# Musical Mirroring of Social Predicaments in Aristotle "GLOC-9" Pollisco Song Compositions: A Stylistic Analysis

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Received : December 17, 2024	Abstract: This study was a stylistic analysis aimed at delineating the different social predicaments
Revised : December 28, 2024	embedded in the ten (10) song compositions of GLOC-9. Particularly, it sought to: (1) identify the
Accepted : December 28, 2024	linguistic levels used in cascading the message and style of the songs along with semantics,
Published: December 31, 2024	lexicogrammar, phonology, and acoustic phonetics; (2) determine the stylistic devices under
	figures of speech used in the songs; (3) define the thematic levels presented in the songs along with
Corresponding Author	the thematic concept and thematic statement; (4) specify the values or morals conveyed in the
Kayeceline G. Godeloson	songs; and (5) discuss the social predicaments embedded in the songs. To further strategize the data
kayeceline.godeloson@cbsua.edu.ph	gathering, the researchers used the Hallidayan Systemic-Functional Linguistic Theory in order to
	extract the different linguistic levels in the songs. Thus, the researchers found out that the social
DOI: 10.29303/jeef.v4i4.807	predicaments embedded in the song compositions that depicted social realities were: (1) social
© 2024 The Authors. This open access	injustice; (2) violence; (3) prostitution; (4) drug addiction; (5) corruption; (6) gender
article is distributed under a (CC-BY	discrimination; (7) killing; (8) poverty; and (9) brain drain mentality. Ergo, the results being
License)	demarcated in this study may help cultivate social awareness and provide positive implications in
	terms of transcending the minds of every Filipino, which is a crucial determinant in society and
	more especially in that of the nation.
	Keywords: musical mirroring, stylistic analysis, social predicaments, qualitative, songs

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Stylistics is a field that illuminates the innovative use of language, shedding light on how individuals perceive and employ language in various contexts. Crystal and Davy (1975) define style, which is synonymous with stylistics, as the conscious or unconscious selection of linguistic features from the vast array of possibilities within language. Consequently, stylistics concerns itself with interpretation, as it seeks to unravel the meanings embedded within linguistic expressions. This intersection of language and interpretation underscores the essence of stylistic analysis.

Recognizing songs as literary products capable of eliciting profound emotional responses, the research employs them as primary artifacts for stylistic analysis. Within this framework, the study delves into the stylistic analysis of the song compositions of the renowned Filipino rapper, GLOC-9, born Aristotle Pollisco on October 18, 1977, in Binangonan, Rizal. Recognized as one of the preeminent Filipino rappers of all time. GLOC-9 has carved a niche for himself in the music industry by integrating poignant social commentary into his songs. Notable tracks such as "Bayad ko," "Dapat Tama," and "Hari ng Tondo" serve as focal points for stylistic scrutiny in this study.

The songs serve as the conduits for exploring how stylistic features influence the nuanced interpretation of lyrical compositions alongside the navigation of the social predicaments that are indeed rampant in the social landscape (Baker, 2020). Rooted in the social fabric of the Philippines, GLOC-9's songs traverse themes of injustice, violence, corruption, and poverty, reflecting his acute awareness of prevailing social predicaments.

In this context, this study extends beyond conventional literary texts to encompass songs as potent vehicles for artistic expression and societal critique. By scrutinizing the linguistic features of the songs, it paved the way for unveiling the underlying social realities embedded within GLOC-9's compositions. Through a comprehensive exploration of stylistic elements, including linguistic levels, stylistic devices, thematic levels, and moral or values underpinnings, the research endeavors to elucidate the creative process and intentions of the composer. Furthermore, by selecting songs that poignantly portray prevalent social issues, the study aims to evoke emotive responses from listeners while unraveling the multifaceted layers of GLOC-9's musical repertoire.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The research methodology employed in this study was qualitative in nature, aiming for an in-depth exploration of GLOC-9's song compositions and their reflections on prevalent social predicaments in the Philippines. Central to this methodology was content analysis, which involved a comprehensive examination of the lyrical content of the selected songs. Through stylistic analysis, the study sought to elucidate various linguistic levels, stylistic devices, thematic elements, morals or values, and social predicaments embedded within GLOC-9's compositions.

The methodological framework was anchored on the Hallidayan Systemic-Functional Linguistic Theory, which facilitated the identification and analysis of linguistic features across multiple levels. Alongside, the data gathering involved the identification of linguistic levels, the determination of stylistic devices, defining thematic levels, specification of values and morals, and the discussion of the social predicaments embedded in the songs. This study was chosen due to its qualitative approach, which allows for a nuanced understanding of GLOC-9's song compositions and their intricate reflections on the social challenges faced in the Philippines. By employing content analysis and stylistic

analysis within the framework of Halliday's Systemic-Functional Linguistic Theory, the research effectively identifies and examines various linguistic levels and stylistic devices that enrich the lyrical content. This methodology not only highlights thematic elements and moral values present in the songs but also situates them within the broader context of societal issues. Such an approach provides a comprehensive lens through which to understand how music can serve as a powerful medium for social commentary, making this study both relevant and impactful in exploring the intersection of language, art, and social awareness.

# **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The discussion of the ten selected song compositions of GLOC-9 were stylistically analyzed using Halliday's Systemic-Functional Linguistic Theory in 1960s. Further, the determined stylistic devices, the defined thematic levels, the specified values or morals, and the discussion of the social predicaments embedded in the song compositions were thoroughly discussed chronologically

# Linguistic levels Used in Cascading the Message and Style of the Song

## Semantics

The study delved into formal semantics, extending its analysis beyond just the selected songs to include a thorough examination of the grammatical nuances within their lyrics. It identified various types of formal semantics present, such as predicate logic semantics, discourse semantics, implicature, quantification, and metaphorical language. Additionally, it focused on lexical relations, which elucidate connections between word meanings (Ocampo, 2022). These relations encompass synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and meronymy. The research primarily concentrated on the lexical dimension of semantics, aiming to establish correlations between the inherent semantic structure of lyrics and their underlying meanings. It underscored the significance of understanding the intricate web of lexical relations embedded within each song lyric to extract their nuanced meanings effectively (Ocampo, 2023).

### Table 1. Linguistic levels Used in Cascading the Message and Style of the Song along Semantics

Song	Lyric	Formal	Formal
Title	-	Semantics	Semantics
Bayad	"Ang pag-aaral iginagapang	Predicate Logic	Predicate Logic
Ko	upang kahirapan ay	Semantics	Semantics
	matakasan." (Her education		
	is being worked hard on to		
	escape poverty.) – verse 1,		
	line 5		
Magda	"Ako ay nagtaka, nagtanong, nagkamot: "Bakit siya sumasayaw na sapatos lang ang suot?" (I started to wonder, I asked, scratched my head Why is she dancing with only her shoes on?) – verse 2, line 15-16	Semantics	Discourse Semantics
Upuan	"Kayo po na nakaupo	Implicature	Implicature

	<i>tumayo</i> " (To you who is seated, will you please try to stand up) – hook, lines 1-2		
Payag	"Matatamis na mga salita parang latik na di niluto sa gata" (Sweet words like syrup not cooked in milk)- chorus, lines 5-6	Metaphorical Language	Metaphorical Language
Norem	Alas dose, hating gabi pwedeng pa-gramo gramo kung gusto bumili" (Twelve o'clock midnight, you can pay by gram if you want to buy) - verse 1 lines 1-2	Quantification	Quantification

					Lexical Semantics	Formal Semantics	
a n	<i>long na</i> pan na s nprison have fo	<i>i <b>tropa</b></i> ed wh	" (He' ile the		Synonymy	Predicate Lo Semantics	gic
1	g sa <b>um</b> (Asleep at night	in the	morni	ng,	Antonymy	Discourse Semantics	
u I	t di pum uwang i 1 is not ) - verse	<i>tuwa"</i> in, I aı	(Even n still		Hyponymy	<sup>7</sup> Implicature	
v b	<i>yong ih</i> bringin	<i>atid"</i> ( ig me t	I drear	med	5 5	Metaphorica Language	
b	0	ig me t	`				Language Quantificatio

The analysis of various Filipino songs reveals the intricate use of formal semantics techniques, enriching the understanding of their lyrical content. In Bayad Ko, verse 1, line 5 employs predicate logic semantics, emphasizing the significance of education in combating poverty. It underscores the Filipino belief in resilience and the importance of parental sacrifice for their children's education, while children seek supplementary income to support their families. Similarly, in Magda, verse 2, lines 15 and 16 blend predicate logic semantics and discourse semantics. The sequence of actions performed by the speaker is followed by a reported speech, reflecting on the speaker's curiosity regarding a woman's behavior. This blend enhances the narrative depth and contextual understanding within the song. In Upuan, the hook in lines 1 and 2 utilizes formal semantics to convey an implicature, urging those in power to take action on social issues. The imperative statement suggests a call to action, emphasizing the speaker's plea for change. Conversely, Payag employs metaphorical language in the chorus, using sensory imagery to critique insincere political promises. The metaphor of "sweet words" compared to "uncooked coconut milk residue" vividly portrays the lack of authenticity in politicians' pledges, especially after they gain power. Lastly, in Norem, verse 1, lines 1 and 2 integrate predicate logic semantics and quantification to depict a late-night scenario where goods are

sold in small quantities, emphasizing the conditional nature of the transaction.

Overall, the analysis of these songs highlights the multifaceted use of formal semantics in Filipino music, enriching the lyrical experience and enhancing the depth of meaning within each composition. In essence, formal semantics played a crucial role in dissecting the grammatical meanings embedded within the lyrics of each song. By employing various types of formal semantics, such as predicate logic semantics and discourse semantics, the profound meanings of the lyrics were condensed and made meaningful. This approach proved valuable not only for language teachers but also for students specializing in language analysis. It facilitated a deeper understanding of the contextual essence of the songs and conveyed the composers' intentions to the listeners effectively.

In the context of lexical semantics, the song Norem employs synonymous words like "kosa" and "tropa," which respectively mean "jailmate" and "group of friends." However, "kosa" has evolved into a slang term for a friend. In Magda, the post-chorus juxtaposes contrasting terms: "umaga" (morning) and "gabi" (night), representing the beginning and end of the day. In Sirena, "bola" (ball) symbolizes basketball. Additionally, in Magda, the word "altar" in verse 4 refers to the church, symbolizing marriage. Researchers identified four types of lexical relations in GLOC-9's songs: synonymy, antonymy, hyponymy, and meronymy. These relationships highlight the connections between words, enriching their meanings. They play a crucial role in conveying the songs' ideas and fostering understanding between the speaker and the listener. Through these lexical relations, the songs offer insights into universal themes, concerns, and connections, enhancing comprehension and appreciation.

#### Lexicogrammar

This study focused on lexicogrammar, which examines the lexical patterns within the grammatical structure of selected songs. It categorized lexicogrammar into two main aspects: patterns of transitivity and tense selection. Transitivity structures in language convey representational meaning, indicating what the clause is about, typically involving a process with associated participants and circumstances. Halliday's transitivity model identifies six types of processes: material (action and occurrences), mental (experiences and consciousness), behavioral (human behavior), verbal (dialogue creation), relational (states of being and having), and existential (existence). These processes help elucidate the content and meaning conveyed through the songs' lyrics.

Table 1B. Linguistic Levels Used in Cascading theMessage and Style of the Song along Lexicogrammar

Song TitleClause	Process
Bayad Ko "Si <b>Mang Berto</b> na sumakay sa may kanto (Mang Berto who rode around the corner)	
"Wag na <b>tayong</b> magpa- uto"	Mental
(Let's not get fooled)	

The analysis suggests that GLOC-9 employs material processes to convey physical actions in his song compositions. Material processes involve tangible actions and are central to conveying concrete experiences. Additionally, mental processes emerge as the second most occurring process. This indicates GLOC-9's inclination towards expressing consciousness and personal experiences through his lyrics. Mental processes encompass perception, cognition, affection, and desire, reflecting the artist's introspective and emotive approach to songwriting.

#### Phonology

In this study, the term "phonology" referred to the categorical speech sounds found within the ten song compositions. It encompassed foundational music structures and was categorized into two main aspects: segmental and suprasegmental. The segmental aspect was a key focus of phonology, aiming to identify the temporal boundaries of meaningful sections within the selected songs. Conversely, suprasegmental aspects were utilized to emphasize the expressive meanings of the songs, incorporating pitch, length, and juncture to provide deeper insight into the contextual nuances of the music.

Table 1C. Linguistic Levels Used in Cascading theMessage and Style of the Song along Phonology

Segmental Phonology – Dapat Tama		
Diphthongs	<b>Consonant Cluste</b>	er Minimal Pairs
ga-b <u>ay</u>	e-lek- <u>sy</u> on	<u>s</u> abay- <u>g</u> abay
ka-m <u>ay</u>	<u>sw</u> e-las	tul <u>a</u> y-tul <u>o</u> y
ak-b <u>ay</u>	pwes-to	tiwala-tiwal <u>i</u>
Suprasegmenta	l Phonology – Hari	ng Tondo
Stress	Pitch	LengthJuncture
BUhay-buHAY	Tondo?	Labi makulay,
BAka-baKA	Ko?	La.bi takot,

Along phonology, the researchers codified this level into two parts, namely: (1) segmental and (2) suprasegmental phonology. Under segmental phonology, diphthongs was the most used specifically in the song *Dapat Tama* while in suprasegmental feature, length and juncture holds the same equivalence when it comes to their usage such as in the song *Hari ng Tondo*.

#### **Acoustic Phonetics**

According to Davenport and Hannahs (2005), acoustic phonetics extends beyond merely examining the physical characteristics of speech sounds to also include linguistically relevant acoustic properties. In this study, the emphasis was on the acoustic aspect of phonetics, which incorporated various features such as crescendo (gradual increase in volume), decrescendo (gradual decrease in volume), slow-paced (indicating a slow speed of sound), and fast-paced (indicating rapid sound). These features were observed within songs, serving as the primary tool to reflect the diverse social predicaments prevalent in the Philippine context.

 Table 1D. Linguistic Levels Used in Cascading the

 Message and Style of the Song along Acoustic Phonetics

Song Title	Lyric	Feature
Magda	"Pinakilala niya lalaki na taga-Maynila" (she introduced a guy from Manila) - verse 1, line 10	
	"Regalo ng Maykapal, ang ikaw ay makilala, Salamat sa alaala, nagmamahal, Magda" (It's a gift from above to be acquainted with you Thank you for the memories. Love, Magda) - verse 4, line 2- 6	

Song Title	Lyric	Feature
	'Di ko maibaling ang pagtingin ko sa iba Minamahal ko siya, hahanapin ko si Magda" ( can't divert my feelings to someone else, I'm loving her still, I will look for Magda) - verse 2 line 4	×
	"Agad siyang sumama sa'kin walang kakaba- kaba Ang trato niya sa'kin ay nobyo tila kataka-taka (She quickly went off with me without nervousness She treats me like a boyfriend, it's somewhat doubtful) - verse 3, line 1-2	;"

Fast-paced

The song Magda delves deeply into the theme of prostitution, exploring the various factors that influence individuals' lives in this context. Notably, the features of acoustic phonetics are evident in the delivery of the lines, reflecting the emotions and intensity of the message. In verse 2, lines 3 to 4, a crescendo is employed, gradually increasing in volume as the singer transitions from a low voice to a louder one. This technique aims to create a lasting impact on the listeners by building up tension and intensity throughout the line. Conversely, in verse 1, line 16, a decrescendo is utilized to maintain clarity in the message while conveying a sense of sadness. The volume gradually decreases, emphasizing the emotional tone of the lyric. Moving on to verse 3, lines 1 to 2, a fast-paced delivery is evident, with the singer delivering the lines rapidly, reflecting a sense of urgency or intensity in the message. The quick tempo undermines the totality of the line, adding to its impact. Finally, in verse 4, lines 2 to 6, a slowpaced feature is employed, reflecting the initial context of the message and infusing sincerity and depth of emotion into the delivery. The deliberate slowing of the tempo adds weight to the message and enhances its emotional impact.

#### Stylistic Devices under Figures of Speech Used in the Songs

In this study, stylistic devices were narrowed down to the figures of speech used in the songs specifically within the lyrics. Its primal intent is to identify the lines that may fall under: (1) simile; (2) metaphor; (3) personification and; (4) hyperbole.

 Table 2. Stylistic Devices under Figures of Speech Used in

	the Songs	
Song Title	Lyric	Figures of Speech
Upuan	"At ang kanin ay simputi ng gatas" (and rice that is as white as milk inside a box) - verse 1, line 9	
Sirena	<i>"Ako"y isang sirena</i> "(I am a mermaid) - chorus, line 1	Metaphor
Hari ng Tondo	<i>"Takot ang dilang sabihin ang lahat"</i> (The tongue is scared to say it all) - verse 1, line 2-3	Personification
	"Kahit sa patalim kumapit" (Even if the knife's edge is gripped) – chorus, line2-3	Hyperbole

The songs examined in this study showcase various literary devices, enriching their lyrical depth and impact. In Upuan, verse 1, line 9 employs a simile, comparing cooked rice to milk to suggest the wealth of the person in power. Contrastingly, Sirena utilizes metaphor in its chorus, comparing the singer ("ako'y") to a mermaid ("sirena"), symbolizing the fluidity and changeability akin to LGBTQIA+ identities. Hari ng Tondo employs personification in its chorus, attributing human traits to hands, suggesting their capacity for indignation. Hyperbole is evident in both Hari ng Tondo and Bayad Ko. In Hari ng Tondo, verse 2, line 5 exaggerates the consequences of outrage by likening it to scorching, while in Bayad Ko, various lines exaggerate the burdens faced by individuals, emphasizing their overwhelming responsibilities. Overall, these literary devices add depth and emotion to the songs, providing nuanced commentary on social issues and personal experiences.

#### Thematic Levels

Thematic level was crucial in terms of establishing the main idea of the subjects and themes that were embedded in the ten song compositions. Thus, for the comprehensive analysis, the general viewpoint and message of the songs were narrowed down into two specific levels namely: (1) thematic concept and (2) thematic statement.

 
 Table 3. Thematic levels presented in the songs along with thematic concept and thematic statement

		ie statement
Lyric	Thematic	Thematic Statement
	Concept	
"Maagang umuwi ng bahay si Mang Berto May dalang supot ng pansit at mamon, Maligaya kahit sa bihirang pagkakataon" (verse 1, lines 7-9)	Poverty	"Poverty lessen its repercussion through the aid of education."
"Kahit ako ay bayaran at kaladkaring babaeng Alam ang amoy ng laway ng iba't ibang lalaki" (verse 4, line 13)	Prostitution	"Prostitution is a lifetime suffering. It cannot remove the marks brought by the tragic past."

Initially, in the song *Bayad Ko*, the thematic concept seen was poverty, in which the textual evidence can be seen under verse 1 - lines 7 to 9. Objectively speaking, poverty refers to the lack of adequate financial resources such that individuals, households, and entire communities do not have the means to subsist or acquire the basic necessities for a flourishing life. This means being so poor as to struggle to obtain food, clothing, shelter, and medicines (Chen, 2023). In this case, struggling in terms of consistently obtaining food supply became a clear determinant that poverty was seen in the shoes of Mang Berto, considering the line number 9 where it showcased that not all the time, he could provide support ng pansit (a plastic of pancit) and mamon (a chiffon bread) whenever he wanted to. With that being said, with little money to buy food, Filipinos have to survive on very limited food (Welch, 2013). In this light, it succeeded in portraying the way most poor Filipino families celebrate simple acts of togetherness alongside having basic meals that a family can share together.

Comes the song *Magda*, the thematic concept was prostitution, and the textual evidence can be observed in verse 4 - line 13. This line conveyed the primary essence of the

identified thematic concept, in which various descriptions about prostitution were highly evident. In connection with this, an article entitled "Prostitution in the Philippines" identified three kinds of prostitutes in the Philippines. With that being said, Magda was the kind of prostitute who worked in bars, karaoke, and hotels, as can be justified throughout the context of the lyrics portrayed by the song.

#### Values or Morals

This study presented the different values or morals exhibited in the song compositions of GLOC-9. Therefore, different responses and attitudes towards the embedded societal messages discussed in the songs served as an aid to elevate the morale of the listeners.

Table 4. Values or Morals conveyed in the songs	Table 4.	Values or	· Morals	conveved i	in the songs
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Song Title	Values or Morals
Hari ng Ton	doCourage
Upuan	

The morals or values identified in the songs *Hari ng Tondo* and *Upuan* was courage. Beginning with the song *Hari ng Tondo*, it rendered a character with great valor to fight, stand up, and break the norm. The same goes with the song *Upuan*, in which the line portrayed a courageous character, able to stand tall and speak for the truth.

From this assertion, courage was drawn, as the moral and value ruminated in the song and it was highly discernible. In accordance to Filipinos being courageous, especially in the pit of fallback, an article published by philstar.com entitled "Commentary: The Filipino Brand of Courage" stated that the Filipino veterans, some of whom perished in line of duty, embodied this kind of courage, and Filipinos should remember and honor them every day for it, as remembering them only in times of national observances is not enough. Furthermore, knowing their stories and perpetuating their heroic deeds are some ways in which Filipinos can pay tribute to the veterans.

#### Social Predicaments

Social predicament is a term used to represent serious, complex, and major dilemmas that are continuously subsisting in the societal setting. In this study, the songs portrayed major dilemmas that represented social realities, beginning from the household until the very extent of the construction of society. Hence, the selected songs triumphantly mirrored the different social predicaments that were embedded in the song compositions of GLOC-9.

# Song Title Social Predicaments

Bayad Ko	Poverty
Dapat Tama Upuan	Corruption
Hari ng Tond	oViolence and Killings
Magda	Prostitution
Norem	Poverty
Paliwanag Payag	Social Injustice

Song Title	Social Predicaments
Sirena	Gender Discrimination

Walang NatiraBrain Drain Mentality

From the ten (10) song compositions of GLOC-9, the emphasis of the different social predicaments were embedded deliberately. Beginning with the song Bayad Ko, where poverty was the central predicament faced by many Filipinos in all corners of the Philippines. In the song Dapat Tama and *Upuan*, corruption was the major issue, which was still seen as a clamor until present. In the song Hari ng Tondo, violence and killings were mirrored, and different abuses were palpable in the Philippine setting. In the song Magda, prostitution is the root of the social dilemma that creates havoc in terms of the future of female youngsters. In the song Norem, drug addiction was dominant, in which Philippines still holds the record for drug slander within the country. Moving on with the song Paliwanag and Payag, the major predicament embedded was the social injustice in which Filipinos still do not have wide access when it comes to equal human rights. Another serious predicament was attached to the song Sirena, in which gender discrimination was perceivable and still creates a continuous noise when it comes to the sexuality of individuals. Lastly, the song Walang Natira addressed the issue of brain drain mentality, which caused the Philippines to sink into the global landscape.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the linguistic analysis of GLOC-9's song compositions unveiled distinct linguistic levels that intricately interacted to convey the songs' main messages. Each level, from semantics to acoustic phonetics, played a crucial role in communicating the essence of the songs and reflected the researchers' dedication to extracting linguistic features embedded within them.

Across the ten compositions, numerous themes emerged, reflecting prevalent social predicaments in the Philippines. These themes resonated deeply with Filipino lives, illustrating the adversities faced within society. Supported by thematic level, GLOC-9's music encapsulated a spectrum of themes, from identity to societal injustices, mirroring the multifaceted realities of Philippine society.

Moreover, GLOC-9's compositions not only shed light on social realities but also imparted valuable morals and values to listeners. Through his music, the composer aimed to instill awareness and enlightenment regarding pressing issues in society, fostering a sense of introspection and action among listeners.

Ultimately, GLOC-9's songs served as poignant reflections of the various social predicaments prevalent in the Philippines. With their social relevance and impactful delivery, these compositions functioned as potent tools for raising awareness and provoking thought on critical social predicaments. GLOC-9's success lies in his ability to provide a musical mirror to the social predicaments of Philippine society, urging listeners to confront and address these challenges.

To build upon the findings of this study, it is recommended that future research explores the broader impact of GLOC-9's music on various demographics within the Philippines, particularly focusing on how his compositions influence social awareness and activism among youth. Additionally, incorporating qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups could provide deeper insights into listeners' emotional and cognitive responses to specific themes in his lyrics. Furthermore, developing educational programs that utilize GLOC-9's songs as tools for discussing social issues in schools could enhance students' engagement and understanding of their cultural context. This multifaceted approach would not only deepen the analysis of GLOC-9's work but also foster a greater appreciation of music as a vehicle for social change.

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