

## **Between Isolation and Integration: Creating the Jazz Aesthetic in Acoustic-Electronic recordings**

*By Brendan Williams*

This paper discusses the practices and techniques of recording acoustic-electronic trio Gogo Penguin for their 2016 release 'Man Made Object (Blue Note Records) produced and engineered by Joe Reiser and the presenter, Brendan Williams. These practices aimed to recreate the jazz aesthetic already achieved in Williams' recordings for Gondwana Records, with various releases nominated for MOBO awards, the Mercury Music Prize and winning the 2015 iTunes jazz album of the year award. As Philip McIntire (2015) shows, older technologies often overlap with the new. Williams' work for Gondwana demonstrated that the choice of technology - in particular the perceived division between digital and analogue - was not the main factor in creating the warm 'signature sound' (Zagorski-Thomas 2014), reminiscent of 1950's Columbia recordings. Those recordings made use of large recording spaces and clear sightlines which came to define a jazz aesthetic in the recorded sound, which Williams showed could be captured even with contemporary digital equipment. However, genre-crossing Gogo Penguin's aesthetic, which incorporates ideas from electronic artists such as Aphex Twin, and their rock-influenced performance style, meant that a simple application of these established recording methods was not possible. The paper describes the practice-led research methods which allowed the "large-space" signature sound to be created even whilst utilising isolation methods more common to other popular music genres.