

# Black lives matter.

**Black Lives Matter: Music, Race, and Justice**  
Harvard Graduate Music Forum Conference  
February 3-4, 2017

**Matthew D. Morrison**  
Keynote Speaker

**Imani Uzuri**  
Keynote/Performer



# Black Lives Matter: Music, Race, and Justice

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# Conference Schedule

*With the exception of Imani Uzuri's Keynote/Performance on February 3, all conference events will take place in Paine Hall, Music Building, 3 Oxford Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts.*

## Friday, February 3

2:30pm Opening Remarks  
Ian Copeland & Laurie Lee, Conference Co-Chairs

2:45pm **Paper Session 1: Representation and Resistance**  
Emily Dolan, Chair

- Representation as Resistance: How an Activist Orchestra Redresses the Push-out of Black Practitioners from Classical Music  
**Eun Lee**, Executive Producer, The Dream Unfinished  
**Ashley Jackson**, Deputy Director, The Dream Unfinished  
**Eric Lemmon**, Artistic Personnel Manager, The Dream Unfinished
- Teaching Choral Music of the African Diaspora: Toward a Living Black History  
**H. Roz Woll**, City University of New York
- Call and Response: K'naan, Ilhan Omar, and the Fight for Representation in Minnesota's Somali Communities  
**Meera Sury**, University of Minnesota Medical School

*break at 4:15pm*

4:30pm **Faculty Roundtable: Academia, Responsibility, and the Movement for Black Lives**  
Krystal Klingenberg, Moderator

Participants:

**William Cheng**, Dartmouth College  
**DiDi Delgado**, Black Lives Matter Cambridge Chapter  
**Treva Lindsey**, The Ohio State University  
**Matthew D. Morrison**, New York University

*break at 6:00pm*

8:00pm **Keynote/Performance: Imani Uzuri**  
Holden Chapel, Harvard Yard

**"Come By Here My Lord" – The Hush Arbor: Spirituals, Soundscapes, and Songs of Resistance**

*Hush Arbors were hidden sanctuary spaces created by enslaved African Americans in wooded areas throughout the southern United States as a place to secretly worship, commune and strategize rebellion. For the performance portion of the evening, Uzuri will be accompanied on piano by Yayoi Ikawa. Due to overwhelming demand and space constraints, entry to this keynote performance will require tickets. Tickets for this performance will be free, and distributed on a first-come-first-served basis in the Paine Hall foyer between 6pm and 8pm Friday evening.*

Saturday, February 4

9:00am **Paper Session 2: Black Religion, Black Space, Black Speech**  
Suzannah Clark, Chair

- When The Walls Have Fallen and The Prophets Are in the Streets: Locating Sacred Song in Tight Times  
**Imani e Wilson**, Independent Scholar
- "Can I Preach for a Minute?": Sounding Transcendence in Public Protest  
**Braxton D. Shelley**, University of Chicago
- "Throwing Ugly": Soul and the Organization of the Black Public Sphere  
**Wade Fulton Dean**, University of California, Los Angeles

*break at 10:30am*

10:45am **Paper Session 3: Improvisation, Struggle, and Liberation**  
Ingrid Monson, Chair

- Black Representation in the Emerging Generation of Jazz Experimentalists in New York  
**Cisco Bradley**, Pratt Institute
- Black American Improvised Music and Community Uplift: Can #BlackLivesMatter Learn from the Black Arts Movement?

**Luke Stewart**, Independent Scholar  
**Jamal Moore**, Coppin State University

- The Performance of James Brandon Lewis as Black Matter(s)  
**Randall Horton**, University of New Haven
- Ankhramation: The Praxis of Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith  
**Ganavya Doraiswamy**, University of California, Los Angeles

*break at 12:45pm*

2:15pm **Paper Session 4: Vernacular Culture and the Power of Celebrity**  
Chelsea Burns, Chair

- The Life and Death(s) of Blind Tom  
**Lindsay Wright**, University of Chicago
- “Sorry / I Ain’t Sorry”: Beyoncé’s *Lemonade*, Southern Gothic Temporality, and Reclaiming the Angry Black Woman  
**Kimberlee Sanders**, Harvard University
- Transformative Darkness: Fear, Vigilantism, and the Death of Trayvon Martin  
**Abimbola Cole Kai-Lewis**, New York City Department of Education / University of California, Los Angeles

3:45pm **Piano Performance – Mother Emanuel: Charleston 2015**  
Karen Walwyn, Howard University

*Steinway Artist, pianist, and composer Karen Walwyn honors Mother Emanuel with the first movement of her multi-movement work depicting the times from first sails to America through to the laying of the foundation of Mother Emanuel. The remaining five moments journey through to the action of Bree Newsome, who wanted to abolish the spirit of hatred and oppression in all its forms by removing the flag from grounds of the State Capitol of South Carolina.*

*break at 4:15pm*

4:30pm **Keynote Lecture: Matthew D. Morrison**

*Following the conclusion of the keynote lecture, please visit those organizations with displays in the foyer to learn more about their work and how to become involved.*

# Conference Abstracts

## Paper Session 1: Representation and Resistance

### Representation as Resistance: How an Activist Orchestra Redresses the Push-out of Black Practitioners from Classical Music

**Eun Lee**, Executive Producer, The Dream Unfinished  
**Ashley Jackson**, Deputy Director, The Dream Unfinished  
**Eric Lemmon**, Artistic Personnel Manager, The Dream Unfinished

Composer Ned Rorem once famously wrote of his colleague and fellow composer Margaret Bonds, "for a Black person, becoming a trained musician—one who could read and write music—has always been an anti-establishment act." For over three centuries, black musicians have surmounted incredible odds to become recognized as classical music practitioners. Despite this documented history of resilience and persistence, black classical music practitioners continue to face ongoing obstacles and are misrepresented as "recent arrivals" to the field. This paper breaks down four systemic practices which have historically discouraged black representation from classical music: Erasure: the omission of black composers in musicological discourse; Exclusion: segregation and its lingering impact on classical music; Excuses: the myth and self-perpetuation of black incompetency in classical music; and Enclosure: the ghetto-ization of black composers in orchestral programming. It then offers the history of racially integrated orchestras from the 1940s to the present day, leading up to The Dream Unfinished, an Activist Orchestra. Founded in NYC in late 2014, the orchestra was established, in part, in response to these inequities. In a final section, this paper details The Dream Unfinished's framework, its founding, and its commitment to programming and contracting musicians and performers of color and their allies. In reference to the aforementioned practices of Erasure, Exclusion, Excuses, and Enclosure, it analyses The Dream Unfinished's accomplishments to date in combating these issues, while also addressing present shortcomings as well as the measures needed to overcome them.

### Teaching Choral Music of the African Diaspora: Toward a Living Black History

**H. Roz Woll**, City University of New York

In *Living Black History*, Marable asserts that the current racial domain can be "undermined ... by harnessing the living power of black heritage and our narratives of resistance." While higher education choral curricula have unique opportunities to harness black heritage and narratives of resistance, they rarely do justice to these opportunities, particularly at predominantly white institutions. This paper, by analyzing a course—"Teaching Choral Music of the African Diaspora in the United States: Toward a Living Black History"—designed and taught by the author at Queens

College, CUNY, investigates how a choral curriculum can “stimulate a new kind of historically grounded conversation about race and the destructive processes of racialization,” and prepare students for effective global citizenship. Using student reflective writing, this case study assesses the course’s effectiveness at undermining the current racial domain in order to provoke further development of curricular models.

The course extended the work of the Chicago Center for Urban Life & Culture and Akosua Addo, applying a community-based pedagogy to focus on music of the African diaspora, placing community members at the center of the narrative-telling, and placing student learning within the community itself. In addition to off-campus class sessions, the course incorporated guest presenters, readings, recordings, singing, and research projects that foregrounded nuanced and varied Black perspectives.

Initial results show that students were surprised at their lack of knowledge, interested in learning more, frustrated with some of their training, and eager to share new information with their own students. They articulated a new awareness of the role music plays in political change, how the narrative around race is constructed, and how this translates to which music is valued and devalued. This paper posits that students gained an understanding of the construction of race, while acknowledging its visceral realities; the course helped students transcend “essentialized notions of race while simultaneously [. . .] analy[zing] . . . the significance of racism” (Mullings, *Reframing Global Justice* 2009:7). This case study opens the door for further development of curricula that do the same.

## Call and Response: K’naan, Ilhan Omar, and the Fight for Representation in Minnesota’s Somali Communities

**Meera Sury**, University of Minnesota Medical School

Less than 48 hours before polls closed on November 8, 2016, Donald Trump made a last-minute campaign stop at a Minneapolis-St. Paul airport hangar. During his 45-minute speech, he asserted that, “Minnesotans have suffered enough” as a result of Somali refugee resettlement policies, before contending that once in Minnesota, Somali refugees are “then joining ISIS and spreading their extremist views all over our country and all over the world.”

Minnesota has become a state of contradictions in the realms of economic and racial justice. While open refugee resettlement policies have led the state to become a home for the largest Somali population outside of Somalia, Trump’s rhetoric about Minnesota’s Somali communities is not new. This paper seeks to illuminate the complicated context in which Trump’s anti-immigrant (and specifically, anti-Somali) language found surprising support in the same state that elected a Somali-American lawmaker to public office for the first time in the United States on November 8, 2016.

Vijay Iyer describes music as “the sound of bodies in motion” (Iyer, 2014: 3). By offering examples from the 2016 election cycle—specifically, Ilhan Omar’s election to the Minnesota State House of Representatives—I aim to demonstrate the responsiveness of



one Somali community in Minnesota to the call for representation amidst a raw climate of white supremacy, racial injustice, and economic inequities that are intricately intertwined in the state's history and policies. In addition to the movement of bodies to polls in support of Omar's history-making campaign, Somali community members have simultaneously been responding to a second call for representation: HBO's new pilot project, "Mogadishu, Minnesota." The show (previously titled "The Recruiters") is the pet project of the Somali-Canadian musician K'naan Warsame, who is the writer, director, and co-executive producer of the show. Many community members have vocalized concerns over the show's narrative of jihadi recruitment in the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood of Minneapolis, which has long been the central pulse of Minnesota's Somali community. This conflict bubbled up at K'naan's performance at the West Bank Block Party in September of this year, where protests ended with police spraying chemical irritants at the crowd.

In "Improvisation, Action Understanding, and Music Cognition with and without Bodies," Iyer contends, "to listen to music is to perceive the actions of those bodies, and a kind of sympathetic, synchronous bodily action is one primary response" (Iyer, 2014:3). The actions and movements of individuals within Minnesota's Somali communities are demonstrative of social calls and responses, offering a unique perspective into the intersections of violence, racial injustice, and the impact of media representation within broader conversations of Black resistance and movement building.

## **Paper Session 2: Black Religion, Black Space, Black Speech**

### **When The Walls Have Fallen and The Prophets Are in the Streets: Locating Sacred Song in Tight Times**

**Imani e Wilson**, Independent Scholar

The Black Lives Matter movement emerged in a moment where "the church" could no longer be assumed to occupy a central place in Black lives. By the time we were inundated by an onslaught of videotaped killings with rapidly increasing frequency, many African-Americans were more than a generation removed from so much as a passing association with Christianity. It was this distance from the institution of the church that allowed popularculture to encompass African-American rituals that can only be described as sacred. As a result, the hallmarks of the culture historically housed within the walls of the church—the cry of the prophetic voice, the performance of pageantry, and the affirming rites of call and response—are increasingly found in secular arenas.

In December 1930, Reverend J. M. Gates of Georgia's recorded sermon "These Hard Times Are Tight Like That" was released on Okeh records. In it, Gates and his congregation rehearse the hard times in which they live, mapping out an existence that includes routine interaction with the police, time spent in the station house jail and visiting loved ones on the chain-gang. I posit that the themes and at times the very

liturgies of the sacred songs once lifted by congregations like the one gathered to hear Reverend Gates have become the domain of popular recording artists performing interventions of resistance in the #BlackLivesMatter era. Specifically, I point to the live performances of Kendrick Lamar's "Untitled" on the Colbert Report (December 16, 2014), J. Cole's "Be Free" on David Letterman (December 11, 2014) and Kendrick Lamar's 2016 Grammy Awards performance of "Blacker the Berry/Alright" as well as Janelle Monae & Wondaland's song "Hell You Talmbout" (released August 13, 2015) as examples of this trend.

These songs range from explicit responses to the crisis of devalued Black lives, as in "Hell You Talmbout"'s roll-call of the names of the martyred (mirroring a central practice of the Yoruba or new world Lucumi traditions), to Kendrick's reassurances in "Alright" that "God's got us" an echo of the sentiments of the gospel classic "I've Got A Feeling," recorded by Albertina Walker in 1979. What becomes of a sacred song when it is no longer housed in a specific space? How do we perform sacred song as a virtual congregation loosely knit together by earbuds and digital screens? What is lost and gained as ritual shifts shape to persist and survive?

### "Can I Preach for a Minute?": Sounding Transcendence in Public Protest

**Braxton D. Shelley**, University of Chicago

Straddling the line between speech and sermon, Rev. Dr. William J. Barber's orations use musical affect to motivate the pursuit of justice. Barber, president of the North Carolina Conference of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and member of the organization's executive board, rose to national prominence as the leader of the Moral Mondays movement, a program of direct action born in response to the right-ward lurch of North Carolina's state government. In this paper, I analyze three of Barber's public presentations: a 2014 speech in Raleigh, NC; the keynote address at Duke University's 2015 MLK Commemoration; and his speech at the 2016 Democratic National Convention. I use resources from homiletics, ritual theory, and theology to develop a phenomenological approach to the aforementioned messages. I argue that as Rev. Dr. Barber "tunes up," performing the characteristic shift from speech into song near the end of his orations, he facilitates a communal experience of transcendence. In each example, at precisely the moment that he makes this sonic shift towards heightened musicality, he makes a textual shift towards history, pointing to the victories of those who fought for abolition, suffrage, and civil rights as proof that the "arc of the moral universe bends towards justice." For just a few moments at the end of these messages, then, Barber's deliberate anachronism fashions transcendence as a resource for resistance. As his listeners feel their place on the universe's moral arc, they acquire a renewed commitment to bend it even the more. Thus, an ecstatic practice that previous writers have derided as evidence of black Christians' fundamentally "otherworldly" disposition becomes fuel for political protest.

## “Throwing Ugly”: Soul and the Organization of the Black Public Sphere

**Wade Fulton Dean**, University of California, Los Angeles

This essay explores the possibility of constructing an investigative field that engages the relationship between Black public life and musical practice. Emerging from my deep connection with music’s role in shaping Black sociopublic culture, this exercise is animated by the rich assemblage of traditions and sensibilities that inform Black instantiations of what Jürgen Habermas has called the “lifeworld,” the shared social reality of actions and their meanings in everyday life. Several keywords are used to theorize and investigate this relationship: expressive culture, storying, the Black public sphere and (post) soul.

Indeed, the expressive and discursive processes that emerge from lifeworld sites such as the street corner, the church, the barbershop, and the jook joint, have been integral to the formation of a Black Public Sphere (BPS). In this sphere, Black vernacular music, specifically, has been integral to shaping practices and institutions that animate the lifeworld with social and political resistance. Scholars concerned with the ways that the sociological, political, and cultural texts (e.g. poems, film, and recorded music) that inform Black public life are scripted, mediated, and performed to deliberative effect have identified the BPS as a rewarding structure for analysis. As cultural theorist and historian Mark Anthony Neal observes, “the Black Public Sphere has been invaluable to the transmission of communal values, traditions of resistance, and aesthetic sensibilities.” How then can these political, social and cultural texts, such as recorded musical performance, help us to understand the breadth, limits, and potentiality of Black political and social culture?

Musicological analysis, augmented by African-American, social, and performance theory, can help interrogate the relationship between vernacular culture and the BPS. My point of departure is the musical genre known as soul. I analyze and advocate for the imaginative ways Black men and women staged the underground discursive valences embedded within Black vernacular culture. I explore Black public life, define its alternative social sites, and analyze its “hidden scripts” (Scott) and their mediation through overtly expressive vernacular forms of great public appeal.

### **Paper Session 3: Improvisation, Struggle, and Liberation**

#### **Black Representation in the Emerging Generation of Jazz Experimentalists in New York**

**Cisco Bradley**, Pratt Institute

New York was one of the most important centers for the Black free jazz movement and the Black arts movement more broadly in the 1960s-70s and has continued to be the epicenter for the music in the decades since. Over the past two decades, Black participation in avant-garde musics that grew out of the Black free jazz movement has

steadily declined. This paper examines the underlying causes of this decline through the lens of social reproduction by examining the relationship between social spaces where music occurs and the community of musicians and the audience. Based on interviews with over 70 musicians on the New York scene, I will argue two main points. First, the defunding of music programs in schools serving Black communities and the prohibitively expensive music schools that are today training the emerging generation have together had a major impact upon participation. Secondly, despite the success of the generation that arose in the 1960s and 1970s at securing prestigious positions in the academy, those spaces and power structures were not conducive for reproducing a subsequent generation of Black practitioners. Instead, the academy has played a direct role in a transferal of cultural wealth and power from Black elders to a primarily white generation between the 1970s and today. One of the direct impacts on free jazz and derivative musics has been the de-politicization of a whole field of music with very revolutionary roots, thus depriving contemporary movements such as Black Lives Matter from another potential cultural weapon.

## Black American Improvised Music and Community Uplift: Can #BlackLivesMatter Learn from the Black Arts Movement?

**Luke Stewart**, Independent Scholar  
**Jamal Moore**, Coppin State University

This project explores the #BlackLivesMatter Movement, from the context of radical music in the tradition of Black American Improvised Music. This cultural tradition has been developed throughout the history of Africans in America, stemming from the collective memory of cultural traditions on the Continent. The interactions, forced or otherwise, with European and Native American cultures have resulted in the development of some of the most potent and effective means of expression. Starting with the Blues as a basis for popular music in the United States, it is the power of improvisation which has persisted in permeating derivative genres. We argue for the foundation of Blackness and Improvisation, or rather being rooted in Black spaces and Black people improvising through Black experiences, as being the constant and basis for almost every popular music genre in the United States. It is this potency of Improvised Music which has proven to be a unifying force, as it is applied to changing aesthetics throughout time and place. Black American Improvised Music can thusly encompass not only Blues and Jazz, but also R&B, Rock & Roll, and Hip-Hop, as well as the underground and alternative efforts of the Free Jazz movements of the 60s, closely associated with the term “Black American Improvised Music.”

Specifically the area in which “Black American Improvised Music” has been associated, the radical jazz movement of the 1960s and 1970s, has been explored through interviews and research with artists and patrons, focusing on the community movements which sought to pair the personal and collective artistic innovations developed amongst practitioners with community engagement and involvement. Within the context of today’s #BlackLivesMatter movement, there is a new rise of the importance of radical history in the arts, especially the community movements of the 1960s and 1970s. From film to dance to visual art, the legacy of those earlier movements has lasted through

today's rise of popular artists like Kendrick Lamar and Kamasi Washington. It is here where we seek to learn from the successes and failures of community uplift through collective arts and to inspire solutions while increasing awareness of this underrepresented yet important piece of history.

## The Performance of James Brandon Lewis as Black Matter(s)

**Randall Horton**, University of New Haven

James Brandon Lewis is an innovative far-reaching saxophonist, whose *sound* is predicated and shaped within a social climate that incites a performance of blackness, drawing on certain aspects of the African American Vernacular tradition. There is a defiance of the dominant narrative within this *sound*, as what escapes as *sound* becomes the un-erasure of those that were stolen away as modern art or the sake of modern art. With the formulation of the JBL Trio alongside of his cofounded group, Heroes Are Gang Leaders, one could say Lewis' *sound* makes reference to a central body of cultural experience through a performance whose centrality is Black Matter, or anti-matter, as in against, which is the only logical concept of blackness given its construction through a colonial lens that bases its moral compass on a perceived whiteness. This paper seeks to contextualize JBL's recordings of Days of a Freeman and The Amiri Baraka Project, both of which uses as its basis, the breaking of restraints and an oppositional approach to predicted chord structure steeped in field hollers and willful ambiguity. This critical analysis will begin with Reginald Shepard's assertion of Blackness being the marked construct of society that cannot fade into a privileged invisibility.

## Ankhrasmation: The Praxis of Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith

**Ganavya Doraiswamy**, University of California, Los Angeles

Ishmael Wadada Leo Smith (b. 1941) is a composer and multi-instrumentalist, whose remarkable body of work has consistently and actively engaged with the politics of civil rights over the span of six decades. Although his later works (such as the Pulitzer-nominated *Ten Freedom Summers*) are overtly political and expressly critical of the racism crisis in the United States, his earlier works are also located in the intersection of music and activism. Over the past year and a half, I worked closely with Smith to better understand his philosophies. In this paper, I address my experience of Smith and his work, and the difficulties I faced in the academy when presenting it.

Curtailling one's ability to express is a form of thought policing that Smith is understandably critical of. He says of improvisation, "[it is] a manipulation of feeling and ideas that you want to be able to connect to something of value when you live in a hostile environment;" and to this extent, the act of creating freeform music becomes a form of resistance. Smith has created a musical language of his own, Ankhrasmation, to circumnavigate oppressive Foucauldian disciplining exerted upon the musician enforced through established hierarchies which privilege Eurocentric approaches to music, both in practice and in academia. My project largely focuses on the functions of this

language, positing it as Smith's response to what he considers to be a problematic distribution of agency in various spheres of society (between the privileged and the disenfranchised) as well as in music (and between composer and performer), as a microcosm of the social.

It is noteworthy that Smith was an early member of the iconic Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, a Chicago-based organization that served as an incubator for African American artists at a time where their right to expression was severely curtailed. His self-published manifesto, *notes (8 pieces) | source | a new | world | music: creative music* (1978) is deeply critical of commercialization, citing the creation of celebrity in popular music as an act of carefully orchestrated oppression that elevates a few at the cost of many, mirroring the fabric of non-musical life. His work engages the idea of a "conscious black" person, calling for artists belonging to underrepresented communities to self-document their lives and self-publish their work as a means of resistance against external control of expression.

#### **Paper Session 4: Vernacular Culture and the Power of Celebrity**

##### **The Life and Death(s) of Blind Tom**

**Lindsay Wright**, University of Chicago

The renowned nineteenth-century pianist Thomas Wiggins, known as "Blind Tom," was an enigmatic figure. He was the first black musician to perform in the White House; he was the last legal slave in the United States. He was born blind on a Georgian plantation in 1849 and deemed mentally impaired, yet he developed pianistic abilities so extraordinary that his performances of classical and popular repertoire attracted audiences for half a century. Rumors disparaging and exaggerating Wiggins' abilities proliferated throughout his career—rumors surely originating from anxiety around his manifestly black and disabled body juxtaposed with the sophisticated sounds he produced. The most remarkable rumors surrounding Wiggins were the repeated reports of his death. According to statements as early as 1871, he was killed in the Johnstown Flood; he died of consumption; he fell down an elevator shaft; he was so enthralled by the murmuring sounds of a creek that he jumped from a bridge. In 1908, Wiggins died for the final time, though impersonators were credulously received for years afterward.

In this presentation, I examine these repeated public rehearsals of Blind Tom's death. Engaging with Laclau and Mouffe's discourse-analytical theories, I argue that Wiggins' numerous obituaries, however rife with remorse, allowed white audiences to stop struggling with the implications of a black body that threatened contemporary racialized discourses of genius and talent. Blind Tom's rumored deaths and subsequent resurrections contributed to the impression that the performer was near supernatural, impeding him from signifying the possibilities of other colored musicians. For Wiggins' manager, each stunning revival represented a new surge in profits. For his audiences, news of Wiggins' death provided opportunities to rehearse the increasingly

essentializing and dehumanizing mythologies of Blind Tom's life story without interference from his very real musical voice.

Despite the repeated reports of his demise, Wiggins' enduring life served as a beacon of possibility for African Americans during the tumultuous decades following the Civil War. His musical offerings forced Americans to question the very nature of musical talent, affirming the vast capabilities of black musical expression when few other expressive forms were available.

## “Sorry / I Ain't Sorry”: Beyoncé's *Lemonade*, Southern Gothic Temporality, and Reclaiming the Angry Black Woman

**Kimberlee Sanders**, Harvard University

In April 2016, Beyoncé Knowles released her second visual album, *Lemonade* with an accompanying one-hour special on HBO. While her previous eponymous visual album was released with music videos for each track, *Lemonade* was a cohesive hour-long film scored with the songs contained on the album. Within the explosion of articles, blog posts, and thinkpieces that occurred after the album's release, many highlighted the ultimate space of forgiveness that the film and album seem to reach by their close. However, in this paper, I attempt to rethink the ways in which *Lemonade* has been read as a linear, temporal progression from betrayal to forgiveness. Through the use of the rural South and its associated Gothic imagery and imaginations, *Lemonade* is a type of “fantastic” cinema, which film scholar Bliss Cua Lim has argued contains “a propensity toward temporal critique...discrete temporalities incapable of attaining homogeneity with or full incorporation into a uniform chronological present” (*Translating Time*, 12). While Lim writes in the context of postcolonial Philippine cinema, her work gives us methods to see how *Lemonade* works against a linear narrative progression and instead highlights the power of pain and rage rather than seeing them as emotions to conquer in order to arrive at reconciliation. Additionally, to explore the impact of remaining in one's anger, I engage with the work of Japanese radical feminist Tanaka Mitsu, who explores the feminist power of holding onto one's “messy” and “disorganized” emotions rather than pushing towards ideals of progression and productivity that she considers connected to oppressive systems of masculinity and capitalism. I deliberately choose to use the work of female scholars of color as my main theoretical framework to think through the ways in which our analysis of and engagement with media may change when we decenter feminist and filmic interpretations from a mode of Western dominance. In this paper, I hope to push against interpretations of *Lemonade* that have redomesticated the rage and pain on display in the piece as simply steps towards reconciliation and instead show that the film works to reclaim the “angry black woman” and uses a non-linear, anti-progressive structure to illuminate the power and purpose of black, female rage.

## Transformative Darkness: Fear, Vigilantism, and the Death of Trayvon Martin

**Abimbola Cole Kai-Lewis**, New York City Department of Education /  
University of California, Los Angeles

On February 26, 2012, seventeen-year-old Trayvon Martin was shot by neighborhood watchman George Zimmerman. Zimmerman spotted Martin on a late evening walk through the gated Sanford, Florida, community in which his father lived. Martin was wearing a hooded sweatshirt and had recently purchased a pack of Skittles and an Arizona iced tea from a local store. Zimmerman was convinced that the Black teen looked suspicious and called the police after trailing Martin through the area. Minutes later Zimmerman approached Martin and shot him. The death of Trayvon Martin led to national outrage about the flagrant policing of Black males in the United States. It also sparked endless questions about race, vigilantism, and Zimmerman's intentions when he encountered Martin that dusky evening.

This presentation examines emcee Chosan's song "Hoodie On" (2013). Chosan eulogizes Martin and critiques the perception of Black youth as threatening and dangerous figures in suburban settings. Moreover, Chosan demonstrates the heightened sense of fear surrounding nighttime encounters with Black males. He emphasizes that a transformative darkness occurs where darkness is metaphorically converted into light. The darkness that Chosan refers to represents negative assumptions about Black males, ensuing fright, and the violence emerging as a consequence. I will use lyrical analyses, musical analyses, and personal communication with Chosan to explore the depiction of Martin in this nocturnal context. Additionally, I will address how documentation from the Trayvon Martin case illuminates how such ideas contribute to fatal incidents triggered by unwarranted policing and increased incidences of racial profiling.

### *Mother Emanuel: Charleston 2015*

**Karen Walwyn**, Howard University

*Mother Emanuel: Charleston 2015*, composed by Karen Walwyn, is a work depicting the plight of an enslaved African people's journey to the United States through to the current struggles African Americans' encounter regarding equality, civil rights, safety and respect. It was composed weeks after the horrific tragedy that occurred on June 17, 2015, in Charleston, South Carolina, upon visiting the church and speaking with the church family members.

This work for piano solo includes five movements. The titles of these five movements are as follows:

Movement I. *A Journey from Afar*  
Movement II. *Birth of Mother Emanuel*



Movement III. *June 17th*  
Movement IV. *It Is Well*  
Movement V. *A New Birth*

These movements represent the period of time from when approximately 12.5 million enslaved human beings were brought to the Americas on ships up to the days immediately following the tragic event at Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

Movement I. *A Journey from Afar* is a vision of men and women that were transported from Africa to this country as slaves, captured and chained like animals. Upon arrival, it demonstrates moments of when families were separated, eventually some would run for their freedom, most were caught and punished and/or hung. And then there were the quiet moments of family love.

Movement II. *Birth of Mother Emanuel* is the erection of the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, often referred to as Mother Emanuel in Charleston, SC, which was built by slaves for slaves.

Movement III. *June 17th* depicts the tragic loss of nine lives during a prayer service. The movement is a cry for peace and love.

Movement IV. *It is Well* is a moment of reflection. I had the opportunity to speak with one of the Deacons of the church during my visit to Mother Emanuel, and I asked him what should I name the movement, which would reflect upon those lives lost and the spirit of the family members of the church. He named it *It Is Well*.

Movement V. The finale, *A New Birth*, is the push for freedom of racial cruelty, violence and prejudice. While one might hear the struggles of Americans in the streets protesting against the confederate flag in South Carolina on the heels of the tragic shooting, it also speaks to the new face of America of today; this movement speaks volumes against the sustained hatred and ignorance and seeks hope to find a new path to unity and humanity inclusive of all races.

This work was composed in the efforts of continuing the struggle of a united and safe community, not just in one state, but also across our beloved nation.

# Participants' Biographies

## Keynote Speakers

**Matthew D. Morrison**, a native of Charlotte, North Carolina, is an Assistant Professor in the Clive Davis Institute of Recorded Music at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Matthew holds a Ph.D. in Musicology from Columbia University, an M.A. in Musicology from The Catholic University of America, and was a Presidential music scholar at Morehouse College, where he studied violin and conducting.

Matthew has served as Editor-in-Chief of the peer-reviewed music journal, *Current Musicology*, where he published a special issue on Race, Sound, and Performance (Spring 2012), featuring an interdisciplinary group of scholars writing about the import of sound and music in society. His published work has appeared in publications such as the *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, the *Grove Dictionary of American Music*, and on Oxford University Press's online music blog. His in-progress book project, *American Popular Sound: From Blackface to Blacksound*, considers the implications of positing sound and music as major components in both individual and societal identity formations, particularly the construction of race. Matthew held a Postdoctoral Fellowship for Academic Diversity through New York University's Office of the Provost, and is currently a research fellow with the Modern Moves research project at King's College, London, funded by the European Research Council Advanced Grant. He has held also received fellowships from the American Musicological Society, Mellon Foundation, the Library of Congress, and the Tanglewood Music Center.

**Imani Uzuri** is a vocalist, composer and cultural worker who has been called "a post modernist Bessie Smith" by *The Village Voice*. She composes and researches music that reflects her rural North Carolina roots where she grew up singing Spirituals and line-singing hymns with her grandmother and extended family.

She has recently been praised in the *New York Times* for her "stirring" music and her "gorgeously chesty ruminations". Uzuri creates concerts, experimental theater, performance art, theater compositions and sound installations in international venues/festivals including Lincoln Center Out of Doors, New York's Central Park SummerStage, Joe's Pub, Public Theater, Performa Biennial, France's Festival Sons d'hiver, Met Breuer, London's ICA, and MoMA. Uzuri has also collaborated with a wide range of noted artists across various artistic disciplines including musicians Herbie Hancock, John Legend, Vijay Iyer; visual artist Wangechi Mutu; conceptual artists Carrie Mae Weems, Sanford Biggers; choreographer Trajal Harrell; poet Sonia Sanchez and composer Robert Ashley.

Uzuri is composer and co-lyricist for the new musical *GIRL Shakes Loose*, selected for the 2016 O'Neill National Music Theater Conference. She was a Park Avenue Armory Artist-In-Residence in 2015-2016 and was recently awarded a Map Fund to begin composing her contemporary opera *Hush Arbor*. In 2016 Uzuri made her Lincoln Center American Songbook debut as well as being a featured performer on *BET* for Black Girls Rock. She is currently a 2016-17 Jerome Foundation Composer/Sound Artist Fellow.

Uzuri recently received her Master of Arts from Columbia University in African American studies researching the liturgy, performativity and "subversive salvation" of New Orleans based street preacher, visual artist, musician and mystic Sister Gertrude Morgan (1900-1980). She has written essays for *The Feminist Wire* and *Ebony* and her work is currently included in the anthology *BAX 2016: Best American Experimental Writing*.

Uzuri is the founder and artistic director of Revolutionary Choir —community singing gatherings formed to teach historical and new protest/freedom songs of resistance and resilience. [www.imaniuzuri.com](http://www.imaniuzuri.com).

### Roundtable Participants

**William Cheng** is Assistant Professor of Music at Dartmouth College. He obtained his B.A. in Music and English from Stanford University (2007), and his A.M. and Ph.D. in Music from Harvard University (2013), where he was also a Junior Fellow at the Society of Fellows (2012–16). He is the author of *Sound Play: Video Games and the Musical Imagination* (Oxford University Press, 2014) and *Just Vibrations: The Purpose of Sounding Good* (University of Michigan Press 2016), both of which received the AMS Philip Brett Award. His current book projects include *All the Beautiful Musicians* (Oxford), *Touching Pitch: Dirt, Debt, Color* (Michigan), and *Queering the Field: Sounding Out Ethnomusicology* (Oxford, coedited with Greg Barz). His publications have appeared in academic venues such as the *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, the *Journal of the Society for American Music*, *Ethnomusicology*, *Ethnomusicology Review*, *Cambridge Opera Journal*, *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music*, and *Critical Inquiry*, and in newspapers and blogs such as *Slate*, *Washington Post*, *Huffington Post*, *TIME*, *Pacific Standard*, and *Musicology Now*.

**DiDi Delgado** is a writer, activist, freelance journalist, and poet. She is currently Head of Operations at S.O.U.P (The Society Of Urban Poetry), a collective of artists and musicians whose mission statement is to help shed light on the diversity amongst creative individuals and groups across gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, faith, ability, age; and aims to bridge the gaps between these intersectionalities. She facilitates writing workshops at the Haley House and the Dudley Café in Dudley Square. Currently an organizer of Black Lives Matter Cambridge, she has served on the leadership team for the ACLU's BCPA Committee, and the Boston Branch of the NAACP's Young Adult Committee. She is constantly on the front lines blazing pathways, creating channels and fostering connections in support of other activists. She is the recipient of the 2015 Jack Powers Stone Soup Savor award, which is awarded annually to one poet that serves the Boston and Cambridge communities as a mentor while consistently providing distinguished contributions to the art of poetry. DiDi has participated in Michael Rothenberg's 100,000 Poets for Change, adjudicated with Boston Poet Laureate and others for the 2015 Mayor's Poetry and Prose program, performed for various venues such as: Boston Center for Arts, Boston City Hall, Emerson College performing under the direction of Akiba Abaka and Walter Mosley, Boston City Councilor At Large Ayanna Pressley's Jump Into Peace initiative and co-curated an event for Illuminus during Hubweek 2015. Deeply passionate about both her local and global community; she believes that poetry and activism go hand in hand.

**Krystal Klingenberg** is a 5th year Ph.D. Candidate in Ethnomusicology from Harvard University. She received a Bachelor's degree from Princeton University in Anthropology and African Studies in 2006. She is interested in black musics worldwide. Her dissertation is on the creation and distribution of Ugandan popular music, at home in Uganda and abroad in the diaspora.

**Dr. Treva Lindsey** is an Associate Professor of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at The Ohio State University. Her research and teaching interests include African American women's history, black popular and expressive culture, black feminism(s), hip hop studies, critical race and gender theory, and sexual politics. She has published in *The Journal of Pan-African Studies*, *Souls*, *African and Black Diaspora*, the *Journal of African American Studies*, *African American Review*, *The Journal of African American History*, *Meridians*, *Feminism, Race, Transnationalism*, *Urban Education*, *The Black Scholar*, *Feminist Studies*, *Signs*, and the edited collection, *Escape from New York: The New Negro Renaissance Beyond Harlem*. She is also the recipient of several awards and fellowships from the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Emory University, the National Women's Studies Association, the Coca Cola Critical Difference for Women Grant, the Center for Arts and Humanities at the University of Missouri and the College of Arts and Sciences at The Ohio State University. Dr. Lindsey was the inaugural recipient of the University of Missouri Faculty Achievement in Diversity Award. Her first book entitled *Colored No More: New Negro Womanhood in the Nation's Capital* is in production at the University of Illinois Press (Spring 2017). She is the co-editor of a forthcoming collection on the future of Black Popular Culture Studies (NYU Press). She is building a strong online presence by guest contributing to forums such as Al Jazeera, Cosmopolitan, HuffPost Live, Complex Magazine, The Marc Steiner Show, and The Left of Black Web series.

### Conference Presenters

**Cisco Bradley** is Associate Professor of History at the Pratt Institute. He is also Executive Editor of [www.jazzrightnow.com](http://www.jazzrightnow.com), which he founded in 2013, and curator of two free jazz and experimental music series in New York City. Professor Bradley is currently working on two books related to the social and cultural history of the music scene in New York.

**Wade Fulton Dean** examines the intersection between Black popular music and socio-political culture. Specifically, Dean explores the ways that Soul, during the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, informed identity and assisted in the organization of Black individuals into discursive collectives (or publics).

**Ganavya Doraiswamy** holds degrees in theatre and psychology, and graduate degrees in performance (Berklee College of Music), and ethnomusicology (UCLA). She is extensively trained in various South Indian performing arts, with a focus on voice. As a scholar, she is currently working on excavating the sociopolitical landscape of the vārakari sampradāya harikathai in Tamil Nadu, a form of story telling that traces its beginnings to 15th century spiritual poetry from Central India. As a performer, she is

currently on tour with Quincy Jones Productions; her debut album, *Aikyam*, is set to release in early 2017.

**Randall Horton** is the recipient of the Gwendolyn Brooks Poetry Award, the Bea Gonzalez Poetry Award, a National Endowment of the Arts Fellowship in Literature and most recently, the Great Lakes College Association's New Writers Award for Creative nonfiction for *Hook: A Memoir*. He is a member of both the Affrilachian Poets and the experimental performance group Heroes Are Gang Leaders. Horton is an Associate Professor of English at the University of New Haven. Originally from Birmingham, Alabama, he now resides in New York City.

**Dr. Ashley Jackson** is the Deputy Director of The Dream Unfinished. As a professional harpist living in NYC, she has worked with the NY Philharmonic, Metropolis, and NOVUS NY, the contemporary music ensemble of Trinity Wall St led by Julian Wachner. She is on faculty at Vassar College and recently joined the e-learning team at Juilliard Global Ventures. Dr. Jackson holds a B.A. from Yale, an M.M. from the Yale School of Music, and a D.M.A. from Juilliard.

**Abimbola Kai-Lewis** is a Special Education Coordinator in the New York City Department of Education. She recently completed her dissertation in the Department of Ethnomusicology at the University of California, Los Angeles on millennial economics and the music of South African hip-hop collective Cashless Society. Abimbola is currently researching the music of New York-based emcee Chosan and Sierra Leonean diaspora communities. Her work has been published in edited volumes and encyclopedias.

**Eun Lee** is the Executive Producer and Founder of The Dream Unfinished. She has over ten years' experience as a music educator and arts administrator in public school and non-profit settings, and is currently based at the Orchestra of St. Luke's as their Manager of Youth Programs. Eun has spoken on The Dream Unfinished in institutions such as New York University, Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute, and the Center for Constitutional Rights, and her work has been documented by media outlets such as The New York Times, Huffington Post, and others.

**Eric Lemmon** is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Music Composition at Stony Brook University. His music has been awarded a MetLife's Creative Connections Grant, a Puffin Foundation Grant, a Tofte Lake Center Emerging Artist Residency and ConEd's Exploring the Metropolis Residency. His works have been performed by organizations that include the International Double Reed Society, mixed quartet Cadillac Moon Ensemble, and the string orchestra Highline Chamber Ensemble.

**Jamal Moore** is an Adjunct Professor in the History of Jazz at Coppin State University. A performer, composer, and educator, he holds a B.M. from the Berklee College of Music and an M.F.A. from the California Institute of the Arts in African American Improvisational Music.

**Kimberlee Sanders** is a Ph.D. student in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at Harvard University with a concentration in East Asian Film and Media.

Her research focuses on 20th and 21st century audio recording culture in Japan and the networks of affect that have been generated and sustained through the proliferation of recording technology.

**Braxton D. Shelley** is a Ph.D. candidate in the History and Theory of Music at the University of Chicago; he is also finishing a Master of Divinity in the University of Chicago's Divinity School. He earned a B.A. in Music and History from Duke University. His dissertation, "Sermons in Song: Richard Smallwood, the Vamp, and the Gospel Imagination," develops an analytical paradigm for gospel music that braids together resources from cognitive theory, ritual theory, and homiletics with studies of repetition, form, rhythm and meter. He has presented his research at Northwestern University's Music Theory and Cognition Workshop, Music Theory Midwest, the Society for Christian Scholarship in Music, and the American Musicological Society.

Multi-Instrumentalist, Scholar, Journalist, Producer, Presenter, and curator, **Luke Stewart** is heavily ensconced in Washington, DC's music community. Luke is the host of a weekly eclectic jazz and experimental music program on Pacifica Radio WPFW 89.3FM in DC.

**Meera Sury** is a medical student at the University of Minnesota, with clinical interests in health disparities, pediatrics, and addiction. Before medical school, Meera completed graduate studies in American religious traditions and bioethics at Harvard Divinity School.

Steinway Artist, Concert Pianist, Composer, and Recording Artist for Albany Records, **Dr. Karen Walwyn** is a recipient of the Global Award "Gold Medal -Award of Excellence" for her recording of her solo piano composition entitled *Reflections on 9/11*. Currently on the piano faculty at Howard University, Walwyn recently was the featured pianist for the Grammy nominated film *A Caged Bird*, on the Life and Music of Florence Price, the first African American female composer to gain national status. She has recorded several CDs of classical music by African American composers including the debut CD recording of the Florence Price *Concerto in One Movement* performed by the Black Music Repertory Ensemble of Chicago. Walwyn, an HBCU Mellon Faculty Fellow (Duke), premiered her colossal choral work, *Of Dance and Struggle: A Musical Tribute to the Life of Nelson Mandela*, at Elon University under the baton of Dr. Gerald Knight.

An educator, writer and cultural critic with a special interest in music, culinary arts, faith traditions, fashion, and visual culture, **Imani e Wilson** was educated at Oberlin College and Columbia University and received an M.A. in African Studies with a concentration in Arts and Aesthetics from SOAS - University of London. In her work as an independent scholar, Wilson has conducted extensive research on global African arts, culture, and religion in North Africa, Cuba, Brazil, Angola, Portugal, Trinidad and Tobago, New Orleans, the Netherlands, and the Indian states of Rajasthan and Gujarat. Her articles and essays have been published in British and American journals and magazines and her literary criticism and poetry have been anthologized on both sides of the Atlantic. A lifelong student of music, Wilson is a member of the Greater Allen

Cathedral Mass Choir and works in the administration of programs for young musicians at Berklee College of Music.

**H. Roz Woll** is on the adjunct faculty at Queens College, where she teaches private voice, vocal pedagogy, and has directed the Women's Choir. She is currently pursuing her D.M.A. at the City University of New York's Graduate Center, where her research focuses on the course she designed and coordinated at Queens College, "Choral Music of the African Diaspora in the United States: Toward a Living Black History." She received her Bachelor of Music Education with a concentration in piano at Indiana University, and her Master of Music in Vocal Performance from Roosevelt University's Chicago College of Performing Arts. Prior to pursuing her doctorate, Roz was a conductor with the Chicago Children's Choir for nine years, directing the Hyde Park Neighborhood Choir as well as choirs in ten Chicago public schools, and was active as a singer in various professional Chicago ensembles.

**Lindsay Wright** is a doctoral candidate in Historical Musicology and Ethnomusicology at the University of Chicago. She is in the midst of writing her dissertation, which explores the concept of musical talent in relation to issues of race, class, and education in American history. Outside of the University, Lindsay also conducts a youth orchestra on the South Side of Chicago and is the director of a music school for young string players that she founded in 2013.

## *Acknowledgments*

There are a number of people without whom this conference would not be possible. First, our thanks go out to our two excellent keynoters, **Matthew D. Morrison** and **Imani Uzuri**, who both immediately recognized the value and urgency of the conference theme. In addition to Professor Morrison, we are honored to be joined on our faculty roundtable by three sterling speakers: **William Cheng**, **DiDi Delgado**, and **Treva Lindsey**. We thank them for their willingness to participate and for committing to this conference during a busy and unpredictable time of year.

We are grateful to the Harvard Music Department faculty as a whole, and in particular to those whom we have asked to serve as panel chairs: **Chelsea Burns**, **Suzannah Clark**, **Emily Dolan**, and **Ingrid Monson**. In addition to the financial backing of our home department, this conference received a generous gift from the Department of African and African American Studies and from the Hutchins Center for African and African American Research. For these extensions of support, we extend our sincere thanks to Department Chair **Lawrence Bobo** and Executive Director **Abby Wolf**, respectively.

The conference organizing committee would like to thank the community of colleagues, collaborators, and friends that comprises the Harvard Graduate Music Forum. In addition to furnishing the conference theme, members of the wider GMF were always willing to lend a helping hand, work through a thorny issue, or offer sage advice. We are grateful to **Krystal Klingenberg** particularly for serving as moderator of the faculty roundtable.

We are grateful to the many student-scholars who submitted a wide-ranging and impressive array of abstracts; it made the GMF's work both difficult and rewarding. To those who were selected, we thank you for your presence here at the conference and the contributions you bring to the wider conversation.

To the indispensable Music Department staff: you are the glue that holds this entity together, often in spite of itself. For their invaluable support we want to thank **Lesley Bannatyne**, **Kaye Denny**, **Eva Kim**, **Mary MacKinnon**, **Jean Moncrieff**, **Karen Rynne**, **Nancy Shafman**, and **Charles Stillman**.

Finally, this conference is inspired by and a testament to the many activists, artists, thinkers, and workers—too numerous to count, though too often unnamed—who take up daily the fight for justice and an end to oppression in all its forms. Your example is one that will be vindicated by history. Above all, we dedicate this weekend's proceedings to those women and men of color who live—and too often die—in the shadow of police violence, mass incarceration, and racial discrimination.



