Harvard Graduate Music Forum 2021 Conference
“To Begin Again: Music, Apocalypse, and Social Change”

Table of Contents

Abbreviated Program ........................................... 2
Full Program (with abstracts) ................................. 3
Biographies .......................................................... 11
Acknowledgments ................................................. 16
**Abbreviated Program**  
*Friday, February 19, 2020*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Chair(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12:45</td>
<td>Opening Remarks</td>
<td>Cana McGhee and Siriana Lundgren, Co-Chairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00-2:15 PM</td>
<td>Apocalyptic Voice and Breath</td>
<td>Dr. Carolyn Abbate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30-3:45 PM</td>
<td>Institutional Apocalypse</td>
<td>Dr. Anne Shreffler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00-5:30 PM</td>
<td>Roundtable Discussion</td>
<td>Dr. Ingrid Monson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderator: Dr. Ingrid Monson</td>
<td>Participants: Dr. Christa Bentley, Dr. Jessica Bisset Perea, Dr. Lei Liang, Dr. Jessica Schwartz, and Dr. Michael Veal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00-9:30 PM</td>
<td>Lecture Recitals</td>
<td>Dr. Landon Morrison</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Saturday, February 20, 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Chair(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00-11:15 AM</td>
<td>Other-Than-Human Apocalypse</td>
<td>Dr. Alexander Rehding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30-12:45 PM</td>
<td>The After-Apocalypse</td>
<td>Dr. Braxton Shelley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00-3:15 PM</td>
<td>A Piece of Apocalypse: Case Studies</td>
<td>Dr. Suzannah Clark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00-5:30 PM</td>
<td>Keynote Address</td>
<td>Dr. Jessica Schwartz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1:00-2:15 PM EDT
Apocalyptic Voice and Breath
*Chair: Dr. Carolyn Abbate*

**“I Can’t Breathe:’ Contextualizing George Floyd’s Last Words in Hip Hop**

*Hannah Strong*

George Floyd was an activist. He was also a rapper. He may only be remembered for his murder and not for his music. On 06/29/20 the New York Times reported seventy cases of people in police custody that died after saying “I can’t breathe.” More than half are Black people. Black Lives Matter has been intricately connected to rap and hip hop since its advent, and as police brutality continues despite protests, those three words are increasingly featured in songs. This paper will contextualize multivalent phrase and sentiment of “I can’t breathe” and the Black Lives Matter movement in rap and hip hop, analyzing the timeline of both police brutality and the increasing presence of the phrase within songs. Works by Loren Kajikawa, Brittney Cooper, and Noriko Manabe will accompany analyses of songs by Run the Jewels, H.E.R., and Lil Baby. My paper will demonstrate that rap and hip hop artists are responding swiftly to police brutality, creating music to enact social change. The most popular genre in the world, these hip hop songs can function as a megaphone for these calls for a change in policing tactics, and systematic change can take place.

**Voicing the Jukebox: Lesbian/Cyborg Sonic Relations in Ginger’s Bar**

*Paola Cossermelli Messina*

A post-apocalyptic world is often silent. When the spread of COVID-19 shut down businesses in New York City, Ginger’s Bar became silent. This experimental ethnography highlights imaginaries of Ginger’s Bar as a lesbian space, and examines the jukebox as a sound object participating in its construction. A contradictory relationship exists between technology and sociality in the co-constructed lesbian present and the cyborg connection between the jukebox, patrons and staff at Ginger’s Bar. The jukebox is simultaneously a capitalist, racist and misogynistic actor, and a site of striving towards the continuity of lesbianism in the present. A community’s shared vision of identity, including roles, values, and hopes for the future, may be reflected in or contradicted by the technologies that its members interact with. This study addresses this tension by attributing two narrative voices to the jukebox: the “voice of domination,” motivated by the programming that connects the jukebox to industry and profit-making; and a “lesbian/cyborg” voice, which challenges the binary stability of human/machine. How does silence affect these voices and what impact does it have on the future of lesbian spaces in the city and beyond?

**Vocality in the World to Come: On Listening to More-Than-Human Voices in Quixadá, Brazil**

*Chris Batterman Cháirez*

Quixadá, Brazil has been grappling with the effects of the ongoing climatological crisis for decades, adapting to severe droughts and food scarcity. It is home to practices of rain prophecy, in which prophets produce meteorological predictions for the year based on careful aural engagements with the environment. By listening to the “voice of the world,” prophets not only glean information about rainfall, but call into question some of our metaphysical assumptions about humanity’s most fetishized biocultural artifact: the voice. Thinking with rain prophets and their ways of listening that are attuned to “more-than-human” voices (de la Cadena 2015), this paper asks what these practices reveal about the nature of the voice, and what vocality might mean in a post-human/post-apocalyptic “world to come” (Viveiros de Castro and Danowski 2014). I argue that these local epistemological orientations offer a blueprint for listening to the Anthropocene and propose a model of voice—contra many hitherto on offer (Eidsheim 2015, Feldman 2019)—as an ontological reality that stands apart from perception and relationality. That is, I suggest that the voice of the world exists in a very real and material sense, and will continue to do so long after humans exist to hear it.
Hauntology, Appropriation and the Aesthetic Apocalypse of an Empire
Matthew Horrigan
Warwick University's short-lived Cybernetic Cultural Research Unit (CCRU) left two legacies: an apocalyptic vocabulary, and a pessimistic discourse on Western musical culture. To the former, Nick Land's concepts of hyperstition, hyperracism and accelerationism have arguably formed the philosophical core of far-right discourse in the late information age, both building on and attempting to escape from Mark Fisher's famous notion that it is "easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism." To the latter, popular music served to illustrate Fisher's notion of "hauntology," in which nostalgic and forlorn soundscapes express longing for a lost future (an idea closely related to Simon Reynolds's notion of "retromania" and Frederick Jameson's account of the postmodern condition). Contra Fisher, Reynolds and Jameson, this presentation frames Eurocentric discourse on musical aesthetics in terms of what I call the "long artistic 20th century," beginning with the Paris Exposition of 1889, concluding with the spectacularized trauma of 9/11, and characterized by an unsustainable process of orientalist appropriation. The end of the long musical 20th century feels apocalyptic only from a myopically imperial perspective, one which fails to grasp that the aesthetic trajectories for which Fisher feels such nostalgia were appropriations all along.

Ornette Coleman's Skies of America and the Production of the Future
Charlie Kirchen
In April 1972, Ornette Coleman recorded his sprawling orchestral work, Skies of America, which was performed by the London Symphony Orchestra and set to be released by Columbia records later that year. This paper examines this occasion from the perspective of the institutional conditions that both enabled and hindered the production of the album as well as the perspective of the musical practice that fueled its production of SOA as a composed object. Drawing on resources from critical race theory, embodied cognition, and sound studies, I examine the tension between the power that certain institutions have to control what objects and sounds are able to enter into the world and the ways Coleman uses music to bend that world to his will. Ultimately I argue that Coleman's theory of music—which in my view encompasses a particular approach to business, set of compositional techniques, and understanding of what music is/does—works by literally reshaping the realm of the possible, thereby offering us a view into the ways that music has been and can continue to be productive of alternative futures.

"Just a Dustbowl Refugee", Woody Guthrie, the Golden Boy of The World Revolution
Eric Hollander and Drew Daniels-Rosenberg
Woody Guthrie has become a musical icon of America: posthumously molded into an ideological paragon of Democracy, Civil Rights, and the patriotic common man. Less celebrated, though, has been his close association with the IWW and various leaders among early 20th Century "Reds" who were busy planning a World Revolution with Russian Socialists against capitalism during the interwar years. These years, for working class Americans like Guthrie, could certainly have been described as apocalyptic: The Great Depression, The Dustbowl, The Great Migration, and the looming specter of WWII.

This presentation will explore Guthrie’s role among socialist activists and activities during his life and reveal how his music worked to deliver a distinctly anti-capitalistic message that later American celebrants have generally ignored or even deliberately obscured. A more honest understanding of Guthrie’s artistic intentions reveals not only greater insight to the songwriter himself, but also works to bring more thoroughly into open conversation the international profundity of the conceptual World Revolution and the nearness to reality that the revolution achieved – topics that, like the genuine message of Guthrie’s music, have been deliberately swept into the dust of history.
4:00-5:30 PM EDT
Faculty Roundtable Discussion
Moderator: Dr. Ingrid Monson
Participants: Dr. Christa Bentley, Dr. Jessica Bissett Perea, Dr. Lei Liang, Dr. Jessica Schwartz, and Dr. Michael Veal

Roundtable participants will each provide a short meditation on the theme of the conference, “To Begin Again: Music, Apocalypse, and Social Change,” and engage in discussion about each other’s work.

8:00-9:30 PM EDT
Lecture Recitals
Chair: Dr. Landon Morrison

Visions of the Apocalypse: Stylistic Eclecticism in William Grant Still's Piano Writing
Joseph Stiefel

William Grant Still’s “Three Visions” (1936)—a pianistic depiction of apocalypse, heaven, and earthly reincarnation—reflects a shift to his self-described “universal” style period. During this period he freely synthesized wide-ranging styles within a given work, including jazz, blues, and various strains of European modernism. Still is best known today for works like the “Afro-American” Symphony that infuse Black musical idioms into classical forms, but disproportionately focusing on these works runs the risk of rendering his career one-dimensional. Correspondingly, works from the universal period that draw on Black idioms more subtly, or not at all, remain less studied and performed.

In a 30-minute lecture-recital on “Three Visions,” I will demonstrate that through the disparate emotional states of an apocalypse and its aftermath, Still integrated contrasting passages of atonality, octatonicism, impressionism, and jazz to beautiful effect. This made “Three Visions” perfectly suited for entering his stylistically eclectic universal period. My analysis is informed by music theorist Horace Maxile’s analytical approach to another of Still’s piano works, and by written remarks from Still and his daughter. Addressing and performing Still’s music from this perspective will foster greater understanding of his mystic spirituality and the sheer breadth of his musical expression.

Piano Concerto: Conveying Beauty, Dread, and the Apocalypse through Sound
Ryan Suleiman

As a composer, I have been striving for meaningful ways to engage with the philosophical (as opposed to representational or programmatic) aspects of the climate crisis for years. My dissertation work, a Piano Concerto, represents a new approach for me that conveys the simultaneity of beauty and dread that we experience in our own time. We take in the miracle of life and the natural world, which is a precious gift, yet we are constantly reminded that our days on this earth our numbered. Drawing inspiration from the Doomsday Clock, my Piano Concerto makes use of a parallel narrative: interruptive, dream-like clock strikes, which convey a sense of doom, as the listener approaches midnight, the metaphorical end of the world. But of course, our apocalypse is only the end of humanity, not the end of time. Therefore, eternity and geologic time are important sources of inspiration as well.

In this presentation, I discuss my portrayal of apocalypse through music and present an excerpt from the composition.
The Vigil of Debris - a waste discarding ritual
Karen Yu

An empty plastic water bottle is a piece of plastic waste. To a percussionist, it could be a found object instrument, but otherwise its purpose is achieved and its lifecycle ends after a single use. Our treatment of different objects shifts according to their purpose and meaning to us. After a disposable object has been used, how does one treat the item? If a piece of waste is given a new purpose, would it change one’s perspective on throwaway culture?

As of 2018, the recycling rate in Hong Kong remains at 30%, slightly higher than New York’s 21% and a far cry from San Francisco’s 80%. As Hong Kongers continue to purchase and discard single-use plastics at an alarming rate, overflowing landfill sites inevitably funnel the plastic debris into the ocean. The aimless motion of dumping recyclable items into tri-color bins became a regular routine, a minimal display of effort to “help the earth” without the obligation of any real responsibility.

The Vigil of Debris is an event to “mourn” disposed and forgotten debris that will continue to exist as a reminder of us - a ritual to sensitize ourselves to the daily apathetic act of discarding waste, and a warning to be conscious of our unrealistic perception of recycling non-biodegradable waste. The performer is instructed to collect pieces of waste they produce and transform these items from personal possessions to totems. By re-evaluating these objects as instruments, the player is asked to interpret, explore, and even revere objects they would normally discard. The ritual, as a reflection, demonstrates the significance of the used item through the player’s interpretation of a series of proposed actions. Through realizing the performance on the collected debris and documenting the performer’s daily consumption of the plastic and disposable items, The Vigil of Debris urges performers and observers alike to rethink the necessity and use of these items, and how to be more thoughtful about not using them, reusing them, and looking for alternatives.

In this presentation, I will explore the composition of The Vigil of Debris, the execution and performance process, and my findings after completion of the project. Through examining the two different interpretations of The Vigil of Debris, I will demonstrate how perception and intentionality changes our behavior towards these items.
Porosity and the Anthropocene: hearing extinction in twenty-first century sound art
Jonathan Packham

Through an analytical framework based on Richard Sennett’s concept of ‘porosity’, this presentation explores the way that music and sonic artworks interact with the natural environment (Sennett 2018). By analysing several instances of ‘ecological’ sonic art—including Kathy Hinde and Jony Easterby’s ‘Nightingales and Cello’ (2014), and Extinction Rebellion’s protest event ‘A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square’ (2019)—this presentation examines how such works engage with the concept of extinction. Understanding performance environments as fundamentally ‘porous’ draws attention to the way that such works render the abstract notion of extinction in more concrete sensorial terms, allowing us to ‘hear’ absence through environmental framing. Finally, I aim to show the way that porosity can be understood in the context of the Anthropocene, elucidating the political implications of emphasising the living—and dying—human and more-than-human world ‘outside of’ the space of musical performance.

Alien Music: Afrofuturism in the Music of Erykah Badu and OutKast
Tamyka Jordan

This paper analyzes the music of Afrofuturist musicians Erykah Badu and OutKast. It seeks to establish that common features of Badu and OutKast music such as the cyclical grooves, and loose song structure can be attributed to Afrofuturism. Building on the scholarship of Marlo David, Alondra Nelson and others, I closely examine the form, temporality, narrative, and aesthetic of select songs/music videos like OutKast’s “Spottieottiedopaliscious” and Badu’s “On & On” through an Afrofuturist lens. Using these and other select tracks, I explore how Afrofuturist tropes like that of the “alien” inform the construction of Badu and OutKast’s sonic, visual, and textual aesthetic as well as how both artists utilize this trope to critique and comment on sociocultural issues affecting the black diaspora. Finally, I contextualize the place this music holds in the lineage of the Afrofuturist music that preceded it.

Xuan He

Chu shamanistic tradition and Taoism always serve as two major inspirations of Tan Dun’s music. Since Tan’s invention of the “organic music” genre in the 1980s, the attention paid by many critics has focused on his musical omnivorism, which on the one hand, can be regarded as praise to Tan’s ability to blend all styles, but on the other hand implies the contextual ambiguity of Tan’s stylistic attributes. In Tan’s early works, such ambiguity has been criticized for resulting in the dissolution of musical subjectivity and therefore hindered the audience from understanding Tan’s artistic intention. However, under the same inspirations, recent compositions of Tan have shown much clearer contextual imagery and musical narrative, especially for works associated with the human condition theme, including Fire Ritual: A Music Ritual for the Victims of War (2018), and Sound Pagoda -Twelve Sounds of Wuhan (2020), which is Tan’s direct response to the current COVID-19 crisis.

The purpose of this presentation project is twofold. Firstly, I will demonstrate how Tan Dun musically presents the concept of “the unity of mankind and nature” as his post-apocalyptic (especially the post-covid 19) worldview through both close literature study and analysis of his two pieces: Fire Ritual and Sound pagoda. Also, I would like to discover Tan’s artistic version of the past, present, and future in his human condition theme compositions, while following his stylistic changes since the 1980s.
11:30-12:45 PM EDT
The After-Apocalypse
Chair: Dr. Braxton Shelley

Projecting the Andalusian Ideal: Arab-Jewish Music, Identity, and Socio-Political Imaginations in Modern Israel
Xavier Sayeed

Over five-hundred years after the fall of Al-Andalus, the memory of the Muslim Iberian Peninsula and the “Golden Age of Interfaith Relations” continues to echo across the global Andalusian diaspora. My paper follows the medieval roots of music originating in 9th century Cordoba to its modern interpretation and impact in Israel. Following decades of ethnic suppression in the mid-twentieth century, contemporary performances of Andalusian emerged as a way for Arab-Jewish Israelis to assert the value of their cultures and gain social mobility. The mythos of Al-Andalus continues to be leveraged, with young musicians seeing their Arab-Jewish identity as a powerful tool to build relationships between Israelis and their Arab neighbors through performance. Amidst growing anti-Arab sentiment and political tension in the region, I use my own ethnographic research, as well as print and digital media from contemporary ensembles to analyze the projection of the Andalusian Ideal through music and how this medieval art form acts as a platform for revolution, connection, agency, and social imagination as young Arab-Jews aim to cultivate a future iteration of idyllic coexistence.

Destiny Meadows

The early years of the United States HIV/AIDS epidemic (1981-1985) were marked by national and local government indifference towards the virus, resulting in the deaths of thousands of Americans. Sensing a need for education, members of the LGBTQ+ community and allies took matters into their own hands, creating music videos promoting and normalizing safe sex. Creators often partnered with non-governmental agencies, such as the Gay Men’s Health Crisis and later the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, to produce these videos, with the goal of disseminating them through public access television for widespread viewership.

In this paper, I analyze the archival music videos of activist creators and organizations produced at the height of the HIV/AIDS epidemic (1987-1993). I argue that these videos, which were created specifically for members of the LGBTQ+ community, provided an effective way to disseminate information while helping creators and viewers alike deal with the subsequent trauma and loss stemming from the virus. I position this mobilization of activists as an extension of the earlier gay rights movement of the 1970s and emphasize the agency of these creators in striving to dismantle homophobic systems of oppressions by encouraging the normalization of safe sex in the LGBTQ+ community.
2:00-3:15 PM EDT
A Piece of Apocalypse: Case Studies
Chair: Dr. Suzannah Clark

The Symbolist Architecture of Scriabin’s Apocalypse
Hannah CJ McLaughlin

In a notebook dated around 1905, the composer Alexander Scriabin roughly sketched the ideal performance space for his ‘Mysterium,’ a work intended to unite all of humanity and bring about the end of the physical world. His close friend Boris de Schloezer described this dome-shaped structure as a “temple,” heavily alluding to the composer’s interest in Indian spirituality. While this Eastern inspiration should not be ignored, Scriabin’s imaginary space also fits within the more local brand of Russian Symbolism, a movement itself preoccupied with apocalypse, the afterlife, and utopia. Similar to Scriabin’s Mysterium is the mythical city of Kitezh as musically described in an opera by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (premiered 1905); both works share imagery and sonic elements which suggest humankind’s ultimate transformation. Also contemporary with the sketch is a play by the poet Valery Bryusov, ‘Zemlya’ (“Earth,” published 1905), which implements the apocalyptic dome in ways akin to Scriabin. In these works, a common relationship is ultimately forged between architecture, music, and apocalypse. They suggest a uniquely Symbolist apocalyptic space that invites ecstatic communal bonding and, in the extreme case, a miraculous extinction of humankind to be welcomed, not feared.

From Passion to Compassion: An Apocalyptic Reading of David Lang’s the little match girl passion (2007)
Andrew Hon

With the flourishing of the Passion genre in the turn of the twenty-first century also came a trend in secularization of the genre. One of the best-known works of this new trend is David Lang’s the little match girl passion (2007), which takes influence from J. S. Bach’s St. Matthew Passion, but “replaces” the suffering of Jesus with that of H. C. Andersen’s little match girl. The little girl, not unlike Jesus in the traditional Passion, is portrayed as an outcast of the society. But the allegorical character represents more than an individual—she embodies the lower class that suffers under the capitalist system. Through a retelling of The Little Match Girl in a postminimalist framework, Lang invites an apocalyptic reading of his work—one that renounces the myth of progress, challenges the status quo, and contemplates change.

In my paper, I will examine the subversive elements in the little match girl passion, particularly when they are manifested in the music and narrative, as well as their meanings for a modern listener. Through a survey of the work’s reception in North America, I will also explore how choral music can advocate for social justice and social change at large.

Love Songs for the Apocalypse, or the Anarchist Subjectivities of Folk Punk
David Farrow

“In my dreams, I am beautiful, dirty, broke, and free,” yelps Patrick Schneeweis on his 2005 folk punk release Love Songs for the Apocalypse. Over the next decade, Pat would travel the United States, playing acoustic punk songs about addiction, mental health, and anarchism. By 2016, Pat, sober and turning 30, announced his retirement from punk and anarchism, revealing “I have grown into a basically ordinary person, albeit a somewhat strange one.” This paper considers Pat’s folk punk as a process of crafting anarchist subjectivity. Anarchism manifests both in his simple songs, slurred melodies, and broken guitars, and in his ethics of life. Anarchist aesthetics rest on this ethics of life itself. Through examining his lyrics, writings, and touring, I will trace the solidarity politics within Pat’s career to connect the crack house, prison cell, and liberation struggle. Living life dangerously carries the risk of state repression and the possibility of community beyond Liberal capitalism. While anarchist subjectivities are opaque due to their association with criminality, Pat’s confessional lyricism illuminates how anarchists confront societal alienation with alternative communities and lifestyles. I evaluate folk punk as a genre and scene, unfolding ways of caring for one another beyond the state and capital.
4:00-5:30 PM EDT
KEYNOTE ADDRESS
“On the Musicality of Breathing: Quotidian Sounds and (the Promise of) Apocalypse”
Dr. Jessica Schwartz
**Speaker Bios**

**KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

**Dr. Jessica Schwartz**

Dr. Schwartz approaches musical representations and sonic histories of militarization and imperial violence, affective alliances, and creative dissent through historical, ethnographic, and theoretical methods. Her work dialogues with American studies, Pacific studies, environmental anthropology, and indigenous studies, and she has begun to collaborate on projects relating to musical activism, artistic expression, and climate change in the Pacific. Other research interests include issues of musical transcription and analysis, critical pedagogies, race, class, and gender in respect to popular music from the postwar onwards and subcultural genres, such as punk and hip-hop. In 2013, Schwartz co-founded and continues to serve as Cultural Programs Advisor to the Marshallese Educational Initiative, Inc., a not-for-profit organization based in Arkansas that raises cultural awareness of and promotes educational opportunities for the Marshallese population. An active guitarist, she composes and performs experimental noise-based and punk music.

**ROUNDTABLE SPEAKERS**

**Dr. Christa Bentley**

Dr. Christa Bentley is an Associate Professor of Musicology at Oklahoma City University. Her research focuses on the politics of music at the intersection of popular and folk styles in the United States. Her current project examines the politics of the singer-songwriter movement in Los Angeles during the 1970s. She is completing the manuscript for her first book *Feeling Free: The Politics of the Singer-Songwriter Movement in the United States* (under contract, University of Michigan Press). This research has additionally led to a published chapter in the *Cambridge Companion to the Singer-Songwriter* (2016) and a collaboration with the Grammy Museum, *California Dreamin’: The Sounds of Laurel Canyon* (2014). She completed her Ph.D. in Musicology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2016, and prior to moving to Oklahoma City, she taught at Georgia State University. In addition to her musicological research, she previously worked as a publicist for Yep Roc Records and with the presenting organization The Bluegrass Situation. She currently teaches courses on gender in music, American Music during the Civil Rights Era, and a graduate research practicum.

**Dr. Jessica Bisset Perea**

Jessica Bissett Perea is an interdisciplinary scholar whose work intersects the larger fields of Native American & Indigenous Studies (NAIS) and Music & Sound Studies. She specializes in Critical NAIS approaches to performance, media, and improvisation studies, and histories of Indigenous arts and activism in North Pacific and Circumpolar Arctic communities. Her first monograph *Sound Relations: Native Ways of Doing Music History in Alaska* (forthcoming 2021) will appear in the “American Musicspheres” series edited by Mark Slobin and published by Oxford University Press.

Dr. Perea’s research, teaching, and service priorities are informed by her lived experiences and academic training. She was born in Anchorage, Alaska and raised on her ancestral Dena’ina (Athabaskan) homelands forty miles north in the Matanuska-Susitna Valley. She is an enrolled member of the Knik Tribe and a shareholder in Cook Inlet Region, Inc. (an Alaska Native Corporation). Dr. Perea studied double bass and vocal performance, music education, and history at Central Washington University before pursuing an MA in Music at the University of Nevada, Reno. She completed her Ph.D. in Musicology at the University of California, Los Angeles and was awarded a Postdoctoral Fellowship in Music at UC Berkeley. Dr. Perea currently works as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Native American Studies at the University of California, Davis, with affiliations in Human Rights Studies, Performance Studies, Feminist Theory and Research, Cultural Studies, and Writing, Rhetoric and Composition Studies.
Dr. Lei Liang

Chinese-born American composer Lei Liang is the winner of the Rome Prize, the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Koussevitzky Foundation Commission, two National Endowment for the Arts grants and a Creative Capital Award. His concerto *Xiaoxiang* for saxophone and orchestra was named a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Music in 2015. His orchestral work, *A Thousand Mountains, A Million Streams*, won the prestigious Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition in 2020. Liang was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic and Alan Gilbert for the inaugural concert of the CONTACT! new music series. Other commissions came from the Fromm Music Foundation, Meet the Composer, and Chamber Music America, among others. Lei Liang’s ten portrait discs are released on Naxos, New World, Mode, Albany and Bridge Records. He has edited and co-edited five books and editions, and published more than thirty articles.

Liang studied with Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Robert Cogan, Chaya Czernowin, Mario Davidovsky, and received degrees from the New England Conservatory of Music (B.M. and M.M.) and Harvard University (Ph.D.). He is Chancellor’s Distinguished Professor of Music at the University of California, San Diego. His catalogue of more than a hundred works is published exclusively by Schott Music Corporation (New York). [www.lei-liang.com](http://www.lei-liang.com)

Dr. Michael Veal

Michael E. Veal has been a member of the Yale faculty since 1998. Before coming to Yale, he taught at Mount Holyoke College (1996 – 1998) and New York University (1997-1998). Veal’s work has typically addressed musical topics within the cultural sphere of Africa and the African diaspora. His 2000 biography of the Nigerian musician Fela Anikulapo-Kuti uses the life and music of this influential African musician explore themes of African post-coloniality, the political uses of music in Africa, and musical and cultural interchange between cultures of Africa and the African diaspora. His documentation of the “Afrobeat” genre continued with the 2013 as-told-to autobiography Tony Allen: Master Drummer of Afrobeat. Professor Veal’s 2007 study of Jamaican dub music examines the ways in which the studio-based innovations of Jamaican recording engineers during the 1970s transformed the structure and concept of the post-WWII popular song, and examines sound technology as a medium for the articulation of spiritual, historical and political themes. His forthcoming book *Wait Until Tomorrow* surveys under-documented periods in the careers of John Coltrane and Miles Davis that encapsulate the stylistic interventions of “free jazz” and “jazz-rock fusion,” and draws on the language of digital architecture in order to suggest new directions for jazz analysis.
PRESENTERS

Chris Batterman Cháirez

Chris Batterman Cháirez is a PhD student in ethnomusicology and a Neubauer Fellow at the University of Chicago. His work draws from sound studies, ethnomusicology, environmental anthropology, and science and technology studies. Based primarily between Mexico City and Rio de Janeiro, his research asks how the sonic might be an entryway into understanding questions of urban life, politics, the human-environment, relation, and sociality under conditions of ordinary and extraordinary crisis. Particularly, his recent work has interrogated embodied and material responses (listening and sounding) to the climate crisis in Brazil, considering how aurality and our relationship to sound might mediate the affective and social registers of precarity under the sign of the Anthropocene.

Paola Cossermelli Messina

Paola Cossermelli Messina is a PhD candidate in Ethnomusicology at Columbia University interested in Lebanese music, identity and diaspora. Her M.A. thesis on the oral histories of Iranian women musicians, completed at The New School, received an award from the Middle East Studies Association and was presented at the first symposium for Iranian popular music at Yale University in 2018. She recently completed a second M.A. thesis at Columbia University, which is an experimental ethnography on a jukebox in a lesbian bar. In her free time, she plays the electric bass and produces the podcast Status Hour/الوضع.

David Farrow

David Farrow is a PhD student in Ethnomusicology at Columbia University. He holds a BA in Cultural Studies and Public Policy from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a MA in Media, Communication, and Culture from New York University. David draws from participation in do-it-yourself experimental electronic music scenes to explore labor, community formation, and gentrification. His current research develops critical theories of urban policy and policing in relation to autonomous organizing in punk and experimental music scenes. Previously, he has taught at the North Carolina Governor's School and written for Tiny Mix Tapes.

Xuan He

Xuan He is pursuing her Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Arts (Scholar Artist Track) at Ohio University. She received her MM in Piano Pedagogy from Florida State University and her BM in Piano Performance (summa cum laude) from Nazareth College of Rochester. As a native of China, Xuan also holds a degree in Musicology from Shandong Normal University. Her current research interests include the study of Chinese “New Wave” composers, transnational musical identities, and postmodernity in contemporary Chinese music composition.

Eric Hollander and Drew Daniels

Drew Daniels and Eric Hollander are graduate students at Brandeis University. They both focus their research and writing on aspects of American music. Drew is currently studying the cultural crossroads of varying American folk traditions from both a musical and social perspective with a special focus on the performance practices of the Grateful Dead, and Eric is readying himself to defend a dissertation prospectus concerning historical representations of American national identity from the perspective of a cowboy song. This pair of scholars has wide-ranging interests, hungry curiosities, and a common affinity for investigating oral traditions, folklore, organic musical dissemination patterns, and music's behavior and treatment as a cultural phenomenon.
Andrew Hon  
Hailing from Hong Kong, Andrew Hon is currently a doctoral student in choral conducting at McGill University where he studies with Jean-Sebastien Vallee and directs the University Chorus. He obtained a BA in music from the University of California, Berkeley, and conducting degrees from the University of Cincinnati and Yale School of Music, where he studied with Maggie Brooks, Jeffrey Douma, and David Hill. Hon has previously served as the Choir Director at St. John’s United Church of Christ – Newport, KY, and a section leader/singer at St. Thomas's Episcopal Church in New Haven, CT and Marquand Chapel at the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, and he is currently a pro-core singer at the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul in Montreal, Canada.

Matt Horrigan  
Matthew Horrigan is a researcher from Ottawa, currently living on Stó:lō, Tsleil-Waututh and Musqueam territory. He holds a B.Mus from McGill and an MFA from Simon Fraser University, where he studied computer music and musical metacreation with Arne Eigenfeldt and is currently pursuing a PhD studying music and media production scenes under the supervision of Eldritch Priest. In addition to a practice of academic electroacoustic music, Matt works as a songwriter and sound designer for hire in children's theatre, most recently on Carousel Theatre's audioplay Nom Nom Gnomes.

Tamyka Jordon  
Before completing her Masters in Music Composition at Louisiana State University in 2015, Jordon worked as an assistant band director in central Florida. In 2016, Jordon served as an Associate Professor and piano accompanist at Wiley College, an HBCU in Marshall, TX. Jordon is currently a PhD candidate in Music Theory at LSU.

Charlie Kirchen  
Charlie Kirchen is a music theorist pursuing a PhD at Columbia University. Drawing tools from actor-network-theory, science and technology studies, critical race theory, and gender studies, his work has addressed topics such as masculinism in the music of the Red Hot Chili Peppers, “the blues” through a comparative reading of the music and theories of W.C. Handy and Jelly Roll Morton, and the relationship between technology and art in the musical practice of Manfred Eicher. He is in the early stages of planning a dissertation that would involve a theory of musical "influence" as it operates in a number of contexts throughout the contemporary musical world.

Hannah CJ McLaughlin  
Hannah McLaughlin is a doctoral student at Princeton University, studying music of the Russian Silver Age. Her dissertation will likely discuss the Russian Symbolists' utopian musical imaginings and their impact after the 1917 Revolution. She has also presented and published on Latter-Day Saint hymnody and the music of Pauline Oliveros. She is a proud wife and mother-to-be, expecting her first child in May.

Destiny Meadows  
Destiny Meadows is an M.M. candidate in Musicology at the University of Miami. Currently, her research centers on music and advocacy during the United States HIV/AIDS epidemic, focusing on grassroots organizations such as ACT UP and GMHC. Previously, she has presented research at the Music, Sound, and Trauma: Interdisciplinary Perspectives virtual conference and the Southeast Chapter of the American Musicological Society.

Jonathan Packham  
Jonathan Packham is a composer, researcher and performer based in Oxford. He is a co-curator of the EXPO series for contemporary art and sound, and also produces and DJs as SALINGER.
Xavier I. Sayeed
Xavier Sayeed is an Indianapolis native currently pursuing a Master of Theological Studies at Harvard Divinity School. His current project, based on an ethnographic study of Judeo-Arabic Andalusian music in modern Israel, explores how performance and narrative shape political imagination, negotiation of identity, and responses to structural and cultural violence.

Joseph Stiefel
Joseph Stiefel is pursuing a double MM/MA degree in piano performance and musicology at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music where he has served as an associate instructor for both the piano and music theory departments. He is interested in piano repertoire by historically marginalized composers and is organizing a spring 2021 virtual performance series of piano music by composers of the African diaspora played by Jacobs students. A native of the rural town Victor, IA, Joseph attended the University of Iowa for undergraduate degrees in piano performance and mathematics. He loves dogs.

Hannah M. Strong
Hannah Strong is a Musicology doctoral student at the University of Pittsburgh. Her research focuses on the intersection of rap and hip hop, feminism, and social movements. Her research on Beyoncé and the #metoo movement is being published in 2021 by Bloomsbury Academic in an edited volume. Strong received a master's degree in Music History from Temple University and completed her undergraduate studies in voice at Westminster Choir College.

Ryan Suleiman
Ryan Suleiman was born to Lebanese and Mid-Western parents in California. His music engages with daydreams, the natural world, and the understated beauty of everyday life. The San Francisco Chronicle called his opera, Moon, Bride, Dogs, “a gem,” with “an aesthetic that is at once so strange and so accessible.” While his artistic interests vary, much of his music engages with the natural world and the simultaneity of beauty and dread that characterizes our moment of ecological crisis. Recent projects include an orchestra piece called Burning, and a work for socially-distanced soprano and ensemble, and a Piano Concerto. He received his PhD from University of California, Davis and is currently a Lecturer at Sacramento State School of Music.

Karen Yu
Karen Yu is a percussionist, experimental sound artist, and interdisciplinary arts researcher who uses sound-making as a medium to question and subvert the relationship between audience and performer. In exploring possibilities of merging performing arts and concert culture, she has collaborated with numerous artists and musicians, including Ken Ueno, Philippe Leroux, Michael Pisaro, Zihua Tan, Vinko Globokar, and Jean-Pierre Drouet. Based in Hong Kong, Yu is a co-founder and co-director of the chamber percussion group The Up:Strike Project, a member of NOVA Ensemble, and co-founder of EXORDIUM Collective. www.karenyu.net.
Acknowledgments
We would like to sincerely thank our keynote speaker Jessica Schwartz, and our roundtable participants Christa Bentley, Jessica Bisset Perea, Lei Liang, and Michael Veal for their generous scholarship and participation in our conference.

From the very beginning of the planning process, we were lucky to have the support of a vibrant graduate student community through the Harvard Graduate Music Forum. We especially acknowledge the hard work of our program committee: Chris Benham, Samuel Budnyk, Sharri K. Hall, and Rachel Rosenman, who not only helped create our program, but helped us think through the logistics of a digital conference. Additionally, we thank previous conference co-chairs, Jingyi Zhang, Sarah Koval, and Samantha Jones for providing crucial support and counsel.

The fruition of this conference merits a special thanks to the Harvard Music Department, as without their financial support this conference would not be possible. Furthermore, we are in debt to the Harvard Music Department faculty—Carolyn Abbate, Suzannah Clark, Vijay Iyer, Alexander Rehding, Braxton D. Shelley, Anne Shreffler, and Ingrid Monson—who have kindly volunteered their time to serve as panel chairs. Finally, we also thank the Music Department Staff: especially Nancy Shafman, Kalan Chang, Brid Coogan, Grace Edgar, and Enrique Marquez. Your invaluable presence assisted and guided many of the essential logistics of the conference from its initial planning stages guaranteeing its success, and everyday we are grateful for your presence.

Thank you, also, to CaptionFirst for providing us with live captioning services for the duration of the conference.

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