

Abstract

This bachelor thesis focuses on work of queer musicians in Russia during the period following the approval of the so-called gay propaganda law (2013). This law has been broadly criticized both in Russia and abroad and has notably influenced the development of domestic queer culture. The work examines social and cultural background of the post-soviet period in relation to queer aesthetics focusing on music production by the band HRISTINA as a case study. The band was founded in 2017 in Moscow. Apart from composition, singer and lyrics writer Hristina Zarembo is engaged in posting in social media on her sources of inspiration and the meanings of her music. Being a queer woman, she also comments on the issues of gender and sexuality. The work aims to study the relationship between music and text in HRISTINA's songs. Accompanying texts, comments on social media and an essay dedicated to one of the songs discussed are also part of the analysis. The analysis discovers the way the singer reflects the legacy of the early post-soviet period on behalf of her own experience of the queer. The period of the 90s is therefore taken into account as the time after the fall of the Soviet Union when an immense growth of queer aesthetics took place. The work also shows that both musicians and critics consider this period (despite its social and economic instability) a cultural topos to which nowadays (not only) queer production tends to refer. The idea of some special temporality that emerged inside the discourse of the 90s, that is, the notion of a broader decade and its projecting into the present in a form of various references — this idea is therefore an integral part of the musical production in question. The analysis of HRISTINA's work shows how connections are being found between Russian art and artists' experience of the queer, that is, the experience that has been silenced for long by the official discourse. One of the key issues of the work is this linking of silenced queer past with today's queer music production by reclaiming well known authors their queer dimension, and therefore making a queer history of Russian culture. The thesis is theoretically grounded in current literature in a field of queer and popular music studies.