitative Focus group

The focus group was used to gather valuable qualitative data regarding the value of the album experience, as perceived by these individuals. The discussion was planned carefully.

For the focus group, voices on the digital audio and video-recording devices were easily identifiable, even though a clear record was kept on paper. Recorders were used, so that accurate transcripts could be made.

All questions started as general questions and gradually became more specific. I did not offer opinions on the topic under discussion, but encouraged the participants to provide detailed information.

The focus group started with a discussion of an online article focusing on the “death of the album”. The article called “Gartner Says 2008 Should Be Last Christmas for Retail CDs” (Addendum D) was used, as it was not too long, and
thus did not have to be handed out prior to the meeting. It was expected to generate mixed responses. This also ensured that the article would be read in an environment that facilitates concentration, as well as ensuring that sufficient time was made available to each participant to read the article without distractions – and all at the same time. Any other problems regarding the legibility of the article or the language could be addressed prior to the discussion.

**Qualitative listening experiments accompanied by Interviews**

Listening experiments were conducted to determine how and whether people valued the album experience. To prevent listener fatigue every participant had to complete three phases (of about 40 minutes each) of the experiment – and these were held on different days. The three phases consisted of the following:

- In phase one, the participants listened to a compilation of random tracks not related to one another. I chose these tracks arbitrarily and mostly from the album choices available to the participants in phases 2 and 3.
- During the second phase, they listened to an album in MP3 format (ripped at 256 kbps using Windows Media Player 10 and the Fraunhofer MP3 Professional encoder) without a CD and cover art. (Albums A or B)
- For the final phase, they listened to a different album with its CD and album cover included as part of the experience. (Albums A or B)

The reason why there were two different albums, one without its CD cover and artwork, and one with its CD cover and artwork, is that the initial listening of the album created a familiarity with the same album in the last phase of the experiment. To prevent skewed results, phases 2 and 3 were mixed: one half of the participants listened to Album A in phase 2 and to Album B in phase 3. The second half listened to Album B in phase 2 and to Album A in phase 3. To compensate for different preferences in music, 6 different genres were available from which to choose. There was thus an Album A and an Album B for each
genre. It has to be noted that it was logistically not possible to include all genres, and album choices were based on availability.

This experiment created an opportunity for listeners to compare the different forms music can take and decide which ones they valued most. After the experiments, the participants were debriefed. Effort went into ensuring a natural listening environment. This included comfortable seats and refreshments. All reasonable precautions were taken to ensure a safe listening environment and the hearing of participants was protected at all costs. Using an SPL meter, I set the average ambient acoustic level measured while playing one of the louder selections to around $60\text{dB}_{\text{SPL}}$.

All participants were asked verbal questions concerning their listening experience. As these questions took the form of a semi-structured interview, a small group of participants was chosen for the listening experiments.

A high quality sound system was required for the listening experiment. The system available at NMMU South Campus, Building 10, Room 130, was particularly well suited to the task.

The data interpreted were made available to the participants, and they were encouraged to comment on the interpretation. Everyone agreed that my interpretations were valid and did not contain any misrepresentations.

2.5 Data Analysis Procedures

Focus group interviews and listening experiment interviews were recorded using an audio recorder; and then transcribed onto a computer hard drive using Word Processor software to prepare them for analysis. Listening experiments were recorded using a digital-video camera; and so saved on the same computer hard drive. Back-ups of all video and audio files were made on recordable DVD discs.
Creswell (2003: 191) describes data analysis in phenomenological research as analysing “significant statements”, producing meaning units and developing an “‘essence’ description”. Data was analysed by using a constant comparative method of coding (Lincoln & Guba 1985: 203). This included a content analysis that looked for the common threads, themes or categories in the form of a single word and phrases in order to organise the data. I then searched for meaning in the narratives provided by the participants. Participants were involved in the analysis process by commenting on my interpretations of the data. The interpretations from the measuring instruments were then compared with the findings from the literature study.

As this study falls within the qualitative paradigm, data analysis and interpretation happened simultaneously. Copies of raw data were made available to the participants and interview transcripts were not rephrased for any reason.

From the research findings, suggestions for further research emerged. The six steps of qualitative data analysis provided by Creswell (2003: 191-95) were implemented. They are:

1. Organising and preparing the data for the analysis. This step mainly involved the transcription of interviews.
2. Reading through all the data.
3. Analysing by means of an initial coding process. This step involved the segmentation of paragraphs into sentences and categorising these segmentations. I wrote down broad ideas in the margins of the transcripts and divided all information up into different topics. These were then coded. I identified the possible types of codes as context codes, perspectives held by subjects, subjects’ way of thinking about people (the artist) and objects (the recorded media) (Creswell 2003: 193).
4. Using the above coding process to generate a description of the setting/people involved.

5. Providing an explanation and description of the themes, in this case a narrative passage conveying the findings. This step involved the discussion of the themes including sub-themes and multiple perspectives from individuals and quotations.

6. Interpreting the meaning of the data. The interpretation was done mostly through asking what lessons were learnt during the study. I compared the findings from the measuring instruments to those from the literature study.

The above steps were used to ensure a systematic, reliable and logical procedure in data analysis.

2.6 Coding

The phrases, themes and categories formed from the listening experiment interviews and focus group were used to find meaning in the responses provided by the participants. I looked for a connection between information given by the participant in his or her criteria form and responses provided during the listening experiment interviews and focus group. The preparation of the data for analysis and the data-analysis process will be discussed in Chapter 4.

2.7 Summary

In this chapter the research design and measuring instruments were explained. I addressed ethical issues, participant selection and inclusion and exclusion criteria. I also discussed the significance of the pilot study. The chapter concluded with a discussion on the qualitative data analysis, using Creswell’s six steps as a foundation. A discussion of the literature studied over the last two years follows in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

As stated earlier, when one enters the phrase “death of the album” into the Google Internet search engine, one would in all likelihood find over 47,900 hits. It certainly appears that there are a lot of people voicing their views on this issue. Many observe and criticise the phenomenon known as “the death of the album.” This group of commentators include both experts and consumers. The problem is that in most cases one can never know how trustworthy these online articles are. Somewhat more reputable are the various articles by USA Today, Sky News, The Observer, The New York Times and Time magazine – to name but a few.

Though many of the more topical sources are of a distinctly ephemeral nature, much of the grounding of this study is to be found in more traditional academic sources. In order to understand the phenomenon, one has to define the different aspects of it.

Definitions from the following reputable sources will be referred to throughout this work: The Harvard Dictionary of Music, The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, The Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World: Media, industry and society (Volume 1) and The Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World: Performance and Production (Volume 2). These definitions will be used to describe and define the important “concepts” of the study, such as an “album”, “record collecting”, “concept album” and “single”.

After the initial reading process, emergent themes gave rise to the following headings as a means of organising the literature:

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28 This figure is based on the number of search results shown by the Google search engine on 23 December 2010 for the phrase “death of the album”.
• Death of the album: This explores articles and literature using the phrase “death of the album”.
• Benefits for the music industry: This explores articles by industry experts on the future of albums and music as art in the digital age.
• Benefits for the listener – sound quality: This explores different opinions on the influence of the MP3 album on the development of high fidelity recordings.
• The album experience: This investigates the explanations, provided by certain sources, on what the concept of an album means as well as what an album experience entails. This section briefly reviews the accessibility of books dedicated to individual albums and the importance of album cover art.
• The iPod experience: This surveys literature on the popularity of the iPod and the possibility of an iPod experience – either as a replacement to or to co-exist with the album experience.
• Listening habits in the digital age: This examines the result of a study conducted by the BMR on the listening habits of the youth.
• Music as art: This explores the literature on the philosophical aspects of music as works of art.
• Record collections: This defines “record collections” as found in standard reference works. It also explores the modern-day social activity of collecting vinyl records and other rare recordings.
• Albums as large-scale musical works: The principal work under this heading compares a legendary album by the Beatles to a large-scale musical work.
• High fidelity formats: This discusses high fidelity formats as the possible future of the album format.

Detailed descriptions follow under each heading:
3.1 Death of the Album

In order to define an “album”, one should be able to compare it to a “single”. Keightley and Straw (2003: 779) identify the function of a single “as either a short-lived bid for immediate popularity or a kind of advertisement or trailer for an album”, as opposed to the album’s artistic connotations.

Aram Sinnreich, managing partner at Radar Research in Los Angeles, told Leeds (2007): “I think the album is going to die”. If the album is dying, then who or what is killing it? Joe Levy, a music editor for Rolling Stone magazine told Edna Gundersen that he believes the CD is responsible for the death of the album: “Once music was sold in a digitized format, it could be easily traded on the Internet”. Levy also believes that the 70 minutes worth of time provided by the CD has been to the album format’s disadvantage, artistically: “The album format got swollen, unmanageable and, to some degree, unlistenable. Either you don’t have that much time to listen to it, or the experience isn’t rewarding”.

On some albums, non-hits are merely filler tracks to make up the 74 minutes of audio made available by the CD. Elborough (2009: 392) comments on the extended length of albums in the 1990s: “Wasn’t the album getting rather long?” Dave Kusek from the Berklee College of Music in Boston told Campbell (2003) that even though he believes the CD will become obsolete a 60-70 minute collection of songs does not have to, as new formats can now thrive.

The article entitled, “Downloading squeezes the art out of the album”, by USA Today journalist Edna Gundersen (2003), features many artists and their opinions on the death of the album. Artists, like Rob Thomas, Alanis Morissette and Ryan Adams (not to be confused with the Canadian artist, Bryan Adams) explain why they value the album. Rob Thomas (from Matchbox Twenty) said about the death of the album: “It’s a conscious step toward disposable art. On an album, the artist creates a full work of art with songs that fit together and create a
mood. If we become a single-minded nation, where careers depend on hits, you won’t hear challenging music that takes risks”.

Alanis Morisette mentioned to Gundersen: “The disappearance of the album as an entity would be sad, but anything to do with the evolution in how people access music excites me… I’m very album-oriented, and my highest preference is that people experience my album as a whole, but I know people can gravitate to a certain song and listen to it ad nauseum. That’s their right. It’s about freedom of choice”. Ryan Adams has conflicting feelings regarding the album: “I’m still stuck in that mode [of making albums]. I like the idea of creating your own world in 10 to 14 songs. I enjoy the broader scope. It’s like taking in a whole exhibit, not just one painting. At the same time, there’s no way to deny technology”.

Gundersen (2003) names the album as “music’s dominant creative framework for the last 40 years” and “pop’s primary aesthetic and commercial unit”. She further mentions that it is not only the physical artefact, but also the concept of a multiple-track format where the songs form an integrated whole which ‘faces extinction’.

David Hadju, writing for The New Republic in 2004 asks: “Is the album dying, or is it just passing into another plane of existence?” The title phrase is not only used by me, but also by many other writers writing informal articles. Josh Bernoff, author of a January 2004 study by Forrester Research said the following: “On demand services are the future of the entertainment delivery … CDs, DVDs, and other forms of physical media will become obsolete”.

Hadju later states that “what we are witnessing, then, is not the death of the album, but something more intriguing: a transformation in the nature of its authorship.” Hadju is referring to the creation of compilation albums. By creating your own album, the consumer is taking over the art from the artist (Hadju 2004: 25, 27).
Campbell (2003) mentions two opposing views on the future of the album: “The future of the album – both in its physical form and as a grouping of related songs – is being pondered by everyone from bands who refuse to provide their music to online services to technology analysts, who predict that the CD will become passé within the next five years [by 2008]”. Metallica and the Red Hot Chili Peppers have mentioned that they did not want their music sold online because they did not want their albums sold as individual tracks since this undermined their creative control.

Dave Allen is the bass player for Gang of Four and owns a blog named “Pampelmoose”. After Radiohead released In Rainbows for free as a digital downloadable album, Allen identified it as “the end of the music album as the organizing principle”. Allen (2009) suggests that “we are now seeing the end of the album-length work as the permanent work, the everlasting body of work that represents the pinnacle of an artists’ creativity”. Allen (2009) suggests that musicians should “put nostalgia, tradition, and old business models and paradigms far beyond them”.

Interestingly enough, he believes in one organising principle, the vinyl album, which “works as a tactile and experiential format and gives great pleasure”. Allen (2009) is careful in clarifying his apparently contradictory views in the article by saying: “I do not suggest using vinyl as a format for delivering an album-length piece of work”. Instead, he suggests “using vinyl for the physical manifestation of your demos, out takes, live tracks etc, and always accompany it with a coupon for free download[s] of any related digital product”.

One should consider that history might only be repeating itself. In the early 1930s, it appeared as if the radio was killing the gramophone record. Elborough (2009: 11) explains: “In some respects, things have almost gone full circle to the present LP era when people collected individual songs and did much of their
listening via the radio; spinning from station to station until they found something to their taste”.

In the digital age, this is as easy as entering your favourite song or artist into *Pandora Radio*\(^{29}\) and letting the online service recommend what you probably want to hear next, or listening to your iPod playlist. In the 1950s and early 1960s, the early years of Rock ‘n Roll music, the single was the most popular format. By 1968 album sales officially overtook single sales – in both the United States and Britain (2009: 168).


### 3.2 Effects on the Music Industry

The Music Industry has been fighting a difficult battle with the illegal distribution of music. One of the solutions to the loss in revenue due to illegal downloading was to introduce online music stores where consumers could pick only the song they wanted and pay a small fee for it.

When fans of illegal downloading were asked why they preferred free single MP3s over CD albums (except for the obvious reason of the MP3s being free of

\(^{29}\) Internet radio service available at [http://www.pandora.com](http://www.pandora.com).
charge), they mentioned the high prices of CDs and the declining quality of the songs on albums. Many were unhappy with the album as a medium to basically sell only one or two good songs (Leeds 2007). Now that there is a legal alternative to downloading music, some people are complaining that $0.99 is too expensive for an MP3.

The work that originally inspired the decision to focus on this topic was one by a South African researcher in music technology, Chatradari Devroop. Devroop (2007) wrote an article for *Samus* touching, quite broadly, on the issue of digital downloads. Devroop (2007:82) says that personalisation, cost-effectiveness, access and distribution are factors that led to the popularisation of the MP3. People love multi-purpose devices. We see this in the form of mobile phones and other portable media devices that can play music, play videos, organise your day, make a phone call and send an e-mail to name just a few (Devroop 2007:72).

People buy the trendiest mobile phones – and they just happen to be able to play MP3 files. The MP3 is considered an acceptable format for use in portable music players, whether it is an MP3 player, iPod or a phone with an integrated MP3 player.

The individual can choose each song online, rather than buying an album for only the two or three songs that they really wanted to listen to. Devroop (2007:77) mentions the example of an increasing number of legal music sites. This gives the individual the choice of shopping around, rather than buying at a specific shop, because it’s the only shop that has a copy in stock! (Devroop 2007:78).

Devroop tends to focus on the illegal distribution of music in his article, but he also includes various insights into the digitisation of music.
Barry Sherman published the article “The Culture of Digital Music Piracy: A South African Perspective” in Volume 28 of *SAMUS* in 2008. It is, like Devroop, an article which focuses mainly on digital music piracy. A large part of the article focuses on the phenomenon of sharing music by using peer-to-peer networks and why some people believe it cannot be associated with theft. The article does not focus on albums; and the term MP3, can thus refer to both digital albums and singles. Sherman summarises his objective for the article as follows: “What is needed is an understanding of current file-sharing practices amongst South Africans who already have access to the necessary technology to be able to engage in such practices … in this way we may well gain insight into the ways South African consumers value their music and the new ways in which they wish to consume it” (Sherman 2008:96).

Sherman (2008:105) mentions the high prices of CDs (which he uses as a synonym for “albums”) and how record companies are supposedly “stealing” money from artists. Even though Sherman’s main focus in this article is music piracy, the lessons we learn from his research regarding modern-day consumer habits can be beneficial to the music industry.

Most importantly, Sherman focuses on the changing value of music in the digital age. *Time* author Tyrangiel wrote about Radiohead’s *In Rainbows* album and its effect on the music industry in 2007. The album was made available by the band on their website and consumers were able to choose what they wished to pay for it. Sherman’s respondents to the survey conducted by himself “expressed an attachment to the physical product of a CD in which many see value” (2008:111).

Sherman also mentions that the physical product is about more than just the music: “It’s something one can look at, hold and feel, even smell”. Elborough (2009: 11) mentions how many people did not want to pay anything for Radiohead’s downloadable album, but that the band profited from those who felt that the album was worth their money.
Passman (2003: 378-379) dedicates a chapter to new technologies and their effect on music distribution in _All You Need To Know About the Music Business_. Passman mentions that record companies like to sell albums because of the large profit margin. Passman suggests that record companies will have to promote the selling of enough singles to make up for what is lost when selling fewer albums. The book is aimed at the aspiring recording artist. Passman therefore suggests how the “death of the album” could be advantageous to the professional musician: “The artist would not have to wait until they had 12 or 13 songs before releasing an album (2003:378)”.

In 2004, at the time of Summers’ release of _Making and Marketing Music_, she mentions that people were not buying online music as much, but that “there could be a paradigm shift any second” (2004: 151). She thus realised in 2004 already that the online distribution of recorded music could become the main method of consuming music. Summers (2004: 231-245) writes in her last chapter about what she sees as the future of the online music industry.

Summers (2004: 207) interviewed Michael Robertson (founder of MP3.com and Lindows.com): “In the long run, everything might be streamed on demand, either online or via satellite, but it will take a while to get from here to there”. Robertson felt that he should be able select any song that he wants to hear anywhere: “…on my bicycle, in my car, in my house – not just sitting in front of my PC, but on my home stereo, on my Walkman while I’m out jogging”. Robertson further explains that until he has that level of ability, “people will want to possess the physical product”. He further suggests that there are generational issues to consider: “Whereas I like to hold things. My two year old won’t have that issue”.

Summers (2004: 236) agreed with Robertson that a generational issue exists: “Society is changing. Teens and adults are used to having things and holding things. But, seven year olds are already nonlinear. They don’t necessarily have the attachment to physical possessions the same way that we do…the concept
of virtual ownership can be taught... If someone grows up knowing that the content they desire will always be available, they'll be less inclined to feel like they need to own it”.

One has to wonder what Robertson would say now, six years later at a time when iPhones and Blackberries make it possible for the consumer to stream audio and video to their phones, anywhere and at any time.

Data gathered by the IFPI on album and single sales – both as digital downloads and physical formats – were used in this study. This data can be found in the “2009 Digital Music Report” (IFPI 2009). The data gathered by the RIAA were used to trace the commercial popularity of the different recorded formats from 1997 until the present. In 2007, the RIAA released an article on the website in an attempt to convince consumers that the CD provides the consumer with better value than before: “While many forms of entertainment have increased in price in both nominal and real costs, the cost of a CD has actually decreased in real terms, and is on an inflation-adjusted basis less expensive today than it has ever been”.

The RIAA mentions that many other forms of entertainment can only be enjoyed once (Broadway shows and concert tickets etc.) Was this written as an attempt to save the album or as a way to prove to those who copy music illegally that buying the CD for only two or three good songs is not a waste of money?

The IFPI released their “Recorded Music Sales 2008” report, comparing the physical to the digital sale market share – both regionally and globally (IFPI 2008b). The USA sold $3138.7 million in physical recorded music, and $1783.3 million in digital tracks. In Europe, people are still buying substantially more physical products ($ 5808.8 million) than digital tracks ($750.8 million), but in all cases, digital tracks are increasing in popularity, especially in Latin America and Europe.
The physical format’s market value in the USA has decreased by 31.2%, and globally by 15.4%. More statistics relating to the difference in market share between physical and digital recorded formats are available from the same document (IFPI 2008b).

The Gartner Group released a statement in 2008 stating that 2008 should be the last Christmas for the retail CD. The 2008 article in The New York Times by the Associated Press focuses on the fall of album sales in 2007 (Associated Press 2008): “Album sales in the United States plunged 9.5 percent last year from 2006, as the recording industry had another weak year, despite a 45 percent surge in the sale of digital tracks, according to figures released Thursday [3 January 2008]”.

The article shows that people are buying more music than ever before: “Overall music purchases, including albums, singles, digital tracks and music videos, rose to 1.35 billion units, up 14 percent from 2006”. The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) figures were also used for the same purpose. They have attempted to predict future trends.

The Music Industry should consider whether they can use tangibility as a way to encourage people to purchase albums. McGlade (2006:6) emphasises the importance of placing the emphasis back on the content of the music rather than the commodity. McGlade is aware of the tangibility of music (whether it’s a physical disc or an iPod) as seen in the following quote: “I can remember as a kid the excitement of racing home with the new Bob Marley record. My friends would be waiting for me, and we always had the same ritual”. McGlade describes this so-called ritual as follows: “First, we'd all take the same seats in my parents' living room and an animated discussion gave way to reverential silence. Then, I'd slowly pull the plastic off the LP, slide it from the sleeve, briefly gaze at the label and give the vinyl one good sniff. Finally, cradling Marley between my fingers, I'd gently place the platter on the turntable, set the needle in the first groove and join
my friends on the couch. From there the music took over”. McGlade compared his ritual of purchasing music to that of purchasing an iPod: “Recently, I witnessed a similar ritual with my own kids. The same nervous excitement as my son brought his friends home with a new purchase. The sound of plastic being removed and the opening of the box heralded silence from the room. I listened intently as the only sound I heard coming from my son’s room was . . . a new iPod being plugged in”.

Styvén (2007: 60-68) suggests strategies for handling intangibility, by including tangible elements in the service of online music by using pictures, physical symbols and information about the item, as well as offering free samples of the product.

Even though McGlade (2006) is aware of the role of tangibility in music, he believes that the content should be the main focus. McGlade clearly states what he believes could become the dominant medium for selling music: “There is little doubt in my mind that digital distribution will rapidly become the dominant sales channel for music. While technology is the conduit to make this happen, content is the natural currency, and its heart and soul. Let’s embrace this change”.

The New York Times is a valuable source on the topic of the death of the album. Jeff Leeds (2007) mentions that fans are buying fewer and fewer full albums: “Digital album sales are rising at a slightly faster pace, but buyers of digital music are purchasing singles over albums by a margin of 19 to 1... Sales of albums, in either disc or digital form, have dropped more than 16 percent so far this year...”. The record industry need to sell a lot more individual songs to compensate. Rolling Stone magazine has started to review singles.

Jemina Kiss, writing for The Guardian, mentions why record companies might be removing songs from iTunes to allegedly protect the artistic value of certain albums. As the album format provides a larger profit margin than separate
singles, the record companies probably do not care much about the artistic statement of the musician, but more about the larger profit margin obtained when selling albums.

3.3 Effects on the Listener

The compressed formats such as MP3, Ogg Vorbis and Windows Media Audio are criticised by some and praised by others. *Sound on Sound* journalist Sellars (2000) defines the MP3 encoding method as a method that drastically reduces the size of digital audio files, while preserving *reasonable* sound quality [emphasis mine]. Compare this with CD PCM (pulse code modulation) audio, which aims to accurately record the waveform to achieve a faithful reproduction of its sound. Sellars (2000) writes that, “whilst PCM attempts to capture a waveform 'as it is', MP3 attempts to capture it 'as it sounds'”.

Robert Harley feels that MP3 sound quality cannot be compared with that of an audio CD (2004: 298). He (2004: 246) feels that the MP3’s “inferior sound disqualifies it as a source component for a high-end audio system”. As the MP3 is a lossy format, samples cannot be encoded to be transparent to all users. A lossy format is one where, once information has been eliminated from the file, that information cannot be recovered (Harley 2004: 268).

Some researchers have allegedly taken this too far by saying that the perceptually coded signal is indistinguishable from the original, and can thus be used as master-tape archive. Harley (2004: 549) says: “Our musical heritage should be preserved with the best technology, not the most economic”.

Jones, writing in *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World: Performance and Production*, mentions that the “MP3 became the most popular among several competing formats” for the digital distribution of music over the [I]nternet. Its competitors include Real, Liquid Audio and Ogg Vorbis. The MP3
codec “allows for extreme compression of audio files with little or no perceptible loss in audio quality” (Jones 2003: 248).

With the possibility that all music could soon be available in compressed, downloadable formats, the listener should be aware of the benefits and disadvantages of downloadable music. Downloadable music is convenient, accessible and takes up little space on a hard-drive or portable media player, but its sound quality typically cannot be likened to that of uncompressed audio formats.

3.4 The Album Experience

The album as a concept (not to be confused with a “concept album”) has existed since the start of the 20th century, understood as a collection of songs that belong together. Albums may exist in both the physical and purely digital formats. The physical album refers to a collection of songs that belong together, enhanced by tangible characteristics, such as album art and liner notes.

It might be argued that an album needs to be tangible in order to fully realise an album experience. An album might also need a combination of album tracks and tracks that were meant to be released as singles – for it to be considered an album experience.

Keightley (2003b: 613) describes an album cover as a “crucial means of advertising and imagining the music contained within … a kind of billboard, calling attention to the commodity for sale”. It “provides an important visual instantiation of the music’s or performer’s identity and/or potential significance”. An album cover’s artwork, according to Keightley (2003b: 613), “calls attention to the album cover’s status as a form of commercial packaging as well as an artistic statement, and as a reminder of the blurred boundaries between culture and commodity within popular music”.
Laing defines “Sleeve notes” (2003b:780-781) and “Advertising of popular music” (2003a: 530-532) in the second part of the *Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World: Media, Industry and Society*. He (2003a: 531) mentions how posters can be “an indispensable means of advertising concerts and records”. Laing (2003b: 780) defines sleeve notes or liner notes as the “texts that appeared on the reverse of the cover of LPs from the early 1950s onward. Sometimes, the notes or song lyrics also appeared on an ‘insert’ or separate sheet of paper or card tucked inside the album cover”. He emphasises that the miniaturisation of recorded music (CDs) “hastened the demise of sleeve notes” (2003b: 780).

Summers (2004) wrote *Making and marketing music: The musician’s guide to financing, distributing and promoting albums* at a time when iTunes was newly released and the future of the music industry was uncertain. Summers defines an album and explains why some musicians want to release albums instead of singles: “An album is a set of songs, sure... but it’s much more than that. An album defines your musical sensibilities at this moment in history. You’re about to create something that will live on forever” (Summers 2004:4). Later she defines an album as follows: “An album is a set of songs that work together to make a unified whole. It needs to have a style” (Summers 2004: 8).

Oded Nay (a Java developer and musician) tells Summers (2004:8): “Each song is an experience in time, but the whole album together is an experience in time within itself; it has to tell a certain story”. She emphasises how every song has to be thought of as a “portion of the larger opus” (2004:9). Summers (2004:2) writes that making an album is a natural progression for any musician: “Get it down on disc, and save it for prosperity, so people can be listening to it two hundred years from now, like Mozart”.

Summers explains that there are two ways to share your music as a musician: live performances and making an album. She calls making an album “a stab at
“immortality”, similar to the music of Johann Sebastian Bach and Elvis Presley. Summers says that “you never know if people are going to embrace your art”. She advises artists to consider producing an album only once they have “something to say that is worth listening to” and “if you’ve got twelve songs that work together as a whole” (Summers 2004:3).

Elborough (2009: 3) compares vinyl singles to LPs: “In comparison with the handful of tawdry singles we had … mostly dressed in tatty, pictureless, paper singlets, LPs gave you … more of everything really. More to hear. More to look at. More to enjoy … But more, even, than the sum of their individual parts”.

Frank Sinatra, according to Elborough (2009: 133-134), “made buying LPs a worthwhile expense”, since Sinatra “organized his albums as shows, choosing and arranging the running order of the songs with the meticulousness his more dubious associates were alleged to deploy in heists”.

Elborough (2009: 368) mention in a footnote how, at a time when copying an album meant recording it on cassette tape, many people would steal cassette covers from shops like WHSmith and Boots to compensate for the missing cover of a copied album. This meant that many original cassette tapes had to be sold at discount prices without album covers. Even though the recording was still original, the consumer would often wonder whether it would not be better to tape that same album from a friend instead. Elborough (2009: 384) also feels that the CD “could never hope to match the sweep, the physical allure, the sensuality of an LP sleeve” as “they shrunk to the size of a postcard”.

Maria Styvén (2007: 53) describes the purpose of her research paper, “The Intangibility of Music in the Internet Age”, as follows: “… this paper explores the intangibility of online music and assesses how online music providers deal with the intangibility of their offer”. She defines tangibility as the “extent to which the product can be experienced with the other senses, such as being seen, heard,
smelled, or tasted”. Styvén (2007: 56) quotes David Kushner, as published in *Rolling Stone* magazine, 24 October 2000: “Music fans are tactile beings and there’s nothing more tactile than the actual CD. People need to physically connect with music”. Styvén questions whether this need can be fulfilled on the Internet.

Wener (2006) discusses the history of concept albums and describes what could make an album worth listening to: “[The] thing is, most albums worth hearing are conceptual to some degree. That’s really the whole point of putting songs together as albums – to give the illusion of cohesion, enhance a batch of tunes with artifice and sequencing. By that measure, even greatest-hits discs have concept”. Elborough (2009: 15) emphasises the fact that humans “crave order” and a sense of cohesion.

Styvén (2007: 60) feels that “people still value tangible products much more highly than intangible ones”. Kleinschmit (2003) mentions that people have a higher price expectation for a CD than a digital downloadable album: “With the number of fee-based online music services growing each month, and legitimate online music distribution poised to take off, new findings from global research firm Ipsos-Insight reveal that consumer pricing expectations for digital music are significantly lower than for those sold in a physical CD format”. According to Ipsos-Insight, digitally downloaded albums are perceived as less valuable than the physical album: “A roughly $5.00 decrease in the range of acceptable prices for a new, full length album distributed digitally versus in a physical format represents a significant decrease in perceived value for this product, based solely on format or distribution method”. Consumers may thus “be willing to pay more for a durable product that is perceived as more permanent and archival in nature, rather than a digital format that may be viewed as more temporary”.

The concept of an album is criticised by many, as some only see it as a method of selling more songs. Dave Allen (2009) asked in his online blog: “If you were
honest, how many albums do you own that demand to be listened to from beginning to end?” Hadju (2004: 27) asks: “Haven't we all found music on records that we didn’t like or understand at first, but grew to appreciate with repeated listening to the work exactly as the artist intended it?”

Allen (2009) also asks: “… in what part of digital music culture does an album-length piece of work now reside? I'll answer that question – I believe it has no place in the digital future” [emphasis by Allen]. In 1930 RCA Victor introduced the first commercially available vinyl long-playing disc. Allen mentions that musical artists had no control over the length of their works – the length was determined by the technology used to play it back. This contradicts the belief of some that musical works need to be long (i.e. not the length of a single) in order to be considered as a work of art.

Allen attended the 2009 “Leadership Music Digital Summit” held in Nashville, Tennessee. The keynote speaker was Rio Caraeff from the Universal Music Group. Caraeff “spoke of lamenting the loss of the experiential and tactile nature of recorded music; he missed the tactile experience of music delivered in its vinyl and cardboard format. The digital file, he argued, had stripped the experience from the music; listening to music was now a flat and unemotional activity compared with holding a well-designed sleeve filled with images, lyrics and artwork”.

Caraeff also seems concerned at the possibility that music may now become readily available through desktop computers, laptops, mobile phones and other portable devices – thereby giving people less reason to own music (Allen 2009).

In Christian Science Monitor, Lynne Margolis (2003) interviews Tony Margherita, manager for the band Wilco, who compares downloadable music with library books. Margherita suggests how artists can ensure higher album sales by comparing music with literature: “Complaining about downloading and the
Internet is akin to the book industry obsessing about libraries … it’s just missing the point. If people in the business of making records worried about actually making more great records, packaging them beautifully, and finding a way to get them to people in a reasonably efficient and cost-effective manner … things could change really quickly”.

According to Campbell (2003), the CD “altered the album experience for many who used to curl up on the couch and contemplate the cover art and liner notes surrounding their vinyl”. Elborough (2009: 7) explains the significance of an LP album cover: “These days, the songs and covers of some LPs are so familiar they feel practically arc welded into our collective consciousness”.

Eric Garland, CEO of a site that tracks online file-sharing, mentioned to Campbell (2003) that “… the online music market is still a singles market,” supporting the view that the digital album has no future. Campbell mentions that this might have changed with the introduction of legally downloadable music. iTunes director of marketing, Peter Lowe, told Campbell that “like with vinyl singles and with CD singles most recently, the availability of individual tracks… does not destroy the album as an art form, or as a business form”.

Michelle Fordice (2006) from The Observer mentions that cover art is losing its importance and that music is losing its tangibility. Fordice is not the only writer using the phrase “album experience”. According to Fordice, downloading music “makes purchasing music faster and easier.” Consumers no longer have to drive to the record store or wait for a mail order. Another advantage, according to Fordice, is that when buying music online “there is less of a cost to buying something unfamiliar”. Fordice also mentions that “there’s no investment in the artist’s full performance, just a simple grab of what is familiar”.

Even concept albums are being reduced to singles: “This trend in reducing albums to singles sadly breaks the integrity of these albums”. The cover flow
feature on iTunes might allow the listener to flip through their collection using
digital images of the album covers, but according to Fordice, “it remains an
afterthought, failing to provide the same feeling of tangibility or the same
importance”.

Fordice measures the advantages of digital downloads against the
disadvantages: “The current ease of getting music is such that it seems to
outweigh many of its more subtle disadvantages. Still, it seems unfortunate that
music production and consumption is changing in a way that seems to devalue
the entire experience of investing in an album and gaining an appreciation of its
complete vision”.

Mike Schramm (2003) commented on Radiohead’s initial decision not to sell their
music on iTunes, considering that the site wanted to sell songs separately at the
time. It is possible that Radiohead’s desire not to sell songs separately was for
financial reasons. However, the article states Radiohead’s reason as purely
artistic. Schramm says that “the concept of ‘album’ is losing meaning. For most
iTunes purchasers, I’d imagine that’s not a bad thing. But artists like Thom Yorke
and Radiohead clearly aren’t ready to see the album experience disappear, and
they’re willing to keep their music off iTunes to fight it”.

Jenny Tatone wrote a series called “The Sound of Technology” on her blog.
Tatone (2008), in the introduction to the series, thinks back to when she was
eleven-years old and was ordering albums through the postal service. She used
to memorise “every aspect of the album”. When she was not listening, she would
admire her very small collection of cassette tapes. She describes the modern
method of buying music as requiring less than one minute: “Sometimes I listen to
the album right away. And sometimes I don’t, only to find my new purchase much
later while scrolling hastily through the thousands of artist titles in my iTunes
library. Oh yeah, I’ll think, I forgot I downloaded that one. Sometimes I’ll click and
listen. Sometimes I’ll keep scrolling”.

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In a later blog entry in the series “The Sound of Technology”, Tatone (2009) comments on an album many consider as providing an album experience: Radiohead’s *OK Computer*. Tatone opens her blog with the following words: “Radiohead’s *OK Computer* is like a book: it was written to be experienced from start to finish, and it may be among the last great rock albums heard as a whole piece of work … there are no hits – it is loved as a complete piece, it is loved as a masterpiece”. *OK Computer* is known for being a legendary album. Tatone (2009) mentions at least two honours given to Radiohead for the creation of their masterpiece: “In 2006, *Spin Magazine* named *OK Computer* the No. 1 album of the last twenty years, and readers of the influential British weekly *NME* voted it the fourth-best album of all time”.

Radiohead created at least two more albums that could be considered as providing album experiences: *The Bends* (1995) and *Kid A* (2000). According to Tatone (2009), the above-mentioned albums might be “among the last to be experienced as full-length recordings”.

Keith Jopling (2006), the director of Market Research for the *International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI)* suggests possible solutions for saving physical recorded media: “Some consumers are going digital for different reasons – immediacy, convenience, price (or single buying) etc. This is great for us [the music industry] provided we respond positively to give consumers what they want. My long-term forecast would be for physical formats being at the very least a large niche, but that assumes CDs will continue to evolve. The biggest concern is with physical retailing. It needs innovative and counter-intuitive business models to offer clear alternatives to digital. Albums are not an issue: albums are a lasting format even as they lose some dominance. The album concept will get stronger as artists will be more demanding of themselves”.

Styvén (2007: 53-74) succeeds in explaining the difficulties digital downloads create for the marketing of music. She explains, using generic marketing
theories, that the intangibility of a product makes it abstract, difficult to display and communicate, leads to (perceived) increased uncertainty and risk for the consumer, creates difficulties in ownership and difficulties with pricing issues. She includes strategies for managing intangibility and gives examples of subscription-based online music services and existing online music stores.

Jacqui Cheng (2008) wrote about artists in favour of the album format. Kid Rock, in June 2008, refused to put his albums on iTunes, as he said that artists do not get paid enough for having their music on the online store. Cheng mentions that “iTunes… pushes the a la carte music track system instead of allowing artists to sell music in album-only format. But selling millions of singles isn’t necessarily as lucrative as selling far fewer full albums, and for some artists … there’s the artistic vision realized only in the full-album experience”.

Jay-Z also decided to boycott iTunes when his album American Gangster was first released. He expressed his reason for this decision: “As movies are not sold scene by scene, this collection [American Gangster] will not be sold as individual songs”.

In “School of rock: what makes a great album”, Will Byers (2009) writes about the characteristics that distinguish an album from other formats of music distribution. Byers describes the tangible elements of an album, especially album art, as a factor in an album’s greatness, but he places more emphasis on the LP as a representation of the album. Will Byers also uses the phrase “album experience” and describes what it entails: a theme or concept and a great cover and artwork.

Armstrong (2003) mentions that Spin magazine named “your hard drive” as the best album of 2000. This was in 2000, when Napster and other forms of illegal music downloading were rising in popularity. People were downloading music for free and the songs were all stored on computer hard-drives. Armstrong’s article focuses mostly on illegal downloads. According to Armstrong, CDs and DVDs
have no future, as they take up shelving space and people will rather download for free. One has to consider the fact that Armstrong is comparing a free commodity with a commercial one.

As there are so many new sources available to purchase through an online store, such as Amazon.com, I decided to search for sources on Amazon. I used the following keywords in my search: “The Beatles”, “album”, “album cover”, “album art”, “singles” and “iPod”. I searched for books written about an album. The first one I looked for was a book on the album, The Dark Side of the Moon by Pink Floyd. I found the book, The dark side of the moon: the making of the Pink Floyd Masterpiece, a 2006 book by John Harris. I also found Radiohead: Welcome to the machine: OK Computer and the death of the album which is a 2008 book by Tim Footman. I also found The Beatles: Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band by Dr Allan F. Moore, who analyses the album. The search was conducted in 2009 and on 7 November 2010, and the lists appear in no particular order.

When searching under album I found, amongst others, the following works relevant to recorded music:

- 1001 Albums you must hear before you die, edited by Robert Dimery
- Rolling Stone 500 greatest albums of all time by Joe Levy
- Goldmine Record Album Price Guide by Tim Neely. This book is already in its 5th edition
- The Art of the LP: Classic album covers 1955-1995 by Johnny Morgan and Ben Wardle
- Classic Album Covers of the 60s by Storm Thorgerson
- The Art of the Album Cover by Richard Evans
- AC/DC In the Studio: The Stories Behind Every Album by Jake Brown
- The Beatles’ Second Album (Rock of Ages) by Dave Marsh
- Goldmine Record Album Price Guide by Martin Popoff
When searching under *album art* or *cover art* I found, amongst others, the following works relevant to recorded music:

- *The greatest album covers of all time* by Grant Scott, Barry Miles and Johnny Morgan
- *Album Cover Album* by Roger Dean and Storm Thorgerson. Thorgerson is famous for being part of the graphic design company *Hipgnosis* who were responsible for such memorable album covers as *The Dark Side of the Moon*
- *For the love of vinyl: the album art and Hipgnosis* by Nick Mason, Peter Blake, Paula Scher, Aubrey Powell and Storm Thorgerson

When searching for books on *singles*, I found the following relevant works, amongst others:

- *Billboard's Top Pop Singles 1955-2002 (Joel Whitburn's Top Pop Singles [Cumulative]*) by Joel Whitburn
- *Hit singles: top 20 charts from 1954 to the present day (All music book of hit singles*) by Dave McAleer
- *The Heart of rock & soul: the 1001 greatest singles ever made* by David Marsh. The 1989 and 1999 versions can be found in the library at the University of Mississippi.

Generally, books written about singles mostly concern themselves with chart listings. Books about albums (not album covers) concern themselves with lists of the greatest albums. The very fact that these books mentioned above (and others dedicated to specific albums) exist, is important for the album, particularly as a collectable art item. Take for instance, *The MOJO Collection*, a book about great albums (Irvin & Mclear 2007). Memorable albums from each period in the time of the record album are discussed, from “the first vinyl pop album” through to the 2000s. The album cover is shown, the production crew members are named and the track lists are included.
The book calls itself ‘the ultimate music companion’. The cover of the $4^{th}$ edition of this book has colourful vinyl records on it. The introduction of this book, written by Phil Alexander, is called *The album is dead!? Long live the album!* In this introduction Alexander distinguishes between “track-ites” (those who believe that the art form of the album is dead and that “tracks have superseded collected bodies of work”) and “album-ites” (“the zealots who maintain that no meaningful musical statement can be made without a full exposition of an artist’s talent”).

Alexander believes that both parties are right, and that the real deciding factor on whether a track or album is collectable, should be the quality (not referring to sound quality here) of the music.

### 3.5 The iPod Experience

Apple Inc sold over 9 million iPods in its fourth quarter of 2010 (ending 25 September 2010). The company is an important player in the digital music industry, as they sold 14.1 million iPhones and 4.19 million iPads during the abovementioned quarter. In their fourth quarter report, Apple Inc. explained to its shareholders what it is known as: “Apple designs Macs, the best personal computers in the world, along with OS X, iLife, iWork, and professional software. Apple leads the digital music revolution with its iPods and iTunes online store. Apple is reinventing the mobile phone with its revolutionary iPhone and App Store, and has recently introduced its magical iPad which is defining the future of mobile media and computing devices” (Apple Inc. 2010).

Could the iPod be the new packaging of music? The appearance of books, such as Steven Levy’s *The Perfect Thing*, Leander Kahney’s *The Cult of iPod* (2005), D.E. Wittkower’s *iPod and Philosophy* (2008) and Michael Bull’s *Sound Moves: iPod Culture and Urban Experience* (2008), in which the authors investigate the iPod as a cultural phenomenon, lead me to believe that the iPod is largely responsible for popularising the MP3 and the tradition of portable music in the digital age. After reading *The Perfect Thing*, it has been revealed to me that a
different experience from the album experience is being created by the iPod – the iPod experience.

In the title, Levy calls the iPod the “defining object of the 21st century”. Levy also describes the tangible qualities of the iPod: “It felt very good to hold. Spinning my thumb on the scroll wheel was satisfying. The smooth silvery back felt so sensual that it was almost a crime against nature (2006:21)”. Levy further describes the experience of listening to music on an iPod: “With all your music at hand, in an enclosure to die for, the personal experience with the iPod goes beyond mere listening, it’s almost a relationship (2006: 142)”.

Later Levy mentions that the iPod is “the coolest thing in the world” (2006: 86). The author includes some of his conversations with Steve Jobs (CEO of Apple Inc.). Interviews with Jonathan Ives, the designer of the iPod, are important, as he describes the significance of the design of the iPod (Levy 2006: 120). Some people have gone as far as placing the design of the iPod on that “lofty realm” known as art, but its designer, Ives, disagrees: “The goal of art is self-expression, and the goal of this is for people to be able to listen to music on a device that was cared about, where every detail was worked on and refined…I don’t see it as art…I mean, I see it as a digital music player”.

Summers (2004: 236) interviewed Michael Dorf (president and CEO of the Knitting Factory). Dorf describes a different kind of experience created by the digital distribution of music: “At first, people argued all kinds of cons against digital distribution… They said you’re going to have no artwork to really be able to present a package, but actually, it’s to the contrary. What the Internet gives you is the opportunity to have an almost unlimited amount of music that can be digitally distributed directly to a consumer. You also have the opportunity to link to all kinds of visuals, or all kinds of hypertext links to the artist’s life. Whatever artists would like to share, whatever they want to communicate, they can do all
Steven Levy (2006: 289) quotes Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple, on the development of the iPod and iTunes: “We don’t have to convince people that they love music. People know that already. So all we’re doing is re-inventing the experience of enjoying music, because you have your whole library with you”. Levy (2006: 193) mentions that he grew up in the era of the LP: “…the unvarying order of the songs on an album became burned into our consciousness with repeated playings. Even now, decades after my turntable has been retired, when I hear a tune from those days, my mind anticipates what used to come next on that banded vinyl plate … when compact disc appeared, there was suddenly the possibility of overthrowing the established order”. Shuffle\(^{30}\) can free a song from its album, but then again, so could the CD.

Tatone (2009) blames technology for the change in listening experience: “But I blame neither the musicians nor the listeners: today’s technology-enhanced environment has re-arranged our experience with music entirely, leaving many of us to feel we have too many options and too little time”. A new listening experience will thus suit modern life: “It’s hard to imagine today’s generation giving uninterrupted attention to an album (maybe they don’t need to). And as the album experience disappears, younger music fans lose the opportunity to know what they’re missing (if anything). But can you blame them?” Tatone (2009) describes how the digital age influences listening and consumer habits: “The digital life urges them to keep up, not slow down – to serve individuality and instant gratification, not a slow, soulful absorption of art. The new reality does not involve listening to a sequence of songs carefully put together by a musician or band. Rather, it is about hastily creating your own sequence of songs (or playlists) – or letting the computer automatically make playlists for you – listening to them like radio stations, listening to them half-attentively, forgetting them

\(^{30}\) The randomization algorithm on an iPod.
easily, and later erasing them from the hard drive to make room for new MP3 discoveries… The digital experience emphasizes the fleeting, remiss act of consumption over the meaningful intention for connection”.

The iPod experience involves the use of functions, such as iTunes’ Genius\textsuperscript{31} button. Tatone (2009) comments on the effect of this technology on listening habits: “When you don’t invest human energy in receiving music, is it not easy to forget?”

Jennings (2007:20) explains how downloadable music can create new experiences in listening to music: “As you play tracks [on MyStrands\textsuperscript{32} etc.], you can add particular selections to a playlist and then publish the playlist for other users to listen to, comment on, and tag – just as though it were an album in its own right”. On page 21, Jennings emphasises that resources such as streaming audio, MySpace and MyStrands add to, rather than subtract from, the methods of discovering entertainment.

Allen (2009) suggests that artists should do the following to create new listening experiences:

- Ask their fans what they want to hear and experience;
- Provide unique content, such as early demos of new songs;
- Provide free MP3s;
- Forget the idea of an organising principle and create a new one;
- Use Twitter, Facebook and other social networking sites;
- Start a blog;
- Start to monetise the experience around your music; and
- Use the Internet browser as the new iPod.

\textsuperscript{31} The Genius feature in iTunes is capable of automatically creating a playlist of songs from the user's iTunes library which are similar to the selected song.
\textsuperscript{32} MyStrands was an online social music service and was closed down in 2009.
Hadju (2004: 27) mentions that “downloading… leaves us in peril of finding satisfaction only in our own tastes”.

Some features people love about albums might continue in the online world. Forrester Research reported in August 2003 that “online downloads will come with extensive artwork, extras like musician interviews and alternate versions, and lifetime service – none of which discs can match” (Campbell 2003).

Artists like Keith Richards and David Bowie view the death of the album as an exciting challenge for artists. Richards admitted to Gundersen (2003) that even though he cherished albums, he thinks that their replacement would be more interesting. Richards emphasises that the format is not as important as the quality of the music. David Bowie admitted to Gundersen that he embraces the disappearance of the album format and uses his iPod to play his own compilation of favourite tracks.

Dave Matthews mentioned to Gundersen that he makes most of his money through touring; and that “nobody’s going to be able to download that”. Live concerts, instead of singles, could be the replacement for albums.

Levy (2006: 145) highlights a very interesting idea regarding the connection between the iPod and live shows: “…the more music you hear from an artist, the more likely you are to want to see that person or band perform in public… the high price of concert tickets seems to confirm the suspicion that the iPod has only enhanced the desire to see music live”.

Michael Bull (a sociologist and author of books such as Sound Moves: iPod Culture and Urban Experience and The Auditory Culture Reader) is quoted by Levy (2006: 143). According to Bull, the iPod gives “the user the unprecedented ability to weave the disparate threads of the day into one uniform statement”. This “uniform statement” is exactly what an album does. Perhaps the iPod has
more in common with an album than we might originally have thought. The iPod, as mentioned by authors like Levy (2006), and McGlade (2006), is a tangible commodity – as it feels good to touch and it also looks great.

3.6 Listening Habits in the Digital Age

British Music Rights together with the University of Hertfordshire presented the results of their survey “Music experience and behaviour in young people; Spring 2008” in a document available on www.bmr.org. There are two documents: “What does the ‘myspace’ generation really want?”(BMR 2008b) and the “Main findings and conclusions” (BMR 2008a). The above-mentioned study is clearly a quantitative one. A total of 773 participants met the criteria for the survey and were all from the United Kingdom, aged 14 and over (BMR 2008a: 41).

It has to be mentioned that half of the participants in that study played a musical instrument (BMR2008a: 39). A lot of information presented therein focuses on illegal file sharing, copying of CDs and on how young people distribute their entertainment budget. The report is introduced as follows: “Like generations before them, young people today are passionate about music. They invest huge emotional value in the CDs and memorabilia produced by their favourite acts… what has changed entirely is how they go about doing this” (BMR 2008a: 2).

Interestingly enough, the BMR study shows just how much young people value music: “Respondents seem to attach a hierarchy of value to different formats of music, with streaming on demand the least valuable (though still valued); ownership of digital files somewhere in the middle; and ownership of the original physical CD the most valuable. However, with respondents spending 60% of their total music budget on live music, it may be that ‘being there’ is considered the ultimate music experience of all … Fans want to support or pay tribute to their favourite artists and ownership of a digital music file does not necessarily do justice to their sense of devotion” (BMR2008a: 4, 35-37).
The BMR study indicates that “the majority of respondents would continue to buy CDs, even if they used a legal file-sharing or streaming service” (BMR2008a: 35). Respondents were asked why they would still buy CDs, when they could buy or stream single tracks instead: “Overwhelmingly, the reasons given for buying CDs, even if they used a legal file-sharing or streaming service, related to the value they put on the tangible product, and the significance of relationship it signifies between themselves and the music or artists they admire” (BMR2008a: 36).

Figure 3.1, taken from the BMR report, shows that respondents value the physical product, its connection to the artist, as well as the artwork, liner notes, extras and lyrics included in album sleeves. Interestingly enough, sound quality and the desire to collect were not found to be significant reasons for buying CDs, instead of MP3s.

![Figure 3.1: Reasons for still buying CDs](image)

**Figure 3.1:** Reasons for buying albums (BMR2008a: 36)
Young music consumers display two different types of relationships with music: an emotional one and an experimental one. The emotional relationship “forms when fans really connect to a piece of music or to an artist. They develop a bond and will be prepared to pay more for a specific item: the original CD, band paraphernalia, or concert tickets. The value to the music consumer in this case rests in the item itself or to the individual who produced it” (BMR 2008b: 4).

The experimental relationship “is about trying-out, searching, exploring, investigating, giving something a go, rating, and recommending to others” (BMR 2008b: 3).

Music provides the soundtrack to a young person’s life. According to the BMR report, “respondents listen to music over six hours a day – either in the background or as the main focus of their attention” (BMR2008a: 7). Within the population surveyed, as many as 92 % of 14-17 year-olds own MP3 players. A total of 84% of 18-24 year-olds own MP3 players (BMR2008a:8). Music is also considered the young person’s most valuable possession (BMR2008a: 9).

Nearly all of the BMR study participants owned a CD collection (BMR2008a:23). Only 3% of respondents indicated that they did not own CDs. One should consider that some of these CDs could be compilation albums (bought or created by the owner) or CDs copied from friends. BMR’s study mentions that “around 14% of the average CD collection has been ripped or burnt” (BMR2008a:24). The study in question distinguishes between the amount of money spent on different formats of recorded music: “… respondents spend in general more than twice as much on CDs than on any other type of recorded music. However, a quarter of respondents’ recorded music budget is now spent on digital downloads” (BMR 2008b: 28).

The respondents showed an interest in owning a permanent copy of the music: “Far fewer respondents were interested in a stream-on-demand service – where
they could access any music they wanted, at any time, on any device, but would not be permitted to own a permanent copy of it” (BMR2008a: 33).

**3.7 Music as Art**

Peter Wicke is a well-known researcher on the aesthetics of popular music. He (Wicke 1990) writes in *Rock Music: Culture, Aesthetics and Sociology* how rock music has social and cultural significance as art. He includes a history of rock music. According to Wicke (1990: 2), “music is not defined by its means of expression – loud or soft, simple or extremely complex – but primarily by the effects which these achieve”.

The album, in some cases, might be seen as a work of art. Keightley, in his definition of an “album” as it appears in the *The Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World: Media, industry and society*, further expands on this idea of an artistic statement: “More than merely a collection of songs, the album here is associated with ideas of complexity. Unlike a single, the album may be conceived as involving a larger totality, with a continuity and coherence of theme, mood, sound or narrative across its duration”.

Keightley (2003a: 613) adds that “this sense of depth, complexity and artistic ambitiousness is also a reminder that albums have historically involved listening in private, domestic space, where these qualities may most fully be appreciated, although the advent of mobile playback equipment has changed this in recent years”.

For artists, the album continues to represent a “creative benchmark” towards which to aspire (Elborough 2009: 9). Bob Dylan wanted to record LPs, because, in his opinion, folk, jazz and classical musicians all made LPs instead of singles. Dylan believed that the collection of songs together with the album cover created a bigger picture (Elborough 2009: 209). The trend of artists to concentrate on LPs
in order to be taken seriously started in the 1960s and accelerated in the 1970s (Elborough 2009: 266).

The LP experienced its greatest moments in the 1970s: “As a physical object and arguably as an art form, it reached peaks and nadirs of quite startling disparity that it would never quite match”. By this time in history, teenagers had more money and could thus afford albums (Elborough 2009: 268).

One single that cannot be considered ephemeral is Queen’s “Bohemian Rhapsody”. It took over 70 hours to record and this six-minute long single is considered a classic. The album on which it appeared, A Night at the Opera, “was a pompous, self-important masterpiece of high camp” (Elborough 2009: 323).

Hadju (2004: 26) explains what the development of the LP meant for classical and popular music: “In the classical realm, the most an LP could achieve was to approximate the sound of musicians interpreting a composition; in pop the LP created the album, which became an art form. The LP facilitated a new kind of adventurism in popular music and advanced the idea of collage as a popular aural art”.

Kevin Kelly writes, as early as 2002, that in the world of free copies, “the only things truly valuable are those which cannot be copied”. In this New York Times article, “Where Music: Will be Coming From”, Kelly discusses the difference between analogue and digital copies: “The industrial age was driven by analog copies; analog copies are perfect and cheap. The information age is driven by digital copies; digital copies are perfect, fluid and free… But the moment something becomes free and ubiquitous, its position in the economic equation is suddenly inverted”.

The “axis of value” has thus flipped – due to free digital downloads of music. Kelly mentions the different possibilities for musicians in the digital age: “Will the model of the future be to give away copies in order to sell out a performance? Or to rapidly issue new work from the studio faster than it can spread online? Or to release music in such wonderful packaging that it is cheaper to buy it than to copy it? The probable answer: all of the above and more”.

Kelly mentions the various possibilities musicians could employ to create new listening experiences. However, these suggestions are aimed at musicians trying to escape from the effects of free digital downloadable music.

Campbell (2003), writing for the Christian Science Monitor, identifies the album as an art form perfected by acts like The Beatles and Pink Floyd.

3.8 Record Collections

Shuker’s definition of “record collection” in The Continuum Encyclopedia of Popular Music of the World: Media, Industry and Society was used to compare it with other kinds of music collection (2003). “Record collecting” refers to “the collection by individuals of sound recordings in various formats, although often with a marked preference for vinyl” (Shuker 2003: 335). It is important to note that in this study, “record collection’ refers only to the social activity. Elborough (2009: 16) says that “we all make our own record collections as we move through life”.

Sherman (2008:112) mentions record collecting in his SAMUS article: “... the value of the collection seems to go beyond simply owning the objects contained within it. There appears to be value in the activity of collecting itself”. What Sherman does not mention is that it might be possible to collect purely digital copies of music. Collecting, however, is about finding what is rare and thus not
easy to obtain. Sherman (2008:112-113) believes that “… there is no such concept as a rare MP3”.

He also mentions that “the value is not in the songs themselves, it’s in the rarity of the physical product … While digital music may not replace physical media such as CDs, it certainly has the ability to affect their value and the value of music in general”.

Cunningham, M. Jones and S. Jones (2004: 7-8) examined personal music collections in a University of Waikato paper called “Organizing digital music for use: an examination of personal music collectors”. According to Cunningham et al. (2004: 7), “… collections are visual and tactile”. CD covers and cover art are easier to find in a collection than album titles. The cover art can also “provide clues as to a CDs genre or style.”

In the above-mentioned study, “some participants expressed no interest in the CDs other than as a container of music … The appearance of both individual CDs and the physical collection as a whole is significant to others” (2004: 8). According to Cunningham (2004: 8) et al., “the sheer physicality of a CD may add to the experience of collecting music”. This will be used to determine whether recorded formats other than the physical album, are collectable.

McCourt (2005) describes the reason why the tangible elements of physical media make them desirable to collect. In the digital age, the emphasis is shifting from music as a cultural item to music as a cultural service (2005: 251). MP3s offer easy access and convenience, while the physical disc offers an artefact and better sound quality (2005:250). McCourt writes: “Browsing a record collection [not necessarily a collection of LPs] is emotionally gratifying; it is visual and tactile at the same time”. He also emphasises that browsing through a CD collection is less satisfying, as “its size limits its visual appeal” and the plastic of the CD packaging “degrades the tactile sensation” (2005: 250). Collectors of
digital sound files, however, value other qualities of music as worthy of collecting: “... the lack of materiality in digital files heightens our sense of ‘ownership’, as well as our desire to sample, collect and trade music in new ways. Processing digital files is a more intense and intimate experience than owning physical recordings”. This statement is based on three things named by McCourt:

- “Desire for compacting”;
- “Desire for immediacy”; and
- “Desire to customize”.

McCourt (2005: 250) emphasises the impact of downloadable audio on society: “The popularity of MP3 files and related formats ... indicates that access and convenience are increasingly more important than artifact and sound quality”. McCourt (2005: 251) also reminds the reader that “… no new technology entirely substitutes for an older technology. Format obsolescence has been crucial to record companies, as it allows them to recycle their catalogs”.

*Time* magazine author Kristina Dell wrote an article, “Vinyl Gets Its Groove Back”, in 2008. This article was about the increasing popularity of vinyl records among the youth of the day. They are quickly discovering the warmer sound and loving the elaborate album covers and liner notes (Dell 2008). Another article, “Music Lovers Rise Up in Vinyl Revolution” by Hargrave – on the same subject appeared on the *Sky News* website on the 11th of April 2009. It includes insightful quotes by recording artists and record shop owners on the popularity of vinyl discs and their superiority over the CD (Hargrave 2009).

Hargrave (2009) mentions how sales of vinyl discs have almost doubled in the USA. Chris Carmino, manager of Amoeba records in Hollywood, told Hargrave: “People are realising that vinyl is the collectors’ format... CDs are becoming just vessels of information, something to throw into your computer for the purpose of getting that music into your iPod”. Vinyl discs might not sell many, but according to Hargrave (2009), they are selling for £20 or more. Creative director of Phonica,
a record shop in London’s West End, Sean Bidder, told Hargrave: “There’s never been the same collectability about CDs … it will come down to digital music, easy access very cheap, plus something that you can collect, and that will be vinyl”. Hargrave interviewed Chris Lowe from the Pet Shop Boys, Annie Lennox and Roger Daltrey, and all three artists are very excited about the vinyl disc’s comeback.

Elborough’s book, *The vinyl countdown: the album from vinyl to iPod and back again* explores the way in which the album became deeply embedded in cultural history. Elborough (2009: 397) mentions that “for the moment at least, that people have a hunger for vinyl”. Van Buskirk (2007) explains why he feels vinyl could be the “final nail in [the] CDs coffin”: “As counterintuitive as it may seem in this age of iPods and digital downloads, vinyl – the favorite physical format of indie33 music collectors and audiophiles – is poised to re-enter the mainstream, or at least become a major tributary”.

Vinyl could have a different function from digital downloadable music: “Records, the vinyl evangelists will tell you, provide more of a connection between fans and artists. And many of today’s music fans buy 180-gram vinyl LPs for home listening and MP3s for their portable devices”. One might wonder what the music industry professionals are saying about a possible comeback for vinyl: “Big labels still aren't buying the vinyl comeback, but it wouldn't be the first time the industry failed to identify a new trend in the music biz … But when it comes to vinyl, these organizations don’t really know what they’re talking about. The RIAA’s numbers are misleading because its member labels are only now beginning to react to the growing demand for vinyl. As for SoundScan, its numbers don’t include many of the small indie and dance shops where records are sold. More importantly, neither organization tracks used records sold at stores or on eBay – arguably the central clearing house for vinyl worldwide. Vinyl's popularity has been

33 The term “Indie” is short for “independent music” and refers to artists who create, record and publish music and who are independent from the major commercial record labels. An Indie shop refers to a retailer who is independent from a major commercial record shop.
underreported before” (Van Buskirk 2007). Elborough (2009: 398) admits that vinyl remains a “niche interest”.

In 2007, Johnny Sharp suggested in *The Guardian*, how a recording can become an instant hit: “Scrap that recording – it’ll become an instant hit”. Sharp uses the example of Deep Purple’s front-man, Ian Gillan, who after the release of their live album, “Deep Purple – NEC 1993”, asked fans not to buy the album since it was a poor performance. Gillan forced Sony BMG to remove the album from shops and ever since fans have been queuing up to purchase the last commercially available copies. Sharp mentions that in February 2007 the album reached £21 on eBay with five days of bidding left. Sharp explains it as follows: “Just as rock fans like to claim exclusive ownership of their favourite artists by pointing out that they were followers back when their idols were busking outside Woolworths, there is nothing a committed rock anorak likes more than owning something that other fans don’t have. And down the years, disagreements between artists and record companies have provided collectors with many such rare artifacts”.

Another more important example would be the Beatles’ 1966 American release “Yesterday and today” which, due to its controversial album cover, was recalled by Parlophone. Sharp states that one surviving copy has been sold for $38,500. The same can be said about Bob Dylan’s 1963 album “The Freewheelin’ Bob Dylan”, with its original track listing (before Dylan replaced the last four tracks at the last minute), which was sold for $35,000.

Albums aren’t the only collectable formats available: Sharp mentions that an unreleased A&M 7-inch single of “God Save the Queen” by the Sex Pistols, before they got dropped by A&M, should sell for £13,000 in 2006.

Michael Crowley, a self-confessed practitioner of rock snobbery, told Levy (2006: 27) that the iPod had made it too easy to access “the cool stuff”; and that this takes away the thrill. Levy (2006: 28) questions the fact that people generally value music by how difficult it is to acquire.
3.9 Albums as Large-scale Works

Standard reference articles on the Western Classical Music concepts of “Movement” (Sadie 2001: 251-252), “Cyclic Form” (Macdonald 2001: 797-798) and “Concert” (Weber 2001: 221-235) were used to compare the album with large-scale works from the Western Classical Music tradition. Macdonald defines cyclic form, as “music in which a later movement reintroduces thematic material of an earlier movement” and describes some cyclic form works as those “where thematic links bind more than one movement; it is not properly applied to mere thematic resemblances”.

Macdonald explains that composers, such as Mendelssohn, Schumann, Franck and Liszt “elevated cyclic principles to great importance” (2001: 797-798). Examples of music in cyclic form include many instrumental sonatas, suites and canzonas, to name a few. Sadie (2001: 25) defines a movement as “a section, usually self-contained and separated by silence from other sections, within a larger musical work … a multi-movement work is sometimes described as cyclic form”. It is often believed that movements from large-scale works should not be performed separately, but Weber mentions that, during the 18th century, it was actually not unusual for programmes to consist of individual movements from larger works (2003: 225).

MacFarlane’s *The Beatles’ Abbey Road Medley: extended forms in popular music* concentrates on tracks 8-17 (Side 2) on the last album by The Beatles, called *Abbey Road* (1969). The concluding sequence of songs is commonly known as the *Abbey Road Medley* and many have attempted to analyse it and name the musical form. MacFarlane (2008) analyses each track and includes examples of works influenced by the *Abbey Road Medley*. These include *The Dark Side of the Moon* by Pink Floyd (2008: 140).
MacFarlane quotes the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*’ entry on *Cyclic Form* (2008:5) and analyses the sequence of tracks exemplifying cyclic form (Prelude, First Movement, Second Movement, Third Movement and Postlude). Elborough (2009: 165) emphasises the significance of the Beatles as creators of albums: “To think of the Beatles is, as often as not, to think of a Beatles LP. The LP-ness of the group is at the core of their identity…”.

MacFarlane (2008: 4) explains how this analysis is rooted in traditional methods: “The nature of this scholarship has run the gamut from traditional formal analysis to progressive philosophical discourse. On the one hand analysts whose views are firmly rooted in the formalist tradition have sought to validate Beatles music by stressing its clear correlation with masterworks of the Western musical canon”. He (2008: 5) describes the unity audible in the *Abbey Road* medley: “Although the various song fragments are listed as discrete tracks in the album’s liner notes, one can readily detect musical elements that suggest a preponderance of organic unity – for example, chromatic mediant relationships that suggest structural implications, the restatement of themes that suggest the presence of developmental processes, and an economy of means with regard to the reworking of harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic material”.

He analyses each movement separately, constantly reminding the reader of the connections between the movements. Even the text of the movements, at times, is related.

MacFarlane compares the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*’ definition of a medley to the *Abbey Road* medley (2008: 5): “Taken together, these elements challenge the notion that the work in question corresponds to Grove’s definition of the term medley. The *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* defines a “medley” as a “… succession of well-known tunes strung together, generally without any format construction” (Sadie 2001: 269). It therefore seems that the *Abbey Road* medley is not a medley at all; rather, it’s an
extended form in three movements … Extended form corresponds to the term cyclic form, …”.

Before he discusses other examples of extended forms in popular music, MacFarlane (2008: 133-134) concludes his analysis of the medley as follows: “In its skillful articulation of an architectonic framework predicated on double-tonic relationships between the tonal centers of A and C, the Abbey Road medley displays a remarkable sophistication and musical eloquence. This framework facilitates the realization of a three-movement structure replete with sectional variation, thematic restatement, and inventive thematic and harmonic development … the Beatles and their collaborators [this includes Sir George Martin] have succeeded in creating a viable extended form in the popular idiom”.

MacFarlane (2008: 140) briefly discusses Pink Floyd’s Dark Side of the Moon (1973), where “the songs achieve movementlike status by means of slow tempos and stark instrumental textures”. He describes Dark Side of the Moon as “a large form that extends beyond one side of a vinyl LP”, as opposed to the Abbey Road medley, which appears on one side only.

Even though it has been mentioned earlier that artists have always been constricted by the amount of information the recorded format of their time could store, some artists did not let a “short” format hold them back. Hadju (2004: 26) mentions that “serious musicians in and out of classical music saw the brevity of the single record as constricting. Duke Ellington … grew fixated on experiments to stretch the song form, accommodate his expansive musical imagination, and challenge the aesthetic classicism that codifies short and long forms as low and high art. He defied the three-minute limit with extended compositions, such as ‘Reminiscing in Tempo,’ released on four sides of two 78s in 1935.”
3.10 High-Fidelity Media

Aczel (2000) does not believe that a higher sampling frequency than a CD’s 44.1 kHz sampling frequency make any noticeable difference, as human beings reportedly cannot hear frequencies higher than 20 kHz. With the CD’s decline in popularity, the DVD-A, SACD and Blu-Ray high-fidelity formats will use the belief that sampling rates higher than 44.1 kHz sound better to distinguish these formats from the compressed audio files used for the online distribution of music.

If Aczel is correct, these new formats will have to rely on their tangibility and extra features (such as surround sound) in order to sell themselves in the digital age.

Robert Harley (2004: 255) explains that even though the Nyquist theorem states “that the sampling frequency must be at least twice as high as the highest audio frequency we want to encode … the relaxation in digital-filter requirements for higher sampling rates”, as those used on DVD-A and SACD, sound more “open and transparent, and deliver greater transient detail”.

The digital anti-aliasing filter that removes all energy above half the sampling frequency is thus less steep for higher sampling frequencies. It is not only the sampling frequency that has an effect on the more detailed sound of DVD-A and SACD: the 20- and 24-bit resolution of these formats expands the dynamic range and “increases the resolution of low-level detail”. This can add to the realism of an instrument and its position on the sound stage (Harley 2004: 257).

Eric Taub (2001) wrote the article “New Ways For Discs and Heads to Spin” about the new formats, such as DVD-A and SACD, considered superior in sound quality by some: “Both formats record music at a much higher quality than ordinary CDs, which audiophiles have long lambasted as having a cold, clinical sound … Can a listener hear the difference? Definitely”. A different listening experience is created by these surround-sound formats: “During a recent
evaluation of the technology, both classical music and contemporary jazz vocals played in the DVD-Audio surround-sound format created a markedly different listening experience compared with regular two-channel stereo. The six speakers enveloped the listener, turning the room into one large sound source. It was as if the music had taken on an added spatial dimension”.

Gary Lux, a 5.1 Entertainment Group audio engineer, told Taub that “DVD-Audio gives listeners the ultimate liner notes”. The problem, however, could be that these two innovative technologies, SACD and DVD-A, are incompatible.

It is equally important to understand the high-fidelity formats, such as DVD-A, and why some believe that its sound quality is no better than CD sound quality. Ranada (2006) does not believe that a higher sampling frequency than a CD’s 44.1 kHz sampling frequency makes any noticeable difference: “Contrary to the wishes of the promoters of DVD-Audio and SACD, the ear’s high frequency performance usually falls off very rapidly above that point [17 kHz].”

DVD-Audio and SACD allow for sampling frequencies as high as 96 kHz and 192 kHz. CD obviously reaches the upper limit of the human ear’s frequency range with ease. Ranada suggests increasing the number of channels instead of increasing the sampling frequency.

Despite the scientific evidence presented here, the listener should experience the so-called high-fidelity formats, such as DVD-Audio and SACD, for themselves and compare them to the CD and compressed audio formats, to determine whether a difference exists and whether the possible difference is important to them.
3.11 Summary

Even though many writers have commented on the predicted death of the album, few have written scholarly contributions that are directly related to the topic.

Many believe that the album is dying out due to the amount of filler tracks commonly found on many CDs. CDs are expensive, and it is much more convenient to choose which songs you would like to purchase. For the Music Business, the album is a profitable recorded medium. With digital tracks increasing in popularity, the Music Industry should take advantage of the significance of the tangibility associated with physical recorded media. It is possible to sell digital tracks, but together with the use of tangible methods.

Album covers and posters are both artistic and commercial in nature. Artists value the album as an art form. Listeners feel physically connected to the music and the artists when listening to a tangible medium. Some listeners crave order, continuity and cohesion. Some will also pay more for the physical product, but if the music is not of a high standard, listeners might invest less money in the physical product. Young consumers value the physical recorded media and memorabilia, as these connect the listener to the artist.

Digital downloadable tracks, usually in a lossy compressed format, are convenient, cheap and accessible. The album is considered by many as artistic, sophisticated and complex. Albums have a lot in common with the large-scale works of the Western musical tradition.

Record collections constitute a social activity where people usually collect rare and tangible products. Vinyl is growing in popularity, and some are selling at higher prices than CDs.
Books about the iPod suggest that it is more than just a portable media player. The iPod creates a listening experience. Similarly, the digital distribution of music has created many different ways for artists to create new experiences, for example, by linking music to hypertext media on the Internet.

It is these literary works that encouraged me to raise the issues addressed in the listening experiments and focus group. The secondary objectives of this study arose from questions which came from these literary works. The questions asked in the listening experiment interviews and in the focus group discussion also derived from the literature reviewed in this chapter. Even though these questions are answered by record company executives, artists and the authors of these works, I felt that it was important for these questions to be answered by young consumers of music in the digital age.
CHAPTER 4

PROCESS

In previous chapters, I have discussed the research design and the design of the experiments. Validity, ethics and reliability were discussed in Chapter 2, and a detailed literature study followed in Chapter 3. Before it is possible to present the data collected from the experiments, I will need to explain how participants were selected, how the data was organised, as well as a description of each of the participants. I will provide a detailed description of the steps I had to take in order to conduct the experiments. The experiments themselves will also be discussed in detail.

4.1 The participant selection process

Participants were chosen from the criteria forms collected, using the non-probability sampling method of purposive sampling (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 166), as discussed in Chapter 2.

Criteria forms were handed out randomly to students on both the South and North campuses over a period of five days. These were handed back to me immediately after completion. This form assisted me in purposely selecting participants for the focus group and listening experiments. The criteria forms were thus completed by a random selection of people. Participants were phoned and e-mailed, depending on the contact details provided on the criteria form. The form has been attached as Appendix E in this document.
After I had studied the criteria forms and numbered the different responses, I set up the following table to compare the pilot study to the actual study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PILOT STUDY</th>
<th>ACTUAL STUDY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents (incl. N/A34)</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents N/A (age)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents N/A (not registered undergraduate or postgraduate student)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents N/A (No name or contact number)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents N/A (Incomplete form)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents that were music students (marked with a “M” on criteria form)?</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of respondents who were non-music students?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of suitable respondents</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.1**: Distribution of criteria forms in both the pilot study and actual study

Once I had booked the venue and the participants, reminder SMSs were sent to all participants closer to the time. A venue could only be booked once I knew when I could get study leave from my employer. I needed to book a time when the students were not on recess. I had to purchase refreshments and blank CDs. Refreshments purchased included coffee, sugar, milk, potato chips, chip dip, cookies, muffins, juice, water and soft drinks. CDs had to be ripped and burned onto discs for the purpose of this study.

34 Not applicable
35 This figure includes the two participants who filled out criteria forms in both the pilot study and the actual study.
The following dates were booked for Room 130 at the NMMU School of Music:
24-27 August 2010
1 September 2010

Every timeslot was one and a half hours long, running from 8:30-17:30 for every day booked. This provided me with enough time to prepare for each participant. On 24 August 2010 I booked the venue from 8:30-11:30am for setting up the room and sound system. Preparation between participants included setting up the refreshments and copying audio and video recordings to a hard-drive, as well as charging the video camera battery.

The sound system used consisted of a Denon DVD-2930 DVD-Audio-Video Super Audio CD player connected to a Meridian G68 Digital Surround Controller. The amplifier is an Adcom GFA 7805 connected to a stereo set of Polk Audio RTi A9 loudspeakers. Whenever the system had to be turned on, an SPL meter was used to calibrate the sound system. The set level read as 60dB\text{SPL} on the SPL meter, while playing one of the louder selections. The level was never adjusted.

The room set-up can be seen in the photographs included as Figures 4.1 and 4.2, showing the positioning of the video camera on the pile of boxes to the right:

![Figure 4.1: Positioning of the loudspeakers and the camera](image)
The next photograph shows the set-up of the listening seat:

**Figure 4.2:** The set-up of the listening room

Figure 4.3 shows a diagrammatic overview of the listening room set-up.

**Figure 4.3:** Overview of the listening room set-up
4.2 Listening Experiments

The chosen participants for the listening experiments will hence be referred to as Listening Experiment (LE) 1-8. My initial aim was to book three consecutive days per participant. In most cases this was possible, but for the following participants it was not:

- LE2 and LE3 (one day break between phases 2 and 3); and
- LE4 (weekend plus 2 days).

Two extra days (2-3 September 2010) were put on hold to prepare for any mishaps. The following factors were considered during the listening experiments:

- Even though most participants attended the three different phases on three consecutive days, not all participants’ schedules allowed for this.
- Participants could choose not to return for the remaining listening phase(s).
- Participants could choose not to attend any of the listening experiments.
- Even though a comfortable listening experience was provided by attempting to simulate a natural listening environment, not all aspects could be accounted for. The listening room and refreshments were not chosen or bought by the participants.

For the listening experiments I aimed for 8 participants and they were originally identified in terms of their criteria form numbers. Each different combination of answers provided on the criteria forms was given a specific number (eg. C25), as seen in Table 4.2. The following table presents the original choices for listening experiment participants:
Table 4.2: Initial choices for participants in the listening experiments

After communicating with possible participants, the list was finalised:

Table 4.3: The finalised list of participants in the listening experiments

Participant descriptions follow, with reasons for choosing them in bold font:

LE1 (C22)
LE1 is a female music student. She listens to both CDs and MP3s at least once a week and purchases CDs, but not MP3s. She owns an iPod.

LE2 (C17)
LE2 is a male student who listens to both CDs and MP3s at least once a week and owns an iPod. He buys both CDs and MP3s.
LE3 (C09)
LE3 is a female student who does not listen to CDs on a regular basis, only to MP3s. She also does not buy CDs, only MP3s. She does not own an iPod.

LE4 (C07)
LE4 is a male student studying music. He listens to both CDs and MP3s at least once a week and owns an iPod. He buys both CDs and MP3s. He regularly performs music.

LE5 (C15)
LE5 is a female student who listens to CDs and MP3s on a regular basis. She has bought CDs and MP3s before. She does not own an iPod. Number 15 was originally chosen as a replacement for number 28. Number 15 was the “general response” for non-music students. The “general response” refers to the most common combination of answers from the criteria forms.

LE6 (C16)
LE6 is a female student who buys CDs, but not MP3s. She listens to CDs and MP3s on a regular basis. She does not own an iPod.

LE7 (C21)
LE7 did not arrive for his appointments, even after numerous phone conversations. He was originally chosen as a replacement for number 10, as number 10 also did not listen to CDs on a regular basis. Neither does he listen to CDs on a regular basis. He also has not bought a CD in the last 5 years, but has purchased MP3s. He is a music student who performs regularly and he owns an iPod.

LE8 (C27)
LE8 is a male student who, after numerous phone conversations, did not come to any of the listening phases. He performs music, but does not study it at the
NMMU. He does not listen to CDs on a regular basis, but has purchased a CD in the last 5 years. He also buys MP3s. He does not own an iPod.

The mixed CD used in phase 1 of the listening experiment was based on songs from the albums mentioned below, including singles and album tracks on occasion.

The playlist of Phase 1’s mixed CD follows:

1. One Republic – All the right moves (Waking Up 2009)
2. Coldplay – Lost! (Viva la Vida or death and all his friends 2008)
4. Kings of Leon – Notion (Only by the night 2008)
5. Coldplay – Viva la Vida (Viva la Vida or death and all his friends 2008)
6. Welcome to the Black Parade (The Black Parade 2006)
7. Amy Macdonald – This is the life (This is the life 2008)
8. Jason Mraz feat. Colbie Caillat – Lucky (We sing, we dance, we steal things 2008)
10. Owl City – Fireflies (Ocean Eyes 2009)

For the second and third phase, each participant could choose one of the six musical genres provided for the listening experiment. The CDs used were chosen based on availability, variety and general appeal. The six genres were prepared as follows:

Genre 1 (acoustic)
A – Jason Mraz (We Sing, We Dance, We Steal Things)
B – Jack Johnson (On and On)
Genre 2 (jazz)  
A – Diana Krall (When I look in Your Eyes)  
B – Stacey Kent (In Love Again)

Genre 3 (art rock)  
A – Coldplay (Viva la Vida or Death and All His Friends)  
B – Muse (The Resistance)

Genre 4 (hard rock)  
A – Muse (Origins of Symmetry)  
B – Kings of Leon (Only by the Night)

Genre 5 (pop)  
A – One Republic (Waking Up)  
B – Owl City (Ocean Eyes)

Genre 6 (Adult Contemporary)  
A – Amy Macdonald (This is the life)  
B – John Mayer (Continuum)

All the CDs above, used for phases 1 and 2, were ripped to hard drive as MP3s with a bit rate of 256 kbps (the same bit rate currently offered by online music retailers, such as Rhapsody and iTunes) using Windows Media Player 10.

All listening experiment phases started with an offer of refreshments to the participants, in order to recreate a comfortable listening environment. In the first phase, the participant read the introductory letter and filled out the Informed Consent form. I explained to the participants in every phase that they should relax and enjoy the experience. I told the participant that he/she would be asked detailed questions about the listening experience and that there is no correct or
incorrect answer. I emphasised the fact that each participant was chosen for his/her unique opinion and should therefore be honest.

For phase 2 of the listening experiment, the participant was introduced to the available genre choices. The participant then made his/her choice, and I chose the album (A or B) from the genre to be used in phase 2. In phase 3, the other album in the genre choice was played and the participant was given the CD cover to look at, if he/she wanted to. No-one chose genre 2 (jazz) and genre 6 (adult contemporary). Table 4.4 illustrates the genre choices made by the participants and which album was listened to during phase 2 and 3 respectively:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Phase 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.4:** Genre and album choices for phase 2 and 3 of the listening experiments

### 4.3 Focus Group

Out of the 11 people who confirmed for 1 September 2010 at 16:00, only 7 participants came (C13, C20, C30 and C31 did not come).

For the focus group I aimed at 12 participants. My original choices are presented in Table 4.5, with an even distribution of music and non-music students:
After I had contacted the possible participants, I finalised the list. The finalised list of participants for the focus group can be seen in Table 4.6.

Table 4.5: Initial choices for focus group participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music Students</th>
<th>Non-music Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C05</td>
<td>C26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C12</td>
<td>C15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C01</td>
<td>C32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C13</td>
<td>C19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C06</td>
<td>C24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C20</td>
<td>C31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6: The finalised list of focus group participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music</th>
<th>Non-music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C01</td>
<td>C36 (new)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C13 (did not arrive)</td>
<td>C16 (new)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C06</td>
<td>C18 (new)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C20 (did not arrive)</td>
<td>C19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C31 (did not arrive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C30 (did not arrive)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chosen participants for the focus group will hereafter be referred to as Focus Group (FG) 1-11. Participant descriptions follow:

FG1 (C18)
FG1 is a male student who performs music and does not own an iPod. He listens to both CDs and MP3s on a regular basis, but does not buy MP3s. He
was originally chosen as a replacement for 15, as 15 also listens to both CDs and MP3s, but also purchases both. 15 does not perform music.

FG2 (C06)
FG2 is a male student in the music department. He was chosen as a representative for the “general response” group of music students. He listens to both MP3s and CDs on a regular basis and he purchases CDs and MP3s. He performs music.

FG3 (C19)
FG3 is a male student who does not listen to CDs on a regular basis. He has, however, bought a CD in the last 5 years, but not any MP3s. He does not own an iPod.

FG4 (C01)
FG4 is a male student in the music department who only listens to and buys CDs on a regular basis. He does not own an iPod.

FG5 (C16)
FG5 is a female student who listens to both CDs and MP3s regularly, but has not bought MP3s. She was originally chosen as a replacement for 32, as 32 also does not own an iPod.

FG6 (C36)
FG6 is a female student who does not listen to CDs regularly. She does not purchase MP3s. She owns an iPod and performs music. She was originally chosen as a replacement for 12 who also does not listen to CDs, but also does not purchase them either.
FG7 (C24)
FG7 is a male student who does not listen to CDs regularly. He, however, does not purchase MP3s. He owns an iPod, but does not perform music.

FG8 (C13)
FG8 is a male student in the music department who did not turn up for the focus group. He does not listen to CDs on a regular basis, but he has bought a CD in the last 5 years. He also purchases MP3s and owns an iPod.

FG9 (C20)
FG9 is a female student in the music department who did not turn up for the focus group. She does not listen to CDs on a regular basis and also has not bought a CD in the last 5 years. She purchases MP3s and performs music regularly.

FG10 (C31)
FG10 is a male student who did not turn up for the focus group. He does not listen to CDs and MP3s on a regular basis, but has bought a CD in the last 5 years. He does not own an iPod.

FG11 (C30)
FG11 is a male student who did not turn up for the focus group. He listens to both CDs and MP3s on a regular basis, but does not purchase music regularly. He owns an iPod.

Generally I experienced quite a few problems in finding people to attend the focus group. Even though combination C15 is a “general response” for non-music students, I could not arrange for any of them to participate. The telephone numbers provided either did not exist or the participant had prior commitments. Quite a few people were not interested in participating in the discussion.
The focus group participants were offered refreshments prior to the discussion. It took some time for them to read the introductory letter and fill out the Informed Consent form. I explained to them that there were no correct or incorrect answers and that they were each chosen for their unique opinions and should therefore be honest. They were then given time to read through the article.

4.4 Preparation of data

All audio recordings of the listening experiment interviews, as well as the focus group, had to be transcribed onto a Word Processor document. Each participant was given a code and these were used throughout the transcriptions. The video recording of the focus group assisted me in distinguishing the voices. Both the video and audio recordings of the focus group were used to transcribe the discussion accurately.

4.5 Analysis of data

All interview transcripts, as well as the focus group transcript, were printed out on A4 paper. On this paper, I underlined similar phrases and words with the same-colour fibre pens. As I read through them once, I created the different categories for the themes. I then compared each person’s response with the different questions asked during the interviews and the focus group – by only using the category name to describe the answer. Observations were noted on paper, while watching the video recordings, and these were linked to the answers given by the participant.

The answers were then compared with the findings from the literature study.
4.6 Summary

In the previous chapter I reviewed the important literature under appropriate headings. Chapter 4 followed the literature review and has described the process of the primary data collection in the form of listening experiment interviews and a focus group. I have discussed the participant-selection process in detail. The different combinations of answers from the criteria forms were numbered C01-C36 – in order to assist in the participant-selection process.

The participants were provided with codes LE1-6 and FG 1-7. Once interview transcripts were printed out, different units of meaning were identified and categorised, while participant observations were written down. The following chapter will present the analysed data in an organised manner, using the categories created during the analysis procedure.
CHAPTER 5
ANALYSIS

In the previous chapters I discussed the research design of the study. I provided a review of the existing literature, and also a detailed narrative of the research process prior to data analysis. After I had transcribed the interviews onto a Word file, I printed this out and started the organising and analyses of the data. The challenge was to summarise the massive amounts of data in such a way that I did not dispose of any meaningful data – and then to display the data in a way that is easy to understand. This chapter focuses on the process of data analysis of the listening experiment interviews and the focus group.

For most questions it proved helpful to organise the data in tables, but for certain questions this seemed rather senseless (see 5.4.12). A table will thus only be used if a question generated more than one category of responses. The tables do not represent an attempt to work in a quantitative manner, as might be assumed. They were merely used to conveniently summarise the answers.

5.1 Analysis of the data collected from measuring instruments

Once I had read through all the transcriptions on paper, I created the following categories (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 495) to summarise the motivations provided by the participants:

- Accessibility: The Internet has created new, easier methods to access music.
- Acoustics (of the room, as a factor of enjoyment): The acoustics of a room could have an effect on how the listening experience is perceived.
- Attraction (good looking; physical attraction of the medium or music player): The aesthetics of the media could add to the listening experience.
• Choice: This refers to the freedom of choice created by digital downloadable tracks or the freedom of choice for the consumer wanting both physical recorded media and downloadable tracks.

• Comfort: This refers to the listener’s level of comfort during the listening experience.

• Convenience: Purchasing music on the Internet is considered more convenient.

• Discovery (of new music or a new artist): The physical album, as well as the Internet, could assist the listener in the discovery of new music and artists.

• Distraction: This refers to the function of music as a background activity.

• Enjoyment/appreciation: This refers to the listener’s level of enjoyment of the listening experience.

• Expression: This refers to the emotion of the artist or the music.

• Familiarity (of the music or artist or genre): A listener could enjoy a listening experience if the music were familiar.

• Improvement/evolution: This refers to the technological advancement of the music, the medium or the music player.

• Labour: This refers to the amount of work that goes into the production or creation of the product.

• Monotony (of the experience): A listener might enjoy a listening experience less when it is monotonous.

• Mood/emotion of listener: This refers to the effect of the music on the mood of the listener.

• Musicianship (as art): Music is art, as it involves musicianship and creativity.

• Music is art: Some believe that all music is art.

• Ordinary/commercial (as a function of music): Listeners might enjoy a listening experience more – or less – when it is commercial music.
• Ownership (collection): This refers to the sense of ownership created by commercially available physical recorded media such as CDs and vinyl records.
• Portability (of the medium or music player): A reason why digitally downloadable music is popular.
• Price: This refers to the retail value of music
• Primary activity (music as the primary activity): This refers to an activity where listening to music is the main focus.
• Product quality: The quality of the product could be a factor when choosing which portable music player to purchase.
• Quality of sound: This refers to sound fidelity as a reason for not downloading music.
• Quantity: This refers to the ownership of a large amount of music.
• Randomness (of a collection of songs): This refers to a random playlist of music.
• Reliability (of the media): The reliability of the recorded media could affect the listener’s choice of recorded music.
• Songwriting or composition (as art): Music is art, as it involves songwriting or compositional skills.
• Status (brand name/coolness): Purchasing of the iPod as a status symbol.
• Support for artist: Appreciation for the artist as a reason for purchasing albums.
• Tangibility (of the product): A possible reason for purchasing the physical media instead of downloadable tracks.
• Taste: The musical taste of the listener could affect many answers regarding the enjoyment of the listening experience.
• Time (duration): This refers to the amount of time spent finding, purchasing and/or listening to music.
• Variety: This could be a reason for enjoying a listening experience.
• Versatility (of the medium or music player): This could be a reason for purchasing a certain portable media player.

• Whole (order; continuity created by a collection of songs): This could be a reason for not downloading individual songs.

I used different coloured fibre pens to underline the relevant phrases or words in the transcripts. I also wrote the category name next to or above the underlined word or phrase. This made it easy to find again.

I then went through all the transcriptions one more time and set up a document where each participant’s response was given under the respective question as his or her number and the category (e.g. LE2: “Variety”). The next step was to compare the answers provided by the different participants. The different questions and responses for the listening-experiment interviews follow. These include the expected responses generated by myself and originally used to formulate the questions for the interviews. These expected responses take the form of reasons for the yes/no questions.

5.2 Listening experiment interviews – Phase 1

It will be remembered from Chapter 2 and 4 that Phase 1 involves a listening experience of random tracks. Participants were asked to provide detailed answers to questions as they were asked in the interview following the listening experiment. For easy reference to the interview transcripts, interview questions have been used as section headings in this chapter.

5.2.1 “Did you enjoy the music?”

I first asked participants whether they had enjoyed the music. LE1, 4, 5 and 6 said “Yes” and LE2 and 3 responded “No”. Affirmative answers were categorised as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Familiarity</th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Comfort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.1:** “Did you enjoy the music?”- Yes

For “No” the following categories were identified:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Familiarity</th>
<th>Taste</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.2:** “Did you enjoy the music?” - No

For the “No” response I expected the participant to elaborate on the sound quality of the MP3s, but mostly on the experience of listening to the music. No participant in this study commented on the sound quality of the MP3s as a reason for not enjoying the music.

**5.2.2 “Were you ever bored?”**

This question’s categories for a “Yes” response were as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Familiarity</th>
<th>Taste</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.3: “Were you ever bored?” - Yes (Phase 1)**

I expected the participants to comment on the duration of the listening experience, the fact that they were not listening in a social environment or that they did not usually listen to music in this environment. I received none of the expected responses.

The “No” response’s categories for this question follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Familiarity</th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Comfort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.4: “Were you ever bored?” - No (Phase 1)**

LE1 commented on the variety of the music, as expected.

5.2.3 “Would you ever listen to music in this environment (Did it feel natural?)?”

The following categories appeared in the positive\(^\text{36}\) response to this question:

---

\(^{36}\) “Positive” responses here refer to “Yes” responses and “Negative” responses refer to “No” responses
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
<th>Mood/Emotion</th>
<th>Relaxation/comfort</th>
<th>Whole</th>
<th>Acoustics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.5:** “Would you ever listen to music in this environment? Did it feel natural?” - Yes

I expected participants to comment on the enjoyment factor of the experience. However, there were no negative responses to this question. For a negative response, I expected participants to elaborate on whether he or she listened to music while busy with other things, such as studying, reading, going to the gym, driving, walking on campus from one class to the next or walking to the shop.

5.2.4 “Would you consider what you heard today as an album?”

This question generated only one positive response. LE5 believed that one could consider the selection of music heard in the first phase as a mixed album; therefore, this fell into the category of “variety”. The expected response for a positive answer describes an album as a selection of music organised as a playlist.
The negative response’s categories follow:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Randomness</th>
<th>Variety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.6: “Would you consider what you heard today as an album?” - No

I expected participants to comment on the fact that the songs were not all by the same artist, did not fall into the same time period, and did not occupy the same genre, thus a “variety”. I also expected participants to comment on the lack of coherence or connection between songs, thus “randomness”. LE1 commented on the listening experience: “It’s all like different kinds of artists. It went through like different genres, which is like nice. It would be a very nice album, but I don’t see how it can actually be an album because of like the different genres and that kind of thing”.

5.2.5 “Have you ever legally downloaded music?”

The following participants responded positively to this question and their answers can be categorised as follows:
Table 5.7: “Have you ever legally downloaded music?” - Yes

LE2 said the following about downloading singles, as opposed to albums: “…’cause it’s a song that I like and [on] an album sometimes you get songs that you don’t like”. LE4 downloads mostly albums: “Well, if I know of a certain single that I want from a certain person. If I know a certain single and the rest of the band’s music is not really my style, then I’ll get that single. But if I know I like that person's music, in general, I’d like to hear more of it, even if I don’t know the rest of what he’s got to offer. It’s the quality of the artist I am downloading”.

Most responses were negative.

Table 5.8: “Have you ever legally downloaded music?” - No

I expected participants to comment on the fact that MP3s can be downloaded for free, that they were afraid of identity theft on the Internet or using one’s credit card on the Internet.
LE1 chose not to download any music: “Well obviously I don’t like downloading music because especially like solo songs, because I actually really enjoy the idea of an original album. First of all buying the original album, like I like having the hard copy and I very much believe in the album because a lot of work goes into choosing songs ‘cause the whole album (is used) to tell a story as a whole kind of thing flows from one to the other and I like that”.

LE3 feels that it is cheaper to download music for free. LE6 feels that legally downloading music is actually quite expensive for what you get: “… ek dink baie van hierdie websites is ook eintlik nogal duur om MP3s en so te download”. LE6 and LE5 both stated limited “accessibility” to these websites as a reason for not downloading. They do not always have access to the Internet.

5.2.6 “Do you think that the advent of MP3s made you listen to more music?”

The majority of the participants responded positively:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Convenience</th>
<th>Choice</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>*</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.9: “Do you think that the advent of MP3s made you listen to more music?” - Yes

LE6 felt that the MP3s had made finding music more convenient and accessible: “… Vandag kan jy deesdae net op ‘n website gaan. Jy kan die liedjies kry.

37 “I think that a lot of the websites are quite expensive for downloading MP3s and so on”. (Original translation by author)
LE1 and LE2 responded negatively. LE2 felt that MP3s did not make him listen to more music, as the sound quality is normally bad. LE1 felt that, even though the MP3 had made music more accessible, it did not make her listen to more music.

5.2.7 “Do you collect music?”

In this study, there were no negative responses to this question. Participants viewed their reasons for collecting music as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
<th>Mood</th>
<th>Relaxation</th>
<th>Distraction</th>
<th>Discovery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.10: “Do you collect music?” - Yes

LE1 collects music to discover more of it: “I like having a lot of music and I like seeing what new artists and people can do with it. ‘cause it’s like so much music has been done already and I just like to see what new can be done or like what people can do differently … ”.

38 “Nowadays we only have to go on to a website. You can find all the songs that you were looking for, whereas in earlier years, you had to spend hours in 
*Musica* to go through all the CDs for the one or two songs on an album”. (original translation by author)
LE2 feels that a sense of ownership is important when collecting music: “It’s better to have it, than not to have it”.

The following participants stated their reasons for collecting singles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Convenience</th>
<th>Taste</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.11: Reasons for collecting mostly singles

LE2 felt that there were times to collect albums and times to collect singles: “… it’s ‘cause like sometimes you might find a song that you don’t like in an album, or a song that you do like that you’ve never heard it before… it’s normally easier to like get a single, like just, ‘cause then there’s more [of] the music I can listen to”. LE3 and LE6 agreed that they did not always like every song on an album; therefore, they collected singles instead.

The following participants gave their reasons for collecting albums:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whole/order</th>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
<th>Discovery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.12: Reasons for collecting mostly albums

LE1 felt a need for order in her collections: “Well, singles in general are just really boring ‘cause it will be like 1 or 2 songs, you put on a CD to listen to 1 or 2
songs. It’s a bit weird… I don’t like listening to a long list of random songs. It has to mean something”. LE4 agrees: “I just want the collection as a whole. I don’t want snippets of this or snippets of that. Even though as I said before sometimes I really, I don’t like that person’s music at all. It’s just rubbish to me, but one single song or two songs I really enjoy… ”.

LE5 felt that an album gives you more to enjoy, depending on your personal taste: “As jy van ‘n spesifieke kunstenaar hou, en jy hou van een of twee van sy liedjies, dan glo ek … [jy sal] van meer hou as net een of twee op ‘n slag”.39

5.2.8 “Do you own an iPod or similar portable music device?”

The following positive responses were recorded, when asked why they had bought an iPod or similar portable music device:

39 “If you like a specific artist and you like one or two of his songs, I believe that you will like more than just the one or two songs at a time”. (Original translation by author)
Table 5.13: “Do you own an iPod or similar portable music device?” - Yes

I expected participants to state the fact that their friends had one, its coolness (“status”), how it looks (“attraction”), “portability” and “convenience” – as their reasons for buying such a device.

LE1 prefers an iPod to other portable music devices: “Well, the nice thing about an iPod, as opposed to MP3 players, is [that] with an iPod you can like sort it out into like playlists and albums and you can actually listen to the album, whereas with an MP3 player, I think it is just a bunch of songs... you can't really choose an album to listen to or an artist. I think so. That's what makes an iPod better”. LE4 states many reasons why the iPod is better than other portable music devices: “Brand name, I think. It has a good name behind it. I know it's going to work. It's not going to give me hassles. It's just, it works. Also the sound quality, if I listen to it through the iPod earphones it comes with, it's really good quality, it's
not this other fuzzy things listening to…It’s quite nice. It’s good looking. It really looks good…. I don’t know if it’s just me imagining things, or technically it is just a step up quality-wise, but definitely, and also it looks, the actual interface, the graphic user interface is just a lot better. The graphic user interface and the way you actually interact with it is just a step up from other devices”.

There was only one negative response to this question in this study. LE3 mentioned that she did not have the money to purchase such a device, therefore falling into the category of “price”.

5.2.9 “Would you consider what you heard today as art?”

The positive responses were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>“Music is art”</th>
<th>Songwriting as art</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
<th>Expression of artist</th>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Whole</th>
<th>Musicianship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
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<td>*</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.14: “Would you consider what you heard today as art?” - Yes (Phase 1)

The “music is art” response could suggest that participants consider both albums and singles as art. The longer duration format, the album, just lends itself to more artistic expression than do most singles.

LE4 mentions that personal taste should not have an effect on whether one considers a work as art or not: “I don’t like it when people say that something
else is not art, just because they do not like it. I, for example, didn’t like the last song that much, but it’s still art, because someone else might have liked it. It’s an expression of people, what they’re thinking, what they’re feeling”. LE5 felt that it is art when the creator is expressing himself or herself through the work: “Die persoon wat dit geskryf het, het mos nou half kuns perform deur sy emosies of ervaringe, en nou gee hy dit deur en dit is vir my kuns, want dan kan ek associeer daarmee. Ek sien kuns as iets wat jy uitbeeld oor hoe jy voel”.

In this study, only one participant hesitated about whether the above selection of music could be considered as art. He (LE2) stated his reasons as “ordinary”, lack of “expression” and that one song is not considered a “whole”: “They’re too commercial, and they don’t have that much meaning. Like if you look into the lyrics that they wrote, they don’t have a story behind... “.

5.2.10 Quality vs. Quantity

LE4, after the scheduled questions were asked, elaborated on the sound quality of the MP3s: “That is another problem that comes with MP3s ... size. Because many people go for 128 [kbps], generally, but having gone through music technology classes I would not like to listen to 128 all the time on my iPod or iPhone; I would just hear this definite difference... but I would rather have good quality music coming out and then change every now and then, rather than have 5000 songs on my iPhone, but they’re all really bad quality”.

5.3 Listening experiment interviews – Phase 2

In Chapters 2 and 4, I described the second phase of the listening experiment as an experience involving an album without its tangible characteristics. Participants

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40 “The person who wrote it, performed art through his emotions or experiences and now he transfers it to the listener and that is what art is to me as then I can associate with it. I see art as something that expresses how you feel”. (Original translation by author)
were asked detailed questions about this experience as compared with the previous one.

5.3.1 “Do you listen to albums (apart from today)?”

Those participants who responded positively, were asked what they liked about albums:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whole/order (as opposed to randomness)</th>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Discovery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.15:** “Do you listen to albums (apart from today)?” - Yes

LE2 felt that an album may be compared with a journey: “Some albums have a story to tell, from beginning to end. As in, ja [yes], they take you on a journey”. LE5 mentioned how an album can lead to discovery: “Dit hang eintlik vir my af van kunstenaar tot kunstenaar. Ek hou daarvan, want jy hoor een liedjie van ‘n persoon en dan like jy hom en dan wil ek meer hoor van die kunstenaar; en ‘n album is mos net van een kunstenaar”\(^{41}\). LE6 agrees: “Wel ja, soos, jy luister en jy sien en jy kan alles hoor wat die kunstenaar doen. En ek bedoel, as jy een

\(^{41}\) “For me it actually depends on the artist. I like it, as you hear one song from an artist and you like it and then you want to hear more from that artist. And an album is only of one artist”. (Original translation by author)
song van ‘n kunstenaar ken en jy hou van dit, sal jy altyd daarna uitsien om na die ander ook te luister”\textsuperscript{42}.

Those participants who responded negatively, were asked what they did not like about albums:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monotony</th>
<th>Taste</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{Table 5.16:} “Do you listen to albums (apart from today)?” - No

LE3 mentioned that she does not like all the songs usually found on an album.

5.3.2 “How much did you enjoy this music compared to last week’s listening experience (phase 1)?”

Those participants who agreed that they had enjoyed the experience of phase 2, were asked why they had enjoyed the music:

\textsuperscript{42} “Well, [on an album] you listen, see and hear everything an artist is capable of. If you know one song from an artist and like what you hear, you will always look forward to listening to the other songs”. (Original translation by author)
Table 5.17: “How much did you enjoy this music compared with last week’s listening experience (phase 1)”? - More

LE1 thinks that it is hard to compare the two experiences: “You can’t really compare it ‘cause it’s so different. I enjoyed listening to like one artist the whole way because it’s getting to know the band. I’ve never really heard a full album of theirs [Muse]. That’s really cool to like get to know them. With yesterday it was just like, you know, kind of like individual songs. There were a lot more songs here though that I didn’t know, that were like nice to discover, kind of”.

LE4 felt that the flow or order of the music helped him to relax, as opposed to the randomness of the previous experience. LE6 enjoyed the fact that the songs were not random, as with the previous experience.

LE3 mentioned that she had not enjoyed this phase more or less than the previous phase. Her suggestion for ways in which the listening experience could be more enjoyable could be categorised as relating to “taste”. I asked her what would make the experience more enjoyable and she responded as follows: “I think if maybe some of the songs weren’t there; only play specific songs. I would repeat so many songs from this album”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Discovery</th>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
<th>Mood/relax</th>
<th>Whole/order (as opposed to randomness)</th>
<th>Choice (of genre)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The participant who agreed that she did not enjoy the experience that much had reasons falling into the following categories: “monotony”, “taste” and lack of “expression”. LE5 did not think that the album was a very good one, as it was quite monotonous, as opposed to the variety of the previous experience. She felt that she was not able to identify with the songs from the album she had to listen to.

I expected participants to comment on the lack of “familiarity”, boredom (“monotony”), the MP3 “sound quality” or maybe that there was something missing from the experience.

5.3.3 “Were you ever bored?”

The following participants were asked why they were bored during this phase of the listening experience (positive responses):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monotony</th>
<th>Taste</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.18: “Were you ever bored?” - Yes (Phase 2)

I expected participants to comment on the duration of the listening experience (“monotony”), not listening in a social environment, or that they never listened to music in this environment (“primary activity”).

When I asked LE3 what was missing or wrong with the listening experience, her answer fell under the category of “taste”, as the songs were too slow for her
liking. I expected participants to comment on the missing CD cover, art work and liner notes, but no-one mentioned it as a reason for being bored in this study.

The participants who responded negatively were asked why:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Whole/order</th>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Variety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.19: “Were you ever bored?” - No (Phase 2)

I expected participants to comment on the good variety of music (“variety”). LE1 said the following: “… at the moment where you would have been bored, they pretty much changed the style of music, which is cool”. LE6 feels like the music had a flow: “…die liedjies bind jou. Dit is ‘n genre waarvan ek hou. Dit is nog steeds rustig. Dit is ontspannend” ⁴³.

5.3.4 “Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?”

Participants who responded positively were asked why they felt the need to skip tracks:

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⁴³ “The songs connect with you. It is a genre that I like. It was still laidback. It was relaxing”. (Original translation by author)
LE4 mentioned that he was glad that he didn’t skip the track he did not like, as it would have spoiled the continuity of the album (“whole”): “Track 8, yes. I was actually contemplating, am I allowed to stand up and skip the track, but then again I’m glad I didn’t, because the end of the song contextualises the beginning and it made sense now. I’d like to listen to it again, now knowing what the end is going to be like. It puts it into a different perspective. But yes, I wanted to skip tracks”.

LE3 mentioned in the very first question for this phase that she never listened to an album the whole way through, thus skipping songs, because she does not like all the songs in an album. LE2 said that if it was a different album, he would still have wanted to skip tracks (“monotony”).

Two participants were asked why they did not feel the need to skip tracks:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variety</th>
<th>Discovery</th>
<th>Whole</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.21: “Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?” - No

LE6 felt that skipping tracks would disturb the flow of the album she listened to.
5.3.5 “Would you consider what you heard today as art?”

The following participants elaborated on why they considered this listening experience “art”:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Expression</th>
<th>Songwriting as art</th>
<th>Musicianship as art</th>
<th>Whole</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
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<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.22: “Would you consider what you heard today as art?” - Yes (Phase 2)

LE4 explained what he considers art to be: “Firstly, because it is people making music, telling a story, and something that they are putting out there for other people to enjoy. They put their emotions out to put other people’s emotions out. When you are able to bring emotions out by using people’s senses, then that is art”.

Only LE3 did not consider the listening experience as art, and her answer falls under the categories of “ordinary” and “familiarity”: “It’s usual music. I just don’t think it is [art]”.

5.4 Listening experiment interviews – Phase 3

As opposed to the randomness of phase 1 and the lack of tangibility of phase 2, phase 3 provided a tangible listening experience in an album.
5.4.1 “From previous experience, have you ever noticed a difference between CD-quality audio and the compressed (MP3) audio?”

LE2, LE3 and LE5 all agreed that they had never heard a difference. LE2 said that he might hear one when listening under different circumstances. LE5 said that she would still not hear a difference even when listening under different circumstances.

LE1, LE4 and LE6 all agreed that they had heard a difference (LE6 being the only participant agreeing that MP3 sounds better) and that they would pay extra for better sound quality.

5.4.2. “How important is sound quality to you?”

All participants agreed that sound quality is important to them. LE1 felt that, when listening to music, sound quality is important in order to hear the details in the music: “When you’re listening to music, obviously sound quality is very important, ‘cause there’s a lot of background things that you don’t even notice that need to be heard”.

LE4 thought that sound quality is dependent on whether music is used as a “distraction” or as a “primary activity”: “Depending on where I am gonna listen to the music and what type of music it is, but if it’s good music I want good quality. So there it’s quite important”.

LE5 believed that bad sound quality could have a negative effect on one’s listening experience, thus affecting the “mood” of the listener: “Ek dink dis belangrik, want dit affekteer die hele atmosfeer, die hele ‘feeling’ van luister. As die klank swak is of as die CD krap, of as die klank nie goed is nie dan, dit sit jou
heeltemal af”. LE6 agreed that bad sound quality could take away some of the enjoyment from the listening experience.

5.4.3 “Do you know what DVD-A, Blu-Ray (audio) and SACDs are?”

LE1 and LE3 did not know what these were and I did not elaborate on this answer.

LE2, LE4, LE5 and LE6 did know what some of them were and they were asked whether they would ever consider buying them if they owned a disc player that was able to play multiple formats (CDs and all of the above). LE 4 stated superior “sound quality” as a reason he would, and LE2 mentioned “improvement” as a reason for upgrading to a DVD-A/SACD/Blu-Ray disc player. LE2 thus perceived better sound quality as an upgrade.

5.4.4 “Do you think that the album format is relevant in the digital age?”

Those who responded positively were asked why they thought that the album is still relevant in the digital age:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whole</th>
<th>Discovery</th>
<th>Expression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
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<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.23: “Do you think that the album format is relevant in the digital age?” - Yes

“...I think it is important as it affects the whole atmosphere, the whole feeling of listening. If the sound is bad or if the CD is scratched or if the sound is not good, then it totally puts you off”.

(Original translation by author)
LE1 mentioned the tradition of collecting songs recorded in the same time period as a means of discovery: “I don’t think that the digital age should have an effect on something like that. I mean, artists have always been collecting like a series of songs together and releasing it, that kind of thing. I don’t see how the digital age should change that. And as I have said before, it gives the artist the opportunity to show new songs that might not come on circuit, songs that like a particular one, like that’s not really cool, but meanwhile you might like the song”.

LE2 mentions that artists need a larger musical canvas to express themselves thoroughly: “… people normally have something to say within their album, and they can’t just say it within one track, so they have, you know, a whole range”.

LE4 explained why it is important, in some cases, to hear a song in the context of its album: “Can I use Muse as an example? … If I had to take one of the songs and listen to it, it’s nice good music, cool. I’d take another song, listen to it, cool, but if you listen to all of them, there’s a story to tell; there’s a certain picture that is being painted and that just forms part of the art”. He compared listening to singles to listening to one movement from Mozart’s Requiem or watching one episode of a television series.

Those who felt that the album was no longer relevant, were also asked why:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Randomness</th>
<th>Variety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.24: “Do you think that the album format is relevant in the digital age?” - No

LE3 saw albums as synonymous with the CD, because when I asked her whether downloadable albums were still relevant in the digital age, she responded positively, stating that they are cheaper and more accessible than
CDs. LE6 mentioned that websites offer music for free, are cheap and are very accessible: “Weinig mense dink ek wil deesdae nog ‘n album koop. Hulle soek net spesifieke liedjies”\textsuperscript{45}.

5.4.5 “Compared to phase 2 of the listening experience, how much did you enjoy the third phase?”

Those who enjoyed it more, were asked why:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Tangibility</th>
<th>Discovery</th>
<th>Variety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
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<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.25: “Compared with phase 2 of the listening experience, how much did you enjoy the third phase?” - More

LE3 and LE6 enjoyed this phase most of all. LE5 enjoyed the first phase more for its element of surprise. I expected participants to elaborate on the cover art and tangibility of the last listening experience as a reason for enjoying it more, but none of them did.

LE2 did not enjoy this phase as much as he did the others. He enjoyed the first phase most of all for its “variety”. This phase was too “monotonous” and his “taste” had an effect on this choice.

LE1 did not feel that there was much of a difference between the second and third phases. Her “taste” in music had had an impact on this.

\textsuperscript{45} “Very few people, I think, want to still buy an album nowadays. They all look for specific songs”. (Original translation by author)
LE4 explained why he enjoyed the experience of the third phase most of all: “I actually looked at the album art and the words more and sometimes when I think I heard something on the CD, like I don’t know what words were really being sung, I thought I heard something, then I would actually open up and go look again: did I hear correctly. I can see the words in front of me; I can look at the album art. I guess if I had the album, the actual little booklet of Viva la Vida I would be able to understand the music and the story more, rather than just listening and looking at the roof, or the wall or something”.

LE3, LE4, LE5 and LE6 kept the album art in mind while listening to the album of the third phase. LE3 and LE4 mentioned that the art had helped them to understand the album as a “whole”. LE1 and LE2 admitted to not keeping the album art in mind. All participants browsed through the CD booklet, read the lyrics (if applicable), read the liner notes and had a look at the track list.

5.4.6 “Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?”

Those who responded positively to this question were asked why:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monotony</th>
<th>Taste</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 5.26:** “Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?” - Yes (Phase 3)

LE4 mentioned “discovery” and the album as a “whole” for being good reasons not to skip tracks: “The one track I didn’t quite enjoy, but I didn’t want to skip it because it formed part of this art, this form of art, this, how can I put it? Work of art? So I guess now I did want to skip a track”.

125
LE2 mentioned that if it had been a different album, he would still have wanted to skip tracks (“taste” and “monotony”).

Those participants who responded negatively to this question were asked why:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Discovery</th>
<th>Expression</th>
<th>Taste</th>
<th>Whole</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>LE5</td>
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<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.27: “Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?” - No (Phase 3)

LE1 felt that skipping a track could possibly be seen as an insult by certain artists: “You just want to hear the song, kind of thing. Maybe it’s also insulting to the artist to skip a track, ‘cause obviously it was important to them, so you are like, let me see why it was important to them, kind of thing”. LE5 and LE6 mentioned that all the songs had had a musical connection, and therefore they had not felt the need to skip a track.

5.4.7 “Would you consider what you heard today as art?”

Those who responded positively were asked why:
Table 5.28: “Would you consider what you heard today as art?” - Yes (Phase 3)

LE4 mentioned how the album art adds to the experience of listening to an album: “Well, the music, I enjoyed it. The interpretation is telling me a story. More than that it’s creating, although this is music, a form of art, it is actually creating a visual form of art in your mind. It’s like painting a picture in front of you, so it’s bringing more than one form of art together, although it is still only one it’s bringing more than one in. And then of course you have the album art, which kind of gives it away”.

LE3, once again, had not considered the third phase’s listening experience as art, thus categorising it as “familiarity”: “I think it’s because I am somewhat used to the music”.

5.4.8 “Was this a new experience for you?”

Of the two participants (LE3 and LE6) who responded positively to the question, only one (LE6) mentioned her reason. She said that it was nice to discover the liner notes and lyrics.

Four participants responded negatively to the question and they were asked why:
LE2 did not provide a reason. LE4 mentioned that, even though he often listened to music as a primary activity, he rarely listened to an album without ever skipping tracks: “I have done it before, so it’s not totally new, but very rarely have I listened to a whole album without stopping once, sat and listened and looked and listened. I would usually stop at a track, or if I don’t like one, skip it or something like that”. LE5 said that she usually browsed through the CD booklet.

5.4.9 “How do you normally listen to music?”

I did not ask this question to LE5. The remaining participants stated their normal listening habits as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distraction</th>
<th>Primary Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE1</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE4</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LE6</td>
<td>*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.30: “How do you normally listen to music?”
5.4.10 “If you had this CD packaging [from phase 2] with you at the last experience, would you have enjoyed it more or would it have changed your experience?”

Most participants speculate that the CD packaging would have changed their experience of phase 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Convenience</th>
<th>Expression</th>
<th>Discovery</th>
<th>Whole</th>
<th>Enjoyment</th>
<th>Tangibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LE2</td>
<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>LE3</td>
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<td>LE4</td>
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Table 5.31: “If you had this CD packaging [from phase 2] with you at the last experience, would you have enjoyed it more or would it have changed your experience?” - Yes

LE2 felt that the album cover made it more convenient to read the lyrics: “Normally like, if I hear a song I like, I like to go research the lyrics and find out their meaning, so this one would be more simple, ‘cause I wouldn’t have to go onto the Internet. ‘cause most of the Jack Johnson songs I normally like to go find the meaning behind the songs”.

LE3 felt that the album packaging helped the listener to discover the track names: “Because I would know what’s the name of each song. ‘cause then I would listen to the songs and know what the names were. And maybe I’d like to recall, maybe I like that song, but I don’t know what it’s called”.

For LE4, the album cover adds a new dimension to the listening experience: “Well, you can get your own interpretation of the music and then also the band’s
interpretation, which I am hoping that the band has some influence in what goes onto the album artwork, people that wrote the music. But then it adds a new dimension to the meaning of the songs… it would be interesting to listen to the songs again and see where this fits in… it would be interesting to listen to it again and now have a new perspective on it. It adds something different”.

LE5 admits the album cover could help the listener to understand what the artist is trying to say: “… met gister s’n spesifiek kon ek nie, ek kon nie regtig hoor waaroor die musiek gaan nie. So as ek die “album cover” by my gehad het en die boekie, dan kon ek meer hoor waaroor die album gaan…. ’n Mens kan nogal baie aflei deur ‘n cover, waaroor die album gaan”\textsuperscript{46}.

LE6 admitted that the tangibility of the album in CD format might have made the experience more enjoyable.

LE 1 is the only participant from this study who felt that the CD packaging would not have changed her experience of phase 2. She did not say why.

5.4.11 “People are basically saying that the album is dying out or will become extinct. Do you think we should be worried, excited or not really bothered?”

This question was formulated after LE1 had finished her 3-phase cycle. I therefore could not ask her this question. No participant in this study mentioned that there was a reason to be excited. LE4, however, did mention that new experiences could come from the death of the album (“improvement”). Two participants felt that we should be worried and stated their reasons as follows:

\textsuperscript{46} “Specifically regarding yesterday’s one, I could not really hear what the music was about. So if I had the album cover with me as well as the booklet, then I would be able to hear what the album is about…One can assume a lot from looking at the cover, what the music is about”. (Original translation by author)
Table 5.32: “People are basically saying that the album is dying out or will become extinct. Do you think we should be worried, excited or not really bothered?” - Worried

LE5 mentioned how the death of the album would not benefit the listener: “Want as albums uitgaan, soos dit begin uit te sterf, dan gaan kunstenaars ook basically [uitsterf], want hulle stel hulself bekend deur hulle album, nie net deur die een spesifieke liedjie wat miskien dit groot maak nie. … een liedjie wat dit bekend maak, dis hoekom jy die album koop: om meer te hoor. So as die album besig is om ‘extinct’ te raak, dan beteken dit dat artists net ‘one hit wonder’ gaan hê. En dan gaan daar minder mense ook in die bedryf ingaan, kunstenaars. En op die ou einde lei [dit] tot min mense wat musiek sing, en dis nie goed nie. Want dan word ons ‘variety’ kleiner, musiek verskeidenheid”47.

LE6 refers to illegal downloads when she mentions the convenience and accessibility of music on the Internet.

Three participants felt that we should not be worried too much and stated their reasons as follows:

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47 “Because if albums disappear, like they die out, then artist will basically die out as well, because they introduce themselves through their album and not through one specific song that makes it big … that is why you buy the album, to hear more. So if the album is going extinct then it means that artists will only have one hit wonders. And then fewer people will go into the business of making music. That will lead to fewer people that sing and that is not good, because then our variety decreases”. (Original translation by author)
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**Table 5.33:** “People are basically saying that the album is dying out or will become extinct. Do you think we should be worried, excited or not really bothered?” - Not worried

LE2 mentioned that consumers should not be worried, as CDs would still be available, even if they were not the main focus of the music industry: “… generally you can still get vinyl’s (if you want vinyl’s) and people were worried that those were going extinct…. I think it’s more wise though to go digital than having an album [CD]. They can get messed up pretty easy”.

According to LE4, even though we should not be worried, he felt that it would be very unfortunate if the album would disappear: “… but I would hate to see it disappear. It shouldn’t [disappear]. We should always have that… If we were excited about it, it would be quite sad, because that’s getting excited for something that is not necessarily good”.

**5.4.12 “Do you listen to classical music?”**

LE3 and LE5 provided a negative answer to this question, thus concluding the interview for phase 3.
5.4.13 “Would you consider buying classical music as separate downloads (in the case of a multi-movement work, only buying the first movement for example)?”

The remaining participants were asked whether they would consider buying classical music as separate downloads (in the case of a multi-movement work, only buying the first movement for example). LE1, LE2, LE4 and LE6 all said no, all providing reasons that might be categorised under “whole”. I expected responses stating that the movements should not be separated from one another as they form a coherent whole and make more sense as an entity, and the listener might be missing out on, for example, Beethoven’s emotional journey if you only listen to the last movement, as the listener would then have no idea of how he [Beethoven] got to that point in the work.

For LE1, it would be like buying half of a song. LE2 felt that a large-scale work is like a journey. He especially mentioned the music of Beethoven. LE4 felt that the composer needed a larger scale work to express himself fully: “… you’re never gonna get the full picture of what the composer is saying, if you just listen to one, like ‘Jupiter’ or ‘Mars’, go listen to ‘The Planets’”.

To LE6 the work needed to be experienced in full for it to make sense: “Dit sal nie regtig sin maak nie. Ek bedoel, in ‘n simfonie, die stukke volg op [mekaar]. Dis ‘n reeks. Jy kan nie eintlik [na] een gedeelte luister en ‘n ander gedeelte mis nie. Ek sal sê hulle hou almal verband met mekaar”.

48 “It wouldn’t really make sense. I mean, in a symphony, the pieces follow one another. It’s a series. You can’t really listen to one part and not the other. I would say that they are all related to one another”. (Original translation by author)
5.4.14 “Would the choice of a classical work affect your choice when downloading tracks separately or as an entity?”

Participants were then asked whether the choice of classical work would affect their initial choice to download tracks separately or completely, as an entity. LE1 and LE6 responded positively, but only LE6 provided a reason that could be categorised as “taste”: “Ja, ek sal sê dit kan dalk. As ek dalk van een beweging hou, maar ek hou dalk nie van [‘n] ander een nie, dan sal ek dit oorweeg om dit dan apart te download.” LE2 could not provide me with an answer and LE4 responded negatively, providing a reason that could be categorised as “whole”.

LE4 compared the movements of a large-scale musical work to snippets of a visual artwork: “… if it is “Für Elise”, for instance, I would download that on its own. But if it’s ‘Dies irae’ from Mozart’s ‘Requiem’, I would not want to download that separately, because that’s pretty much pointless. You’re having one little snippet of a big piece of art. It’s like looking at Mona Lisa’s eyes and nothing else, and blocking out the rest. Well, ok. But if it’s meant to be alone then I wouldn’t mind that much”.

5.4.15 “Do you consider single-movement compositions (e.g. Ravel – Rhapsody for violin; Kreisler showpiece; Chopin Preludes, Mazurkas, Polonaises) of equal importance when compared with large-scale compositions?”

Participants were then asked whether they would consider single-movement compositions (e.g. Ravel – Rhapsody for violin; Kreisler showpiece; Chopin Preludes, Mazurkas, Polonaises) equally important as large-scale compositions. LE1, LE4 and LE6 responded positively, but only LE6 provided a detailed answer that could be categorised as “enjoyment/appreciation”: “Ek dink jy kan elkeen, 49

49 “Yes, I believe it could. If I happen to like one movement, but I don’t like the other one, then I would maybe consider downloading it separately”. (Original translation by author)
alhoewel hulle verskillend is, jy kan elkeen waardeer vir wat dit is. Jy probeer dit in die lig sien as, ok dit is ‘n simfonie, dit het verskillende bewegings, ek waardeer dit so[os] [dit] is. Dit is ‘n Mazurka of iets. Dit het net een beweging. Ek waardeer dit nog steeds vir hoe dit is\footnote{\textit{I think that you could, even though they are different, appreciate each one for what it is. You attempt to see it in the light. It is a symphony. It has multiple movements. I appreciate it as it is. It is a Mazurka or something. It consists of one movement. I still appreciate it for what it is". (Original translation by author)}}.

LE1 thinks that it is unfair to ask whether one work is more important than another, based on its complexity: “…. you can’t really say that something is more important than the other, kind of thing. It doesn’t matter whether it’s a large scale or small scale”.

LE4 felt that every level of complexity in music has its place: “…there is a need for that, I mean. Not all composers can sit and write 20 movement symphonies or, ok. Well, you know what I’m saying”.

LE2 responded negatively and his answer could be categorised as “quantity”: “Ja, more things better than one…”.

5.4.16 “Do you listen to operatic music?”

For the following question, I asked participants whether they listened to operatic music. Only LE2 responded negatively, therefore concluding his interview. LE1, LE4 and LE6 were asked whether they would prefer to listen to the entire opera or selected arias, duets, overtures etc. LE1 believed that one should listen to the entire opera; her reason was categorised as “whole”. LE4 and LE6 preferred selected pieces from operas, their reasons being categorised as “taste”. LE6’s reason could also be categorised as “enjoyment/appreciation”.

\footnote{\textit{I think that you could, even though they are different, appreciate each one for what it is. You attempt to see it in the light. It is a symphony. It has multiple movements. I appreciate it as it is. It is a Mazurka or something. It consists of one movement. I still appreciate it for what it is". (Original translation by author)}}
LE5 mentioned to me, while we were having an informal conversation that she had worked in music retailing before. I decided to ask her a few extra questions. I first had to ask her when she had worked in music retailing, and she stated her answer as 2007 and 2008. I asked her whether she thought that people were still purchasing albums. She responded positively stating her reasons as gifts (“tangibility”) and as collections (“ownership”). I concluded her interview by asking her whether she thought that compilation albums have sold more, less or with no difference during the last five years.

She replied that compilation albums were selling more, as they provided a variety of songs where the listener liked most of them. A compilation album also removed the risk factor, as the listener knew what to expect as compared with a single-artist album.

5.5 Focus group

The focus group was asked to read a short article (Appendix D) named “Gartner Says 2008 Should Be Last Christmas for Retail CDs” (Gartner 2008). Set questions were asked by the researcher, and the participants were free to elaborate on each topic. All answers, once transcribed, were categorised, as with the listening experiments.

The kind of data I wanted to gather were those concerned with how people valued the album experience – as well as its extra-musical features. I asked whether they usually tended to skip tracks on an album, or whether they preferred to listen to it as an entity. In many cases, the answer depended on the album choices of the listener. I also focused on the role of the iPod and our fast-paced lives in popularising the compressed audio format. I did this by asking people why they had bought an iPod or similar portable media device.
The following categories were generated to organise the motivations provided by the participants, after the focus group transcript had been analysed:

- **Business**: This refers to the consequences of a business decision, as opposed to an artistic one;
- **Clutter/space**: This refers to the space taken up by audio files and media on a hard-drive/device/shelf;
- **Compatibility (of media)**: DVD-A and SACD, for example, are not compatible formats;
- **Exclusivity (of the product)**: An exclusive product might be considered rare and more valuable than an ordinary one;
- **Expertise (of the listener)**: An experienced listener or person with a trained ear might hear certain sonic differences between various audio formats;
- **Ephemeral**: This refers to music that is temporary, and will not stand the test of time, which can, therefore, be deleted without trouble;
- **Retail space**: This refers to where music is sold (concerts, online, shop);
- **Risk**: This refers to listeners who risk not getting value for their money when purchasing something unfamiliar or never heard before; and
- **Timeless (permanence)**: This refers to music that will stand the test of time.

5.5.1 “What did you guys think of the article?”

FG6 agreed with the slant of the article, stating her reasons as “exclusivity” and “accessibility”: “If I agree with it, it’s like burn-on-demand … They’re not saying they’re going to apply it to the whole industry; they are just saying you must not spend that much money on album distribution in shops. Like making it more like a thing that you go to gigs to buy, like you know people go and then you buy the original merchandise which is cool. A lot of people don’t ever go to buy an album. Like most of the music I listen to you can’t buy in any shops. Like, you have to go and download it. So if you go to a concert of a band that you like and you buy it there”.

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FG2 did not agree, stating his reasons as “whole”, “expertise”, “choice” and “quality”: “So immediately if it’s going all digital, it will be a lot less, and I think the artist will lose out if he is trying to put across a message; so I don’t always agree with it, that it should go digital… It’s nice to have the choice … Then there’s also the quality thing; it’s not that it’s going from like, just on to digital, but the quality of the actual song, because it’s compressed and that kind of thing, it loses quality, but then I mean, who’s actually listening to it? So, do they notice? I don’t think so, that the lame ear actually notices that.”

When FG6 mentioned to FG2 that it is possible to download albums, FG2 said the following: “But you don’t ever do that … You’ll buy the hit of the CD”.

FG1 mentioned “sound quality”: “It’s mostly about the quality of the recordings. CD quality is almost perfect, whereas if you compare it to downloaded music, it takes a very big hit. Like if you look at classical music for example, in a lot of classical music you can distinctly hear the drop in quality… ”.

FG7’s reasoning can be categorised as “ownership”, “sound quality”, “expertise” and “business”. He said the following about CDs sold at concerts: “Like for keeps sake.” About sound quality, choice, expertise and business, FG7 said the following: “I heard on the ‘net that vinyl has better sound quality. You hear certain things that you can’t pick up… I think that lots of consumers aren’t music professionals. They’re just consumers… It’s nice that people actually have that opportunity to choose. Like if you like the band and you’d buy the whole album, if you like the band and you buy all their albums, even the ones that you didn’t find that great”. He also mentioned that the industry would make decisions based on business issues.
5.5.2 “What about MP3 albums? As in, you can buy Muse’s *The Resistance*, you can buy the whole album but in MP3 format...Would you think that that’s the same as buying a CD?”

FG1 said the following about the “tangibility”, “exclusivity”, “ownership” and “choice” relating to CDs: “You can also do the same with a CD though. Because then if you purchase on demand, and they have you buy from a supplier and they send it to you, you still got the tangible product. So you can still say that ‘I’m the collecting fan boy, I’ve got it.’ And if you want the quality, you’ve still got it. If you’re like a casual listener you’re not really into this ... the option of being able to download is always good, because it gives you a choice”.

For FG7, the business aspect is very important: “I think it’s like the record companies, because companies don’t really care about the quality: they want money”.

FG6 felt that we should not be too worried about the death of the album, as there will always be albums available (“accessibility”), the music industry will just not keep their main focus on it. The level of expertise of the listener also has an effect on whether an MP3 album and CD album will be the same to the listener. FG6 felt that for the general consumer, there would be no difference. FG6 and FG7 mention an important aspect of sound quality: good or bad sound quality would be more noticeable when music is used as a “primary activity”, rather than as a “distraction”.

FG3 felt that, even though the tangibility of the product is appealing, convenience still had the upper hand: “I would consider my ear as a lame ear. I am not terribly musical. And if I do buy CDs, because I do enjoy like getting the lyrics and it comes in a nice parcel. But generally what usually happens, after the first week, I’ve ripped the music onto my computer and I never listen to the original CD
again... ”. In his opinion, he would not notice the difference in sound quality, because he does not have an expert ear (“expertise”).

When “sound quality” and obsolete media are mentioned together, vinyl always seems to become an item of discussion. FG6 and FG7 both emphasised that vinyl is still “accessible”. FG7 and FG5 both felt that vinyl would not die out, as it is considered to be a collector’s item. Once again FG7 mentions the superior sound quality of vinyl and that you cannot record that sound quality on CD.

5.5.3 “What do you like about albums?”

Three participants stated reasons that fall into the following categories:

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<th></th>
<th>Tangibility</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Support for artists</th>
<th>Timeless</th>
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<td>FG2</td>
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Table 5.34: “What do you like about albums?”

FG2 believed that albums are a way of showing your appreciation to the artist. He believes that a singles culture will stop people from buying albums, even if there are downloadable albums, as the artist actually loses money. If you only like the one song from the artist, that is the song you would buy, not the album. FG6 believes that the artist can make their money through concerts, as many already do.

FG5 emphasised that even an album can be ephemeral. FG6 finds an album’s tangible nature and sense of ownership attractive.
5.5.4 “What don’t you like about albums?”

Five participants stated reasons that fall into the following categories:

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<th>Clutter/space</th>
<th>Reliability</th>
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<td>FG7</td>
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Table 5.35: “What don’t you like about albums?”

Albums (in CD format) are physically big and they take up space, as mentioned by FG6 and FG7. As seen in the above table, all of FG2, FG5, FG6 and FG7 find the CD’s tendencies to scratch and skip parts of the song undesirable. This, therefore, makes the CD somewhat unreliable. As an answer to a later question, FG3 mentioned that CDs tend to clutter, and take up space.

5.5.5 “What do you like about downloadable singles?”

Six participants stated reasons that fall into the following categories: 
Table 5.36: “What do you like about downloadable singles?”

FG7’s answer to the above question was: “They’re single!” This thus enables the listener to choose songs within his or her taste. FG6 mentioned that downloadable singles are very convenient, as they can be downloaded, and only the song you like, instead of the whole album (“taste”), can be downloaded. Once you become tired of that one single, it is very easy to delete it, thus making it ephemeral. FG5 mentions that downloadable singles are “instant gratification”, thus being convenient and accessible. FG6 felt that in CD stores, she rarely finds what she is actually looking for. FG1 agreed with FG6 on this score.
Music in a CD store is thus less accessible than it would be on the Internet. It also takes time to look through all the CDs in a CD store to find the one you are looking for. The downloadable single thus saves you time.

FG6 and FG7 mentioned that it’s easier to find rare collections online than in CD stores, thus making these collections “exclusive”. The real question, however, would be whether a commodity can be exclusive and accessible at the same time.

At the end of the focus group interview, FG3 mentioned that the downloadable single has made it easier to rediscover songs that you used to like, thus creating a “nostalgia kind of experience”. Here, FG6 also agreed, as seen later in the focus group meeting.

FG2 mentioned, for a previous question, that the downloadable single allows the listener to store a lot of music on one device (“quantity” and “convenience”). The downloadable single also allows for greater “portability”.

FG3, in an answer to a later question, mentioned the inconvenience of CDs: “If you want to listen to this song and now you only have CDs, you’re gonna have to like go find, ok there’s the artist, there’s the album, ok. Put it in. Skip, skip, skip, as you said. There you go. Ah now I want to listen to this song.” The downloadable singles are thus more accessible and convenient.

5.5.6 “What don’t you like about downloadable singles?”

Five participants stated reasons that fall into the following categories:
Table 5.37: “What don’t you like about downloadable singles?”

FG4’s answer to the above question was: “It’s not the same quality as the original.” FG6 agreed that sound quality might be a bigger concern when listening to classical music: “Classical music is very intense and there’s so many different things and I’m sure some of that goes lost like a bell or something…”.

FG2 feels that its “accessibility” makes the listener appreciate it less (“enjoyment”): “… it doesn’t really mean anything, as if you go buy the CD, it’s like I’ve got the CD. I’ve paid for it”.

FG5 felt that MP3s can easily get lost between the rest of your music.

5.5.7 “What does the phrase ‘album experience’ mean to you personally?”

Six participants stated reasons that fall into the following categories:
Table 5.38: “What does the phrase ‘album experience’ mean to you personally?”

FG6 was the first participant to voice her opinion: “For me it’s the whole, like you know, as we were saying, you go and you know what you want, and you know you’re gonna get it. And then you have it in your hands and you go home and you like [excited noises] open it.” She used the physical copy of Radiohead’s In Rainbows album as an example of a great tangible album, where the consumer gets to assemble his/her own CD cover with the stickers provided.

For FG3, the album experience is more about the mood set by the album and listening through an album the whole way through, rather than its tangible characteristics.

FG7 felt that an album experience is a way of experiencing the artistic expression of the musicians. FG5 said the following: “… music takes you directly into the mindset of the composer. And I think that it’s very true, because if you like listen to a CD and the progression of it and like the way the songs are ordered or whatever, it affects your mood and I think that’s a very powerful thing. Whereas if you just take like a single song, maybe I want to listen to that now whatever, it
won’t have such a big impact on your mood, or on how you’re gonna spend the rest of your day maybe”.

An album, as an ordered collection of songs, can thus affect the mood of the listener as the artists get the opportunity to express themselves through their music. FG2 said the following: “I like to buy live albums as well, and then you can get a general feel of the message or something like throughout the whole thing … I think you can throw that away and just by downloading one song”. This closely relates to FG6’s response to the question: “… one song doesn’t necessarily have the whole context of the band captured in that one song”.

FG1 mentioned that the risk factor of purchasing an album could create excitement. FG1 felt strongly about the tangible characteristics of the album in the album experience: “And then also like an album experience might be, that being a tangible object, you’ve got some sort of memory attached to it, so it’s just like a photo… And it is always going to be yours … It is your little piece of the artist. It’s like mine. And then even though there might be songs that you don’t like, you might just want to listen to one song, there’s the other ones there, it gives you that feel of the flavours of the artist as well, which you wouldn’t always find, especially if you download it.”

Purchasing an album thus helps the listener to discover the artist.

5.5.8 “How important are the tangible characteristics of an album to you?”

FG6 bought the physical CD of an album she already owned as a downloadable album because she supports that specific band and it was exclusive, as it was the band’s debut album and it took her months to find. FG2 however does not believe that the need to support a specific artist is enough to support the CD format.
At the end of the focus group interview, FG3 and FG7 discussed the possibility of downloading album art and liner notes as either thumbnails (Winamp, CoverFlow) or a printable PDF file. FG3 has mentioned before that the tangible characteristics of the album, for him, do not form part of the album experience.

5.5.9 “I like to compare a legally downloaded MP3 to a CD, because you would pay for both. I mean, the illegal one has that unfair advantage and if you would pay for both, which one would you buy?”

FG2, FG6 and FG7 mentioned that they would rather buy a CD, even if the downloadable MP3 (or collection of MP3s) would be cheaper. FG6 did mention that her choice would depend on her “taste”: “It depends on the CD.” FG7 mentioned the “ownership” of a CD as a likeable quality: “Regardless of the price, I would obviously choose the CD because … it’s a nice thing to have”.

FG1 felt that a physically copied CD is intangible: “With a copied CD it’s this blank white thing. You’re like, that’s not the original album. You lose that tangibility of it”.

5.5.10 “Why did you buy an iPod or a portable music device, if you have one of course? Let’s start with an iPod …Who has an iPod?” … And other portable music devices, or let’s say a cell-phone that can play MP3s?

FG7 felt that a portable music device is great at distracting the listener from the noise of the outside world. He does mention that the sound quality of a cell-phone is very bad, thus emphasising that a cell-phone as a portable music player cannot be compared with portable devices designed to play music as their primary function.
FG2 and FG6 mentioned that one of the reasons why they bought a portable music device was for the space, thus allowing the listener to add a great number of songs on the device (“quantity”).

5.5.11 “Is there a reason, for those who did buy the Apple iPod, is there a reason why you specifically bought the iPod vs. another portable device? … What about the way it looks?”

FG2 and FG7 both agreed that the Apple iPod’s design is a factor in choosing which portable player to buy. FG6 mentioned that iTunes provide a convenient method to access music online.

5.5.12 “Do you think there are positive implications regarding the ‘death of the album’?”

The following participants agreed that there could be possible implications, but not for complete extinction:

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<th></th>
<th>Clutter</th>
<th>Retail Space</th>
<th>Exclusivity</th>
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<tr>
<td>FG6</td>
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<td>FG7</td>
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Table 5.39: “Do you think there are positive implications to the ‘death of the album’?” - Yes

FG6 explained how the disappearance of the CD could bring about a change in retail space for the CD: “If they limit the distribution of physical CDs to concerts or whatever or to orders from one station then that would be awesome”. CDs could then become more exclusive, or rare, similar to the vinyl record, according to FG7. Not only do CDs gather dust, says FG7, they are also bad for the environment: “I think it won’t be complete extinction. You’re also making,
lessening your carbon print. CDs are plastic and paper... Not only that, it’s the trucks that take [it]”. Both FG6 and FG7 agree that “complete and utter extinction” will not have any positive implications.

For FG1 the biggest concern is “sound quality”: “You can’t compare CD to MP3”.

5.5.13 “Bandwidth is getting wider. Do you think people will download let’s say WAV files as well, which are basically CDs?”

FG7 agreed that people would download higher quality music as long as it would not take too long to download and the consumer had more than enough hard-drive space. FG6 also agreed that, as long as they did not take very long to download, people would download uncompressed PCM WAV files.

5.5.14 “Do you think that Blu-Ray audio, DVD-Audio and SACD could possibly save the CD?”

If there is a market for these media, FG5, FG6 and FG7 all agreed that these technologies could save the physical format. FG6 said the following: “You need to change the mindset of the consumer”. LE4 (from the listening experiments) interrupted the conversation on these media and mentioned the compatibility issue, which is related to the business aspect.

5.5.15 “Are there negative implications to the death of the album?”

The following participants were asked why they thought there were negative implications to the death of the album:
FG1 touched on the various negative implications of the death of the album: “It’s the end of a genre. End of a part of humanity. It’s just, it’s different because … there’s always been this awesome tangible thing, like this is my CD and it’s my property and it’s my way of supporting. It’s like a tangible contribution towards the artist … If everything turns digital then it’s just a download fest”. Downloadable music thus lacks a sense of ownership and tangibility, creating an ephemeral commodity that concerns itself with quantity.

FG6 said the following: “… the CD is like your little … your piece of an experience, of a memory … Because it went from vinyl which was a tangible thing, to CD, which is still [tangible]. And if that goes away then you kinda have nothing to hold on to”. FG2 mentioned the tangibility and ownership of CD as reasons for not getting rid of a physical product: “It’s not anything to do with the actual music I think. I think it’s just about having a CD”.

### 5.5.16 “Is the album worth saving?”

FG1, FG3, FG5 and FG6 all agreed that the album is worth saving. FG7 said the following on how we should move on with the times and not be afraid of change: “I’m sorry. I’m a realist. I believe that everything is going to go digital. Everything
has its place. Everything has and everything will. Like a preference”. He thus emphasised that CDs might have a place, but they would not be the main commodity.

FG6 felt that the album format allowed the artists to fully express themselves through their music: “But I also think like the artists expressing themselves, like if you look at the album covers and the whole product, a lot of thought goes into that and the musicians get together with artists and designers, you know, all to put into this product to... This represents who they are. Like, that is the message, so you don’t, if you don’t see that, then you just hear it and it’s about the music, sure, but it’s not a full expression, a complete expression of the musician”.

FG1 believed that choice would be an important factor in the future of the album: “I don’t think CDs should be completely extinguished, like the end of them all. I think it’s just, technology can deeply supplement music, and it’s a good way of sharing it and expressing it. At the same time it shouldn’t be like: here’s technology or here’s CDs. They should, like, basically combined ... on the website they can say ‘I’ll purchase the CD’ and then, well maybe give them the electronic version, but then also ship them like the physical tangible CD. So they get the memento. At the same time, they get access to it. So it’s their choice whether, which one they want. But don’t make them, force, you have to buy the CD or you have to download the album. Because there’s always gonna be advocates on both sides. But the really nice way is to supplement each other”.

5.5.17 “In your music collection, what is more important: quality or quantity?”

FG2 and FG7 felt strongly about the quality of the music in their collections.

For FG6, the ownership and support for the artist was more important in a music collection than quality and/or quantity: “If I could, if CDs were exactly the same
quality as the MP3s, I would still go for the CD. Not because of the quality necessarily, but because you know, you’re kind of supporting your band and that’s like… I don’t know. It’s a personal thing. It’s like human hoarding syndrome”.

FG1 felt that too much work (“labour”) and time had gone into improving the sound quality of recorded music: “You spend so many years, not us but like humanity, towards getting such good quality music out and such high quality recordings and it feels with digital music that the quality just takes this massive drop. So it’s like all this work. So it drops from quality suddenly just shifts its entire focus based on commercial value to quantity”.

FG7 emphasised that it is possible to download quality nowadays and with more hard-drive space it has become possible now to have both the quality and the quantity: “Do you know what might actually be an answer to that, is that because your bandwidth is getting faster, you can download quicker … So maybe the speed of your downloads and the fact that hard-drives have kept the same size but can take so much more, maybe that’s where your answer comes, because my friend just started downloading, legally, Blu-Ray movies, like because his hard-drive is so massive and he has got one of those, MWEB gave out these 10 MB lines. So you’re downloading like, it’s madness really. It’s like click 3, 2, 1, album’s there… He can, you know, get that …. And once it becomes more accessible to download faster and store it, that’s where the quality … I should hope so. I mean I could… ”.

5.5.18 “Are MP3s collectable?”

FG3, FG4, FG6, and FG7 all felt that it was possible to be a collector of MP3s. To FG7 collecting music is about “quantity” and “enjoyment” or “appreciation”.
Once the data had been transcribed, studied, organised and finally analysed, the results were compared with the literature study.

5.6 Summary

While Chapter 4 described the data-collection process, as well as the participant-selection process, this chapter has presented the analysed data in an organised manner separate from the literature reviewed in Chapter 3.

In the listening experiments, sound quality did not affect how much the participants enjoyed the music of the first phase. The musical taste of the listener had a significant effect on the participant’s enjoyment of the listening experience.

Participants made it very clear how they would define music as art. Participants enjoyed albums for the following reasons:

- They allowed the listener to discover new music by the artist;
- The songs on an album create a coherent whole;
- They create a sense of ownership;
- They help the listener to support the artists; and
- They are more permanent and tangible than digital downloadable tracks.

Participants felt that some albums are monotonous. Participants admitted that they would be willing to pay more money for higher quality audio. The participants felt that sound quality is important to them, but that it is more important when listening to music as a primary activity.

Participants felt that the tangibility of the third listening phase had a significant effect on the listening experience, as it helped them discover more about the album in question; it formed part of the album’s coherent whole and created a larger platform for artistic expression. Some participants felt that albums would always be accessible. The participants who admitted listening to classical music
felt that they would not want to download separate movements of a large-scale musical work, if they appreciated the work in question.

The focus group discussion concerned itself with the changing retail space of music. Participants agreed that downloadable music is convenient, quick to find, accessible and it is possible to have many. Downloadable tracks are easy to delete, and it is easy to find rare recordings. Participants felt that the predicted death of the album might bring about a change in retail space, but a lack of ownership, tangibility and possibly sound quality too.

Chapter 6 will present the findings by comparing the analysed data from the measuring instruments with the findings from the literature review. Where appropriate, the observations from the video recordings of the listening experiments will be included to enhance validity.
CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The preceding chapters have featured the research design, the measuring instruments, the literature reviewed and the process of the research. The data collected from the measuring instruments were organised and analysed in the previous chapter. In this chapter I will compare the findings from the literature review with those from the experiments. These findings will be explored under headings derived from the secondary objectives stated in the methodology chapter. As stated earlier, I will use what Bassey (1999: 12) refers to as “fuzzy generalization” to summarise the findings.

I have followed a contextualist or holistic research strategy – whereby I described the events within their specific context rather than attempting to generalise to some theoretical population (Babbie & Mouton 2001: 272).

One of the first realisations I had when conducting the experiments is that people tend to associate the album with the CD. When I asked the focus group what they did not like about albums, all the reasons were related to the medium, and not to the actual characteristics of an album. CDs “take up space” as “they’re so big”. CDs also “get scratched” (FG5, FG6, FG7).

The listener’s taste could highly affect his/her choice of listening to albums or listening to singles. If the listener supports the artists and generally enjoys their music, he/she will listen to that artist’s albums. If the listener only listens to one or two songs from the artist, he/she tends to buy the singles from that artist. It will thus seemingly be important for the digital-age listener to have choices.

At the beginning of the study I suspected that the genre of the music is worth considering. I believe now that even more than the genre, the taste of the listener
will have the biggest effect on the future of the album. These sentiments are echoed by LE3, who, for example, said in the second phase that she does not usually like all the songs on an album – and therefore, does not listen to albums as a whole.

In the third phase, LE3 enjoyed more songs than in the second phase and only felt the need to skip one song as it was “childish”. Generally, participants in the listening experiments mentioned that they enjoyed the music, as they had “heard the music before” (LE4), and there was a considerable variety.

6.1 Revisiting the problem statement and research objectives

In the first chapter, three realisations were recognised about the perception of the album in the digital age:

1. The album might not have a future in the digital age;
2. The digital downloadable songs might not be able to recreate an album experience; and
3. The death of the album could create new, exciting challenges to artists as they strive to create art.

To the reader the question still remains whether the album as a physical medium and as a digital download will die out or not. I did, at the beginning of this dissertation, make it clear that this study does not aim to make any predictions. Although some believe that the album will die out, this does not guarantee that it will, or that it will happen right away. If it does, it will most probably happen gradually.

If the album dies out, consumers will have a smaller variety of music to choose from, as listeners will be deprived of the great songs that used to be album tracks (LE5 and FG1). The reader has to ask whether artists will feel the need to create these songs if there is no market for them.
The reader might also ask why the album should not disappear. People generally enjoy the sense of ownership, timelessness/durability, tangibility, order and artistic expression created by a good album, as seen in the responses from the listening experiment and the focus group participants. The CD, however, will probably die out, but not as soon as expected. In 2003, Campbell mentioned that technology analysts predicted that the album would be obsolete by 2008. Similarly, the Gartner Group predicted that 2008 would be the last Christmas for the retail CD.

Only once the CD evolves into other physical formats, such as DVD-A, SACDs and Blu-Ray discs, and these become well-known, compatible and sought after, could the CD die a slow death.

Vinyl discs are already collector’s items (Dell 2008, Hargrave 2009, Elborough 2009, Van Buskirk 2007), and rare LPs are sought after by many and sold at very high prices (Hargrave 2009). Physical formats will become a large niche (Jopling 2006). According to the BMR study on the listening habits of young people in Britain, they still enjoy purchasing CDs (BMR 2008a: 35).

In the focus group, I asked participants whether we should be worried that people are predicting the death of the album. Some mentioned that in some respects, we should not be worried. People said that vinyl would die out as well – and how “you can still get vinyl” (LE2). CDs are unreliable, but albums will always be accessible (FG6). If there is a demand for albums, they will be manufactured. This is consistent with Elborough’s (2009: 11, 168) view which states that, during the course of history, albums have increased and decreased in popularity. Similarly, Summers (2004:3) and LE1 believe that artists will always feel the need to create albums, as they are such a natural part of any artist’s recording career.
The music industry needs albums for its larger profit margin, as many more singles would have to be sold, to make up for the sales lost on albums (Passman 2003: 378-379). Artists also need albums for artistic expression. Singles open themselves up to artistic expression as well, of course, but the album creates a larger platform (“a whole range”) for artistic expression (Fordice 2006, LE2, FG1, FG2 and FG6).

Somewhat different from this, the focus group believed that we should be worried, as people do not realise what they will be deprived of if the album becomes obsolete. LE5, for example, feels that the listener’s variety will actually decrease, as fewer people would want to make music if they are only allowed to create downloadable tracks. The tangible characteristics of an album (cover art, liner notes) would be missing. The Coverflow function of iTunes remains an afterthought (Fordice 2006), and it is only there because the consumer expects it to be there.

One has to wonder whether visual artists will still feel the need to create expressive cover art for a single or digital album, if it is only going to be displayed on screen. What will happen to the album’s identity if no cover art exists? (Keightley 2003b: 613). Will you still know its name? It is important to note that the album cover might not be significant to all listeners. LE1 and LE2, for example, admitted to not keeping the album art in mind when listening to the album for phase 3.

Even more extreme in this regard, was the observation that LE1 never looked at the album art in phase 3, but sometimes at the track list. From the above one could assume that consumers believe that albums will not disappear, but might be replaced by digitally downloadable tracks, as the main musical commodity.

When people download music, they tend to download singles (Leeds 2007). I also still believe that the downloadable album will never be as popular as the
downloadable single (Campbell 2003, RIAA 2009). Similarly, FG2 feels that, if you provide people with a choice as to whether they will download the album or the single, they will download the single. FG2, FG6 and FG7 all believe that they will prefer the physical product, regardless of the price, as it creates a sense of ownership.

This view is expressed by FG7, who said the following: “Regardless of the price, I would obviously choose the CD because … it’s a nice thing to have”. One could thus conclude that some consumers value the physical recorded medium.

It is easy to forget that downloadable music might be inaccessible to some. If the physical album dies out, some music might become inaccessible to those without access to the Internet. An example of this can be seen with LE5 and LE6, who admitted that they do not always have Internet access.

Campbell, (2003) in her article “Death of the album?”, shares the opinions of many, including those who believe that the physical format can continue to exist alongside the online distribution of music. Others in Campbell’s article are convinced that the CD will disappear, but not necessarily all large-scale works. Interestingly enough, Campbell writes that few are ready to predict whether the death of the album will be a reality and even those at the online services believe that the album and digitally downloadable music can coexist.

Elborough (2009: 15) feels that “albums in whatever format will survive as long as we want them and as long as people are prepared to make them”. Furthermore, he asks the same question that I do: “In the age of the iPod, when we can download an infinite number of single tracks instantaneously, does the concept of the album mean anything?” In this, he concludes that the “album … has only survived this long because it met the needs and fed the desires of its times” (2009:398).
Wener (2006) writes in his article how modern-day artists are still creating concept albums. He names examples of concept albums from the 21st century that have achieved great commercial success, as well as critical acclaim, and makes a case that the album still has some relevance in the digital age.

There will always be bands and artists wanting to create albums (Summers 2004:2, 4). A good album can be timeless or immortal (Summers 2004: 3). In fact, the digital age will encourage more creative output from artists (Jopling 2006) For a digital album to sell, the overall quality (not referring to sound quality) of music would probably have to improve. One could argue that, as long as artists are willing to create albums and consumers are willing to listen to them, the album will not disappear.

Digital distribution could provide the listener with more choices, but these choices might not have any great effect on the relevance of the album format.

The realisations mentioned earlier will further be discussed under the relevant headings based on the secondary research objectives. The possible death of the album could lead to a smaller variety of music, as artists might not feel the need to create non-hits. The CD might die out, but the album could continue in different physical formats, such as the SACD and DVD-Audio.

Physical formats might become rare and expensive. The album might survive as a means of creating musical art by using a larger platform. Record companies need albums for financial reasons, and the listener might feel that albums create a sense of ownership that cannot be achieved with downloadable music. If the physical album dies out, music to own might actually become inaccessible to some.
6.2 Listening habits (Secondary Objective 1)

In the first chapter I asked whether our listening habits are destroying the album. I do not think that our listening habits are responsible for the death of the album. The compressed format has made music more accessible (LE6), and music now has many other functions in our lives. In the BMR study it was reported that the respondents spent over six hours a day listening to music – as either a background or a primary activity (BMR 2008a: 8).

Music has now become part of our working life (Kennedy 2006). We thus now have the choice as to whether we wish to listen to our music as a background activity, a distraction, or as the primary activity. Our busy society demands portable, convenient and easy access to music. When asked what they like about MP3s, the participants of the focus group mentioned convenience, accessibility, portability and quantity as reasons. The freedom of choice is also appealing (FG6 and FG7). The digital downloadable single or album can help the listener rediscover music from his/her past, thereby creating an experience of nostalgia (FG3). The compressed format thus has a different function from the higher fidelity, physical media. MP3 players and iPods cannot recreate the album experience fully, but they create their own experiences. The compressed format is thus not a replacement, but an alternative.

In the listening experiments for this study, I asked participants whether they ever listen to music as a primary activity. All participants responded in the affirmative, as they enjoy the experience; and it helps them to relax.

In the first chapter, I asked whether consumers have a mindset that prefers quantity over quality. For most people, this might be the case. It is also true for only one aspect of our listening habits. As a distraction, it is better to have more music. As a primary activity, it is better to have higher quality music. The ideal, of course, might be to have the best of both: a large number of high quality music
recordings (FG6 and FG7) to enjoy as either a primary or background activity. This mindset of quantity over quality, therefore, does not have to eliminate the album experience. FG2 and FG7 felt strongly about the quality of the music in their collections.

The different modes of music distribution each serve different functions depending on whether music is enjoyed as a primary or background activity. Downloadable music is an alternative rather than a replacement; and it creates freedom of choice. It helps the listener to discover and rediscover music.

6.3 Value (Secondary Objective 2)

Sherman (2008:109), after investigating the impact of Radiohead’s album *In Rainbows*, discovered that value is a subjective entity: “… but with the Radiohead example in mind, I [Sherman] now realise that what people consider ‘reasonable’ [price] is entirely subjective and that it is very difficult to assign a monetary value to a cultural product such as music in an objective way”.

People thus perceive value in different ways. Some will pay a lot for this Radiohead album, while others will take advantage of the opportunity to get it for free, and legally.

*Music Ally’s The Report* interviewed John Kennedy (2006), chairman and CEO of the IFPI; and the discussion mainly focused on illegal downloads and their impact on the music industry. Kennedy does have very interesting insights on how people value music: “Music is ubiquitous and has become such an important part of people’s lives. In that sense, it’s [the diverse number of ways that music can now be consumed] restored its value to people in terms of how important it is to their working day. The challenge is in restoring its value to people in terms of how much they are prepared to spend on it”.
People are able to listen to music in the workplace by using their personal computers or their iPods. It is thus no secret that people value music. Whether they will be willing to spend more on it, especially if a free version is available, is a valid question which has yet to be answered. A possible answer to this question is the fact that focus group participants confessed that they are willing to spend money in order to own the physical product.

Similarly, listening experiment participants agreed that they would spend more money on better sound quality.

Jemina Kiss asks a very important question in her article for *The Guardian*. She asks her reader whether he/she remembers the first MP3 they ever owned, as people usually remember the first album they ever owned (Kiss 2008). This highlights the album’s nostalgic value and the significance of ownership in music consumerism.

To the participants of the BMR study (2008b: 4, 28), CDs and memorabilia create an important connection with the artist that is worth paying more money for. Participants from the BMR study also felt that owning a permanent copy of the artist’s music is of value to them (BMR 2008a: 33). This corresponds with LE1’s sentiments when she says that it is special to own a hard copy, as so much work goes into an album and the songs have an order.

The album makes it easier for a fan to support his/her own favourite artist (FG 1). These sentiments are echoed by young participants in the BMR study conducted in Britain, who felt that the ownership of digital files does not necessarily do justice to their appreciation of the artist (BMR 2008a: 4. 35-37).

Focus group participants mentioned the presumed inferior sound quality, lack of ownership and the ephemeral nature of MP3s as undesirable qualities (FG2,
FG4, FG5, FG6 and FG7). FG2 feels that the accessibility of downloadable music makes the listener appreciate it less.

Kleinschmit (2003) also explains how people are willing to pay more money for a physical product than for a downloadable one. One of the participants in my study felt that it is too expensive to purchase music online (LE6). The reader should ask him/herself: Would I pay money for a downloadable album, if I can get the same downloadable album for free? Would I rather purchase the physical album than download it legally instead? It remains the choice of the consumer and this choice is based on factors such as dedication to the artist, the perceived value of the music, a need for ownership and a need for a tangible album experience.

Some artists, like Rob Thomas, believe that downloadable singles are “disposable art” (Gundersen 2003). According to Kevin Kelly, something is only valuable if it cannot be copied (Kelly 2002).

From the above, one may well conclude that young people probably value the physical album, as it creates a sense of ownership, connects the fan to the artist – and that they would be willing to pay more for the physical product. Value is, however, subjective.

6.4 Cultural and Technical Significance (Secondary Objective 3)

I did ask in the first chapter whether the album is culturally superior. The album is related to ideas of complexity (Keightley 2003a: 613) and sophistication (MacFarlane 2008: 133-134). The concept album, according to Keightley (2003c: 614), could justify the existence of a performer as a serious artist. Technically, in terms of sound quality, there is generally not a difference between the album (in all formats) and the single. Both albums and singles have the opportunity to be of a higher quality than the lossy compressed downloadable formats.
LE1, LE2, LE4 and LE5 all felt that the album is relevant in the digital age. As the songs of an album are connected, so the album helps the listener to discover more from the artist, thereby becoming a great platform for artistic expression (LE2, LE4, FG5, FG6). Those participants, who believed that the album is not relevant, said that the Internet makes music more accessible and gives the listener more variety and freedom to choose only the songs they want (LE6).

The album experience can save the album. There are other features that make an album desirable, whether in physical or downloadable formats. The album marks a specific time in an artist’s history (Summers 2004, FG7). The album makes it possible to trace eras, trends and musical experimentation: “To see what [the artist] has done, from how he’s progressed...”.

FG1 mentions the tangibility of an album as a desirable characteristic: “... there’s always been this awesome tangible thing”. FG6 said: “... I like ... the whole pictures thing and an album gives you that...”. Later FG6 mentions how an album is nice to “have in your hands”. Albums “come in a nice parcel” (FG3). FG7 believes that an album is “a nice thing to have”.

LE4 compared the songs on an album with the episodes of a Television series, while Jay-Z compared it with scenes from a movie: “As movies are not sold scene by scene, this collection [American Gangster] will not be sold as individual songs” (Cheng 2008). One could thus argue that the continuity of a large-scale work adds to the overall experience, when it can be enjoyed as a whole.

Humans crave order (Elborough 2009: 15), and a good album can provide just that. If the album is created as art, and not primarily as a commercial product, the songs will form a coherent whole, as they trace the artist’s emotions and life experiences during the time of the specific album’s creation (FG7). Some albums might be considered culturally superior to downloadable songs, as some associate the album with ideas of “complexity” and “sophistication”.

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Depending on the recorded format, the album is not necessarily technically superior.

6.5 Record collecting (Secondary Objective 4)

In the focus group, I asked the participants whether they believed that MP3s are collectable. Those participants who responded to the question, responded in the affirmative. Participants from the listening experiments all admitted to collecting music. As it is possible to have many MP3s (LE1, LE4, LE6), they may be considered collectable (McCourt 2005: 250). LE2 feels that ownership is important when it comes to collecting music.

One has to ask whether an MP3 can ever be exclusive or rare. Interestingly enough, when asked what they liked about MP3s, FG6 mentioned that it makes it possible to access rare collections. Perhaps they can be, but once you have obtained that “rare” MP3, it is in most cases no longer exclusive and the rarity of the physical product makes it worthy of collecting (Sherman 2008: 112-113).

The value of collecting lies in the activity itself, according to Sherman (2008: 112), but Alexander (in Irvin & Mclear 2007) feels that the quality of the music (not the recording) makes it collectable. Even though MP3s are collectable, they will thus not be rare in most cases, and therefore not exclusive. MP3s are still, in most cases, ephemeral and mostly forgotten (Tatone 2008, 2009).

The participants in the focus group admitted that MP3s are easy to delete (FG5) and they can easily get lost between the rest of your music. Sharp (2007) explains how a recording becomes collectable and valuable by being considered rare. Sharp not only uses albums as examples, but also a single. Levy believes that, if it is rare, it is collectable (Levy 2006: 27, 28).
Participants from the listening experiments were asked whether they preferred collecting singles or albums. Those collecting singles said that it was a matter of taste. If they enjoyed more music from a particular artist, they would collect the album (LE5, LE6). LE1 and LE4 collected albums, as they would prefer to have the whole work rather than snippets of it.

With regard to a record collection, tangibility makes it easier to enjoy one’s collection, as the album art makes it easier to find a record than the album name would have made it (Cunningham et al 2004: 7).

I think that vinyl is still the ultimate collector’s item (Dell 2008, Hargrave 2009). FG7 also believes that vinyl has better sound quality and cannot be compared with a CD. FG6 and FG7 have mentioned how vinyl is still accessible, and how it is considered a collector’s item, even if it is considered obsolete. Vinyl has a different function to digital downloads, as it is highly tangible and lacks portability (Van Buskirk 2007).

From the above one could thus argue that, if CDs do not become collector’s items, vinyl records could still be considered the ultimate artefact.

FG6 and FG7 believed that the complete extinction of the album format could have no positive implications. Even though the physical album, in some cases, is considered exclusive (especially if it is in vinyl format), albums can become more exclusive if they are not the main focus of music retailing. This could encourage more people to collect albums and pay more money for a rare product. If physical media disappear from mass consumerism, a change in retail space would be required, as fans might still want to purchase a physical album, but not on a regular basis. These could thus be sold at live performances or on demand, as mentioned by FG6 and FG1.
Downloadable tracks are considered collectable by some. Record collecting usually involves tangible, permanent and rare artefacts that can stand the test of time. From the above, one might thus state that whether the listener prefers to collect albums or singles will depend on the listener’s musical taste and possible need for the continuity created by an album, as seen in the responses of LE1, LE4, LE5 and LE6.

6.6 The album as an art form (Secondary Objective 5)

Campbell (2003) and Keightley (2003a: 612) are amongst those authors who have described the album as art. According to the popular music commentator Wicke, and the participants in the listening experiments, all music is art if:

- It opens itself up to artistic expression (Wicke 1990: 2, LE4, LE2, LE1, LE5);
- The musicianship of the band or artist is clearly presented (LE2, LE6); and
- The songwriting or compositional skills of the musicians are any good (LE2, LE6).

LE3 was the only listening experiment participant who did not consider all three listening phases as art. Her reasoning for considering the first listening experience as artistic is that “all music is art”. For phases 2 and 3, LE3 felt that the songs were too familiar and ordinary to be considered art. Seen in this light, the MP3 or single can thus also be considered art. The criteria above thus justify the single as art as it:

- Creates a platform for artistic expression. Just because the platform is smaller, it does not detract from its “art-like” nature (LE1, LE4 and LE6). In the past, artists had no control over the length of their recordings, as this was determined by the medium of the time (Allen 2009). Hadju (2004: 26) believed that the LP created the album, and that serious musicians have always felt the need to expand on the short song form.
- Requires musicianship; and
• Requires songwriting or compositional skills.

Based on the evidence above, one might state that the album is an art form, but that the single might also be considered artistic.

6.7 Tangibility and the album experience (Secondary Objective 6)

An album cover helps to identify an album. The album cover art defines an album as a commercial product and as an artistic statement (Keightley 2003b: 613).

The album experience cannot be fully recreated by digitally downloadable tracks. To some listeners, tangibility is an important part of the album experience. LE4 and LE5 mentioned their reasons for enjoying the third phase more than the second as “tangibility”. Only LE1 felt that there was no difference between phase 2 and phase 3 of the listening experiment. Not all participants in either of the listening experiments and focus group believed that the tangible characteristics of a CD are able to create the album experience.

FG3 felt that listening to an album the whole way through constitutes an album experience. FG3 and FG5 felt that the mood an album can create, as well as the coherent whole created by a collection of individual tracks, constitutes an album experience. LE1, LE4 and LE6 all felt that skipping the tracks of the album from phase 2 would disturb the flow of the album. LE1 felt that having the CD packaging available to admire in the second phase would not have changed her listening experience in any way.

Interestingly enough, when asking participants whether they felt that something was missing from the second phase of the listening experiment, no one mentioned the intangibility of the music, but most agreed at the end of the third listening phase that the tangibility of the music, whether by discovering the song
titles, seeing the music in a new perspective or just being able to read the lyrics instead of using the Internet, made it more enjoyable (LE2, LE3, LE4, LE5, LE6).

On the videos recorded of the listening experiments, I observed that, during phase 3, LE5 looked at the CD cover from the first track. She took out the CD booklet and studied it until the second track. She frequently studied the cover and back of the CD packaging during the course of the third phase, but did not take the CD booklet out again. LE1, on the other hand, only looked at the track list during the first track of the third phase. Similarly, LE2 looked through the CD booklet during the first track and the third track only.

LE4 studied the CD booklet in detail during every track, trying to match the artwork inside the booklet to the music. Similarly, LE6 studied the CD booklet for every track, while LE3 looked at the CD packaging or booklet every time she wanted to know what the new song was called.

Tangibility, however, is an important aspect of the album experience, as described by Elborough (2009: 384), Styvén (2007:56), Sherman (2008: 111), Allen (2009), Byers (2009) and McCourt (2005). FG1 and FG6 also believed that tangibility forms part of the album experience. The BMR study on listening and consumer habits of young people in Britain explained that participants value the physical hard copy and aspects of the CD packaging most of all (BMR 2008a: 4, 35-37). This same study also suggested a change of retail space (BMR 2008a: 2) for the physical product (FG6, FG7).

Part of the album experience involves discovering all the different aspects of the artist (Fordice 2006, FG1). FG1, FG2, FG5, FG6 and FG7 all believe that the artistic expression of an album constitutes an album experience. To LE2, LE4 and LE6, the coherent whole created by the album makes the album more enjoyable. A physical album creates a sense of ownership (FG1 and FG6).
Based on the literature review, one could argue that the CD might not have been the appropriate medium for the album after all. If the album is dying out, it could be argued that the CD is partly responsible for the death of the album (Campbell 2003). As the CD reduces the size of the album art and places the disc in a plastic container that tends to crack and break, vinyl could be considered the appropriate medium to reproduce the album (Elborough 2009: 384, Laing 2003b: 780, McCourt 2005: 250).

When damaged, a CD tends to skip parts of the song (FG2, FG5, FG6 and FG7), which is much more disturbing to the human ear than the crackles and pops of a slightly damaged vinyl disc. The 74-minute capacity of the CD encourages artists and record companies to fill the medium with as many songs as possible. This is not always to the advantage of the album.

High-fidelity media would have the same tangible characteristics as the CD, and the packaging looks almost identical. The album art is still small compared with that of a vinyl disc. As these discs can store more data than a CD (especially Blu-Ray), the disc will be able to host many extra features to enhance the album experience (Taub 2001).

It is possible to conclude that tangibility is an important aspect of the album experience, but it is not the only one. An album experience consists of an album where the individual tracks form a coherent whole, and can thus be enjoyed most without skipping tracks.

**6.8 Albums as large-scale musical works (Secondary Objective 7)**

Some consider the album to be the modern day artist’s version of the large-scale works of the Western Tradition (MacFarlane 2008, Keightley 2003c: 614). A large-scale work provides artists with a larger platform to express themselves
(FG6). An album helps the listener to place a specific song within a particular context, similar to the separate movements of a large-scale musical work.

The participants from the listening experiments who listened to classical music felt that these large-scale works should be purchased in full, as each movement forms part of the whole, unless the listener really does not like all of the movements. The album helps the artist to create something permanent that will stand the test of time, like a great large-scale composition.

Great album tracks that won’t be able to sell as singles, but also cannot be considered filler tracks, help the artist to showcase all their different styles and experimentations. It helps the listener to discover more from the artist, as explained by LE1, LE2, LE5 and LE6.

A good album might thus be compared with the large-scale works of the Western musical tradition – if the individual tracks form a coherent whole.

6.9 Sound quality (Secondary Objective 8)

From the literature study, it might seem that it is unclear as to whether the so-called high-fidelity media really sound better than CDs. Harley’s explanation of why a higher sampling frequency can make a difference in perceived sound quality makes more sense than the arguments of Aczel (2000) and Ranada (2006). Aczel and Ranada base their arguments on one scientific principle (Nyquist theorem); and they disregard the fact that the digital anti-aliasing filters required by higher sampling frequencies possess different characteristics to those of CD’s 44.1 kHz.

I will therefore accept that DVD-A, SACD and Blu-Ray discs may be considered higher fidelity media.
The question still remains whether high-fidelity media could save the album from extinction. I have already stated that the album experience is an important aspect in saving the album. I have also mentioned that the CD could possibly become obsolete as the primary form of music distribution. One reason why these high-fidelity media could save the album is because of their superior sound quality. Once again, these media might only appeal to those who enjoy listening to music as a primary activity.

Incompatible players are still an obstacle, as explained by LE4 when he unexpectedly joined the focus group discussion51. Until it is clear which medium will be most popular, it remains a gamble. FG5, FG6 and FG7 all agreed that there has to be a market for these media for them to replace the CD.

LE2, LE4, LE5 and LE6 all agreed that they would purchase these high-fidelity media if they had a player that could play them all, but until the incompatibility issues are sorted out, high-fidelity sound for mass consumers remains an unlikely prospect.

Wider and cheaper bandwidth in the future might encourage more consumers to download certain music as uncompressed files. If anything, the choice should at least be provided by all online retailers. FG6 felt that, as long as the song does not take extremely long to download, she might consider purchasing online music in uncompressed PCM formats. It could also be possible that, even with cheaper broadband, consumers will not purchase or even share large files (such as uncompressed PCM WAV and Apple AIFF files) of higher sound quality as they would rather download more music, in compressed formats. In the case of the latter, it will be important to offer a medium capable of reproducing very high-quality sound.

51 LE4 arrived early for the final phase of his listening experiment, which took place after the focus group meeting.
By embracing the collectability of physical formats, especially of high-fidelity formats, the music industry could choose to sell these collectables at high prices instead of losing their customers to the file-sharers of MP3 files.

Sound quality is closely related to the environment in which we listen (LE2, LE3, and LE4). If music is considered a distraction (FG6 and FG7), the lossy compressed format (MP3) is appropriate. When listening to music as the primary activity, higher quality music should be available. The high-fidelity formats could thus have a function when music is used as the primary activity.

During the first phase of the listening experiment, one participant commented on the sound quality of the songs (being in a lossy compressed format, encoded at a higher bit rate).

With the predicted death of the album, sound quality might also become unimportant to most. Depending on the taste of the listener and the artist in question, some listeners might not feel the need to experience music of higher quality. In that case, they might prefer to download more.

The participants of the listening experiments who admitted to hearing a difference between CD quality and MP3 quality audio, are all prepared to pay extra for better sound quality. All participants from the listening experiments felt that sound quality is important to them. LE1 felt that better sound quality would reveal more detail from the music, while LE5 and LE6 felt that this could make the listening experience more enjoyable.

It would be sad if what is created in the recording studio by the engineer is not represented in the listening environment. If there is no medium to reproduce these high-fidelity recordings, engineers will not bother to create them (FG 7). With the possible death of the album as a physical format, the consumer could possibly also see the death of high-fidelity music altogether. Alternatively, it could
be argued that, as there will always be fans of high-fidelity recordings that will be prepared to pay more, it is unlikely that high-fidelity music will disappear with the album.

6.10 The iPod experience (Secondary Objective 9)

The iPod experience is a reality and can be considered artistic when used properly. In fact, it can co-exist with the album experience, as they both have something unique to offer. The iPod has a lot in common with the physical album: it is tangible (Levy 2006: 21, 120, 142); it allows you to listen to music in a particular order or randomly; and it can display album art. The sociologist, Michael Bull, notes that as music has lost its traditional aesthetic packaging (i.e. the album), the aesthetic quality of music now lies within the iPod itself (Levy 2006:102).

The listener does not have to compromise on sound quality either. By ripping your CDs as uncompressed PCM WAV files or downloading your music as WAV files or in a lossless compressed format such as FLAC\[^{52}\], the listener can enjoy CD quality music, but without the clutter and the unreliable medium we know as the CD. The iPod is even capable of creating its own unified statement (Bull to Levy 2006: 143).

The iPod experience differs from the album experience in many ways. Artists can express themselves more by using the larger platform provided by the album to create a larger-scale work with songs in a particular order. The physical album helps artists to express themselves aurally and visually. The iPod experience does open itself up to artistic expression, according to Summers (2004: 236), Jennings (2007: 20) and Campbell (2003). The iPod has a different type of tangibility attached to it, as the album covers displayed on screen cannot be

\[^{52}\text{Free Lossless Audio Codec. Audio files compressed by FLAC can be decompressed into an identical copy of the original audio data.}\]
compared with the physical product. The songs on an iPod are still ephemeral as they are easy to delete and to copy.

In the BMR study, very few respondents were interested in a stream-on-demand service (2008a: 33). Many felt that the lack of ownership made it an undesirable listening experience.

In the first phase of the listening experience, I asked participants whether they were ever bored. All of the reasons for being bored or for not being bored were categorised under “familiarity”. A variety of music also eliminated boredom.

Is the iPod experience a suitable replacement for the album experience? Probably not, but it is a great choice to have! The lossy downloadable formats are not acceptable for reproducing the album experience. It is not the function of the downloadable format to reproduce the album experience. Downloadable music helps the listener to discover more music, and to have more access to more music.

The listener also has more choices; and therefore, does not have to pay for something not wanted in the first place. LE1 is the only participant from this study who felt that, even though music is more accessible, it did not make her listen to more music. Similarly, LE2 felt that the availability of MP3s did not make him listen to more music, as the quality of downloadable music is generally bad.

If physical media die out, as predicted by some, it will not only be better for the environment (according to FG7), but it will also take up less physical space.

If artists are not restricted by expressing themselves on albums and singles only, they could find new ways of creating art. This refers to the iPod experience. The album experience, I believe, is thus not the only worthwhile listening experience.
The iPod experience is not a replacement for, but an alternative to, the album experience.

6.11 Revisiting the Research Question

I asked the focus group, quite bluntly, whether they thought that the album is worth saving. Most participants felt that saving the album would be worth the effort. People thus desire choice. Different modes of digital distribution create more choices for the listener. Digital distribution might have an effect on the perception of the traditional album, as different modes of digital distribution would create more listening experiences. When I asked the participants what they liked about albums, they mentioned tangibility, ownership, support for artists and timelessness.

The physical album should be preserved, as it may be considered an exclusive object. A physical album can be rare, while a digital downloadable album, once found, cannot be considered rare or exclusive. Of course, it is possible for an album to be ephemeral, but hopefully the availability of digitally downloadable music will provide the listener with a choice of whether to purchase an album or not.

The album could thus be perceived as an integral part of society, as it creates a sense of ownership (FG1, FG2 and FG6). A physical album will always be your piece of the artist (FG1), while digitally downloadable music will continue to provide the listener with distraction from other activities and with more choices.

6.12 Scenarios for the future

Instead of creating a traditional album of over 60 minutes worth of music, I would suggest that artists create works of three, four or five songs that work well
together, thus concept EP\textsuperscript{53}s. These would be cheaper to produce and could sell at lower prices than CD albums. They would take a shorter period of time to produce and there would thus be less time between releases than with the creation of albums. A concept EP should have no space for filler tracks.

The death of the album, if it happens, is a phenomenon that could go through many stages. The first stage would probably involve digitisation and virtualisation. The album would thus become purely virtual in such a case. There would be album art and liner notes at first – to make the transition from the physical to the virtual product smoother. A parallel stage would involve the high-fidelity physical media.

Once this happens, consumers will probably not buy virtual albums, unless record companies are able to add unique features that no hard copy media could contain.

Those who desire albums would most probably turn to high-fidelity physical media and old formats, such as vinyl. These would thus become few and far between – and thus rare. They would become collectables, sought after and artistic (Jopling 2006).

When deciding whether to create albums or singles, artists should consider what their target audience is likely to be. Some artists might want to create both singles and albums, as they have been doing for years. For the artist it may still be financially beneficial to create albums. For those artists who do not reap financial rewards from albums, they should be able to make rewards from live performances and memorabilia, like posters, t-shirts and DVDs (Dave Matthews to Gundersen 2003).

\textsuperscript{53}Extended Play. EP refers to a musical recording which consists of more than a single but cannot be considered an album.
FG6 mentioned how an artist, like Lady Gaga, supposedly makes large amounts of money through her concerts.

In the first chapter, I mentioned that albums may generally be classified into two categories. I suggested that the digital age should eliminate one of these categories (album as a commercial unit only) and focus on live performances and singles instead. With a (legal) digital option, the consumer will no longer pay for the album tracks they do not want. LE3 and LE4 have mentioned in the listening experiments that they preferred not to listen to albums – as they tend to be “monotonous” (LE4), and they “do not like all the songs” (LE3) on an album.

The consumer in the digital age has discovered more music, and therefore, will be more selective when purchasing music. Albums should thus be reserved for artistic statements rather than bring marketed as commercial units.

6.13 Delineations and suggestions for further research

With more time and effort, this study could benefit from other approaches. I decided not to include music piracy in this study – for reasons mentioned earlier. As FG2 mentioned in the focus group: “… it is a big thing, but I mean there’s always been piracy since tapedeck… ”. The exclusion of the illegal online distribution of music excluded certain listening habits. Gundersen (2003) holds that piracy is “not the only culprit in the potential demise of the album”. A researcher could thus also include the effect of illegal downloadable music on the possible death of the album.

This study could benefit from a purely quantitative approach, involving the use of questionnaires. The findings could then be compared with those from the qualitative experiments that were conducted in this study.
It might be interesting to investigate how record companies and artists should embrace the current changes. Interviews with artists and music industry experts could add a whole new dimension to the topic.

With more time, a researcher could interview more people and conduct more listening experiments. When conducting a large-scale study, it might be possible to generalise the findings to a larger population. The researcher could extend the range of ages considered in the study. Participants do not all have to be University students; and participants from other areas in South Africa could participate in the study.

Further studies could also benefit from an ethnographic approach. The experimental setting of the listening experiments remains artificial, despite my efforts to create a comfortable listening environment. In an ethnographic study, participants could be studied in their own environment, and over a longer period of time.

6.14 Summary

The findings from this study strongly suggest that the traditional album remains a relevant listening experience to the modern listener and that digital distribution has some effect on the perception of the album, as seen from the conclusions made to the secondary research objectives. Some young consumers still value the album format. They believe it is culturally superior to single tracks; they enjoy collecting it (together with single tracks); and they still believe that the album creates a larger platform for artistic expression. Some listeners, especially from the focus group, believe that tangibility is an important aspect of the album experience.

Many consumers realise that compressed audio formats using lossy compression cannot be compared with CDs (and even more with the high-fidelity formats) in terms of sound quality.
The consumer should fight for choices (FG1, FG2). If the consumer wants a physical album, he/she should be able to access it. If the consumer wants a single, he/she should be able to access it. If the listener does not want a bunch of physical albums to collect dust on his/her shelf and take up space, then he/she should be able to buy the digital album; and if they simply cannot live without the album cover and sense of ownership, then the listener should be able to purchase the physical album.

The iPod experience is a choice, and not a replacement. Whatever choice the music industry makes should benefit the listener, the artist, music retailers and the record companies. Music has to remain enjoyable, valuable and artistic.
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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTIONS

FOCUS GROUP 1 SEPTEMBER 2010

INTERVIEWER: What did you guys think of the article?

FG6: I agree with it

INTERVIEWER: You agree with it. Who agrees? Show of hands

FG7: If everything should go digital

FG6: I didn’t say that everything should go digital

INTERVIEWER: Can I accept that the rest of you do not agree?

FG7: No

FG6: If I agree with it, it's like burn-on-demand maybe, but maybe not ... the whole industry. They're not saying they're going to apply it to the whole industry; they are just saying you must not spend that much money on album distribution in shops. Like making it more like a thing that you go to gigs to buy, like you know people go and then you buy the original merchandise which is cool. A lot of people don't ever go to buy an album. Like most of the music I listen to you can't buy in any shops. Like, you have to go and download it. So if you go to a concert of a band that you like and you buy it there.

FG7: Like for keeps sake

FG6: Yeah. 'cause I like, you know, the whole, pictures thing and an album gives you that... I used to, all the time.

INTERVIEWER: Those who don't agree, what would you say about this?

FG1: It's mostly about the quality of the recordings. CD quality is almost perfect whereas if you compare it to downloaded music, it takes a very big hit. Like if you look at classical music for example, in a lot of classical music you can distinctly hear the drop in quality

FG7: From CD to digital?

FG1: Ja

FG7: I heard on the 'net that vinyl has better sound quality. You hear certain things that you can't pick up. Same thing, because whereas, at now in whatever it is everything is going digital. That indaba in a guy's head that everything that can be digital will be. It's like everything that we have in our lives that can be digital, man will...I think that lots of consumers aren't music professionals. They're just consumers. Like if I get irritated at people, I study graphic design, so, how could you, you know, use that for your company. You know. 'cause I know, 'cause I have studied it and I know the whole ... behind it ...

FG1: There's always a public demand

FG2: I think through CDs they are trying to voice a message that a lot of the time you will go download something on the net, like a once off hit. So immediately if it's going all digital, it will be a lot less, and I think the artist will loose out if he is trying to put across a message; so I don't always agree with it, that it should go digital.

FG6: You don't necessarily have to just download one song. They can make it that you have to buy their album online.

FG2: But you don't ever do that. You are guided by one, you'll buy one song. You'll buy the hit of the CD or, so...

FG7: It's nice that people actually have that opportunity to choose. Like if you like the band and you'd buy the whole album, if you like the band and you buy all their albums, even the ones that you didn't find that great. And I used to, Queens of the Stone Age, I used to have all their albums. Some of them were a lot better than the others, but I used to buy all the albums. It's nice to have that choice.
FG2: It’s nice to have the choice. But, ja, then there’s also the quality thing; it’s not that it’s going from like, just on to digital, but the quality of the actual song, because it’s compressed and that kind of thing, it loses quality, but then I mean, who’s actually listening to it? So, do they notice? I don’t think so, that the lame ear actually notices that.

FG7: It’s also like an opportunity of choice. Then you have the people like the businessmen who see an opportunity in this. When they start funding it, funding bands that actually only go over their one single. And they’ll go for a band only if they push out 5 good singles. Bringing their cash far. As opposed to a band that brings out 7 albums and only has like 4 hits.

INTERVIEWER: What about MP3 albums? As in, you can buy Muse’s The Resistance, you can buy the whole album but in MP3 format
FG6: At a shop?
INTERVIEWER: Let’s say Amazon.com.
FG2: Can’t you do that already
FG3: I think you can
INTERVIEWER: I know that you can get it from Amazon. I don’t know if you can get it from our country, but I know you can actually do so. Except iTunes.
INTERVIEWER: Would you think that that’s the same as buying a CD?
FG6: For listening to the music, as you said, like for the general consumer, yes. Because not all people are hardcore fans that would want to see the actual product and they just want the music and whether the standard is here [high] or here [low] they’re not gonna notice. Like, basically it would be the same thing for the consumer.
FG7: It’s like teenagers and booze. They don’t care what it tastes like as long as they get drunk.
FG6: They just wanna get drunk

FG3: Ja I mean, like, I would consider my ear as a lame ear. I am not terribly musical. And if I do buy CDs, because I do enjoy like getting the lyrics and it comes in a nice parcel. But generally what usually happens, after the first week, I’ve ripped the music onto my computer and I never listen to the original CD again or I would just listen to the ripped...

FG2: But that’s still not MP3 format. That’s still wave.
FG3: Well, quality, I can’t [distinguish]
FG7: You can rip an MP3 at like 120 kbps, it’s the normal MP3. Then 380kbps, depending on how you rip it, it maintains that quality. It’s a massive file. But more MP3s ... 120.
INTERVIEWER: iTunes sells them at 256
FG7: That’s it! 256 not...
FG5: Generally what I do is if I have a few nice CDs on MP3 that I like, I put them all onto one MP3 [CD].So then I'll put it in my CD player and I'll just listen to it all the time...So then it just...I go to bed with it and when I wake up it’s still playing.
INTERVIEWER: You don’t ever have to change CDs then
FG2: I think the plus side is that you can put masses onto one thing, so you can put a lot and you almost have smaller space as where you’d have to carry around all these CDs as well. So it can be a plus, but then you also have to take the other side which would be people who really care about the quality that they are listening to and immediately hear the difference. So I don’t know really where you can draw the line.

FG7: I think it’s like the record companies, because companies don’t really care about the quality: they want money. It’s all about what gets, also the quality listener, there would be 3 in a room. The mass consumer, there’s 7 in a room. This is about money so let’s butter those guys up.
FG6: But still there will be albums available so if you really, really want it
FG2: That is if they carry on like that... It sounds like the CD is going to...
FG6: Well, what I understood from the article is that they don’t want to cut it out completely. They just don’t want to like invest so much money in album distribution, because it’s a waste
FG7: Like some bands I know bring out, they print their best stuff on vinyl and vinyl is obsolete. But…
FG6: Some people buy it still
FG7: Some people still buy it. They're still printing vinyl. I know, because you can’t record that quality on CD. It's like a subsonic bass frequency that you can’t really... you can hear it on a disc, but you can’t really hear it. On vinyl, that’s where you hear it at its best.
INTERVIEWER: It’s a different technology. It’s analogue vs. digital
FG7: It actually requires vinyl ...
FG5: And it’s something of a collector’s item
FG7: Yes, that’s it. It makes it something exclusive which is also very cool.
FG1: You can also do the same with a CD though. Because then if you purchase on demand, and they have you buy from a supplier and they send it to you, you still got the tangible product. So you can still say that “I’m the collecting fan boy, I’ve got it.” And if you want the quality, you’ve still got it. If you’re like a casual listener you’re not really into this ... the option of being able to download is always good, because it gives you a choice.

INTERVIEWER: What do you like about albums?
FG6: “I have the album.” That you can show people and you can go through and like look at you know, who produced it and mastered it and like all those little crazy details...And I'm like, I'm a very big fan of Radiohead and their albums are always very interesting, like they’ve got like these little messages and cool little things ...
FG7: Stanley Donwood does the album covers for them. He’s amazing...This Radiohead designer who does the cover, Stanley Donwood, if you ever look at his stuff online, it’s great. It’s like they’ve actually taken time like for the artwork... which is nice. If you like Radiohead that much, go and buy his prints or buy the Radiohead album.

FG2: It’s like a way of just showing appreciation to the artist as well
FG6: When I got all the Radiohead originals, I wouldn’t trade them for the world. I love them
INTERVIEWER: But not all artists are Radiohead. There are artists out there just to make money. So would you then rather have the digital or the MP3 of let’s say ... even someone like John Mayer
FG6: But if this is about the artist making money, how much of the percentage of the album actually goes to the artist itself? It’s mostly to the record label and ... 1 or 2 percent of the album actually gets to the hands of the artist
FG7: It’s about what you look for in music. Like, if you’re looking for, like that originality and creativity, I like that type of like bands that kind of make you think, like oh do I like it? ... Difference is good. Even those bands that kind of rely on technology, like that stupid dude with the voice thing ... He relies on technology to sell CDs. Like it’s not really original. He’s using like a new technology ... wow, blinded by the lights... maybe for some CDs the quality should be good also maybe it encourages the guys not to rely on that funny little ...

FG5: Then also you get some CDs that are timeless, like say for example, Queen or Radiohead, or something, but if you get like something like Lady Gaga’s CD, next week it will be off the shelves.
INTERVIEWER: Lady Gaga is an example of where the physical [product] might not matter.
FG2: That’s where that ... for music comes in. So you’ll download one hit wonder, you’ll listen to a song on the radio. I don’t think you’d really download her album as well. So then she looses out on money but ...
FG6: But she makes up money at her concerts anyways. Those things are jammed packed.
INTERVIEWER: What don’t you like about albums?
FG7: They take up space
FG6: They’re so big
FG5: They get scratched
FG7: They get scratched like …
FG6: And there’s like [makes scratch noises] Remixed…
FG7: It’s like VHS when you see like, when you see like the photographs rewind, like paused at …and you see some boob …
FG6: Especially in my car radio. It’s rubbish, so like. I go through, I write CDs from my laptop and I go through them like so quickly. It gets ruined in there. I never play my originals in my car.
FG2: Yeah, I think the fact that it also jumps when you’re driving in your car or when you bump a CD player or something, and it doesn’t really happen when you are listening to MP3s
FG7: You do get some funny things in MP3s, like it popped or it’s like it doesn’t download properly. But that’s hardly ever
INTERVIEWER: But that’s the price you pay for either getting it cheap or [paying] nothing at all
FG7: And that’s like a technical … CDs still in the case. “I don’t want to scratch the cover”…
FG6: …all shiny again

INTERVIEWER: What do you like about downloadable singles?
FG7: They’re single
FG6: You don’t have to buy the whole album to get one song. Like you said, if you just like the one song of the band, if it’s like a one hit wonder or whatever, it’s convenient. And then a week later just delete.
INTERVIEWER: Anyone else?
FG5: It’s basically like instant gratification. Every once in a while you get it now, you listen to it and like, over and over…
FG7: Like I was … Amazon Kindle. Do you all know what Amazon Kindle is? It’s like, you can … PDA and you can download books through it. Same thing, like taking CDs out of a store. Like: What do you miss? You miss going to the CD shop looking for CDs and now you just sit at home. You sit at home and you’re sitting with your Kindle and you get the paper instead of going to the shop to buy the paper, you sit with the Kindle. Instead of going to the CD shop to get the CD, you sit with your computer … So everything is just like, it brings it in home, it makes it [easier] like digital, like little “cells”.

FG6: I mean, I don’t ever go to CD shops really anymore, because firstly it takes a lot of time to go through all the CDs to look for one. It’s expensive … most of the time I don’t find what I want anyways.
INTERVIEWER: Especially in PE the variety is not so great
FG7: You can order …
INTERVIEWER: Order’s not the same as actually going to the shop "Ahh this is the one I was looking for!" Anyone else on what makes downloadable singles good?
FG1: The nice thing about them is that, often you can find a lot of indie music that you wouldn’t otherwise be able to find through that form. There’s a downside to that as well because sometimes they only put some of it on and you don’t have access the rest of it and then you are limited by the variety of local music shops. And try going to Musica and asking them to buy Fiona Apple, is like … it’s a waste of breath completely.

INTERVIEWER: B sides and things like that
FG7: Ja, rare collections and stuff…
FG6: I mean, you’re more likely to probably find them online than in any store …
FG7: You get access to the world, which is great
FG1: You get access to the world which people let you access… “We’ll make it available on the CD on the special edition only, that’s not downloadable”. “But I want that song.” “You can’t get it”
FG7: “Found it! Excuse me”
FG6: There are ways [to get it]
FG1: There’s always eBay
INTERVIEWER: What don’t you like about downloadable singles?
FG4: It’s not the same quality as the original
FG2: Ja
FG6: If you say it’s not the same quality, what exactly do you mean? Does it sound very different?
Is there something missing?
FG4: Like … you see the thing is I download music quite often, you see. But now I don’t like really mind like who’s like actually the person who like recorded the song or whatever, but then like there are times when you’re actually listening to it and you notice, like you’ll listen maybe the second time and you go “Oh, oh there! That sounded different.” You pick something like that up.
FG6: But it’s not really profound like …
FG4: No, not really
INTERVIEWER: It depends on what you listen to.
FG6: I suppose like you said classical music earlier, that does make, because classical music is very intense and there’s so many different things and I’m sure some of that goes lost like a bell or something
FG7: It’s like where you listen to music. ‘Cause like, you’ll be in your car driving like [makes car noises] like how cars do, you don’t really hear the small things. When you’re in a room dedicated to listening to that one song, quiet, speakers like set up, then you could appreciate it. Whether you listen to CDs, an iPod, walking in the mall and in the car…
FG2: Ja, you just want to hear the tune. ..
FG7: Ja
FG2: But I think like you’d appreciate it less as well like you download it quickly. It’s really easy access, but then it’s not like, it doesn’t really mean anything as if you go buy the CD, it’s like I’ve got the CD. I’ve paid for it.
FG7: It’s too easy
FG5: It gets lost between the rest of your music
FG2: And you just listen to it once or twice or something and then let’s look for something else
FG4: I think also you could compare it to, like if you would buy a PS3 game, you know. You’re not gonna just like chuck it there … as opposed to like …
INTERVIEWER: Yeah, you’re going to take your time to actually play that game and finish it, because you spent your money on it
FG7: … buy one and play it extra slowly, milk it for what it’s worth …

INTERVIEWER: Now this is really a personal opinion one. It’s really what it means to you. It’s a term “the album experience.” What does that mean to you personally?
FG6: Ok, I’ll start. For me it’s the whole, like you know, as we were saying, you go and you know what you want, and you know you’re gonna get it. And then you have it in your hands and you go home and you like [excited noises] open it. Radiohead their … In Rainbows album was really cool. It came in like a little box and then you had to kind of put it together. It had stickers that you stick on the album cover and you get everything inside and you have to kind of like assemble the album. I love that, you know. You kind of cut out things. That was really cool. That was like an ultimate album experience if you just put it in and you listen to it. Awesome.

INTERVIEWER: Anyone else?
FG3: I guess for me I don’t relate the album experience to physical album at all. For me album experience is like listening to the whole album through. Does it carry a general mood? How does it influence me or affect me, or what kind of experience do I end of with it? … that’s why I don’t really see the point of CDs at all, besides a means of getting it onto the computer. They clutter as well. If you want to listen to this song and now you only have CDs, you’re gonna have to like go find, ok there’s the artist, there’s the album, ok. Put it in. Skip, skip, skip, as you said. There you go. Ah now I want to listen to this song.

INTERVIEWER: They take up so much shelf space. And most of, how many, when was the last time when I listened to a CD I bought in 1999 you know? It’s been years. So they do take up space. Oh well. Depends on what it is obviously. As you say, those Radiohead albums you’ll definitely listen to again.
FG7: As you said like an album experience to me, it’s like, I don’t have a good ear so I can’t hear the finer things, but it’s all about the vision, the art, the music itself for me. To see what he’s done, from how he’s progressed from his last album and maybe a side project that he is doing. To see how he has drawn influence from his main band into … that for me, is like the more important. That’s what I. It’s a personal preference …

FG1: One other thing: the album experience. What I always find, I don’t know if you guys also find the same thing, when you buy an album it’s often because, unless it’s a specific group that you, or artist that you really, really enjoy, even then, like for example if I go out and I pick some random indie band and say: “You! I am going to listen to you today.” And it’s R130 or whatever and it’s a gamble, because I know that there’s one song that I like. I mean there’s nothing to say that if it’s contemporary songs, the other nine songs that I don’t know aren’t gonna be like mindblowing, like change your world. Because it’s an experience. It’s a chance that you’re taking. And then also like an album experience might be, that being a tangible object, you’ve got some sort of memory attached to it, so it’s just like a photo. If you go to an artist’s, like if you go to a performance and they sell albums there, you have to buy one and get it signed. And it is always going to be yours. It is always going to be signed. It is your little piece of the artist. It’s like mine. And then even though there might be songs that you don’t like, you might just want to listen to one song, there’s the other ones there, it gives you that feel of the flavours of the artist as well, which you wouldn’t always find, especially if you download it. You go online and say: “I want this song.” You don’t know what other stuff the artist has done. So it always gives you a taste of the artist.

FG6: Ja, like I remember I downloaded this one album, the artist is The Irrepressibles and they have this awesome song “In your shirt” and it’s stunning and the rest of the music is really crap. So if I had gone and bought the CD I would be like [sigh] FG7: … one good song and the rest of the songs were awful
INTERVIEWER: It'll probably put you off the artist as well
FG7: … ja, they really raised the bar with the first song, but the rest of the stuff is dismal
FG5: Have any of you ever watched the movie Immortal Beloved?
INTERVIEWER: Yes, bits of it. Beethoven’s life story
FG5: Well, in that movie they say that music takes you directly into the mindset of the composer. And I think that it’s very true, because if you like listen to a CD and the progression of it and like the way the songs are ordered or whatever, it affects your mood and I think that’s a very powerful thing. Whereas if you just take like a single song, maybe I want to listen to that now whatever, it won’t have such a big impact on your mood, or on how you’re gonna spend the rest of your day maybe.
FG7: Unfortunately albums nowadays are not one composer. There are like 25 guys behind an album…
FG5: Ok well, with classical music
FG7: Oh classical ja
INTERVIEWER: … With something like Coldplay the whole album is the band
FG2: I like to buy live albums as well, and then you can get a general feel of the message or something like throughout the whole thing. So ja, it’s nice to download one hit wonders but it’s also nice to get a message of like how a band, what they’re trying to say through their music and that type of thing. Oh, I think you can throw that away and just by downloading one song. Although I do download one song. I do it, but I’m just saying that I still support that side of the CD.
FG6: Ja and it also, if you, one song doesn’t necessarily have the whole context of the band captured in that one song. Like I, was it Coldplay’s (Was it called Parachutes?) Yellow is on the very first album, and that song, it’s a really nice song. It’s a pretty song, like my first idea was like this is kind of like a pop, you know, popular band. But then you go listen to the other things, and it takes you to like so much deeper and changes your … [conversation about how much FG7 hates Coldplay]

FG7: No, because I … interest in the band. Like what you appreciate behind a band. For me it is always like how … At that time, actually before that time, there was Jeff Buckley who sang in like
a falsetto, like he was, he wrote a couple of albums but then he drowned in Mississippi, drunk, fell off a boat or something. (Don’t quote me on that). And then after, then Radiohead’s producer, Radiohead was writing Kid A?

FG6: No, it was the first one. No. Ok Computer.

FG7: OK Computer! …and then the producers told him to go and watch Jeff Buckley, who showed Thom Yorke that it was ok to sing in a falsetto, if he could like really pull it off. That’s when like, if you listen to like say Pablo Honey, which is their first album, which is a lot more rock, not this, his high voice, this whaling kind of like, where is he going with this? And then after that, Radiohead, the voice came in all the bands, like Coldplay or Keane all using that same type of like technique…formula in their music. You see, that for me, that’s what I look for in a band. … That’s why I listen to Jeff Buckley. That’s why I don’t appreciate bands that like that too much. No, they’re great, really good musicians, some of the Radiohead, they all studied music and they all like you know, they’re really great, but I have a preference towards something else. You see this is what I look for in music. The story as well, not like the quality.

INTERVIEWER: Anyone else?

INTERVIEWER: How important are the tangible characteristic of an album to you?

FG6: It depends on how into the band you are. On how much of a fan you are, and then you will make the effort to get their merchandise. Like I’m also a very big fan of The Smiths and I looked for their debut album for like months and eventually I found it. Even though I had it already on digital format, you know, I still went and I looked for it everywhere. So it’s quite … I did. I have it.

FG2: I think everyone’s got like one band that they support. Like one, like a few and then their rooms will be covered with posters and CDs, but I think generally it’s not really like that. I think generally people will download things like, other bands they will just download the album or just give you a hard-drive or whatever, but for their one band it will be specific. They’ll go buy these. But I don’t think that’s enough to support the CD. I think it’s leaning more towards the digital for me. Not that CD isn’t digital, it is actually digital…

INTERVIEWER: Yes it is! Downloadable. But the physical vs. the virtual

FG7: Maybe the reason like people like say companies kind of “you would not download” “steal a car”… Companies can’t control, like piracy. Like they think they can. So they’re trying to put it in like a bad light. This isn’t duplicating…

INTERVIEWER: I actually read a study that said they can’t actually use that slogan because you’re not stealing it, you’re not taking something away. There’s always a copy of it.

FG2: I don’t think piracy’s, it is a big thing, but I mean there’s always been piracy since tapedeck or anything.

INTERVIEWER: Radio days

FG2: …You just like stick it in. So, that’s always gonna be there. I think it’s the whole thing of …

FG6: And you know how music gets around through piracy. I mean not everyone can afford to go…or, I know my dad would never (I don’t have a credit card) and my dad will never ever ever let me use his to go purchase music online. But I get music from people and that how I listen and that’s how I kind of discover new bands. It just spreads like a wild fire and then all of a sudden everybody knows about it and that’s how the musicians actually make their money. I mean wasn’t it Arctic Monkeys who … made their first album available online and they would like, like that. You know. It just kind of hit it off and became famous.

FG7: I know that there are benefits of like piracy. I was watching this thing of how piracy is good, but this relates more to television, downloading series and so forth. While others are saying no it’s stealing ratings and this and that yadiyadiyadi, but what they’re not actually getting is that the most downloaded programs for example, Weeds, you know, like at the bottom ‘cause you’re watching this thing, at the bottom ABC or NBC, I don’t really know, ABC is giving free advertising: “ABC 12:30. Watch Family Guy”… watch Scrubs. That’s free advertising for you. That’s …Battlestar Galactica became famous because of like online downloads … it’s not the same thing, but like no one used to watch it. Sci-Fi channel used to come on like late at night … and they found that there was this whole big like subculture just downloading and downloading and downloading. And that’s when it became famous …

FG2: I think the guys that are complaining most are the people in business, not the artists. So maybe it’s good that they shoot themselves in the foot.
FG7: Like Arno Carstens [did a song] about piracy. Thanks Arno, here’s a 100 bucks…
INTERVIEWER: Can we move away from illegal downloads? … I like to compare a legally downloaded MP3 to a CD, because you would pay for both. I mean, the illegal one has that unfair advantage and if you would pay for both, which one would you buy?
FG2: If you pay for both CD or
INTERVIEWER: CD and MP3. The album or the MP3
FG2: And they were both, and they were the same price?
FG3: No, but they will never be the same price.
INTERVIEWER: They are actually not the same price
FG3: They will always be cheaper to download
FG7: If you had to give me like a CD or MP3, like here. I’d rather take the
FG6: R200 or R15
FG7: Regardless of the price, I would obviously choose the CD because … it’s a nice thing to have. Cool, yay.
FG2: Ja, I would buy the CD
FG6: I don’t know. It depends on the CD
INTERVIEWER: Anyone else?
FG1: Also, if you copy a CD like, for example if you download a MP3 album, there are very easy means in copying that, so a friend of mine downloads one. Ok that’s interesting. I copy it onto my hard-drive. … compare that. It’s just the same, except there’s no distinguishable lack of ownership in front of it. Yet with a copied CD it’s this blank white thing. You’re like, that’s not the original album. You lose that tangibility of it.

INTERVIEWER: I think System of a Down, they had an album where they basically wrote … it looks like a copied CD. I thought that was pretty creative. Why did you buy an iPod or a portable music device, if you have one of course? Let’s start with an iPod … Who has an iPod?
FG7: Varsity. It was just such a nice thing to sit and not listen to people, you know… grunt through their nose or eat chips. [jokes]
INTERVIEWER: And other portable music devices, or let’s say a cell-phone that can play MP3s?
FG2: The space, hey
FG6: Ja, that as well
FG7: Cell phone music has got sound quality that is crap. You walk around like this [holds it like a boombox]. It’s like an advert. It’s like just because you can. That is bad.
INTERVIEWER: Is there a reason, for those who did buy the Apple iPod, is there a reason why you specifically bought the iPod vs. another portable device?
FG6: It’s easy to access, to download music through iTunes, because you know if you register your iPod then you open an account at iTunes. It’s just really easy.
INTERVIEWER: What about the way it looks?
FG2: Ja
FG7: The design by the Apple’s stuff is amazing. They, as a design company, they think about everything, like their design philosophy is just really amazing.

INTERVIEWER: “The Death of the Album”. That’s a term that if you Google it, you will get quite a few, I think it’s 9 million hits at this stage, do you think there are positive implications to it?
FG6: Death .. complete and utter extinction?
INTERVIEWER: Yes
FG6: No
FG7: I think it won’t be complete extinction. You’re also making, lessening your carbon print. CDs are plastic and paper, huge trucks of crap going out. Not only that, it’s the trucks that take the crap. It’s all that.
INTERVIEWER: And those that don’t get sold …
FG7: Ja. It all just gathers dust.
FG6: But that also, you know, that’s about the distribution. So if you have like a concert where …

__________________________
54 This number is based on an earlier, informal Google search, conducted in 2010.
FG7: Concerts ... that's fine
FG6: That's cool. If they limit the distribution of physical CDs to concerts or whatever or to orders from one station then that would be awesome
FG7: I also think that maybe one, when you go look for like records, sometimes you go second-hand shopping and you find a cool record like Deep Purple ... Jethro Tull or something that pops up in the background there. Like some of my kids will go and look for CDs.

INTERVIEWER: Yeah, we have to think about that
FG1: I think it's the quality, is the big thing. You can't compare MP3 to CD
FG7: The crackle of vinyl is like cool...
INTERVIEWER: Do you think, let's say bandwidth is getting wider. Do you think people will download let's say WAV files, which are basically CDs right?
FG6: If it's possible to do it and it doesn't take like infinity. That would be great

[conversation]
FG7: Are WAV files Mac compatible?
FG2: I don't know.
INTERVIEWER: It should be ja
[FG2 and FG7]
INTERVIEWER: Because WAV comes directly from a CD
FG7: I don't know if you know FLAC quality, which is like, apparently it's like the top, always three times the size of the normal albums ... It's gonna take too long to download
INTERVIEWER: I guess with our Internet it wouldn't make sense yet, but maybe in the future
FG2. 'cause you know on the one hand, I know this is like a different topic, but you have like Blu-Ray which is going up in quality. Obviously your music is gonna go up as well. So I don't know where... Cause they will never use like MP3s in movies and stuff like that. So why is it in audio?
INTERVIEWER: Do you think that let's say Blu-Ray audio [Do you know what that is? It’s basically like Blu-Ray but for audio, no video], DVD-Audio and SACD, (which is Super Audio CD). Those are, they can be surround formats, or just very high quality music, but in stereo. Do you think that that could possibly save the CD?
FG1?: Possibly
INTERVIEWER: If the CD dies out but we replace it with that
FG7: If you change the consumer. Business is about making money. If that is where the money lies, that’s where business goes...
[LE4 interrupts]
FG6: You need to change the mindset of the consumer

INTERVIEWER: Do you think there are negative implications to the death of the album?
LE4: Kan ek iets se daaroor?
INTERVIEWER: Yes, sorry, (LE4)
LE4: Can I interrupt? Is it fine? ... It's about the SACD and Blu Ray. The whole thing about that is also you need a player to actually be able to play the Blu-ray and the SACD.
INTERVIEWER: Most of them aren't compatible
LE4: Most of them aren't compatible. The reason being that they change the bit rate of the actual media that goes on that by like two bits or something. So then you actually can not play it on a normal CD [player]. SACD and Blu-Ray. DVD for instance, DVD-Audio, they changed the bitrate from 96 to 98 or something, I don’t know the actual numbers, that you can not play it on a CD [player]. If they just changed it to 2 extra more, then you can play it on a CD [player].

INTERVIEWER: Like this one can play SACD and DVD-Audio, but not Blu-Ray
LE4: And the reason why they do that, is because they want to milk every little Rand or Dollar that they can out of you.
FG7: That's when it comes to business again.
LE4: That is the business
FG7: You'll become in like 4,5 years time where everything become standard Blu-ray. Remember like your first computer when it was just playing CDs. That was it. Note even a CD and a DVD player. And then a CD and a DVD player. And then only a CD writer. And then CD/DVD writer ....
They milk you. They can go like Adobe. Like Photoshop, Illustrator and all those programs. I know Adobe can go: here’s one big program. One program to rule them all... They give you what? They give you separate little programs: Illustrator, Adobe reader and use Photoshop separate. They keep on, like one step. Business. Make money. It’s crazy.

FG5: Some of (I study architecture) I mean you have Revit and AutoCAD and 3ds Max and SketchUp. Everything, all of them do basically the same thing, but there’s just that one little thing that you can’t do in it.

FG7:… Make it two and you can select. “Photo” or “..” One button. One button to rule them all.

INTERVIEWER: Are there negative implications to the death of the album?

FG6: Yes

FG1: It’s the end of a genre. End of a part of humanity. It’s just, it’s different because ... there’s always been this awesome tangible thing, like this is my CD and it’s my property and it’s my way of supporting. It’s like a tangible contribution towards the artist. If that’s gone then digital.

FG2: Is it though? Like I don’t know, they get 1%

FG6: It’s not necessarily about that.

FG1: It doesn’t have to be, but it’s representative of it. So you feel like that’s how it is. If everything turns digital then it’s just a download fest. Then it’s like, ok you give me some music here and I give you some music …

FG2: Which is better ... anyways

FG6: And this is like the CD is like your little, as you said, your piece of an experience, of a memory

FG5: And you can get a free poster

FG6: Downloading is just like you just add more into this neverending like white hole of computers.

FG7: One thing like, at the end of it, like you could probably make a movie out of this, working in a CD shop like High Fidelity. You know, like that type of stuff. You’ll be like selling CDs ...DVDs. Our grandchildren will be like: “What the hell is this?” Like we wear glasses and on the glasses they just play the movie.

FG2: I don’t think that if it went out of fashion that I would be so bummed. I just think that it is, like you said, the end of a genre. It’s not anything to do with the actual music I think. I think it’s just about having a CD.

FG6: Because it went from vinyl which was a tangible thing, to CD, which is still [tangible]. And if that goes away then you kinda have nothing to hold on to.

FG2: Except the flash drive

INTERVIEWER: or your iPod

FG7: It’s like phones and cameras, like it’s got a camera, organiser, you can read your email. It’s like an iPod ... it’s convenient

FG6: You see, that’s convenient. I don’t know. Ja, maybe I’m just sentimental

INTERVIEWER: Is the album worth saving?

FG6: Yes

INTERVIEWER: Show of hands (I could see FG3, FG5, FG6 and FG1. Don’t know about FG2)

FG6: Is the album worth saving, [FG7]? Did you hear the question?

FG7: I’m sorry. I’m a realist. I believe that everything is going to go digital. Everything has its place. Everything has and everything will. Like a preference. I like having the CD. It’s really great, but …

FG2: Ja. You work for like a MP3 company or something like that.

[more jokes]

INTERVIEWER: Now just something about your music collection: In your music collection, what is more important: quality or quantity?

FG2: Quality

FG7: Quality. You mean quality of sound or quality of the actual music itself?

INTERVIEWER: Sound and the product itself. A bit of both
FG6: If I could, if CDs were exactly the same quality as the MP3s, I would still go for the CD. Not because of the quality necessarily, but because you know, you’re kind of supporting your band and that’s like… I don’t know. It’s a personal thing. It’s like human hoarding syndrome
FG7: I don’t know how to answer the question. I’m not big on quality, more quantity, but … quantity more quality, but quality of the music itself.
INTERVIEWER: I guess when I figured this question out, it was quality of sound because that will take more space. While quantity is, you know, MP3s are small so you can have a lot of them.

INTERVIEWER: The last question is: are MP3s collectable?
FG7: Yes
FG6: Yes
FG3: Yes
FG4: Yes
FG1?
FG5: Yes
FG2: What do you mean collectable, like
FG6: You can have many of them
INTERVIEWER: You know, a collector’s item
FG7: … collect … anything more, like you know, it’s like a collector’s mission, you know. I know this friend that’s got like 100 GBs. That’s a terabyte of just music. Like his music knowledge is so wide. He has taught me everything from like Radiohead to Stevie Dan to Muddy Waters to like, something more like, Mos Def, hip-hop. It’s so wide. And he really really appreciates music. He loves music, he just loves it too much in an obsessed-like manner.

INTERVIEWER: I would like to think that the main thing is our love for music. What is the best for that, so that we can still enjoy music?
FG2: There’s no right or wrong answer
INTERVIEWER: Ja, it is a hard one. Any last thoughts?
FG1: It just feels really weird. You spend so many years, not us but like humanity, towards getting such good quality music out and such high quality recordings and it feels with digital music that the quality just takes this massive drop. So it’s like all this work. So it drops from quality suddenly just shifts its entire focus based on commercial value to quantity.
FG7: Do you know what might actually be an answer to that, is that because your bandwidth is getting faster, you can download quicker and now that flash disks, my first flash stick was like, yay 12 MB. Now I like, I bought a flash drive like the other day. What? 4GB. That’s like the smaller ones. 4 Gigs. 4 Gigs is a third of my first hard drive. My first hard drive was a 12 GB. In Warcraft II days, like back in the day. So maybe the speed of your downloads and the fact that hard drives have kept the same size but can take so much more, maybe that’s where your answer comes, because my friend just started downloading, legally, Blu-ray movies, like because his hard drive is so massive and he has got one of those, MWEB gave out these 10 MB lines. So you’re downloading like, it’s madness really. It’s like click 3, 2, 1, album’s there… He can, you know, get that …. And once it becomes more accessible to download faster and store it, that’s where the quality … I should hope so. I mean I could …
FG2: It’s about the music hey. I don’t think how it gets to us is ..
FG6: But I also think like the artists expressing themselves, like if you look at the album covers and the whole product, a lot of thought goes into that and the musicians get together with artists and designers, you know, all to put into this product to… This represents who they are. Like, that is the message, so you don’t, if you don’t see that, then you just hear it and it’s about the music, sure, but it’s not a full expression, a complete expression of the musician.
FG7: Maybe there’s a way around that, like, I don’t know like, All-4-One you do get the album cover as a thumbnail of about 10 bits. But maybe you should make it like a new thing like instead of saying “no it’s wrong, no it’s wrong”. Maybe make a suggestion. Maybe it goes like, I don’t know, the album, you download a little PDF that, you can you know, you can print it out yourself if you want to, but it’s always there…
FG3: I do that with my music. With every like MP3 thing I’ll download the album art and then like I use Winamp and Winamp has a little thing where it displays the album art
INTERVIEWER: That’s an iPod thing as well
FG7: Ja. That’s an answer to the solution. The iPod, ja, does the same thing.
FG6: Ja, it’s …
FG7: Oh you want an actual piece of paper
FG6: No, it’s like, not just the front cover, it’s like the whole, the content and everything that goes inside it
FG3: But you can download all of that
FG6: Is it?
FG3: Ja
FG2: [jokes] It’s not the same
FG6: Personally, I, this is probably like you know, those … , like those little notebooks you get, I buy that before I go buy like that R3 one at Pick ‘n Pay. It’s just personal preference.
FG7: …
FG6: No man
FG7:
FG2: Ja, … as well
FG7: Just because you buy an expensive book, doesn’t mean that your … will be better.
FG3: Another thing that I like really like about MP3s is I generally will listen to, what I do is like when I get new music, I will like rate it and then I have a playlist that has all my 5 star music, so like my favourite songs. And this like dates back to like 10 years ago and … I often will just play that playlist on shuffle. And like what happens is that every now and then like a song that I used to like way back in the day will just like randomly hop on and I’ll go “Oh my gosh! This song is so cool!” And then I will be reminded and then I’ll go and like listen to the whole album again and it will be like an awesome like memory, like nostalgia kind of experience. But I was relying on CDs I would never dig to the bottom of the pile and pull out this dusty CD and listen to it again, but because of like the freedom of MP3s that allows me to relive those memories and I love that, I love listening to the songs I listened to like 10 years ago.
FG6: Ja, that’s a very cool point, because I also …
FG7: My old Smash Hits is probably like scratched to bits
INTERVIEWER: Any last thoughts
FG1: I don’t think CDs should be completely extinguished, like the end of them all. I think it’s just, technology can deeply supplement music, and it’s a good way of sharing it and expressing it. At the same time it shouldn’t be like: here’s technology or here’s CDs. They should, like, basically combined. For specialists, well for … special interest people, you get some that like really like indie. There’s some people like certain pop music. There’s some people who really like classic, whatever. Then, you should make up your own mind, I think. And, so they can, on the website they can say “I’ll purchase the CD” and then, well maybe give them the electronic version, but then also ship them like the physical tangible CD. So they get the momento. At the same time, they get access to it. So it’s their choice whether, which one they want. But don’t make them, force, you have to buy the CD or you have to download the album. Because there’s always gonna be advocates on both sides. But the really nice way is to supplement each other.
FG7: I’ve never had actually, the quality you spoke about, I never heard like technically the same album on digital and on CD. So I’ve never actually… I’ll do that perhaps.
INTERVIEWER: Also, look at the bit rate
FG7: Ja, you see, I don’t pay attention to that…What’s going on in the band? What’s he doing? What’s he on? Who’s he with? How long has he been out of rehab or something?
FG2: The important stuff
FG7: Ja, the important stuff
INTERVIEWER: Did you enjoy the music?
LE1: Yes
INTERVIEWER: why did you enjoy the music?
LE1: I don't know. Well, I knew every song...
INTERVIEWER: Were you ever bored?
LE1: No
INTERVIEWER: why?
LE1: The songs were kind of like different. There was something in every song that was like new. It kept you kind of like interested.

INTERVIEWER: Would you ever listen to music in this environment, just sitting here in front of loudspeakers and listening to music.
LE1: I would
INTERVIEWER: why?
LE1: It's nice...

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as an album?
LE1: It's hard to say as it's all like different kinds of artists. It went through like different genres, which is like nice. It would be a very nice album, but I don't see how it can actually be an album because of like the different genres and that kind of thing. But, it would be a very good album.

INTERVIEWER: You can really be honest with the next one. Have you ever legally downloaded music?
LE1: No
INTERVIEWER: why?
Well obviously I don’t like downloading music because, especially like solo songs because, I actually really enjoy the idea of an original album. First of all buying the original album, like I like having the hard copy and I very much believe in the album because a lot of work goes into choosing songs 'cause the whole album (is used) to tell a story as a whole kind of thing flows from one to the other and I like that.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that the advent of MP3s made you listen to more music?
LE1: I wouldn't say so. It made it more accessible, but it didn’t encourage me to listen to more music

INTERVIEWER: Do you collect music?
LE1: I try to
INTERVIEWER: why?
LE1: I like having a lot of music and I like seeing what new artists and people can do with it. 'cause it's like so much music has been done already and I just like to see what new can be done or like what people can do differently and how like different genres...

INTERVIEWER: Do you collect mostly singles or albums?
LE1: Albums
INTERVIEWER: why?
LE1: Well, singles in general are just really boring 'cause it will be like 1 or 2 songs you put on a CD to listen to 1 or 2 songs. It's a bit weird. I don't like listening, even if you put it on your computer, I don't like listening to a long list of random songs. It has to mean something.

INTERVIEWER: Do you own an iPod or similar portable music device?
LE1: Yes
INTERVIEWER: What made you buy one?
LE1: Well, I won it. I didn't actually buy it.
INTERVIEWER: Did you ever want an iPod?
LE1: Ja, I did want an iPod.
INTERVIEWER: So, if you didn't win an iPod, would you have bought one?
LE1: I would have, just 'cause it's nice to have music-on-the-go sometimes, like traveling or being able to, if you have a quiet moment to just check it out and listen to it instead of carrying a stereo around.
INTERVIEWER: Is there a difference between an iPod and another portable music device?
LE1: No, I don't know. Like personally, not for me because I suppose you mean like, as opposed to like Walkmans or something?
INTERVIEWER: Or just like a normal like average MP3 player?
LE1: Well, the nice thing about an iPod, as opposed to MP3 players, is [that] with an iPod you can sort it out into like playlists and albums and you can actually listen to the album, whereas with an MP3 player, I think it is just a bunch of songs...you can't really choose an album to listen to or an artist. I think so. That's what makes an iPod better.

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as art?
LE1: Music as a whole is art anyways. So ja, definitely.

INTERVIEWER: Well, that is as far as I want to go today, unless there is something else on your mind.
LE1: Not really. This is really cool. It was really nice.

PHASE 2:
25 August 2010
Style chosen: Hard rock
Album: A (Muse)

INTERVIEWER: Do you listen to albums?
LE1: Ja.
INTERVIEWER: What do you like about albums?
LE1: I like that you get to see different sides of the same artist like if you just listen to the one song that is on radio, like it would be the one most popular thing, but like in the album they do many very different things with their music.

INTERVIEWER: How much did you enjoy this music compared to last (yesterday's) experience?
LE1: You can't really compare it 'cause it's so different. I enjoyed listening to like one artist the whole way because it's getting to know the band. I've never really heard a full album of theirs [Muse]. That's really cool to like get to know them. With yesterday it was just like, you know, kind of like individual songs. There were a lot more songs here though that I didn't know, that were like nice to discover, kind of.

INTERVIEWER: Were you ever bored today?
LE1: No, like at the moment where you would have been bored, they pretty much changed the style of music, which is cool.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?
LE1: No
INTERVIEWER: And why do you think that?
LE1: Well, they [Muse] kept actually changing it a lot. You are like intrigued to see what’s gonna happen next, sort of thing. If you skip one track you are pretty much robbing, you probably won’t listen to the album at all, kind of thing

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as art?
LE1: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Why?
LE1: It’s so different. The thing is they use so many instruments and so many sounds to make so many different things, That’s basically what art is. It’s so expressive. The album is very expressive. So, there’s a lot of expression in their music.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything else you’d like to comment on, specifically on the experience, more than on the specific album?
LE2: It was nice. I don’t normally get to sit down and listen to a whole album and that kind of thing. So, it was like really cool.

PHASE 3
Album B (Kings of Leon)
26 August 2010

INTERVIEWER: Out of previous experience, have you ever noticed a difference between CD-quality audio and the compressed (MP3) audio?
LE1: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Would you be prepared to pay extra money for better sound quality?
LE1: Yes

INTERVIEWER: How important is sound quality to you?
LE1: When you’re listening to music, obviously sound quality is very important, ‘cause there’s a lot of background things that you don’t even notice that need to be heard.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know what DVD-A, Blu-Ray (audio) and SACDs are?
LE1: No, I don’t think so

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that the album format (collection of songs together by one artist) is relevant in the digital age?
LE1: Yes
INTERVIEWER: Why?
LE1: I don’t think that the digital age should have an effect on something like that. I mean, artists have always been collecting like a series of songs together and releasing it, that kind of thing. I don’t see how the digital age should change that. And as I have said before, it gives the artist the opportunity to show new songs that might not come on circuit, songs that like a particular one, like that’s not really cool, but meanwhile you might like the song

INTERVIEWER: Compared to phase 2 (that was yesterday) of the listening experience, how much did you enjoy the third phase?
LE1: *Probably the same*
INTERVIEWER: What do you think would have made either one more enjoyable then?
LE1: I *don’t know.* ‘cause it depends on whether you like the album, I suppose, more than anything else

INTERVIEWER: Did you keep the album art in your mind while listening to the album?
LE1: *Not really*
INTERVIEWER: Did you browse through the CD booklet?
LE1: Yes
INTERVIEWER: Did you read the liner notes, that is anything inside regarding who produced it?
LE1: Yes
INTERVIEWER: Did you read the lyrics (if applicable)
LE1: *Some of them, yes*
INTERVIEWER: Did you look at the tracklist?
LE1: *Ja*

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?
LE1: *No*
INTERVIEWER: and why?
LE1: You just want to hear the song, kind of thing. Maybe it’s also insulting to the artist to skip a track, *cause obviously it was important to them, so you are like, let me see why it was important to them, kind of thing.

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as art?
LE1: *Ja*
INTERVIEWER: once again, why?
LE1: Just, music expression of soul, especially this band, *cause they’re very, it’s all they’ve been doing their whole life, is music. It’s pretty much them telling their life story. It’s very artistic, I think.

INTERVIEWER: Was this a new experience to you?
LE1: *Not really. I know the album and I sat and listened to music before now*

INTERVIEWER: How do you normally listen to music (in what environment)?
LE1: *Normally whilst like doing stuff; it would be like doing your homework or cleaning out your room and then you just put on a CD player or something.*

INTERVIEWER: *(shows CD cover of album from phase 2)*: Here is the CD cover of the album you listened to yesterday. Would this have changed the way you experienced it, if you had the CD cover there?
LE1: *I don’t think so, no* [comments on weird CD cover]

INTERVIEWER: Do you listen to classical music?
LE1: *Sometimes*
INTERVIEWER: Would you consider buying classical music as separate downloads (in the case of a multi-movement work, only buying the first movement for example)?
LE1: *No, I wouldn’t. It would be like, I don’t know, strange, like buying half a song.*
INTERVIEWER: Would the choice of classical work affect your choice to download tracks separately or as an entity?
LE1: *Ja, it would*

INTERVIEWER: Do you consider single-movement compositions (e.g. Ravel – Rhapsody for violin; Kreisler, just one showpiece; Chopin Preludes, Mazurkas, Polonaises) of equal importance to large-scale compositions, like symphonies or operas?
LE1: *Ja, you can’t really say the something is more important than the other, kind of thing. It doesn’t matter whether it’s a large-scale or small scale*

INTERVIEWER: Do you listen to operatic music?
LE1: *Sometimes*
INTERVIEWER: Do you prefer to listen to the entire opera or selected arias, duets, overtures etc.
LE1: I would probably say the entire [opera]. It’s more flowing.
Participant LE 2
Criteria form number 17
24 August 2010
PHASE 1:

INTERVIEWER: Did you enjoy the music?
LE2: The beginning was sort of…it was ok. Then after Jason Mraz, I think, it started getting a bit too much. The whole slow vibe. Then also there was a bit a lot of commercial stuff today

INTERVIEWER: Were you ever bored?
LE2: The last song played, yes
INTERVIEWER: why were you bored with that one?
LE2: It [the last song] was just not my type of style of music and I didn’t understand what she was saying

INTERVIEWER: Would you ever listen to music in this type of environment where you are just sitting in front of your sound system, just listening?
LE2: A lot of times
INTERVIEWER: And why?
LE 2: I feel as if like somehow I can connect to music. Like what said like normally, normally what happens is that I like I listen to different styles on different types of days, depending on how I feel. So then I just connect.

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as an album and why would you say that?
LE2: It would sell, but not as an album, ‘cause it’s just different sort of styles and just mixed up together. And I don’t think that I would be able to listen to the whole thing.

INTERVIEWER: Have you ever legally downloaded music?
LE2: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Did you download mostly singles or albums?
LE2: Singles.
INTERVIEWER: Why do you prefer singles?
LE2: ‘cause it’s a song that I like and [on] an album sometimes you get songs that you don’t like

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that the advent of MP3s made you listen to more music?
LE2: No, not really. Normally the quality is bad

INTERVIEWER: Do you collect music?
LE2: Yes

INTERVIEWER: Do you collect mostly singles or albums?
LE2: On my computer I think it’s more albums. But then at the moment singles are also big. But on my computer it’s mostly albums.
INTERVIEWER: Why for the album part and why for the singles part?
LE2: Well, albums, it’s ‘cause like sometimes you might find a song that you don’t like in an album, or a song that you do like that you’ve never heard it before. And then, the singles part, it’s normally easier to like get a single, like just, ‘cause then there’s more [of] the music I can listen to. Not just everything.

INTERVIEWER: Do you own an iPod or similar portable music device?
LE2: Yes
INTERVIEWER: What made you buy one?
LE2: Just to be able to zone-out in music, really.
INTERVIEWER: May I ask: Is it an iPod or a cell-phone that you are using…?
LE2: It's a cell-phone, ja. I did own an iPod, but it got stolen.
INTERVIEWER: Oh no, so you did own an iPod!
LE2: yeah
INTERVIEWER: Ok, now that's also important, 'cause I need to ask you what made you buy the iPod and not anything else?
LE2: It's actually 'cause of the space that was on it. And then so that you could use it for more than one thing. You could use it as a portable device to, you know, transfer stuff from it and the quality
INTERVIEWER: Is that the quality of the product itself…?
LE2: Ja, the product itself. And the program: iTunes program

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as art?
LE2: I would say the last song, and the Amy Macdonald and Coldplay was art. All the others? No
INTERVIEWER: Why would you consider the few as art?
LE2: Well, my view of Coldplay is because of the lyrics, the songwriting quality and also the music.
INTERVIEWER: And the other songs, what made them not art?
LE2: They're too commercial, and they don't have that much meaning. Like if you look into the lyrics that they wrote, they don't have a story behind...

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything else you'd like to talk about, that caught your attention while you were listening, all about, about the experience?
LE2: Let's say the first part of the first session was, it was sort of like happy, sort of good vibe, upbeat, energy. And the next part was (started with Amy Macdonald) was sort of like laid back, relaxing, soothing.

PHASE 2:

25 August 2010
Style chosen: Acoustic
Album: B (Jack Johnson)

INTERVIEWER: Do you normally listen to albums, apart from today?
LE2: Ja
INTERVIEWER: What do you like about albums?
LE2: Some albums have a story to tell, from beginning to end. As in, ja, they take you on a journey.

INTERVIEWER: How much did you enjoy today's experience compared to yesterday's (phase 1)?
LE2: Today was more of the stuff that I would listen to. Jack Johnson is one of my favourite artists. So, ja, today was much better, 'cause I really enjoyed it.
INTERVIEWER: Is it just because of Jack Johnson?
LE2: Ja
INTERVIEWER: If it was a different artist, how do you think it would have changed your experience?
LE2: Well, normally I wouldn't notice the album. 'cause, I'll first be like, ja, it takes a while for me to actually understand the whole album. So, I don't know really.

INTERVIEWER: Were you ever bored?
LE2: A bit.
INTERVIEWER: what would you say was missing or wrong with the experience (why were you bored)?
LE2: I can't explain.
INTERVIEWER: Do you think it's the music itself?
LE2: Ja. Some songs you know are boring. Not all of them are good.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?
LE2: Yes
INTERVIEWER: Why would you say that?
LE2: Beat wasn't nice or something
INTERVIEWER: if it was a different album, would you have wanted to skip tracks?
LE2: Yes

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as art?
LE2: Yes
INTERVIEWER: why would you say that?
LE2: Because, sort of being able to play guitar and being able to sing and songwriting is art.
INTERVIEWER: Is there anything else about this experience compared to the last experience that you'd like to comment on?
LE2: Not really. There's nothing I can think of.

PHASE 3

27 August 2010

Style chosen: Acoustic

Album: A (Jason Mraz)

INTERVIEWER: There are 2 questions that I forgot to ask you the very first time. And when I asked you whether you download music legally, you said yes, but I didn’t ask you why you download legally.
LE2: Oh, supporting South African music.

INTERVIEWER: And then the other one was, I asked you whether you collect music, and you said yes, but I forgot to ask you why.
LE2: …it’s better to have it, than not to have it

INTERVIEWER: Out of previous experience, have you ever noticed a difference between CD-quality audio and the compressed (MP3) audio?
LE2: No
INTERVIEWER: Do you think that if you listen under different circumstances (like while driving) that you would hear a difference?
LE2: Uh-huh

INTERVIEWER: How important is sound quality to you?
LE2: I think it is very important. Compressed files don’t sound that great
INTERVIEWER: Do you know what DVD-A, Blu-Ray (audio) and SACDs are?
LE2: No, I don’t know SACD
[interviewer explains SACD and DVD-Audio to participant]
INTERVIEWER: If you could find a player that can play all 3 of these (DVD-Audio, Blu-Ray Audio, SACD and normal CDs), would you buy one?
LE2: Yeah
INTERVIEWER: And why?
LE2: ‘cause sometimes, I don’t know really. It’s like an upgrade. It’s like moving from VHS to DVD and from normal TV to HD

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that the album format (as we know today as a collection of songs on one disc or not even on an disc, even MP3s) do you think that is relevant in the digital age?
LE2: Yeah
INTERVIEWER: and why would you say that?
LE2: ‘cause mostly people normally have something to say within their album. And they can’t just say it within one track, so they have, you know, a whole range.

INTERVIEWER: Compared to the last experience you had (Wednesday), which one did you enjoy more?
LE2: I would have to say Wednesday.
INTERVIEWER: Is that just because of Jack Johnson [being one of your favourite artists]?
LE2: And I’ve got a short concentration span. I tend to loose concentration quite quickly.

INTERVIEWER: Did you keep the album art in your mind while listening to today’s music?
LE2: No

INTERVIEWER: Between the three experiences, which one did you enjoy the most?
LE2: I must say, the first one.
INTERVIEWER: And why?
LE2: It was a whole range of music instead of just one style

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever browse through the CD booklet?
LE2: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Did you read the liner notes (that is, producer, songwriter)?
LE2: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Did you look at the tracklist?
LE2: Ja

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?
LE2: Yes
INTERVIEWER: And why would that be?
LE2: It got boring
INTERVIEWER: If this was a different album, would you still feel the need to skip tracks [different artists]?
LE2: Ja

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as art?
LE2: All music is art. Even if it’s like Britney Spears or something: she can sing

INTERVIEWER: Was this a new experience for you (listening to the CD with its cover here)?
LE2: No

INTERVIEWER: How do you normally listen to music?
LE2: Normally I play it really really loud and then I’ll do something like else or I’ll just sit and listen. The only difference is that it’s always, my music is like really loud.
INTERVIEWER: (shows CD cover of album from phase 2): This is the cover (actually the whole thing) of the album you listened to last time. If you want to look at it, you can. [random conversation on who all the CDs used in the experiments, belong to]. If you had this with you at the last experience, would you have enjoyed it more, would it have changed your experience?
LE2: Yeah.
INTERVIEWER: Why would you say that?
LE2: It's got the lyrics. Normally like, if I hear a song I like, I like to go research the lyrics and find out their meaning, so this one would be more simple, 'cause I wouldn't have to go onto the Internet. 'cause most of the Jack Johnson songs I normally like to go find the meaning behind the songs.

INTERVIEWER: People are basically saying that the album is dying out or will go extinct. Do you think we should be worried, excited or not really bothered?
LE2: I don't think we should be worried though. 'cause generally you can still get vinyl's (if you want vinyl's) and people were worried that those were going extinct.... I think it's more wise though to go digital than having an album [CD]. They can get messed up pretty easy.

INTERVIEWER: Do you listen to classical music?
LE2: Yes
INTERVIEWER: Would you consider buying classical music as separate downloads (in the case of a multi-movement work, like a symphony or only buying the first movement of Beethoven's 5th instead of the rest of them, for example), would you consider buying it separately?
LE2: No, I think I'd rather have the whole thing.
INTERVIEWER: Why would you listen to the whole thing?
LE2: It's more interesting, you know. Like, 'cause it's like a journey, especially Beethoven. Beethoven is like a journey. So, ja, it starts off there and somehow it changes and gets dramatic and then comes a bit down.
INTERVIEWER: Would the choice of classical work affect your choice to download tracks separately or together?
LE2: Not sure, can't answer that yet. Sorry.
INTERVIEWER: Do you consider a single-movement composition (like Chopin, he wrote all of these Mazurkas, Preludes; single things, only a one movement work) Do you consider that of equal importance to something like a symphony or multi-movement work?
LE2: No, I think multi-movement is better.
INTERVIEWER: And why would you say that?
LE2: Ja, more things better than one...
INTERVIEWER: Do you listen to operatic music?
LE2: No
Participant LE 3
Criteria form number 09
24 August 2010

PHASE 1:

INTERVIEWER: Did you enjoy the music?
LE3: Well, I enjoyed some of the songs
INTERVIEWER: why only some of them?
LE3: Because I didn’t know most of them. There were nice songs that I did enjoy.
INTERVIEWER: Those that you didn’t know, did you also enjoy them?
LE3: Some of them, maybe 2

INTERVIEWER: Were you ever bored?
LE3: Yes. When one song played I was quite bored. I didn’t know it.
[next answer was unclear]
INTERVIEWER: Why weren’t you bored with the other ones?
LE3: I think because of the words. I enjoyed some of the words. The lyrics. And the beat as well.
INTERVIEWER: Would you ever listen to music in this type of environment where you are just sitting in front of the system or your hi-fi and you’re just listening to music (Did it feel natural?)?
LE3: Ja, I would
INTERVIEWER: why?
LE3: Because sitting and listening to music, it just releases my stress. I like doing it, listening to music. Maybe dancing! Only to certain music, though.

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as an album?
LE3: No
INTERVIEWER: Then why?
LE3: Because it’s different artists

INTERVIEWER: Have you ever legally downloaded music?
LE3: No
INTERVIEWER: why?
LE3: It’s cheaper to download illegally

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that the advent of MP3s made you listen to more music?
LE3: Yes, it does

INTERVIEWER: Do you collect music?
LE1: Yes, I used to collect music…
INTERVIEWER: Why did you collect music?
LE3: Because I love music, especially different genres
INTERVIEWER: Do you collect mostly singles or albums?
LE3: Singles, because I don’t like every song on an album

INTERVIEWER: Do you own an iPod or similar portable music device? More like a phone, something that you can carry with you, or a MP3 player.
LE3: No
INTERVIEWER: Is there a reason for that?
LE3: … I don’t have the money to buy one
INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as art?
LE3: I think all music is art

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything else you’d like to say about the listening experience today
LE3: It was interesting. Very calm environment. I enjoyed listening to the music. It was pretty comfortable

PHASE 2:
25 August 2010
Style: pop
Album: A (One republic)

INTERVIEWER: Do you listen to albums, apart from today?
LE3: The whole album?
INTERVIEWER: Yes
LE3: Not really. I skip songs
INTERVIEWER: What don’t you like about albums?
LE3: The thing is with albums, I don’t like all the songs on the album.

INTERVIEWER: How much did you enjoy this music to yesterday’s listening experience (phase 1)?
LE3: This one was Ok…
INTERVIEWER: What could make the listening experience more enjoyable?
LE3: This music?
INTERVIEWER: Ja, this one you listened to now. What would make you enjoy it more, you think?
LE3: I think if maybe some of the songs weren’t there; only play specific songs. I would repeat so many songs from this album.

INTERVIEWER: Were you ever bored?
LE3: I think only with two songs.
INTERVIEWER: What was then missing/wrong with it?
LE3: They were very, very slow. Two songs were extremely slow

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as art?
LE3: No
INTERVIEWER: And why not?
LE3: It’s usual music. I just don’t think it is [art].

INTERVIEWER: If there is anything you’d like to comment on today’s experience vs. yesterday’s experience?
LE3: I think today the music was more interesting, because I knew most of the songs, the music. It’s interesting. I actually loved some of the songs on this album, which is unusual for me. I think I danced to one of them.
INTERVIEWER: Out of previous experience, have you ever noticed a difference between CD-quality audio and the compressed (MP3) audio? Do you know what I am talking about?
LE3: No

INTERVIEWER: Is sound quality important to you?
LE3: Yeah, it is

INTERVIEWER: Do you know what DVD-Audio, Blu-Ray (audio) and SACDs are?
LE3: No

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that the album format (as this collection of songs by one artist) is relevant in the digital age?
LE3: Not really.
INTERVIEWER: Why would you say that?
LE3: In the digital age you can now download MP3s
INTERVIEWER: Now related to that … do you think the album as a downloaded format, is that still relevant?
LE3: Yeah
INTERVIEWER: And is there a reason why you say that?
LE3: Mainly because it’s cheaper and easier to get access to.
INTERVIEWER: Which one is better: downloading an album or downloading a single?
LE3: I would have to say, downloading a single.

INTERVIEWER: Compared to Wednesday (phase 2), how much did you enjoy the third phase?
LE3: I enjoyed the third phase, because I think I enjoyed most of the songs, except for one … the previous phase where I only enjoyed some of it
INTERVIEWER: Out of all the phases, would you say this one was the best?
LE3: Ja

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever keep the album art in mind when you were listening to the album?
LE3: Ja, I did. I think some of the songs are related to the art
INTERVIEWER: Did you browse through the CD booklet?
LE3: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Did you read the liner notes, that’s anything like who produced the album?
LE3: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Did you ever look at the tracklist there at the back?
LE3: Yeah, many times

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?
LE3: Ja, just one song.
INTERVIEWER: Why would you say that?
LE3: To me it didn’t make sense, it was quite childish (“dental care”)
INTERVIEWER: If it was a different album, would you have wanted to skip tracks?
LE3: It depends which album it would’ve been

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as art?
LE3: No
INTERVIEWER: And why is that?
LE3: I think it's because I am somewhat used to the music

INTERVIEWER: Was this a new experience for you today: listening to an album with, you know, the CD cover?
LE3: Yes

INTERVIEWER: How do you normally listen to music?
LE3: I normally listen to music, sometimes by sitting... I just listen to music. Sometimes when I listen to music I, like, dance.
INTERVIEWER: Is it usually while you do other things?
LE3: Ja. I usually listen to music while I clean, or sometimes go through my school work. It's a good distraction.

INTERVIEWER: (shows CD cover of album from phase 2): This is the album cover of the album that you previously listened to. I don't know if you'd like to look at it? Would this have changed the way you experienced the second phase, where you listened to an album but without a cover?
LE3: Yeah, I think it would've.
INTERVIEWER: Why would you say that?
LE3: Because I would know what's the name of each song. 'cause then I would listen to the songs and know what the names were. And maybe I'd like to recall, maybe I like that song, but I don't know what it's called...

INTERVIEWER: People are saying that the album is dying out or will go extinct soon. Do you think we should be worried or excited...or not be bothered at all?
LE3: I don't think we should be bothered.
INTERVIEWER: Would you like to expand on that?
LE3: I think it's because we all have different opinions, I don't think we should be bothered. .. listening to singles only is fine.

INTERVIEWER: Do you listen to classical music?
LE3: No

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything you'd like to comment on this experience vs. the one before and then the first one?
LE3: Well, in the first one I was a bit uncomfortable because I didn't know most of the songs. The next one I was feeling more comfortable, and today was very, very very nice .... I enjoyed this album today.
INTERVIEWER: Did you enjoy the music?
LE4: Most of it, yes
INTERVIEW: why?
LE4: Well, I heard the music before. It's just good music. I liked it.
INTERVIEWER: And the rest?
LE4: There was one song right at the end. Didn't quite know it. It was a bit out there. Maybe if I heard it again and again it will grow on me, but this was the first time I have heard that as well.

INTERVIEWER: Were you ever bored?
LE4: With the last song, yes. The one particular one I didn't like. Otherwise, it was quite fun to sit and listen and relax and think.

INTERVIEWER: Would you ever listen to music in this environment, in front of your sound system just listening to the music?
LE4: Yes, definitely
INTERVIEW: and why?
LE4: I don't know. Maybe it's, as a music student, you appreciate the music more for just the music. And just listening to all the different things happening inside, picturing the story that they are actually trying to tell you when you do understand what they are singing. I just enjoy music, so…

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as an album?
LE4: … An album as such, but if I had to think quickly, no.
INTERVIEWER: and why would you say that?
LE4: I would like to still think of an album as a certain person’s music, or a certain band’s music as, for example, let's take Michael Jackson, for example. You take his music, put it on a CD. That's whatever, that's his album. You take his music, Pavarotti's music and throw some Jack Johnson in there, that's a compilation.

INTERVIEWER: Have you ever legally downloaded music?
LE4: Legally, yes, actually
INTERVIEWER: did you download them mostly as singles or albums?
LE4: Albums

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that the advent of MP3s made you listen to more music?
LE4: Indirectly, yes. It has definitely given me a lot more to listen to. A wider variety.

INTERVIEWER: Can I just go back to the previous question of downloading albums? And can I ask you, is there a reason why you download albums more than singles?
LE4: Well, if I know of a certain single that I want from a certain person If I know a certain single and the rest of the band’s music is not really my style then I'll get that single. But if I know I like that person’s music, in general, I'd like to hear more of it, even if I don't know the rest of what he’s got to offer. It's the quality of the artist I am downloading.
INTERVIEWER: Do you collect music?
LE4: Yes, definitely.

INTERVIEWER: And why?
LE4: It's music! The more to listen to, the more to enjoy. It's like somebody that likes to go bowling on a professional level. He'll like to try out different bowling balls, get all the different ones, collect them. He might like that colour more than this one. He'll have both 'cause he still likes both. The same with music: you might listen to it, you might enjoy it and you might appreciate it.

INTERVIEWER: Do you collect mostly singles or albums?
LE4: If I look at my iTunes collection, if I just skip through it, I would say albums.

INTERVIEWER: And why?
LE4: I just want the collection as a whole. I don't want snippets of this or snippets of that. Even though as I said before sometimes I really, I don't like that person's music at all. It's just rubbish to me, but one single song or two songs I really enjoy so that. But in general, albums.

INTERVIEWER: Do you own an iPod or similar portable music device?
LE4: Yes I do (iPhone).

INTERVIEWER: What made you buy one?
LE4: That's a funny story that! Because I didn't buy it. I actually won it. I was 2 years ago, make it one and a half years ago, but at this stage I would have bought an iPod if I didn't win it.

INTERVIEWER: Is this the iPhone you are talking about?
LE4: iPhone yes. Which is basically an iPod that can phone.

INTERVIEWER: Would you have bought an iPod or an iPhone?
LE4: iPod

INTERVIEWER: And why would that be? What is better about the iPod?
LE4: Brand name, I think. It has a good name behind it. I know it's going to work. It's not going to give me hassles. It's just, it works. Also the sound quality, if I listen to it through the iPod earphones it comes with, it's really good quality, it's not this other fuzzy things listening to...It's quite nice. It's good looking. It really looks good. [random iPod conversation]

INTERVIEWER: Would you agree that an iPod or iPhone is different from other portable players?
LE4: Do you want a definite yes or no question answer? 'cause, they all can play music. Yes that's right, they, great. But for me the iPod or iPhone with an iPod feature: the quality is just a step up. I don't know if it's just me imagining things, or technically it is just a step up quality-wise, but definitely, and also it looks, the actual interface, the graphic user interface is just a lot better. The graphic user interface and they way you actually interact with it is just a step up from other devices.

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as art?
LE4: Yes

INTERVIEWER: And why is that?
LE4: It was music, and therefore it is art. I don't like it when people say that something else is not art, just because they do not like it. I, for example, didn't like the last song that much, but it's still art, because someone else might have liked it. It's an expression of people, what they're thinking, what they're feeling.

INTERVIEWER: Is there anything else you'd like to comment on the experience you had?
LE4: Can I ask you a question?

INTERVIEWER: Ja

LE4: Was the format that these songs were in, these numbers, was it MP3 format that was converted to CD?

INTERVIEWER: Yes. It was CD to MP3 at 256 kbps, back to CD.

LE4: Because at the beginning one or two songs sounded a little bit fuzzy. I don't know if it was my imagination, or...

INTERVIEWER: It was... 2 songs on here that weren't actually 256 kbps. They were 128, because I don't have the originals. It was “The black Parade” and the last song.
LE4: That is another problem that comes with MP3s is size. Because many people go for 128, generally, but having gone through music technology classes I would not like to listen to 128 all the time on my iPod or iPhone; I would just hear this definite difference. Minimum 256, and if I do rip a CD these days, or an album, then that is usually at 320. 320 I think is the highest one. The highest possible that my computer can do.

INTERVIEWER: How big are those files?
LE4: Depends on, obviously, the length of the song. But we’re looking at about 11 MB…11 or 12 per track, which is quite a lot, but I would rather have good quality music coming out and then change every now and then, rather than have 5000 songs on my iPhone, but they’re all really bad quality.

[more random conversation about the MP3]

PHASE 2:
25 August 2010
Style chosen: Art rock
Album: A (Coldplay)

INTERVIEWER: Do you normally listen to albums, except for today?
LE4: Rarely, rarely if I have time and I want to relax, then I will, but that doesn’t happen often.

INTERVIEWER: What don’t you like about albums?
LE4: They can get monotonous. It’s the same style, even if it’s a good style. Anything over 15, 16 tracks on an album that starts getting a bit too much of the same thing.

INTERVIEWER: What do you like about albums?
LE4: Ok, can I use this one that I just heard and compare it to another album? Like Queen’s album for instance, where one song would refer to another. Like “Bicycle”, “I want to ride my bicycle” he would refer to the song “Fat Bottomed Girls”, which happens quite smart and this album did that as well once or twice. Track 4, the song “42” where they go into the instrumental part, I think it’s a piano, has the same notes but I just think in a minor key or slightly changed as “Life in Technicolour”, which I think is quite good. And then track 5, uses the same, the piano uses the same rhythm as the tune in “Technicolour” …and I like that interplay between songs and the story it tells.

INTERVIEWER: Compared to yesterday, did you enjoy this one more or less or …?
LE4: I think this one more.

INTERVIEWER: And why did you enjoy it more?
LE4: I was able to get into the zone. Just, it flows and it relaxes me, as compared to yesterday it was one song and then suddenly another song and then it was like going from robot to robot instead of taking this long journey all the way to the Karoo or something...

INTERVIEWER: Were you ever bored?
LE4: Well Track 8, yes. I think again it’s because I didn’t like the song that much in the beginning. … well, let’s get going now. But that’s personal taste I guess. Well, the end of that track was quite nice and suddenly it grabbed my attention again, and it was like whoah, what’s this?

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?
LE4: Track 8, yes. I was actually contemplating am I allowed to stand up and skip the track, but then again I’m glad I didn’t, because the end of the song contextualizes the beginning and it
made sense now I'd like to listen to it again, now knowing what the end is going to be like. It puts it into a different perspective. But yes, I wanted to skip tracks.

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as art?
LE3: Definitely
INTERVIEWER: And why would you say that?
LE3: Firstly, because it is people making music, telling a story, and something that they are putting out there for other people to enjoy. They put their emotions out to put other people's emotions out. When you are able to bring emotions out by using people's senses, then that is art.

[rerandom conversation concerning the music itself]

PHASE 3
1 September 2010
Style: Art Rock
Album B (Muse)

INTERVIEWER: Out of previous experience, have you ever noticed a difference between CD-quality audio and the compressed or MP3 audio?
LE4: Yes, I have heard a difference
INTERVIEWER: would you be prepared to pay extra money for better sound quality?
LE4: Definitely yes
INTERVIEWER: How important is sound quality to you?
LE4: Depending on where I am gonna listen to the music and what type of music it is, but if it's good music I want good quality. So there, it's quite important.

INTERVIEWER: Do you know what DVD-A, Blu-Ray (audio) and SACDs are?
LE4: Yes I do
INTERVIEWER: would you consider buying them if you owned a disc player that was able to play multiple formats?
LE4: Yes I would
INTERVIEWER: Why?
LE4: The superior audio quality. Just to have that experience of just pure quality coming right at you. But combined with the player, you'd have to have speakers that can handle that audio quality. If I had the correct setup, I would buy them, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that the album format (collection of songs) is relevant in the digital age?
LE4: Yes
INTERVIEWER: Why?
LE4: Can I use Muse as an example? ... If I had to take one of the songs and listen to it, it's nice good music, cool. I'd take another song, listen to it, cool, but if you listen to all of them, there's a story to tell; there's a certain picture that is being painted and that just forms part of the art. It's difficult. I once heard my one teacher say that, she complained that they were playing Mozart's Requiem or something and she's a ... Roman Catholic, so they only played one or two of the movements, like the “Dies Erei” and the “Rechts” or something, and she says that you can't play that without the next one. You can't have the “Rechts” without, you know, whatever else is in it.
Listening to one song is cool, but listening to all of them adds a whole new dimension to it. It's like watching “7de Laan” on a Thursday evening and never watching it again. You’re watching it every Thursday evening. Well, it’s nice, ok well, bad example. It’s like watching “Grey’s Anatomy” every fourth episode. It’s good! It’s good stuff, but you’re never gonna have that full experience of what’s happening in the whole thing if you don’t watch every one, in this case, listen to every track.

INTERVIEWER: Compared to phase 2 of the listening experience (the last time when you listened to Coldplay), how much did you enjoy the third phase?
LE4: A bit more actually. I would say quite a bit more.
INTERVIEWER: Why?
LE4: I actually looked at the album art and the words more and sometimes when I think I heard something on the CD, like I don’t know what words were really being sung, I thought I heard something, then I would actually open up and go look again: did I hear correctly. I can see the words in front of me; I can look at the album art. I guess if I had the album, the actual little booklet of “Viva la Vida” I would be able to understand the music and the story more. Rather than just listening and looking at the roof, or the wall or something.
INTERVIEWER: And compared to the first experience?
LE4: I enjoyed it a lot more than the first experience, not that I didn’t enjoy the first experience. But this was just a step above.
INTERVIEWER: Did you keep the album art in your mind while listening to the album?
LE4: Yes, and maybe just now if I can give comments and I can say something about the album art as well… [goes into detail of album art and how the it relates to the words of each song]… this album art, especially on this page [UK ultra etc.] has a lot to do with the songs that are on there…but now having seen this, I will still be thinking, well how, you think of how to interpret the songs. It helps you to interpret the songs.
INTERVIEWER: Did you browse through the CD booklet?
LE4: Definitely I did, yes
INTERVIEWER: Did you read the liner notes (who produced it, who the songwriters are)?
LE4: Well, I know now that Matthew Bellamy is the pianist, vocalist, programmer, and it also mentioned like who helped there, who helped this, who did the …
INTERVIEWER: Did you read the lyrics (if applicable)
LE4: Yes, of course
INTERVIEWER: Did you look at the tracklist?
LE4: Yes

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?
LE4: The one track I didn’t quite enjoy, but I didn’t want to skip it because it formed part of this art, this form of art, this, how can I put it? Work of art. So I guess now I did want to skip a track

INTERVIEWER: Would you consider what you heard today as art?
LE4: Yes, definitely
INTERVIEWER: And why?
LE4: Well, the music, I enjoyed it. The interpretation is telling me a story. More than that it’s creating, although this is music, a form of art, it is actually creating a visual form of art in your mind. It’s like painting a picture in front of you, so it’s bringing more than one form of art together, although it is still only one, it’s bringing more than one in. And then of course you have the album art, which kind of gives it away.

INTERVIEW: Do you know what a concept album is?
LE4: I’ve heard the word. I probably know what it is. I just need to link the two. So…I can’t say I do. Give me a hint.
INTERVIEWER: Basically it’s an album with a theme or story that goes all the way through. [random discussion on whether this album is a concept album and concept albums in general]
INTERVIEWER: Was this a new experience to you, listening with the CD cover here, in front of the hi-fi?
LE4: I have done it before, so it’s not totally new, but very rarely have I listened to a whole album without stopping once, sat and listened and looked and listened. I would usually stop at a track, or if I don’t like one, skip it or something like that.

INTERVIEWER: How do you normally listen to music?
LE4: Depending on what the situation is, in a car, I would usually have earphones in, because of the higher quality I can get out of it and it also blocks out the traffic and all of that. At home, usually I would sit in front of my hi-fi where there’s no TV or no distractions, and just listen to the music. Reading a book, not really no. Because, then I’ve got two stories running in my mind: what’s happening in the book and what’s happening in the music, which is not that nice. And then obviously live music, but that’s different.

INTERVIEWER: (shows CD cover of album from phase 2): This is the CD cover from the one you listened to last time. So if you wanna take some time to look through it, you may. [participant looks through it; participant discusses the booklet]. Would this have changed the way you experienced the previous phase, if you had that with you? Or do you think it would have changed your experience?
LE4: I think so, yes.
INTERVIEWER: Why?
LE4: Well, you can get your own interpretation of the music and then also the band’s interpretation, which I am hoping that the band has some influence in what goes onto the album artwork, people that wrote the music. But then it adds a new dimension to the meaning of the songs…it would be interesting to listen to the songs again and see where this fits in…it would be interesting to listen to it again and now have a new perspective on it. It adds something different.

INTERVIEWER: Basically people are saying that the album is dying out or it’s going extinct. What I want to know from you is, do you think we should be worried, excited, or we shouldn’t bother?
LE4: At the moment we shouldn’t worry too much, but I would hate to see it disappear. It shouldn’t [disappear]. We should always have that…If we were excited about it, it would be quite sad, because that’s getting excited for something that is not necessarily good. That’s like being excited when they say that they aren’t gonna produce any more series on TV, they’re just gonna have movies. Well, why should we be excited about that? A movie is good, yes, but series, it’s got that whole lifespan, that whole story that it’s telling, so I guess what I am doing is comparing a movie with one song and a series with an album. Whereas the movie you can enjoy it. Great, for an hour you sit there. Good stuff. But a series, you get 20 hours worth of entertainment and it all leads one into the other. It becomes part of your life. So if you take that into musical terms, you can listen to a song for 5 minutes, a great song of 5 minutes, and it’s finished, or you can listen to 20 songs of 3 minutes each, but it tells you a story, like you live it, you know, just, well there’s a nice song, you know. Good stuff.

INTERVIEWER: Do you think that the death of the album could bring new experiences in listening to music or experiencing music?
LE4: Yes, I can. Many things that happen that are actually quite sad that it happened, like you don’t want it to happen, did bring about changes which can also be good. For example, let’s take World War II: ain’t nothing good about WWII, a lot of people died, but what it did do, factories opened, production was going. So, there’s good in the bad, so I don’t know what can come out of the death of the album that is good. But something can, maybe some new form of entertainment can come out of it.

INTERVIEWER: Do you listen to classical music?
LE4: Yes, definitely
INTERVIEWER: Would you consider buying classical music as separate downloads (in the case of a multi-movement work, only buying the first movement for example)?
LE4: I was about to say that yes, if I am playing one of those movements, but then you are losing the whole feeling of what the music is about. So what I guess I am saying is, I would stay clear of
downloading only like one movement. I would actually want to download like the whole symphony, for example. ’cause you’re never gonna get the full picture of what the composer is saying, if you just listen to one, like “Jupiter” or “Mars”, go listen to “The Planets”.

INTERVIEWER: Would the choice of classical work affect your choice to download tracks separately or as an entity?

LE4: No.

INTERVIEWER: Is there a reason for that?

LE4: It depends on what classical music, yes. Because if it is “Fur Elise”, for instance, I would download that on its own. But if it’s “Dies Erie” from Mozart’s “Requiem”, I would not want to download that separately, because that’s pretty much pointless. You’re having one little snippet of a big piece of art. It’s like looking at Mona Lisa’s eyes and nothing else, and blocking out the rest. Well, ok. But if it’s meant to be alone then I wouldn’t mind that much.

INTERVIEWER: Do you consider single-movement compositions of equal importance to large-scale compositions?

LE4: Yes I would…there is a need for that, I mean. Not all composers can sit and write 20 movement symphonies or, ok. Well, you know what I’m saying.

INTERVIEWER: Do you listen to operatic music?

LE4: At times yes

INTERVIEWER: Do you prefer to listen to the entire opera or selected arias, duets or overtures.

LE4: Well, opera is not exactly my favourite. So, I would, in opera’s case I would usually listen to selected pieces from it. The pieces that I quite like.

INTERVIEWER: Would you like to comment on the experience you had today compared to the Coldplay one and the first phrase?

LE4: Well, I would love more continuity in music, personally. I am not saying that it’s bad that it’s not continuity from one track to another, but I quite like when one track flows into another…[random discussion on compositional techniques used by Muse and Coldplay. Muse is composed. Modern music is written] …I think if you stick to the classical rules of theory, your music will last [like Muse]. [random conversation about the political meaning of the songs and the title “Resistance”, rising up, new beginning]
Participant LE 5
Criteria form number 15
25 August 2010
PHASE 1:

Interviews conducted in Afrikaans

INTERVIEWER: Het jy die musiek geniet?
LE5: Ja, meeste van dit
INTERVIEWER: Hoekom? Hoekom het jy die geniet wat jy geniet het?
LE5: Dit was rustig en dit was 'n verskeidenheid, maar hulle was nie so verskillend nie. Hulle is min of meer dieselfde tipe: almal was rustig en saamsing liedjies

INTERVIEWER: Was jy ooit verveeld?
LE5: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Hoekom?
LE5: Ek dink dit was by die 2de of 3de liedjie, toe het ek begin teken. Die laaste een was 'n onbekende liedjie, toe was ek 'n bietjie verveeld want ek het hom nog nie gehoor nie en toe ken ek hom nie regtig nie ... die ander een hou ek net nie van nie, dan skakel ek half af.

INTERVIEWER: Sal jy ooit luister na musiek in hierdie tipe omgewing waar ons net sit voor jou hifi en jy luister?
LE5: Ja, ek doen dit gereeld.
INTERVIEWER: En hoekom?
LE5: Musiek is vir my, dit laat my 'n bietjie afskakel. En met van die liedjies, kan jy as jy 'n moeilike dag het dan laat dit jou rustig voel of ander cite jou op vir die week.... Dit is vir my soos 'n escape.

INTERVIEWER: Sal jy wat jy vandag gehoor het sou jy dit consider as 'n album?
LE5: Ja...
INTERVIEWER: Wel, dit hang af hoe jy 'n album verstaan.
LE5: Ek verstaan 'n album as een kunstenaar en al sy liedjies. Maar hierdie is verskillendes so ek sien hierdie as 'n mixed album. Ja, ek sal dis beskou as 'n album.

INTERVIEWER: Het jy al ooit legally musiek gedownload?
LE5: Nee. Ek het nog nie, maar ek het CDs wat iemand vir my [gedownload het], maar ek het dit nie self gedoen nie.
INTERVIEWER: En hoekom het jy dit nie gedownload nie?
LE5: Ons het nie Internet nie

INTERVIEWER: Dink jy dat die feit dat MP3s bestaan ('n klein format wat maklik verkrygbaar het) het dit jou na meer musiek laat luister?
LE5: Ja, want dit het baie data en jy kan verskillende soorte opsit. 'n Hele paar albums.

INTERVIEWER: Versamel jy musiek?
LE5: Ja
INTERVIEWER: En hoekom versamel jy musiek?
LE5: Soos wat ek gese het, ek hou van musiek, enige verskillende tipes. So, ek glo daar is musiek vir elke mood wat jy in is. Dit laat jou beter voel en as jy hartseer is en jy wil sad voel, dank an jy na sad musiek luister. So ek versamel 'n verskeidenheid.
INTERVIEWER: Versamel jy meestal singles of albums?
LE5: *Albums.*
INTERVIEWER: En hoekom meestal albums?
LE5: As jy van ’n spesifieke kunstenaar hou, en jy hou van een of twee van sy liedjies, dan glo ek daar sal iets [jy sal] van meer hou as net een of twee op ’n slag.

INTERVIEWER: Het jy ’n iPod of similar MP3 player/portable music device?
LE5: *Ja,* *Ek het ’n MP3 player*
INTERVIEWER: Hoekom het jy een gekoop?
LE5: *Meeste vir as ons travel. Sodat ek my musiek kan luister, en nie my ma-hulle s’n nie.*
INTERVIEWER: As jy ’n iPod kon koop, sou jy?
LE5: *Ja.*
INTERVIEWER: Is daar ’n rede spesifiek?
LE5: *Omdat jy baie liedjies daarop kan sit. Dit het baie memory. En hy’s klein en compact, nie soos daai portable CD players wat op ’n stadium [popular was nie].*

INTERVIEWER: Sal jy wat jy vandag gehoor het, sal jy dit sien as kunst?
LE5: *Ja,* ek *sou so se.* Want dis verskillende tipe liedjies en elkeen het ’n ander storie of message wat dit gee. Die persoon wat dit geskryf het, het mos nou half kuns perform deur sy emosies of ervaringe, en nou gee hy dit deur en dit is vir my kuns, want dan kan ek assosieer daarmee. Ek sien kuns as iets wat jy uitbeeld oor hoe jy voel.

INTERVIEWER: Is daar enige iets anders wat jy wil se oor vandag se experience?
LE5: *Dit was lekker. Ek het dit geniet om soos, ek moet se dit was my tipe musiek…rustige, saamsing, lekker luister songs. Lekker rustige atmosfeer.*

**PHASE 2:**

26 August 2010

Style: Art Rock

Album: B (Muse)

INTERVIEWER: Luister jy gewoonlik na albums, behalwe vir vandag?
LE5: *Ja*
INTERVIEWER: Wat is dit waarvan jy hou van ’n album/wat hou jy van albums?
LE5: *Dit hang eintlik vir my af van kunstenaar tot kunstenaar. Ek hou daarvan, want jy hoor een liedjie van ’n persoon en dan like jy hom en dan wil ek meer hoor van die kunstenaar; en ’n album is mos net van een kunstenaar.*

INTERVIEWER: Hoe het jy vandag se ervaring geniet in vergelyking met gister s’n (phase 1)?
LE5: *Gister s’n was vir my eintlik beter as vandag s’n*
INTERVIEWER: En hoekom sal jy so se?
LE5: *Gister s’n was ’n verskeidenheid en vandag s’n was een kunstenaar, maar die album was nie vir my so goed gewees nie. Ek het later moeg geraak van die ou se stem die heel tyd. Aan die einde veral, was daar meer musiek [instrumental] as enige sing. Meer instrumental. En hou van die tipes waarmee ek kan assosieer, die stories.*

INTERVIEWER: Was jy ooit verveeld?
LE5: *Ja*
INTERVIEWER: Sal jy se dieselfde rede wat jy nou net genoem het, hoekom jy verveeld was?
LE5: *Ja. Omdat daar meer instrumental dele was. Dit het my nie regtig getref nie. Die eerste twee liedjies was nice, en toe daarna…*
INTERVIEWER: Het jy ooit gevoel jy wou tracks skip?
LE5: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Hoekom?
LE5: Ja, min of meer dieselfde rede as voorheen. Van hulle het 'n lang intro.

INTERVIEWER: Sal jy wat jy vandag gehoor het beskou as kuns?
LE5: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Hoekom sal jy so se?
LE5: Hulle eie identiteit word deur hulle musiek weerspieël. Nie dat ek dink al hulle goed is mooi nie...

INTERVIEWER: Is daar enige iets wat jy wil se van jou ervaring vandag, teen gister?
LE5: Vandag s'n het nie regtig enige emosies opgewek nie. Gister s'n het my lekker laat voel. Dit was rustig en goeters. Die musiek van hulle was so half agro asof hulle kwaad is, maar ek kon nie hoor hoekom nie. Ek sou van musiek .... En jy kon associeer, of wat gaan oor 'n spesifieke ding: wat gaan oor liefde, of gaan oor natuur wat ook al, of skoonheid. Hierdie kon ek nie regtig uitmaak waaroor dit gaan nie. Gister s'n het ek geniet omdat dit 'n verskeidenhied van liedjies was van elkeen en jy kon nie regtig verveeld raak met elke kunstenaar se...

PHASE 3
27 August 2010
Style: Art Rock
Album: A (Coldplay)

INTERVIEWER: Uit vorige ervaring, het jy al ooit 'n verskil gehoor tussen CD quality klank en MP3 (compressed) klank?
LE5: Nee
INTERVIEWER: As jy onder ander luister (soos wanneer jy nie bestuur nie of wanneer jy nie met iemand praat terwyl jy luister nie) dink jy sal 'n verskil hoor?
LE5: Nee. Hang af van die kwaliteit van die MP3.

INTERVIEWER: Hoe belangrik is klank kwaliteit vir jou?
LE5: Ek dink dis belangrik, want dit affekteer die hele atmosfeer, die hele feeling van luister. As die klank swak is of as die CD krap, of as die klank nie goed is nie dan, dit sit jou heeltemal af.

INTERVIEWER: Weet jy wat DVD-A, Blu-Ray (audio) en SACDs is?
LE5: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Het jy al van DVD-A gehoor?
LE5: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Sal jy dit ooit dit oorweeg om 'n speler te koop wat kan DVD-A speel?
LE5: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Dink jy dat die album formaat (collection van liedjies deur een kunstenaar) dink jy dit is relevant in die digitale era?
LE5: Ja, ek dink so. Want, soos wat ek se, jy hoor 'n liedjie van 'n kunstenaar en dan is dit vir jou mooi en dan wil jy meer hoor van daardie kunstenaar. En waar as jy net soos 'n mix (ek hou van 'n mix), maar as jy net 'n gemengde CD vat dan, jy hoor nooit meer van soos een spesifieke
kunstenaar nie. Sy styl, sy klank, seker mense het 'n baie mooi stem, soos ek hou verkskriklik van hierdie Chris Martin se stem. Soos, ek sal meer 'n album koop om sy stem te waardeer.

INTERVIEWER: In vergelyking met gister se ervaring, watter fase het jy meer geniet?
LE5: Vandag.
INTERVIEWER: En tussen al drie?
LE5: Ek sal se, die eerste een. Maar ook vandag s’n, want vandag kon ek sien wat die liedjies se name is op die kassie wat jy vir my gegee het en ek kon deur die boekjie gaan en so aan, waar met die eerste een was dit nou weer lekker want ek het dalk nie geweet wat om te verwag nie
INTERVIEWER: Het jy die album se kuns, die voorblad basies, het jy dit in gedagte gehou toe jy geluister het?
LE5: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Het jy deur die boekjie geblaai binne in?
LE5: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Het jy binne in die boekjie gelees, se nou maar, van wie die album produce het of daardie tipe goeters?
LE5: Ja, ek het.
INTERVIEWER: En die lirieke?
LE5: Hulle het nie regtig nie. Net in die middelblad het hulle so 'n paar goed geskribbel. Maar gewoonlik in ander albums lees ek die lirieke saam met die liedjie, wanneer ek die liedjie luister die eerste keer.
INTERVIEWER: En het jy ooit gekyk na die track list?
LE5: Ja

INTERVIEWER: Wou jy ooit liedjies skip?
LE5: Nee.
INTERVIEWER: En hoekom dink jy so?
LE5: Ek persoonlik hou nogal van Coldplay, maar dit was ook nie soos gister waar dit, gister se liedjies was soos heeltemal verskillend van mekaar. En hierdie het half, soos een vloei. Vandag … ek het dit geniet. Dit was lekker om na te luister.

INTERVIEWER: Sal jy wat jy vandag gehoor het as kuns beskou?
LE5: Ja.
INTERVIEWER: En wat is jou rede daarvoor?
LE5: Ook maar dieselfde as die ander. Want hierdie spesifieke album is kunstig: die cover en die liedjies ook want die musiek is nogals interessant. Dit is soos 'n compile van die verskillende musiek style wat hulle saam sit, die instrumente en die woorde van die musiek. Dit express wat die kunstenaars voel en hoe hulle dit saamst is kunstig...Party van die liedjies se music videos, van hierdie album spesifiek ... is nogal vir my ook kunstig.

[random discussion of some of the music videos]

INTERVIEWER: Weet jy wat 'n concept album is?
LE5: Nee

[interviewer explains that this was a concept album]

INTERVIEWER: Was dit 'n nuwe ervaring vir jou om deur 'n album te luister, jy weet, soos hierdie tipe omgewing waarin ons is, met die CD cover by jou, daardie tipe storie.
LE5: Nee, nie regtig nie. Ek doen dit nogal. Ek luister nie altyd met 'n CD cover nie, maar as ek na 'n album spesifiek luister en nie 'n MP3 mix nie, dan lees ek gewoonlik deur die boekjie...

INTERVIEWER: (Wys CD cover van phase 2 se album): Hierdie is gister se album: hoe hy lyk. Ek weet nie of jy daardeur 'n bietjie wil kyk nie.[looks at CD cover]. My vraag vir jou oor dit is: Sou dit jou ervaring van gister verander het as jy dit by jou gehad het (die boekie en die prentjies)?
LE5: Ek dink so, ja. Dan met gister s’n spesifiek kon ek nie, ek kon nie regtig hoor waaroor die musiek gaan nie. So as ek die album cover by my gehad het en die boekie, dan kon ek meer hoor waaroor die album gaan….’n Mens kan nogal baie aflei deur ‘n cover, waaroor die album gaan.

INTERVIEWER: Jy weet as jy sekere liedjies kry op die Internet, dan as jy hom speel, dan sal jy miskien ‘n klein weergawes van die cover erens kan sien. Dink jy ‘n mens kan dit vergelyk, dat dit dieselfde is as om dit fisies vas te hou, soos wat jy nou daarna kan kyk?
LE5: Nee, dis anders as jy ’n album soos het as wat jy dit sien op ’n screen. Want ek hou van soos deeglik na die producers en so aan, en skrywers, liedjieskrywers [te kyk].

INTERVIEWER: Sekere mense se dat die album is besig is om uit te sterf of die Engelse se, extinct te raak, die album gaan dood, “death of the album”. Dink jy dat ons moet bekommerd wees daaroor, of excited, of ons, dit maak nie saak nie, either way.
LE5: Ek sou se bekommerd. Want as albums uitgaan, soos dit begin uit te sterf, dan gaan kunstenaars ook basically [uitsterf], want hulle stel hulself bekend deur hulle album, nie net deur die een spesifieke liedjie wat miskien dit groot maak nie. …een liedjie wat dit bekend maak, dis hoekom jy die album koop: om meer te hoor. So as die album besig is om “extinct” te raak, dan beteken dit dat artists net “one hit wonder” gaan he. En dan gaan daar minder mense ook in die bedryf ingaan, kunstenaars. En op die ou einde lei [dit] tot min mense wat musiek sing, en dis nie goed nie. Want dan word ons variety kleiner, musiek verskeidenheid

INTERVIEWER: Luister jy na klassieke musiek?
LE5: Nee

INTERVIEWER: Die ander een (vraag) is eintlik meer ‘n persoonlike vraag en dit is omdat jy vroer vir my vertel dat jy in music retailing gewerk het. Jy hoef nie enige name te noem van die companies of waar of so iets nie. Maar al wat ek net vir jou wil vra is, eerstens, wanneer was dit, wanneer het jy daar gewerk in die bedryf?
LE5: Toe ek in Graad 11 was. Graad 11 tot .. ja, ek het ’n jaar en ’n half en dit was in 2007 [she later corrected it as 2008/09]

INTERVIEWER: Dink jy dat mense nog steeds albums koop?
LE5: Ja.

INTERVIEWER: Hoeekom dink jy koop hulle dit?
LE5: Mense koop dit eintlik as geskenke vir ander en dan die wat dit persoonlik wil koop veral in die retail industry koop dit vir collection, soos toe Michael Jackson dood was het daar baie mense sy CDs gekoop, en soos toe Miriam Makeba, Brenda Fassie, daai mense [dood is], dan koop mense hul albums om hul collections aan te vul.

INTERVIEWER: Verkoop compilation albums meer, minder of dieselfde as, se nou maar, 5 jaar terug?
LE5: Meer.

INTERVIEWER: Sal jy dink daar’s ‘n rede daarvoor?
LE5: Ek dink omdat daar ‘n verskeidenheid van liedjies is, al die liedjies waarvan jy hou en party mense wil dalk nie ‘n hele album van die kunstenaar koop nie juis omdat jy nie weet wat om te verwag nie, dan koop hulle maar net ’n compilation album met daardie snit op dit.
Participant LE 6
Criteria form number 16
25 August 2010
PHASE 1:

This interview was conducted in Afrikaans.

INTERVIEWER: Het jy die musiek geniet?
LE6: Ja ek het.
INTERVIEWER: Kan jy vir my se hoekom?
LE6: Wel, dit is almal alles contemporary liedjies en dit was hulle is almal min of meer in
dieselfde genre, jy weet, pop, rock. Dit is alles, jy weet rustige musiek en dit is, dit laat ‘n mens
ontspan.

INTERVIEWER: Was jy ooit verveeld?
LE6: Nee, ek was nie.
INTERVIEWER: Hoekom was jy nie verveeld nie?
LE6: Wel, ek ken baie van die liedjies. So dis bekend, want ek het baie van hulle op die radio
gehoor en so juist vir daardie redes word hulle gereeld gespeel

INTERVIEWER: Sal jy ooit na musiek luister in hierdie tipe omgewing waar ons die speakers net
hier het en die sound system en jy sit net en luister?
LE6: Ja ek sal, want ek dink juist omdat dit so ‘n groot oop venue is. Dit help jy weet dat die klank
deur kom. Acoustics en alles.

INTERVIEWER: Sal jy ooit na musiek luister in hierdie tipe omgewing waar ons die speakers net
hier het en die sound system en jy sit net en luister?
LE6: Ja ek sal, want ek dink juist omdat dit so ‘n groot oop venue is. Dit help jy weet dat die klank
deur kom. Acoustics en alles.

INTERVIEWER: Sal jy wat jy vandag gehoor het, sal jy dit consider as ‘n album?
LE6: Wel nie eintlik nie, nee. Juis, daar is baie verskillende genres. Ek meen, jy sal nou nie Owl
City en Greenday saam op ‘n album sit nie, glo ek nou. Want ek bedoel, Owl City is meer pop en
Greenday is meer alternative rock. Die genres is ‘n bietjie verskillend.

INTERVIEWER: Het jy al ooit wettig musiek gedownload?
LE6: Wel nee, ek het nie eintlik betaal daarvoor nie. Ek het net ander mense se musiek gecopy,
ja, en gevat basies.

INTERVIEWER: Is daar ‘n rede hoekom jy dit nog nie legally gedoen het nie?
LE6: Wel, ek het nie altyd toegang tot die Internet nie en ja, ek dink baie van hierdie websites is
ook eintlik nogal duur om MP3s en so te download.

INTERVIEWER: Dink jy dat nou dat ons die format het, MP3s, wat klein is en daar is baie
daarvan beskikbaar, dink jy dat dit jou meer na meer musiek laat luister?
liedjies kry waarvoor jy soek, waar jy vroer jare moes jy ure in Musica spandeer het, deur al die
CDs gaan om te kyk na watter een of twee liedjies op ‘n hele album. So ek sal se, definitief.

INTERVIEWER: Versamel jy ooit musiek?
LE6: Ja, ek doen
INTERVIEWER: Is dit meestal albums of singles
LE6: Singles, eintlik
INTERVIEWER: Is daar ‘n rede daarvoor, spesifiek singles?
LE6: Ja, want gewoonlik, jy hoor een liedjie, maar dit is net dalk die ene waarvan jy hou. Jy hou
dalk nie van die ander een nie, dan kry jy net altyd die een nie die ander nie. Soos, een artist kan
gewoonlik ‘n liedjie maak waarvan jy hou en dan bring hy ‘n ander een uit waarvan jy nie hou nie.
INTERVIEWER: Besit jy 'n iPod of soortgelyke portable music device?
LE6: Tel 'n selfoon?
INTERVIEWER: Ja
LE6: Ja
INTERVIEWER: Het jy die selfoon gekoop vir daardie rede, of was dit een van die redes hoekom jy die foorn gekoop het?
LE6: Nee, nie eintlik nie
INTERVIEWER: Sou jy wou misskien 'n iPod koop?
LE6: Ek sal, beslis. Ek sal graag 'n iPod wil he.
INTERVIEWER: Is daar 'n rede hoekom presies 'n iPod?
LE6: Wel, juis omdat jy so 'n klomp liedjies alles op een device kan he. En ja, dis maklik om dit saam met jou dra. Jy kan enige tyd, enige plek kan jy na jou musiek luister. Behalwe natuurlik in die klas!
INTERVIEWER: Behalwe as jy agter sit in die klas!

INTERVIEWER: Sal jy wat jy vandag gehoor het, sou jy dit sien as kuns?
LE6: Ek dink so. Ja, want ek bedoel, enige musiek basies, dis 'n kuns om actually, jy weet, 'n instrument te kan bespeel, om lirieke te kan skryf. Ek sal se dit is 'n kuns.

INTERVIEWER: Nou, dit is al wat ek hier op die agenda het. As daar enige iets ander is wat jy wil se van die ervaring?
LE6: Wel, ja. Ek kan se dit was 'n aangename ondervinding. Ja, dit was lekker want jy voel nie, jy is rustig, jy is op jou eie. Daar is nie enige distractions om jou nie.

PHASE 2:
26 August 2010
Style: Hard rock
Album: B (Kings of Leon)

INTERVIEWER: Luister jy gewoonlik na albums, behalwe vir vandag?
LE6: Ja ek doen
INTERVIEWER: Wat is dit wat jy hou van albums?
LE6: Wel ja, soos, jy luister en jy sien en jy kan alles hoor wat die kunstenaar doen. En ek bedoel, as jy een song van 'n kunstenaar ken en jy hou van dit, sal jy altyd daarna uitsien om na die ander ook te luister.

INTERVIEWER: Hoeveel het jy vandag se ervaring geniet in vergelyking met gister s'n (phase 1)?
LE6: Wel ek sal se ek het dit ietwat meer geniet.
INTERVIEWER: En hoekom sal jy so se?
LE6: Want, aangesien dit van een kunstenaar is, en ja, dit is alles dieselfde genre en dieselfde styl musiek. So dit is nie alles, soos dit wissel af, soos hierdie een liedjie, hy volg die ander liedjie. Dis nie so random nie.
INTERVIEWER: Is jy 'n fan van Kings of Leon?
LE6: Nee eintlik nie, maar ek moet se, na wat ek vandag geluister het, hou ek van hulle musiek en ek kan daarna luister

INTERVIEWER: Was jy ooit verveeld?
LE6: Nee, want die liedjies bind jou. Dit is 'n genre waarvan ek hou. Dit is nog steeds rustig. Dit is ontspannend.
INTERVIEWER: Het jy ooit gevoel dat jy wou tracks skip?
LE6: Nee, nie eintlik nie. Want dit was asof die musiek alles in mekaar vloei

INTERVIEWER: Sal jy wat jy vandag gehoor het, as kuns beskou?
LE6: Ek sal se ja
INTERVIEWER: En hoekom?
LE6: Wel, soos wat ek gister gese het, ek dink dis ‘n skill om liedjies te kan skryf, om musiek te kan maak. Ja ek se dit is kuns.

INTERVIEWER: Is daar enigiets anders waaroor jy wil comment oor vandag se ervaring teenoor gister s’n?
LE6: Wel, ek sal se omdat ek kon kies waarna ek wou luister, sal ek se dit meer geniet.

PHASE 3
27 August 2010
Style: Hard Rock
Album A (Muse)

INTERVIEWER: Eerstens, ek het vergeet om vir jou ‘n vraag te vra die heel eerste keer en dis toe ek vir jou gevra het “versamel jy musiek” toe se jy ja, maar ek het nooit vir jou gevra hoekom nie. Is daar missien ‘n rede?
LE6: Wel, ek luister gewoonlik na musiek in die aande wanneer ek wil ontspan of soms wanneer ek, soos byvoorbeeld as ek lees of iets dan sal ek gewoonlik altyd ‘n CD opsit.

INTERVIEWER: Uit vorige ervaring uit, het jy al ooit ‘n verskil gehoor tussen CD klank kwaliteit en dit van MP3 (compressed, kleiner formaat) gehoor?
LE6: Ja, ek kom agter die klank kwaliteit gewoonlik by ‘n MP3 is ietwat beter. Veral as jy dit byvoorbeeld op iets soos ‘n iPod of ‘n selfoon speel, jy hoor actually soos instrumente en klank wat jy nie altyd gewoonlik op ‘n CD oor ‘n CD player of selfs op die radio sou hoor nie
INTERVIEWER: Sal jy bereid wees om ekstra geld te betaal vir hoere klank kwaliteit?
LE6: Ek sal se ja, want ek bedoel, jy koop iets en jy verwag dat jy, jy weet, waarde vir jou geld sal kry.

INTERVIEWER: Hoe belangrik is klank kwaliteit vir jou?
LE6: Ek sou se dis baie belangrik, want klank, it adds to die hele experience daarvan om na musiek te luister. En ek bedoel, as jy nie goeie klank het nie, kan jy nie eintlik, jy weet, soos die liedjie of die musiek geniet nie.

INTERVIEWER: Weet jy wat DVD-A, Blu-Ray (audio) en SACDs is?
LE6: Ek dink ek het al daarvan gehoor. Ek het daar so ‘n CD. Dit is ‘n gewone CD, maar hy bevat actually soos ‘n video ook.
INTERVIEWER: Sal jy bereid wees ‘n speler te koop, soos ‘n CD player ding, wat hierdie goed kan speel, se nou maar, SACDs, en DVD-Audio en Blu Ray saam met jou normale CDs?
LE6: Ek sal, ja. As ek voel dis die moeite werd en ek wil dit he, sal ek dit beslis koop

INTERVIEWER: Dink jy dat die album format, dink jy dis relevant in die digitale era?
LE6: Wel, dis ’n bietjie moeilik om te se dat dit relevant is, want deesdae, jy hoef net na ‘n website toe te gaan en jy kan enige liedjies download daarso en in ‘n mate sal jy se dit is relevant, maar dit is, ek sal se dit is besig om, jy weet, uit te sterf en dit maak plek vir websites
waar jy MP3s kan download en so. Weinig mense dink ek wil deesdae nog ‘n album koop. Hulle soek net spesifieke liedjies.

INTERVIEWER: In vergelyking met gister se ervaring, watter een het jy die meeste geniet?
LE6: Ek sal se vandag se ervaring. Dit was juist omdat ek nie juist die band, Muse, se musiek ken nie, was dit eintlik vervressend om daarna te luister. En dit is ook, hulle musiek is soveel anders as wat jy gewoon is, as jy vergelyk met wat jy deesdae op die radio hoor.

INTERVIEWER: In vergelyking met die eerste ervaring?
LE6: Ek sal se ek het vandag s’n ook meer geniet as wat ek die eerste een geniet het. Ek sal se juist omdat die style so verskillend is.

INTERVIEWER: Het jy ooit terwyl jy geluister het, aan die album cover gedink?
LE6: Ja, ek het. En ek het ook na die lirieke gekyk wat aan die binnekant gedruk is van die album cover.

INTERVIEWER: En daar is ander goed ook, tien teen een daar binne van wie dit produce het?
LE6: Dis reg, ja…en wie speel watter instrumente.

INTERVIEWER: Het jy ooit na die track list agter gekyk?
LE6: Ja, ek het daarna gekyk.

INTERVIEWER: Wou jy ooit enige tracks skip?
LE6: Nee, ek wou nie want die liedjies vloei so gemaklik in mekaar. Dit is nie asof jy eintlik juist een kan skip om na die ander een te luister nie, want hulle het almal ’n musikale verbintenis.

INTERVIEWER: Het jy ooit terwyl jy geluister het aan die album cover hierso en jy doen niks anders nie?
LE6: Dit was beslis ’n nuwe ervaring. Ek hou gewoonlik na die liedjies vloei so gemaklik in mekaar. Dit is nie asof jy eintlik juist een kan skip om na die ander een te luister nie, want hulle het almal ’n musikale verbintenis.

INTERVIEWER: Hoe luister jy gewoonlik na musiek (watse tipe omgewing)?
LE6: Gewoonlik is ek in my kamer. Dan sal ek dan byvoorbeeld soos ’n CD aansit of soos wanneer ek op die radio moet luister. Andersens, as ek gewoonlik op die rekenaar werk dan sal ek my playlist vir my opstel en sal ek daarna luister.

INTERVIEWER: (Wys CD cover van phase 2 se album): Gister het jy geluister na hierdie album. As jy wil kyk dan kan jy. [kyk deur boekie]

INTERVIEWER: My vraag vir jou daaroor is: As jy dit by jou gehad het gister, sou dit jou ervaring van gister verander het?
LE6: Dit mak dit eintlik half meer aangenaam, sal ek se.

INTERVIEWER: Daar is mense wat se die album besig is om uit te sterf of hulle praat van “the death of the album”. Dink jy of voel jy ons moet bekommerd wees daaroor of ons moet excited voel daaroor of ons moet nie bother nie.
LE5: Ek sal se ons moet bekommerd wees in ’n mate. Juis jy weet omdat jy deesdae net op die Internet kan gaan en die liedjies net kan download wat jy wil he. Dit is nie dat jy fisies na Musica of na Look and listen toe gaan en fisies ’n album koop nie. Ek sal se ons is nog nie, jy weet, daar dat albums heeltemal gaan uitfasere soos wat, as ek nou ’n wilde voorbeeld kan vat, soos wat video tape uitgefasere het om plek te maak vir die DVD nie. Dan kan gebeur dat die album later heeltemal afgestel word.
INTERVIEWER: Luister jy na klassieke musiek?

LE6: Ja, ek doen af en toe, dan sal ek byvoorbeeld na ‘n opera of iets luister.

INTERVIEWER: Sal jy, as jy nou klassieke musiek sal koop, sal jy se nou maar (weet; ‘n simfonie het mos meer as een beweging, se nou maar vier of so bewegings) sal jy dit oorweeg om jou bewegings apart te koop, se nou maar, ek wil nie die tweede beweging he nie, so ek koop net 1, 3 en 4.


INTERVIEWER: Sal jou keuse van klassieke werk…jou besluit verander om hulle separately te download as bewegings?

LE6: Ja, ek sal se dit kan dalk. As ek dalk van een beweging hou, maar ek hou dalk nie van [‘n] ander een nie, dan sal ek dit oorweeg om dit dan apart te download.


LE6: Ek sou se, ja, dit is ewe belangrik. Ek dink jy kan elkeen, alhoewel hulle verskillend is, jy kan elkeen waardeer vir wat dit is. Jy probeer dit in die lig sien as, ok dit is ‘n simfonie, dit het verskillende bewegings, ek waardeer dit soos [dit] is. Dit is ‘n Mazurka of iets. Dit het net een beweging. Ek waardeer dit nog steeds vir hoe dit is.

INTERVIEWER: Luister jy na opera?

LE6: Ja, ek doen.

INTERVIEWER: Sal jy dit verkies om na die hele opera te luister of maar ‘n duet of ‘n aria uit die opera uit?

LE6: Gewoonlik vir my persoonlik staan ‘n aria meer uit as wat mens byvoorbeeld na die hele opera sal sien. Jy hou dalk nie eintlik van die storie of dramatiese aspek van opera nie, maar jy hoor dalk ‘n aria of dalk seifs ‘n duet wat vir jou uitstaan en jy waardeer dit.

INTERVIEWER: Is daar enigiets waaroor jy wil comment, as jy terugdink aan al 3 ervarings?

LE6: Wel, al wat ek basies kan se is ek het dit geniet. Jy weet, dit was ‘n nuwe ondervinding. Ja, dit het beslis my ‘n bietjie anderste ook laat dink oor musiek en …alles wat daarmee gepaard gaan, die ding van albums en die manier waarop ons musiek koop en daarna luister is besig om te verander.
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE – LISTENING EXPERIMENTS

PHASE 1:
1. Did you enjoy the music?
   **If yes,** why did you enjoy the music?
   **If no,** why didn’t you enjoy the music?
   (expecting participant to elaborate on possibly the sound quality of MP3s, but mostly on the experience of listening to the music)

2. Were you ever bored?
   **If yes,** why? (expected response: too long, no friends with me; I never listen to music in this environment)
   **If no,** why? (expected response: good variety of music)

3. Would you ever listen to music in this environment (Did it feel natural?)?
   **If yes,** why? (Expected response: It’s a great experience)
   **If no,**
   (expecting participant to elaborate on whether he or she listens to music while busy with other things e.g. studying, reading, going to the gym, driving, walking on campus from one class to the next, walking to the shop)
   **If no,** what is missing/wrong with it?

4. Would you consider what you heard today as an album?
   **If yes,** why? (expected response: it’s a collection of music organised as a playlist…of course it’s an album)
   **If no,** why? (expected response: the songs are not all from the same artist, time period, genre; there was no coherence or connection between the songs.)

5. Have you ever legally downloaded music?
If yes, did you download them mostly as singles or as albums?
  If as singles, why do you prefer singles?
  Have you ever downloaded an album?
If no, why? (expected response: because you get it for free instead, or you are afraid of identity theft on the Internet or using your credit card on the Internet)

6. Do you think that the advent of MP3s made you listen to more music?

7. Do you collect music?
If yes, why?
  Do you collect mostly singles or albums?
  If mostly singles, why?
  If mostly albums, why?
If no, why?

8. Do you own an iPod or similar portable music device?
If yes, what made you buy one?
(expected responses: my friends have them; it’s cool and I love the way it looks and feels; it’s portable and prefect for my busy lifestyle; I knew that I would use it a lot)
If no, why?

9. Would you consider what you heard today as art?
If yes, why?
If no, why not?

PHASE 2:
(Before the CD is played, the investigator has to ask the participant whether he or she has heard the music before, and if yes, whether he or she is a fan of the particular artist)

1. Do you listen to albums?
   If yes, what do you like about albums?
   If no, what don’t you like about albums?

2. How much did you enjoy this music compared to last week’s listening experience (phase 1)?
   If a lot, why did you enjoy the music?
   If not as much, why?
   (expecting participant to elaborate on the experience of listening to the music; maybe boring as he or she does not know the music; maybe there is something missing? Maybe it’s the MP3 quality sound? )
   If no difference, what could make the listening experience more enjoyable?

3. Were you ever bored?
   If yes, why? (expected response: too long, no friends with me; I never listen to music in this environment)
   If no, why? (expected response: good variety of music)
   If no, what is missing/wrong with it?
   (expecting participant to discuss the missing CD cover; art work; liner notes)
   (expecting participant to elaborate on whether he or she listens to music while busy with other things e.g. studying, reading, going to the gym, driving, walking on campus from one class to the next, walking to the shop)

4. Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?
   If yes, why?
   If yes, if it was a different album, would you have wanted to skip tracks?
   If no, why?
5. Would you consider what you heard today as art?
   If yes, why?
   If no, why not?

PHASE 3
(Before the CD is played, the investigator has to ask the participant whether he or she has heard the music before, and if yes, whether he or she is a fan of the particular artist)

1. From previous experience, have you ever noticed the difference between CD-quality audio and the compressed (MP3) audio?
   If no, if you listen under different circumstances (not while driving, in conversation etc.) would you hear a difference?
   If yes, would you be prepared to pay extra money for better sound quality?

2. How important is sound quality to you?

3. Do you know what DVD-A, Blu-Ray (audio) and SACDs are?
   If yes, would you ever consider buying them if you owned a disc player that was able to play multiple formats (CDs and all of the above)?
     If no, why?
     If yes, why?
   If no, move on

4. Do you think that the album format is relevant in the digital age?
   If yes, why?
   If no, why?

5. Compared to phase 2 of the listening experience, how much did you enjoy the third phase?
If more than phase 2, why? (expected responses: mentioning cover art, tangibility etc. to be the difference)
If less, why?
If the same, what do you think would have made either one more enjoyable? (expected response: a variety in music;)
Did you keep the album art in your mind while listening to the album?
Did you browse through the CD booklet?
Did you read the liner notes?
Did you read the lyrics (if applicable)
Did you look at the tracklist?

6. Did you ever feel the need to skip tracks?
   If yes, why?
   If yes, if it was a different album, would you have wanted to skip tracks?
   If no, why?

7. Would you consider what you heard today as art?
   If yes, why?
   If no, why not?

8. Was this a new experience for you?
   If yes, why?
   If no, why?

9. (shows CD cover of album from phase 2): This is the cover of the album you listened to last time. If you want to look at it, you can. If you had this with you at the last experience, would you have enjoyed it more, would it have changed your experience?
   If yes, why?
   If no, why?
10. People are basically saying that the album is dying out or will go extinct.
   Do you think we should be worried, excited or not really bothered?
   **If excited**, why?
   **If worried**, why?
   **If not bothered**, why?

11. Do you listen to classical music?
   **If yes**, would you consider buying classical music as separate downloads (in the case of a multi-movement work, only buying the first movement for example)?
      If yes, why?
      If no, why? (expected response: the movements should not be separated from one another as they form a coherent whole and make more sense as an entity; missing out on, for example, Beethoven’s emotional journey if you only listen to the last movement…no idea of how he got to that point in the work)
   If yes or no to the above, would the choice of a classical work affect your choice when downloading tracks separately or as an entity?
   Do you consider single-movement compositions (e.g. Ravel – Rhapsody for violin; Kreisler showpiece; Chopin Preludes, Mazurkas, Polonaises) of equal importance to large-scale compositions?
   Do you listen to operatic music?
   If yes, do you prefer to listen to the entire opera or selected arias, duets, overtures etc.
   **If no**, leave out the above questions and conclude the discussion.
APPENDIX C

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST – LISTENING EXPERIMENT

PHASE 1:

- Can’t sit still (moves around)
- Looks bored
- Looks irritated
- Looks around the room
- Is busy texting or chatting on his or her mobile phone
- Looks at the printed tracklist
- Does not look at the printed tracklist

PHASE 2:

- Can’t sit still (moves around)
- Looks bored
- Looks irritated
- Looks around the room
- Is busy texting or chatting on his or her mobile phone
- Looks like he or she is concentrating on the music, the song lyrics, the message etc.
- Looks relieved when a song is over
- Looks relieved when the album is over
- Looks at the printed tracklist
- Does not look at the printed tracklist
PHASE 3:

- Can’t sit still (moves around)
- Looks bored
- Looks irritated
- Looks around the room
- Is busy texting or chatting on his or her mobile phone
- Looks like he or she is concentrating on the music, the song lyrics, the message etc.
- Looks like he or she is interested in the album art
- Does not look at the cover art (looks at the art frequently and for a long time)
- Taking the CD booklet out of the case
- Looks like he or she is interested in the song lyrics printed in the booklet (looks at the song lyrics frequently)
- Looks like he or she is interested in the liner notes printed in the booklet (looks at the liner notes frequently)
- Looks like he or she appreciates the design of the CD booklet (browses through the CD booklet, looking at each page for a long period of time)
- Quickly browses through CD booklet
- Does not take the CD booklet out of the case
- Looks at the track list
- Doesn’t look at the tracklist
- Looks relieved when a song is over
- Looks relieved when the album is over
INTERVIEW SCHEDULE – Focus group

Here follows a copy of the article used to introduce the discussion. This was given to participants in advance.

Gartner Says 2008 Should Be the Last Christmas for Retail CDs

Music Industry Must Move Away from Retail CD and Invest in Online Distribution

Stamford, Conn., December 22, 2008

The music industry must move away from the retail CD as its primary revenue generator before Christmas 2009, according to Gartner. Gartner said that reliance on revenue from the sale of prerecorded CDs is hindering the music industry from fully embracing online distribution opportunities.

“By propping up the CD business, rather than fully investing in online distribution alternatives, the major labels and the larger music industry have neither succeeded in stamping out piracy nor done much to recreate the business models of the old ‘record business,’” said Mike McGuire, research vice president at Gartner. “Music labels should instead emphasize ‘digital first,’ making all new releases and catalog issues via digital services and moving CDs to an on-demand publishing mode.”

In 2007, online distribution represented about 23 percent of revenue in the U.S, and about 15 percent worldwide. Gartner said that while the music industry’s reliance on the disc worked well from 1985 though the U.S. market’s revenue peak in 2000, CD sales are now dropping rapidly in major markets worldwide and are unlikely to regain market share. As a percentage of total revenue in the U.S. market, physical media (CDs, LPs, DVD-A and so on) have gone from 91 percent of revenue in 2005 to 77 percent in 2007 and there is also evidence that physical retailers are even reducing the physical floor space dedicated to CDs.

Enabling the transition away from retail music CDs toward online distribution is now in sight, given that 77 percent of U.S. households (a total of 96 million connections) will have broadband connections by 2012. Beyond these consumers, the alternative distribution afforded by Wi-Fi-enabled notebooks and rapidly improving media-enabled mobile phones pose opportunities that provide multiple paths for marketing, promotion and distribution outside the consumer’s home.
By eliminating the cost of the CDs through a new burn-on-demand model, labels could cut out the expense of trying to anticipate demand and reduce costs associated with shipping. Songs or albums would always be distributed online first, leveraging the burgeoning social network sector as awareness and promotional tools to drive sales at online sites, and the growing number of mobile music services.

“The industry's comfort with past marketing and promotional practices centered on CD launches is ingrained and difficult to give up. But the reality is that digital natives and immigrants are more interested in convenience and choice,” said Mr. McGuire. “This is not to say that the physical CD would disappear altogether. Rather, it could shift to being a promotional tool to be sold or given away at concerts for example.”

As well as the move toward ‘digital first,’ Gartner recommends that labels focus on the limitless ways digital content (that is, songs, videos, lyrics and communiqués) can be delivered, consumed and monetized. Gartner also advocates the development of comprehensive and flexible licensing regimes to fully optimize online services.

Additional information is available in the Gartner report “Christmas 2008: The Last Year of the Retail CD.” The report is available on Gartner’s Web site at http://www.gartner.com/DisplayDocument?ref=g_search&id=829014&subref=simplesearch.

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About Gartner:

Gartner, Inc. (NYSE: IT) is the world's leading information technology research and advisory company. Gartner delivers the technology-related insight necessary for its clients to make the right decisions, every day. From CIOs and senior IT leaders in corporations and government agencies, to business leaders in high-tech and telecom enterprises and professional services
firms, to technology investors, Gartner is the indispensable partner to 60,000 clients in 10,000 distinct organizations. Through the resources of Gartner Research, Gartner Consulting and Gartner Events, Gartner works with every client to research, analyze and interpret the business of IT within the context of their individual role. Founded in 1979, Gartner is headquartered in Stamford, Connecticut, U.S.A., and has 4,000 associates, including 1,200 research analysts and consultants in 80 countries. For more information, visit www.gartner.com.

SOURCE: http://www.gartner.com/it/page.jsp?id=844812

The pilot focus group agenda follows:

- Do you agree with the author of this article (show of hands)
- Why do you agree or disagree?
- What do you like about albums?
- What don’t you like about albums?
- What do you like about downloadable singles?
- What don’t you like about digital downloads?
- What is an album experience?
- How important are the tangible characteristics of an album to you?
- (if applicable) Why did you buy an iPod or portable media player?
APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANT CRITERIA FORM

Name:………………………………………………...…Contact No.:…………………
The following information will not be used for data collection but purely serves as part of the participant selection process.

Please tick the appropriate answer

1. Are you a registered full time student at the NMMU?
   □ Yes
   □ No

2. Are you between 18 and 25 years of age?
   □ Yes
   □ No

3. Do you listen to music as a primary or background activity at least once a week?
   □ Yes
   □ No

4. Do you listen to Compact Discs (CDs) at least once a week?
   □ Yes
   □ No

5. Do you listen to MP3s (or any other purely digital format of recorded music) at least once a week?
   □ Yes
   □ No

6. Have you bought any CDs in the last five years (since 2004)?
   □ Yes
   □ No

7. Have you ever bought 55 MP3s (or any other purely digital format of recorded music) either online or via your mobile/cellular phone?
   □ Yes
   □ No

8. Do you own an Apple iPod (this does not refer to any other portable music player)?
   □ Yes
   □ No

9. Do you perform music (vocalist and/or instrumentalist)?
   □ Yes
   □ No

55 Online stores in South Africa include the Nokia Music Store.
10. Are you a registered student at the NMMU music department?
   □ No

(Filled in by researcher)Code: ...............
Dear Participant

You are being asked to participate in a research study. We will provide you with the necessary information to assist you to understand the study and explain what would be expected of you (participant). These guidelines would include the risks, benefits, and your rights as a study subject. Please feel free to ask the researcher to clarify anything that is not clear to you.

To participate, it will be required of you to provide a written consent that will include your signature, date and initials to verify that you understand and agree to the conditions.

You have the right to query concerns regarding the study at any time. Telephone numbers of the researcher are provided. Please feel free to call these numbers.

This study aims to investigate the death of the album and listening habits in the digital age.

You will be asked to take part in a listening experiment consisting of three phases on three different days each followed by a brief interview to discuss your listening experience. As this study follows a qualitative approach, you are encouraged to provide the researcher
with honest and detailed opinions. Furthermore, it is important that you are aware of the fact that the ethical integrity of the study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee (Human) of the university. The REC-H consists of a group of independent experts that has the responsibility to ensure that the rights and welfare of participants in research are protected and that studies are conducted in an ethical manner. Studies cannot be conducted without REC-H’s approval. Queries with regard to your rights as a research subject can be directed to the Research Ethics Committee (Human), Department of Research Capacity Development, PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, 6031.

If no one could assist you, you may write to: The Chairperson of the Research, Technology and Innovation Committee, PO Box 77000, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Port Elizabeth, 6031.

Participation in research is completely voluntary. You are not obliged to take part in any research.

If you do partake, you have the right to withdraw at any given time.

The study may be terminated at any time by the researcher or the Research Ethics Committee (Human).

Although your identity will at all times remain confidential, the results of the research study may be presented at scientific conferences or in specialist publications.

This informed consent statement has been prepared in compliance with current statutory guidelines.

Yours sincerely

Liska du Preez
RESEARCHER
Date 24 August 2010

Ref: H 09 ART MUS 001

Contact person: Liska du Preez

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Yours sincerely

Liska du Preez
RESEARCHER
INFORMED CONSENT FORMS FOR FOCUS GROUPS AND LISTENING EXPERIMENTS

NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM – Focus groups

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>Principal investigator</td>
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<td>Address</td>
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<td>Postal Code</td>
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<td>Contact telephone number (private numbers not advisable)</td>
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A. DECLARATION BY OR ON BEHALF OF PARTICIPANT

I, the participant and the undersigned

ID number

Address (of participant)

A.1 HEREBY CONFIRM AS FOLLOWS:

\textsuperscript{56} The title of the dissertation as well as the research objectives listed in these consent forms and participant letters have been adjusted since the use of these forms, in order to match the current nature of the study.
I, the participant, was invited to participate in the above-mentioned research project that is being undertaken by Liska du Preez from The Department of Music; Faculty of Arts of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.
The following aspects have been explained to me, the participant:

2.1 **Aim:**
The objective of this study is to investigate whether the album in a physical format is relevant in the digital age and, if so, whether the alternative (MP3) is an acceptable format to reproduce the album experience. If the album in its physical form does have a future I wish to investigate whether the high-fidelity formats (DVD-A, SACD, Blu-Ray) are good enough to reproduce the album experience.

2.2 **Procedures:**
I understand that my voice will be recorded during the interview using a sound recorder.

2.3 **Confidentiality:**
My identity will not be revealed in any discussion, description or scientific publications by the investigators. I understand that my anonymity can not be guaranteed amongst focus group participants, and that my identity will not be revealed in any publication or to any other party.

2.4 **Access to findings:**
Any new information or benefit that develops during the course of the study will be shared as follows: I will have access to sound recordings, all interpretations made by the investigator using the data I supplied, as well as the final research report by contacting the investigator or his/her supervisor via email or by phoning the telephone numbers supplied in this document and the letter.

2.5 **Voluntary participation / refusal / discontinuation:**
My participation is voluntary

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<th>YES</th>
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<td>FALSE</td>
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My decision whether or not to participate will in no way affect my present or future care / employment / lifestyle

3. **The information above was explained to me/the participant by:**

Liska du Preez

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<th>Afrikaans</th>
<th>English</th>
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and I am in command of this language.

I was given the opportunity to ask questions and all these questions were answered satisfactorily.
4. No pressure was exerted on me to consent to participation and I understand that I may withdraw at any stage without penalisation.

5. Participation in this study will not result in any additional cost to myself.

### A.2 I HEREBY VOLUNTARILY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED PROJECT:

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<th>Signed/confirmed at</th>
<th>on</th>
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Signature of participant

Signature of witness:

Full name of witness:
STATEMENT BY OR ON BEHALF OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

1. I, Liska du Preez Declare that:
   
   I have explained the information given in this document to (name of patient/participant)

2. He / she was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions;

3. This conversation was conducted in Afrikaans English
   
   And no translator was used

4. I have detached Section C and handed it to the participant YES NO
   
   Signed/confirmed at o n

   Signature of witness:
   Signature of interviewer

   Signature of interviewer

   Full name of witness:

IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO PARTICIPANT

Dear participant

Thank you for your participation in this study. Should, at any time during the study:

- an emergency arise as a result of the research, or
- you require any further information with regard to the study.

Kindly contact Liska du Preez

at telephone number +2772 561 6889

or email liska.dupreez@gmail.com
NELSON MANDELA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
INFORMATION AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM – Listening Experiments

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A. DECLARATION BY OR ON BEHALF OF PARTICIPANT

I, the participant and the undersigned

ID number

Address (of participant)

Initial

A.1 HEREBY CONFIRM AS follows:

I, the participant, was invited to participate in the above-mentioned research project

that is being undertaken by Liska du Preez

From The Department of Music; Faculty of Arts

of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

Initial
## THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS HAVE BEEN EXPLAINED TO ME, THE PARTICIPANT:

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## THE INFORMATION ABOVE WAS EXPLAINED TO ME/THE PARTICIPANT BY:

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<th>3.</th>
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</table>

Signature of witness:

Full name of witness:

Signature of participant:
STATEMENT BY OR ON BEHALF OF INVESTIGATOR(S)

1. Liska du Preez declare that:

2. I have explained the information given in this document to (name of patient/participant)

2. He/she was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions;

3. This conversation was conducted in Afrikaans English

And no translator was used

4. I have detached Section C and handed it to the participant

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IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO PARTICIPANT

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