



ETHNOTES

News & Events...

EDITED BY
EMILY WANG

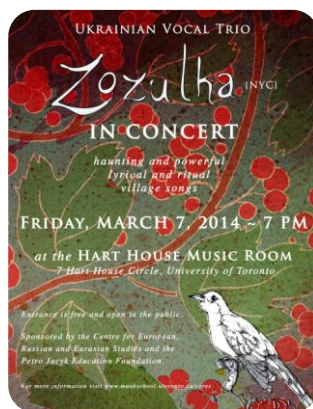
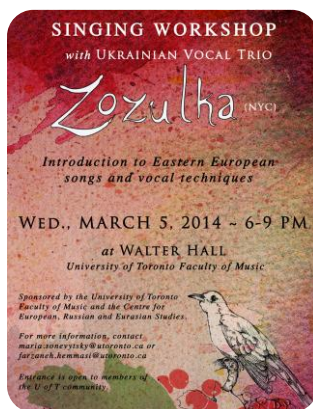
...New Doctor

Our friend **Carolyn Ramzy** has successfully completed, defended and submitted her PhD dissertation: "The Politics of (Dis)Engagement: Coptic Christian Revival and the Performative Politics of Song." Caro now lives in Washington D.C., although we got to hang out with her a little bit at SEM in November. Read about her post-defence perspective on page 7 of this issue.

...[soon to be] New Baby

[Rebecca Möllemann](#) and husband Jim Lim are happy to announce that they are expecting their firstborn at the end of April. Rebecca reports that the pregnancy is going well, and that her currently unnamed little boy will probably enjoy saying hi to everyone at Roundtable next fall, even though Rebecca will be on leave. Rebecca also wants to thank the community for all the warm wishes, smiles, and support she has received as she navigates the pregnancy during course work.

...Singing Workshop and Concert



Ethnomusicologist and Postdoc fellow at the Centre for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies Maria Sonevitsky (read our interview with her on page 2 of this issue) and Farzi Hemmasi organized a Ukrainian vocal workshop master class with the New York City-based trio Zozulka on March 5th in Walter Hall at the Faculty of Music.

In addition to the master class, the trio gave a concert at the Hart House Music Room on March 7th.

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Follow us on Facebook,
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...Korean Drumming

The U of T Korean Drumming Club, which meets on the weekends and is made up of students, faculty and community members, is inviting people interested in percussion, dance and general stress relief to join. It is free, not for credit, and generally about learning groovy percussion music and socializing – the music originates in farmers' percussion bands that play at village rites, annual celebrations and social events. The club generally meets on Sunday in the late afternoon and welcomes all. announcements!



A Chat With ...

Maria Sonevytsky

Maria Sonevytsky is an awesome ethnomusicologist and musician. This academic year (2013-14) Maria is the Jacyk Postdoctoral Fellow at the Center for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies at U of T. She hangs out with us at roundtables from time to time, and will be giving a talk on February 27th!

How do you and yours like Toronto so far?

My husband really likes Toronto, and that makes me happy because he's such a New Yorker! I really like Toronto, too, but to be honest I don't like the cold so much...I really like bicycling everywhere, but it has been so icy this winter I had to stop sometimes. That makes me sad! I really love the campus, though, and my office is lovely. All the resources close by are just lovely. I wish I could see more of Toronto, but right now I am kind of toddling around with a tiny human being. I've really been enjoying dim sum in Toronto, too, and that makes me very happy.

How's your year going?

This term I am teaching a seminar called "Topics in East Europe and Ukraine," or "Musical Exoticism of the Former Soviet Union," and it is going great! The seminar is small, and we have one ethnomusicologist in class! It's a cozy, nice seminar.



In the fall I just read a whole lot for my book project. I had the experience I suspect many of us have: just when you start to think you might know the literature you have to be dealing with, it opens up this whole other branch of literature you haven't read. It goes on and on like that, and you start to feel like you can just read eternally. Sometimes I think this might be specific to ethnomusicology, sometimes

I think it's built into being an academic. In a sense this is also a product of pursuing one's own project for which you feel a certain kind of accountability. My book project is one of those really big questions and there are so many literatures one can tap into, and because I am surrounded by area studies specialists and they bring incredibly specific geographical and historical knowledge to the table, so I can be tempted to stay in the library for years and years. So I need to decide to start writing.

Why do you think this "branching off" might be specific to ethnomusicologists?

I think there are many different voices and approaches in ethnomusicology, and there are so many different kinds of ethnomusicologists. The more ethnomusicologists I meet and the more ethnomusicologists I read, the more it points me to different directions. I think that plurality is built into our discipline.

How did you get into the project that turned into your book project?

The book project grew out of my dissertation. I was taking a look at two pretty distinct borderlands in Ukraine, and what marked them was that they were historically exoticized in the eyes of local imperial powers and travellers and ethnographic accounts. My interest was to see how those histories of exoticism were negotiated through music and sound in contemporary Ukraine. The fundamental questions I am asking have to do with constructs of civilization and barbarism, which are still relevant today. It's not a conventional monograph, so in the book version I am trying to theorize a little bit about how we can do comparative ethnomusicology today that is neither totally reductive nor...racist, frankly [laughs]. I want to reframe my project as something that might be useful for ethnomusicologists who might not be interested in my region.

The "keyword" for my project is exoticism, but it really grew out of this notion of wildness. What led me down this scholarly path was when Ukrainian pop star Ruslana won the Eurovision in 2004 with the song *Wild Dances*. And the Ukrainian diaspora was so proud. It was a big deal in terms of national pride. I remember witnessing the reactions being kind of stunned, because it was such an exoticizing way of presenting a national culture. The specific culture she



was representing was of the Hutsuls, the highlanders of the Carpathian Mountains. I was stunned by her “re-imagination,” because it was so much closer to Xena the Warrior Princess than what I understand to be indigenous Hutsuls. So I went to Hutsulshchyna and asked them what they thought of the *Wild Dances*. And it was fascinating! Their



It started with Eurovision... but turned out to be so much more.

reactions were as diverse as any group of people, but that diversity revealed to me that these representations of indigenous groups are complex, contingent, and emergent. It really gave birth to my dissertation from that small kernel. I was also interested in seeing what the utilities of

conceptual categories like “wild” or “exotic” might be beyond one small ethnic minority, so I looked to the Crimean Tatars, which I knew much less about at that time. The Tatars are one of the quintessentially exoticized groups, and had this incredibly traumatic story of being exiled but launched the boldest human rights campaign in the Soviet era for rights to return home. They also evaded civil war by being pacifists. It’s an incredible story, and I wanted to know more about their musical cultures.

What brought you to public ethnomusicology?

The public ethnomusicology stuff really started as an attempt to explain what I am up to and what my interests are! The first project I did was a multi-media museum exhibition in collaboration with a photographer friend who visited me in the field. We installed the pictures with Soviet rotary phones that we re-engineered so that when you pick up the phones in front of the pictures, it would play excerpts of the interview and some of the music. I am still proud of that engineering! The second project was a Chernobyl folk song project...and it began because I wanted an excuse to sing this really compelling music better. That had grown into a scholarly research project, and will probably be my second book project.

How do you balance all this musicking with your academic pursuit while you were in grad school?

I don’t know. I mean, I didn’t have a baby then [laughs]. I had a really great experience in grad school. I worked hard, and I think my advisor Aaron Fox – who I think is just one of the most brilliant people on this planet – just always believed in me, so that was really wonderful. I just... did it. I really love playing music and it was just always a big part of my life. Being in New York or any big city helps, too.

Lastly, do you have a take-home advice for current graduate students?

While you are in school and have the time, if you want to be in academic it’s never too early to start thinking about the steps it takes to get a job and build a career. Think about publishing, and learn to network effectively at conferences. Think about job materials like a job letter. It would be fine to start on that stuff earlier than later. And if you don’t want to be in academia, grad school is also a good place to think where else you want to be. Again, it’s never too early.

COMMUNITY FRIENDS: JOHN CARNES

John is a professional jewelry designer who teaches at OCAD. He can be spotted in world music ensembles around Toronto.

I started playing Balinese gamelan twenty-odd years ago in New York. I was buying strings for my bass and saw a flyer that said, literally, “Gamelan. Needs members.” I thought it was gonna be a bunch of hippies banging on pots, but it turned out to be Garry Kvistad’s group. There were many amazing people coming through there, and I just followed my interest.

I moved here in 2005 and found that Annette Sanger had instruments in the same tuning I learned to play in, so I said, “Okay, we gotta start a group!” So we started a quartet with Jim Kippen and Albert Wong, who was a composition major here years



ago. And then the dancer Keiko Ninomiya brought back instruments from Bali, so we started another group *gong kebyar* style called *gamelan kayonan*. We’ve played a couple of concerts, in particular as part of the Asian Heritage month in the Public Library. And then I met Josh Pilzer, who introduced me to traditional Korean drumming. I just totally fell in love with this stuff. I play music at least three nights a week.

I really love Toronto. I thought I’d eventually “go home” (West Coast), but realized I’m already home! This is it! I put down roots really quickly. Part has to do with the fact that Toronto is such an international city with so much to offer: there are so many opportunities and events. You get to see all the people doing different things, too. It’s a perfect city for me.

Notes From ... Our **Under** grads

In the first three issues, Ethnotes has spilled quite a bit of ink on professors, artists, and graduate students in ethnomusicology at the U of T. But our ethnomusicology community is bigger than that—many undergraduate students and community members also actively participate in the academic and musical life here. Here we've gathered a few different perspectives on ethnomusicology from our undergraduates.

Jamie Corbett

Jamie is a 4th year History and Culture Major at U of T. She will soon be undertaking graduate studies in ethnomusicology.

I entered my first year of study at the Faculty still trying to decide between piano performance, historical musicology, or (what I then thought was) ethnomusicology. In the first week of class, I attended the first session of Jim Kippen's *Music & Society* course – the ethnomusicology survey that famously begins with a lecture on “Happiness is a Warm Gun” – and I was convinced that ethnomusicology was indeed the discipline that best suited my musical interests and tastes. Since then I have taken many History & Culture classes that have led me to explore different musics and approaches. That enriched perspective shaped my understanding of music and ethnomusicology as a discipline.

Much of my learning has taken place outside the classroom. Encouraged by faculty members, I have taken advantage of the regular Colloquium series as well as conferences such as Society for Ethnomusicology – Niagara Chapter conference in 2012 and the graduate student conference *Sounding Bodies* in 2013. These experiences led to significant intellectual and personal growth, and I learned not only “what’s new” in the field but also how to be an academic – how to listen to a paper, how to handle post-talk chit-chat, etc. I would say these academic events were a really big part of my education here.

I have found that the community – including professors and friendly, relatable grad students – is very supportive and has given me many opportunities to stretch my mind and my ears. Thanks to the vibrant musical city of Toronto, I have been able to take ethnomusicology out of the classroom and into an active project under the supervision of Jeff Packman on folkloric music and dance in Toronto's Portuguese community – my initiation into fieldwork and the highlight of my academic experience so far. My advice to any undergraduate (or pre-undergraduate) with an interest in ethnomusicology is to engage in any way that makes you feel



comfortable—some shy emailing can quickly turn into a deepened interest and appreciation for music that you already love, or have yet to hear.

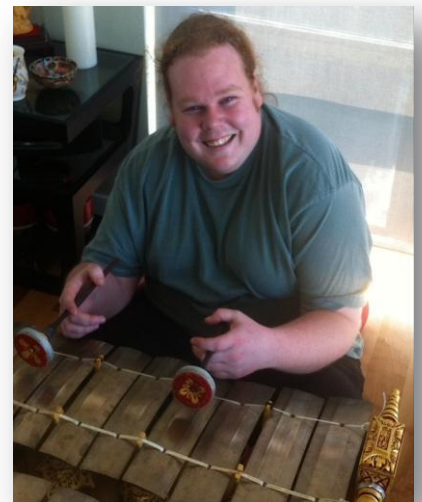
Andy McNeilly

Andy is a 3rd year Performance major in Percussion

My first semester at U of T was marked by a simple challenge from Jim Kippen in *Music & Society*: to listen to music in ways we hadn't before. I took that challenge very seriously. During that 12-week session and the numerous weeks following, I tracked my progress in listening as I submerge myself in the sounds of The Beatles, *bugaku*, Celtic music, *gamelan*, *gangkoudi*, The Guess Who, Roy Orbison, *samul-nori*, steel pan, *tabla*, Tamboo-Bamboo, and the list goes on. I listened voraciously and learned to play in many different musical traditions. As I am training to be a performer, listening is a crucial aspect of my growth as a musician.

In my second year I enrolled in *World Music* with Josh Pilzer and was again amazed. In that class we discussed in greater depth the relationship between music and society. I was mesmerized thinking about and listening to music in this way. I felt compelled to explore ethnomusicology, so in fall 2013 I enrolled in *Balinese Gamelan Performance and Context* with Annette Sanger. The course balanced the music's historical and social context with practical instruction by Visiting Artists Vaughan Hatch & Putu Evie Suyadnyani. For me, that was a culminating moment where the listening, playing, and understanding of music all came together. Through the friends I made in that course I am continuing my studies in gamelan privately this semester.

The ethnomusicology courses and resources at U of T that are offered to undergrads have been instrumental in my decision to pursue graduate studies in ethnomusicology.



Helen Geng

Helen is a first-year student majoring in trumpet performance.

To me, “ethnomusicology” used to be synonymous with phrases like “world music” or “ethnic music.” I used to have a very ethnocentric conception of music: that there was Western Art Music, and then there is a bunch of “foreign” music from “other” cultures. Then I encountered *Music & Society* where I came to understand “ethnomusicology” as a way to study music that considers *all* music, not just “other” music. What music is “other” music, anyway?

I realized recently how much that course shaped my thinking about music and the world. We were playing a piece called “Bali” in Wind Symphony. It is a fascinating and intricate piece resembling a gamelan orchestra (and now I know how Balinese gamelan is supposed to sound), but I was totally frustrated when I saw someone had pencilled in “(India)” next to the word Bali. Bali is not in India! Thanks to *Music & Society* I have learned not to think of “other cultures” as a homogenized blob, but to enjoy learning about music I am unfamiliar with instead of regarding it as something I was forced to learn in school. My encounter with ethnomusicology has also made me more aware of cultural events around Toronto. One of the coolest concerts I attended at school so far was the World Music concert in December that featured Klezmer music, Taiko drumming, and Balinese Gamelan. I am now much more likely to attend concerts that feature music from all over the globe, as opposed to the standard concert band and orchestra shows.

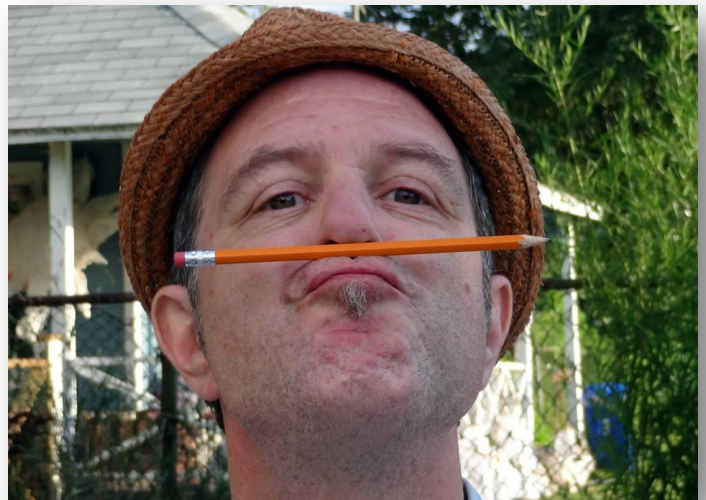


From Someone In The **Thick** Of It ... (PhD dissertation writing, that is) ... “Country” Chris Wilson

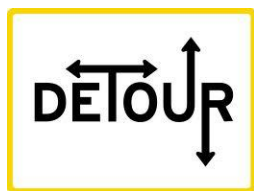
I imagine that there are those better suited than me to write a PhD dissertation. These other people are more focused, more disciplined, more brilliant. They have taken better notes, have their research materials labelled and alphabetized, write faster than I do, and are more popular with their friends. These other people are clearly better than me.

Now these people *may* exist – and my colleagues that have recently finished their program *are* brilliant I think (shout out to Meghan, Caro, Hillhouse, Bellaviti, Laver, Parm and Catherine) – but their work and work habits ought not to be any concern of mine. Writing a dissertation is an intensely personal thing, and the only way I’m going to manage to do it is to do it my way (cue the intro music . . .).

To say that it is a privilege to set aside 4-6 years of your life, design an original research project and execute it is an understatement. I get discouraged a lot, and feel a sense of social isolation that is new to me. But I am doing something that is uniquely *mine*. There is a lot of uncertainty that I have to cope with, and sometimes I am not sure why I decided to go this route. But at the end of this journey, I will look back at what will be the single largest achievement of my life, and the accomplishment will be mine to savour.



“Country” Chris, in typically thoughtful and productive mode, above, is completing a PhD dissertation on songwriters who live and work in Nashville, Tennessee. He has contributed a book chapter “Gender and Nashville Songwriters: Three Songs by Victoria Banks” for A Boy Named Sue Too: Gender and Country Music (eds Kristine M. McCusker & Diane Pecknold) out in 2015 with University of Mississippi Press.

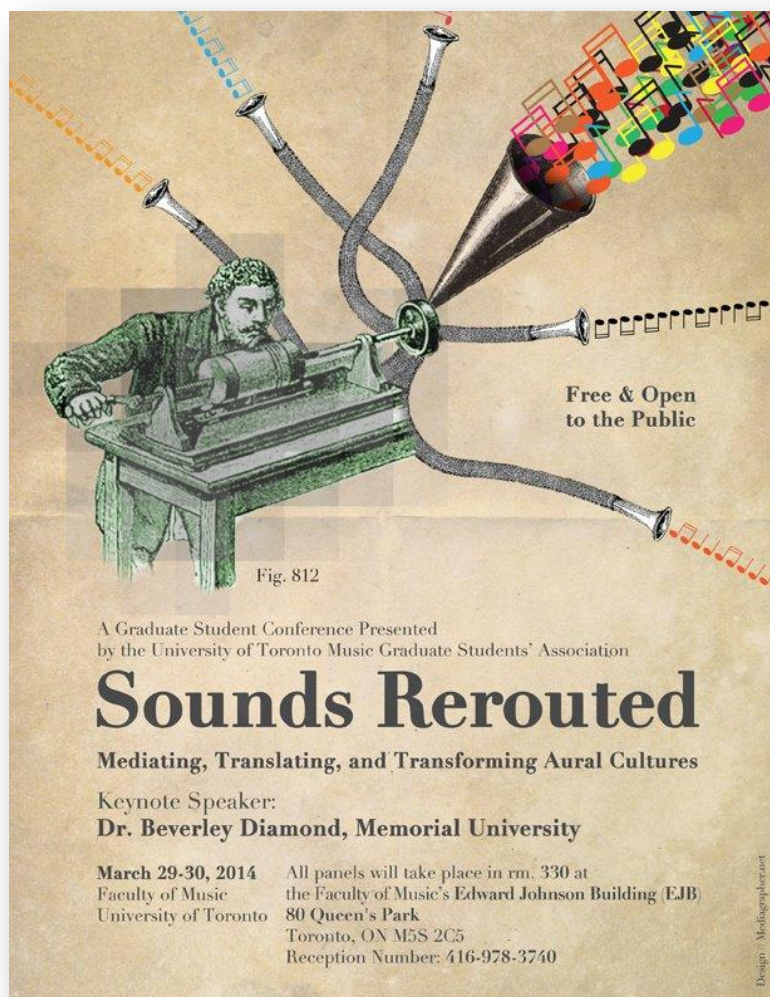


Sounds Rerouted

... from our Conference Organizer: **Alia O'Brien**

Sounds Rerouted: Mediating, Translating, and Transforming Aural Cultures is a conference about mediated music, where *mediation* is considered to be the processes by which sounds are moved – and move *us* – along axes of meaning and understanding. Through such processes, new creative or destructive possibilities for hearing, sounding, being, and doing might emerge. But what constitutes a mediating substance? For one, analogue and digital sound objects and encodings fall into this category, as do scores, graphic analyses, photographic and filmic representations, literature and criticism. Furthermore, even the most basic vocal utterances involve a series of transformative *intermediary* bodily actions; air is pushed upward by the diaphragm, rendered audible as it moves along the vocal chords, passes through the air and into the ear canal of another. Of course, sound itself is a medium; and so the list goes on. Thus, the topic of mediation offers a wonderfully open-ended point of entry for an interdisciplinary discussion about people and sounds.

The theme of *Sounds Rerouted* was inspired by an array of works that differently take up issues of (mass) reproduction, representation, circulation, and communication, including Benjamin's work on mechanical reproduction (1936), Attali's concepts of "representing," and "repeating" (1985), Bateson-via-Feld's "schismogenesis" (1994), Baudrillard's "hyperreality" (1981), and Deleuze and Guattari's "rhizome" and "deterritorialization" (1972, 1980), as well as more recent music scholarship on technoculture (Lysloff 2003), hearing, sensing, and modernity (Erlmann, ed. 2004), mediated sonic cultures (Greene and Porcello, eds. 2005), and piracy and remediation (Novak 2010, 2011). While our theme is in many ways tried-and-true, one need only consider the complex issues surrounding the use of pre-recorded music as a device for torture at Guantanamo Bay, or ongoing local debates about recordings, race, and appropriation to recognize the importance of perpetuating a conversation about translating aural cultures. Ultimately, it is my hope



that the papers and panels at this conference will engage with *rerouting sounds* from diverse – even contradictory – perspectives so as to further complexify and deepen our collective meditations on sonic transformations.

I am also excited to announce that University of Toronto alumnus **Dr Beverley Diamond** will be delivering the keynote address at *Sounds Rerouted*. Dr Diamond is currently the President of the Society for Ethnomusicology (2013-2015) and the Canada Research Chair in Ethnomusicology at Memorial University. An eloquent and engaging speaker, Dr Diamond's work explores issues including women's expressive cultures, Canadian historiography, the arts and reconciliation, indigenous modernities, and interplay between audio technologies, social meaning, and social action.



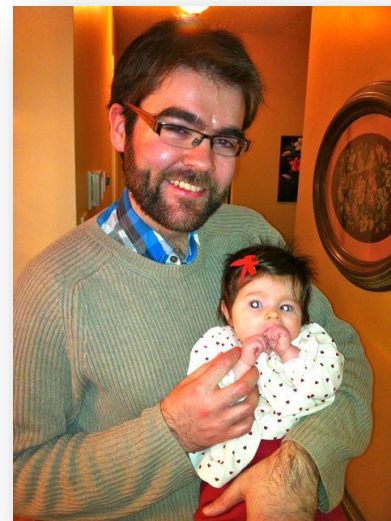
CONGRATULATIONS!

HANDSOME MARK LAYER @ GRINNELL

We are pleased to announce that “Handsome” **Mark Laver** (PhD Ethnomusicology, 2011) has accepted a tenure track position in Music (Jazz Studies) at Grinnell College. Located in central Iowa, Grinnell is one of the top-ranked liberal arts colleges in the United States. Mark is thrilled to be joining Grinnell's vibrant music department, and we wish him

the very best as he embarks on this new phase in his career. Naturally he will be joined by his lovely wife and U of T alumna Erin Bustin (MA in Musicology) and their daughter Nora.

Mark is presenting a paper titled "Improvise!™: Improvisation and the Aesthetics of Neoliberalism" to Roundtable on Monday, March 10 in room 224 at 3:30pm.



Nora with Mark

On The Menu For Next Year: Our 2014-15 Graduate Courses

The following graduate electives have been approved for next year...

Performing Politics

Farzaneh Hemmasi

How does group music making lend itself to communal feeling? How have dance movements contributed to social movements? What of music & dance's perceived powers to fracture social groups or to cause them to cohere? We explore discourses, practices, and experiences of power & politics in music and dance, draw on contemporary interdisciplinary literature considering topics such as the relative “agency” of musical improvisers, the widely reported experiences of collectivity in social dance, and national cultural policies that attempt to shape relations between performance and politics.

Latin American & Caribbean Music

Jeff Packman

Various kinds of mixing (e.g., racial, cultural) have been paramount in Latin America and the Caribbean, deeply informing musical sounds and practices, notions of national identity and more. This seminar will examine key scholarship on music that takes up questions of *mestizaje*, *mestiçagem*, *créolité*, and any number of other discourses of hybridity in the Latin American/Caribbean context. A central goal will be to better understand the processes, politics, and stakes for musical/cultural mixing and interrelationships between hybridities and music cultures in nation-states such as Brazil, Cuba, Peru, Haiti, etc.

Cultural Geography of Music

Josh Pilzer

Music is variously involved in the production of senses of place & space. Music and other forms of sound production and listening are likewise resources for navigating the maps and landscapes of culture and daily life. We consider practices of mapping through musical and lyrical reference; how the acoustic properties of sound are manipulated to create senses of space; how mobile musics variously reinforce or challenge laws and conventions of space; how music and dance inspire and are inspired by daily movement; how music forges connections with environments, etc.

Advanced Research in Indian Music

James Kippen

We look at elements of the melodic and rhythmic theory and practice of North Indian music. Our aims are (a) to understand how composition and improvisation work, thus providing a firm basis for their critical appreciation; (b) to uncover the socio-musical history and evolution of contemporary practices; (c) to address broader theoretical issues through an investigation of some of the key topics in that history. This course is taught in conjunction with an undergraduate elective introducing the key components and contexts of Hindustani musical practice.

Perspectives From The Other End Of The Tunnel ...

(PhD dissertation writing, that is) ... Carolyn Ramzy

It was a single Facebook status change that signalled the end: "Dr Ramzy is in da house!!!" I'll admit, it was the *sweetest* joy and the sweetest little victory to share this milestone with friends and family, encompassing work they had witnessed unfold, rise, and fall through a period of close to seven years.



I started my Ph.D. exactly 6.4 years ago, at least, according to LinkedIn. And in that time, my field research and writing has drastically shaped my life; it took me down the most unexpected paths, helped me to forge the most unlikely alliances, and embedded me in stories I thought I would always watch and

hear from afar. I study Egyptian Christian popular music, specifically how a genre of songs called *taratil* express Coptic Christian political identity a religious minority in Egypt. So,

when these songs made it into Tahrir Square during the January 2011 Uprising, I had to follow them.

As a newly minted Ph.D., life does not feel too different. I still continue to write papers and articles, read, revise, rinse, and repeat. The title change is nice but it is the possibilities it holds that are more exciting. Looking back to my first years as a student, I wish I had sooner realized the myriads of options available to me once I graduated. Perhaps, I would have explored other institutions, NGOs, and non-academic organizations academia sooner. I would have also invested more in connecting to others outside of my discipline. My courses in anthropology and Middle East studies connected me to some of the most interesting colleagues and gave me a perspective I would not have had if I had stayed only within the Faculty of Music.

At the moment, my journey takes me to Washington D.C. where I am a Program Manager at a small NGO called Coptic Orphans. There, I use my critical chops, writing, and research to supervise a number of literacy and educational mentorship campaigns all throughout Egypt. Where I go to next, I'm not so sure. But, as my Facebook status subtly announces, my journey has only just begun.

Reports From The 2013 Conference Of The Society For Ethnomusicology – Indianapolis

Last November a contingent of U of T professors and graduate students attended the Society for Ethnomusicology annual meeting in Indianapolis. Even though many of us rode in the same van to the conference, we each had different expectations and disciplinary affinities that led to rather different experiences in Indy.

Chris Wilson and Deanna Yerichuk (see page 8) provide us with two different takes on SEM 2013!

(Photo: a bonding moment in the beloved hotel lobby during SEM 2013. Photo by David Novak)



Reports on SEM 2013 Indianapolis, continued ...

Chris Wilson



Get up the
nerve to talk to
strangers!

I had some anxiety
after the first two
days of the Indy
conference. I wasn't

meeting anyone, making professional connections, doing those things that a graduating PhD candidate ought to be. But I had a plan. I had made an arrangement with a professor I know from travels to Nashville to go for lunch after the only session of the conference dedicated to country music in any capacity. Sure enough, after the session a dozen scholars and graduate students, all colleagues in the country music field, were heading to a restaurant, where we had a great time, swapped stories and information, exchanged emails, and left with promises to connect later. Networking? Check. Making connections? Check.

My take away from this? Follow the connections you have, show up where you should be and have a quiet assurance that that's where you are. Get up the nerve to talk to strangers, but also let them, and your opportunities for professional and personal connection, come to you. Before long, you will be going to SEM and seeing a bunch of friends and colleagues that you only get to see once a year. And one of them might open up your inside track to a job.

Deanna Yerichuk (...our good friend, and 4th year PhD student in Music Education)

The 2013 SEM conference was my first foray into the wider ethnomusicology discipline. As a music education student and frequent ethnomusicology interloper, I infiltrated a van full of smart University of Toronto ethno students on a 9-hour ride to Indianapolis to answer for myself: just how hard do the ethnos work and play? (Answer: very.) Among many inspiring papers, I most valued a panel on indigenous people that featured a substantial amount of CanCon, such as Idle No More, and



Just how hard do
the Ethnos work
and play?
(Answer: very!)

Arviat's
music practices.
Not only did this
provoke ideas and
questions for my

Canadian-focused dissertation, but the panel piqued my scholarly interest in music and social movements. I was also introduced to the education group of SEM, whose pedagogical concerns of ethnomusicology, and music in general, will become a critical conversation on my own scholarly path. Music-making was everywhere: trumpets in the hotel lobby, lunchtime participatory gospel choirs, midnight jam sessions. But my secret pleasure of the conference: having some beers on Harvard's dime.

REMEMBER!

For instant updates, reminders, and
other fun tidbits on the Ethnomusicology
Community at U of T, follow us on Facebook, Twitter,
or subscribe to our Blog....



To submit, just send an email to ethnotes@gmail.com