

MUSIC

NEWSLETTER



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Bach to Beyoncé: Bending the Arc of Music Appreciation

Harvard's venerable Music 1 has traditionally followed the model of standard music appreciation courses: a survey that begins in medieval music and ends with the 20th century, divided in the middle by Beethoven. Each professor who teaches the course brings their own expertise and interests. But Michael Uy, resident dean of Dunster House and inheritor of Music 1 since 2018, is the only one to end the course with classes on Kendrick Lamar and Beyoncé.



Beyoncé at Coachella. Kevin Winter/Getty photo.

“Each professor who teaches the course brings to it their own interests and areas of expertise. For my part, I was looking to make more space for women and artists of color.”

The middle and last third of Uy's “Introduction to Western Music, from Bach to Beyoncé,” is dedicated to these people otherwise excluded from standard survey textbooks. Students in Uy's course study performers—Jenny Lind, Pauline Viardot, and Sissieretta Jones—as well as arts patrons such as Isabella Stewart Gardner and Alma Morganthau Wertheim, and teachers, including

some, I encourage the students to write articles, or do special projects on this material. These resources are in your own backyard, I tell them – you can investigate them, and your work can then become part of our future textbooks.”

Unique resources exist for the contemporary artists on Uy's syllabus as well. Kendrick Lamar's *To Pimp a Butterfly* (2015) was one of four albums chosen as part of the Hip-hop Archive's Classic Crates project at Harvard. Students can study versions of recordings containing the original music used for samples. All the material is housed and available for research

“To leave out women or artists of color is to leave out a significant part of history. You can't focus solely on composers if we talk about how music is produced and conserved.”

Nadia Boulanger and her sister, pianist and composer Lili Boulanger, the first woman to win a Rome Prize. They also study composers of color such as Carlos Chávez, Tania León, Chen Yi, and Florence Price.

“We have material on these performers, teachers, and patrons—songbooks, letters, lithographs, and daguerrotypes—in Isham and Houghton. “With the help of our librarians, I've brought these materials to class. As we know little about the contextual aspect of

in the Music Library.

“More can be done in our own backyard,” says Uy.

What's harder to come by are scholarly resources. Uy sourced material for the course from New Grove entries and longer form articles in periodicals such as the *New Yorker* and the *New York Times*. There were some scholarly articles in *JAMS*, and more in sociology journals.

Uy admits that it was a huge amount

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of work to prepare and teach the middle and last third of his course; he had to find or write much of the resources himself. But, he says, “It should be done, because the status quo for survey courses without these important artists is becoming less and less defensible.

“Ultimately, Music 1 needs to give students vocal and listening tools so they can better understand their sonic world, whether it is art music, dance music, religious music, or sound. We compare performances of “On the Sunny Side of the Street” by Esperanza Spalding, Ella Fitzgerald, and Diana Krall, not to see what we like best, but to learn to differentiate what we like about a piece or performance. This needs to be informed by experience and practice, and supplemented with formal vocabulary. What artistic decisions are being made in melody, timbre, instrumentation? What we find interesting becomes informed not by just taste and preference, but features of the music.

“We look at ways Beyoncé’s *Lemonade* might be considered a work of art—visual, performative, textual. Students study ostinatos as we would Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring*. We analyze text in terms of metaphor, phrasing, and structure, similar to what we’d do for a Schumann song cycle or *Dichterliebe*. The argument is not that *Lemonade* was written or performed like it was trying to be Classical Art Music. But we can use musicological tools as a way of understanding *Lemonade*.”

Uy’s class on Beyoncé’s music interrogates not only the mechanics and aesthetics of *Lemonade*, but its place in social movements. Looking out at the patchwork screen of student faces on Zoom, Uy asks, “Do Beyoncé and Lamar have a responsibility to be socially-conscious artists? Do we have the same expectation for non-black artists like Eminem, Macklemore, or Ed Sheeran? Or is political activism something we expect only from artists who share the same color skin as the most marginalized groups in our country? Beyoncé and Lamar have used their fame to shed light on issues of marginalized people. *Lemonade* taught a lesson in female empowerment; ultimately it’s about forgiveness, resurrection, hope, and redemption.”

Michael Uy is Resident Dean at Dunster House, Assistant Dean of Harvard College, and Lecturer in the Department of Music. His book, *Ask the Experts. How Ford Rockefeller and the NEA Changed American Music*, will be released this fall from OUP.



I’ma wade, I’ma wave
through the waters
Tell the tide,
“Don’t move”
I’ma riot, I’ma riot
through your borders
Call me bulletproof

—“Freedom,” *Lemonade*

Zooming Music 1

When students were asked to leave campus mid-March, Professor Michael Uy got to work reconfiguring Music 1 as an online course. Where he would have asked students to clap ostinatos live, he now asks for volunteers to send videos of them doing so, and spends long hours editing the exercises, as well as performance videos, to share with the whole class online.

Moving from real-world to Zoom meant re-thinking how students receive information, and actually opened up new choices for learning.

“We’ve tried to take advantage of the features of Zoom that would not be possible in a large lecture hall,” says Uy, “such as the breakout rooms and the polling function. For sections, students have a choice between synchronous sections, one-on-one meetings with their TF, or a discussion forum on Canvas. We’ve granted greater flexibility with assignments and tests - these are meant to help students structure the material and to assess their own progress, and are not meant to add further psychological burden or distress.

“For one assignment, I added an additional prompt asking students to describe in 500 words the impact of COVID19 on their local communities. I was surprised and delighted that so many students chose this option, and I learned a lot about how musical communities are responding from San Francisco to New York, to Baltimore, Chicago, Worcester, Tokyo, and Istanbul. I also learned what students are doing personally to help local musicians.

“I think what kept me going for a lot of the second half of the semester was students reaching out to me during lecture and after lecture, expressing that Music 1 was at times the highlight of their week, or that they listened to some of the songs or pieces that we studied for hours because it helped them feel a little happier or more hopeful. For others, the lectures reminded them of our time in Boylston in the first half of the semester. They said that the class helped as a pause from the crazy world or a relief from everything else going on. I think it was these small messages that also helped me get through a month and a half of remote teaching, when normally I rely so much on the energy I get from the classroom.”

Creative Music: Advanced Ensemble Workshop Innovates, Creates, Donates

How would a class premised on realtime collaboration continue with students scattered across the hemisphere?

“The heart of this course,” says Franklin D. and Florence Rosenblatt Professor of the Arts Vijay Iyer, “is in our meetings each week, when we listen to one another’s work with patience, sensitivity, and openness.”

This remained intact when students left campus and Music 177, Advanced Creative Music Workshop, had to morph from a live masterclass format to Zoom.

“After the break, our classes became wonderful collective listening sessions. When we listen to music together, we can have a meaningful, shared emotional response, and we can learn what that music has to offer. Listening to the students’ recorded pieces in various stages of process offered a way for us to engage in that kind of communion.”

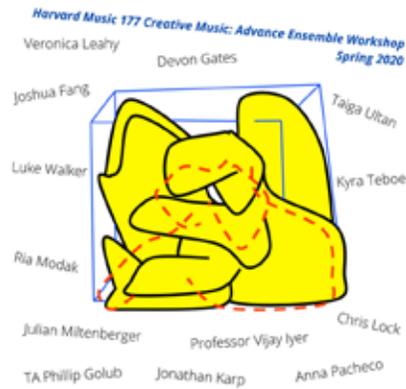
“This course is very hands-off, actually, in terms of what the students create,” adds Iyer’s TA, Phillip Golub ’16. “We try to help them realize what they’re hearing and open them up to possibilities they might not be thinking of. This didn’t change once we moved online.”

The class knew sophomore Luke Walker, for example, as a talented steel pan player. But, Iyer, recounts, in Luke’s final piece he was able to create a makeshift ensemble by overdubbing himself on cuatro (a four-stringed lute), percussion (using the back of the cuatro as a makeshift hand drum!), electric bass, flute, and vocals, including a stirring spoken word piece about one of his ancestors from Venezuela.

“Luke’s ‘Bisabuelo,’ which he created back in Trinidad, became an ebullient meditation on lineage, land, freedom, and the sense of home. It was all the more astonishing to us because he hadn’t revealed all of these extra abilities to his Harvard classmates before,” said Iyer.

Sophomore Anna Pacheco’s work early in the class had a fresh, youthful R&B sensibility. At home in Queens, NY, she started exploring the electric bass.

“Her singing and songwriting took on a profoundly vulnerable melancholy. ‘Deserve Your Love’ became our class’s quarantine anthem: a solitary cry, rich with feeling.”



“Mixtape” can be found at <https://harvardmusic177.bandcamp.com/album/mixtape>

Pacheco enlisted help from two classmates, Kyra Teboe ’22 on electric piano, and Jonathan Karp (G3) on viola, who recorded their parts in their own homes in Maine and Massachusetts.

“I did my best to give students some critical feedback, other musical points of reference, and other ideas to consider,” says Iyer. “But mainly I felt it was important under the circumstances just to hold space, so the students could have some time together, show appreciation for each other’s work, and treat each other with dignity and kindness. And as you can hear, that went a long way.”

Although “Mixtape” is available to everyone, listeners are encouraged to contribute to The Jazz Foundation’s COVID-19 Relief fund at jazzfoundation.org/donate/. Please select COVID-19 Musicians’ Emergency Fund and indicate “in the name of Harvard Music 177.”



ist and composer. A recent composition project with that group is “Memory Play,” a short film voted “Best Experimental” from the Grand Jury Selection at the Ivy Film Festival.



Iyer, Golub, and the students of Music 177 after their first concert in Holden Chapel. [missing from photo: Ria Modak]

OFA Awards Arts Prizes

THE OFFICE FOR THE ARTS 2020 ARTS PRIZE winners included several Music Department concentrators and joint concentrators. JESSICA SHAND ’21, received the Interdisciplinary Prize. Shand is a student in the Harvard/NEC joint five-year AB/MM program joint concentrating in Mathematics and Music with a secondary in Computer Science. A flutist, she has been featured as a solo artist on NPR’s From the Top and Colorado Public Radio, and with ensembles such as Harvard’s Brattle Street Chamber Players, Pikes Peak Philharmonic, and the Denver Young Artists Orchestra.

Music awards went to MIRANDA AGNEW ’21, a Harvard/NEC student concentrating in Anthropology with a secondary in Music. Agnew, a trumpet player, has attended the Banff Centre’s International Workshop in Jazz and Creative Music, as well as the Summer Jazz Academy at Jazz at Lincoln Center.

JULIAN MILTENBERGER ’22, a drummer enrolled in the Harvard/NEC program concentrating in Music, is a member of the Harvard Monday Jazz Band conducted by Yosvany Terry, and also performs with a combo in the Harvard Jazz Combo Initiative coached by Don Braden ’85.

ALEXANDER “SASHA” YAKUB ’20, a music concentrator, received the Levin Prize in performance for his violin work. Sasha has studied with Lynn Chang, James Buswell, Minna Diner and Giovina Sessions, and was also a 2019 Harvard OFA Artist Development Fellow, 2020 Yamaha Young Artists Competition honorable mention winner, and a 2017-18 Tanglewood Music Center Violin Fellow. Sasha is also a composer, and a member of The Goat Exchange, an artistic collective where he serves both as violin-

Jonathan Savilonis Recreates Music Building in LEGOs

Staying at home has been productive for FAS Building Manager Jonathan Savilonis and his twin five-year-old sons, Julius and Lysander. They've been working on a model of the Music building for nearly six months, when Savilonis took photos, did a few sketches, and started thinking about how to scale up the project. Now that the family has extra time inside, there's been good progress.

"We made a fairly expensive purchase of 3000 red masonry bricks and some windows from a brick seller in Germany last month," Savilonis wrote in an email. "We started building on March 17th when the order arrived. Having all the ordered parts I need and a pretty large assortment of already sorted LEGO has made things go pretty quick."

Savilonis works on the project daily.

"Honestly, my boys lost interest pretty quickly and returned to building spaceship and robots in the LEGO room (playroom) while I worked away about an hour an evening and a couple longer sit downs here and there."

The LEGO Music building is now complete, and includes all three structures that comprise its modern iteration. John Knowles Paine Concert Hall, built in 1914 and designed by the architect firm of alumni John Mead Howells (class of 1891)—includes LEGO marble steps, pseudo columns, and window treatments that mirror the original (most impressive, the Steinway piano on the Paine Hall stage). The Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library (1956) is now landscaped with LEGO plantings and the 1972 Mason addition features LEGO plate glass windows and roof ladder.

"It has been really fun to figure out how to scale the project and watch it take shape," says Savilonis. "I have never built anything this large before. The best part is sharing it."



Broadway Musicals Online: Zooming *In the Heights*



They log in from bedrooms and living rooms in Florida, California, Washington state, and up and down the East Coast. For some it's 7:45 in the morning; for others, nearly noon. Each of the students in Carol Oja's American Musicals: History and Performance Freshman Seminar has been assigned a part in Lin Manuel Miranda's Tony Award-winning musical, *In the Heights*. This morning, they are about to embark on a performance of the number, "96,000," in which characters envision what they'd do if they won big money in the lottery. This is the last of three staging sessions—the other two featured scenes from *South Pacific* and *A Chorus Line*, all coached by the Broadway professional staff director Allegra Libonati. Harvard junior Ben Sperling was music director for the session on *South Pacific*, and the Broadway composer David Hancock Turner stepped in as music director for the final two sessions.

No one expected the course to move online in the middle of the semester. And although moving to a virtual classroom took choreography and stage tableaux out of the

mix, it didn't take away the essence of the quick, complicated verbal interplay of Miranda's characters.

"Think about how to accent words to infuse them with emotion," Libonati tells the students via Zoom, speaking from her home base in Las Vegas. "Put more argument in it; don't lose the momentum of the scene before. This whole song is an argument."

The class starts and stops like a real-world rehearsal. Libonati and Turner coach the students through each of their parts, beginning with a cold reading and developing rhythm, dynamics, and emotion. Just as in the Washington Heights Miranda writes about, there's never just one thing happening; many things are happening all at the same time. Miranda's laser-sharp rap lyrics have to fit in the spaces around a vocal duet and at the same time, sync up rhythmically.

"If you have something on the first beat of the measure, give that a little more," Turner advises.

With each addition of a new element—

One upside of the virus is that Broadway professionals have been available in ways that would be difficult otherwise. Allegra Libonati was engaged before the crisis, but others have stepped in since. Libonati arranged for professional music director David Hancock Turner to coach the students, and Oja invited Kurt Crowley (AB '07, who served as music director for the touring production of *In the Heights* and has since taken on multiple leadership roles with *Hamilton*), to visit the class and talk about his experiences with the show.

rap, duet, chorus—the song takes shape. Confidence and familiarity grow, students sing full out, and the beauty and complexity of the song takes over. For the final run-through, Libonati smiles into the camera, "It's showtime. Lay it all out there."

They're singing into a computer. They can only see each other's faces and shoulders. There's a trans-continental lag between computers. But they lay it out there, they do.

"It wouldn't be anyone's first choice to stage a number from a Broadway musical on a collection of eleven small screens," says Oja. "There's a lag, depending on the internet speed of each student. As David Hancock Turner said during a previous session: it's like dealing with a pipe organ, where there is a brief delay between when you touch the keys and when the sound emerges. So the performance ends up as a community statement built of each individual singing into the void."

Community in the time of corona. American Musicals has created a process—and metaphor—for these times.

Engaging Broadway professionals Allegra Libonati and David Hancock Turner was possible through support from the Elson Family Arts Initiative Fund.

Two Poets and a River: Worlds of Love in the Wakhan Valley



Professor Richard Wolf recording the sound of ice on the Oxus. Photo: Richard Wolf

On opposite sides of the Oxus River border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan live two poet-singers who share a common language, faith, and family network and yet remain separated by vicissitudes of the Great Game, the 19th century conflict between the British Empire and Czarist Russia. Ethnomusicologist Richard Wolf has been contemplating the rupture that exists across this divide in his work-in-progress “Two Poets and a River” — a film about poet-singers Qurbonsho in Tajikistan and Daulatsho in Afghanistan.

Wolf, a professor in Music and South Asian Studies, has a longstanding curiosity about Central Asian people and music, but his research efforts began in earnest on a Fulbright fellowship to Tajikistan in 2012.

“I went to Central Asia to work on Wakhi music and soon came to know of Qurbonsho, a poet-singer who lives on the Tajik side of the river,” he said. “I was always curious about the Wakhis living on the Afghan side, but in 2012–13, as a Fulbright scholar, I wasn’t allowed to cross into Afghanistan.”

The border had been negotiated long ago by rivals Britain and Russia, and Wolf was intent on crossing it, but the effort took years. In 2015, he returned to Tajikistan with names of Wakhi poets, musicians, and their villages in hand. He and his small team drove for several days until the road came to an abrupt end: melting snow had descended in torrents off the

mountaintops and washed out the road and many settlements. Wolf and his companions were forced to continue into Upper Wakhan by foot, yak, and donkey. In village after village, he would hear of Daulatsho, who seemed to be everyone’s teacher as well as the composer of most modern Wakhi songs. Wolf arrived at Daulatsho’s village of Yur (alt. 10,500

ft.) only to find that the musician had retreated to the higher pastures where Wakhis graze their cattle in the summer months. The poet-singer finds much creative inspiration in the high mountain flowers, fields, rocks, and rushing water.

“I left word that I’d return the next year. In July 2016, Daulatsho was ready for me and set me up in a one-room house. But I didn’t get much of a chance to see what was going on in the village. So I proposed making a film in order to have an excuse to see more of the village.”

Wolf had used other formats to present scholarly material before—his 2014 book, *The Voice in the Drum: Music, Language, and Emotion in Islamate South Asia*, was a work of creative nonfiction based on 30 years of fieldwork in India and Pakistan. He had been thinking about using a film to create a sequel, but his current research in Central Asia led him to postpone that plan.

“Two Poets and a River” took shape over the next several years and has been shown in the US and Europe as a work in progress. Wolf traces the poets’ contemplations on separation, family, and environment, as well as their imaginings about what lies on the other side of the border. The two singers knew of one another by reputation and through recordings Wolf had made, but they had never met. In the

winter of 2018–19, stranded with Daulatsho not far from the border because an enormous truck had broken down and blocked the road, Wolf realized he was close enough to pick up a cellphone signal from Tajikistan. He called Qurbonsho, and the two poets spoke to each other for the first time.

“The life experiences of these two musicians differ significantly,” Wolf said. “Qurbonsho studied in Soviet schools near his house and served as a construction worker for the army; Daulatsho had to relocate to the district center. He has crossed the border into nearby Pakistan but for the most part stays in Wakhan. Qurbonsho lives on what he makes from performing at weddings, but no one can afford to pay Daulatsho for his performances—rather he survives on his meager monthly salary as a schoolteacher. Distances that can be covered in hours on the Tajik side may take days on the Afghan side. Wakhis from Tajikistan see in Afghan Wakhis images of themselves 50 years ago. Afghan Wakhis see in their Tajik counterparts a measure of freedom and wealth.”

Wolf continued: “As I worked with each of these musicians, however, I found many similarities. They share common lifeways of pastoralism, house construction, and food. Their musical poetry is based on themes common to the Persianate world. The quintessentially Wakhi song of separation, *bulbulik* [nightingale], inspires the art of both poets with its sparse, three-line structure. Daulatsho’s Afghan Wakhi poems tend to be lengthy but use only a few melodies. Qurbonsho writes brief, pithy poems that draw from a variety of musical styles current in Tajikistan.”

After more than 100 years of imposed division, what resonates among the Wakhis, what their poets sing and write about, comes from something deeper: love, longing, and distance from a beloved.

“My film considers the broad trope of love as well as what it means for members of a community to be separated across a national divide. I was thinking of ending ‘Two Poets and a River’ with the two men meeting in person,” says Wolf. “But I’m not sure that would be true to the spirit of love, loss, and separation that underlies the river metaphor.”

Faculty News

Professor of the Practice CLAIRE CHASE, together with the performance artist Ione and the International Contemporary Ensemble, led a worldwide Zoom performance of Pauline Oliveros' *World Wide Tuning Meditation* each Saturday in April. The events were part of Music on the Rebound, an online festival designed to support performers during the coronavirus pandemic. Chase also helped raise money for the New Music Solidarity Fund by turning online concerts into fundraisers. Most recently, she performed Steve Reich's *Vermont Counterpoint* as part of the Bang on a Can Marathon online.

Quincy Jones Professor INGRID T. MONSON was elected to American Academy Arts & Sciences, joining the distinguished company of previously elected members such as Benjamin Franklin, Robert Frost, Margaret Mead, Judy Woodruff, and John Lithgow.



This semester Fanny Peabody Professor ALEX REHDING had talks and residencies canceled at Cornell, Indiana, NYU, and the Bonn Beethovenhaus. He managed to give talks in person at Baltimore County and the Harvard Graduate Student Conference. Publications came out in *MusikTheorie*, *Journal of Music Theory*, and the *History of Music Theory* blog.

Assistant Professor BRAXTON SHELEMY was inducted into the 35th annual MLK Jr. College of Ministers and Laity Collegium of Scholars at Morehouse College.

G. Gordon Watts Professor KAY KAUFMAN SHELEMY traveled to Ethiopia during the second half of January. She also gave a series of talks in Ireland in February, including the keynote lecture for the annual meeting of ICTM Ireland at the University of Cork. In addition to speaking in Dublin, Shelemy gave a talk, "After the Revolution A Musical Portrait of the Ethiopian



Above: Shelemy at the Irish World Academy. Below: Ethiopian Christian Epiphany procession in Addis Ababa on January 21, 2020, Saint Michael's day.



Diaspora," at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance in Limerick.

Professor of the Practice ESPERANZA SPALDING was awarded a Grammy for the best jazz vocal album for her work *12 Little Spells*.

A concert featuring Ritual Ensemble—CPCI graduate student RAJNA SWAMINATHAN, Senior Lecturer YOSVANY TERRY, CPCI graduate student GANAVYA DORAISWAMY, and Rosenblatt Professor VIJAY IYER—was live-streamed from Wigmore Hall this past January.



Morton B. Knafel Research Professor THOMAS F. KELLY and graduate student GIULIO MINNITI on Kelly's vespa pre-virus. Minniti was conducting primary research in Rome.



Preceptors DANIEL CHONG and JESSICA BODNER of the Parker Quartet at home, offering up a performance of Mozart G Major Duo Adagio from their living room for audiences who miss seeing them in Paine Hall.

Graduate Student News

IAN COPELAND had a chapter published in an edited collection that came out in January. The chapter is entitled “Making a Difference? Musical Strategies Among Malawi’s Voluntourists,” and the book is *The Art of Emergency: Aesthetics and Aid in African Crises*, edited by Chérie Rivers Ndaliko and Samuel Mark Anderson, with Oxford University Press.

National Sawdust, the Williamsburg music incubator and non-profit performing arts space has announced that SONJA MUTIĆ is one of three winners of the third annual Hildegard Competition for emerging female, trans, and nonbinary composers. The winning composers will each receive a \$7,000 cash prize, a new works commission, coaching and mentorship by the Competition’s judges and a performance and recording by the National Sawdust Ensemble led by cellist Jeffrey Zeigler under the baton of conductor Lidiya Yankovskaya.

SAMORA PINDERHUGES recently released the song & film “Hold That Weight.” The film is about the work that goes into trying to re-acclimate to home life and society when released from prison—battling thoughts, trying to navigate a way forward and battling a prison system that traumatizes those it incarcerates and then gives no thought to what happens after people are released. The song was produced by Jack DeBoe and the film directed by Daniel Pfeffer, starring Lucas Monroe and Michael Barrett, and based on their true stories.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w237dUE1PIQ>

DAVINDAR SINGH is a Language Fellow at the American Institute of Indian Studies for the 2020–2021 academic year.

HENRY STOLL has been named a fellow by the Camargo Foundation in Cassis, France and an Advisory Council Dissertation Fellow by the McNeil Center for Early American Studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

PAYAM YOUSEFI was awarded the Charles Seeger Prize at this year’s annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology for his paper, “Singing Resistance through Subversion: Feminine Voices Renegotiating Iran’s Public Sphere.” Yousefi is currently on a Frederick Sheldon Traveling Fellowship conducting fieldwork in Iran for his dissertation, “The Politics of Style in Classical Persian Music.”



Students and faculty of Music 168, Analog Synthesizer and the Digital Age, at their end-of-term HYDRA concert in Paine Hall. Students composed on historic synthesizers, as well as used music software to create non-beat-based drone music. HYDRA loudspeaker orchestra is a sound projection system designed for the performance of electroacoustic music with or without the participation of instrumentalists.

After the University shift to digital learning, the 25 PhD student fellows who host interactive events moved quickly to ensure that social distancing wouldn’t erode the grad students’ sense of community. Using Engage, a social engagement platform also used by the College, center fellows have begun ramping up a slate of options to gather virtually, including a weekly knitting and crochet circle, a photography workshop, and virtual exercise classes.

SARAH KOVAL and ETHA WILLIAMS, third- and sixth-year doctoral students studying historical musicology, decided to launch a podcast, “Distant Socialing,” after the campus closure put an end to a tongue-in-cheek “conceptual podcast” they had held over meals in the Commons dining hall where they would discuss and rate the food and chat with whomever joined them.

“When the coronavirus crisis hit, we started trying to think about ways to maintain closeness and community amidst growing physical distance — both small-scale (social distancing and campus closures in Cambridge) and large-scale (as Sarah returned to Canada while I stayed in Cambridge),” Williams said via email. “We thought that making our conceptual podcast a ‘real’ podcast could be one way to do this.”

In addition to their usual humor, the pair discuss the psychological aspects of coping with the pandemic and share some tips they learned in a Harvard University Health Services workshop, “Managing Emotions.”

—excerpted from *Harvard Gazette*, “At Graduate Schools, Reinvention on the Fly,” 3.20.20



Davindar Singh



Payam Yousefi

Swashbucklers, Superheroes, Sorcerers: Gender Politics in Film Scores

Grace Edgar wasn't born when Maureen O'Hara swashbuckled her way through the 1952 film, *At Sword's Point*. O'Hara played the daughter of Athos, one of the four Musketeers, charged with rescuing Queen Anne in 1648 France in collaboration with children of the other Musketeers. What interests Edgar about the film, though, and about many other action films created in the period between 1950s and 1980s, is that it features a strong female character, something that's not as rare as most of us think.

"There were strong women in film far earlier than people realize. When Princess Leia appeared in *Star Wars* in 1977, many people thought she must be the first. So too, when female heroes appeared after the rise of second-wave feminism there was a sense that this must be new. But there are many examples of strong female characters in film dating back to the earliest days of cinema. It's that we tend to think only of canonical movies that came out in the 1970s and beyond."

Edgar chose the time period for her dissertation because it roughly coincided with the Cold War era. She'd initially been drawn to Copland and Blitzstein, whose music she loved, but discovered that what she loved about working with their music applied to film scores as well: it offered a lens through which to look at the contemporary gender politics.

"During the Cold War we were focused on containing communism abroad, but in the domestic arena there were anxieties about gender. World War II had ended and women were being pushed out of higher paying jobs and encouraged to return to the private sphere. It's not a surprise that there were swashbuckling women and Westerns with gunslinging female bandits and saloon owners in the 1950s. People wanted to explore how women could play a larger role in the public sphere. The trick was to offer people the opportunity to watch women breaking the rules while also reassuring them that traditional gender norms are still somewhat intact."

The scores for these action movies, written largely by men, were stylistically diverse, consisting of, for example, sweeping, Wagner-inspired Romantic scores for swashbucklers and theme-song scores for Westerns.



Maureen O'Hara as Claire in *At Sword's Point*.

In Roy Webb's score for *At Sword's Point*, Maureen O'Hara's character is represented by the male-coded heroic theme used for the three other (male) swordfighters. When her character falls in love with the son of D'Artagnan, though, Webb introduces what Edgar calls "a very conspicuous love theme." Maureen O'Hara could sword fight and save France, but she also needed to put on a dress at some point and fall in love with a man.

As second-wave feminism worked its way into art and entertainment, bold female superheroes emerged. Films like *Supergirl* (1984) rode that cultural wave. Jerry Goldsmith's score plays on the camp legacy of comic books, queering Supergirl by linking her to a male-coded leitmotif. Other films, like *Conan the Barbarian* (1982), channeled the backlash against feminism. "In *Conan*," says Edgar, "the powerful female character [the thief Valeria] was hijacked by conservative messaging. Even though Valeria participates in action sequences, she is only linked to a love theme, which indicates her function in the film—despite her abilities—is to serve as a love interest for Conan."

"All of these Cold War-era action genres—swashbucklers, Westerns, superhero films, or sword-and-sorcery films—come with expectations for the music that's largely based on the main character being a man. There's more activity in the music that's coded as masculine. The instruments, style, it all tells you something about how you are to understand the character. So how do these

strong women characters interact with expectations? Film scores participate in a larger discourse on women's rights."

For a more recent example, take *Wonder Woman* (2017).

Wonder Woman (Gal Gadot) was introduced in *Batman vs. Superman: Dawn of Justice* (2016). She was sexual, sultry, mysterious; she was exoticized. Hans Zimmer and Junkie XL gave Gadot's character an outsider, otherworldly theme. One year later, she reprised her role as *Wonder Woman* in the eponymous film.

"Rupert Gregson-Williams's score for 2017's *Wonder Woman* did some interesting things. He desexualized the character by separating the theme music he inherited from Zimmer from the new depiction of *Wonder Woman*. When he did use exoticist orchestration, it was not to sexualize her, but to create the sense of an ancient Greek mythological setting. Gregson-Williams additionally built similar theme music for *Wonder Woman* and for Ares, the god of war. *Wonder Woman* was no longer marked as being different, but as having the same stature as Ares."

From *Batman vs. Superman* to *Wonder Woman*, Gal's character musically morphed from sex object to god.

"A lot of scholars concentrate on big, canonical movies. I noticed there were lots of movies where women played interesting roles that haven't been talked about. Telling the history of film scoring with regard to strong female characters illuminates the Hollywood system from a different angle."

Grace Edgar's dissertation is titled "Hearing Hollywood Women: Music and Gender in Action Films, 1950s–1980s." She is a G-6 PhD candidate in musicology and her chapter "I Am No Lady When I Fight!": Gender Politics in the Postwar Swashbuckler Score," is forthcoming in *Sounds Like Action! Music in the Action Film*, edited by James Buhler and Mark Durrand (Routledge).



Alumni News

Berkowitz Named Director of Global Health at Tyson School of Medicine



The Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine announced AARON BERKOWITZ (PhD 09) will serve as the founding Director of Global Health and will also lead the development of the school's neurology curriculum. Berkowitz previously served as the Director of the Global Neurology Program at Brigham and Women's Hospital and an Associate Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School. He continues to serve as a Health and Policy Advisor in Neurology to Partners In Health, and a Senior Specialist Consultant to Doctors Without Borders.

Dr. Berkowitz has been a leading voice in neurology, medical education, and global health, having contributed to practice-defining texts and research. He has published over 60 peer-reviewed articles, written the chapters on neurology in resource-limited settings in *Samuels Manual of Neurologic Therapeutics* and the *Oxford Handbook of Humanitarian Medicine*, and published the acclaimed textbooks *Clinical Neurology* and *Neuroanatomy: A Localization-based Approach* and *Clinical Pathophysiology Made Ridiculously Simple*.

Berkowitz has been involved in humanitarian collaborations in settings including Haiti, Malawi, the Navajo Nation, and Boston's homeless. His work with the NGO Partners In Health led to the development of the first neurology training program in Haiti. His efforts were recognized by the Mridha Spirit of Neurology Humanitarian Award from the American Brain Foundation in 2018 and the Viste Patient Advocate Award from the American Academy of Neurology in 2019.

TREVOR BAČA (PhD 16) accepted a lectureship in the Music Department at Yale University where he is teaching seminars on 20th-century music and American vernacular musics.

LOUIS EPSTEIN (PhD 13) received tenure at St. Olaf's College.

RUJING HUANG (PhD 19) received a post-doc position in Music Cultures and AI at KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm.

EVAN MACCARTHY (PhD 11) has accepted a three-year position between Amherst College and UMass Amherst.



Joshuah Campbell

Two recent graduates of Harvard College, JOSHUAH CAMPBELL ('16), and GABE FOX PECK ('20), were at the Oscars this past February, where "Stand Up," a song that Campbell co-wrote with Cynthia Erivo and Fox-Peck co-produced for the biopic *Harriet*, was nominated in the best original song category.

Both were grateful for the mentorship of VIJAY IYER, Franklin D. and Florence Rosenblatt Professor of the Arts, and each performed for the other's senior creative thesis (Fox-Peck's was a gospel performance, Campbell's jazz).

"We've been tight collaborators off and on," said Campbell, a South Carolina native who is currently working on a master's in divinity at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. "Harvard has given me several people like Gabe. We had to find community with other people in extracurriculars. We learned to hustle, and we learned to love doing it with each other."

Elton John won the Oscar, but we all are proud of and amazed by Joshuah and Gabe. —Excerpted from the *Harvard Gazette*, 2.5.2020.

MATTHEW MUGMON (PhD 13) was appointed Associate Professor at the University of Arizona.

HANNAH LEWIS (PhD 14) has been promoted to Associate Professor at the University of Texas, Austin.

LEI LIANG (PhD 06) has been awarded the Grawemeyer Award for his large-scale orchestral work "A Thousand Mountains."

MEREDITH SCHWEIG was awarded the Fulbright for travel to Taiwan and to write about Teresa Teng.

FREDERICK REECE (PhD 18) has been offered a one-year position at the University of Washington in Seattle.

ANNIE SEARCY (PhD 16) to the faculty of the University of Washington in Seattle. Currently, she is investigating the intersections of music, politics, and dance, and she is using dance as

a means of bridging the gap between the seemingly intangible aspects of music and the immediacy of political action. Searcy is writing a book titled *Ballet in the Cold War: A Soviet-American Exchange*, currently



under contract with Oxford University Press. In addition, Searcy has been exploring the relationship between dance and hip hop music in the Broadway show *Hamilton*, with an article on "Bringing Dance Back to the Center in *Hamilton*" published in a special issue on the musical in the journal *American Music*.

Library News

Uqbāl mīt Sanah, Aziz El-Shawan

Aziz El-Shawan (1916–1993) was twentieth-century Egypt's most prominent composer. His collection of manuscript scores—including finished works, sketches and miscellaneous other materials—is held here at Harvard's Loeb Music Library, and we are excited to announce that the Aziz El-Shawan Collection of Manuscript Scores is now fully processed, with nearly all of its contents digitized and freely available online.

You may read more about this collection by accessing the blogpost, written by Josh Kantor, Assistant Keeper of the Isham Memorial Library [<http://blogs.harvard.edu/loebmusic/author/linklater/>]

New Appointment

JOSEPH KINZER, Senior Curatorial Assistant, has been appointed to section editor for the *Malaysian Journal of Music*.

Forthcoming Publication

A biography with a collection of essays about the work of composer LEI LIANG, Harvard PhD 2006, is coming this summer. "Confluence of One Hundred Streams: Narrating the Soundscapes of Lei Liang" includes a collection of his writings, essays by the late Chou Wen-chung, poet Wai-lim Yip, UCSD colleagues Aleck Karis, Seth Lerer, Steven Schick, and



Promotional photograph of Aziz El-Shawan. From the private collection of Salwa El-Shawan Castelo-Branco.

Falko Kuester, ethnomusicologist KAY KAUFMAN SHELEMAY, composers Paul Chihara, Jia Daqun, and Shulamit Ran, Laing's publisher Norman Ryan (Schott Music), critics James Chute, Ettore Garzia, and Robert Kirzinger, and musicologists Yayoi Uno Everett, Wulalji (Inner Mongolia), Ban Lixia (Beijing), and Chen Hongduo (Shanghai). Harvard librarian QIU LINGWEI wrote Liang's biography. The 500-page volume includes a DVD and over 100 photographs. It is edited by musicologist Qin Luo and will be published by a leading music publisher in China, the Shanghai Conservatory of Music Press.

Josh Kantor's 7th Inning Stretch

Ever since the baseball season was supposed to have started on March 26th, Music Library assistant and Boston Red Sox organist JOSH KANTOR has been live-streaming organ concerts and taking song requests daily at 3:00pm EDT from his living room in order to help himself and others miss Fenway Park and baseball a little less, and to raise money for food banks. The concerts, which have been profiled by dozens of local and national media outlets, can be viewed via <http://facebook.com/7thinningstretch2020> (Facebook log-in required to watch live and to post to the live chat/request line, but not required to watch any time after the performance concludes).



Composer Lei Liang

Hurtado Wins Guggenheim



Composer and pianist JOSÉ LUIS HURTADO (PhD 09), an associate professor in the University of New Mexico's Department of Music in the College of Fine Arts, is one of the 2020 winners of the Guggenheim Fellowship, one of the nation's most prestigious honors. Both a pianist and composer, Hurtado plays and writes music that is known in academia as contemporary classical music. His catalogue includes

works for solo instruments, mixed ensembles, and orchestra.

With the Guggenheim Fellowship Hurtado will focus writing a concertante piano work for a child pianist. The instrumentation will include a piano soloist, plus a string orchestra, two percussionists, and electronics. The piece will be written for his 10-year-old son Mateo, who will premiere the piece both here in the U.S. and Mexico.

Demirjian Awarded Georg Solti Conducting Award



Photo: Panagiotis Achouriotis

ARAM DEMIRJIAN (AB 08) received the 2020 Sir Georg Solti Conducting Award, the largest grant currently given to a single promising American conductor 38 years of age or younger. Demirjian is Music Director of the Knoxville Symphony Orchestra (KSO). During his three-year tenure, the orchestra has attained new artistic heights and sustained significant ticket revenue increases. In 2020, the KSO was selected as one of four orchestras to be featured at SHIFT: A Festival of American Orchestras, presented by the Kennedy Center and Washington Performing Arts. Of note is Demirjian's conducting of the nationally acclaimed, 17-performance run of Bernstein's *Candide* with the KSO in 2018.

Demirjian is also the recipient of 2017 and 2019 Solti Foundation U.S. Career Assistance Awards, a 2018 Solti Foundation U.S. Opera Residency and the 2011 Robert J. Harth Conducting Prize from the Aspen Music Festival, where he was a three-time Conducting Fellow in the Aspen Conducting Academy.

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Fromm Music Foundation's 20th Century Composers Series Reissue



From January 1957 to March 1962 Columbia Masterworks in collaboration with the Fromm Music Foundation released a series of 9 highly acclaimed LPs in the Twentieth Century Composer Series with music by composers including Elliott Carter, Luigi Dallapiccola, William Denny, Leon Kirchner, Ernst Krenek, Benjamin Lees, Jerome Rosen, Ilhan Usmanbas and Ben Weber.

Sony Classical – with kind support by the Fromm Music Foundation – has now properly documented the collaboration between Columbia Masterworks and the Fromm Music

Produced by Robert Russ in collaboration with the Fromm Music Foundation at Harvard University. Distributed by Sony Music Entertainment

Foundation with the release of a special 9 (+1) CD boxed set, remastering the remaining 6 LPs with repertoire by Foss, Harrison, Killmayer, Kirchner, Krenek, Weber and Dallapiccola from the 2- and 3-track analogue tapes, and thus making this special repertoire available worldwide on CD.

These reissues allow mid-century masterpieces, recorded with top performers and the best technology of their time, to be re-heard with fresh ears. Fromm wanted to avoid the common scenario of a new work being premiered with great fanfare but never heard again. Therefore, the Foundation's grants were designed to galvanize rather than subsidize, by generating networks of support among composers, journals, performers, recording companies, and music publishers.

From 1953, with the help of a committee of experts, he granted the Fromm Music Foundation Award to support a premiere with top performers in a major city, a recording, and publication of the score. (Most of the composers featured on Fromm's Epic series, here CDs 1–6 and 8, received Fromm Music Foundation Awards.) Later, he would often provide the same “package deal” to the works he commissioned. By fostering the dissemination of works, Fromm sought to establish a repertory of American classical music that would be esteemed and respected like the contemporary European music of his youth.

Since its inception, the Foundation has commissioned over 478 compositions in classical, jazz, and hybrid genres.