

The Society of Graduate Students in Music Presents

The 23rd annual

**Western University Graduate
Symposium on Music**

August 26th – 27th, 2022

**Keynote: Dr. Maisie Sum (Conrad Grebel University
College - Waterloo University)**



23rd Annual

Western University Graduate Symposium on Music

WELCOME to WUGSOM 2022!

Now in its 23rd consecutive year, WUGSOM is continuing its tradition of showcasing excellent graduate student research on music from a variety of discipline. This year's phenomenal program committee worked diligently to ensure an engaging and diverse line up of graduate student papers. We received a generous number of abstracts, spanning over twenty different universities in Canada and internationally! To accommodate our international peers, we have chosen to keep the conference in a virtual format this year.

It is my sincere pleasure to welcome you to WUGSOM 2022!

Rosheeka Parahoo
Chair & WUGSOM Coordinator
SOGSIM

WUGSOM 2022

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With Special Thanks to:

Dr. Maisie Sum for graciously accepting our keynote invitation

The Society of Graduate Students

Sessions Chairs: Huang (Patrick) Huang, Sonja Z. Maurer-Dass,
Mitchell Glover, Elisabeth Roberts & Donna Janowski

The Don Wright Faculty of Music; in particular, the Dean's office and their generous support.

Audrey Yardley-Jones (Graduate Program Assistant) & Rachel Condie (Marketing & Communications
Coordinator) for their time, assistance, and guidance.

Dr. Kevin Mooney (Associate Dean, Graduate Studies)

———— SCHEDULE OF PROCEEDINGS ————

Friday, August 26th, 2022

(All times are in EST)

10:15 – 10:30am: Opening remarks (Dr. Kevin Mooney)

**10:30 – 12:00: Session 1: Expanding the Boundaries of
Musicology**

Chair: Huang (Patrick) Huang

Bernice Hoi Ching Cheung, “Don’t Miss Me”: Resonances and Imaginings of Home and
Everyday Life

Zhengyi Zhu, Beethoven in Beijing: Western Classical Music and Aesthetics in Contemporary
China

Qinyu Yu, Culture Diplomacy of Major Country: Cultural exchanges between Chinese and the
former Soviet Union from 1949 to 1959

———— **12:00 – 1:00: Lunch Break** ————

1:00 – 2:00: Session 2: The Contemporary Performer

Chair : Sonja Z. Maurer-Dass

Bardia Hafizi, Rhythmic Texture of Iranian music: A Performance Analysis of Māhoor Tasnif by M.
Tabrizi-zadeh & Dj. Chemirani

Gillian Radcliffe, Extended Techniques and Valve Transformations in Luciano Berio’s Sequenza X
(1984)

———— **2:00 – 2:15: Break** ————

2:15 – 3:45: Session 3: Western Art Music in Action

Chair: Mitchell Glover

Jason Yin Hei Lee, Musical Sehnsucht: Linear and Rhythmic Strategies in Brahms’s Vocal
Quartets

Erin Johnston, From Lied to Symphony: Evaluating Harmony’s Influence on Mahler’s
Symphonic Manipulation of Song Material

Reed Mullican, Re-Examining the Vertical in Classical Atonality and Serialism

——3:45 – 4:00 – Break——

4:00 – 5:30: Keynote Address

Dr. Maisie Sum (Conrad Grebel University College - Waterloo University)

“Rules, Rites, and Respect: Performing Black Moroccan Music and Culture”

Saturday, August 27th, 2022

(All times are in EST)

10:00 – 11:30: Session 1: Pathways of Early Music

Chair: Huang (Patrick) Huang

Oriana Lodwick, The Interaction Between Text and Secular Music in Late Tudor and Early Stuart England

Micah Mooney, The Little Mermaid's Happily Ever After: Ashman's Influence on the Disney Renaissance and Beyond

Brigette De Poi, Public opera in 17th-Century Venice and the influence of commercialisation on composers

——11:30 – 1:00: Lunch Break & Break Out Rooms——

1:00 – 2:30: Session 2: Technological & Cognitive Music at Work

Chair: Elisabeth Roberts

Ryan Galik, Dementia and Discord: Viral and analytical reactions to The Caretaker's six-hour electronic music project

Kenrick Ho, Drawing Stick-figures with Music: Reflections on Creating Cognition-inspired Compositions

Hoi Tong Keung, Praising Mother Earth in Different Ways: A Comparative Analysis of Video Recordings of Frederic Rzewski's “To the Earth”

——2:30 – 2:45: Break——

2:45 – 4:45: Session 3: Ethnomusicological Endeavors

Chair: Donna Janowski

Allia Guillot, "Fusion" in Gnawa Music: A Study in Moroccan Diasporas

Solomon Shiu, Sounding 'Indonesia': Migration, Identity and Space in Hong Kong's Victoria Park

Awura-Ama Agyapong, Revitalization and sustainability of Adenkum: A case study of the Dokodoko Ensemble

Timiesha Knowles, "Cap'chirren Du Sun, Sand and Sea": The Journey to Caribbean Musical Sublimity (18th century Sublime effects upon the Caribbean Experience and Expression)

———**4:45 – 5:00 – Closing Remarks**———

**Rosheeka Parahoo
Chair & WUSGOM Coordinator
SOGSIM**

Abstracts for Friday, August 26th, 2022, Presentations

Bernice Hoi Ching Cheung, “Don’t Miss Me”: Resonances and Imaginings of Home and Everyday Life

In May 2022, Hong Kong singer-songwriter Yoyo Sham released “Home is...,” an album of Cantonese popular songs on the topic of home. The album serves as a form of biographical record and reflection for Sham, who had a nomadic career and recently resettled in Hong Kong. At the same time, it arrives aptly for Hongkongers, as many citizens have left and continue to leave the city amidst one of the largest emigration waves in Hong Kong’s history. While departure and arrival can be captured in one single moment, be it the take-off or landing of an airplane, they are in fact experienced through time – as one’s experience of their everyday life. The track, “Don’t Miss Me” (translated from the original Chinese title 勿念), reads as a letter written from someone who has left their home, to a loved one elsewhere, documenting many moments from everyday life. In this paper, I apply Rita Felski’s theory of “everyday life” in my analysis of “Don’t Miss Me” to demonstrate how these ideas provide new imaginings of home, nostalgia, and longing, and create resonance with the audience.

Existing theories of everyday life from philosophers such as Heidegger and Lefebvre view it to be problematic and counterproductive. On the contrary, cultural theorist Felski’s model demonstrates the day-to-day to be valuable in her more comprehensive approach. Her understanding is grounded in three areas: time, space, and modality. She suggests that the temporality of the everyday is based in repetition, space in home, and mode in habit. I adopt this multilateral approach to the study of everyday life in my examination of the song’s lyrics and music videos to provide a more complete analysis.

The significance of this project is three-fold. First, I offer a practical, real-life application of everyday life theory in the realm of popular music. Second, by studying the nexus of cultural and music studies, I show the potential of the convergence of both disciplines. Third, I call attention to the critical examination of the hugely underrepresented genre of Cantopop (Cantonese popular music).

Zhengyi Zhu, Beethoven in Beijing: Western Classical Music and Aesthetics in Contemporary China

In China before 1979, nationalists and Maoists alike rejected musical autonomy in favour of emphasising the political function of music. However, the idea of musical autonomy made a dramatic entrance in reform-era China with the 1979 introduction and reinterpretation of Eduard Hanslick’s aesthetics. This essay examines the changing relationship of official Chinese cultural attitudes to Beethoven and Beethoven’s music, as a lens through which to understand changing attitudes to musical autonomy in China, especially in the 2010s. I present a history of Beethoven reception in China from the mid-nineteenth century to the present day and focus on the transformation of Beethoven’s image as a Confucian sage to the co-opting of Beethoven into Maoist revolutionary narratives, then link this to the reception of Hanslick’s aesthetics in reform-era China, illustrating contradictions and interplays in the changing relationship between these extremely different systems of thought in China by analysing Yu Runyang’s re-evaluation of

Beethoven and reinterpretation of Hanslickian aesthetics, state-promoted Beethoven-esque music heroes, Beethoven's image in the Chinese textbook, as well as recent concerts commemorating Beethoven and controversies around censoring Beethoven's Symphony No.9 in China. I argue that Beethoven's reception in China was central to both Mao-era music policy and Hanslickian musical autonomy reinterpreted by reform-era music scholars which maintained the de facto exemption of Western classical music; however, it is still caught up between the politicisation of Western classical music and the façade of apoliticality which legitimises Western classical music in contemporary China. This complex relationship challenges the Eurocentric view on Beethoven's reception as a primarily Western/North Atlantic cultural phenomenon and demands the reimagination of Beethoven and Western classical music as a global phenomenon, with the perspective of a post-Cold War Asia-Pacific still divided by opposing ideological systems as a prominent focal point.

Qinyu Yu, Culture Diplomacy of Major Country: Cultural exchanges between Chinese and the former Soviet Union from 1949 to 1959

In the early years of the People's Republic of China (PRC), under Chairman Mao's "propaganda, friendship, and learning" and Zhou Enlai's "seeking friendship, peace, and knowledge" and other cultural instructions, Chinese cultural delegations visited the former Soviet Union on a number of occasions to give musical performances, as well as many music groups from the former Soviet Union performed in Chinese cities.

These music groups included the Chinese Lvda Song and Dance Troupe in 1956, the Chinese Youth Art Troupe in 1957, the Soviet Youth Art Troupe in 1950, and the Soviet State Folk Dance Troupe in 1954. These performances involved a variety of musical forms, included many classical and excellent musical arts from China and the former Soviet Union. The performances are considered to be especially significant by Chinese government and people, since performances can show the excellent Chinese music culture to the former Soviet union people, and can help the Chinese and the former Soviet people to understand each other better after the performance. In this paper, I want to explore these important musical performances between China and the Soviet Union, it involves the specific schedule of the important performance, the artists involved in the performance, the characteristics of the performance and the impact of the performance and so on. I think this research of the content and form of these cultural exchanges between China and the former Soviet Union between 1949 to 1959 provides an insight into the development of Chinese music during a very important period, and at that time, folk performers were directly involved at a large scale in both high-level cultural diplomacy and the establishment of the current Conservatory training systems. Their impact also reveals early models of PRC cultural diplomacy, and new dimensions to cultural exchanges and political relations between the two countries during the 21st century.

Bardia Hafizi, Rhythmic Texture of Iranian music: A Performance Analysis of Māhoor Tasnif by M. Tabrizi-zadeh & Dj. Chemirani

The constitutional revolution of 1905 is the event that is most associated with the advent of modernity in Iran. Socio-economical changes ushered in an era of change for music and musicians, including but not limited to independence of performers from royal patronage, elevation of the

status of artists as the elite class, rise of music intellectualism and re-creation of the role of composer. The economical and military influence of Russia (later the Soviet Union) and Europe also had an immense effect on the practice of music in Iran.

However, no transformation was as immense as the one tombak (Iranian goblet drum) went through. Based on the earliest gramophone recordings, the style and content of tombak performance was very limited. Moreover, we know from historical sources that a tombak player was never considered a real musician. Both of these musical and social characteristics changed immensely in the modern era, a change that is attributed to Hossein Tehrani (1912-74). These events all culminated in the reshaping of a tradition, that of rhythmic performance. Although previous studies have been conducted on both the tradition of rhythm and tombak in Iran, none have attempted an analysis of the rhythmic texture of ensemble performance in Iranian music.

In this paper I've attempted a performance analysis of an Iranian *tasnif* (song). I investigate the rhythmic texture of the performance by 1) codifying the rhythmic motifs and analyzing the vertical relationships between three different voices (text, melodic instrument and drum), and 2) analyzing the micro-timings of the performance and the way the voices interact with each other. I find that 1) the texture of this music is highly hetero-rhythmic, and 2) the underlying rhythm is comprised of unequal pulses and is, in fact, internally dia-metric.

Gillian Radcliffe, *Extended Techniques and Valve Transformations in Luciano Berio's Sequenza X* (1984)

Luciano Berio's collection of *Sequenzas* have set the standard of technical playing for many instruments and continue to challenge the idea of virtuosity for performers. Throughout the collection, Berio uses each piece to "reflect properties of its subject which we could not have hitherto known" (Impett 2007), with the subject being the instrument of the *Sequenza*. This can be seen in *Sequenza X* (1984) for trumpet and piano resonance, where Berio uses the music as a way of shaping the trumpet, rather than allowing the trumpet to shape the music. By analyzing the extended techniques required by the piece through a transformational model of trumpet valves (De Souza 2017), and further drawing on theories about scientific instruments and epistemic things (Rheinberger 2008, Rehding 2016), *Sequenza X* can be recontextualized as a tool for understanding the trumpet on a deeper level.

My paper examines Berio's use of the valve tremolo throughout *Sequenza X*, by combining theoretical and performance analysis. Valve tremolos are an uncommon extended technique that require the performer to trill between alternate valve combinations for the same pitch. The alternate valve combinations access different partials of the overtone series and produce a wavering effect as the pitch shifts in and out of tune. Throughout the piece Berio specifies the alternate valve combinations to use for only three of approximately twenty tremolos, and a transformational approach to the remaining trills reveals the performative aspects of different valve transformations (De Souza 2017). The assigned combinations function as one of the most parsimonious valve transformations, requiring a change in only the third valve, which acts as a baseline for comparison as the remaining trills are analyzed. This analysis explains how the trumpeter manages the technical and timbral performance of these trills, while also explaining the role of the trumpet and the *Sequenza* as a tool, or instrument, of music theory. Overall, *Sequenza X* results in a greater

understanding of both trumpet and trumpeter as Berio manages to “recompose and reshape” the way the trumpet is understood by listeners and performers alike.

Jason Yin Hei Lee, Musical Sehnsucht: Linear and Rhythmic Strategies in Brahms’s Vocal Quartets

The Romantic notion of Sehnsucht (“longing” or “yearning”) is preponderant in the German Lied repertoire of the nineteenth century, including Brahms’s songs. Nonetheless, popularity of Brahms’s vocal quartets has been dwarfed considerably by his solo songs and duets in terms of both performance and scholarship. Supplementing the relatively scarce body of research on the genre, this paper will analyze two vocal quartets (Op. 112, Nos. 1 and 2) by Brahms to reveal new observations about how the sentiment of Sehnsucht—as explicated in musicological and linguistic studies—can be manifested by linear and rhythmic strategies and the design of song endings.

This paper will demonstrate how the sentiment of yearning is reflected in the voice-leading structure of Op. 112 No. 1 “Sehnsucht” primarily through evaded cadences (ECs). Interestingly, ECs employed in this number do not belong to the category meticulously investigated by Schenkerian analysts—the paradigm involving $\hat{5}$ – $\hat{6}$ motion in the bass or the “one more time” technique. Instead, through these ECs, Brahms retained the local $\hat{5}$ in the bass and repeatedly delayed the arrival of local tonics by prolonging the II and V harmonic areas. The persistent evasion of cadential goals—both melodic and harmonic—portrays the essence of Sehnsucht: the paradoxical desire to long for its goal, yet “preventing its own realization” (Wurth 2012, 47).

Second, my analysis of Op. 112 No. 2 “Nächtens” will focus on its rhythmic aspect. I shall demonstrate how Brahms’s play with metrical dissonance is unfolded by the quartet texture and in ways that are not observed in previous studies. The gradual shifting of grouping under the inherently asymmetric quintuple meter constitutes grouping dissonance that embodies the indeterminacy of romantic longing. Moreover, temporal surprises created by anticipations and delays compound the psychological effect of metrical instability and foregrounds the antithesis between one’s yearning for its object and the fated frustration of hope.

This paper will conclude by offering the interpretation—as an alternative to Terrigno’s (2021) “tragic-to-transcendent” reading—that major endings in minor songs represent the ultimate (yet preordained) unrealized of the object of yearning.

Erin Johnston, From Lied to Symphony: Evaluating Harmony’s Influence on Mahler’s Symphonic Manipulation of Song Material

Mahler’s self-quotation practices have long been recognized as central to his work. Some musicologists have delved into the implications of this practice on his music, focusing primarily on musical narrative and meaning implied by intertextual relationships (Johnson 2009, Revers 2007, Roman 2007, Knapp 2003, Borio 2000). This approach is typical of musicological work on quotation in Romantic repertoire, however, they fail to fully explore all the musical implications of Mahler’s self-quotation practice. My paper seeks to provide fresh analytical insight into this compositional feature by considering Mahler’s borrowing and rearrangement of material from his Lied, “Ging heut’ Morgen übers Feld,” for the opening movement of his First Symphony. I argue that, in addition to narrative and affect, harmony is a central motivating principle in this reordering.

Mahler's reordering of Lied material first becomes evident in his sonata-movement's exposition: the composer rearranges the song's strophes, beginning with music from the affectively calmer third strophe, followed by material from the chromatic and rhythmically insistent first strophe in the second half. Given Mahler's decision to quote his earlier vocal work in this symphony, why reorder this quoted material? Some have attempted to justify this rearrangement as a means to reconstruct the affective arch of the first and second strophes' latter halves, now across the entirety of the exposition (Knapp 2003). One could also argue that narrative meaning motivates Mahler's reorganization: as the symphony's original program suggests nature's post-winter awakening, the exposition should emulate this slow awakening.

Without denying the significance of these elements, I argue that harmony—more specifically, the harmonic narrative of sonata form—is a more fundamental motivating principle. My paper draws on typical harmonic and formal patterns of sonata-form movements, considering how the tonal and cadential processes of the song's strophes fit (or do not fit) into this form's expectations. Discussing several excerpts, this paper demonstrates how one could conceive Mahler's adjustments to the song material as stemming primarily from the harmonic and formal principles of sonata form. My work also offers a glimpse into his compositional process, leading toward new ways of approaching Mahler's complex late nineteenth-century musical style.

Reed Mullican, Re-Examining the Vertical in Classical Atonality and Serialism

Typically, analyses of the music of the Second Viennese School prioritize the horizontal/linear logic of the music and de-emphasize the vertical/harmonic logic. Chords are usually explained as simultaneous expressions of a motive or row instead of fundamental harmonic units. However, such an approach does not answer an essential question: why is this line sounding with this one? What I propose in this presentation is to break away from the traditionally linear analysis of atonal music, setting aside motives and rows and instead forming a new methodology to examine harmonic logic on its own terms.

This logic can be understood through what I call chromatic "blocks," each of which connect all the various voices and chords within it, regardless of their horizontal origins. Blocks typically consist of four or more notes, most of which are "complemented" by a note a half-step away (whether literally or in a different register). The purpose of these blocks is to define zones of half-step complementarity, clarifying the chromatic voice-leading by analyzing it harmonically; in this way, it is analogous to figured bass theory in the Baroque, which is also a method of simplifying units of voice-leading by wrapping them up in a harmonic package. To support this, I will first trace the origins of half-step complementarity back to Wagnerian voice-leading; then, I will give examples of chromatic block analysis of both serial and "freely atonal" works and propose that this method is potentially more clear and pedagogically helpful for students of theory than existing models.

Abstracts for Saturday, August 27th, 2022, Presentations

Oriana Lodwick, The Interaction Between Text and Secular Music in Late Tudor and Early Stuart England

During a time of religious reformations, Renaissance England underwent tremendous change in court politics. The rapid changes to authority, royal image, and politics were accompanied by the development of poetry and music. During the era of Elizabeth, the first, secular music began gaining popularity due in part to the Italian madrigal making an appearance, set to English text. Soon followed the English Madrigal School, and secular art song in madrigal and solo forms took a prominent stage in music.

Through textual analysis, harmonic analysis, listening examples, and support from a historical background, this paper will evaluate the relationship between text and music during the late Tudor and early Stuart reigns. Key historical factors such as the changing monarchy and religion will be utilized to connect the changes that occurred in secular music of the era. The careers of composers before and after Elizabeth I's death will be examined to highlight the significance of secular music. There will be a survey on the English language as it developed into the Renaissance era to associate language with the poetry that was written during the reigns of the Tudor and Stuart families. The role of the English Madrigal School and its composers will be determined while considering their influence on the formation of secular music. Three prominent composers and their works will be looked at in detail; John Dowland's *Come Again, Sweet Love Doth Now Invite*, John Wilbye's *Weep, Weep Mine Eyes*, and finally Thomas Campion's *Fair, if You Expect Admiring*. Through a textual and harmonic analysis of each piece, this paper will showcase the development of text and music during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

Though religion was uncertain during the reigns of the Tudor and Stuart families, poetry and music became an outlet for composers to express themselves. The increase of secular music was supported by the rapid political changes of the era, which has left behind art song that is emotionally relatable, a pleasure to listen to, and a new look into the political history of the Tudor and Stuart reigns.

Micah Mooney, The Little Mermaid's Happily Ever After: Ashman's Influence on the Disney Renaissance and Beyond

In this paper, I discuss lyricist Howard Ashman and composer Alan Menken's influence on Disney animated musicals. By looking at the structural role of "Part of your World" from *The Little Mermaid*, I will show how the writers return to traditional Disney tropes while beginning new innovations which would be mimicked in the following decade. I argue that the resurgence of Disney princess movies in the past fifteen years continue some of these patterns while innovating further within the expected framework.

Ashman advocated for the "I Want" song, a piece sung early in a musical where the lead expresses their desire. My paper analyzes the musical and structural role of this film's "I Want" song, "Part of Your World." Interestingly, this song becomes associated with two distinct desires through its reprises. By using the song's motifs in the underscore, Menken strengthens these associations while building anticipation for a final return of the song. In the finale, the music reprises "Part of Your World" again, indicating the two fulfilled desires and providing closure to the audience.

This finale recalled features of earlier Disney princess movie finales: namely the inclusion of a non-diegetic choir singing a reprise of an earlier song. A portion of my paper is dedicated to tracing these trends in finales of Disney Princess movies. I found that as Disney heroines have become more independent through the decades, the finale is less likely to reprise a romantic song. Instead, it will place a greater emphasis on returning to the heroine's desire or community. *The Little*

Mermaid begins the shift to these newer finales. The consistent use, however, of the non-diegetic choir in the finale unites these films. My analysis includes a discussion on the diegetic/non-diegetic nature of the finale, as well as the music throughout the film, building on Rick Altman's work regarding diegetic drift in film musicals.

Brigette De Poi, Public opera in 17th-Century Venice and the influence of commercialisation on composers

The Venetian premiere of *Andromeda* by Benedetto Ferrari in 1637 was a milestone for opera, ushering in a new era of public and therefore commercialised productions. This talk aims to establish a possible link between growth in employment and economic opportunities for composers resulting from this new opera market.

In this presentation, I will build upon existing scholarship to examine how the shift in opera from a private entertainment to public theatres stimulated additional employment opportunities and generated a new financial avenue for composers. I will closely examine the financial and employment prospects of two composers who span the timeline of early commercialisation: Claudio Monteverdi and Francesco Cavalli. I will refer to a detailed analysis of primary sources, such as the surviving letters of Monteverdi and documents relating to the running of Venetian opera companies. Of particular importance are the extensive records of Macro Faustini relating to his time as an impresario in several Venetian theatres. These documents include multiple accounts of Cavalli's employment and financial data, including commissions and wages. I established a clear economic advantage for composers participating in public opera productions by examining the available data.

My analysis seeks to identify a correlation between the commercialisation of opera and the improvement in the financial mobility of composers. Reasoning that the commercial nature of opera in seventeenth-century Venice fostered economic and artistic freedoms, which allowed a previously unknown level of financial stability for freelance composers.

Ryan Galik, *Dementia and Discord: Viral and analytical reactions to The Caretaker's six-hour electronic music project*

Between 2016 and 2019, reclusive English electronic music artist Leyland Kirby, under his alias The Caretaker, released six albums that formed a cohesive whole: *Everywhere at the End of Time*. A massive musical undertaking which deals extensively with the sonification of Alzheimer's induced dementia manifested through sampling 78 rpm ballroom records, the digital modifications to which are meant to parallel the mind's progression through stages of the disease. Beyond the musical content, the final album's release was followed by some unexpected attention. The six-and-a-half-hour work went viral on the short-form media platform, TikTok, inviting users to listen to the entire set in one listen, calling it the "dementia challenge." Another oddity was the residual community that formed in the wake of the artist's and album's attention, with multiple online groups comprising thousands of members each formed shortly thereafter with the goal of analyzing the music and unraveling its secrets. Beyond an analysis of musical content and the narrative implications of the modifications to the original samples, the presentation also provides substantial context to public reactions to the album: a history of the album's virality, interviews with founding members of online analysis forums, and the state of the album three years after its release. The methods of analysis conducted by amateur music theorists is also given context, with examples and databases used to catalogue analytical findings referenced throughout. Primarily, my research

explores these reactions as a main focus: asking how an experimental electronic album went viral on social media, why this work specifically garnered such a large and dedicated group of enthusiasts to analyze its contents, and what they have found in the process.

Kenrick Ho, Drawing Stick-figures with Music: Reflections on Creating Cognition-inspired Compositions

It is second nature for composers to care about how their music sounds. Even algorithmic composers such as Pierre Boulez and John Cage have shown to have adjusted their processes in favour of achieving the sound they preferred. In fact, composers such as James Tenney and Paul Hindemith have written about their interest in music perception and demonstrated how it has informed their compositions. However, the relationship between cognition and composition is not as simple as a straightforward ‘theorize and apply’ process. This paper reflects on such motive and discuss the issues in applying cognition to composition in terms of aesthetics, ontology, and creativity. The research is practice-led where a portfolio of cognition-inspired compositions has been created to demonstrate the working relationship between cognition theories and the compositional process. Reflecting on the experience, the paper found that research in cognition — despite fruitful in its own right — is insufficient to function as instructions to compose. Epistemologically, cognition models are mostly speculative, so it is inappropriate to use them as literal recipes and expect a certain musical outcome. Furthermore, by consulting cognition, there seems to be an assumption that the music aims to be pleasurable for the human mind. Composition is not always about writing music that pleases the mind, and as shown in the musical examples, music that plays by the rules of perception are basic and can easily get uninteresting; akin to drawing a stick-figure on paper. The pieces written in this project is limited by cognition-derived rulesets that monitors the outcome to be simple, homophonic, consonant, and cognisable. This is not necessarily a problem as long as the composer understands the implications of incorporating cognition in the practice and if this description matches the ambition of the composer. At the end of the day, composers use the method and aesthetic they prefer because it helps them achieve the sound they want to hear. The pieces are examples of how the author would work with cognitive theories in the context of his musical preference, and there is considerable potential in different ways of working with other cognitive theories for composers.

Hoi Tong Keung, Praising Mother Earth in Different Ways: A Comparative Analysis of Video Recordings of Frederic Rzewski’s “To the Earth”

“To the Earth” for speaking percussionist (1985) by Frederic Rzewski is scored for four flower pots with a Homeric hymn recited by the performer. Rzewski provides the original text in Greek and translations in English and German in the score. While most musicians perform the piece in English, some perform it in their vernacular languages. Music theorist Joel Lester (2009) emphasizes musicians should not strive for the “ideal” performance, but should embrace the affordances of each performance. This perspective is particularly applicable to a piece like “To the Earth,” in which the musician has much artistic and linguistic freedom. Complementing existing literature on “To the Earth,” which discusses individual performers’ experiences (Schick 2006; Whiting 2012) and potential struggles in performing the piece (Broscious 2018; Soflin 2017), I illuminate the use of performance analysis in analyzing “To the Earth.” While music performance analysis scholars advocate the use of recordings in music analysis (Bowen 1999; Cook 2009), most existing literature relies on audio recordings, neglecting important performative and interpretive

techniques such as physical gestures. By adopting a method of comparative video recording analysis, I attend to both audio and visual facets of the performance, achieving a more comprehensive analytical result.

In this paper, I analyze three video recordings of “To the Earth” as performed in English, Spanish, and Mandarin to show how expressive gestures and language qualities contribute to performative decisions. First, music theorist Leech-Wilkinson (2009) defines expressive gesture “as an irregularity in one or more of the principal acoustic dimensions...introduced in order to give emphasis to a note or chord.” Expanding Leech-Wilkinson’s parameters, my analysis examines the use of voice, flower-pot timbre, physical gestures, and timing in the three video recordings of “To the Earth” to capture the expressive gestures in both sonic and visual domains. I suggest that these expressive gestures serve the spoken text, regardless of the performance language. Second, inherent linguistic qualities, such as rhythm and consonantal load, differ among the three performance languages. Hence, I examine these qualities to elucidate how they affect the overall character of the performances.

Allia Guillot, "Fusion" in Gnawa Music: A Study in Moroccan Diasporas

The study of fusion reveals many social and ethnographic facts about the evolution of Gnawa music. At the beginning the Gnawa operated both in a secret, ritual context and in public to make money and hide the afore mentioned ritual activities (work with spirits). With globalization and the « world music » market their esoteric musician status evolved to become performing secular musicians (although they still work in « secret » at lilas, their public status has changed starting from 1960, due to the occidentals interest in their music). It is not only the status that changed but also the music itself, which evolved from secret to popular and this independently of fusion. The process of fusion brought an additional dimension by opening the Gnawa culture and music to the whole world, amongst others thanks to Randy Weston, Mustapha Bakbou or Karim Ziad. In my work I have chosen to study fusion as a music in its own right according to particular musical criteria and to contrast the discourse of fusion musicians with the music they play. Here fusion will be used in its musical marketing sense as a style which "mixes" Gnawa music and any other genre. How is fusion actually played, what are its modalities? Are there any dominant elements, privileged ways of playing, or recurring musical discourses? By comparing several versions of the same piece (Lalla Aicha), I noticed many recurring inherited elements of Randy Weston's playing (muffled string playing on the piano, which is an idiomatic element of his musical language) and Mustapha Bakbou's musical language .

It could be that the fusion described as a field of freedom and renewal by musicians is in fact framed by norms and habits. Although fusion is relatively recent, it seems possible to draw up a history of it. In order to delimit my study, I chose certain pieces considered as "hits" of fusion by musicians. It is through these different questions that I will approach fusion by apprehending it as a genre parallel to traditional gnawa music and not as an opposition.

Solomon Shiu, Sounding 'Indonesia': Migration, Identity and Space in Hong Kong's Victoria Park

Amounting to nearly 5% of the population and 9% of the overall workforce, migrant domestic workers (or, MDWs) are an integral part of Hong Kong’s economy. Despite this, they experience discrimination and social inequality — and with the fight for MDW rights continuing to be overshadowed by Hong Kong’s other sociopolitical woes, these communities are rendered invisible and voiceless. Hailing from the Philippines and Indonesia, MDWs are almost exclusively women,

and are transient workers who live in with their host families. MDWs only receive Sundays off, when many choose to gather in the city's public spaces to socialise, relax, and make music.

In this paper, I focus on the music and sounds of Indonesian MDWs, who congregate in Hong Kong's Victoria Park every Sunday. Gathering in the park's northern, western and southern edges, each 'section' is represented by different genres of Indonesian music making; as well as vastly dissimilar ways of placemaking, performing sonic identity, and sonically expressing belonging. These practices are also mediated by ethnolinguistic, cultural, and regionalistic differences within the city's Indonesian diaspora, as well as the authoritativeness of patrolling Hong Kong law enforcement.

The 'voices' of the Indonesian MDW community, expressed in displacement within the Hong Kong framework, calls to question what 'home' and 'authenticity' means to both the local and the diasporic. Drawing from fieldwork conducted between February and December 2021, I seek to illustrate how the Indonesian MDW diaspora, despite facing myriad difficulties and obstacles from the Hong Kong government and local citizenry alike, adapts to the Hong Kong soundscape, and utilises it to sound identities, and exert sounds of protest and nationalism. I argue that Victoria Park hosts nostalgic re-imaginings of the Indonesian nation state, and several uniquely 'Hong Kong' versions of performing music and sounds from across the Indonesian archipelago. With this, I call to question the fine lines between private vs public, inclusion vs exclusion exhibited in the 'sonic haven' that is Victoria Park.

Awura-Ama Agyapong, Revitalization and sustainability of Adenkum: A case study of the Dokodoko Ensemble

This paper examines the revival and sustenance issues around indigenous Akan female musical traditions. It focuses on the adenkum musical type to understand how its performance practice is being revitalized. In indigenous Ghanaian communities, women have always played an essential role in the music-making of various indigenous expressive traditions. One such tradition is the adenkum, which, besides its function as entertainment, also serves as a communicative and educational tool. The adenkum is a unique gourd-shaped instrument believed to have emerged among Akan women. Its performance context was framed as a space where women expressed themselves in ways that were forbidden in the Ghanaian society. The adenkum repertoire, a wealth of socio-cultural and historical data, characterizes and shaped how women discussed pertinent issues that affected them. Unfortunately, its performance practice has, over the years, declined, with a few groups occasionally performing it. One such group is the Dokodoko Ensemble, formed and led by Nana Osei-Twum Barima. This group explores ways of re-engaging the performance tradition of the adenkum. The ensemble has re-contextualized how the main instrument is used in performances with Afro-fusion features. The paper argues that although the instrument is engaged within a different context, the basis of drawing attention to the music tradition is inevitable within its new performance framework. Using the Dokodoko Ensemble as a case study, the paper conceptualizes how the ensemble's usage of adenkum brings vitality to a music tradition that otherwise was in decline.

Timiesha Knowles, "Cap' chirren Du Sun, Sand and Sea": The Journey to Caribbean Musical Sublimity (18th century Sublime effects upon the Caribbean Experience and Expression)

For Caribbean nationals, the conquest for autonomy extends to cultural genres, particularly music. Despite the commonwealth's modernization, these nationalistic efforts toward autonomy are primarily founded on orally transmitted "word of mouth" traditions. As a result, many of the notated songs by Caribbean musicians assimilate Western musical notions, vocabulary, and history due to accessibility. This presentation "Cap'chirren Du Sun, Sand and Sea": The Journey to Caribbean Musical Sublimity, discusses 18th-century Sublime concepts and their impact on the Caribbeans musical experiences and expressions. My talk places us within the process of Caribbean autonomy. By centering this process, I engage with the commonwealth's histories of slavery, rebellion, and independence, which allows the Caribbean to build, share, and expand upon an infinite number of dialects, writing zones, and oral transmissions of past, present, and future Caribbean nationals simultaneously. As a result, it creates a new aesthetic, "the Caribbean sublime." Using melodic, thematic, and Kantian 18th-century sublimity concepts, I will define "the Caribbean sublime" and how it allows Caribbean composers to orally transmit Sublimity from lived experiences and expressions through their music. As well as answer the question "To what extent is oral sublime a decolonial struggle?" Through a detailed study of Trinidadian composer Dominique Le Gendre's "Pain ou Ca mange"

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