

2020 YGMS Program

(Unless otherwise noted, all events are in Stoeckel 106)

Friday, February 28

11:00 REGISTRATION

12:00-12:15 OPENING REMARKS

Michael Veal, Director of Graduate Studies

12:15-1:45 PANEL: SOUNDS OF PROTEST

Moderator: Zac Stewart

[Sonic Activism Against the Tear Gas: Hongkonger's Raging Roars and Sound Acts](#)

[Winnie W C Lai](#) (Music, University of Pennsylvania)

Abstract

In Hong Kong's 2019 protests, the deep-seated and conflicting political ideologies and cultural values between Hongkongers and the Chinese sovereignty are seen and heard from street spaces to shopping malls where tear gas and pepper spray, injured bodies, raging roars, and the striking sounds of road signs, traffic cones, umbrellas, and molotov cocktail are assembled. Particular sounds and their musicality take on a vital role in various actions in the protest space—sounds exist as subversive sound acts both in peaceful demonstrations and intensive clashes. Protestors do particular sound acts that they believe are politically meaningful and functional, thus continuing their fight against police brutality in the pungent mist of tear gas. Utterances of dissent are amplified while everyday mundane urban sound acts are muted in this new sonic and spatial experience in the city, where the entanglement between the fleshy beings and the newly emerged urban environment is restructured. Through protesting, Hongkongers are experiencing a drastic change of everyday living, while the protest experience nonetheless enhances citizens' cultural and political values and sense of belonging as Hong Kong people. Taking the sonic and spatial environment of the ongoing pro-democracy protests in the city as a case study, this paper

discusses: (1) how the complex entanglement of human beings, sound and the protest environment explains the experience of protest sound as action; and (2) the possibility of the subversion of an “old Hong Kong” (the mundane everyday) and values attached to it via the emerging sonic and spatial experience of activism in public gatherings.

***Festa da Penha* in Brazil’s Post-Slavery Abolition Period: Black Corporealities and Musicalities as Contestation of a Hegemonic Space**

Eduardo Marcel Vidili (Music, Universidade Federal do Estado do Rio de Janeiro, Visiting Scholar at University of Texas at Austin)

Abstract

Festa da Penha is a traditional popular Catholic festival which has taken place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, since the end of 18th century. Its celebration includes religious and extra-religious aspects. This paper discusses changes in popular aspects of that festival during post slavery abolition period (1890-1920), when it was considered the second most important popular festivity in that city. The increasing presence of subordinate groups, most of them formed by black people, challenged the civilizing aspirations of the ruling classes, which sought to subject these undesired individuals by controlling certain musical practices associated with them. Following the concepts of “deviant black geographies” (Leu 2014) and “tactics” (Certeau 1984), this study analyzes reports from the Festival, taken from periodicals of that time, which describe the repression of certain musical practices by authorities. Tensions between social groups are reflected in these prohibitions, for which the official allegation was the maintenance of order. I argue that prohibitions were attempts to discipline the presence of these undesired bodies and corporealities. However, these restraints generated forms of resistance, readable in popular tactics employed either to challenge or to circumvent them. *Festa da Penha* constituted a privileged locus of social performance for marginalized black groups, who operationalized music and other cultural manifestations as a way of asserting their right to space and visibility. This study contributes to the understanding of motivations behind prohibitions to sound-body practices at the *Festa da Penha*, and to the ways they were challenged by black populations.

The Fact of Black Nonrelationality: Cecil Taylor in Paris

Matthias Mushinski (Film and Moving Image Studies, Concordia University)

Abstract

In February of 1965, the French jazz review *Jazz Hot* published a feature article on Cecil Taylor, the first in a series of profiles coinciding with tours that brought Don Cherry, Archie Shepp and Steve Lacy to Paris that same year. The opportunity to experience the music firsthand seized the attention of the Parisian jazz press and the critical cohort at *Jazz Hot* immediately set out to inaugurate a theoretical strategy capable of addressing it.

This essay is committed to what Fred Moten describes as “another way of thinking of things that is offered in the social aesthetics of black radicalism and its improvisatory protocols.” As a case

study, I will examine the critical reception of Taylor's music (concert reviews, artist profiles, interviews etc.) in *Jazz Hot* between 1965 and 1968, with a specific focus on the journal's uptake of Amiri Baraka's ideas. This period is notable for the fact that Taylor arrived in Paris for the first time on October 20th, 1966, staying until December. As a result, in *Jazz Hot* we find numerous interviews in which Taylor insists on the fact of black nonrelationality and directly confronts repeated attempts to situate his practice in relation to the European avant-garde. Taylor's music embodies a tension between the abstraction of art music and the desired functionality of folk music. It encompasses collective improvisations, networks of unpredictability, and scatterings of sounds that merge together familiar rhythms, found objects and disassembled instruments. In turn, this essay aims toward an unknown totality by highlighting the divergent ways in which the writers at *Jazz Hot* greeted the task of amplifying Taylor's reformulation of the conversion between aesthetic and political insurgency.

2:00-3:30 WORKSHOP WITH DAPHNE BROOKS

"All Things Must Pass": Space, Place & Radical Racial Affinities in the Record Shop

Daphne Brooks, William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor of African American Studies, American Studies, and Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies

[Recommended Reading](#)

4:00-5:30 PANEL: TECHNOLOGIES OF MEDIATION

Moderator: Holly Chung

Exploring The Morphology Of Matter And Space As An Inclusive Performance System Using Immersive Technology

[Lewis Smith](#) (Music, Drama, and Performing Arts, Ulster University)

Abstract

'If music cognition is embodied in a musically meaningful way, in the flesh of experience, then we ought to be able to specify just how this occurs. One way begins in imitation of musical sounds and of the physical exertions that produce them.' (Cox, 2016)

In this presentation, an immersive performance system for inclusive music making is discussed. The metaphors used within music often refer to time, space, motion and morphology. As Mark Johnson explains 'our experience of a bit of music shares something with our experience of

seeing objects move in physical space' (Johnson, 2007) or as Adlington says, 'changing musical sound may be conceptualised via a wide range of physical source domains' (Adlington, 2003)

The system discussed explores an embodied connection between the morphology of 3D objects within a virtual environment, and musical performance or experience. In particular, I look at how visual texture, the use of haptics and corresponding treatments of sonorities attached to 3D models within virtual reality can allow us to create performance systems allowing musicians with and without disabilities to perform complex music.

In detail, I discuss a prototype system built using the Unity 3D game engine and the texture details that are exposed in Unity. These come in the form of materials created using texture maps called the 'Normal' and 'Height' maps. Using SteamVR, the system allows the performer to reach out, touch, interact, feel and affect musical properties through their interaction and experience of an object's physical qualities.

This presentation also briefly discusses the use of these ideas as part of the inaugural concert of the Open Youth Orchestra of Ireland (OYOI). It discusses the virtual environment as a narrative leading the OYOI through participatory compositional practices and the creation of sonorities. It looks at the discussions with performers in the creation of a 20min VR composition.

Desire, Sound and the Postcolonial Politics of Cinematic Adaptation in Vishal Bharadwaj's *Haider*

Abhipsa Chakraborty (English, University at Buffalo)

Abstract

This paper is interested in addressing the role of the sonic and the mode of musical mediation in analyzing the aesthetic structure and textual politics of *Haider* (2014), Vishal Bharadwaj's cinematic adaptation of Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*. I will engage with the particular codes of Bollywood's cinematic vocabulary, the semiotics and aesthetic function of narrative interspersed with music-dance against the politically charged, dark landscape of Kashmir. In specifically looking at *Haider* I raise the tangled questions of cinematic adaptation in South Asia and South Asian politics, especially as concerns the role of diegetic and non-diegetic sounds and music in the cinematic form. Connecting music and more generally sound with the pressing questions of Kashmir's autonomy, the paper analyses resonances of dynastic trauma in contemporary issues of governance by the Indian capitalist State, biopolitics and dissent as formalized in the film and in popular imagination. The unique situation of Kashmir militancy in the film lodges the story in a contemporary political conundrum, which then imposes singular stakes on Haider's personal story—his relations with his mother, with his love interest and with the political land per se. Moreover, Bharadwaj's radical reworking of the Ophelia subplot also has interesting consequences for the effects it yields on her relationship with Haider and on his subjective breakdown. One of the expressive resources that the Hindi film form uses to render this unique personalized vision of the Hamlet archetype is music, especially in an interesting relation to the body—both the suffering orthopedic body of Haider and its performative, affective dimensions explored by means of dance and costume. The musical retelling of the intense gravedigger scene

also stands out as a striking feat of Bharadwaj's cinematic imagination. What are the political and aesthetic stakes involved in this directorial undertaking? To what extent is the film's reception mediated by and a function of its anchoring in the original Hamlet? Who is the ultimate addressee of this work of art—the canon, the film's audience or the work itself? These are some questions the paper will address.

Vodou on the Air: Radio, Transnationalism, and Music in New York's Haitian Diaspora

Ayanna Legros (History, Duke University)

Abstract

This paper explores the usage of Vodou music on Haitian Creole radio programming in New York City between 1969 – 2002. *Vodou on the Air: Radio, Transnationalism, and Music in New York's Haitian Diaspora* argues that folkloric/spiritual music played on the radio encouraged diasporic Haitian to embrace a stigmatized religious practice while also engaging in debate through coded messages and music. Lè Ayisyen's incorporation of Vodou music on their weekly programming to counter the commentary of other political groups (on the left and right) would shift discussions and cause listeners to have to decode illicit messages – already implicated through the deliberate usage of Haitian Creole over the French language on the radio. While newspapers such as *Haiti Observateur*, *Haiti Tribune*, *Haiti Progrès*, and *Sèl* circulated around the Upper West Side of Manhattan, offering exiles room to present opinions, radio provided members of the Haitian community a sonic space to grapple with the realities of their homeland while also discussing strategies for combatting racism, xenophobia, sexism, classism, and the linguistic privileging of the French language over Kreyòl. Radio became a site for intellectual production.

5:30-6:30 WINE AND CHEESE RECEPTION (STOECKEL 107)

6:30-7:30 SOUND ART PERFORMANCE: RESONANT SPACES

Moderator: Tatiana Koike

[Mathias Klenner](#) (Architecture, Design, and Construction, Universidad de las Américas, Chile)

[Sofía Balbontín](#) (Architecture, Design, and Construction, Universidad de las Américas, Chile)

Description

From the interaction between sound and space emerges the dimension of soundspace, which transcends the functionalism of acoustic architecture towards a social, aesthetic and political implication of soundspace as a means for generating critical spatial and sonic practices.

We propose soundspace compositions, installations and performances using field recordings, activation of sounds by acoustic and electronic means, slow feedbacks and convolution reverbs, that are used to explore and analyze new social and political narratives through listening.

The case studies for experimentation are a coal tank and a cooling tower of an abandoned power plant in Belgium, a flood cistern and an air-raid shelter of the civil war in Spain, and two oil tanks of the WWII in UK, with reverberations from 5-80 seconds, soundspaces that supported the world we live in today, or that are an effect of the political and economic wills of it.

Our research identifies two types of soundspaces: the space created by sound and the sound created by space. Soundspace could be created and/or perceived in both ways. The objective is to investigate the contemporary concept of soundspace in the critical practices of sound art and architecture.

In sound art, soundspace can be understood as room tone, as the background noise that always has been there through history. In architecture, it is the acoustic dimension of the space we inhabit. Sounds and places shape the world we live in today. A critical listening to contemporary soundspaces promotes an awareness of the forces that shape us.

The interaction between sound and space through critical spatial and sonic practices, allow us to reveal the soundspaces of these buildings, and by doing so create a dialogue with them.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 29

8:45-9:15 BREAKFAST AVAILABLE

9:15-11:15 PANEL: SOUNDING PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Moderator: Will Watson

Tensions Between Policy and Curriculum in Japanese Music Higher Education

[Garrett Groesbeck](#) (Music, Wesleyan University)

Abstract

As the spaces where music educators of all levels are trained and enculturated, Japan's academic institutions are critically important entities in shaping the country's musical identity and relationship to its history. The particular ways in which its first music school, predecessor to Tokyo University of the Arts, was structured had enormous implications for music education, and precipitated the current disparity between government policy and practice in music classrooms. A significant amount of scholarly attention has been paid to the authoritarian Meiji government's suppression of traditional Japanese genres, as well as to the ways in which Tokyo College of Music founder Shuji Isawa's musical philosophy de-emphasized Japanese performance styles and compositional technique. With that historical background as a basis, this report analyzes the ways in which Euro-centric ideas continue to shape music education and discourse, as well as how institutional inertia in Japanese music schools conflicts with updates in Ministry of Education (MEXT) policy, through the lens of public-facing visual and textual materials. In spite of lip service paid to music as an important part of Japanese cultural heritage, college promotional brochures, profiles, and application materials provide carefully curated evidence of an approach to music education that continues to center European canons and ways of thinking. It also provides a concrete point of comparison between sonic and visual traditional arts, with fine arts such as ink painting, ceramics, and architecture retaining a relatively higher place of prestige than musical forms like gagaku or koto sokyoku, and pointing to music's unique vulnerability to cultural imperialism also evident in other areas of the world.

Sounding Art: Enlivening and Extending Silent Museum Spaces through Interdisciplinary Music- and Visual Art-based Programming

[Aruna Kharod](#) (Music, University of Texas at Austin)

Abstract

Critical studies of museum and curation practices explore the potential of sensory engagement and innovative programming to increase the accessibility of traditionally silent (and silencing) museum spaces (Wyatt 2014, Embrick et al. 2019). In this paper, I will explore how two projects at the Blanton Museum of Art in Austin, TX combined Indian and Western classical musics with visual art to create access-oriented exhibits and curriculum. The first case study focuses on my experience working with the Blanton's curatorial and education team to develop a multimedia, multisensory, and performance-based programming to complement a visiting exhibition of Indian miniature paintings. In this case, public programming transformed the normally silent space of the museum to a performative, musical space. The second project was a collaboration with the Austin Symphony Orchestra's (ASO) annual Young People's Concerts series to create interdisciplinary curriculum for elementary schoolers. This curriculum paired visual artwork from the Blanton's collection with musical pieces performed by ASO to explore shared themes of artistic intent. Through these projects, the Blanton sought to expand arts access to traditionally underrepresented communities in the museum—Asian-Americans and elementary schoolers—in the greater Austin area. I will draw from interviews with collaborators, visitors' written

feedback, and autoethnographic reflections from my work as an artist-in-residence and arts educator to gauge the efficacy and motivations of these projects. These sources will reveal how curators envisioned and audiences experienced music and visual art in conjunction to create sensorially-engaging artistic encounters. I argue that the use of music and visual art in museum exhibits and collaborative curriculum development amplifies the affective potential and accessibility of artistic works and spaces by encouraging audiences to forge individualized artistic experiences through sensory engagement (Hennion 2011).

Religion and the Ryman: Practicing Theology in the “Mother Church of Country Music”

[Chase Castle](#) (Music, University of Pennsylvania)

Abstract

The Grand Ole Opry live broadcast has been venerated in the country music world since 1927. Fans who listened to the radio staple found comfort in the tradition of country music and artists who achieved a spot on the program were deemed saints in the country music canon of faith. The musical significance of these broadcasts is well known, but the manner in which they have relied on tropes of congregational sacred worship have received less attention. And yet, sacred themes pervade the performances, which, as this paper shows, functioned as sacred ground that combined the pleasure of Saturday night and reverence of Sunday morning. The sacralization stemmed in part from the venue: for thirty-one years the broadcast was performed at the Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, Tennessee. Originally constructed as a tabernacle for Christian revivals, the auditorium would in time welcome numerous country music stars. Commonly referred to as “the mother church of country music,” the Ryman’s complex spatial identity as both church and concert venue present contrasting theologies in music at the Opry and the intersection of religious practice with a diverse genre that is only superficially secular.

This paper explores the sacralization of country music by focusing on three aspects of the Ryman performances. First, I outline the close historical ties between evangelical theology and country music. Second, I reveal how the theology of failure, which represented the everyday hard times of working-class Americans, had a special place in the lives of country fans and argue that affiliation was showcased on the stage and in the pews of the Ryman. Finally, I consider how the auditorium has attained a shrine-like status since the broadcast’s suburban move. This highlights its role in promoting values of nostalgia and community to the country music genre.

A Chorus of Grunts: Addressing the (Sonic) Gender Problem in the ‘Weight Room’

[Natalia Alexis Perez](#) (Critical and Comparative Studies, University of Virginia)

Abstract

The weight room, annex, or any other equivalent, is a physical space in most gyms that houses the heavy-lifting equipment like bench presses, squat racks, leg presses, etc. It is where one

would go to perform multi-joint, compound movements that are both difficult to execute and require the use of equipment that lacks accessibility for the novice exerciser given the baseline strength, coordination, and knowledge they necessitate. While the weight room is a physical site, it is also a constructed cultural concept that signals intense physical exertion, which through a complex matrix of historical and social processes, gets coded as “masculine.”

The characteristic and industrial sounds of the weight room—echoing with grunts, the dull thuds of iron plates slamming the ground, the clanging of iron plates hitting one another, and the wispy sounds of metal-to-metal contact—are complicit in the gendering of the space. Weight room sounds are reflective of the people and behavioral patterns of those who occupy the space—those who are by in large male. The weight room, then, literally projects masculinity onto those who enter the space, which can be especially distressing for non-males who seek entry into the often-exclusive realm of weightlifting and of the benefits it offers. Women, who are already burdened with social pressures that teach her that cardiovascular exercise is her only place in fitness, face the added challenge of trying to navigate their own difference in a room that is both visually and sonically telling them they do not belong. This paper lends a listening ear to the familiar sounds of the weight room, interrogates their meaning, and analyzes how they work together to create an atmosphere that is far from inclusive.

11:30-1:00 PANEL: MUSICAL ENVIRONMENTS

Moderator: Jade Conlee

Senses of Space: Spatial Coordinates in the Pianism of Chucho Valdés

[Martyna Włodarczyk](#) (Music, UC Berkeley)

Abstract

Over the last thirty years, the fields of cultural geography and anthropology bore fruit of an abundance of writings about place. The ethnomusicological contribution was especially evident in the influential 1996 anthology *Senses of Place* edited by Steven Feld and Keith Basso. The volume opened with a philosophical essay in which its author Edward Casey offered a phenomenological view on the space-place problem and challenged the metaphysical assumption according to which space is prior to emplaced phenomena. Dismissing space as an invented idea, Casey wrote: “if the occupants of a place were utterly to vanish and the place to be permanently empty, it would be no place at all but a void”.

In my paper, I will respond to Edward Casey’s take on the space-place problem and argue that it is important to think of space as more than merely a void. Firstly, because the assumption of space’s priority offers the idea of potentiality that further opens the doors to understanding how places come into being; secondly, because the very concept of anthropology of place, as developed by Feld in particular, depends on some notion of collectively-produced and shared space. Moreover, because acknowledging the existence of space does not foreclose that our

sensed experiences are emplaced in the midst of cultural, historical, and political intersectionality.

During my presentation, I will show that embodied manifestations of music are both in space and in a place. In order to do so, I will use musical examples by the Cuban pianist Chucho Valdés, which I will relate to Matthew Rahaim's term "musicking body" (2012). Further, I will offer an understanding of the piano keyboard as space, and discuss Martin Daughtry's notions of "displacement" and "transplacement" (2015) as well as "groundedness" in the context of my analysis of Valdés' pianistic choices of melodic gestures.

Musical Anatomies and Scientific Ruptures in Stepanov Notation

Sophie Benn (Music, Case Western Reserve University)

Abstract

No art form tethers music to space more explicitly than dance, a fact that dance theorists in the late nineteenth century knew well. One way to express this relationship was through dance notation, which was not at all standardized in the period. Several theorists developed notational systems to use as a shorthand for the relationship between the body and its enclosures, whether spatial, temporal, or musical. Many of these theorists turned to music as a model in creating these systems. Music, they reasoned, was dance's more respected sibling: through its notational system it became analyzable, rational, and in possession of the permanency that they craved for dance. This paper concerns Vladimir Ivanovich Stepanov, whose *Alphabet des mouvements du corps humain* (1892) introduces his system of gestural notation, one that was used by Russian dancers into the twentieth century.

I consider Stepanov's publication as an aesthetic, medical, and musicological text, in addition to a dancerly one. Trained in anatomy, Stepanov was not content to simply notate dance. He proposed his system as a way to record all human movement, from gymnastic exercises to the convulsions of choreic patients. In the treatise's expository essay, Stepanov demonstrates his investment in the latest developments in science, drawing on the words, ideas, and inventions of Jean-Martin Charcot and Étienne-Jules Marey. While earlier dance notators' interest lay in creating a linguistic framework for dance, many scientists had rejected language as an accurate means of communication by the late nineteenth century. They preferred graphs, which Marey called a form of "natural writing," to describe physical phenomena. Following Marey, Stepanov also proposes that musical rhythm can express the temporal organization of human movement that music and anatomy interact in ways of which we are only dimly aware.

Gnostic Sounds, Gnostic Spaces

Allison Chu (Music, Yale University)

Cat Slowik (Music, Yale University)

Abstract

Arnold Schoenberg famously preferred a narrow study, claiming that his work was better when there was a wall against his back. Mahler retreated from the world to composing huts in Wörthersee and Attersee, which have become sites of pilgrimage and, in the case of John Adams' "Mahler Hut," emulation. Berlin-based composer Rebecca Saunders reports having composed in "pretty much every room" in her apartment, depending on how many children she had, before acquiring a separate composition studio in her apartment building.

The room of one's own, and the distance it grants from an audience, have long been mythologized as essential to Western composition and analysis. The composer's work is separate from performance. As Alvin Lucier put it in 1969, "I am sitting in a room different from the one you are in now." And yet, composer's studios aren't always "sounding" spaces.

In this paper, we survey these gnostic spaces, where sound is imagined without necessarily being realized. We will consider the following questions: What is the epistemological status of "unsounded" musics created in these spaces? What are the politics of doors, apartments, forests, and other borders that separate pre-drastring musicking (composition) from other aspects of musical life and performance? Who is allowed to enter these spaces, and who is kept out? What are the stakes of these borders? Music's ineffability is located in moments of failure of the music-language metaphor. How do these spaces resemble writers' spaces? How do they differ?

1:00-2:30 LUNCH

2:30-4:00 PANEL: VOICING IDENTITY

Moderator: Cat Slowik

"Who Gave You Power?" On Sound as Argument in College Policy Debate

[Timothy Byram](#) (Religion, Harvard University)

Abstract

The scene is a college policy debate round in which I sat as judge for two opposing teams: the first team, two Black debaters from Rutgers, presented arguments based on Ashon Crawley's aesthetic and theological reading of Fred Moten and Stefano Harney's notion of "the undercommons." In response to a debate topic centered around executive authority, they played Erykah Badu while reading critical race scholarship, arguing that their performance infused Black life into the debate space in a way that was uncapturable by anti-Black disciplinary apparatuses. The second team, two white debaters from Kansas, argued that Rutgers's

performance did not provide a contestable stasis point for rigorous debate and therefore served only as a pacification of radical movements intent on forming material strategies to combat capitalism. Together, the teams jointly constructed an argumentative constellation in which life, race, and commodification played contested roles.

This presentation draws from a broader ethnographic project that interrogates the interlacing of arguments and bodies in debate writ large. For the purposes of this symposium, I use a sonic lens to analyze this specific debate as a site in which sound itself has been agonistically conscripted into the realm of argument, imbuing the world its vibrations touch with contestable political stakes. I interpret the fragments of academic literature read in the debate alongside ethnographic observations of the embodied performance and its rhythms—treating all as primary sources—to examine what type of space is constructed in the process. This approach reads the discursive cacophony produced between both teams as an unstable theoretical frame which limns the edges of sound’s legibility and, in so doing, generates the political stakes to a notion of “Black life” as both a mode of being and as a communicative argument premised precisely on its own incommunicability.

Listening to the Voice of the Cynocephalus

Margaret McCurry (English, New York University)

Abstract

With a focus on their “mingled barks,” which “spoil every word they say” the Liber monstrorum’s description of cynocephalic vocal production persuades readers to condemn the cynocephali as a species with whom it is difficult—or even impossible—to communicate. The text suggests that by occluding its own messages, the cynocephalic voice is a form of selfsabotage that prevents cynocephali from engaging in rational discourse with humans. Further, it begs the question as to how clearly the cynocephali can understand themselves, if at all.

This paper offers a close examination of the cynocephali of medieval lore and their vocal modalities. During the medieval era, assessments of the voice were particularly critical because it was believed that outward characteristics, such as the voice, revealed inner characteristics, such as rationality. Correspondingly, medieval scholars with an interest in monstrosity relied upon this principle to determine whether or not monsters such as cynocephali were able to rationally conceive of God, comprehend religious doctrine, and receive salvation. By examining the philosophy of language posited by the early medieval grammarians Donatus and Priscian and by scrutinizing the soul of the cynocephalus, Saint Christopher, I will argue that the cynocephalic voice has been traditionally misunderstood by medieval scholars, that cynocephali are capable of reason, and that they may even have their own form of language. As such, humans should not dismiss the barks of the cynocephali, but listen and learn from their language so as to provide space for respectful engagement.

Yells, Screams, and Whistles: A Sonic Space for *Mexicanidad* (Mexican-ness)

José R. Torres (Arts, Humanities, and Culture, Hiram College)

Abstract

In the global popular conscious, the high-pitched screamed-*grito* maintains an inseparable association with the musical imagery of the mariachi, as well as being one of the most celebrated and equally stereotyped sound-emblems of Mexico's national culture. Its powerful emotive expressivity spatializes a particular "sonic imaginary" (see Stearne 2012), heard as *mexicanidad* (Mexican-ness), and this is in no small part due to its appropriation, first on film, and now in virtually all genres of Mexican popular music. While not as iconic, *chiflidos* (whistles), musically possess equal affective potential to incite emotional response, generating aesthetic energy in a mariachi performance. For musicians and aficionados in Mexico, mariachi performativity is experienced as "authentic" through idealized notions of hyper-masculinity or machismo, used as a perceptual baseline, indexing particular imaginaries of mexicanidad that musically naturalize codes of nationalism and heteronormativity. I coin this process of musical signification as *mariachismo*, a neologism for the musical experience of hyper-masculine tinged subjectivity, ritualized in practices of sound production, listening, and embodiment.

In this paper, I explore the vocalized gestures of gritos and chiflidos, within a soundscape of mariachismo, "listening" to how they performatively construct an experiential space for authentic musical mexicanidad. I accomplish this phenomenologically, examining sound and listening as simultaneous perceptual ground for subjectivities formed through excessive feeling, embodiment, and receptive listening. Unchoreographed in performance, they embody culturally agreed upon notions of tonality, timbre, and rhythmicity that when organized and musically gestured, bring forth a phenomenological utterance of genuine Mexican *sentimiento*. More so, they are "techniques of the body" (Mauss 1973), acquired like language and communicative sound affects materializing a gendered "authentic self" conveyed through mariachismo. Repeated performances, both in the everyday lifeworld and in musical imaginaries, shape them as socio-cultural artifacts that ritualize understanding, since no knowledge of sound comes from outside culture (Stearne 2012:6).

4:15-5:45 KEYNOTE LECTURE: KWAMI COLEMAN

Music Logic and Illogic in an Imperial Postcolony

Kwami Coleman (Gallatin, New York University)

Respondant: Michael Veal

5:45-6:45 SOUND INSTALLATION: STAND WITH HONG KONG: SOUNDING PAIN AND ROAR THROUGH THE LENNON WALLS (STOECKEL 408)

[Winnie W C Lai](#) (Music, University of Pennsylvania)

Description

Colorful “Lennon Walls” have sprung up across districts in Hong Kong during the ongoing Anti-Extradition Bill Protests and Pro-Democracy Protests. Messages and posters on the Walls reveal Hongkongers’ dissent and the scenes of police brutality censored by certain Beijing-backed media outlets. The Lennon Wall spaces amalgamate with sites of battle in the city. Some Lennon Walls are located in or near the protest sites, others spring up in everyday residential areas—at all sites, however, the brightly colored sticky notes display the tears, pain, suffering, complex emotions and experiences of the Hong Kong people, as well as wishes for a democratic Hong Kong. In front of the Lennon Walls in residential areas, some citizens discuss politics with their neighbors; many of these residents read and write the messages, and some of them were violently attacked by pro-Beijing supporters. The complex spaces of the Hong Kong Lennon Walls have also been recreated in dozens of cities across the world. These overseas Lennon Walls build up new relations with people outside Hong Kong through their very physical presence, forming international alliances and solidarity. This interactive installation, a set of sounding mobile Lennon Walls, aims to (1) create the complex spaces and relations of the Hong Kong Lennon Walls; and (2) provide a setting that allows those outside Hong Kong to learn about people’s struggle in Hong Kong via sensory experience. The audience will write their messages on colorful sticky notes on the Lennon Walls, listen to audio tracks recorded in the protests, and, hopefully, realize the reasons why Hongkongers have been fighting for freedom for months under oppression.

7:00 DINNER AT LALIBELLA

176 Temple Street, New Haven