

Radioradio

Music Radio as it could be: songs about radio

Statement

it's about time Radio Art reclaims Music Radio. Which has always involved a sensual approach to the medium, as well as musical savvy: this is why the best Pop Music Radio was broadcast at night, and often the Dj was as important as the music. The listeners always came out with something bigger than the sum of the ingredients: Music Radio was a sonic, psychic and sometime introspective journey.

In Europe today, Music Radio (in the classic meaning of the word, talk and tunes) is mostly made of selections created by software, programmed to know what you will like, accompanied by generic talk. The result is that the musical palette offered by radio in 2016 is smaller than ever. And not because the listeners prefer a simpler radio experience, but because more daring choices wouldn't go well with the main ingredient of commercial music radio: advertising. In the US the situation is different because of satellite radio's endless choice of music channels, mostly devoted to single genres: not exactly adventurous broadcasting (with some notable exceptions, like Bob Dylan's *Theme Time Radio Hour* on Sirius).

On the Internet, every music streaming provider also offers a "radio" service: music you will certainly enjoy, automatically created according to your previous choices. They might call it radio but, as I've written elsewhere, "it's a silence filler, a porn-like music experience (another field where people only watch what they will certainly like), sonic gratification, acoustic wallpaper – anything but radio." Popstar curated playlists don't seem to do the trick either. For different reasons, I also don't find Music Podcasts very exciting. I love the idea (Music Radio made by the people for the people), I enjoy some shows, but generally I find the formats pretty boring. Unless they're produced by actual radio stations, like PBS, Music Podcasts are just some folks talking about music, and then playing it (unless they're Dj sets, which is an entirely different format, also not new). You get to hear great tunes, but the form is ancient, derivative and often poorly executed. I know exactly why: I've had a live Music Radio show three times a week for years, in the 1980s. All you can do is stay informed,

play good music and try not to repeat songs too often. It takes time to make interesting Radio, and the better you want to make it, the longer it takes: the production costs go up, and Podcasts are usually free.

For some time, I've been curating a web page called MOSS ([sergiomessina.com/moss](http://sergiomessina.com/moss)), a themed Music micro-magazine that aims to be a radio show you read, click, and listen to. It's also another way to reclaim Music Radio, through a highly curated digital music experience. So I thought that for one hour, thanks to Kunstradio, I could reclaim Music Radio as a form, creating a meta-musical radio show (radio about Radio), a celebration of Music Radio and Pop Culture. But not good old Radio: daring new Radio that tackles an old, consolidated radio format in a different, and hopefully exciting way.

Sergio Messina  
Amsterdam, march 2016