

# Pervasive and Precarious Popular Music Heritage: Case Study of Juice Leskinen's Square

28.2.2023

cultural heritage, heritage sites, Juice Leskinen, monuments, popular music

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*This article discusses the evolving heritage of the Finnish rock-musician, writer, and media persona Juhani Juice [pronounced: 'jujse] Leskinen as it has been monumentalized and exhibited on the artist's namesake square in his hometown of Juankoski (Kuopio) in Eastern Finland. Through an analysis of the square's changing features realized by various actors and interest groups in 1986–2019, the paper reconstructs the development of the site from a local place-promotion enterprise in which the figure of Juice Leskinen was discovered as part of an emerging Juankoskian cultural heritage to a regionally politicized heritage conflict fueled by the municipality's merger with the city of Kuopio in 2017. Taking Juice's Square as a reference point, the article argues for an understanding of popular music heritage that accounts for both its cultural pervasiveness and the persistent vulnerability of its traces. In doing so, it contributes to recent discussions that define popular music heritage as multiply precarious.*

## Introduction

The death of a music star seldom marks the end of the artist's career. Rather, as the cultural sociologist Andy Bennett describes, it is typically succeeded by a posthumous iconic one (Bennett 2015, 65). This is exhibited in the accelerated reproduction of the artist's work, images, and life story that regularly follows a star's passing. However, the best guarantee for such a successful posthumous career is a broad, anticipatory monumentalization that begins well before an artist's physical death. Finnish rock musician, writer, and media persona Juhani Juice (pronounced according to the Finnish phonology: 'jujse) Leskinen (1950–2006) is a case in point. This article retraces the phases of a specific *cultural heritage process* centered on the figure of Juice Leskinen, which first began in his hometown of Juankoski in the mid-1980s and has continued after the artist's death, until recent years. As such, it partakes in the theory construction of popular music heritage and its sites.

Frequently dubbed a national "institution" himself (Liete 2002, 58), Juice Leskinen's bearing on late twentieth-century Finnish culture can hardly be exaggerated. He was not only one of the most successful music artists of the period and initiators of the Finnish-language turn in rock music but an acknowledged literary personality as well as a popular public commentator. Leskinen began his recording career in the early 1970s as the headman of his provocatively named ensemble *Los Coitus Interruptus*, later abbreviated to *Leskinen & Coitus Int*. The eclectic mixture of imported popular culture references, traditional comic song witticism, and rhyme schemes adopted from Finnish schlager music (*iskelmä*)—a trademark of Leskinen's early songwriting style—proved appealing to a large audience base turning *Coitus Int* rapidly into "a band of the whole people" (Bruun et al. 1998, 212), as an early magazine article proclaimed. The band's far- and wide-reaching popularity was further enhanced by the more or less flattering "theme songs" that Leskinen wrote about individual Finnish cities and smaller municipalities. (Kurkela 2003, 584–586.)

By his mid-30s, Leskinen had established himself as a national media icon, known not only as a praised lyricist but also a contributing columnist to several newspapers and magazines, as well as a regular panelist on the prime time television game show *Kymppitonni*. Leskinen's deteriorating physical health, the result of a worsening alcohol addiction, started to take a toll on his touring practice in the late 1980s, although this only seemed to have a reverse effect on his public career. Leskinen was the first rock musician to attend the annual Independence Day Reception at the

Presidential Palace on December 6, 1986. (Heikkinen 2016, 353, 385.) Three years later, he was the recipient of the Finnish State Prize for Music, and in 1993, he was awarded a three-year artist grant by the National Music Council (Bruun et al. 1998, 438). Fully but consciously, Leskinen embraced the image of a self-satisfied rock star and national figure. It can be claimed that this deliberative artistic image, not void of self-irony, has acted as a preemptive mechanism against more critical reassessments of Juice Leskinen's public persona and work.

For most of his life, Leskinen lived in the industrial city of Tampere in Western Finland, where he had moved in 1970 to study English translation. Consequently, the singer-songwriter has been closely connected to the rock music scene that evolved in the city in the 1970s and 80s, referred to as *Manserock* (after Tampere's repute as the "Manchester" of Finland) (Bruun et al. 1998, 214). Early on, the administrative and cultural agents of Tampere took pride in the city's renowned resident, lavishing upon him compliments that further enhanced the artist's association with the city. In 1985, before the Finnish State Prize, Leskinen was granted the Tampere city's Music Prize (Heikkinen 2016, 399). When Leskinen turned 40 in 1990, the Tampere-based radio station Radio 957 aired a 40-hour show that included all of Leskinen's previous recordings as well as 20 hours of interview material with the artist (Luoto & Montonen 2007, 120–121).

Besides Tampere, the municipality of Juankoski has continued to promote its association with the singer-songwriter. Located in the North-Savonian region of Eastern Finland, Juankoski originally grew from the factory community of the Strömsdahl Ironworks, founded in the parish of Nilsiä in 1746. The Strömsdahlsbruk was the first and longest-lived ironworks in Finland, which based its production on the use of bog iron retrieved from the numerous waters of the region. It was not until early in the twentieth century when the iron industry of Juankoski was fully replaced by paper manufacturing, turning Juankoski into an important cardboard producer under the lead of the Kymi Corporation. (Forsberg & Kankkunen 1996, 9–10.) Born in the municipality in 1950, Pauli Matti Juhani "Juice" Leskinen (since 2006, Juhani Juice Leskinen) remained a Juankoskian until his late teens. In later interviews and (auto)biographical texts, this early period of Leskinen's life has often been described in ambivalent terms, as the provincial atmosphere of the small paper factory town didn't always prove welcoming to the book-loving and longhaired Beatles listener (e.g., Leskinen 2003, 55).

Throughout the 1970s, however, the attitude of the local administration grew gradually warmer towards the singer whose single "Juankoski here I come", released in 1974, had put the town's

name on the lips of every other Finn. In 1986, a public square in the center of Juankoski was renamed after the artist. The inauguration of the square was later followed by a lengthy sequence of alterations and repairs that form the subject of this article.

Through an analysis of the changing features of Juice's Square, documented during two excursions to Juankoski in 2016 and 2020, newspaper articles, and local government documents, the article reconstructs the development of the site from its first opening in 1986 until its last rebuilding in 2019. Special attention is given to the various heritage practices realized on the square by different actors and interest groups ranging from municipal governments to local associations, enterprises, and active individuals. In the paper, the development of Juice's Square is divided into two phases, in 1986–1995 and 2017–2019, when the site underwent significant makeovers; first as part of a more encompassing heritage process that involved the recognition of Juankoski's long industrial past, and later after the municipality's merger with the city of Kuopio in 2017. From there, the article proceeds to reflect on the ambivalence between the cultural pervasiveness of popular music's recent past as witnessed by its continuing remediations and the persistent vulnerability of its intangible and tangible traces. In doing so, it contributes to recent discussions positing that popular music heritage, as an expanding category of cultural heritage, is both typically and distinctively precarious.

## **Studying the Making(s) of Popular Music Heritage and Its Sites**

Since the end of the last century, notions of "heritage" and "culture" have become increasingly embedded in the popular cultural forms of the recent past, including popular music (Bennett 2009, 474). Consequently, the histories, memories, and artifacts associated with popular music's past are routinely remediated across a diverse field spanning multinational media and entertainment companies, national memory institutions, fan activity, and collecting (Roberts & Cohen 2013, 2). In Finland, the past decades have also seen a notable surge in smaller and larger scale genre revivals, band reunion tours, biographical and historical films and literature, as well as public sites and monuments devoted to popular music, with an emphasis on Finnish twentieth-century *iskelmä* and rock. An important passage in this development was the opening of the Music Museum (FAME) and Finnish Music Hall of Fame in the Pasila district of Helsinki in 2019. Among the hall of fame's first ten inductees was Juice Leskinen.

During the last decade, “popular music heritage” has also become the subject of a growing body of academic literature. Les Roberts and Sara Cohen remark that what the inquiry into popular music heritage revolves around, is not necessarily music as such, but the “constellation of heritage practices” through which social, symbolic, and economic value is attached to and extracted from popular cultural forms of the past (Roberts & Cohen 2013, 2). Assessing different heritage formations of popular music within the UK, they apply an understanding of popular music heritage as a “social and cultural process” that takes into consideration how it is enacted and “performed” in specific spatial and temporal contexts (Roberts & Cohen 2013, 3).

Drawing from the notion that popular music heritage is “both practice and process” (Long 2018, 125), the current article traces the local *heritagization* of a national music celebrity in Finland. What kinds of meaning- and value-creating operations were performed and attached to the figure of Juice Leskinen? Who were the active local and translocal participants in the process and what kind of cultural heritage community did their engagement foreground?

To this end, the notion of heritagization has figured prominently in the field of critical heritage studies, especially concerning the national or regional meaning-giving processes of specific spatial or historical traces of the past. The term heritagization was originally coined by Robert Hewison in his book *The Heritage Industry: Britain in a Climate of Decline* (1987), in which he associated it with the cultural heritage process of certain spatial sites. Later scholars have asserted the importance of understanding heritagization as a process that is maintained, first and foremost, by an active community (Smith 2006; 2021; Sivula 2015). According to Regina Bendix (2008), heritagization points to the selection of particular objects or cultural expressions to be preserved for the future generations of a more or less imagined community, such as a nation-state, or mankind. It is carried on by a complicated mishmash of different local, national, translocal, or international meaning-givers: owners, users, buyers, sellers, practitioners, experts, audiences, and state officials. The process of heritagization can thus be approached as a changing emotional attachment between the *heritage-as-a-thing* and the possessive subjects or groups, who claim rights over the objects or practices they value as their heritage (Coombe 1998; 2013, Smith 2021).

The crucial question, time and again emerging in the field of cultural heritage, is: How do we identify the members of a cultural heritage community? Obviously, a heritage community is often more translocal than local, but tangible heritage sites are always local, and often maintained by a local cultural heritage community. The translocal community, however, participates in the value

creation of cultural heritage sites and affirms their meaning (Golinelli et al. 2012; Smith 2021). The heritage sites of popular music make no exception. Like any other heritage sites, they are often connected to tourism economies and entrepreneurial goal-attainment, which in turn are translocal by nature (see e.g., Cohen 2003; Gibson & Connell 2007; Lashua 2018).

The selection and management of cultural heritage is often described in terms of Authorized Heritage Discourse. This (implicitly or explicitly) is considered a top-down influential action maintained by local, national, and global heritage regulating and administrative authorities (Smith 2006). According to Laurajane Smith and Emma Waterton (2012, 154), Authorized Heritage Discourse (AHD) is “a particular construction or way of seeing heritage” that “frames, constrains, or (de-)legitimizes debates about the meaning, nature, and value of ‘heritage’”, which has gained traction in public policy, archeology, and heritage management. In critical heritage studies, the top-down administrative policies and practices upheld by AHD are frequently contrasted against more bottom-up activities of groups and communities (see e.g., Smith 2021, 5–12, 54–60 and passim.).

Within the subfield of popular music, a difference is also made between *authorized* and *unauthorized* ways of organizing and maintaining heritage (Roberts & Cohen 2013) with scholars focusing on various “DIY preservationist” practices (Bennett 2009; Collins 2015; Dowd, Ryan & Tai 2016) and DIY institutions (Baker 2015; Baker & Huber 2013; Withers 2018). These are often grounded in volunteer-based collecting, preserving, sharing, and sometimes displaying of music-related material. However, the informal memory institutions of popular music, such as community archives, often struggle with maintaining continuity and sustainability (Baker & Collins 2017). The uncertainty faced by DIY institutions, which many times stems from a lack of resources and technological change, also predisposes the heritage and “vernacular knowledge” found in these institutions to endangerment (Baker & Collins 2017, 484).

Building on these findings, recent research has paid more attention to the specific ways in which popular music heritages become endangered and, finally, lost. As Lauren Isvandity and Zelmarie Cantillon (2019) argue, in its current contexts of emergence, popular music heritage is at large and, in many ways, a *precarious* cultural resource. Furthermore, this predisposition for endangerment and loss seems to be working against the dynamics of expansion that underlie popular music heritage’s cultural import, even pervasiveness, in late modern societies—manifested most pointedly and contestedly in what the music writer and critic Simon Reynolds (2011) famously refers to as *retromania* or “pop culture’s addiction to its own past”.

This ambivalence is also considered in the current article. The paper thus asks: How does the growing heritagization of popular music account for the precarity and imminent loss of many of its traces? As will be shown, a part of the Juankoskian heritage became endangered in the second phase of Juice's Square. Before this, however, the article assesses the creation and development of the site in 1986–1995. This "first life" of the square coincided with a more encompassing process in which the historical traces of Juankoski were becoming progressively recognized by the local public as valuable tokens of a shared past.

### **1986–1995: From a National "Hero" to Juankoskian Local Heritage**

In the late 1970s, interest in the nationally acclaimed artist Juice Leskinen was building up in his former hometown. Around that time, the marketing and tourism branches of the Juankoski municipal administration asked for Leskinen's permission to adopt the title of his birthplace-inspired song "Juankoski here I come" as a marketing slogan for the town. Leskinen approved of the proposal but added that he would be even more approving should the municipality decide to paint over its main road (coincidentally also the national road 569) in red and rename it *Juice Leskinen Avenue* after him. (Leskinen 1978; *Savon Sanomat*, January 9, 1986.) Something of the like ensued, when in January 1986 the municipal council of Juankoski unanimously accepted a proposition developed by the municipal cultural board and tourism committee to name a market square in the town center *Juicen tori*, or "Juice's Square" (*Savon Sanomat*, January 9, 1986; Virranta 2016). Additionally, the square was to be expanded and embellished with flower beds and benches, and the vending places demarcated with red asphalt and concrete. The purpose of these changes, as spelled out in the regional newspapers, was to enliven the market square and give a boost to local tourism. (*Koillis-Savo*, January 8, 1986; January 13, 1986; *Savon Sanomat*, January 9, 1986.)

When asked in a radio interview about the plans that were now being advanced in his honor in Juankoski, Leskinen commented in his trademark laconic style: "It can't be helped that I happen to have been born in Juankoski. If [they] for this reason wish to build monuments to me, it is up to them" (*Koillis-Savo*, January 13, 1986).

As part of the inaugural ceremony in June 1986, a concrete monument was indeed unveiled in Juice's Square. Notwithstanding his previous statements, Leskinen himself was present and immortalized his handprints in a concrete block that was later attached to the monumental

structure. Leskinen's handprints were to be later joined by those of other musicians from Juankoski. In addition, the artist was given the honorary title of the square's first *Tormestari*, a whimsical combination of the Finnish words for marketplace (*tori*) and mayor (*pormestari*), with a lifelong vending place on his square. The title would be annually passed on to another Juankoskian that had in their way benefited the municipality's culture or renown. (*Juankosken Sanomat*, July 2, 1986; Turunen 1986.) In its following report, the local paper *Juankosken Sanomat* (July 2, 1986) rejoiced over the successful market day: all in all, the inaugural events had attracted an audience of 7000, temporarily doubling the population of Juankoski.

More accolades followed when in 1992 the local paper purchased a bronze bust modeled after the features of Juice Leskinen from the Estonian-born sculptor Villu Jaanisoo (Figure 1). The plan was to reveal the work as a monument to Leskinen in his namesake square. (*Juankosken Sanomat*, June 24, 1992; July 2, 1992.) However, due to Jaanisoo's initial refusal for the existing concrete monument in the square to be the statue's new pedestal, its final placement was postponed indefinitely (Muhonen 1995). The sculpture's wandering was eventually put to an end in a reopening of the square in November 1995. As part of the refurbishment, realized collaboratively by the municipality, local enterprises, associations, and residents of Juankoski, the square was encircled by a red brick wall and the concrete monument in its center expanded and improved (*Juankosken Sanomat*, July 14, 1995).



*Figure 1. Juice Leskinen's bronze bust by Villu Jaanisoo on Juice's Square. Photo: Anna Peltomäki 2016.*

In the reopening ceremony, Leskinen was again in attendance and revealed his bronze likeness, whose ownership had now been transferred from the local paper to the municipality of Juankoski, on the concrete structure that had until then served as the main landmark of the square (*Juankosken Sanomat*, November 17, 1995; Siltari 1995). Speaking before the crowd, the chief editor of the local paper, Ari Kankkunen proclaimed: "Elsewhere monuments are being brought down but here in Juankoski, we build new ones" (Muhonen 1995). By this, the editor referred to the extensive felling and demolition of monuments in transitioning socialist countries, which was also covered widely by the Finnish media at the time (Lähdesmäki 2009, 67).

The allusion to Soviet monuments may be considered apt also in the sense that Leskinen's assertive expression and balding crown, portrayed in the sculpture, bore a notable resemblance to

those depicted in the tens of thousands of monuments of Vladimir Lenin executed in socialist-realist style in the USSR after the chairman's death in 1924. Another visual reference point for Leskinen's statue can be found in the vast body of media imagery inspired by the President of Finland, Urho Kaleva Kekkonen (1900–1986). During his three-and-a-half-term service between 1956 and 1982, Kekkonen's bald profile and large glasses became established in the Finnish media as all-around symbols of the presidential "authority and cunningness" (Hämäläinen 2016, 57) associated with "UKK's" autocratic style of leadership. Leskinen's resemblance to the President had not been left unnoticed by Finnish reporters and columnists (e.g., Hytönen 1990). In the early 1980s, a group of the artist's fans and colleagues had united in a campaign to have him elected as the 9th President of the Republic (*Helsingin Sanomat* 1982)—an endeavor the artist found some took a little too seriously.

As the words of the chief editor imply, Leskinen's bronze statue was unveiled at a time when public monuments, a marker of Western cosmopolitan culture, were facing a severe backlash. This *counter- or antimemorial* sentiment (Huysen 1996; Young 1989) was evidenced most tangibly in the toppling of Soviet monuments. The loss of value suffered by the figurative monumental tradition reflected broader changes in the European political psyche: a postmodern sense of disillusionment and iconoclastic justice amidst a "broken" political reality of failed ideologies and weakened trust in representative politics (Ankersmit 1996). In Jaanisoo's bronze bust of Leskinen, the figurative monumental style previously reserved for "great men" of the recent past, specifically political leaders, was recreated in the image of a rockstar, in a sense, the very opposite of an idealized head of a body politic.

By playfully merging the image of the Great Leader with that of Leskinen, the sculpture revealed the symbolic and increasingly tangible fall of the former, while affectionately ironizing the hubris associated with rockstardom and Leskinen's unparalleled national status in particular. Through the monumentalization of Leskinen's features, the statue attested to the artist's standing as the unofficial "head of state" or "Kekkonen" of Finnish rock music. At the same time, the sculpture's explicit faithfulness to the figurative monumental style implicitly connoted its acute cultural decline. The irony of the gesture was further emphasized by Leskinen's sarcastic approach to those hungry for power, which he often expressed in his lyrics and columns.

As the chief editor of the local paper summarized the (anti)memorial gesture: "We have not built a monument to a god, but a human, a fellow traveler" (Muhonen 1995). These words may be

comprehended as an intimation not only to Leskinen's national status as a beloved lyricist of the human condition but also to his roots which attached him more exclusively to the Juankoski public.

At the time when Leskinen's square was being developed, Juankoski was also becoming more invested in its long industrial past, namely, its historical ironworks. The area, which encompasses the former buildings of the ironworks, production facilities, offices, and factory workers' residences, had in 1980 been included among the "built cultural heritage sites of national significance" by the Ministry for Internal Affairs and the Finnish National Board of Antiquities. When Juice's Square first opened in 1986, a working committee for developing the area was established by the municipal board. Through an extensive volunteer effort led by the Juankoski Cultural History Association (founded in 1990) and backed financially by the Finnish government, an ironworks and labor museum was opened in the former blast furnace of the plant in 1991. In the opening ceremony, Juice Leskinen was again "present", now in the form of a recitation of his selected poems by two Juankoski residents. (*Juankosken Sanomat*, May 30, 1991.) Plans for a popular music museum to be housed in the historical buildings were also advanced (*Koillis-Savo*, July 2, 1986; Väinämö 1986). These plans, however, never materialized.

Instead, in Juice's Square, several visual details reframed the artist as part of the emerging Juankoskian cultural heritage (Figures 2 and 3). After Leskinen, other Juankoski-born musicians also received their handprints on the square's concrete structure. By 1991, the structure had been adorned with the handprints of singer Eija Ahvo, producer Jori Sivonen, composer and songwriter Kaj Chydenius, and a representative of the Juankoski Factory Orchestra, Soini Rissanen. (*Juankosken Sanomat*, July 4, 1991.) For the square's reopening in 1995, three apertures symbolizing the industrial town's smokestacks were added to the structure's righthand section. In the middle part, a mosaic ornament was assembled from *slagi*, a metallurgical waste material from the plant. Depicted in the mosaic were the rapids of Juankoski, Juanvirta, and Juankoski. (Muhonen 1995.) In the reinauguration of the square, Leskinen was granted the privilege of marking his permanent vending space before the monument with red spray paint (*Koillis-Savo*, November 15, 1995). Later, a small strip leading to the square's monumental center was painted in red and given the name Juice Leskinen Avenue, as per the artist's original proposition (Pulkkinen 2018).



Figures 2 and 3. Juice's Square, Juankoski, before the site's last makeover. Photos: Anna Peltomäki 2016.

Gradually, through a long process of adding and modifying carried out by the local community, Juice's Square was turned into a comprehensive tribute to the municipality's versatile cultural heritage, including its music. In this "creation" of local heritage, the town's most renowned former resident and national celebrity Juice Leskinen was established as an important *figurehead* and symbol for the municipality's cultural lineage. Although taken as evidence of the Savonian people's good-humored mindset (*Koillis-Savo*, July 2, 1986), the playful gesture of dedicating a site to a living rock star should thus also be noted as a serious investment, both emotional and financial, in the cultural heritage spaces of Juankoski (Figure 4).

Through active input from local associations and enterprises, the square soon became an important venue for local gatherings: most prominently the annual summer market held around mid-summer, where the next *Tormestari* of the square was announced, and the autumn market in November (*Juankosken Sanomat*, June 27, 1991). Due to the wide media attention followed by the square's first and second openings in 1986 and 1995, the site also began to attract fans of Leskinen and summer motorists from other parts of the country—thus fulfilling the expectations of the local tourism promoters. When Leskinen passed away in November 2006 after decades of struggle with alcoholism-related diseases, the square was turned overnight into a sea of candles rendering the (at least sometimes) lively marketplace into a site of reverent commemoration. (Pulkkinen 2018.)



*Figure 4. A notice in the local paper Juankosken Sanomat (June 24, 1992) advertising an upcoming concert starring the inductees of Juice's Square. In the advertisement, the square is displayed against the backdrop of the historical ironworks creating an image of an encompassing Juankoskian heritage landscape.*

## **2017–2019: Between Institutionalizing and Dissolving Municipal Heritages**

In 2017, Juankoski merged with the city of Kuopio, becoming part of a greater wave of mergers that has changed the municipal map in Finland over the last decades. The purpose of the

amalgamations has been to streamline municipalities' statutory functions and services to develop a more cost-efficient structure (Zimmerbauer, Suutari & Saartenoja 2012, 1065). Among the municipalities most impacted by these changes, has been the city Kuopio [\[1\]](#). The Juankoski–Kuopio-merger was precipitated by the former's—a deindustrializing small town with a decreasing population—denomination as a “crisis municipality” in 2012 and 2015 whereby the Finnish central government had in 2013 urged the parties to begin negotiating for an amalgamation (Koski 2021, 10; Nykänen 2013). [\[2\]](#) Interestingly enough, in the Kuopio City Council meeting that finally confirmed the merger in 2014, Juice Leskinen was again invoked, this time by the chairman of the Council, who concluded the meeting in the now prognostic words: “Juankoski, here I come” (Niiranen 2014).

A month after the municipal merger came into effect in January 2017, plans for developing the surroundings of Juice's Square were approved by the Kuopio Urban Structure department (City of Kuopio, February 8, 2017). The purpose of the renovation was to improve the square's functionality and safety and to make the site more inviting for both inhabitants and tourists (City of Kuopio, January 23, 2019; Patrakka 2017). In the autumn of 2017, the city of Kuopio presented four alternative plans for a new Juice's Square. In the renovation plans, different placements for the square, as well as new traffic and parking arrangements, were explored. The alternatives were introduced at a public event organized in Juankoski in October 2017, and Kuopio's residents' opinions were also explored via an online survey. Local enterprises were heard from as well, as was the Juankoski Town Council, which had been established as a tool for implementing grassroots democracy in Juankoski during and after the transition period. Later, a preliminary plan based on the alternative sketches and feedback was approved by the Urban Structure department as a blueprint for developing the square and its surrounding traffic. (City of Kuopio, September 5, 2018; City of Kuopio, December 12, 2018.)

The renovation was to also bring about significant changes to how Juice Leskinen's memory—and the cultural heritage of Juankoski overall—was visually honored at the site. In the remodeled traffic arrangements of the square, Leskinen was finally to receive a permanent “avenue” in a circular car lane that would be constructed around the square. A new set of lampposts was also planned for the square with citations from Leskinen's songs engraved in them. For the phrases, suggestions were asked from the inhabitants. (City of Kuopio, December 12, 2018; Rokka 2018.) However, the detail in the renovation plan that most awakened the interest and anxiety of the residents of

Kuopio's new district was the square's monumental concrete structure, which was to be replaced by a new single pedestal for Juice's bust. Addressing the already rundown structure's renewal in November 2019, the City Architect and Head of Urban Planning explained that as the bronze sculpture was now officially a part of the public art collection of Kuopio, it was "by image-related aspects alone" justified that its display and base also "meet the criteria" of public art (City of Kuopio, November 4, 2019). As for the handprints, they were to be unfastened from the concrete and relocated to another public site, such as the local library. (Martikainen 2018; City of Kuopio, September 5, 2018.)

In a newspaper interview from the summer of 2018, the chair of the Juankoski Cultural History Association, Marja-Sisko Pihl, commented that the planned replacement of the square's concrete structure with a new pedestal had caused "a bit of a stir" among the Juankoski public (Pulkkinen 2018). The local community especially objected to the city department's plan to remove the handprints of Leskinen and his colleagues from their prominent place at the site. In a statement backed by the Juankoski Cultural History association, a group of former *Tormestari* honorees of Juice's Square addressed the city of Kuopio, demanding that the artists' handprints be retained. According to the statement, the other artists were as deserving as Leskinen of their spot on the square, being a site frequented by locals and tourists alike. The issue was eventually resolved in a decision approved by the Juankoski Town Council that the concrete monument along with its decorations be relocated to a community garden not far from the market square. (City of Kuopio, January 23, 2019.) The park, called *Ruukin Katve* ("Shade of the Ironworks"), was originally built and planted by volunteer Juankoskians in 2010 and 2011 as an area for communal recreation and entertainment (*Mmm...* 2013). In the past years, however, its maintenance had somewhat fallen into a state of disrepair.

Through the summer of 2019, Juice's Square underwent a comprehensive makeover (Figure 5). The renovation costs, amounting to 690,000 euros, were covered by the money received by the city of Kuopio from the Finnish government for the municipal merger (Tiihonen 2019). For the duration of the construction work, Juice's bronze head remained in the community garden, which was also restored to a more becoming state for its new monument (Karvinen 2019) (Figure 6). In November 2019, Juice's Square once again reopened for its traditional autumn market. The traffic arrangements around the square had been completely reorganized. New "lyrics lampposts" had also been planted in the marketplace, as well as Leskinen's bronze sculpture, which had now

received a more distinguished red granite pedestal designed by the artist Villu Jaanisoo. Moving amidst the local public, a reporter of the regional newspaper found divided opinions on the refurbished square. According to two elderly women residents, the new pedestal had left the monumental ensemble looking rather “stern” and lacking in “softness”. And the interviewees remarked, “where have the handprints gone?” (Tiihonen 2019).



*Figure 5. Juice's Square after the site's refurbishment. Photo: Anna Peltomäki 2020.*



*Figure 6. Ruukin Katve community garden with its new monumental centerpiece. Photo: Anna Peltomäki 2020.*

What is interesting is that despite its efforts to foster transparency and community engagement in the development of Juice's Square, the city of Kuopio was unable to generate a collective experience of democratic participation in the inhabitants of its new district. At the heart of this failure was a misrecognition of the fact that despite its rundown outlook, Juice's Square was an outcome of a long process of local development and symbolic accumulation realized by the Juankoski community. In this process, the concrete structure in the square, instead of being (or failing to be) a mere pedestal for Leskinen's "official" bronze monument, held special meaning not only as the site's de facto original monument but as a marker in the heritage landscape of Juankoski, which had evolved with the square since the 1980s.

What is, however, also noteworthy is that in spite of the local community's oppositional stance, the prevailing state of the square as well as that of the community garden before 2019 exposes a decreased interest in the shared upkeep of these places—up until the municipal merger. As ethnologist Minna Mäkinen (2013, 53) describes, local monuments frequently lose their sense of importance in the daily lives of inhabitants; however, in the case of a municipal amalgamation, these symbols may be rediscovered as parts of a heritage that now appears under threat. The dissolution of a municipality may, then, well become the spark that (re)activates the production of a "municipal heritage" (Mäkinen 2013; Sivula 2015, 63). The renovated Ruukin Katve garden is an outcome of such an experience of an anticipated loss.

In the refurbished Juice's Square, on the other hand, the memory of Juice Leskinen is re-curated in accordance with the requirements set by the city planners of Kuopio. In the square, Leskinen's bronze monument—now an item of the Kuopio public art collection—remains alone, mounted on its new but more traditional pedestal where the artist's years of birth and death have been engraved. The antimonumental playfulness of dedicating a statue to a living rockstar seems to have given way to a more conventional and formal understanding of monumental public art.

## **Discussion: Popular Music Heritage Made and Unmade**

The gradual makeover of Juice's Square in 1986–2019 may be conceived as documentation of the processual expansion and reaffirmation of Leskinen's memory by a widening sphere of heritage actors. As such, the shifting face of the square reads as a localized reflection of the national legitimation of Finnish 20th-century rock music and Juice Leskinen as one of its most recognizable "personifications". The rehabilitation of popular music into the ranks of respectable

Finnish *culture* has been analyzed in depth in previous studies (e.g., Aho 2002, 190–191, 215; Kallioniemi 1992; Mattlar 2015; Rautiainen 2003; Rautiainen-Keskustalo 2008). This paper, however, considered Juice’s Square from the vantage point of the various actors claiming authority to its realization and maintenance. From this perspective, the square constitutes a site of struggle over local authority and its eventual transfer from the Juankoski community to the city of Kuopio.

Evidently, some of the actors involved in the second stage of the heritage process can be identified as promoting a type of cultural planning ethic that seems to align more closely with the formal and expert-driven characteristics of Authorized Heritage Discourse, while others appear more representative of the community and praxis-based ways of making heritage from the bottom up. In the new square, the functionalist interest of urban planning is united with an aesthetically informed pursuit to present the bronze statue in surroundings that are best aligned with its monumental style. In the community garden, on the other hand, symbolically coded visual signs made by the locals recreate the cultural heritage of Juankoski as a historical continuum. As a result, the sites convey two very different notions about the purpose and ultimate value of the heritage invoked and maintained in them: whereas in Juice’s Square the bronze statue’s significance as an object of public art is highlighted, in the community garden the collaborative mode of not only doing-heritage-yourself but “doing-it-together” (Collins 2015) is presented as a value in and of itself.

Of course, the refurbishment of the site in 2019 can also be understood as a welcoming gesture directed at the people and culture of Kuopio’s new district (epitomized by the former municipality’s most renowned former resident), as well as visiting tourists. Nonetheless, the course of events leading to the site’s updated image in 2019 discloses a certain undervaluation of the practices and symbols through which the (popular music) heritage of Juankoski had theretofore been sustained and celebrated. This disregard for the previous configurations of popular music heritage may, however, be conceived as a characteristic of, rather than an exception to, its forms of production, whereby this heritage has come to inhabit a cultural position and quality that can be described as concurrently pervasive and precarious. Taking this duality into consideration also helps to understand how the artist Leskinen, and later his memory, could be inscribed and invoked in such various ways on the cultural heritage landscape of Juankoski, and how one important material marker in this landscape could be so readily exchanged for another.

In *Retromania* (2011), Reynolds argues that since the end of the 20th century, popular culture has been consumed by an insatiable need to recall and repeat its own recent past. Citing as his examples rereleases and remakes, reunion tours, mashups, and museum exhibitions, Reynolds argues that a derivative logic has taken over the culture industries that now relentlessly scavenge the past for products and concepts to recapitalize on. Over a decade after the publication of Reynolds's book, his arguments appear to an extent applicable to the cultural industries at large and can be witnessed dividually in the continuing heritagization of Juice Leskinen. Within the past few years, Leskinen has become the subject of a full-length biopic (*Juice*, 2018), inspired two musicals (*Kaksoiselämä; Viidestoista yö*), and received a star on "Finland's first international Walk of Fame for music" founded in Tampere in 2019. In Juankoski, the artist's memory also continues to hover dominantly in and through varied places, taking on varied formations. Since 2016, an exhibition focusing on Leskinen's childhood and adolescence has been running in the ironworks and labor museum (Figure 7) and guided walking tours through "Juice's Juankoski" have been made available for booking (Malinen 2018). In addition, 2020 saw the launch of an Augmented Reality tour *Jussista Juiceksi* ("From Jussi to Juice"), leading through local sites that have in one way or another figured in Leskinen's formative and later years (Hakkarainen & Väänänen 2020) (Figure 8). Needless to say, Juice's Square was included.



*Figure 7. Juice's Tormestari hat displayed in the Masuuni Brunou museum's exhibition in Juankoski, Kuopio. Photo: Anna Peltomäki 2020.*



*Figure 8. An AR board from the Jussista Juiceksi tour in Juankoski, Kuopio. Photo: Anna Peltomäki 2020.*

For Reynolds, the most pressing issue with retromania is that cultural production that is based on mere recycling and reuse may ultimately hamper the regeneration of (popular) cultural forms. In light of the Juankoski case, however, this very “invokability” of popular music’s past that, on the one hand, allows for its multifaceted and multi-placed heritage formations seems, on the other, to contribute to the vulnerability of this heritage itself. As Istvandy and Cantillon (2019, 1) observe, despite the “overwhelming permeation” of popular music and its past into everyday life and culture, many of its tangible and intangible traces remain in a continuing state of precarity and thus predisposed to loss. This precarity, they add, does not apply solely to the “items for preservation”, but also to the “preservation practices themselves” (Ibid.).

What in part explains this vulnerability is that although popular music is progressively treated as cultural heritage in ways that resemble the treatment of previously recognized forms of cultural heritage, this heritage is also produced by the same mechanics that drive the production and

dissemination of popular culture in the first place. For this reason, it is not only susceptible to the threats faced by cultural heritage in general (such as the wearing of physical objects and sites, or the transience of oral traditions and histories), but also to the cycles of innovation, diffusion, and fading that inform the time spans of popular cultural phenomena. (See, e.g., Istvandy & Cantillon 2019, 2–3; Long 2018, 127.) Because of the mediated character of popular music and the foregrounded translocality of its audiences, questions of guardianship also pertain to its heritage differently. The fact that popular music heritage is often negotiated and produced in the in-between spaces of individuals, groups, and institutions often translates to a lack of specified responsibility for this heritage and therefore, a systematic plan for its preservation. Partial loss of popular music heritage is also imminent in the points of transfer, where an artifact or document is received by a new guardian such as an archive or museum (Istvandy 2021, 335). This is exemplified in the way that the care for Juice’s Square and its monuments was passed on from the municipality of Juankoski to the city of Kuopio.

None of these factors, however, diminish the cultural weight that popular music’s recent past has come to possess over the present. On the contrary, the same affordances that predispose popular music heritage to loss account for its many affixations and assimilations from the municipal level to the national. The various local- and national-scale remembrances devoted to Juice Leskinen serve as an example. Nonetheless, a playing out of this ambivalence—between the cultural pervasiveness of popular music’s past and the precarity of its traces—can also be noted in the case of Juankoski and Juice’s Square, where the institutionalization of Leskinen by the city of Kuopio inadvertently led to the dismantling of a monument to local music heritage.

## Conclusion

By reconstructing the phases of Juice’s Square, this article throws light on the various actors and interest groups that have left their mark on the cultural heritage landscape of Juankoski: starting from Leskinen’s own playful proposition, which was later taken up by Juankoski’s cultural board and tourism committee and sanctioned by the municipal council in 1986; further endorsed by the paper *Juankosken Sanomat* in collaboration with sculptor Villu Jaanisoo as well as other local businesses and cultural associations; and later assumed by the city of Kuopio. All along, the recurrent presence of Juice’s fans, who did not stop visiting even during the square’s upheaval in 2019 (Karvinen 2019), reinforced the site’s association with the songwriter.

Although the Juankoskian local community was not primarily focused on promoting popular music heritage as such, its initiative had a bearing on how the memory of Juice Leskinen was and continues to be retrieved and fostered by a wider, and more dissonant, popular music heritage community. As the analysis reveals, the heritage process that evolved on and from Juice's Square first began as an enterprise of local place-making and -promotion but, after 2017, separated into two conflicting notions regarding the appropriate maintenance and, ultimately, the value of this heritage. As a result of the conflict, two successive heritage sites can now be found along the main road/569 of Juankoski. Paradoxically, while the shifting face of Juice's Square testifies to the expansion and continuity of Leskinen's public memory, it also reveals the persistent precarity of the traces of popular music heritage. Therefore, when it comes to the ongoing heritagization of popular music, discontinuity and loss appear as the other side of the process.

## Acknowledgements

We thank the anonymous reviewers for their feedback and the Emil Aaltonen Foundation whose grant supported Anna Peltomäki's research on this article.

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All links verified 31.1.2023.

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## Notes

[1] Since the 1960s and after 7 municipal mergers, the city of Kuopio has outgrown its moderate 40 square kilometer size, evolving into a 4000 square kilometer and 120,000-inhabitant regional center (Koski 2021, 11).

[2] At the time of the merger, the municipal debt of Juankoski amounted to roughly 24 million, over 4700 euros per capita (Tiihonen 2014).