The Graduate Association of Musicologists und Theorists presents the 10th annual

GAMuT Graduate Student Conference
Saturday, February 4, 2023, 9:00 am–5:00 pm
UNT Student Union, Senate Chambers (Room 332)
University of North Texas

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Adriana Helbig
Associate Professor of Music, University of Pittsburgh

“PUTIN, GO @$!*% YOURSELF!”:
MUSICAL HUMOR IN TIMES OF WAR

Generously Supported by:
UNT College of Music
Division of Music History, Theory, and Ethnomusicology
UNT Graduate Student Council
PROGRAM

8:30  Set up

9:00  Opening remarks
Dr. April Prince, Principal Lecturer in Music History

9:10  Music as Material: Physical Presence, Object Histories, and Media
     Session Chair: Jacob Collins

     “‘Eliminating the Very Possibility of Failure’: Presence, Player Pianos, and William Gaddis’s Agapē Agape”
     Philip Bixby (Yale University)

     “‘Playing in the Mud’: Cassette Tapes and the Do It Yourself Histories of East Bay Punk”
     Sean Peters (Cornell University)

10:15 Break

10:25  Lingua Musica: Rhetoric, Dialectics, and Communication
     Session Chair: Nayeli Sanchez

     “The Earnestness of Wit: Returns in Haydn’s Finales as Sites of Moral Edification”
     Robert B. Wrigley (The Graduate Center, CUNY)

     “From a Musical to Political Resolution: The Tension of the Tonic Anticipation in Black Pop”
     Matthew Oliver (University of North Texas)

11:30 Lunch
1:00  Keynote Address
Session Chair: Chandler Hall

“‘Putin, Go $@!% Yourself!’: Musical Humor in Times of War”
Dr. Adriana Helbig (University of Pittsburgh)

2:00  Break

2:10  Reclaiming the Stage: Assault, Consent, and Bodily Agency in Music Performance
Session Chair: Avery Wright

“I Can't Say No: Re-Problematising Through Female Agency in the Oklahoma! Revivals”
Janna O’Leary (University of Arkansas)

“Reclaiming a Body: Glyndebourne’s Reimagining of Benjamin Britten’s Rape of Lucretia”
Leonard Walker (University of Florida)

3:15  Break

3:25  Confronting Marginalization: Reckonings in Pedagogy and Performance
Session Chair: Júlia Coelho

“‘What You Do Live Does Come Out of Your Horn’: Fred Ho’s Advocacy in Yes Means Yes, No Means No, Whatever She Wears, Wherever She Goes!”
Haley Akemi Briggles (Stony Brook University)

“Exploring the Hidden Curriculum: Diversifying Gender Representation in Music Theory Pedagogy”
Tori Vilches (Indiana University)

4:30  Break

4:40  Closing Remarks and Presentation of the Paper Award
Dr. Benjamin Brand, Professor of Music History and Chair of the Division of History, Theory, and Ethnomusicology
Chandler Hall, GAMaT President, Conference Co-Chair
Keynote Address

“PUTIN, GO $@!% YOURSELF!”: MUSICAL HUMOR IN TIMES OF WAR

Dr. Adriana Helbig (University of Pittsburgh)

Musical humor is a form of communication. It may be satirical, farcical, ironic, absurd, surreal, or slapstick. It may be violent and grotesque, inverting religious, sexual, and social norms of propriety. It may be overtly political or offer an outlet for processing situations perceived as beyond one’s control. It may act as a catalyst, influencing perceptions and realities. It may provide an outlet for emotions, offering opportunities to process experiences. In oppressive regimes, expressions of public political dissent often carry serious personal consequences. How people use musical humor to circumvent such outcomes lends insight into how they deal with difficult situations. Drawing on musical humor relating to Russia’s unprovoked war in Ukraine, this talk builds on Thorston and Powell’s idea of humor as a coping mechanism. Specifically, it offers ideas for developing a musical theory of humor as an analytical tool to better understand coping processes in oppressive regimes. It argues that a serious analysis of humor in songs may contribute to a deeper understanding of how people process feelings of oppression that result from state violence. Because the trauma such contexts generate is passed on from one generation to the next, this keynote address argues for an analysis of musical humor in historical context since coping mechanisms are passed down alongside memories of trauma.
Dr. Adriana Helbig is an Associate Professor of Music and Chair of the Department of Music University of Pittsburgh. She is the author of *Hip Hop Ukraine: Music, Race, and African Migration* (Indiana University Press, 2014) and the co-editor with Milosz Miszczynski of *Hip Hop at Europe's Edge: Music, Agency, and Social Change* (Indiana University Press, 2017). Her book *ReSounding Poverty: Romani Music and Development Aid* will be published by Oxford University Press in 2023. She is a classically trained pianist and teaches courses on global hip hop, applied ethnomusicology, music and disability studies, and music and conflict.
ABSTRACTS

Music as Material: Physical Presence, Object Histories, and Media

“ELIMINATING THE VERY POSSIBILITY OF FAILURE”: PRESENCE, PLAYER PIANOS, AND WILLIAM GADDIS’S AGAPĒ AGAPE

Philip Bixby (Yale University)

Agapē Agape, William Gaddis’s fifth and final novel, was published posthumously in 2002. Composed of a single paragraph of first-person narration, it potently concentrates several themes that recur consistently across Gaddis’s literary output. Gaddis had begun planning Agapē Agape in the 1960s, initially conceiving it as a social history of the player piano. Although the final product became something quite different, the player piano remains essential to Agapē Agape’s jeremiad, being the narrator’s central obsession and a source of his disillusionment with modern technological culture. In this paper, I explore the theme of presence that permeates both Gaddis’s novel and the marketing history of the player piano. Drawing on Jacques Derrida, I take presence to be a metaphysical thesis suggesting that unmediated access to meaning is possible and desirable. Throughout the player piano’s popular ascendency, manufacturers insisted on the ability of their instruments to provide fulfilling musical experiences to listeners, conjuring up the spirit of the pianist whose playing was recorded onto the piano roll. In Agapē Agape, the concept of presence undergirds the narrator’s invective against forgery and mechanization. However, the player piano’s false simulation of presence ironically parallels the narrator’s own failure to achieve self-presence. I argue that this ironic duality in Agapē Agape reveals Gaddis’s own ambivalence toward the concept of presence. While the novel’s narrator apparently believes in some possibility of true presence through music (a possibility tragically derailed by the player piano), Gaddis’s novel formally performs deconstructive work, implying that musical presence is always illusive.

“PLAYING IN THE MUD”: CASSETTE TAPES AND THE DO IT YOURSELF HISTORIES OF EAST BAY PUNK

Sean Peters (Cornell University)

Punk histories often omit the material conditions and labor of music scenes to tell the stories of “legendary” bands. This approach to writing history has been an awkward fit for a subculture that views itself as egalitarian and shuns ‘rock stars.’ In this paper, I shift my focus from genealogies of great bands to the material conditions of the scene, specifically its use of cassettes, to take a bottom-up approach in telling the story of the 1980s/1990s East Bay Punk scene of Northern California. Through archival research and interviews, I theorize an East Bay Punk ontology built on the tenets of collectivism, leftist activism, and a Do-It-Yourself (DIY) ethic enabled by the material affordances of the compilation tapes produced by scene participants. I focus on two compilation cassette tapes produced by scene members that were donated to Cornell University, exploring how each cassette exemplifies the broader scene’s ethos. The first cassette, Get Off My Guts (1982), defined an identity for the scene through a shared aesthetic that prized lo-fi recordings and a DIY approach to music-making. The second cassette, Absolutely Zippo!: Time Capsule (1997), illustrates the memory work and approach to history (re-)making that has allowed East Bay Punk participants to shape how we remember the scene through tape. Ultimately, my paper asks how objects can record and tell histories?
**Lingua Musica: Rhetoric, Dialectics, and Communication**

**THE EARNESTNESS OF WIT: RETURNS IN HAYDN'S FINALES AS SITES OF MORAL EDIFICATION**

Robert B. Wrigley (The Graduate Center, CUNY)

One of Haydn’s celebrated motivic techniques, especially frequent in finales, is to tease thematic returns by repeating isolated upbeat figures, a procedure which I term “upbeat fragmentation.” Drawing on Mathew’s (2018) exploration of how Haydn constructed his music so as to capture the attention of his audiences, I argue that upbeat fragmentation is a way of directing the ears even of relatively untutored listeners to moments of structural articulation, thereby achieving the effect of moral edification proposed by Schroeder (1990). Toward that end, I offer a reading of four moments of upbeat fragmentation in the finale of Symphony no. 98, investigating how the procedure may function to pique listeners’ interest selectively at important moments.

My analysis, furthermore, heeds Webster’s (2009) call to reframe our understanding of Haydn’s earnestness and wit in terms of dialectic rather than polarity. While Rosen (1971) and Burnham (2005) view the isolation of upbeats as a principal mechanism of the composer’s humor, I argue that upbeat fragmentation shows how wit and earnestness operate jointly and simultaneously, each dependent on the other for its impact. Just as the humor of upbeat fragmentation draws its power from the expectation of return, the witty rhetoric of the moment draws attention to important structural junctures. In addition to exploring the communicative significance of Haydn’s formal techniques, my work therefore also suggests a need broadly to rethink our interpretation of musical humor, with the understanding that making a joke is not necessarily making light.

**FROM A MUSICAL TO POLITICAL RESOLUTION: THE TENSION OF THE TONIC ANTICIPATION IN BLACK POP**

Matthew Oliver (University of North Texas)

This presentation argues that Black pop music containing overt political messages frequently uses what I call a “tonic anticipation” as an important rhetorical device. Drawing from scholarship by Nicholas Stoia, I posit that a tonic anticipation occurs when a melody outlines a tonic mode over a pretonic harmony, increasing the harmonic tension and heightening the expectation for a tonic. Although its effect is similar in some respects to a classical anticipation, it is distinct because it occurs solely in the melody and draws from a collection of pitches, rather than being a single note. James Stewart argues that Black pop played an important political role in the decade following the civil rights movement because it allowed listeners to use the lyrics in relation to their personal struggles. But the influence of melody and harmony on how lyrics are interpreted has not yet been examined. The tonic anticipation heightens general tension, and surrounding musical context allows listeners to interpret the political message positively or negatively. In Sam Cook’s “A Change Is Gonna Come (1965)”, the bridge concludes with a tonic anticipation as Cook’s highest vocal resonates over a dissonance between ^8 over V7. Both factors draw attention to Cook’s frustration regarding societies lack of empathy. Stevie Wonder’s “Visions (1973)” also features a tonic anticipation with a sharp dissonance highlighting shattered dreams of a society without hate. By considering the tonic anticipation in Black pop, we can appreciate the role of music in some black American’s self-definition during the post-civil rights era.
Reclaiming the Stage: Assault, Consent, and Bodily Agency in Music Performance

I CAN’T SAY NO: RE-PROBLEMATIZING THROUGH FEMALE AGENCY IN THE OKLAHOMA! REVIVALS
Janna O’Leary (University of Arkansas)

This paper investigates how the 2019 revival of Oklahoma! explores and reinterprets the problematic elements of the original 1943 Broadway production, while also infusing new problems into the narrative that reflect the social issues of the United States in 2019. This analysis centers the musical reinterpretation and representation of the soubrette character Ado Annie, through the song “I Cain’t Say No.” The essay uses audio samples, transcriptions, and scores to show how, while the harmonic, melodic, and lyrical content largely remain unaltered, the changes in orchestration, timbre, and ornamentation bring new meaning to the work, and allow for new interpretations of the pre-existing harmonic, melodic, and lyrical content.

RECLAIMING A BODY: GLYNDEBOURNE’S REIMAGINING OF BENJAMIN BRITTEN’S RAPE OF LUCRETIA
Leonard Walker (University of Florida)

Benjamin Britten’s chamber opera The Rape of Lucretia is well-acknowledged in scholarship that details musical obscurity, violence, and treatment of women in twentieth-century opera; however, few have considered how this opera and its volatile content are displayed on a modern stage. Glyndebourne’s 2015 production reimagines this forgotten work as a contemporary air that comments on both the original composition’s thematic approaches and modern rape politics. Britten’s initial creation used the “heroine” as a plot device rather than as a central character. Had the opera been about Lucretia herself, the composer might have named it Lucretia; however, the focus on the act of rape tells us that her rape is more important than her body. In this paper, I demonstrate that Glyndebourne production designers Fiona Shaw, Michael Levine, and Nicky Gillibrand, crafted a space that reconstructed Britten’s narrative, which, in turn, gave the opera urgency and the titular character psychological agency. I focus specifically on the titular act’s scene and the ways that production elements such as costume and light design, stage construction, and choreography are manipulated to divert the audience’s attention away from explicitly violent imagery to focus on the complexities of human tragedy. By humanizing Lucretia, this production shifts rape as shock factor to sympathetic portrayal of a sexually and psychologically traumatic moment. As many dramaturgists and theatre creators have explained, attempting to stage sexual violence in an age with a heightened awareness of violent sexual deviancy poses great challenges. But, by identifying these strategies, we gain insight on how to communicate the intricacies of rape culture through a socially sensitive framework. I conclude that this Lucretia offers effective and humane ways to reimagine operatic depictions of sexual violence in the twenty-first century.
Confronting Marginalization: Reckonings in Pedagogy and Performance

“What You Do Live Does Come Out of Your Horn”: Fred Ho’s Advocacy in Yes Means Yes, No Means No, Whatever She Wears, Wherever She Goes!

Haley Akemi Briggles (Stony Brook University)

American popular culture has not been kind to Asian Americans. Both the image and sound of Asians and Asian Americans in American mainstream popular culture—largely invented by non-Asians—have consisted of several harmful, silencing stereotypes nonrepresentative of Asian American people. In addition, media portrayals of Asian Americans’ relationships with other minoritized groups have been generally negative, framing Asian Americans as a “model minority” and, as a result, a potential detriment to these groups. Asian Americans have, however, been fighting these false narratives and stereotypes; one such example is Chinese American saxophonist Fred Ho. Ho, who passed away in 2014 from cancer, spent the majority of his life using his music and image to fight false narratives surrounding Asian Americans, and advocated for Afro Asian solidarity as a means to encourage unity among people of color. A strong advocate for women, Ho also used his music to confront the marginalization and oftentimes forced silencing of sexual assault victims. Drawing on George Lewis’ and Fumi Okiji’s theorizations about jazz and Cathy Park Hong’s arguments about sexual assault and silence among Asian Americans, I argue that in his jazz suite, Yes Means Yes, No Means No, Whatever She Wears, Wherever She Goes!, Ho confronts the belittled position of women in narratives about sexual assault and sheds a positive light on the relationships that African Americans and Asian Americans have. In the rise of anti-Asian attacks and media silence surrounding many of those attacks, his silence-breaking music is now especially relevant.

Exploring the Hidden Curriculum: Diversifying Gender Representation in Music Theory Pedagogy

Tori Vilches (Indiana University)

This project critically examines the Western music theory pedagogical canon through a feminist lens in order to highlight the effects of underrepresentation in music theory textbooks and anthologies. I build on Philip Ewell’s research of the seven most frequently sourced U.S. music theory textbooks to show how the most common musical examples used in theory texts and anthologies primarily consist of works by the “big three” — Bach, Beethoven, and Mozart. I explore the “hidden curriculum” of music theory as presented by Palfy and Gilson in order to reveal the ways in which women are consistently undervalued in the current pedagogical canon. I argue that the general exclusion of women from textbooks is detrimental to the professional development of women in the field, therefore proving the necessity for gender diversity in pedagogical material. I compare the low membership numbers of women in the Society for Music Theory, arguing that perhaps the lack of representation of women in our textbooks and anthologies has a direct correlation to the gap in representation in the field of music theory; perhaps one of the roots of the problem starts with our textbooks and teaching materials. I show analyses of excerpts composed by three women — Fanny Hensel, Julie von Webenau, and Lili Boulanger, with an eye toward increasing gender representation in theory pedagogy. I present these excerpts as supplemental musical examples that can be integrated into pedagogical analytical instruction at the university level.
About our Presenters

Philip Bixby (Yale University):
Philip Bixby is a fourth-year doctoral candidate in musicology at Yale University. Previously, he obtained degrees from the University of Texas at Austin and the University of California, Irvine. His research has spanned many topics of the twentieth century, including György Ligeti’s surrealist influences, Adornian readings of British modernism, and representations of the voice in literature and horror films. His dissertation explores the reception of rock music through conservative evangelical Christian writings from the 1960s to the 1980s, analyzing this reception as an evolving set of claims regarding the intersection of sonic affect and spirituality.

Haley Akemi Briggles (Stony Brook University):
Haley Akemi Briggles is a PhD candidate in Music History and Theory at Stony Brook University. Her research focuses on the relationship between late 20th and early 21st century East Asian American musicians, silence, and marginalization of Asian Americans in American popular culture. As a fellow in Stony Brook University’s inaugural 2022 IDEA Fellows Program, Haley has worked on grant writing projects that aim to increase Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) in the Humanities at Stony Brook. As a classically trained pianist, Haley also has extensive experience performing, teaching, accompanying, and doing collaborative work.

Janna O’Leary (University of Arkansas):
Janna O’Leary (she/they) is a music, theatre, and movement artist living on the lands of the Kiikaapoi, Osage, Muscogee, Caddo, O- ga-xpa Ma-zho, and Očhéthi Šakówin Nations, colonially known as Tulsa, OK. She is a Graduate Assistant pursuing a MM in Music Theory at the University of Arkansas.

Matthew Oliver (University of North Texas):
Matthew Oliver received a Master's Degree in Music Theory Pedagogy from Southern Methodist University and a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from Stetson University. He is currently pursuing a PhD in music theory at The University of North Texas where he has served as a teaching fellow for six years. His current research explores the influence of melody on harmonic function in popular music and the musical tension that arises through the interaction between melody and harmony. Other research interests include theory pedagogy and American composers of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Sean Peters (Cornell University):
Originally from Syracuse, New York, Sean Louis Peters (he/him) is a PhD candidate in Music and Sound Studies at Cornell University. He holds a BA in Music from Texas Woman’s University, an MA in Ethnomusicology from the University of North Texas, and an MA in Musicology from Cornell University. He is currently working on his dissertation, which is a broad survey of the relationship between the cassette tape and punk scenes, using the cassette to explore the development and dissemination of punk.
**Tori Vilches (Indiana University):**
Residing in Bloomington, Indiana, Tori Vilches is a first year PhD student studying music theory at Indiana University, Jacobs School of Music. Originally from the DFW area, she earned her Bachelor's degree in vocal performance from Tarleton State University and holds a Master of Music degree in music theory from Texas Christian University. Tori is interested in interdisciplinary studies regarding race, gender, and culture and the ways in which they interact with music theory, value, and music theory pedagogy. Future plans include a university teaching career and pop music research.

**Leonard Walker (University of Florida):**
Hailing from Chicago, Illinois, Leo Walker is a musicologist, dramaturg, and performing artist. Mr. Walker is a PhD student in Historical Musicology at the University of Florida focusing on the vocal works of Benjamin Britten as they exist in the twenty-first century. His research addresses contemporary theatre creators’ use of the composer’s works to reflect on their respective social cultures. Currently, Mr. Walker serves as artistic consultant and guest-artist to several regional dance and theatre companies. He is a double alumnus from Western Michigan University, where he obtained his MA in Musicology and two undergraduate degrees in Voice and Dance Performance.

**Robert B. Wrigley (The Graduate Center, CUNY):**
Robert B. Wrigley is a PhD candidate in historical musicology at The Graduate Center, CUNY and a Writing Across the Curriculum Fellow at City College, CUNY. He holds a Master of Arts of Musicology from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University and a Bachelor of Arts in Music from the University of Puget Sound. His dissertation, “Symphonies for God: Joseph Haydn's Masses in Church and Concert Hall,” considers the reception of Joseph Haydn’s liturgical music in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a counterpoint to conventional narratives of canonization, Kunstreligion, and musical meaning.
What is GAMuT?

GAMuT (The Graduate Association of Musicologists und Theorists) is a graduate student organization dedicated to providing a forum for the presentation of original research by its members. In addition, GAMuT provides professional development opportunities, offers a forum for discussion of matters relevant to the academic lives of its members, and serves as an organized liaison between students and faculty in the Division of Music History, Theory, and Ethnomusicology. Each year, GAMuT publishes a journal, *Harmonia*, that features papers written by graduate students. For more information visit our website: [www.mhte.music.unt.edu/gamut](http://www.mhte.music.unt.edu/gamut)

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