

**APRIL
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TIMELY CONVERSATIONS

THE 25TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MIDWEST GRADUATE MUSIC CONSORTIUM

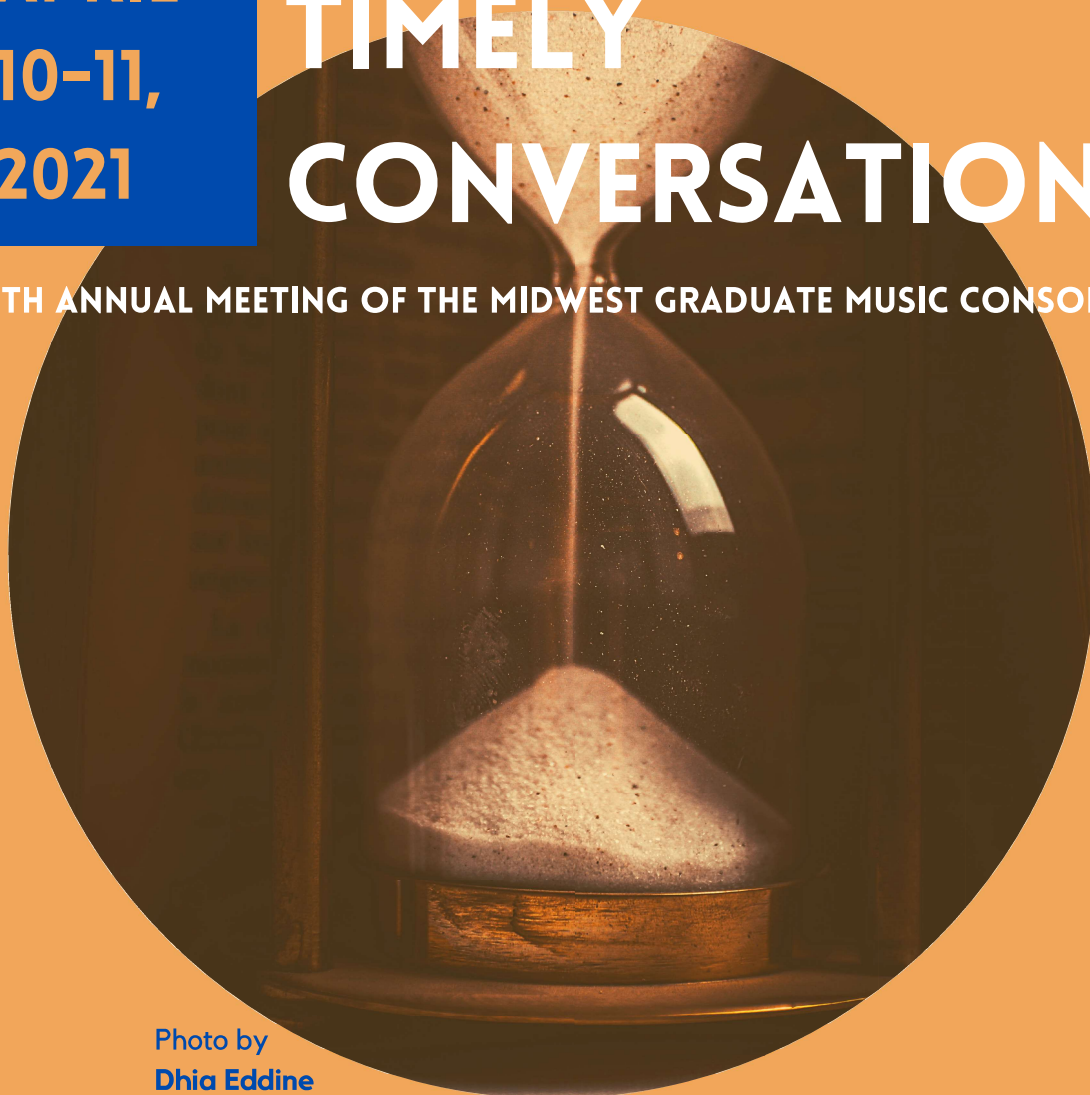


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A **VIRTUAL** Graduate Student Conference Hosted by **the Society for Music Research** at the University of Michigan

FEATURING:

Keynote Speaker: **Dr. Shana L. Redmond (UCLA)**
New Music Concert of Graduate-Student
Compositions by the University of Michigan's
Contemporary Directions Ensemble
Directed by Adrian Slywotzky



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**APRIL
10, 6 PM**

Midwest Graduate Music Consortium
2021: TIMELY CONVERSATIONS

Hosted by the Society for Music Research at the University of Michigan

April 10–11, 2021
Virtual, EDT (GMT -4)

FROM THE ORGANIZERS

Welcome to the Midwest Graduate Music Consortium's 2021 Conference, "[Timely Conversations](#)!" We are delighted to have you join us for this exciting weekend of scholarship, musical performance, and professional interaction—all via remote technology and from the comfort of your own homes.

Our theme, "Timely Conversations," has inspired graduate students from all over the world to produce scholarship and new music in response to the varied conversations that have taken place over the past year about racial injustice, inequality, and the effects of a global pandemic on universities, research, and societies—all of which raise questions about accessibility, prejudice, and power dynamics in our work. These papers and compositions touch on a wide range of topics such as, but certainly not limited to, institutional and humanitarian crises; music during social upheaval; accessibility in music scholarship and pedagogy; diversifying the music syllabus; the effects of social distancing on research, performing, and teaching; and thinking about the way music scholarship and pedagogy engages with race and other identities. We are honored to host this year's keynote speaker, Dr. Shana Redmond, and to hear her talk titled "Black Antiphonal Life." It is our hope that the timely conversations we have at MGMC 2021 will stimulate productive conversation among attendees and serve as a tipping point for the future of music scholarship.

In this document, you will find the conference schedule, our keynote speaker's biography, abstracts for the papers that will be presented, information about the New Music Concert and program notes for the pieces to be performed, and a list of the many volunteers without whose help we could not have hosted this event. If there is anything else you need, please write to us in the conference Slack Workspace or email us at smrconference@umich.edu. Any of our conference volunteers would be happy to help you.

The 25th annual MGMC conference is hosted by the Society for Music Research ([SMR](#))—an organization composed of graduate students in music research in the School of Music, Theatre & Dance at the University of Michigan—in partnership with the other institutions of the Midwest Graduate Music Consortium: The University of Chicago, the University of Iowa, the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and Northwestern University.

We are looking forward to a weekend of engaging in "timely conversation" with you!

Joshua Kerobo, Anna Rose Nelson, Sylvie Tran, and Alyssa Wells
(SMR MGMC Conference Committee)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To all of the volunteers without whose help this event would not be possible, thank you!

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* Special thanks to the volunteers who put together this program book.

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that the University of Michigan and the city of Ann Arbor lie on the unceded territories of the Three Fire Peoples: the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Bodewadmi. We acknowledge that settler colonialism is an instrument of genocide, power, and erasure, and we acknowledge the University of Michigan's origins in the dispossession of Indigenous people. We invite you to think about how colonial pasts, presents, and futures shape the way you listen to and engage with our conference programming this weekend. Finally, if you are not joining us from the Ann Arbor area, we encourage you to view the names of the peoples whose territories you are on at <https://native-land.ca/>.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

(all times in EDT, GMT -4)

SATURDAY, APRIL 10

10:30–10:45 am	Opening Remarks	Zoom Room 1
10:45–11:45 am	Paper Session 1: Let's Talk about Pop Chair: Audrey Slote (University of Chicago)	Zoom Room 1
	“‘The Rap of China’: The Development of Mainstream Chinese Hip-Hop after 2017” Shiyu Tu (University of Rochester)	
	“How the Womyn’s Music Movement Shaped Rock ‘n’ Roll” Courtney Nichols (Texas Tech University)	
12:00–12:45 pm	Coffee Hour: Publications Chat Join editors of <i>SEM Student News</i> and <i>Music & Politics in the Moment</i> to chat about what they do and how you can get involved, and engage in informal conversation with other conference attendees.	Zoom Room 1
1:00–2:30 pm	Paper Session 2: Narrating Musical Identities Chair: Chuyi Zhu (University of Michigan)	Zoom Room 1
	“Resurrection and Messianism in Mathew Rosenblum’s <i>Lament Witches’ Sabbath</i> ” Nicolás Aguía (University of Pittsburgh)	
	“The Suppression of Folk Music in the 20th Century: The Case for Music from the African Diaspora” Kevin Paton-Cole (Johns Hopkins University)	
	“‘I’ve Been in Here Too Long’: Dialogue and Critical Reception in Fiona Apple’s <i>Fetch the Bolt Cutters</i> ” Kelly Cole (Bowling Green State University)	
1:00–2:30 pm	Paper Session 3: Like, Listen, and Subscribe Chair: Benjamin Weissman (Northwestern University)	Zoom Room 2

	<p>“What’s so funny? Mashups Through an Intersectional Lens” Kayla Shaeffer (Florida State University)</p> <p>“Love Songs and Love Spells: Micropolitical Negotiations in Three Recordings of ‘I Put A Spell On You’” Hannah Waterman (Stony Brook University)</p> <p>“Listening to the Internet: Cultural Discourses, Vicente Fernandez, and Looking at YouTube Comments” Alex Miguel Medina (Lawrence University)</p>	
2:45–3:45 pm	<p><i>Paper Session 4: Sounding Out Progress in Academia</i> Chair: Michaela Franzen (University of Michigan)</p> <p>“Progressive Steps Toward Independence in Afro-Cuban Music for Undergraduate Drum Set Studies” Michael Minarcek (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)</p> <p>“Continuous Creative Collaboration: Reimagining Ethnomusicological Research Methods” Madison Archer (Arizona State University)</p>	Zoom Room I
6:00–7:00 pm	<p><i>NEW MUSIC CONCERT</i></p> <p>Contemporary Directions Ensemble Director: Adrian Slywotzky</p> <p><i>Dromic Episodes</i> for Small Chamber Ensemble Diogo Salmeron Carvalho (University of Florida)</p> <p><i>Can’t Take You Anywhere</i> for Cello and Electronics Ralph Lewis (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign)</p> <p><i>For Dreams Will Be Cold</i> for Chamber Ensemble</p>	Zoom Room I

	<p>Wenxin Li (University of Iowa)</p> <p><i>songs after sufjan</i> for Piano Trio Baldwin Giang (University of Chicago)</p> <p><i>...to the shore...</i> for String Quartet Hongwei Cai (University of Iowa)</p>	
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SUNDAY, APRIL 11

10:30–11:30 am	<p>Composer Roundtable Chairs: Anna Rose Nelson and Josh DeVries (University of Michigan)</p> <p>Join composers and performers from the New Music Concert as they talk about their work and answer audience questions.</p>	Zoom Room 1
12:30–2:00 pm	<p>KEYNOTE LECTURE “Black Antiphonal Life” Dr. Shana Redmond (University of California, Los Angeles)</p>	Zoom Room 1
2:15–3:15 pm	<p>Paper Session 5: Voicing Gender in Opera Chair: Cody Norling (University of Iowa)</p>	Zoom Room 1
	<p>“A Female Pastoral: Northern Italian Ballads as a Topic in <i>Primo Ottocento</i> Opera” Carlos Alberto Pérez Tabares (University of Michigan)</p>	
	<p>“Ms., Opera, Music, Mr.: Gender Bias in Contemporary Classical Music Criticism” Allison Chu & Frances Pollock (Yale University)</p>	
2:15–3:15 pm	<p>Paper Session 6: The Power of Black Popular Music Chair: Jake Arthur (University of Michigan)</p>	Zoom Room 2
	<p>“Negative Space: Jazz and the White Music Imaginary”</p>	

	Ross Clowser (University of Iowa)	
	<p>“‘Yes, the sky’s gone up’: Esperanza Spalding’s Afrofuturistic Critique of the Black Patriarchy in Her Song, ‘Elevate or Operate’”</p> <p>Alejandro Cueto (University of Texas at Austin)</p>	
3:30–5:00 pm	<p><i>Paper Session 7: 2020, It Speaks for Itself</i> Chair: Cody Jones (University of Michigan)</p> <p>“Weathering the Storm: Covid-19’s Impact on the Portfolio Career Musician” Jenna Richards (University of Ottawa)</p> <p>“Do You Hear the People Sing? The Sound of Protests” (Anonymous)</p> <p>“Beyond Black and White: Humanizing Black Bodies Through Hip Hop Videos in the BLM Era” Abigail Lindo (University of Florida)</p>	Zoom Room 1
3:30–5:00 pm	<p><i>Paper Session 8: We’re All in This Together: Making Music-making Accessible</i> Chair: Rhianna Nissen (University of Michigan)</p> <p>“Strength for the Journey: Music-making and Critical Disability” Diane Kolin (York University)</p> <p>“Bridging the Gap? Obstacles to Higher Music Education in the UK” Stephen Tatlow (Royal Holloway, University of London)</p> <p>“PRIVILEGE IN THE HOUSE OF MIRRORS: What You Can Do to Shatter Structural Barriers in Classical Music” Bram Wayman (Ohio State University)</p>	Zoom Room 2

KEYNOTE LECTURE

“Black Antiphonal Life”

Dr. Shana Redmond, *University of California–Los Angeles*

(shana.redmond@schoolofmusic.ucla.edu)

Drawn from her recent book, *Everything Man*, this talk announces "antiphonal life" as a uniquely conceived strategy of the polymath movement artist Paul Robeson. His ascension in scale, from raw element to mountain peak, reveals the failures of the surveillance state and the achievements of The People in their demand to hear and be heard.

Shana L. Redmond (she/her) is a public-facing scholar and the author of *Anthem: Social Movements and the Sound of Solidarity in the African Diaspora* (NYU Press, 2014) and *Everything Man: The Form and Function of Paul Robeson* (Duke UP, 2020), which was named one of NPR's Best Books of 2020. In 2019 she contributed the critical liner essay for the vinyl soundtrack release to Jordan Peele's film *Us* (Waxwork Records). She is professor of Musicology and African American Studies at UCLA.

ABSTRACTS

SATURDAY, APRIL 10

10:45–11:45 am

Paper Session I: Let's Talk about Pop

Session Chair: Audrey Slote

**“The Rap of China”: The Development of Mainstream
Chinese Hip-Hop after 2017**

Shiyu Tu, *University of Rochester* (stu5@u.rochester.edu)

The presentation is about the development of Chinese hip-hop after it has been commercialized in 2017. The evolution of Chinese mainstream hip-hop reveals a path of commercialization in Chinese music industries. However, the credibility of Chinese hip-hop in China's social context has little to do with the music style itself. It is a complex process in which the manipulation of the commercial industries, Chinese governmental intervention, and the desire of being cosmopolitan people among Chinese youths are the main factors that help Chinese hip-hop enact its credibility in public.

In my proposed presentation, I will describe Chinese hip-hop by focusing on the local understanding of what the authentic hip-hop is in a way that unfolds as a negotiation between their self-identification as ‘real rappers’ and the manipulation of commercialization and governmental force of hip-hop in mainland China. The presentation moves through a series of analytical concepts: authenticity, commercialization, identity, language, expediency. Each term will provide a frame that helps us to understand various aspects of Chinese hip-hop after it became a mainstream music genre in 2017. Taken together, the presentation will give listeners a portrait of how commercialization made hip-hop gain great popularity rapidly, where a myriad of committed players, such as individual hip-hop artists, agencies, and the official government would respond to the new arisen culture in their own way. Through this, I will provide a map of how different individual forces react with the commercialization of hip-hop in mainland China by their self-identification and their music-making, in which we know the local understanding of what the real Chinese hip-hop means to them.

How the Womyn's Music Movement Shaped Rock 'n' Roll

Courtney Nichols, *Texas Tech University* (courtney.r.nichols@ttu.edu)

Because women have different life experiences than men, the influences for the participants of the Women's Music Movement of the 1970s different from those of the men in rock 'n' roll. In this paper, drawing upon historical analysis of women musicians' experience in rock music before and after the advent of the 1970s Women's Music Movement and musical analysis of the topics explored in those women's songs, I will argue that the Movement (1970–1994) increased the number of women who participated as creators in the rock genre and likewise shaped the optics about which the musicians of the Movement wrote.

Historically, rock 'n' roll has been a gendered male-perspective genre whose topics have often centered around sex, rebellion, and drug use. However, in the 1970s as a response to Second Wave Feminism and the Gay Rights Movement, the Women's Music Movement began to steadily increase in popularity as women, especially lesbians, desired songs that expressed their hardship of being gay in a heteronormative society. The musicians of this movement, including Meg Christian (b. 1946), Holly Near (b. 1949), Cris Williamson (b. 1947), and many others, sought to avoid such stereotypical topics. For example, Meg Christian, as one of the founders of Olivia Records, wanted to write songs about "our life experiences" including the social, political, and economic inequality women experienced. Many of the artists involved in this movement were inspired by the social movements in America to use their music and voices and express the hardships of being gay and/or of being a woman. The female artists sought freedom from the restrictions of social norms and mores and wanted to see themselves represented in society.

1:00–2:30 pm

Paper Session 2: Narrating Music Identities
Session Chair: Chuyi Zhu

Resurrection and Messianism in Mathew Rosenblum's *Lament Witches' Sabbath*

Nicolás Aguía, *University of Pittsburgh* (nia42@pitt.edu)

American composer Mathew Rosenblum's clarinet concerto, *Lament/Witches' Sabbath* (2017), was commissioned and supported by the Guggenheim Foundation for clarinetist David Krakauer and the Boston Modern Orchestra Project. Rosenblum's concerto uses recordings of the voice of his grandmother Bella Liss, and recordings of Ukrainian and Ashkenazi Jewish laments as part of the musical fabric. In the course of the concerto, Liss tells her family's story of how they fled the pogroms in Ukraine and escaped murderous mobs in the town of Proskurov, in 1919. The composition has two foundational materials: the laments and citations from Berlioz's last movement of his *Symphonie fantastique*, "Dream of a Witches' Sabbath." The pitch world of the laments informs the piece's microtonal language which gives it its unfiltered expressivity. The quotations from Berlioz, according to Rosenblum (2017), allude to his grandmother's superstitious beliefs rooted in Eastern European Jewish culture and the fear that drove the violence against Jewish communities in Ukraine.

The appropriation of Berlioz's music is redefined, moreover, by its inscription in Rosenblum's sound world shaped by his filiation to traditional Jewish klezmer music and admiration for Krakauer's playing. Following cultural critic John Beverley (2010), this paper will argue that Rosenblum's composition can be thought of as "transculturation from below": the oral elements are not modified to fit the cultural codes of the concerto, instead, orality and vernacular klezmer music reconstitute the concerto format of Western classical music. By underlying the structural tension between the medium of classical music and the historical memories coming from oral tradition, I contest that the lament's narratives and Bella Liss' historical account manifest the symbolic value of memory—which philosopher Walter Benjamin calls "messianic" (Lowy 2005). They resurrect subalternized historical subjects and their narratives become constitutive of *Lament/Witches' Sabbath*'s artistic expression.

The Suppression of Folk Music in the 20th Century: The Case for Music from the African Diaspora

Kevin Paton-Cole, *Peabody Institute of the John Hopkins University* (patoncolekevin1995@gmail.com)

The idea of a generative role of folk music, once popular, has been consistently suppressed and ignored by the mid-20th-century modernists. In the past two years, Western world has been asking for forgiveness from its non-Western counterparts. Yet, the stubborn denial of the role of folk music of the non-Western cultures remains an obstacle for moving forward with these issues in the musical academia. It is especially urgent regarding musical traditions of the African continent—the cradle of mankind. Hiding behind the formalist slogans of the individual freedom, the academic music after World War Two in the West managed to completely get rid of the folk paradigm. Our current situation returned us to the fact: denying folk music as a basis for Western music equals to denying the truth about music as an art form and its actual evolution.

The very notion of folk song (*Volkslieder*, in Herder's or Bartok's terms) needs a revision. Many unnecessary connotations were attached to its idea, ranging from fake patriotism to totalitarian ideology. In my country Sierra Leone, folk music is championed by main interrelated local tribes, among these are the Creole people of Freetown, the capital, the Mende, Temne and the Limba. Western classical music is performed in churches and taught, but the tradition of folk music has always been upheld. It is time to exculpate the folk song and consider its actual merits beyond politicized interpretations. The subject matter of a folk song is not, in any case, the “art about nothing”; a professionally trained composer may find in folk music the source of unfading inspiration. This paper will address the issues presented above on the examples from several African folk traditions.

“I’ve Been in Here Too Long”: Dialogue and Critical Reception in Fiona Apple’s *Fetch the Bolt Cutters*

Kelly Cole, *Bowling Green State University* (kcole@bgsu.edu)

On April 17th, 2020, singer-songwriter Fiona Apple released *Fetch the Bolt Cutters* through Epic Records with her fellow producers and collaborators Amy Aileen Wood, Sebastian Steinberg, and David Garza. This album was released nearly a month into the COVID-19 pandemic and amidst the 2020 election campaign season. *Fetch* has been heralded as one of her most experimental albums to date, secured a rare perfect score of 10 on *Pitchfork*, and received a Grammy award for best alternative music album. The prevalent sonic elements of the album are the use of percussion, improvisation, and distinct shifts in vocal timbre and register. *Fetch* is a culmination of Apple's past and present experiences; it demonstrates how she uses her personal struggles and self-disclosure to make statements about the current cultural and political zeitgeist. What distinguishes *Fetch* from previous releases is how the musical content of the album and the production process portray Apple's relationships and conversations with women.

As a survivor of sexual assault, the subject matter in Apple's art has been scrutinized with intensity from the beginning of her career to present day. Apple's activism and personal creed have developed significantly since the release of her first album *Tidal* in 1996. In this paper, I will provide a

brief overview of how the critical reception of Apple's work and life has changed over time. I will draw on reviews and interviews from the inception of Apple's career and following the release of *Fetch*. I will use select musical examples to discuss how Apple's response to her critics and journey of self-healing led to her to creating an album that builds community and creates dialogue with women through lyrical, sonic, and literal modes of expression.

1:00–2:30 pm

Paper Session 3: Like, Listen, and Subscribe
Session Chair: Ben Weissman

What's so funny? Mashups Through an Intersectional Lens

Kayla Shaeffer, *Florida State University* (khs19d@my.fsu.edu)

In August 2020, TikTok creators flooded the short-form video app with mashups of Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion's recent hit single, "WAP." In "WAP," the rappers explore their sexual fantasies, exerting their position as sexually empowered women. On TikTok, several "WAP" mashup audios went viral as countless creators recorded themselves dissolving into laughter at the joined songs. These viral mashups nearly universally paired the second verse of "WAP" with songs by white men, while mashups of "WAP" with music by artists of color largely failed to reach the same popularity. In this paper, I investigate mashups of "WAP" to demonstrate how they aurally navigate intersecting issues of race and gender. Creators use these mashups to ridicule—sometimes subconsciously—Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion's embrace of empowerment through their sexuality.

I draw upon Christine Boone's work on issues of gender and power in mashups using a "raw/slick" continuum" where "raw songs are masculine-coded while "slick" songs are feminine-coded (2018). My analysis of "WAP" mashups expands upon Boone's framework to account for the messy arithmetic of intersecting identities. In support of this expansion, I call upon the work of Robin Attas on phrase in popular music (2017) and Harald Krebs on metric dissonance (1999) to articulate why these mashups tend to start with the second verse of "WAP," namely they focus on the most metrically and structurally conservative verse. Creators thus affirm the supremacy of the other song in the mashup through their privileging of metric stability. Through juxtaposition and the reification of metric stability, mashup creators undermine the sexual empowerment of Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion—turning their power into a joke—and safely ensconce them within an overwhelmingly white, male musical canon.

Love Songs and Love Spells: Micropolitical Negotiations in Three Recordings of "I Put A Spell On You"

Hannah Waterman, *Stony Brook University* (hannah.waterman@stonybrook.edu)

In *The Race of Sound* (2019), Nina Sun Eidsheim argues that vocal identities are not innate, but rather a product of the "micropolitics of listening." The acousmatic question — "*Who is this? Who is speaking?*" — mediates the collective, cultural construction of identity around the voice. Following Eidsheim in the consideration of a specific case study, I foreground the contingent agency of the listener in constructing racialized and gendered vocal identities in three recordings of "I Put A Spell On You" by

Screamin' Jay Hawkins, Nina Simone, and Annie Lennox, respectively. My analysis focuses on present-day listening to older audiovisual recordings on YouTube, an idiosyncratically acousmatic situation in which the singer's body is visible, but the sociopolitical circumstances of recording are obscured. As with the audio-only recordings Alexander Weheliye considers in *Phonographies*, this rift between recording and reception (the "phonographic split") is fraught with micropolitical ambiguities and negotiations between whiteness and its Others.

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

Listening to the Internet: Cultural Discourses, Vicente Fernandez, and Looking at YouTube Comments

Alex Miguel Medina, *Lawrence University, Conservatory of Music* (alex.m.medina@lawrence.edu)

In the digital age, the possibility for interlocutors to engage with one another across spatiotemporal boundaries has increased dramatically. My project focuses on public discourse, specifically YouTube comments, surrounding the music video to Vicente Fernandez's song "Por Tu Maldito Amor." The comments add to and complicate Small's (1998) conceptualization of musicking in that they exist beyond their direct involvement in the musical process; they serve no necessary part in the composition, distribution, or formal critique of Fernandez's musicking and yet provide context for critical engagement. I take these comments to signify as performances in their own right, while also demonstrating the postnational condition that they spawn from. I employ the term performance-politics to show how in the discursive and digital interactions of social media, there is a unique structure of cultural politics in action, whereby the commenters demonstrate an acknowledgement of a postnational condition while simultaneously engaging in discourse using nationalist rhetoric; comments also relate the music video (along with Fernandez's singing voice) to notions of heterosexual tragedy and hyper-machismo sexuality in Mexican and Latin American culture. While this project is situated around a music video by the famous ranchera singer, I am more interested in the quotidian interactions in the comment section. I use music as a point of departure more than an object of analysis, in a way to understand how people interact and engage in cultural politics. It is for this reason why I utilize the term performance-politics as the *modus operandi* for this project; I focus on the comments on his music video to be able to center the agents who make his music culture.

2:45–3:45 pm

Paper Session 4: Sounding Out Progress in the Academy
 Session Chair: Michaela Franzen

Progressive Steps Toward Independence in Afro-Cuban Music for Undergraduate Drum Set Studies

Michael Minarcek, *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign* (mike7813@gmail.com)

When introducing new styles of percussion music to college students in the United States, a style's similarity to the unified rhythmic expression of rock or swing jazz drumming often enables a quicker onboarding. However, styles such as Afro-Cuban music rely on a different kind of coordination of independent patterns. Drawing on my experiences as a graduate student and adjunct professor introducing Afro-Cuban music to undergraduates, I have developed a step by step approach that allows more students to access the fundamentals of Afro-Cuban drum set playing.

In this paper, I will explain the key concepts and practice regimens I have used to develop these skills with percussionists who had yet to immerse themselves in this music. In working through this set of progressive studies I created, my students have developed the necessary rhythmic independence in each limb to apply Afro-Cuban music principles to their drum set skills. In addition to improving facility on drum set, this sequence leads to a further examination of how to solo in this genre (as on the authentic Afro-Cuban instruments such as congas and timbales). Through discussing this, I hope to foster not only more experiences for music students to play Afro-Cuban music, but also encourage graduate students, professors, and other teachers to develop their own strategies to comprehensively engage students in learning musical practices beyond Classical music.

Continuous Creative Collaboration: Reimagining Ethnomusicological Research Methods

Madison Archer, *Arizona State University* (marcher8@asu.edu)

Ethnomusicology has a long history of extracting materials, recordings, and knowledge from disenfranchised groups without informing their sources, providing ethical reimbursement, or considering cultural or religious musical values. What are the ethical responsibilities of a 21st century ethnomusicologist to avoid inserting their own perceptions onto musics that possess meaning and power outside of Western values?

Current social movements like Black Lives Matter and indigenous activism show us how music is a powerful force in creating awareness for social change as well as providing a musical community that engages with it. These musics provide spaces for ethnographic research, but with tensions surrounding issues of racial and cultural identities, an ethnomusicologist cannot simply walk in and begin recording or gathering material. A recent component in ethnomusicological work involves active awareness of a given community's position in society, the issues surrounding their community that manifest in music making, and most importantly, the values and perspectives they place on their music. For the purpose of this presentation, I examine three scholars of different music scenes—Western choir events, female Australian Aboriginal artists, and Hopi intellectual property rights—who collaborated with their

marginalized interviewees so as to avoid further dissolving their cultural agency. Following these examples, I will propose collaboration suggestions for change and new scholarship.

Ethnomusicological work should not look like the work from fifty years ago nor should our work fifty years in the future look like the present. Cultures and societies are ever evolving and changing so if our research methods do not evolve and change with them, how could our research or data possibly maintain validity or relevance? Ethnomusicologists must be aware of the cultural and social places of the people within the space of their research and how their academic work should evolve to prevent further marginalizing of disenfranchised voices.

6:00–7:00 pm

New Music Concert

University of Michigan Contemporary Directions Ensemble

Director: Adrian Slywotzky

Dromic Episodes

for Clarinet, Piano, Cello, Violin

Diogo Salmeron Carvalho, *University of Florida* (dcarvalho@ufl.edu)

Michelle Ho, clarinet

Tiffany Wilkins, violin

Joshua DeVries, cello

John Morefield, piano

Dromic is the corresponding adjective to *dromos*, defined by the website Dictionary.com as:

noun

1. *Archaeology.* a passageway into an ancient subterranean tomb.
2. a racetrack in ancient Greece.

Sometimes our senses sluggishly react to fast events.

Is it because we are in an unhurried mood and slowly respond to anything?

What happens when we are racing?

What is the threshold for calling something a surprise or an “I saw it coming” event?

Can't Take You Anywhere

for Cello and Electronics

Ralph Lewis, *University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign* (rslewis2@illinois.edu)

Joshua DeVries, cello

Can't Take You Anywhere is written for (amplified) cello and triggered fixed media. It is inspired by traveling around with a particularly noisy crackle box. Its light sensors responded in particularly cantankerous ways when we were riding elevators in my building. Often engaged by curious elevator passengers, I found myself having to explain the goings on as if I were an embarrassed pet owner. The cello and electronics embody different moments, patternings, and realizations found throughout this process.

For Dreams Will Be Cold

for Chamber Ensemble

Wenxin Li, *University of Iowa* (wenxin-li@uiowa.edu)

Annalese Lohr, flute

Michelle Ho, clarinet

John Morefield, piano

Laura Gamboa and William Thain, violin

Joshua Thaver, viola

Hanna Rumora, cello

My fiancé and I have been in a long-distance relationship for nearly two years. The most difficult moments are not when we are apart, but when I have to watch him drive away after visits. The short-lived happiness of yesterday fresh in my mind, doubles the aching of the long and lonely anticipation of the coming days. In these times, I am reminded of the Chinese poem by Li Shutong saying “dreams will be cold after tonight’s farewell (今宵别梦寒).”

songs after sufjan

for Piano Trio

Baldwin Giang, *University of Chicago* (baldwingiang@uchicago.edu)

Tiffany Wilkins, violin

Joshua DeVries, cello

John Morefield, piano

songs after sufjan is, in part, an homage to the singer/songwriter/composer Sufjan Stevens. I found myself most intrigued with how Stevens’s lyrics, often intensely lyrical, conflicted, and loaded with symbolism, are usually accompanied by music of simplicity and restraint. I wondered how this ambiguous combination of elements would be transformed if fragmented and cast as purely instrumental music. My piece for piano trio makes use of some of the musical material of Stevens’s songs, such as translating their carefully orchestrated pop production into dreamy microtonal harmony and extended techniques, as a means to evoke both the intimacy and delicate affect of Stevens’s soundworlds. Furthermore the

ghosts of Stevens's lyrics, when recontextualized against my own music, serve as a starting point for the unique emotional arc of my own work.

The first movement, “I should have known better,” is a reference to the song “Should have Known Better” from Stevens’s 2015 album, *Carrie & Lowell*. Stevens’s lyrics concern his grief over his mother’s death, and the conflicted nature of their relationship, before an unexpected turn towards the light that his newborn niece brings into his life. My work, inspired by the drama of the lyrics, juxtaposes highly contrasting material based on chromaticism and 7 limit-just Intonation.

The second movement, “so/than,” is a study in ambiguity. It functions both as an interlude between the outer movements as well as the emotional center of the entire work. It takes some veiled influence from Stevens’s “Fourth of July,” also from *Carrie & Lowell*. The title of the third movement, “to be alone with you,” is a reference to the eponymous song by Stevens, from his 2004 album *Seven Swans*. I found the lyrics of Stevens’s song, which acknowledge the self-sacrifices required to be alone with someone and with God, especially relevant as I was making hard choices in my own personal life during the COVID-19 pandemic. In these times, to choose to be alone with someone brings both comfort and risk, companionship and awkwardness.

...to the shore...

for String Quartet

Hongwei Cai, *University of Iowa* (hongwei-cai@uiowa.edu)

William Thain and Beau Henson, violin

Thomas Chafe, viola

Hanna Rumora, cello

Partly inspired by Michael Jackson’s song “Heal the World,” my String Quartet No.1 “to the shore” is an imaginary journey searching for a “place” where there is no damage or hurt, sorrow or fear. The music begins moaning-like and is slow-paced, constantly changing timbre with a dark expression. After a sudden flash—a metaphor for the dawn of hope—the music shifts, sending a signal to God asking a way to travel from shore to shore. After a difficult trek, the “place” appears unexpectedly. It is quiet and peaceful, like a beautiful meadow, birds singing and with flowers fragrant. Everything is created in beauty and exists in harmonious coexistence.

SUNDAY, APRIL 11

2:15–3:15 pm

Paper Session 5: Voicing Gender in Opera

Session Chair: Cody Norling

A Female Pastoral: Northern Italian Ballads as a Topic in *Primo Ottocento* OperaCarlos Alberto Pérez Tabares, *University of Michigan* (pereztc@umich.edu)

Recent scholarship suggests that the presumption of Italian folk influences in *primo ottocento* opera is risky. Indeed, Roberto Leydi (2003) sees no hard evidence of composers of this period drawing significantly from folk sources. Other critics, however, have historically identified similarities between folk genres and opera numbers. Francesco Degrada (1977), for example, mentions how parallel thirds sung by women's choirs, pervasive in Bellini's *La Sonnambula*, remind him of Northern Italian folk music. What he calls "typically Po-valley" thirds are described by Tullia Magrini (1995) and Ignazio Macchiarella (2001) as a hallmark of Northern Italian ballads, which were traditionally sung by women. This parallelism seems even more striking considering Emilia Branca's (1882, 161) account of Bellini's trip to Moltrasio before writing *La Sonnambula*, in which he allegedly collected themes sung by peasant women. In light of these and other Italian commentators' recognition of their soundscapes in opera (see also Scherillo 1882, 69–70; Pastura 1959, 250–53; and Confalonieri 1968, 505), I suggest that Northern Italian ballads, in particular, may be identified as a *topic*—a musical style or genre used outside of its original context (Mirka 2014, 2). I discuss how this topic may have been consolidated in the operatic repertory as a byproduct of the wane of pastoralism in nineteenth-century Italy. In doing so, I explore Italian cultural politics at the time within what Denis Cosgrove (1985) calls "landscape ideology," i.e., how Europeans used landscape to represent themselves and comment on social relations. I argue that ballads may have entered operatic conventions through a process, described by Emanuele Senici (2005), of cultural negotiation that replaced pastoralism's idealized countryside with the Alps. I elaborate on Senici's argument that this negotiation was tied to the portrayal of women in Italian opera and argue that gender relations added to the signification of ballads in this repertory. I close the paper with discussion on the musical features of the ballad topic.

Ms., Opera, Music, Mr.: Gender Bias in Contemporary Classical Music CriticismAllison Chu & Frances Pollock, *Yale University*(allison.chu@yale.edu, frances.pollock@yale.edu)

Music studies depend on critical reviews. Critical reviews have judged composers, served as advertisements, and introduced artists to public audiences. However, critical reviews are also important opportunities for composers to receive feedback on their work. Between 2010 and 2020, following the #MeToo movement and the increased visibility of female composers, music critics and opera institutions have promoted the myth that female composers are anomalies who have only recently turned their attention to opera; male opera composers are assumed to be the norm. Consequently, reviews that should critically engage with the work of female composers frequently display gender bias, leading to

further marginalization and the ultimate tokenization of their work. Through a close rhetorical analysis of contemporary opera reviews, this paper examines the hurdles and glass ceilings women continue to face in the critique of their work.

In our research, we have found that female opera composers continue to receive less critical attention at every level of the review. Using Voyant, a digital tool for rhetorical analysis, we examined a corpus of seventy-eight opera reviews published between 2010 and 2020 by major news publications in the United States in two tiers based on annual operating budget. Our research has shown that female composers receive shorter articles that utilize gendered language. Women's works are often considered to be modeled off of the Western canon, rather than innovating the genre. Based on this data, we argue that longevity of female-composed operas is ultimately harmed by the subtle biases perpetuated in music criticism today.

2:15–3:15 pm

Paper Session 6: The Power of Black Popular Music
Session Chair: Jake Arthur

Negative Space: Jazz and the White Music Imaginary

Ross Clowser, *University of Iowa* (ross-clowser@uiowa.edu)

In much of music scholarship, a great deal of time and energy has been spent defining the non-white “other,” but, as a whole, music scholarship has not consistently examined the role of dominant culture and its power structures as it relates to music production. In order to help correct this, I propose the concept of “the white music imaginary”, which borrows extensively from George Lipsitz’s “white spatial imaginary.” The white music imaginary seeks to describe how systems of white supremacy and the possessive investment in whiteness function in relation to the production of music, manifesting in various forms which include: policing, gatekeeping, commodification, and historical revision. Because the production of Black music has historically posed a threat to the white music imaginary and by extension, white supremacy, white institutions are often incentivized to police the creative activity of Black artists. This is particularly evident when Black artists seek to utilize their creative production as a locus for change, as with the 1955 Jazz at the Philharmonic Concert presented in Houston, Texas to an integrated audience, which resulted in the arrest of Ella Fitzgerald, Illinois Jacquet, Dizzy Gillespie, and Norman Granz. Analyzing this example serves to demonstrate exactly how policing functions to threaten and control Black art production through literal force and legal means, highlighting both resistance to the white music imaginary and white supremacy’s response to it. The work laid out here will help inform future ethnographies on modern music scenes and the relationship between the white music imaginary, policing, and the resistance of Black creative production.

“Yes, the sky’s gone up”: Esperanza Spalding’s Afrofuturistic Critique of the Black Patriarchy in Her Song, “Elevate or Operate”

Alejandro Cueto, *University of Texas–Austin* (alejandro.cueto@utexas.edu)

Esperanza Spalding's 2016 live premiere of her album *Emily's D+Evolution* was groundbreaking both for its eclectic visual storytelling and Black feminist critique. Through elaborate costumes, theatrics, and puppetry, "Elevate or Operate" addresses the hegemonic assimilationism of some older Black Americans who advocate for the adoption of White cultural norms to elevate their own social standing. This paper analyzes how Spalding casts marionette puppets to represent the assimilationist/feminist binary. A tall, elderly elevator operator is dressed in a gold serviceman's uniform to represent his gilded subservience to whiteness while a shorter marionette of Spalding herself, clad in futuristic clothing, represents Black feminism. The motion of the puppets, costumes, and lyrics interact to depict the marginalization of Black women and at the same time point to an alternative way forward. The elevator operator's constant and physically aggressive interruptions of Spalding relegate her contributions to the static chorus while the elevator operator dominates the song's narrative verse sections. This asymmetric relationship present in the verse-chorus structure reflects the historic silencing and erasure of Black Women. The narratives of the live and audio recordings diverge greatly. The audio album portrays a grim reality and a nonexistent future for Black equality. The live performance, on the other hand, features a disintegration of the assimilationist argument as the elevator operator floats off-stage babbling incoherently; the song closes with Spalding sitting triumphantly atop the elevator. Thus, she is presented as the future of the Black civil rights movement.

3:30–5:00 pm

Paper Session 7: 2020; It Speaks for Itself
Session Chair: Cody Jones

Weathering the Storm: Covid-19's Impact on the Portfolio Career Musician

Jenna Richards, *University of Ottawa* (jrich182@uottawa.ca)

A portfolio career consists of multiple part- or full-time positions held at once, in short succession, or as a series of concurrent or frequently changing jobs, such as contract work. Many modern classical musicians have earned their livelihoods in this manner for centuries, and thus could be categorized as portfolio careerists. This is in part due to the transient nature of work in the industry and lack of job security even amongst seasoned professionals. Performance and in-person teaching are the primary roles in musicians' portfolios, but the Covid-19 pandemic has eradicated many traditional opportunities in performance, and in many urban centers, in-person teaching has been drastically reduced. How have classical musicians adapted their portfolio careers in light of the Covid-19 pandemic? Have successful portfolio careerists fared "better" than their more traditional full-time performer counterparts due to the diversity of their work?

This presentation investigates Western classical musicians' multifaceted professional lives. Professional identities and portfolio careers are discussed vis-à-vis studies from the United Kingdom (Mills 2006; Rogers 2002) and the United States (Thompson 2013). The study equally explores how income, identity, and societal frameworks contribute to the way musicians are recognized and how these identities and work patterns have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Data illuminates over forty individual professional roles for "musicians" (from performance to administration to teaching, etc.). It equally confirms that the majority of musicians hold 3-4 roles

concurrently. Covid-19 has drastically reduced many traditional performance streams and, by consequence, cut administrative, production, and other positions. As musicians face these new realities, they have restructured their portfolios to include less traditional performance practice and more digital media, distanced teaching, livestreaming, and adaptive programming, or simply taken a step out of the industry.

Do You Hear the People Sing? The Sound of Protests

Anonymous Author

In September 2017, “Do You Hear the People Sing?” from the musical *Les Misérables* (1980) has been banned in music streaming services in PRC. How could a song about the French revolution be regarded as sensitive content in modern-day society? This song was regarded as one of the anthems in the 2014–2019 Hong Kong protests, promoting Hong Kong freedom. In this paper, I present three analyses from the most popular YouTube covers of the same song during the 2014 and 2019 Hong Kong protests. The comparison between different versions demonstrates how the meaning in one song is tweaked by audio-visual stimuli and localized text. These lyrics are rewritten to advocate for political-specific ideas featured in the protests, for example, activism as a civil citizen. The context and meaning from the original lyrics are modified while preserving the ideas of acting against the authority and pursuing freedom. These ideas are facilitated by the clips that imitate the front line in the protests, with real footage taken during protests and with re-choreography and dramatization of scenes in the protests. These three covers present three distinct examples to convey the moving yet agitated message in the audience. Despite the orchestration, featured subjects, images, camera angles, and editing techniques in the three clips are greatly different from each other, they all preserve the same dark tone and re-written lyrics. In short, both the musical and non-musical elements contribute to the powerful and emotion-evoking messages conveyed by song, leading to music censorship towards it.

Beyond Black and White: Humanizing Black Bodies Through Hip Hop Videos in the BLM Era

Abigail Lindo, *University of Florida* (abbylindo@ufl.edu)

Hip hop culture has long put black male bodies on display in a threatening manner. They embody the fear of “the other” by challenging societal constructions of what is deemed acceptable for black masculine performance and elevating black perspectives reflective of struggles faced by African Americans in American society. Music videos made for songs about racial inequality connected to the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement often use black and white as a strategic way to visually allude to the weight and trauma of black racialized existence and how races have often been portrayed in opposition to one another since segregation in America. The act of listening and viewing the video often occurs privately, can easily be repeated, and provides individuals with the comfort and safety of engaging with the performers from a distance. Specifically, white viewers can view black realities without engaging with black bodies, allowing them to better understand the plight of individuals they may not typically convene

with and challenging their own racial beliefs. The analysis of three recent black and white hip hop videos will demonstrate the potency of colorless portrayal to negotiate the embodiment of difference and confrontation of racial ideals. Music videos challenge the often-feared visage of the black male performers and humanizes them through their message(s) in the song, surrounding individuals, and/or use of common racial tropes. In this way, music videos are visual agents that give perceivable value to black identity through honest portrayal of black narratives and creative escapism from black realities.

3:30–5:00 pm

Paper Session 8: We're All in this Together: Making Music-making Accessible

Session Chair: Rhianna Nissen

Strength for the Journey: Music-making and Critical Disability

Diane Kolin, *York University* (dkolin@yorku.ca)

It is often assumed that inquiry between music and disability is limited to the field of music therapy. I argue that a musician with a disability can develop a strong professional career, provided that a key adaptation occurs along the journey.

This paper explores methods employed by professional musicians to succeed in their careers despite their disability. It is illustrated by interviews of three different musicians, living in three different parts of the world, who chose three different instruments.

After defining what Critical Disability Studies can bring to music by examining the existing literature on music and disability, I propose an analytical approach of the three interviews, on medical issues, embodiment, perception, adaptation and accessibility. The past, present and vision of the future of the three musicians, especially with the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, are addressed and show contrasting journeys and perspectives. The paper highlights how each artist was able to make use of their own reflections on their musical journey.

Based on the three case studies and the literary works already available on the subject, the paper finishes by providing a model for reflection to build a bridge between the music field and Critical Disability Studies to allow a complementarity that is rarely addressed in both scholarships.

Bridging the Gap? Obstacles to Higher Music Education in the UK

Stephen Tatlow, *Royal Holloway, University of London* (stephen.tatlow.2016@live.rhul.ac.uk)

Whilst indications of progress are present in the fight to minimise discrimination in university admissions in the UK, a 2020 quantitative analysis of gender demographics for Higher Music Education (HME) courses in the UK between 2014 and 2020 revealed a significant gender divide in specific areas. Generic music degrees and degrees combining music and theatre (e.g., Musical Theatre) have predominantly female populations, whilst degrees combining music and technology and degrees focused around the study or performance of popular music have predominantly male populations. These are

indications of a continued and substantial gender gap which must be bridged in future access and inclusivity initiatives.

To identify potential areas for impactful work, a qualitative survey of advertised entry requirements for undergraduate degrees matriculating in 2021 in music-related subjects at universities in the UK was conducted. This revealed five main types of entrance requirements for HME in the UK: academic qualifications; non-academic qualifications; artistic requirements demonstrated through creative portfolio, interview or audition; further study requirements foundation years or additional study years; and evidence of musical engagement.

By examining existing data surrounding these pathways, three key questions can be answered: What obstacles to access can be observed in this study? What difficulties do those working in the UK face as they challenge these obstacles? What further data is required to maximize the impact of diversity initiatives?

PRIVILEGE IN THE HOUSE OF MIRRORS:

What You Can Do to Shatter Structural Barriers in Classical Music

Bram Wayman, *The Ohio State University* (wayman.33@buckeyemail.osu.edu)

As ensembles have worked to raise up oppressed voices in the arts, so many stumble when it counts most: on opening night. Performers still file on stage in concert-blacks. Audiences navigate a briar patch of jargon like “will call” with no explanations in sight. If someone dares take out their phone, they get glowered at. Audiences abused like this do not come back. They tell their friends classical music is for the kyriarchy, for those who can afford knowledge and access. No matter who is on the program, they are right. I propose to discuss my work in *post classical music*, the effort to shatter privilege barriers to concert music, to reach “un-classicaled” listeners and make this art at last theirs. Radical changes to performance methods build new audiences, as I have witnessed, and brought about, firsthand. For two years I led a vocal ensemble that invited audiences to chat, eat, drink, and come and go as they pleased during our performances. We sang Niels Gade part-songs on street corners and William Cornysh drinking songs with glasses raised on high. We galvanized entire train stations with our dressed-down, soaring renditions of Rheinberger. We held open rehearsal to demystify the music-making process. We sent accessible program notes by qr code. We talked with audiences between and even during pieces. And people smiled, and stopped listening, and started listening again. If Beethoven’s kiss is for all the world, it is time we recognized that much of the world dresses in jeans, does not listen silently, and either cannot afford tickets to the symphony or would never feel comfortable going. I have watched people like this love classical music when, instead, we simply go to them where they are. I’d like to share how it worked.