Midwest Music Research Collective &
KU Musicians for an Anti-Racist College

Virtual Spring Conference 2021
March 26-27, 2021

Held virtually on Microsoft Teams

Schedule ........................................................................................................................................ pp. 2-3
Abstracts ........................................................................................................................................ pp. 4-9
Keynote Speaker Biography ........................................................................................................ p. 10
Presenter Biographies ................................................................................................................ pp. 11-13
Presenting Organizations & Acknowledgments ................................................................. p. 14
SCHEDULE
FRIDAY – 03/26/21

10:00-11:30AM CST | Panel

The Music that People Use to Sleep: Universal and Subgroup Characteristics | Rebecca Jane Scarratt

Frisson, Emotion, and Synthetic Gestalts: The Emotional Implications of Expressive Meaning in Debussy’s Cello Sonata | Issa Aji

Neo-Riemannian Harmony and the Twentieth-Century Hymn Topic | Elena Specht

11:30AM-1:30PM CST | Lunch Break

1:30-3:00PM CST | Panel

Beach out of Reach: Amy Beach’s Search for Stylistic Individualism | Megan Lyons

“I Won’t Shut Up”: Critical Reception and Fiona Apple’s Identity in Fetch the Bolt Cutters | Kelly Cole

Piranhas, Volcanoes, and Turtle Shells: Coherence and Congruence in Mario Kart 8’s Enigmatic Sound World | James Heazlewood-Dale

3:30PM | Keynote Lecture

going into language: i used to love to dream | A.D. Carson
**SCHEDULE**  
SATURDAY – 03/27/21

10:00-11:30AM CST | Panel

Love Songs and Love Spells: Micropolitical Negotiations in Three Recordings of “I Put A Spell On You” | Hannah Waterman

Syncretism in Vietnamese Art Music | James Alexander

The Use of Choreography and Body Movements by Latin American Choirs in Canada: Video Performance Analysis | Esteban Mendoza

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Thematic Interplay in Samuel Coleridge-Taylor’s Clarinet Quintet in F-sharp Minor, Op. 10 | Nadine Silverman

The Black American Sound: Examining the Influence of 1930’s Chicago on Classical Music At Large | Lydia Bangura

“Yes, the Sky’s gone up”: Esperanza Spalding’s Afrofuturistic Critique of the Black Patriarchy in her song, “Elevate or Operate” | Alejandro Cueto

3:30PM | Workshop

A Craft Workshop on Rap & Storytellingly Invention | A.D. Carson
ABSTRACTS

The Music that People Use to Sleep: Universal and Subgroup Characteristics | Rebecca Jane Scarratt

Sleep quality is decreasing dramatically worldwide, and in the absence of sustainable treatment options, many people turn to music to help them sleep in order to help induce relaxation or to distract for external or internal noise. Although some studies have shown the effectiveness of music in inducing sleep and relaxation, few have inquired about the properties of the music that is chosen to help sleep. With a large dataset of 297,619 tracks retrieved from sleep playlists from the online streaming service Spotify, this study found that music used for sleep has higher instrumentalness and acousticness, and lower energy and loudness than music in general. After performing a clustering analysis, it was also found that while some clusters represent the above mentioned findings very well, other clusters have high speechiness, high liveness, low acousticness and high danceability. It is likely that different people choose to listen to music for different reasons and therefore have variability in the type of music that is chosen. Furthermore, some people might tend towards the typical type of music used for sleep, such as ambient music which is characterized by the general features of sleep music, while some opt for music they are more familiar with, such as mainstream pop music, which was very present in the clusters with surprising features. Individual preference of music also plays a role in how likely a track is to induce relaxation. Furthermore, the more familiar an individual is with a piece of music, the more predictable this track becomes. In that way, there is less surprise and the individual can relax more. Using the largest sleep music dataset to date, this study found that music that is used for sleep is characterized by high instrumentalness, high acousticness, low loudness and low energy. It also found variation in the types of music that is used for sleep which might be due to preference, familiarity and the reason for which individuals listen to music before sleep.

Frisson, Emotion, and Synthetic Gestalts: The Emotional Implications of Expressive Meaning in Debussy’s Cello Sonata | Issa Aji

Cognitive theorists have often used the colloquial term “frisson” to describe the cognitive-psychophysiological “thrills,” “shivers,” “chills,” and “gooseflesh” that one perceives while listening to a particularly expressive musical passage. In attempting to account for such passages, David Huron (2006) attributes the phenomenon to two primary conditions: “(1) loud passages, and (2) passages that contain some violation of expectation—such as an abrupt modulation.” Despite the validity of these structural parameters, this paper finds that in the opening four measures of Debussy’s Cello Sonata, L. 135 (1915)—which evokes a strong frisson-like response (in my experience)—our expectations for sudden dynamic and/or harmonic shifts, as prescribed by Huron’s hypothesis, would not be fulfilled. Thus, in order to fully understand the rich emotional potential of this passage, I contend that we must go beyond mere surface-level interactions, and account for its emergent expressive meaning. The proposed paper, therefore, provides a semiotic reading of the opening bars of Debussy’s Cello Sonata (mm. 1–4) in order to elucidate the multifaceted implications of expressive interactions, resulting in more complex emotional experience.

Using Kofi Agawu’s extroversive-introversive semiotic paradigm as a model (1991), this paper finds that the perceived emotions in the opening of Debussy’s sonata emerge from a series of rhetorical (topical) and structural (syntactic) oppositions that interact to form a “synthetic gestalt” (Hatten 2004). Specifically, I show how perceived emotions in this passage are formed by the synthesis of two pairs of oppositions: (1) a rhetorical opposition between two dialogically opposed topics and (2) a structural opposition between melody and harmony. I propose that expressive meaning in the opening bars of Debussy’s sonata hinges on both the confrontation and dependency between the two domains of semiotic analysis; it is precisely where rhetorical and syntactical oppositions interact and merge into a synthetic gestalt that expressive meaning becomes “emergent” (Hatten 2018). Finally, I argue that these meanings then become interiorized into an amalgam of thought and feeling, creating an emotional charge that is more than the sum of its parts.
Neo-Riemannian Harmony and the Twentieth-Century Hymn Topic | Elena Specht

Drawing on the work of Ratner (1980) and others in topic theory, this paper considers appearances of the hymn topic in twentieth century repertoire. In defining the hymn topic, both Mckee (2007) and Sánchez-Kisielewska (2016, 2018) place great emphasis on the prominence of the Romanesca schema (Gjerdingen 2007) in eighteenth century occurrences of the hymn. However, much twentieth century music abandons traditional tonal functions, raising the question of what harmonic features do define this topic in more recent repertoire. I argue that in the absence of functional tonality, neo-Riemannian transformations are key features of these hymns, and these relationships help establish continuity and coherence, especially in works that have no tonal center. Common-tone relationships allow for smooth voice leading and give a sense of logical order without progressive harmony.

I examine neo-tonal, triadic works by Britten, Schuman, Holst, and Floyd, all of which possess other defining features of the hymn topic, such as a chorale texture, slow tempo, and simple rhythms, and all of which use neo-Riemannian transformations. In some cases, stronger ties to traditional tonal music and forms are present: Britten’s work uses the Romanesca under its harmonic transformations, Schuman elicits the theme and variations genre, and Floyd uses functional tonality in brief snippets. At the same time, competing and distantly-related tonal centers are key to these works as well, as neo-Riemannian transformations allow the music to visit disparate tonal regions. In many places, the music rejects opportunities to follow common-practice voice leading in favor of surprising harmony and modulations made possible by common tone. Though each work is unique, these similar harmonic patterns suggest a common thread among works that reference the hymn topic in the twentieth century.

Beach out of Reach: Amy Beach’s Search for Stylistic Individualism | Megan Lyons

Throughout her compositional career, Amy Beach was consistently controlled by others: her mother, her husband, and the MacDowell Colony. The critical moment of freedom was the death of her husband and the subsequent death of her mother. Beach’s mother dictated how she studied music and even arranged her marriage to the older doctor. Dr. Henry Beach continued to control her life, discouraging her from performing and not allowing her to formally study composition. The loss of her mother and husband provided the creative and emotional freedom she needed to find her own compositional style.

Four of Beach’s art songs were set to her own text, and are arguably the most individualistic works she created. Three were composed prior to 1910, the year of Dr. Beach’s death, and contrast drastically with the fourth. In the three earlier songs, her text and music often present different narratives, a musical irony which shows inner emotional turmoil through Beach’s use of modal mixture. The fourth song abandons musical irony and presents Beach’s emotions with a renewed sense of clarity. She no longer mimics her husband’s Old English writing style in her texts and finds a new emotional depth through her writing. Her first art song The Rainy Day (1883) and In the Twilight (1922), both featuring texts by Longfellow, show Beach’s evolution to find her individual style. The earlier is simple with little use of chromaticism or modal mixture, while the latter is intricate and chromatic, showing her emotional as well as compositional growth.
“I Won’t Shut Up”: Critical Reception and Fiona Apple’s Identity in *Fetch the Bolt Cutters* | Kelly Cole

On April 17th, 2020, singer-songwriter Fiona Apple released her fifth studio album *Fetch the Bolt Cutters* through Epic Records with her fellow producers and collaborators Amy Aileen Wood, Sebastian Steinberg, and David Garza. This album was released nearly a month into the COVID-19 pandemic and amidst the 2020 election campaign season. *Fetch* has been heralded as one of her most experimental albums to date and even received a perfect score of 10 on *Pitchfork*. The prevalent sonic elements of the album are the use of percussion, improvisation, and distinct shifts in vocal timbre and register. *Fetch* is a culmination of Apple’s past and present experiences; it demonstrates how she uses her personal struggles and self-disclosure to make statements about the current cultural and political zeitgeist.

As a survivor of sexual assault, the subject matter in Apple’s art has been overtly political from the beginning of her career to present day. Still, Apple’s activism and personal creed have developed significantly since the release of her first album *Tidal* in 1996. Each album possesses its own distinct sound world. What distinguishes *Fetch* from previous releases is its critical reception and how the musical content of the album and the production process portray Apple’s relationships with women. In this paper, I will show how the critical reception of Apple’s work and life has changed over time. I will use select musical examples to discuss how Apple’s response to her critics and journey of self-healing led to her to creating an album that builds community and creates dialogue with women through lyrical, sonic, and literal modes of expression.

Piranhas, Volcanoes, and Turtle Shells: Coherence and Congruence in Mario Kart 8’s Enigmatic Sound World | James Heazlewood-Dale

Nintendo’s *Mario Kart 8* presents a vividly imaginative virtual world, in which players race in tiny go-karts through enigmatic racecourses and across disparate gaming universes using objects like bananas and empty turtle shells to derail competitors. In contrast to the visual component, music establishes a sense of normalcy. How does the score create coherence (an essential quality for player immersion) in an incongruent world? The present study draws from research by scholars, Andrew Schartmann and Guillaume Laroche, who focused on the evolution of the musical themes found in *Super Mario Bros* and its subsequent iterations, and Isabella van Elferen, William Gibbons, and Tim Summers who have produced fruitful literature on the ludomusicological topics of immersion and remixing. Notwithstanding, existing scholarship seldom explores the relationship between music and games that utilize exceptionally unrealistic gameplay. This issue will be explored through *Mario Kart 8* - arguably one of Nintendo’s most outlandish games. My research involves a detailed discussion of the scores and virtual environments of the “Piranha Plant Slide” and “Grumble Volcano” racecourses. I argue that the coherence and congruence of the objects and characters in *Mario Kart 8*’s nonsensical environments are established through the players’ musical literacy of past Nintendo scores, the evocation of musical affect, and the real-time transformation of diegetic stingers. This study is unique in exploring the music of the *Mario Kart* series, and by furthering scholarship that details music’s role in establishing congruence within imaginative virtual worlds.
Love Songs and Love Spells: Micropolitical Negotiations in Three Recordings of “I Put A Spell On You” | Hannah Waterman

In *The Race of Sound*, Nina Sun Eidsheim argues that vocal identities are not innate, but rather a product of the “micropolitics of listening.” The acousmatic question — “Who is this? Who is speaking?” — mediates the collective, cultural construction of identity around the voice. Following Eidsheim, I foreground the contingent agency of the listener in constructing racialized and gendered vocal identities in recordings of “I Put A Spell On You” by Screamin’ Jay Hawkins, Nina Simone, and Annie Lennox. My analysis focuses on present-day listening to older audiovisual recordings on YouTube, an idiosyncratic acousmatic situation in which the singer’s body is visible, but the sociopolitical circumstances of recording are obscured. As with the audio-only recordings Alexander Weheliye considers in *Phonographies*, this rift between recording and reception (the “phonographic split”) is fraught with micropolitical ambiguities.

Using a strategy based in ethnographic content analysis, I read YouTube comment sections for traces of the means by which sound is consumed, politicized, and policed, working towards an understanding of the process by which present-day listeners negotiate the phonographic split and retroactively construct the singer. YouTube listeners attribute a magical quality to both Hawkins and Simone, ambivalently wavering between terror and comedy in Hawkins’s recording, and crisis and comfort in Simone’s recording. In contrast, Lennox’s listeners find her rendition to be innocuously romantic. This paper shows that these divergences reflect constraints on listening made not only by the musical content of each recording, but by the conditions of global racial capitalism.

Syncretism in Vietnamese Art Music | James Alexander

Current research on Vietnamese music focuses on traditional music using Indigenous instruments and customs rather than Vietnamese-western art music created by fusing traditional Vietnamese music with western practices. Musicology today favors similar trends in the music of China, Indonesia, and Japan. The diaspora of Vietnamese people creates discrete styles built from a combination of traditional Vietnamese music and music of their new residence. My interviews with Vân-Ánh Võ, Nhat Minh Nguyen and PQ Phan explicate a compositional development characterized by bringing the Vietnamese traditional sound to the forefront. My lecture recital and supporting DMA document involves performing and writing about the works of these composers namely *Awakening* by Vân-Ánh Võ written for dàn bão and cello, *Etude for solo cello* by PQ Phan and a new cello and electronics composition by Nhat Nguyen written for the recital. These composers synthesize traditional Vietnamese music with North American and European sounds creating a greater breadth of experience, understanding and evolution of classical music traditions globally. Modernization and hybridization of musical languages derive a new classical style and problematize conventions of art music. World music textbooks in American schools and programming at American halls depict Vietnamese music as folk music, or world music, rather than art music, or canonic music. Genres like ca trù risk extinction without a place in the Vietnamese academia. Vietnamese music branching out from traditional or folk music into art music reveals how styles inspired by Western art music and Vietnamese traditional music represent Vietnam effectively. My work pushes for Vietnamese-American art music entering the Western art music repertoire and considers the former as significant as the latter.
The Use of Choreography and Body Movements by Latin American Choirs in Canada: Video Performance Analysis | Esteban Mendoza

The inclusion of physical movements is a typical hallmark of Latin American choirs in their performances (Gualchi & Ordás, 2019), a feature that remains in the immigrant choirs in Canada. This research analyzes forty-eight songs in audiovisual records of live performances by seven Latin American choirs in Canada from 2006 to 2019: Cantares Latin Choir, Canto Vivo, Fusión Latina, Los Parranderos de Vancouver, Nuestras Voces, UNAM-Canada Choir, and Viene Sonando. The aim of this study is to examine the choral practice of these choirs to understand the scope, characteristics, and function of the use of choreography and body movements in their performance.

My preliminary findings suggest that choreography and body movements are recurrently used by these choirs as a way of preserving the Latin American repertoire in its most genuine way of interpretation. This is achieved by uniting the musical styles with elements of dances associated with them, in such a way as to highlight their characteristic properties and reveal the multimodal nature of Latin American choral music.

Informed by works regarding the influence of musical "gestures" and body movements on choral performances (Camurri & Volpe, 2011; Camurri et al., 2004; Ordás & Blanco, 2013; Gualchi & Ordás, 2019; Seighman, 2015), and studies addressing different approaches to the concepts of "choreography" and "choralography" (Kolo, 2016; Lepecki, 2007; Green, 1984), I analyze the videos from a comparative perspective that allows me to find tendencies and common patterns regarding the physical performance developed by these choirs, considering in turn, the repertoire interpreted, its musical style, the attitude of the choristers, and the role played by the conductors. From my research I can suggest that these choreography and body movements fulfill a function that goes beyond the enhancement of choral performance to forge Latin American representative elements of identity in the Canadian context.

Thematic Interplay in Samuel Coleridge-Taylor’s Clarinet Quintet in F-sharp Minor, Op. 10 | Nadine Silverman

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875-1912) was poised to become one of the great composers of his era had he not died so young. Although his trilogy of cantatas brought him international acclaim, the chamber works he composed during his student years are full of interesting compositional techniques. In this paper, I examine Coleridge-Taylor’s use of thematic interplay through an analysis of his Clarinet Quintet in F-sharp Minor. Throughout the first and second movements of his quintet, Coleridge-Taylor integrates the thematic ideas beyond their respective formal sections in three distinct ways. These techniques obscure traditional theme zone boundaries, deny our melodic expectations, and bring a sense of familiarity to themes that we have not yet heard. Yet despite blurring the lines between theme areas, Coleridge-Taylor’s use of thematic interplay helps to strengthen the overall sense of formal closure.

I begin by discussing thematic layering, which involves two or more themes playing simultaneously. Coleridge-Taylor typically does this by making one theme more accompanimental and using it to support another melodic theme. Then, I introduce the concept of thematic staggering. Coleridge-Taylor uses this technique to quickly pivot between themes by interrupting one melody with another. For listeners, this shift between themes can be unexpected yet engaging. Finally I present thematic foreshadowing, which describes instances when a theme fragment is played before the first full iteration of a theme, thus hinting at new melodic material before its theme zone has been reached. Coleridge-Taylor uses these three methods throughout the work to diversify the development of themes and to solidify the sense of formal return and closure. By drawing attention to Coleridge-Taylor’s compositional techniques, I hope to begin addressing the lack of music-theoretical research on him as well as other marginalized and underrepresented composers highlighted recently by Philip Ewell (2020) and others.
The Black American Sound: Examining the Influence of 1930’s Chicago on Classical Music At Large | Lydia Bangura

The Bohemian composer Antonín Dvořák, known for the New World Symphony, commented in the New York Heald in 1893:

“I am now satisfied that the future music of this country must be founded upon what are called the Negro melodies. This must be the real foundation of any serious and original school of composition to be developed in the United States... These beautiful and varied themes are a product of the soil. They are American. I would like to trace out the individual authorship of the Negro melodies, for it would throw a great deal of light upon the questions I am most deeply interested in at present. These are the folk songs of America, and your composers must turn to them.”

Classical music is not a field that has always felt accessible to me as an African-American woman; it is still not a field that is accessible to many communities of color in the United States. And yet, the American sound is fundamentally founded on the people who built the country. The Black roots of American classical music and the erasure of the Black vernacular from the American canon go largely overlooked. As I enter into the field of music theory, I question, as Dvořák did, the whiteness of the field, the research and the Western canon. This paper will explore the concept of the distinct American sound, how to define said sound, its specific attributes, and in what ways this sound is rooted in the Black vernacular. By focusing on the setting of the 1930’s in Chicago, I will examine the distinct melodic and harmonic characteristics of three African-American compositions and their larger influence on the development of the American sound. The paper will ultimately focus on a few select works that reveal such influence: Florence Price’s Symphony in E Minor, William Dawson’s Negro Folk Symphony, and Margaret Bonds’ The Negro Speaks of Rivers.

“Yes, the Sky’s gone up”: Esperanza Spalding’s Afropolitan Critique of the Black Patriarchy in her song, “Elevate or Operate” | Alejandro Cueto

Esperanza Spalding’s 2016 live premiere of her album Emily’s D+Evolution was groundbreaking both for its eclectic visual storytelling and Black feminist critique. Through elaborate costumes, theatrics, and puppetry, “Elevate or Operate” addresses the hegemonic assimilationism of some older Black Americans who advocate for the adoption of White cultural norms to elevate their own social standing. This paper analyzes how Spalding casts marionette puppets to represent the assimilationist/feminist binary. A tall, elderly elevator operator is dressed in a gold serviceman’s uniform to represent his gilded subservience to whiteness while a shorter marionette of Spalding herself, clad in futuristic clothing, represents Black feminism. The motion of the puppets, costumes, and lyrics interact to depict the marginalization of Black women and at the same time point to an alternative way forward. The elevator operator’s constant and physically aggressive interruptions of Spalding relegate her contributions to the static chorus while the elevator operator dominates the song’s narrative verse sections. This asymmetric relationship present in the verse-chorus structure reflects the historic silencing and erasure of Black women.

The narratives of the live and audio recordings diverge greatly. The audio album portrays a grim reality and a nonexistent future for Black equality. The live performance, on the other hand, features a disintegration of the assimilationist argument as the elevator operator floats off-stage babbling incoherently; the song closes with Spalding sitting triumphantly atop the elevator. Thus, she is presented as the future of the Black civil rights movement.
A.D. Carson is a performance artist and educator from Decatur, Illinois. He received his Ph.D. in Rhetorics, Communication, and Information Design at Clemson University doing work that focuses on race, literature, history, and rhetorical performances. A 2016 recipient of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Award for Excellence in Service at Clemson, Carson worked with students, staff, faculty, and community members to raise awareness of historic, entrenched racism at the university through his See the Stripes campaign, which takes its name from his 2014 poem. His dissertation, “Owning My Masters: The Rhetorics of Rhymes & Revolutions,” is a digital archive that features a 34 track rap album and was recognized by the Graduate Student Government as the 2017 Outstanding Dissertation.


Carson is currently assistant professor in Hip-Hop and the Global South at the University of Virginia. Follow A.D. Carson on Twitter/IG @aydeethegreat.
**PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES**

**Issa Aji | him/his | issaaji@utexas.edu | University of Texas at Austin**

Issa Aji is currently a first-year PhD student and assistant instructor in music theory at the University of Texas at Austin. Issa’s primary research interests revolve around notions of musical expressivity, affect, and emotion. He seeks to address these topics through interdisciplinary means, such as narrativity, gesture, phenomenology, temporality, and culture. Currently, he is working on a project that investigates the role of emotions in Arab music.

**James Alexander | him/his | jalexander394@gmail.com | University of Kansas**

James Alexander is a cellist from Michigan pursuing a DMA at the University of Kansas studying cello performance with Hannah Collins and orchestral conducting with Carolyn Watson. His doctoral research is focused on the syncretic elements of Vietnamese American art music. He has worked with the internationally acclaimed musician Woulg and has played on stage with members of the Detroit Symphony, Moscow Ballet, and HAMILTON Broadway pit ensemble. He has played with symphonies in Missouri, Kansas and Michigan and currently plays principal cello in the KU Symphony Orchestra.

**Lydia Bangura | she/hers | lbangura@mail.roosevelt.edu | Roosevelt University**

Lydia Bangura (soprano) is a graduate of Northern Arizona University (Class of 2019) and currently enrolled at Roosevelt University (Class of 2021). A lifelong music performer, Bangura has experience studying violin, viola, piano and voice. Her recent roles include Papagena in Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*, Ellen Orford in Britten’s *Peter Grimes*, and Franca in Adam Guettel’s *The Light in the Piazza*. Bangura also has experience as a music researcher; in 2020, she was awarded a research fellowship from Roosevelt University’s Office of Student Research for her work surrounding music theory pedagogy. She is looking forward to starring in Judith Weir’s one woman show for soprano (*King Harald’s Saga*) and continuing her music theory education following graduation from Roosevelt.

**Kelly Cole | she/they | kcole@bgsu.edu | Bowling Green State University**

Kelly Cole graduated from Columbus State University in 2018 with a Bachelor of Arts in music and minors in communication and audio technology. She is currently pursuing a Master of Music degree in music history at Bowling Green State University. Her research interests include pedagogical studies, popular music, film music, intersections between music and gender, and cultural hybridity in music. She has presented at the Midwest Graduate Music Consortium, Music and the Moving Image Conference, and the MTMS graduate conference at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music.

**Alejandro Cueto | him/his | alejandro.cueto@utexas.edu | University of Texas at Austin**

Alejandro Cueto is a first-year masters student in music theory at the University of Texas at Austin. He received his undergraduate degrees in horn performance and music theory from Arizona State University. His research interests include decolonialism, popular music, jazz, queer studies, and performance studies.
James Heazlewood-Dale | him/his | jameshd@brandeis.edu | Brandeis University

Growing up in the vibrant music scene of Melbourne, Australia, James started playing the double bass professionally in early high school. Having completed a bachelor’s degree in jazz performance with first class-honors, he relocated to Boston to study at the Berklee School of Music and New England Conservatory on the provision of full scholarships. A current Ph.D. candidate in musicology at Brandeis University, his research focuses on jazz studies and ludomusicology. He has given lectures and talks at several universities in the Boston area, including Brandeis University, Tufts University, the Berklee College of Music, and Boston College. His current musical projects include working as a trio member for Grammy award-winning Mehmet Sanlikol and Vadim Nebraska’s nonet, which also involves Grammy award winners Dave Douglass and Keita Ogawa (Snarky Puppy).

Megan Lyons | she/hers | megan.lyons@uconn.edu | University of Connecticut

Megan Lyons is a PhD candidate and graduate teaching assistant in music theory and history at the University of Connecticut. Her research areas include music theory pedagogy, music encoding and its analysis, Joni Mitchell’s use of alternate guitar tunings, and the art songs of Amy Beach. Megan and Dr. Peter Kaminsky presented their work on Joni Mitchell at the 2020 SMT national conference. She is co-author with Dr. Philip Ewell of “Don’t You Cry for Me: A Critical-Race Analysis of Undergraduate Music Theory Instruction,” a chapter in the forthcoming edited volume Teaching and Learning Difficult Topics in the Music Classroom.

Esteban Mendoza | him/his | esm556@mail.usask.ca | University of Saskatchewan

Esteban Mendoza is a student in the Master of Arts in Musicology program and Graduate Teaching Fellow at the University of Saskatchewan, supervised by Dr. Amanda Lalonde. In addition to being a musicologist, he has been a music teacher for secondary education and a youth choir conductor. As well, he has worked on several popular music projects as a singer, bassist, and guitarist.

Rebecca Jane Scarratt | she/hers | calamity-jane@orange.fr | Radboud University

Rebecca is a British citizen who grew up in France who now lives in Amsterdam. She has just completed her Masters in Neurobiology at Radboud University in the Netherlands. She spent 9 months in the Donders Center of Cognitive Imaging studying memory consolidation and prior knowledge schemas. She further has written about the role of music in second language acquisition and in studying. This winter, she carried out an internship at the Center for Music in the Brain where she worked on an RCT study investigating music listening as a treatment for insomnia. She also worked on a data mining study looking at the music people use to sleep which she will present for you today.

Nadine Silverman | she/hers | nadinesilvermanmusic@gmail.com | Rutgers University

Nadine Silverman is a multi-disciplinary graduate student at Rutgers University’s Mason Gross School of the Arts. She is currently pursuing master’s degrees in music theory and clarinet performance, and she holds a bachelor’s in music theory and composition from West Chester University of Pennsylvania. In addition to her education, Nadine serves as the Director of Research for the National Arts Diversity Integration Association (NADIA), a nonprofit dedicated to furthering equity in the arts. Her research, in line with NADIA’s mission, is focused on elevating the work of underrepresented composers and examining the history of marginalization in the musical canon.
Elena Specht | she/hers | erspecht@msu.edu | Michigan State University

Elena Specht is a composer and music theorist currently studying at Michigan State University, where she is pursuing a DMA in composition and an MM in music theory. She writes instrumental and vocal concert music inspired by nature, captivating questions, and compelling stories. Recent commissions have come from the Denver Pops Orchestra, the Grand Valley State University New Music Ensemble, and the Hypotenuse Trio. As a theorist, her research is on composition as a pedagogical tool in the theory classroom and music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Hannah Waterman | she/hers | hannah.waterman@stonybrook.edu | Stony Brook University

Hannah Waterman is a second-year Ph.D student in music history and theory at Stony Brook University. Her research has taken two broad directions: first, critical approaches to popular music, and second, the status of speculative music theory during the Scientific Revolution. Outside of research, Hannah enjoys teaching undergraduate music theory courses and represents the music department in Stony Brook’s Graduate Student Senate.
PRESENTING ORGANIZATIONS & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Midwest Music Research Collective (MMRC)

MMRC aims to foster an interdisciplinary platform for students of all disciplines to present their music research, and for emerging scholars to share their research and experiences. MMRC’s goal is to provide students with opportunities for presentation of research, performance, professional development, and networking. MMRC is also dedicated to bringing scholarly research in dialogue with the greater Lawrence community by creating and hosting events that bring together scholars, artists, musicians, poets, and the local population. Currently, MMRC membership is open to graduate students of all disciplines who have an interest in music.

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KU Musicians for an Anti-Racist College (MARC)

MARC is an organization of current and former students of the KU School of Music who advocate for the intellectual, emotional, and professional agency of current student musicians. MARC does this by taking direct action against racist, exploitative, and patriarchal institutional practices; partnering with organizations throughout KU and the larger Lawrence community; and facilitating critical spaces for decolonial thought within music studies.

KU Musicians for an Anti-Racist College Members

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Finally, we extend special thanks to our student organization faculty advisor, Dr. Scott Murphy.