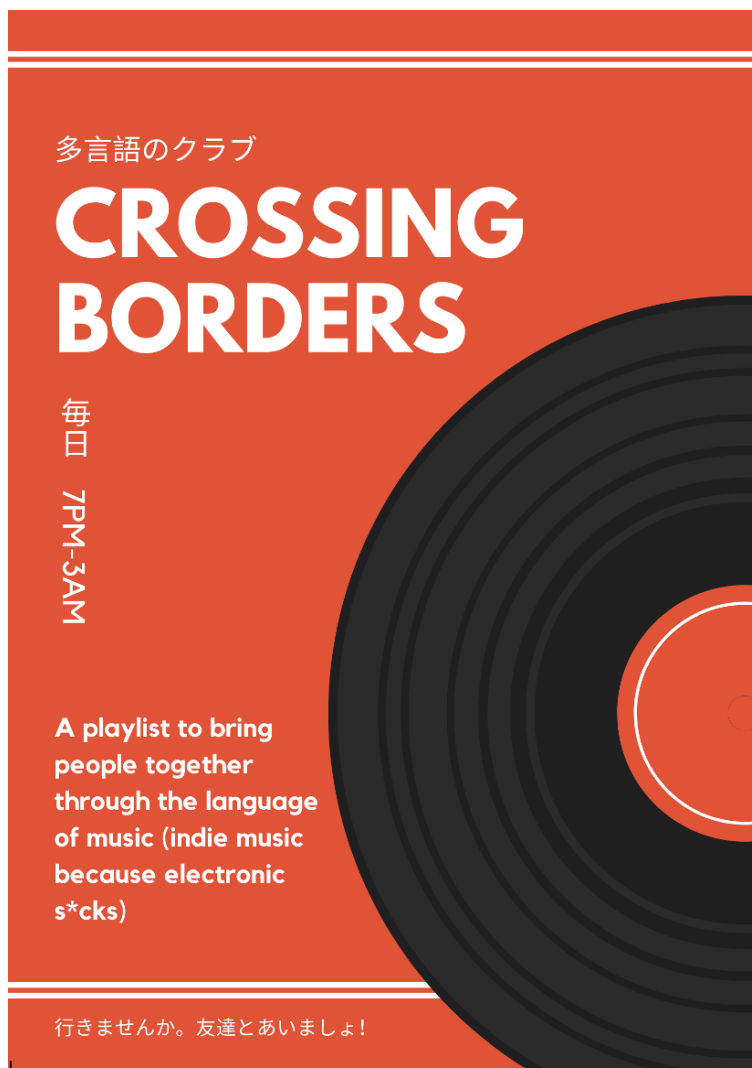


Crossing Borders by Catarina de sa Gomes

Like Luke, Catarina too had created a playlist as her final creative output. She had done this on Spotify, and you can listen to it though the link below. Through her playlist Catarina wanted to explore the multiculturalism in Tokyo, something that is often not prominently recognised in representations of Japan that tend to emphasise the supposed homogeneity of the Japanese.

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5zByY9BZwBs1Qm98OFy90C?si=2e957bb6f24647e8>



“By creating this playlist, I attempted to come up with a new concept to bridge the gap between people of different ethnicities, nationalities and identities. It is true that “music can be used to draw boundaries between groups, thereby shaping and strengthening social identities (Rice 2013, p.72)” (Lidskog 2016, 25). However, the point of this project is to break through these intangible boundaries by connecting the various social groups within the same social space through music. [...] With this idea in mind,

I began asking “who lives in Tokyo?”. Besides Japanese people, who else lives in this global city? Based on studies on multiculturalism and immigration in Japan (Lie 2001; Murphy-Shigematsu 1993; Machimura 2013) and on Census data (TOKYO STATISTICAL YEARBOOK 2018), I was able to get an answer to this question; the most prominent communities are from China, South Korea, Vietnam, Philippines, Nepal, Taiwan, US, India, Myanmar, Thailand, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Iran. Tokyo’s globalisation, even after the burst of the bubble, earned it the status of one of the first world centres. Tokyo promised prosperity which motivated immigration from all over the world, particularly from Asia.”

“By compiling a night bar playlist with indie music by the immigrant communities listed above, individuals would be exposed to other languages and people from different cultures, without social or cultural divisions. The main point was precisely to go a step further on the concept of “ethnic bars” (e.g. Chinese bars, Latino bars, Korean bars) and create an all-inclusive space. “[M]usic provides a basis for intimate relations with others” and is “often the basis of collective, public experiences” (Hesmondhalgh 2013, 1). Taking advantage of music’s potential for sociability, the playlist is an attempt at combining different cultures through indie music. Like the middle class Japanese, immigrant citizens also enjoy *asobi* as part of their lives. Erasing labour and class divisions, the fictitious bar where the playlist would play would be a place for communion and interaction for all persons, without the need to specify the ethnic or cultural target of the bar.”