

2017 NCCSEM Meeting – ABSTRACTS

The Purpose and Loss of Monolingualism in the Catalan Popular Music Scene *Victoria Saenz, Stanford University*

In our globalized world, many minority cultures are constantly on the defensive. Therefore, all ambits of society within these communities, including popular music scenes, should be aware of the role they can, and arguably should, play in preserving their culture—and language. This paper will explore the impact and significance of monolingualism in the Catalan popular music scene during two times periods in which Catalunya has resisted a government it perceived as unjust and intolerant: under Franco's dictatorship and in today's Independence movement. The Nova Cançó music movement developed in the 1960s under Franco as a tool to denounce the dictatorship as well as recuperate a culture that was suffering the worst attempt at ethnocide in its history. During the Nova Cançó, one of the most successful artists, Joan Manuel Serrat, began singing in Spanish, causing a divide in the movement. The Catalan music community's reaction quickly showed the value placed on monolingualism: it was essential to the movement, and the language, and no compromise was to be made. He was ostracized from the movement and is still criticized to this day.

Today, it seems that bilingual or Spanish-language Catalan artists are accepted in the popular music scene, even amongst supporters of Independence and admirers of the Nova Cançó. I hope to uncover how this trend developed after the militant monolingualism of the 1960s and 70s, and analyze whether it makes sense with the current state of the Catalan language, which has, under democracy, begun undergoing substitutive bilingualism.

“Sittin’ in The Pocket: An Ethnography of a Jazz Jam Session” *Nelsen Hutchison, UC Santa Cruz*

This paper is an ethnography of a weekly jazz jam session that takes place at The Pocket, a bar in Santa Cruz, California. It examines the dynamic of pedagogy and competition in this particular venue, and attends closely to the tensions between the “authentic” pedagogy of jam sessions and institutionalized jazz education. It also explores how the setting in which the jam session takes place affects the musicians that participate, and provides a description of how the session is operated. From the hyper-competitive “cutting contests” between stride pianists in the 1920s, to the legendary jam session at Minton’s Playhouse (credited as the incubator of bebop), and up to the present moment jam sessions have been important sites for canonization, competition, exposure, networking, and pedagogy in the jazz community. Early academic writing about jam sessions and autobiographies of musicians tend to portray the events as cutthroat and exclusionary, with musicians attempting to outdo one another and shaming or threatening less accomplished players off the bandstand. Musicians often view this experience of humiliation as a rite of passage and an intrinsic facet of their pedagogy and evolution. Such narratives of the ordeal support another narrative in scholarship about jazz – the critique of the shift in jazz pedagogy to academic programs. This paper investigates how these themes resonate

in The Pocket and concludes with a discussion of this jam session's capacity for community building.

Monkeys on the Mount: A California Ramayana

Joseph Cadagin, Stanford University

In the 1970s, Indian yoga guru Baba Hari Dass and his American followers founded the Mount Madonna Center in the Santa Cruz Mountains south of San Jose, California. The Mount Madonna School, established for the yoga community's children, has grown into an exclusive pre-K-12 private academy. Every year since the school's opening in 1979, its 200-some students have dressed up as demons, monkeys, gods, and warriors to perform a rock musical based on the *Ramayana*. This millennium-old Hindu epic has been adapted into diverse genres and media, particularly across South and Southeast Asia. In my ethnography of Mount Madonna's 2016 *Ramayana*, I examine the production's similarities to the North Indian *Ramlila* theatricals (as discussed in the work of Richard Schechner and Linda Hess), in particular the oral components that the two traditions share. At the same time, I explore what makes this California Ramayana distinctive: the Mount Madonna production taps into particularly American themes and musical styles as well as child- and youth-centric aspects. Through interviews with Mount Madonna teacher and *Ramayana* director Sampad Martin Kachuck and his student-actors, I document the rehearsal process and complex hierarchical culture that surrounds the production. The results of my field work reveal that both in its connection to existing *Ramayana* traditions and its own status as a young, developing institution, the Mount Madonna production is fueled by a dialectic between tradition and innovation.

From pre-modern to postmodern: an auto-ethnography of early music practice in Southwestern Europe.

Mélotie Michel, UC Santa Cruz

The practice of early music has known a considerable success among classical musicians in the past few years. This phenomenon has been particularly widespread in the Southern part of Western Europe (Italy, Spain and Portugal), especially after the economic crisis of 2008.

The aim of this paper is to present a relationship between the reasons that motivate the choice of early music as a practice, and the organizational reality of early music practitioners. I would argue that the renouncement of modern ideologies, which underlines early music practice and its aesthetics, gives expression to a specific community organization; and that this organization system can be seen as a model for postmodern societies, both at economic, social and labor organization levels.

Using existing scholarship about early music (Taruskin, 1995) and ethnographic works about its practice (Shelemay, 2001) as a jumping point, I will relate them to other western-music ethnographic studies (Menger, 2001) and to theoretical works on labor organization (Minzberg, 1993) and networking communities.

This research is mostly an auto-ethnographic work. Being myself an early music practitioner from 2009 to present days, and I have been participating actively to the early music scenes of Italy, Spain and Portugal from 2012. Furthermore, direct and participant observations, as well as informal conversations, are completed by online-data surveys, numeric data and topic-related publications.

Chazzanus Today—becoming an artist, embracing a problem
Jeremiah Lockwood, Stanford University

A cohort of young singers in the Chassidic community in New York City are actively engaged in performing *chazzanus* (Eastern European Jewish classic cantorial music), a genre often considered to be in a period of decline. Despite its loss of pride of place as the ubiquitous genre of synagogue music in the post-immigrant era, *chazzanus* has continued to hold an appeal both to a community of cognoscenti and, in some parts of the larger Jewish community, as a signifier of “authenticity.” For young artists from Chassidic backgrounds, *chazzanus* offers a unique opportunity to pursue a career as a musician working in a rarified field of “high” art. The most talented performers emerging from the Chassidic world have leveraged their expertise as performers of old repertoires of Jewish liturgical music to find employment in prestigious synagogues outside of their own religious community, sometimes leading to conflicts. The cantors are desired for their skills, but are employed by communities who often have a minimal understanding of *chazzanus* and limited patience for its subtleties. In this paper I examine the learning experiences and career challenges facing these young cantors. I highlight the innovations involved in transmission in a culture that has experienced serious disruptions due to the breakdown of oral transmission through choirs and apprenticeships. Through interviews and participant observation in worship services, I analyze the sounds of young Chassidic cantors and the fraught relationships with the communities they serve.

The Figure of Santo Santiago: Memory and Sound in Mexican Danza
Luis Chávez, UC Davis

How might popular Catholic festival performances destabilize nationalist bifurcation between Spanish/Aztec identities in Mexico? This paper examines *danza* and sound performance in a Santo Santiago (Saint James) festival in the rural Mexican town of Juchipila, Zacatecas. The *danza de los tastoanes* performs memory of Spanish colonization by staging mock battles between Santo Santiago and the indigenous Caxcanes of Juchipila. Specifically, I focus on the process of local northern Mexican identity formation through *tamborazo* music, *danza* performance, and religious expression. I argue that music and dance in the Santo Santiago festival are not separate embodied expressions, but that masked and costumed performances combined with these performance techniques are experienced as *danza*. The *danza de los tastoanes* is an embodied performance of memory that enacts a communal experience with Catholicism and God. I conclude that the Santo Santiago fiesta is used by *mestizos* in Juchipila to form a local autonomous identity connected with Mexican spirituality through memory and

sound, expressing a unique Mexican Catholic practice in southern Zacatecas. My presentation contributes new perspectives in ethnomusicology and makes connections between local *mestizo* identity, *danza*, and northwestern Mexican musics. It bridges ethnomusicology and Native American Studies by using both standard and locally derived methods to explain difference for seemingly contradictory narratives in Mexican Catholic Saint Festivals, intervening in longstanding Mexican music discourse that does not include critical discussions of Mexican indigeneity.

Separate and Unequal: Exploring the Politics of Failed Musical Revival in Yösöng Kukkuk

Jiyoon Jung, UC Santa Cruz

Yösöng Kukkuk is South Korean traditional music drama, performed by professional women. During its heyday in the 1950s, the all-female performance genre enjoyed tremendous popularity, which ebbed so that Yösöng Kukkuk is now almost forgotten despite constant attempts to return the genre to its past glory. Most of the existing studies regarding Yösöng Kukkuk provide superficial analysis of why Yösöng Kukkuk revival in South Korean society failed. They cite gender-based discrimination and women performers personal limitations. While considering these general social forces that influence revival projects, this paper, based on three months of fieldwork in Seoul, Korea, highlights the unequal process of modernization that musical theater genres underwent in Korea during the 20th century. Where Chankuk, the mixed gender equivalent of Kukkuk has thrived in recent years, enjoying successful revival of interest and resources, Yösöng Kukkuk modernization of traditional musical theater has yet to secure a reliable audience in the 21st century. This paper focuses on the ways that male-dominated imperialist ideas were engaged and challenged in Yösöng Kukkuk throughout the process of modernization and industrialization in the post-Korean War era, and how female performers engaged music specifically to embody aspects of masculine power and identity.

“Vernacular Anarchist Song: The Poetics of Revolution”

David Roby, UC Davis

What are the different ways in which alternative anarchist political philosophies can be theorized? In this paper I will argue that instead of utilizing existing schisms in anarchist philosophy, such as “collective” versus “individual”, that we should examine “vernacular” and “institutional” forms of anarchist political thought. I am theorizing a vernacular form of anarchism that emerges from engagement with punk expressive culture rather than philosophical tomes, political pamphlets, or scholarly discourses. To do this I will be interrogating different forms of anarchist thought in history alongside anarchist expressive culture. The most recognizable form of expressive culture in anarchist history is the utilization of song. Songs can provide the rhetoric needed to spur solidarity or offer a poetics of anarchist worldviews. I begin by outlining the complicated relationship between what I am calling “vernacular” and “institutional” forms of anarchism. Following that discussion, I will examine the approaches to music taken by different modes of anarchism in historical versus contemporary

contexts. To do so, I will offer a textual analysis of turn-of-the-century anarchist popular song as compared against contemporary (1970s-2010s) anarchist punk song. I assert that it is through everyday encounters with crust punk music that “anarchist” punks come to embrace anarchist politics.

“I chose, I consented. I spoke”: Playing Along with Mashrou’ Leila’s “3 Minutes”

Nour El Rayes, UC Berkeley

In March 2015, Lebanese indie pop band Mashrou’ Leila set their fan communities abuzz with the release of their single, “3 minutes.” The track debuted exclusively as a music video via the band’s YouTube channel, and appeared to be more polished, professionally produced, and heavily synthesized than the music which came before it. These changes very quickly gave rise to a series of heated debates, comments, and interpretations surrounding the song’s lyrics, the meaning of the video, and the band’s seemingly new sound, all of which were, in some fans’ eyes and ears, tantamount to selling out. I contend that the song is evidence of the band’s creative indexing of commercialized pop music as mechanism for social and political critique, and is vital to the interpellation of fans and listeners into the discursive spheres which have taken life surrounding the band and their music.

This paper’s reading of “3 minutes” is informed by Michael Warner’s writing on publics and counterpublics, and engages with Kiri Miller’s notion of “playing along”. By utilizing Miller’s methodological attention to the engagements of fans with various participatory media, and drawing from Carol Vernalis’ call for attention to music video as a complete audiovisual work I will argue that Mashrou’ Leila’s video blurs the lines between observer and observed and invites viewers/listeners to take on either or both of those roles, playing along becomes a mode of identification with the music and therefore a mechanism for inculcating a particular set of ethics and social/political stances.

“A Moral Music Education: Cultural Policy and Indonesia’s 2013 Curriculum”
Gillian Irwin, UC Davis

In 2013, the Indonesian government implemented a new national curriculum with the goal of improving students’ moral character, traditional manners, and ethics—an ambition which has been closely tied to the practice of traditional music and dance throughout Indonesian history. Ki Hadjar Dewantara, Indonesia’s first Minister of Education and Culture and heroic figure of Indonesian nationalism, based his Taman Siswa school system in traditional Javanese teaching methods with an emphasis on traditional Indonesian performing arts. In doing so, he linked his name, and traditional arts education, with a morally sound nationalist education. Several decades later, during former president Suharto’s authoritarian New Order (1966-1998), “development” projects reformed and re-taught traditional music and dance—sometimes causing violence to noncompliant practitioners—in search of a national culture which fit the administration’s vision for a new Indonesia.

My work traces the connections between moral behavior, culture, and education throughout Indonesian history and suggests what they might mean for similar initiatives in the 2013 educational curriculum by examining the curriculum itself and the discussion that surrounds it. In this paper, which draws from conversations with government employees, journalism on the 2013 curriculum, and scholarship on Indonesian cultural policy, I argue that the dialogue surrounding the curriculum and the newly appointed Minister of Education and Culture, Muhadjir Effendy, echoes the rhetoric of Ki Hadjar Dewantara in his statements on the Taman Siswa school system and implicitly endorses the “development” projects of the New Order.

**Computer Face//Pure Being: Afrofuturist Technics in Flying Lotus’s
Cosmogramma**
Max Suechting, Stanford University

This paper discusses the electronic musician Flying Lotus’s 2010 Afrofuturist epic *Cosmogramma*, focusing specifically on the relationship between the album’s audio-visual aesthetics and Lotus’s use of sampling as a compositional technique. I approach the sample’s paradoxical “repetition with a difference” as both a historically-situated musical technique and a condensation of Black Atlantic attitudes towards sounding, creativity, and the past, locating *Cosmogramma* alongside the work of luminaries like Sun Ra, Erykah Badu, J Dilla, and Herbie Hancock in what Erik Davis calls the Black Electronic.

Using *Cosmogramma* as a model, this paper thus also seeks to augment conventional notions of Afrofuturism as remixing historical representations of blackness - as Kodwo Eshun writes, “the analysis and assembly of counterfutures” - by examining pervasive elements of Afrofuturist cultural production which are *not* directly representational but rather formal or technical. Drawing on Eshun and Alex Weheliye’s work on musical techniques, as well as Steve Goodman’s work on affect and sonic ontology and Stephen Feld’s notion of “acoustemology,” I contend that the Afrofuturist project addresses itself not only to contemporary struggles over representation but also exerts an epistemological pressure on its audience, a worlding which generates a sense of unexhausted alternatives - in Tobias van Veen’s phrase, “transform[ing] not only the coordinates of blackness, but the default givens of the ‘human’ in general.” I argue for centering questions of sonic ontology and technique in the study of Afrofuturist music, and for re-examining the questions Afrofuturist music raises about the relationship between cultural practices, artistic techniques, and meaning-making.

**“The Technology of Connection: Carla Scaletti, Kyma, and Community
Formation in Computer Music”**
Madison Heying, UC Santa Cruz

While reflecting about what makes a computer music language successful, composer and computer scientist Carla Scaletti (b.1956) stated that it must “serve a community of users.” A

strong user community has been crucial to the success of Kyma—the programming language she created. Along with Scaletti’s desire to engineer a programming environment conducive to the implementation of compositional algorithms and the creation of complex musical systems, forming and fostering a community of users was a primary consideration from an early stage in Kyma’s development. Kyma has been in use for over two decades; there is a small yet thriving international community of users that includes composers, sound designers, and researchers. The Kyma community is emblematic of a shift that occurred in the late 1980s and 90s: the advent and accessibility of personal computers and the internet allowed experimental music-making communities to evolve outside of the studio, lab, and university.

In this paper I analyze the parallel development of Kyma and its user community to understand and document how Scaletti’s deliberate community cultivation has made itself manifest in the nature of the community and its musical output. I will rely on ethnography conducted at two Kyma International Sound Symposiums, interviews with Scaletti and Kyma users, Scaletti’s published materials, and literature on community formation by ethnomusicologists Thomas Turino and Kay Shelemay. Kyma is a critical example of how digital and Communication technology in the 1980s transformed not only how computer music was made, but how music-making communities form and operate.

Brass and the Revival of Street Carnival in Rio de Janeiro: From Nationalist Revivalism to Internationalist Cannibalism

Andrew Snyder, UC Berkeley

Despite their ethics of spontaneity and experimentation, pre-Lenten carnivals are often rites of traditionalism in which certain repertoires, practices, and events gain auras of authenticity. In Rio de Janeiro, the samba school parades embody the world-famous image of the city’s “official” carnival tradition. They represent legacies of mid-twentieth century government propaganda that promoted the “unity” of Brazilian cultural identity. The diversity of Rio’s emergent street carnival revival of the past twenty years, however, has come to rival in importance the city’s “official” carnival.

The street carnival’s alternative brass movement brings together Brazilian musical traditions—such as *samba*, *maracatu*, and *frevo*—with New Orleans brass, Balkan brass, and even video game music renditions. In so doing, this street brass movement offers a musical diversity that has broken open the policing boundaries of traditional carnival genres. This paper examines the repertoire choices of the alternative brass movement to show how the movement has transformed from a dominant preoccupation with cultural nationalism to embracing a belief that carnival should be a spontaneous space “to play anything.” Through examination of two carnival brass bands, Cordão do Boitató and Orquestra Voadora, I explore how the brass movement has engaged with the dominant modernist Brazilian tropes of cultural protectionism and internationalist cannibalism (the consumption and transformation of all available cultural resources). I show how these older cultural debates animate the contemporary aesthetic manifestations of one of the world’s largest festivities, one that shows the “Olympic city” of Rio de Janeiro to be a more “global” city.

The Social Life of an American Gamelan

Jay M. Arms, UC Santa Cruz

What is the role of gamelan instruments in the communities that form around them? Ethnomusicologist Eliot Bates argues for considering musical instruments not just as passive objects used by musicians, but as centers of social interaction. Among mid-twentieth century discourses about "American gamelan," those centering on gamelan building demonstrate a complex set of relationships that created several different designs, and dozens of unique gamelan. These homemade gamelan attracted musicians and composers and engendered distinctive affinity groups across North America. This paper takes Gamelan Son of Lion, built in 1974 by composer-ethnomusicologist Barbara Benary (b.1945), as its focus to understand some of the concerns and motivations among gamelan builders in the United States and how those discourses are reflected among gamelan communities. It explores how discourses about just intonation, Cagean listening, "World Music," and the sounds of the Javanese gamelan Kyai Mendung, interacted to produce New York City's first and longest running performing gamelan.

Based on ethnographic interviews with Benary and other gamelan builders and composers in conjunction with archival materials from Benary's collection, this paper traces discourses about gamelan building, and specifically tuning, that informed the construction of Gamelan Son of Lion. The tuning of these instruments traveled from a Javanese court, then transformed because of their specific physical construction and material conditions in Manhattan, and eventually resonated in New York's "Downtown" scene in unexpected ways. This paper examines this unique trajectory, inquiring about what Javanese court music and American experimental music have to say to one another in collaboration.

Music of Yarsan: A Living Tradition (2015)

Partow Hooshmandrad, California State University, Fresno (Producer)

The educational documentary film *Music of Yarsan: A Living Tradition* is an investigation into the variety of musical practices in the life of the Kurdish Ahl-e Haqq people of the Guran region, in the Kermanshah province of Iran.