

McGill Music Graduate Students' Society Symposium 2020

Friday, March 13, 2020

12:00–13:00 – Guided Tour of the Schulich School of Music

Elizabeth Wirth Music Building Lobby

13:00–16:00 – Registration

Wirth Music Building, 8th floor

13:30–13:45 – Welcome Remarks

Wirth Music Building, A-832

Traditional Territory Acknowledgement (Tobias Tschiedl, VP Symposium)

Dr. Lloyd Whitesell, Vice-Dean of the Schulich School of Music

13:45–14:45 – Lecture Recital I

A-832

Karin Cuellar-Rendon (McGill University): “*Yaravies* and *Huayños* in the church: Hybridity and Patriotism in the music of Pedro Ximenez Abrill Tirado.”

This Lecture Recital includes performances of Día 3 and Día 4 from Abrill Tirado’s *15 Meditaciones para el Quinario*, arranged for string quartet.

Karin Cuellar, violin

Simon Alexandre, violin

Isabelle Douailly, viola

Jessica Korotkin, cello

14:45–15:00 – Break

15:00–16:30 – 20th century issues

Chair: Robert Hasegawa

A-832

(1) Michael Bennett (Stony Brook University): “The Expressive and Structural Economy of Gesture in Luciano Berio’s *Sequenza XIVa* for Solo Cello”

(2) Neal Endicott (Michigan State University): “Mamlök on Day One: Strategies for Incorporating Recent Music Throughout the Undergraduate Music Theory Curriculum”

(3) Danny Gerth (Indiana University Bloomington): “Tintinnabuli Techniques and Proportional Canon as a Metaphor for a Spiritual Journey in Arvo Pärt’s *Mein Weg hat Gipfel und Wellentäler*”

16:30–17:00 – Break

17:00– Research Keynote

Dr. Judy Lochhead (Stony Brook University): “Timbre's Realities: A Phenomenological Study of

Saariaho's *D'Om Le Vrai Sens*"

Introductory Remarks: Prof. Robert Hasegawa

A-832

After Research Keynote: Wine and Cheese Reception

A-832

Saturday, March 14, 2020

9:00–11:00 – Registration (and Coffee)

Wirth Music Building, 8th floor

9:30–11:00 – Cognitive, Empirical and Quantitative Approaches

Chair: Lena Heng

A-832

(1) Andrew Blake (Kent State University): "Tempering the Clavier: Examining the Intervallic Content of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier Through the Lens of Historical Temperaments."

(2) Jade Roth (McGill University): "Cross-Modality as an Approach to Timbre Analysis in Tōru Takemitsu's *Rain Spell*."

(3) Bezal John Benny and Keon Ju Lee (University of Victoria): "Exploring machine learning techniques for music emotion recognition."

11:00–11:15 – Break

11:15–12:15 – Rhythm and Analysis

Chair: Nicole Biamonte

A-832

(1) Gerry Lopez and Zachary Lookenbill (Michigan State University): "Effects of Rhythmic Complexity on Tempo Determination."

(2) Hanisha Kulothparan (Michigan State University): "Metric Stability and Instability in Maurice Ravel's Piano Music."

12:15–13:45 – Lunch

13:45–15:00 – Performance Keynote

Dr. Eric Wen (Bard College, Curtis Institute): "Realizing the Turning Point."

Introductory Remarks: Prof. Martha DeFrancisco

Tanna Schulich Hall

15:00–15:15 – Break

15:15–16:45 – Lecture Recital II

Renaud Boucher-Browning (McGill University): “The Theory and Practice of Improvising Cadenzas in Classical Concertos”

Chair: Dorian Bandy
Tanna Schulich Hall

*This Recital includes a full performance of
Concerto No. 18 in C minor (1807) by Johann Matthias Sperger (1750-1812)*

I. Allegro maestoso
II. Andante poco Adagio
III. Rondo: Vivace

Renaud Boucher-Browning – Double Bass
Brigitte Poulin – Piano

16:45–17:00 – Break

17:00–17:30 – Lecture Recital III

Anneli Loepp Thiessen (University of Ottawa): “The Girl Gershwin: Dana Suesse and *The Cocktail Suite*”

Chair: TBD
Tanna Schulich Hall

18:30 – Symposium Dinner

La Société (1415 Rue de la Montagne)
For a guide to walk you there, meet at 18:00 in Wirth Music Building Lobby.
Please RSVP by March 6.

Sunday, March 15, 2020

9:00–9:30 – Coffee

A-832

9:30–10:30 – Medieval Issues

Chair: Julie Cumming
A-832

(1) Christina Dioguardi (Brandeis University): “The Songs of Humbertus de Salinis.”
(2) Eric Elder (Brandeis University): “Text, Meter, Line, and Tone: Toward a Holistic Approach to the Structural Analysis of Ars Antiqua Polyphony.”

10:30–11:00 – Break

11:00–13:00 – Popular Music and Politics

Chair: David Brackett

A-832

(1) Jared Asser (Trent University): “Shellacking the Klan: Music and the Preservation of Far-Right Identity.”

(2) Megan Batty (McGill University): “‘Authentic’ re-creation: Gesture and Gender in Contemporary Swing Dance Communities.”

(3) Sandow Sinai (Queens College, CUNY): “‘I’ll Walk Out a Wiser Weaker Man’: Narratives of Punishment and the Public/Private Divide in the Music of Johnny Cash.”

(4) Adrian Matte (Carleton University): “Political Convergence and Aesthetic Thickening: The Art Ensemble of Chicago’s Soundtrack to the Film *Les Stances à Sophie*.”

13:00 – 13:15 Closing Remarks

A-832

Frédéric A. Michaud, MGSS President

Tobias Tschiedl, VP Symposium

ABSTRACTS

Friday, March 13, 2020

13:45–14:45 – Lecture Recital I

A-832

***Yaravíes* and *Huayños* in the church: Hybridity and Patriotism in the music of Pedro Ximenez Abrill Tirado**

Karin Cuellar-Rendon (McGill University)

In the final decades of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth century (1790-1840), South America underwent a period called the ‘Age of Revolutions,’ during which the Spanish colonial rule ended giving way to the Republican era. This was a time in which fighting for freedom, liberty, independence and ultimately democracy permeated every aspect of life, including arts and music. Peruvian composer Pedro Ximenez Abrill Tirado (1786-1854), who lived during this period, drew extensively from both local musical styles and European models and aesthetics to express in his music a new criollo libertarian–national identity. His output, impressive both for its quality, its size, and aesthetic breath reflects the ways in which South American composers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries molded their aesthetic identities in the midst of enlightenment movements, Colonial reforms, and independence revolutions. This lecture recital will explore the use of Andean dances and yaravíes – a Peruvian song genre associated with the Independence cause during the Age of Revolutions –in 15 Meditaciones para el Quinario, a set of paraliturgical pieces meant to be performed as instrumental interludes to inspire prayer and introspection during Holy week festivities. This presentation will illustrate the ways in which Ximenez used a hybrid musical language arguably with the intention of infusing patriotic fervor in his audience—a composer’s endeavor so important in these times of identity construction.

14:45–15:00 – Break

15:00–16:30 – 20th century issues

Chair: Robert Hasegawa

A-832

15:00

The Expressive and Structural Economy of Gesture in Luciano Berio’s *Sequenza XIVa* for Solo Cello

Michael Bennett (Stony Brook University)

Past analyses of Luciano Berio’s *Sequenza* series have largely been defined by pitch-based approaches to musical structure. While such analyses prove invaluable in understanding the constructive principles at work, their explanatory power is limited given their formalist scope and the composer’s idiosyncratic use of diverse structural principles. Additionally, by exclusively focusing on pitch, such analyses neglect its role within potentially more elaborate structural and expressive schemata. My paper offers an alternative, gesture-based analysis of Berio’s *Sequenza XIVa* for solo cello, taken as emblematic of the general structure of the series writ large. Berio’s essays and interviews indicate that pitch organization in the *Sequenza* series intersects with a more comprehensive “morphological dimension” devised around the musical conventions and material properties of particular instruments. This broader dimension as Berio describes it is a spectrum encompassing the timbral characteristics and idiomatic gestures associated with the solo instrument, and morphological tension lies in the dynamic between culturally inherited and unfamiliar, extended instrumental techniques.

Following theorizations of gesture and analytic approaches in recent music theory, phenomenology, and the composer’s own published writings on musical semiotics, I contend that a music-analytic framework of embodied gesture reveals motivic and formal structures while it also reflects the composer’s values of modernist nonconformity and political pluralism. The work is constructed around contrasting extremes on a conventional-nonnormative spectrum, and my analysis reveals how the morphological dimension is realized both through the motivic development of morphological extremes and a formal dialectic which ultimately fails to synthesize those motives. Read alongside Berio’s writings on gesture and Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of embodiment, analysis of *Sequenza XIVa* suggests alternative, gestural economies of musical expression as well as alternative modes of embodied social being.

15:30

Mamlok on Day One: Strategies for Incorporating Recent Music Throughout the Undergraduate Music Theory Curriculum

Neal Endicott (Michigan State University)

This presentation offers concrete solutions to two challenges that face theory instructors seeking to better cover post-tonal music. The first of these challenges is the lack of curricular time dedicated to music since 1900 (Buchler, 2017), particularly given the attitude that such topics

must be left for last, so to speak. The second of the two challenges is the attitudes frequently demonstrated by students towards topics that they prejudge to be difficult, unfamiliar, aesthetically unappealing, or entirely divorced from previous topics (Roig-Francoli, 2017).

Both challenges can be partially ameliorated by early incorporation of 20th- and 21st-century examples into the music theory classroom without needing to alter overall curricular structure. This allows instructors to avoid the necessity of easing into post-tonal repertoire upon arrival at its dedicated unit (Strauss, 2018), expands composers — particularly female composers, composers of color, and living composers — and styles — including underrepresented styles and instrumentations — with which students are familiar, allows for increased student familiarity with the sound of post-tonal music, makes the study of post-tonal music less daunting, and offers opportunities to engage more fully with literature utilizing even the most basic topics.

After a brief literature review (see attached materials) I discuss sample lessons that integrate 20th- and 21st-century works into lessons that typically fall within the first year of collegiate studies. For instance, in the teaching of pitch I utilize the theme from Ursula Mamlok's *Variations for Solo Flute*, which allows students not only to identify pitches but also to immediately engage analytically with a “real” composition by articulating observations of the palindromic pattern of pitch presentation in the theme. Other example lessons will offer similar opportunities for high-level engagement, while others will present opportunities for the integration of contemporary music into speed-drill and homework exercises.

16:00

Tintinnabuli Techniques and Proportional Canon as a Spiritual Journey in Arvo Pärt's.

Danny Gerth (Indiana University)

While several scholars (Hillier, 1997; Brauneiss, 2012; Amblard, 2010; Conen, 2006) have provided overviews of the various techniques employed in Arvo Pärt's tintinnabuli style, there are very few in-depth analyses of his works, though John Roeder's study of mathematical transformations in *The Beatitudes* (2011) is a rare exception.

In response, I have decided to analyze the techniques identified by Hillier (1997) and Brauneiss (2012) in Pärt's organ work *Mein Weg hat Gipfel und Wellentäler*. The title of this work is derived from the German translation of French-Egyptian poet Edmond Jabès's poem:

My road had its hours of greatness,
its blows, its pain.
My road has its crest and its downswell,
Its sand and its sky.
My road. Yours.

The title of Pärt's piece derives from the third line of the poem, which uses ocean waves as a metaphor for the ups and downs of life. Pärt therefore uses the proportional canon—both the canon subject, which is made of alternating ascending and descending scalar passages, and the process itself—to create musical “waves.” Pärt has claimed that the tintinnabuli style contains two voices—the melodic voice, which uses only the notes of a scale, and the tintinnabuli voice, which uses only the three pitch classes of a triad—that represent sin and forgiveness, saying in a

2003 interview that “the melody represents my sins and my imperfect being, whereas the second voice is the forgiveness that is granted to me.” My analysis focuses on how the canon and its subject serve as a metaphor for a turbulent spiritual journey. This journey is filled with dissonances generated by the canon (2nds, in particular), representing sin, but are ultimately resolved in the end by ending on the same e minor triad that started the piece, representing forgiveness.

16:30–17:00 – Break

17:00 – Research Keynote

Introductory Remarks: Prof. Robert Hasegawa
A-832

Timbre's Realities: A Phenomenological Study of Saariaho's *D'Om Le Vrai Sens*

Dr. Judy Lochhead (Stony Brook University)

Timbre has a visceral sonic presence and an undeniable sonic reality. Yet, it has become a much-remarked truism that timbre poses conceptual difficulties or that it is a paradox. The enigma of timbre as concept is not unique. Visual color, for instance, has long perplexed modern thought. Recently the artist David Batchelor has remarked that “...color has always meant the less-than-true and the non-quite-real.” The implied analogy of visual color with aural timbre, through the term tone color, suggests a shared conceptual enigma and a challenge to the reality of timbre and visual color. But whatever the conceptual challenges might be, the qualitative phenomena of timbre and color have powerful experiential realities that invite consideration. Here I focus on how timbre might productively be understood as the musical phenomena of lived experience that is centrally involved in the production musical meaning.

I consider timbre as a lived musical reality in the instance of Kaija Saariaho's *D'Om Le Vrai Sens*, a six-movement clarinet concerto composed in 2010. The music of Saariaho has a certain pertinence for this study because of her writings on matters of timbre and her work with the timbre researcher Stephen McAdams. I consider the first movement of Saariaho's concerto, *L'Ouïe* (hearing), through a phenomenological investigation. This investigation starts with my lived encounters with a recorded performance and then explores, through guided variations, how timbral phenomena are produced by the sonic details, revealed by analysis of the score and performance. My investigation shows how the sonic designs of pitch, rhythm, instrumentation, dynamics, and articulation all contribute to the overall timbral realities of the movement. Combining experiential and score analysis, I explore how the multi-dimensional timbral designs of Saariaho's concerto are the central productive forces for its musical meaning.

After Research Keynote – Wine and Cheese Reception

A-832

Saturday, March 14, 2020

9:30–11:00 – Cognitive, Empirical and Quantitative Approaches

Chair: Lena Heng
A-832

9:30

Tempering the Clavier: Examining the Intervallic Content of Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier* Through the Lens of Historical Temperaments.

Andrew Blake (Kent State University)

While it is well-known today that J.S. Bach’s *Well-Tempered Clavier* was not composed with equal temperament in mind, it is unknown today exactly which well temperament Bach had intended for the work. While equal temperament produces 12 uniform intervals of each size (i.e. the 700 cent perfect fifth), systems of well temperament slightly stretch and compress the size of various fifths, which alters the size of other intervals such as the third. Gann (2019) examines preludes from WTC from the reference point of Werckmeister III. Another system of well temperament, based on a drawing by Bach, has also been postulated by Lehman (2005) as Bach’s tuning system of choice. While we do not have a definitive answer as to which well temperament Bach had used, corpus methodologies may be applicable in comparing the two systems. By examining the frequency and duration of interval use in each of the 24 preludes with respect to multiple temperaments, it is possible to determine which temperament prioritizes intervals which are closer to their just intonation ratios.

This paper provides an empirical corpus approach testing these theories on the impact of temperament in composition. The study will utilize a newly developed program using Humdrum syntax for harmonic analysis of music with microtonal deviations. The corpus consists of all WTC fugues in equal temperament and microtonally adjusted for tuning in Bach/Lehman temperament (Lehman, 2005) and Werckmeister III. By applying a “rotation” (Huron, 1991) through each of the 12 possible keys for each fugue, we can select the option which is the best fit for each fugue. The results of this experiment may offer insight into which of these well temperaments are closer to the tuning system used by Bach.

10:00

Cross-Modality as an Approach to Timbre Analysis in Tōru Takemitsu’s *Rain Spell*.

Jade Roth (McGill University)

Tōru Takemitsu’s (1930–1996) style is often compared to that of Debussy, Messiaen, and Cage, three composers who Takemitsu acknowledges as inspirations to his unique approach to composition. Previous approaches to the analysis of his works have focused on pitch relationships—most notably, his use of octatonic and pentatonic scales and pitch-class sets. While there are plenty of pitch-focused analyses, a large facet of Takemitsu’s compositional style remains understudied: his techniques in orchestration and use of timbre as an element of structure.

Despite the acknowledgment of Takemitsu’s “refined interest in timbre,” relatively few

analyses study how Takemitsu treats instrumental timbre and texture in his compositions. This problem stems in part from the lack of adequate methods for analyzing these musical parameters. This paper provides a means of analyzing timbre and texture through cross-modal comparison, namely through the study of Impressionist painting techniques. In my analysis, I examine the ways Takemitsu treats timbre and orchestration in his late chamber work, *Rain Spell* (1983). Through the combination of score-based and aural approaches to analysis, I study Takemitsu's orchestration techniques using grouping principles from auditory scene analysis (Touizrar and McAdams 2019). I argue that many of the aural similarities between the compositional styles of Takemitsu and Debussy are a result of common treatments in timbre and orchestration.

In the following essay, I examine the influence of French orchestration on Takemitsu's compositional style. Next, I provide a historical context of French painting and art music in the late 19th century to showcase the similarities in their values and artistic vision. Finally, in a cross-modal case study, I study how the aesthetic values of late 19th-century painting manifest in Takemitsu's *Rain Spell* and how the composer's philosophy regarding silence and sound connects to the metaphorical language frequently used to describe timbre.

10:30

Exploring machine learning techniques for music emotion recognition

Bezal John Benny and Keon Ju Lee (University of Victoria)

Music can be used to express a wide range of human emotions, from basic (e.g., pleasantness or unpleasantness dichotomies) to more complex emotions (e.g., transcendence or nostalgia). These emotions can be quantified by examining different elements of music such as rhythm, timbre, tonality etc. Past studies have identified that certain low-level audio features are more prevalent than others in evoking certain emotions and previous research shows that time-series analysis and the temporal nature of music is essential in building robust music emotion recognition systems. In this study, we use the MediaEval Database for Emotional Analysis in Music (DEAM) to identify key low-level features that contribute towards music emotion characterization. The DEAM dataset contains 1744 music excerpts and Valence-Arousal annotations which we classify based on the Circumplex Model of Affect, where the cognitive representation of emotion is encapsulated using eight affect concepts. Audio feature extraction is performed on the DEAM dataset to carry out tests using machine learning to identify features that contribute towards classification of music emotion. Finally, we explore our newly proposed feature-set and compare its effectiveness in music emotion characterization against the low-level descriptors standardized within the MPEG-7 framework.

11:00–11:15 – Break

11:15–12:15 – Rhythm and Analysis

Chair: Nicole Biamonte

A-832

11:15

Effects of Rhythmic Complexity on Tempo Determination

Gerry Lopez and Zachary Lookenbill (Michigan State University)

Previous research on tempo has been limited with regards to tempo determination, or the process of actively determining an appropriate tempo based on melodic, rhythmic, or harmonic cues. This project investigates the role of rhythm in the tempo determination process, with the hypothesis that given the ability to alter the tempo, a subject will decrease the tempo for rhythmic stimuli perceived as more complex and increase the tempo for rhythmic stimuli perceived as less complex. The rhythmic stimuli and rating scales are drawn in part from the work of Povel and Essens (1985) and Essens (1995), as well as related studies (Boltz 1998; Fitch and Rosenfeld 2007; Thul and Toussaint 2008; Shmulevich and Povel 2010; Hoesl and Senn 2018).

The experimental design consists of three sections. In the first, participants use a spin wheel to adjust the tempo of rhythmic stimuli in real time until it feels “correct.” The second section presents the same task, but the rhythmic stimuli are preceded by a metrical defining context (four quarter notes). The third section presents participants with the metric context and the rhythmic stimuli, asking the participants to rate the complexity of the rhythms on a scale of 1-6 (very simple - very complex). Throughout, the stimuli are systematically varied in the amount of syncopation and rhythmic variability (Patel and Daniele 2003; Gomez, Melvin, Rappaport, and Toussaint 2005) to determine the effect of these characteristics on tempo determination and complexity ratings.

Preliminary results confirm the initial hypothesis. Ratings of syncopation and variability for the rhythmic stimuli are correlated with rated complexity, and appear to have an effect on the determination of tempo, with increased syncopation and variability resulting in slower tempos. Follow-up experiments will study how syncopation and variability influence complexity ratings and tempo determination.

12:15

Metric Stability and Instability in Maurice Ravel’s Piano Music

Hanisha Kulothparan (Michigan State University):

Maurice Ravel’s compositions had a fluid and continuous style. His innovative use of meter and rhythm helped create this quality within his music through virtuosic passages, dance rhythms, and highly technical gestures. This characteristic creates moments of instability within his piano works. Still, Ravel creates a deeper level of stability within these passages. I will explore passages of *Alborada del Gracioso*, *Sonatine*, *Oiseaux Tristes*, and *Le Gibet* and how each passage has local instability on the surface, while a deeper level of stability still exists.

I will use the analytical techniques of previous scholars within these various Ravel excerpts.

Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff's (1983) preference rules capture how listeners process music and associate a metric or grouping structure. Harald Krebs's (1999) terms metrical and grouping dissonance and displacement will serve to describe moments of ambiguity and instability.

Gretchen Horlacher's (1995) qualitative periodic models help describe some passages in which there is no deeper level of stability. In passages where there is no deeper level of stability that can be attended to, motives provide the sense of stability since they are the most consistent gesture in a piece.

Multiple readings of each passage are created through grouping and metric ambiguity and changing groupings and meter. Hypermeter, form and motive driven meter, however, creates a stronger overall deeper sense of stability. This analysis of Ravel's piano works can allow listeners to understand his innovative compositional significant to the impressionist era.

12:15–13:45 – Lunch

13:45–15:00 – Performance Keynote

Introductory Remarks: Martha DeFrancisco
Tanna Schulich Hall

Realizing the Turning Point.

Dr. Eric Wen (Bard College, Curtis Institute)

The performer's role is to transform written musical notation into sound. Unlike a book or a painting, which can both be interpreted directly, a piece of music needs a performer to realize its composer's ideas. A score by itself is silent and static, requiring a performance to translate its coded message into sound and bring its meaning to life. As the celebrated American photographer Ansel Adams put it: "The negative is similar to a musician's score, and the print to the performance of that score. The negative comes to life only when 'performed' as a print."

Tonal music is distinguished by the interplay of expectation and fulfillment. As a goal-oriented system, it continually raises expectations, of a new key, or the resolution of a chord. Sometimes, however, these expectations are left unfulfilled, often derailed by unexpected detours. The pivotal moments when these changes occur can be denoted as turning points. In this talk, we shall explore the reciprocal relationship between analysis and performance through the concept of the turning point. Looking at canonical extracts by Schubert, Mozart and Beethoven, we will examine the ways analytical understanding can shed light on their meaning, enabling performers to realize them in both senses of the word.

15:00–15:15 – Break

15:15–16:45 – Lecture Recital II

Tanna Schulich Hall

The Theory and Practice of Improvising Cadenzas in Classical Concertos

Renaud Boucher-Browning (McGill University)

For the curious concerto soloist, the improvised cadenza offers an occasion to explore the art of extemporization, or inventing music in real time. The late-eighteenth century cadenza allowed soloists to meditate on the preceding music in a monologue rife with surprises for the audience.

Though period treatises give guidelines for cadenza improvisation, they neglect to furnish examples of cadenzas that quote material from specific concertos. Like the piano cadenzas by Mozart, the extant cadenzas by Johann Matthias Sperger (1750-1812) for ten of his eighteen concertos for Viennese violone constitute primary-source evidence of the improvisatory practices behind cadenza creation. Sperger's practices include quotations from the concerto and the use of formulas, insertions, and multiple endings to create cadenzas with various permutations.

In concerto performances today, some specialized pianists improvise cadenzas in Mozart's style. Until now, however, string players have had few notated cadenzas from the late 1700s to emulate, leaving the creation of model cadenzas to editors or composers. If soloists lack training in improvisation or composition, they may omit the cadenzas or prepare published cadenzas. As an alternative approach, I seek to equip soloists with principles for creating their own cadenzas.

In this lecture-recital, I will demonstrate a range of historical tools that present-day soloists can use to improvise cadenzas. During the lecture, I will analyze and perform selected cadenzas by Sperger to deduce general principles of cadenza creation that inform the learning process of first composing, then sketching, and later improvising cadenzas. During the recital, I will improvise cadenzas in a complete performance of Sperger's Concerto No. 18 in C minor (1807). Improvising cadenzas affords soloists an opportunity to express themselves and frees them to take risks, as in jazz. Reviving the practice of cadenza improvisation empowers soloists to showcase their creativity, thereby engaging audiences with uniquely exciting performances.

16:45–17:00 – Break

17:00–17:30 – Lecture Recital III

Anneli Loepp Thiessen (University of Ottawa): “The Girl Gershwin: Dana Suesse and *The Cocktail Suite*”

Tanna Schulich Hall

In 1932, *The New Yorker* published an article about Dana Suesse, calling her “the girl Gershwin.” Despite possessing the same ability as George Gershwin, Suesse's career was anything but parallel. While Gershwin became a household name for musicians, few have heard of Dana Suesse. Her works are rarely performed in public today, and there is only one album of her complete piano works, performed by Sara Davis Buechner in 2009. Nevertheless, Suesse made significant contributions to piano repertoire — both in quality and in quantity — and in her time was named a significant female composer alongside Amy Beach and Cecile Chaminade.

This lecture recital will explore the life and career of Dana Suesse through a presentation

of her piano work, *The Cocktail Suite*. Five delightful pieces each portray a different cocktail, such as “Bacardi” and “Manhattan.” Self-described as ahead of her time, Suesse’s ability to weave melodies and engage jazz influences shine through in this memorable suite, her longest work for solo piano. Suesse’s pianistic writing combines both popular and classical styles, both in thematic material and technical writing. Although she been largely forgotten, performances and discussions of Suesse’s work bring her back to the stage and into public recognition. This tribute to the life and work of Dana Suesse serves to recognize the unique abilities of female composers, and will inspire audiences to continue remembering the many forgotten women of classical music.

18:30 – Symposium Dinner

La Société (1415 Rue de la Montagne).

For a guide to walk you there, meet at 18:00 in Wirth Music Building Lobby.

Please RSVP by March 6.

Sunday, March 15, 2020

9:30–10:30 – Medieval Issues

Chair: Julie Cumming
A-832

9:30

The Songs of Humbertus de Salinis

Christina Dioguardi (Brandeis University)

Since the 1984 discovery of the San Lorenzo Palimpsest (SL2211) by Frank D’Accone in the Archivio del Capitolo di San Lorenzo (Florence, Italy), technological advancements in imaging have reshaped scholarly discourse on the manuscript. Andreas Janke and John Nádas’s published multispectral images (2016) advanced our understanding of SL2211, but also, due to the manuscript’s numerous unica, led musicologists to reconsider the close of the Florentine ars nova.

Gathering 18 comprises twelve secular songs for two or three voices in both French and Italian, ten of which have been fully or partially identified, and all of which have no known concordances. Of these twelve songs, three are ascribed to the obscure French composer Humbertus de Salinis. According to Margaret Bent (forthcoming), Humbertus occupies a special place in SL2211 as the only non-Italian composer to be named anywhere in the manuscript. Nearly all of his known music is sacred, found in Q15, and linked to his tenure at both the Council of Pisa and the papal chapter. Although much of Humbertus’s life remains shrouded in mystery, two papal letters discovered by Nádas and Giuliano Di Bacco have helped to trace his ecclesiastical career.

With SL2211, Humbertus’s catalogue grows to include secular song. In this paper I present the first transcriptions of the songs ascribed to Humbertus in Gathering 18. Building on my analysis of the notational idiosyncrasies, musical style, and text setting present in these songs, I argue for the attribution of one more song from this gathering to Humbertus de Salinis.

10:00

Text, Meter, Line, and Tone: Toward a Holistic Approach to the Structural Analysis of Ars Antiqua Polyphony

Eric Elder (Brandeis University)

Despite scholars’ best efforts, the nature of tonal structure in ars antiqua double motets remains shrouded in mystery. In his 1962 book, *Structural Hearing*, Felix Salzer suggested that Schenkerian theory might be used to lift the proverbial veil. Salzer doubled down in the first volume of the *Music Forum* (1967), where he argued that a Schenkerian approach could uncover the birth of tonality through the evolution of early polyphony. Saul Novack notably built upon Salzer’s foundation with his contribution to *Aspects of Schenkerian Theory* (1983).

Ultimately, the Salzer-Novack approach to early music was rejected by Schenkerians as overreaching. But in his 1984 article, “Machaut’s Rose, lris and the Problem of Early Music Analysis,” Daniel Leech-Wilkinson carried the work of Salzer and Novack into the realm of historical musicology, sparking a polemic between the author and the venerable Margaret Bent, who criticized the analytical method as being entirely “presentist” and, therefore, invalid. But Bent never attacked the method on its musical merits, leaving the way open for Delores Pesce to follow Leech-Wilkinson down the rabbit hole in her 1990 article, “A Case for Coherent Pitch Organization in the Thirteenth-Century Double Motet.”

This paper renews internal Schenkerian criticism of this analytical lineage. Beginning with a detailed examination of Pesce’s analytical apparatus, fundamental flaws are revealed in her prolongational structures. Positing that the simplification of a complicated musical texture lies at the root of the problem, this study then proposes a method of hierarchical voice-leading analysis that retains the identity of individual lines, recognizes the metric rule of the perfection, takes into account text-line structures, and prioritizes the composers’ contrapuntal processes, shedding light on the nature of tonal structures in *ars antiqua* double motets, and also pointing to a better understanding of the significance of text setting in relation to those structures.

10:30–11:00 – Break

11:00–11:30 – Popular Music and Politics I

Chair: David Brackett

A-832

11:00

Shellacking the Klan: Music and the Preservation of Far-Right Identity

Jared Asser (Trent University)

Despite being produced by the largest hate group in American history, the music of the 1920s Ku Klux Klan has remained almost entirely unstudied. This iteration of the Klan was strongest in the Midwest, particularly Indiana. Here they focused on community building through public events, most often parades, almost all of which featured music. The sounds of these events (preserved for us today through rally hand-outs, sheet music, and later through shellac 78-RPM recordings) were instrumental to the processes of group and identity formation. After the 1925 murder conviction of Indiana ‘Grand Dragon’ (state leader) D.C. Stephenson, the Klan was barred from public performance. Using insights drawn from sociological studies of contemporary ‘White Power Music,’ and the theories of sound reproduction developed by Jonathon Sterne, this paper seeks to understand how shellac 78-RPM records allowed individual Klansmen to continue identifying with a larger social movement after the Klan was confined to private spaces. Following the development of a single song, “The Klansmen’s Friend,” this argument proceeds in two parts. First interpreting the importance of music performance to Klan recruitment, proceeding to an analysis of the shellac-disc medium in the context of the post-1925 Klan. Preserved in the shellac were not only sounds, but a sense of community, which ultimately allowed the Klan to continue mobilizing through to the late-1920s. This paper concludes by

assessing how the results of this study can be applied to future research of contemporary hate music.

11:30

“Authentic” re-enactment: Gesture and Gender in Contemporary Swing Dance Communities

Megan Batty (McGill University)

Since the swing dance revival in the 1990s, swing dancers have sought to re-enact moments from history in their attempts to perform swing dance “authentically.” Understandings of what constitutes “authentic” swing dance are highly gendered and racialized, and serve, both historically and currently, to exclude and delegitimize the participation of certain bodies. In this paper, I investigate how dancers within contemporary swing dance communities are attempting to re-enact “authentic” gestures of the past, highlighting the various ways that these approaches are informed by gender, race and embodiment, and to investigate the subsequent effects on the contemporary swing community. This paper will be divided into three areas: firstly, I provide brief overview of the contemporary swing dance scene, locating it as a product of the swing revival of the 1990s. Secondly, I explore how this revival culture understands certain gestures and people to be associated with “authentic” jazz dance, and which bodies act as gatekeepers to this knowledge. Lastly, I draw on examples from current swing dances scenes to illustrate how dancers aim to re-enact “authentic” gestures in their practice, and in some cases, interrogate how these attempts can further perpetuate gendered and racialized ideas of legitimacy. Negotiating which gestures and which bodies are considered “authentic” to be performing swing music and dance has been an ongoing debate since the inception of swing in the late 1920s. As such, some of the discussion will be focused on historical instances of defining “authentic” aspects of the swing dance, and how these assumptions have influenced contemporary understandings.

12:00

‘I’ll Walk Out a Wiser Weaker Man’: Narratives of Punishment and the Public/Private Divide in the Music of Johnny Cash.

Sandow Sinai (Queens College, CUNY)

In the first chapter of *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault says the following:

Punishment, then, will tend to become the most hidden part of the penal process. This has several consequences: it leaves the domain of more or less everyday perception and enters that of abstract consciousness; its effectiveness is seen as resulting from its inevitability, not from its visible intensity; it is the certainty of being punished and not the horrifying spectacle of the public punishment that must discourage crime; the exemplary mechanics of punishment changes its mechanisms. As a result, justice no longer takes public responsibility for the violence that is bound up with its practice.

A reader familiar with the music of Johnny Cash will notice several resonances between Foucault’s concept of the penal system and Cash’s. There is however, an angle from which Cash pushes against the grain of prison as described by Foucault: in his roles as musical artist and as public figure, Cash stripped modern punishment of its privacy, and returned it from the abstract

to the concrete.

That country music tends to problematize the conceptual divide between public and private spheres of life has been explored elsewhere, particularly with regards to such social dynamics as gender. I contend that, in his music about prison and punishment, Johnny Cash engages this tradition, and that in doing so he exposes the mechanisms by which modern incarceration acts psychosocially on both the punished (who it controls directly) and on the general public. To argue this, I will critically study of several Cash songs, including “Folsom Prison Blues,” “San Quentin,” and his cover of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds’s “The Mercy Seat”. I will also closely read extramusical elements of his live recordings from prisons; I aim to read Cash as articulating a critique of and resistance to the state’s Foucauldian imposition of power-knowledge upon all those socially involved in incarceration.

12:30

Political Convergence and Aesthetic Thickening: The Art Ensemble of Chicago’s Soundtrack to the Film *Les Stances à Sophie*.

Adrian Matte (Carleton University)

How does “black” jazz sound when viewed through a feminist film lens? This paper will attempt an answer as it discusses issues of race, sexuality, and the politics of liberation in director Moshe Mizrahi’s French film *Les Stances à Sophie* (1971). This rarely screened dramatic comedy features a soundtrack by the Art Ensemble of Chicago (AEC) with guest vocalist Fontella Bass. The music is deployed in the service of feminist author Christiane Rochefort’s screenplay, which presents a scathing critique of patriarchy, consumer capitalism, and the sexual mores of European society.

I contend that *Les Stances à Sophie* sits at the intersection of two currents of radical politics that motivated the creators of the film’s soundtrack as well as its narrative: the African American Civil Rights movement—embodied by the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (of which the AEC are prominent members)—and post-1968 French feminism. This convergence results in what philosopher Eric Lewis (2019) calls an “aesthetic thickening”, and I extend his idea of thickening to the realm of the politics of liberation. Thus, the film becomes greater than the sum of its parts, a multilayered and polysemous text that confounds expectations of the exploitation of “black,” or Afrological music. With this film, the two coeval movements acquire greater valence by working together.

A superficial reading of the film might well claim exploitation, for jazz has a fraught history of deployment in film. Scholars like Krin Gabbard have noted that audiences have watched and listened to African Americans’ creative labour being manipulated and exploited to reinforce essentialist, race-based notions of physicality, sexuality, freedom, and otherness. These are the tools of oppression; however, in *Les Stances à Sophie*, the AEC, Christiane Rochefort, and Moshe Mizrahi collaborate in an attempt to turn such stereotypes against their oppressors.