

The Society of Graduate Students in Music Presents

The 21st annual

Western University
Graduate Symposium on
Music

Friday, August 14th, 2020

Keynote: Dr. Charles Garrett (University of Michigan)



21st Annual

Western University Graduate Symposium on Music

WELCOME to WUGSOM 2020!

Now in its 21st consecutive year, WUGSOM is continuing the tradition of showcasing excellent graduate student research on music from a variety of disciplines. This year, for the first time in the history of the event, WUGSOM will take place entirely online. Though we will miss the in-person contact that this conference usually provides at the end of the summer term, this one-day virtual symposium will give us a chance to engage with and learn from one another. This year's outstanding program committee worked hard to put together an engaging and diverse line up of graduate student papers. You will notice that the program this year is made up entirely of papers by students here at Western, a testament to the excellence and dedication of our graduate student community. Though our conference will look very different than usual this year, many things will remain the same as we use WUGSOM as an opportunity to gather, share, learn, and be together. It is my pleasure to welcome you to WUGSOM 2020 and I look forward to continuing our two-decade long tradition together.

Mark McCorkle

WUGSOM 2020 Coordinator

WUGSOM 2020

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With Special Thanks to:

Dr. Charles Garrett for graciously accepting our keynote invitation

The Society of Graduate Students

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Dr. Catherine Nolan (Associate Dean, Graduate Studies)

Diana Wu for logistical support and valuable feedback

———— SCHEDULE OF PROCEEDINGS ————

Friday, August 14, 2020

(All times are in EST)

10:00 – 10:15am: Opening remarks (Dr. Catherine Nolan)

10:15 – 12:15: Session 1: Topics in Musicology and Music Theory

Chair: April Morris

Forest Muran, Appreciating Satie's Mysticism: Erik Satie and the Convergence of Mysticism and Humour

Martin Ross, Gestural Forces in Steve Reich's Augmentation-as-Process Works

Mitchell Glover, The Ingenious Conductor and the Musical-work Concept

Stephen Bright, Navigating The Knowledge: Issues With Researching Instrumental Methods For The Contrabass.

———— **12:15 – 1:30: Lunch Break** ————

1:30 – 2:30: Session 2: The Contemporary Musician

Chair: Jashen Edwards

Brianna DeSantis, Training the Musician as an Athlete

Leanne Vida, The Search for Canadian Art Song: Developing a Framework for a Database of Art Song by Canadian Composers

———— **2:30 – 2:45: Break** ————

2:45 – 3:45: Session 3: Engaging In/Through Popular Music

Chair: Lydia Wilton

M Gillian Carrabre, Throwing Light: Understanding Apprenticeship and Artistry in Gloving Practices

Rhiannon Simpson, Barnsey, Farnsey, Democracy: Aussie Rock as Civic Literacy

——3:45 – 4:00 – Break——

4:00 – 5:30: Keynote Address

Dr. Charles Garrett (University of Michigan)

“Our AI Lets Humans Take Control”: Popular Music and Collaborative Artificial Intelligence

Abstract: Recent technological advances have ushered artificial intelligence into everyday musical life, from Spotify predicting what songs you like to Google generating customized music with the click of a mouse. As AI has moved from the research lab into the mass marketplace, discourse has shifted from the philosophical to the pragmatic. Questions probing the nature of consciousness and creativity have taken a backseat to corporate concerns about efficiency, price points, and scale. Whether AI will surpass the ability of human ingenuity has become less pressing than whether AI-generated music can be copyright protected. Most notably, to assuage anxieties sounded across the music world, AI industry leaders have come to embrace collaboration as a model for how artificial intelligence promises to enhance, rather than replace, human creativity.

This presentation explores the mechanics and theorizes the challenges of computer-human interactivity through close examination of singer/songwriter Taryn Southern’s *I AM AI* (2018), billed as the first AI pop album. Co-produced with cutting-edge software developed by AIVA, Amper, Google, and IBM, the album reveals how AI helps to extend, automate, and supplement Southern’s musical abilities while enabling her to maintain claims of artistic agency. Interviews with AI industry professionals and popular musicians who use AI reveal similarly productive tensions involving control, credit, and creative autonomy. Encounters with these new forms of intelligence invite us to characterize, distinguish, and understand musical relationships between human and virtual beings.

Biography: Charles Hiroshi Garrett is Professor of Musicology at the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance. His book *Struggling to Define a Nation: American Music and the Twentieth Century* (2008) received the Irving Lowens Memorial Book Award from the Society for American Music. He coedited the collection *Jazz/Not Jazz: The Music and Its Boundaries* (2012) with David Ake and Daniel Goldmark, and served as editor-in-chief for *The Grove Dictionary of American Music*, second edition. A former President of the SAM he is currently a member of the AMS Board of Directors. With Carol J. Oja, he is coediting *Sounding Together: Collaborative Perspectives on U.S. Music in the 21st Century*, a collection highlighting collaborative research that is scheduled to appear in 2021.

Abstracts

Session 1

10:15 – 12:15

Topics in Musicology and Music Theory

Chair: April Morris

Forest Muran

Appreciating Satie's Mysticism: Erik Satie and the Convergence of Mysticism and Humour

Erik Satie is seen by many as a kind of enigma in the Western musical tradition, a composer who has been described as both a 'mystic' and a 'mere humourist.' Many musical thinkers and performers even seem to harbour a fear that Satie's apparently 'serious' compositions might be trying to deceive them, making them the punchline of a musical joke. In this paper, however, I explore the idea that what makes Satie so unique as a composer is his stylistic fusion of mysticism and humour, creating a kind of music that employs parody as a tool for expanding expressive potential. In order to emphasize the nature of Satie's project, I also delve into the history of the term 'mysticism,' as well as draw attention to the ubiquity of humour in spiritual traditions, particularly in the unification of mysticism and humour found in Zen Buddhism. I also discuss Satie's own involvement in the tradition of Christian Mysticism and Rosicrucianism. The paper aims to reveal Satie not as an odd musical trickster, but as a dichotomy-breaking musical mind who managed to see past the arbitrary divisions between 'high' and 'low' art in Western classical music, setting an example for the postmodernists who were to follow him.

Martin Ross

Gestural Forces in Steve Reich's Augmentation-as-Process Works

While most of Steve Reich's process works (1965–1971/73) use phase to execute a process, *Pendulum Music* (1968) and *Four Organs* (1970) consist of short attacks gradually becoming longer. The former literally realizes the physical phenomena of gravity and inertia. From opposite sides of a room, microphones swing from a fulcrum above centrally positioned speakers, consequently creating amplified tones. The latter musically represents the effects of the same physical forces. While *Pendulum Music* augments the length of individual tones over time, *Four Organs* augments a single chord under a constant rhythmic pulse. Rather than a physical swinging motion elongating the tones, Reich composes longer time signatures as the work progresses. Due to their apparent straightforward design, these augmentation-as-process works tend to receive less analytical attention from scholars than the phase works for which Reich is far better known.

Using Steve Larson's qualitative model of musical forces, which metaphorically associates the tendencies of musical motion with forces in the physical world (magnetism, gravity, and inertia), I argue that *Pendulum Music* and *Four Organs* are more closely related than they initially may seem (Larson 2012). In *Pendulum Music*, gravity pulls the microphones from their furthest points towards the middle and inertia continues their movement to and from their gravitational center. In *Four Organs*, Reich composes out the same process for live performers.

Larson's model of musical forces reveals an extramusical significance to *Four Organs* that is not readily apparent from the score alone—namely, gesture. Using Robert Hatten's theory of musical gesture, defined as meaningful energetic shaping over time, I discuss how musical forces in *Four Organs* signify the process as emergent gestures (Hatten 2004). In my scoreless gestural analysis, I show how the process in *Four Organs* is analogous to a pendulum going back and forth. The onset of the full chord (positioned in the “middle” of the pendulum) and its arriving/departing motions are motivated by the direction of the pendulum via gravity and its ongoing continuation via inertia. These resulting gestures show how Reich's augmentation-as-process works create strong directionality, tension, and anticipation that an attentive listener can identify.

Mitchell Glover

The Ingenious Conductor and the Musical-Work Concept

In *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works*, Lydia Goehr argues that a new conception of the musical work—the musical-work concept—emerged around the year 1800 and came to define the norms, expectations, and behaviours that now characterizes classical music practice. My paper expands on Goehr's theory, focusing on the function and relation of the conductor to the musical-work concept from 1800 to the present. An important component of her theory is the notion that the emergence of the musical-work concept relied on the reification of the composer to the designation of artistic genius. In this paper, I argue that as the musical-work concept raised the stature of the composer to the ingenious creator of musical works, it also elevated the role of the conductor to that of the ingenious interpreter. As the baton conductor became a prominent figure in the concert hall in the nineteenth century, they were no longer merely a time-beater *for* the orchestra but a virtuoso performer whose instrument *was* the orchestra.

I conclude with a case study using Peter Kivy's theory of genius to explain the portrayal of the ingenious conductor Rodrigo Desousa in the television series *Mozart in the Jungle*. Kivy differentiates between two forms of genius: the passive and the active. For Kivy, the active genius “makes creation happen,” and he or she is capable of representing nature in the truest possible form in his or her art. The passive genius, alternately, attributes their giftedness to a metaphysical being like a supernatural figure or a muse. The most notable of the many tropes the writers use to convey Desousa's genius in *Mozart in the Jungle* is by showing the occasional visits he receives from his muse: an apparition of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. The apparition of Mozart encourages him and guides him toward the ‘truth’ of the works he conducts, and often berates him for not being diligent enough in his work ethic as an interpreter. This portrayal functions to show that Desousa's giftedness is dependent upon his relationship with the ingenious composer whose music he performs in his role as a conductor.

Stephen Bright

Navigating the Knowledge: Issues with Researching Instrumental Methods for Contrabass

The four-string contrabass found in contemporary orchestras is a new-comer compared to the other members of the string family from the historical perspective of its tuning, number of strings and even its name. During the first half of the nineteenth century, four different national tunings could be counted and the number of strings mounted on the instrument also varied depending on the country. These factors coalesced in the mid-nineteenth and the four-string contrabass tuned EADG emerged across Europe as the standard orchestral tuning. For a brief time in the nineteenth-century, French contrabassists mounted the instrument with only three strings and tuned it in fifths. In the process of researching the history of this specific tuning for my dissertation, it became clear that this would be a challenging undertaking. Academics exploring the contrabass's history prior to the nineteenth century ultimately confront a myriad of issues related to terminology, lineage and tunings so much so that the instrument's history is still unclear and remains subject to much debate.

The purpose of this paper is to present some of the research-related issues that I encountered throughout the writing process, and how these issues were approached. On occasion, some issues proved to be too daunting. My research examined ten method books that provide some form of instruction for fifths tuning in the form of fingerings, scales, hand positions and excerpts. While some of these method books were written by contrabassists, others were written by musicians who were not contrabassists. As part of my discussion, I will present examples from primary sources to demonstrate some of the problems I encountered with a particular focus on two methods, their striking similarities and how their comparison took my dissertation into an unexpected direction. It is my hope that this paper will help other doctoral students discuss similar research problems and how these problems can be addressed.

Session 2

1:30 – 2:30

The Contemporary Musician

Chair: Jashen Edwards

Brianna DeSantis

Training the Musician as an Athlete

Musicians and athletes often perform in front of audiences, which affords the opportunity for performance excellence, excitement, and the motivation to succeed. However, it also affords the opportunity for performance anxiety, fear, and doubt. These reactions are typically not seen in a practice room or training session and are brought out in a performance, or performance-like situation such as a competition, an audition, or even a recording. The performer, whether a musician or an athlete, needs to balance the positive aspects of performing with the (perceived) negative aspects associated with performing. This allows them to perform at their absolute best.

Music and sport have the incredible power to bring people together and to inspire a sense of community in their players and supporters. The common denominator for these domains is the requirement for “coordinated processes of perception, cognition, and action,” (Proctor & Dutta, 1995, p.1), in order to elicit the best possible performance in a high-pressure setting. By studying

one area of sporting skill, such as learning to putt in golf, we can gain applicable knowledge for a musical skill.

The intersection between sports and music is not novel. Scholarly application of sports to music is prominent when it comes to performance anxiety and practice habits (Barbeau, 2011; Robson, Davidson, & Snell, 1995; Freymuth, 1994; Fine & Bravo, 2011; Bernardi, Schories, Jabusch, Colombo, & Altenmueller, 2013; Carter, 2012). Conversely, when applying music to sports, the scholarly output is more focused on music and the affect that it evokes in sports and exercise, rather than practice and performance anxiety recommendations.

Aside from the applications from sport to music and vice versa, researchers have combined both topics to examine the outcomes in various education studies. However, there is still a marked gap in the literature on what musicians can glean from athletes to improve their training and performance routines. This presentation aims to outline some of the practical applications that musicians can glean from athletes, such as imagery, flow state, teaching, memorization, learning music, and performance anxiety.

Leanne Vida

The Search for Canadian Art Song: Developing a Framework for a Database of Art Song by Canadian Composers

Art song is a diverse, inclusive genre of music, as well as an important pedagogical tool for singers, however, many Canadian singers are not exposed to Canadian art song and/or have difficulty accessing it. This study aims to address this problem by demonstrating the need for a graded, online database of Canadian art song, termed the *Database of Canadian Art Song (DoCAS)*. The *DoCAS* will be an open-access, graded online catalogue of Canadian art song. The design of the *DoCAS* will focus on the following primary directives: ease of use, opportunity for exploration/discovery of new music, augmentation of educational resources for singers and singing teachers, knowledge mobilization, and promotion of Canadian composers and their music. All art songs housed in the *DoCAS* will be evaluated according to a grading scheme devised by the author, assigned a difficulty level, and will be catalogued with relevant information. Users of the website will be able to browse Canadian art song by level, or to search by composer (or composer's gender or Indigenous Canadian identification), title, poet, language, duration, voice type, instrumentation, publication date, or keyword and create a profile to save art songs into collections for future reference. An online collection of all Canadian art song does not currently exist, making this project unique in its concept. To have all of our art song collected in one location alone would be of tremendous value to Canadian musicians or anyone interested in Canadian art song, and would increase access to Canadian art song for singers, singing teachers, and collaborative pianists, in addition to increasing exposure for Canadian art song and Canadian composers. Also unique to this project is the application of a grading system to the art song submitted to the database, which will efficiently indicate the appropriate song choice for a given student, the marketplace for Canadian composers, the networking opportunities created for everyone who creates a personal profile, and the promotion of art music events throughout Canada as well as the international art music community.

Session 3

2:45 – 3:15

Engaging In/Through Popular Music

Chair: Lydia Wilton

2:45 – 3:45

M Gillian Carrabre

Throwing Light: Understanding Apprenticeship and Artistry in Gloving Practices

Contemporary dance music has long been a catalyst for self-expression and active audience participation. In the 1950s and 60s, New York discos offered safe spaces to gay, African American and Latino men, and open-air acid house events in the UK allowed young working-class teenagers a sense of freedom and purpose. New genres such as Electronic Dance Music (EDM) are hot spots of creative expression, from the solo dance form known as shuffling, to “flow arts” practices like poi, hula hooping, orbiting, and gloving. Gloving is a subcultural practice coupling LED lights and finger movements. It is a method of expression for dance music enthusiasts. It has become an important component of the EDM scene, particularly over the past decade. Gloving consists of expressive “secondary” performances to live music (DJs) using complex techniques such as symbolism, word painting, and “musicianship.” Glovers perform using improvisatory movements that are drawn from a large lexicon, known collectively as “concepts.” Learning the skill involves taking part in oral transmission, cyphering, both online and in person community building activities, and cultivation of a gloving identity with an accompanying pseudonym. This paper is part of a larger autoethnographic study about gloving practices in Toronto, rooted in the participatory approaches of journalists Hunter S. Thompson and Simon Reynolds. Toronto has played an integral part in the history of gloving from its earliest roots in “liquidizing,” a style of dance that originated at raves during the 1990s. The work embraces audio-visual materials, participant observation methodology, fieldnotes and meta-reflections, interviews, and pictures, presented in a mosaic approach à la Marshall McLuhan.

Rhiannon Simpson

Barnsey, Farnsey, Democracy: Aussie Rock as Civic Literacy

With popular music inherently tied to the values and ideals of sociological systems, an exploration of the role music education may play in shaping sociological discourses is essential. In an Australian context, the distinct genre of ‘Aussie Rock’ both reflects and shapes a sense of national identity, with musical representations of civil disobedience a defining aspect of these works. This presentation explores the ways in which ‘Aussie Rock’ as classroom content develops both musical and psycho-social skills associated with civic literacy; which promotes democratic engagement to incite societal change.

Exploring the ways in which past musicians have utilized popular music as a tool to encourage protest and socio-political engagement ensures students perceive themselves as musicians of the present, and therefore potential change facilitators. Active participation with socio-political issues within music classrooms encourages critical reflection regarding not only the musical practices of popular musicians, but the ways in which they utilize social media, performance spaces and messaging to promote socio-political ideals.

Music classrooms can no longer be considered spaces separated from the social issues which impact society outside of the school grounds. An understanding of the ways in which 'Aussie Rock' reflects and encourages engagement with civil disobedience serves to inspire teachers of all nations to engage relevant social issues within music curriculum. Though at times challenging, developing the civic literacy of students in music classes ensures they perceive composition and performance as an integral tool in shaping societal values. Thus, students are encouraged to actively and critically evaluate the social impact their own musical practices may have on specific communities in their role as musicians, and therefore potential change enactors.