

Music Department

Colloquium Series Spring 2020

Thursdays | 4:30–6:00pm |

This lecture series showcases new work by performers, composers, and scholars in ethnomusicology, musicology, music theory, sound art, and cultural history. The colloquia also invite dialogue with professionals working in arts education and in librarianship. The series is organized by Jane Alden.

All colloquium held in Adzenyah Rehearsal Hall 003 unless otherwise posted.

Spring 2020

Lynsey Callaghan - Conductor/Educator/Scholar, Dublin

“Revisiting the Kodály Concept in Irish Choral Music Education

January 30, 2020 4:30 p.m.

This presentation draws on personal experience to explore Zoltán Kodály’s music pedagogy and the philosophy associated with this Hungarian music educator. Following a brief overview of the music-educational reforms that were achieved by Kodály and his collaborators and students, I will outline briefly the political and cultural context in which Kodály achieved these reforms. Moving the focus to present-day Ireland, I use a range of reports and publications to summarize current music education policy and practice, and I assess Kodály’s philosophy of music education in relation to the contemporary Irish context. Finally, I present Dublin Youth Choir as a case study of an organization that had adopted and adapted Kodály’s philosophy of music education to meet the needs of contemporary Irish society.

Lynsey Callaghan is an Irish conductor and educator with research interests in Kodály training and medieval musicology. She has conducted the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra, the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, and the Ulster Orchestra. Passionate about providing opportunities for youth choral music, in 2017, Lynsey founded Dublin Youth Choir, which now comprises Chamber Choir, Youth Choir, Male Voice Choir, and Junior Choir, and is still growing! Lynsey is also the Musical Director of the Belfast Philharmonic Youth and Chamber Choirs. Her work embodies a Kodály-inspired philosophy of music education. Lynsey has worked as a musicianship tutor for the National Youth Choirs of Great Britain and Ireland. In 2016, she was appointed Head of Musicianship and Conductor for Youth Choir Kenya. She has taught on the undergraduate music degree in Trinity College Dublin and at the Kodály Society of Ireland’s annual summer course.

Aaron Bittel - Q&A with the Music Librarian, Wesleyan University
"A Town Hall with the New Music Librarian"

February 6, 2020 4:30 p.m.

In preparation for Aaron's colloquium, please give thought to the following question:
"It's your Music Library; it's your World Music Archives; What do you want them to be?"

Perhaps peruse the following websites, as you reflect on these questions:

Ethnomusicology: Global Field Recordings, www.ethnomusicology.amdigital.co.uk/Ethnographic Sound Archives Online, <https://search.alexanderstreet.com/etsa>

Aaron M. Bittel is the new Director of the World Music Archives and Music Librarian at Wesleyan University. He previously served as Archivist-Librarian and Head of Digital Projects for the UCLA Ethnomusicology Archive, one of the largest and oldest ethnographic audiovisual archives in North America, and also taught courses on audiovisual archives and oral history at UCLA. His principal areas of research and professional practice are archives education, digital archives, and the implementation of open standards and open platforms for preservation and access. He served for several years as co-chair of the Education and Training Committee of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC), and has also held leadership positions in the Music Library Association (MLA) and International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archives (IASA). Aaron is an active musician with scholarly and performing interests in free reed instruments, music of Quebec, Ireland, and the Balkans.

Eben Graves - Ethnomusicologist, Yale University ISM

"The Politics of Musical Time: Ritual Temporality and Media Production in Bengali Devotional Performance"

February 13, 2020 4:30 p.m.

For centuries, performances of devotional song in eastern India have used temporal features of musical style to express ideas about religious affect and political belonging. A feature of musical time prominent in *padabali kirtan*, a medium of song and storytelling from the Bengal region, is the use of an expansive musical style that elongates relatively short song texts into long-song forms. The slow tempos and large meters used in performance illustrate connections between musical style and the processes of devotional meditation central to devotional practice in Bengal since the sixteenth century. While musicians attempt to reinforce these links in the present, features of modern time organization have introduced temporal conflicts that challenge the completion of full-length song renditions. This talk examines how musicians work to reinforce the connections between devotional practice and musical time that are strained in the performance contexts of contemporary India, as I focus on how features of musical time are negotiated in live performance and media production.

Eben Graves holds a PhD in Ethnomusicology from the University of Texas at Austin and has recently held fellowships at Yale University and Columbia University. His research on devotional song in South Asia has appeared in the journals *Ethnomusicology* and the *Journal of Hindu Studies*, amongst other publications. His current book project focuses on connections between musical performance, devotional practice, and social time in contemporary West Bengal, and is titled *The Politics of Musical Time: Expanding Songs and*

Shrinking Markets in Bengali Devotional Performance. He currently directs an interdisciplinary fellowship program and several research initiatives at the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. Apart from scholarship, he has studied the Bengali *khol* for many years, and finds time to study, teach, and perform Bengali music whenever possible.

Eliot Bates - Ethnomusicologist, CUNY

“Interface Aesthetics and Analog Feel: Rematerializing Synthesizer and Recording Studio Gear Cultures”

February 20, 2020 4:30 p.m.

What accounts for the enduring love of bulky, expensive audio hardware and large-format analog synthesizers at a time when software simulations and virtualizations are affordable, recallable, and often more convenient than their legacy hardware counterparts? This paper presents some of the initial findings of a multi-year, multimode research project Samantha Bennett and I have been doing on recording studio gear cultures, supplemented with findings from my own case study into Eurorack modular synths.

More than a simple matter of “consumer choice,” or of demonstrable differences in sound and sound quality, hardware audio technologies house a peculiar capacity to be constitutive of real-world and online gear cultures. Not all audio tech readily does this, however; the nuances of the look and feel of technological objects matter considerably, meaning that the user gaze on technologies, the kinesthetics of using them, and the haptic feedback provided during human-technological encounters work in tandem to create the desired embodied experiences of technological objects.

As I will show, the staging of these experiences (at trade shows, in media, on message forums) coalesces the economic fetishization of gear acquisition with the sexual fetishization of post-WWII military-industrial derived technologies—a previously underexamined aspect of the systemic gendered and racialized exclusions within audio technology/production milieus. Following a critical assessment of the extant hegemonic gear culture, I will assess the work of designers who experiment with queering interfacial norms in order to alter the dynamics of gear cultures.

Eliot Bates is an ethnomusicologist and technology studies scholar who researches recording production and the social lives of musical instruments and studio technologies. He received an MA in “ethnomusicology and interactive computer media” from Wesleyan University and a PhD in Ethnomusicology from UC Berkeley. Bates was an ACLS New Faculty Fellow and is currently on the faculty of the Graduate Center at the City University of New York. He has authored two books: *Digital Tradition: Arrangement and Labor in Istanbul’s Recording Studio Culture* (OUP, 2016), and *Music in Turkey: Experiencing Music, Expressing Culture* (OUP, 2011), and with Samantha Bennett coedited *Critical Approaches to the Production of Music and Sound* (Bloomsbury, 2018). He has contributed to over 80 albums and film scores as an engineer, producer or studio musician.

Seth Cluett -Composer/Visual Artist, Columbia University
“In(form)ation: Communication and Sonic Praxis”

February 27, 2020 4:30 p.m.

Through creative work examples ranging from scored, graphic, and text-based concert work to installed and performed spatial audio pieces, composer, artist, and researcher Seth Cluett will discuss the role of communication and meaning making systems in his current work.

Seth Cluett is a composer and visual artist who creates work that explores everyday actions at extreme magnification, examines minutiae by amplifying impossible tasks, and tries to understand the working of memory in forms that rethink the role of the senses in an increasingly technologized society. Ranging from photography and drawing to installation, concert music, and critical writing, his “subtle...seductive, immersive” (*Artforum*) sound work has been characterized as “rigorously focused and full of detail” (*e/i*) and “dramatic, powerful, and at one with nature” (*The Wire*). The recipient of grants from Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Fund and Meet the Composer, his work has been presented internationally at venues such as The Whitney Museum, MoMA/PS1, Moving Image Art Fair, CONTEXT Art Miami, GRM, and STEIM. His concert work has been commissioned by ensembles ranging from the Hong Kong Sinfonietta and the International Contemporary Ensemble to So Percussion, Catch Guitar Quartet, and Clogs and is documented on Line, Sedimental, Notice, and Winds Measure recordings. Cluett is the Assistant Director of the Computer Music Center and Sound Art Program at Columbia University and is Artist-in-Residence with Experiments in Art and Technology at Nokia Bell Labs where he maintains a studio and is active in research on virtual and augmented reality acoustics and multi-sensory communication. More information: <http://www.sethcluett.com>

Zosha Di Castri - Composer, Columbia University
“The Makeup and Mockup of a Musical Process”

March 26, 2020 4:30 p.m. - POSTPONED UNTIL FALL DUE TO COVID-19

This talk will offer an introduction to Di Castri’s compositional methods and eclectic interdisciplinary approaches through the prism of her recent solo, chamber, orchestral, and music-theatre work. Using elements of improvisation, composition, collaboration, various forms of musical notation, video as documentation, sound recording, and employing detailed digital audio mockups to communicate her ideas, she illustrates how her approach shifts depending on the setting and particular constraints of a given project. Rather than employing a single musical process that is structurally fixed, she discusses the artistic freedom she has found in allowing her writing to be context-sensitive and ever-evolving.

Zosha Di Castri is a Canadian composer/pianist/sound artist living in New York. Her work, which has been performed internationally, extends beyond purely concert music including projects with electronics, installations, and collaborations with video and dance. She has worked with such ensembles as the BBC Symphony and BBC Singers, San Francisco Symphony, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, the L.A. Philharmonic, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, ICE, JACK Quartet, Ekmeles, the NEM, and Talea Ensemble among others. Upcoming projects include a Koussevitzky commission from the Library of Congress for percussionist Steve Schick and ICE and a commission for the Grossman Ensemble in Chicago. Zosha is currently the Francis Goelet Assistant

Professor of Music at Columbia University and recently finished a year-long fellowship at the Institute for Ideas and Imagination in Paris. Her debut album *Tachitipo*, released November 2019 to critical acclaim, can be found on New Focus Recordings.

Mehmet Ali Sanlikol - Composer/Performer/Scholar, NEC

“Reconstructing a Turkish identity in Boston: Jazz, Mehter, Byzantine music, and bimusicality”

April 2, 2020 4:30 p.m. - POSTPONED UNTIL FALL DUE TO COVID-19

Immigrants are often challenged by how much of their already-formed identity and inherited culture to leave behind while adapting to their new social environment. In this paper I will focus on several social and ideological aspects of my environment while growing up in Turkey and then add to it certain specifics of what I came to experience in Boston as an immigrant. Finally, I will explain and demonstrate via examples how Turkish music has ‘travelled’ to be a part of my life in the US while helping reconstruct both my identity as well as my musical output.

Mehmet Ali Sanlikol is a multi-instrumentalist/vocalist, ethnomusicologist, and composer, whose unique blend of contemporary composition, jazz and Turkish music has been praised by critics all over the world. The Boston Globe described his music as “colorful, fanciful, full of rhythmic life...the multiculturalism is not touristy, but rather sophisticated, informed, internalized.” He made his Carnegie Hall debut in 2016 premiering his piece *Harabat/The Intoxicated* with the American Composers Orchestra. Sanlikol pairs Turkish instruments such as *zurna* (double reed wind), *ney* (end-blown flute), *kös* (large kettledrums) and *nekkare* (small kettledrums) with large ensembles to perform compositions in which Turkish *makam* (modes) and *usul* (rhythmic cycles) are intertwined with contemporary composition. On the other hand, his “coffeehouse opera”, *Othello in the Seraglio: The Tragedy of Sümbül The Black Eunuch*, bridges the musical cultures of opera house and coffeehouse, Baroque Italy and Ottoman Turkey. Performed 20 times within three years, it draws audiences into a meditation on race, slavery, sexuality and the entwined histories of East and West. Sanlikol has composed for, performed, and toured with Dave Liebman, Bob Brookmeyer, Billy Cobham, Anat Cohen, Antonio Sanchez, Tiger Okoshi, Gil Goldstein, Esperanza Spalding, The Boston Camerata, The Boston Cello Quartet, A Far Cry string orchestra, American Composers Orchestra, Okay Temiz and Erkan Oğur. He is the president of DÜNYA, a musicians’ collective dedicated to contemporary presentations of Turkish traditions, in interaction with other world traditions. Active as a scholar, his book *The Musician Mehters* was published in English and Turkish in 2011. Currently, Sanlikol is a full-time faculty member at New England Conservatory and he is also the director of NEC’s Intercultural Institute.