

The Bulletin

of the Society for American Music

FOUNDED IN HONOR
OF OSCAR G. T. SONNECK

From the President

Daniel Goldmark



Daniel Goldmark, SAM President

Dear Colleagues,

I want to start off my first President's Message by bringing back to everyone's mind what a wonderful conference we had this summer. Thanks once again to the resourcefulness and creative planning of our conference team—Joice Gibson, Paula Bishop, Megan MacDonald, the Program Committee (Chair, Nancy Yunhwa Rao, Jacqueline Avilam, Laurie Blunson, Justin Burton, Elizabeth Hoover, Jeff

Magee, Shana Redmond), and the Local Arrangements committee (Gwynne Kuhner Browne, chair, Matthew DelCiampo, Joshua Gailey, Ellen George, Sarah Kolat, Sue Neimoyer, Kerry O'Brien, and Mark Rodgers). Despite everything that happened over the course of 2020, everyone that I saw online during the course of the conference—presenters and participants, long-time members and first-time attendees—was excited and engaged. The two plenary sessions—with Katherine McKittrick and Samora Pinderhughes—were especially memorable for me; both presenters showed me that they could embrace and work with both the assets and idiosyncrasies of Zoom. I was riveted to both events.

Normally this would be the place where a new president opines on the state of the field, the future of the Society, or new developments in pedagogy. And while those are all significant topics, it feels reckless of me to make predictions of any sort when the ground changes under our feet on an almost daily basis. What I can promise is that the Society is here to support our membership and the larger world of historians, journalists, researchers, and writers involved with music of the Americas in any way that it feasibly can. As the field changes, as music changes, as the world changes, the Society too can and will evolve with the times in order to serve the needs of its membership.

I also wish that I could be using this space to announce the return of the in-person SAM Conference. By now we all know that, with the seemingly unending grip that the pandemic has had on all our lives, that will not be the case. We fortunately have an amazing, inventive group of people working on our third online conference. I am excited to learn what new and innovative research our members will be bringing to the society through their talks and presentations. I'm equally excited to see how folks will continue to adapt their approaches to the online format that many, if not most, of us find ourselves using on an almost

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daily basis. Anyone who has an interest in thinking about, studying, or especially *making* music has had to reconsider: so many of the public and private spaces where we conduct research and/or experience music have closed, some permanently. The ways that we have thus been forced not only to think differently about how we do our work, but how we provide for ourselves and others, and how we live our lives in general, is one of the unexpected consequences of the situation we're all facing.

If Zoom has done anything for me, it was to remind me—especially when we were basically in lockdown—that I didn't need to wait for a conference, or a research trip, or some other special event to reach out to my colleagues and friends. I initiated weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly gatherings with friends and colleagues with whom I normally only spoke twice a year: at AMS and at SAM. I also spent the better part of the spring of 2020, in my guise as president-elect, having Zoom conversations with SAM members who had served in leadership roles (presidents, committee chairs) to get their impressions on what the future of American music studies looked like to them. While I would have loved to have had these conversations in person, the fact that I was able to have them at all (and especially not crammed into a single long weekend during a conference), and to be in the presence of these people—albeit a digital presence—reminded me how important communication is at the best of times, and how essential it is in times of crisis. At the time no one had any idea how long the shadow of Covid would loom over us, but even then, the theme we kept returning to was how drastically things had changed in just a few months' time. Now that things have freed up a little bit—I'm back to teaching in person, for instance—I am able to visit with local friends and colleagues in person. I have not, however, given up the habit of “spending time” regularly with other friends and colleagues in Zoom-land. While I look forward to seeing people at the 2022 online SAM conference, I know that there is nothing to replace a meal with colleagues, a hug from an old friend, and the camaraderie of being in a roomful of people with similar interests. I hope we all get to experience all that and more very, very soon.

Summary of Minutes from the Business Meeting of SAM's 2021 Conference

The business meeting of the 2021 SAM conference was held on 12 June and called to order at 3:46 PDT. Outgoing president Tammy Kernodle began by discussing the challenges of switching to a virtual conference format. In spring 2020, SAM was the first organization to be impacted by the pandemic and could not have known that a year later we'd still be dealing with it. Kernodle then discussed the implementation of a strategic communications plan, which outgoing SAM vice president Christina Baade has been spearheading. This plan represents an effort to communicate more effectively within the board and with the membership, especially in light of our increasing dependence on internet-based communication during the pandemic. The SAM website's homepage now prominently features a link to a communication form, which members are encouraged to use. Kernodle also mentioned the ongoing assessment and improvement of the website, before during to a discussion of SAM programming beyond the conference. We had one event prior to the conference from the Gospel Interest Group that can serve as a model going forward for programming between conferences. Interest Groups and committees should think about realizing the potential of drawing in new members and expanded constituencies. Kernodle concluded with a report on the centralization of SAM's financial operations, which will free up the executive director to deal with outreach and day-to-day operations.

Treasurer Maribeth Clark reported that the balance sheet for FY 2020 reveals that SAM navigated a difficult year exceptionally well, due to our generous donors, our flexible and creative executive director and conference staff, and the strong growth of our investments. SAM took in \$142,877 and spent \$132,603, resulting in a net operating revenue of \$10,275. Clark then offered an account of work to improve our financial infrastructure, and some breakdown of the numbers to provide more insight into our strong financial health. Her report covered issues related to infrastructure, conference planning, membership, annual giving, and investments.

Attendees of the business meeting took a moment to remember Robert Keller (1934–2021), who passed early in the year. This was followed by warm congratulations to the recipients of SAM's annual honors, awards, and subventions, as well as immense gratitude for those who contributed to the successful implementation and running of the conference: Joice Gibson, Paula Bishop, and Megan McDonald; the Local Arrangements Committee (chaired by Gwynne Kuhner Browne), the Program Committee (chaired by Nancy Rao); the many SAM producers; our exhibitors; and the PR Committee (chaired by Naomi Graber).

The next conference will be hosted by Tucson in March 2022.

Kernodle concluded the meeting by recognizing the many transitions of officers, board members, and committee members, and welcomed incoming president Daniel Goldmark, who thanked the conference team as well as members for attending.

The meeting adjourned at 4:39pm PDT. Requests for the complete minutes of the business meeting should be directed to SAM's secretary, Leta Miller.

2021 Awards, Fellowships, and Subventions

Adrienne Fried Block Fellowship



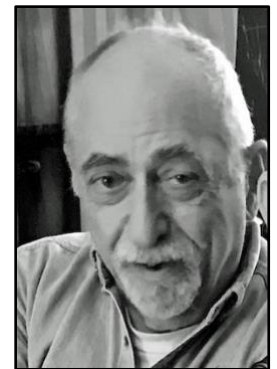
Cesar D. Favila

This year's Adrienne Fried Block Fellowship committee elected to share the award between two outstanding projects that seek to follow its namesake's intellectual spirit in illuminating our understandings of musical life in large urban communities. Both proposals foreground how music aids those with limited power in managing urban life through expressive spiritualism. [Cesar D. Favila's](#) book project "Immaculate Sounds: The Musical Lives of Nuns in Colonial Mexico City and Puebla" seeks to recover the voices of women in the convents of Mexico City and Puebla and thus advances histories of music, art, politics, indigeneity, and religion in colonial New Spain. The author not only strives to trace women's agency within manuscript musical sources, but critiques their mediation by the church's male clergy, a mediation that both celebrates and controls, amplifies and silences. [Victoria Mogollón Montagne's](#)

dissertation project "The Vehemence of Sound: Affect and Violence in Venezuelan Espiritismo Marialioncero" uses ethnomusicological methods to reconsider music as an expression of violence by *espiritistas marialioncero*s in Caracas. The author examines the meanings and management of lived experience through "fuerza" (strength) expressed in drum music and other musical activity to "decenter the spectacular" and understand musical violence as a tool of endurance and generative action. Congratulations to both Block Fellowship recipients.

Paul Charosh Independent Scholar Fellowship

Independent scholar [Gregor Benko](#) has been awarded the 2021 Paul Charosh Independent Scholar Fellowship, which will support his work on a biography of Josef Hofmann, an American pianist of Polish birth, who concertized widely and was director of the Curtis Institute from 1926 to 1937. Working independently for more than 30 years, Benko has already gathered and studied original documents relating to Hofmann, and has unearthed and published all known recordings of Hofmann. Benko was co-founder (with Albert Petrak) in 1966 of the International Piano Archives, an extensive collection of piano recordings, books, scores, programs and related materials, which he managed in New York City before donating the collection in 1976 to the University of Maryland. For his research on historical piano recordings and his production of LPs and CDs that preserve over a century's worth of recorded piano performances, Benko received the Liszt Medal, a lifetime award from The American Liszt Society in 2017.



Gregor Benko

John and Roberta Graziano Fellowship

The winner of the John and Roberta Graziano 2021 Fellowship is [Dr. Basil Considine](#), for his project "Reconstructing a Comprehensive Catalogue of the Music Collection of Eliza Eichelberger Ridgely (1803–1867) of Baltimore and the Hampton National Historic Site"

Dr. Considine continues ongoing work on Eliza Eichelberger Ridgely; the importance of the subject is demonstrated in his recent article on the correspondence between Ridgely and Lafayette. The detailed and comprehensive project will determine and consider the full scope of Ridgely's interests and music collection. The resulting article, and online catalog linking to available scores and reference recordings, will prove valuable to many with an interest in European-based music cultures in the mid nineteenth-century United States.



Basil Considine

Charles Hamm Fellowship



Erik Broess

The winners of the 2020 Hamm Fellowship are [Erik Broess](#) and [Brian F. Wright](#). Broess has won support for his dissertation, which has the working title “Circuits, Interfaces, Rigs: Electric Guitar Gear and the Archaeology of Tone,” and analyzes the ways “the design, manufacture, and circulation of electric guitar gear” contributes to “the cultural politics of tone” and the ways tone gradually “became a rarified fetish object for electric guitarists.” Wright has won support for his book manuscript, *The Bastard Instrument: A Cultural History of the Electric Bass*, which is under contract with the University of Michigan Press. His project promises to use the history and development of the electric bass as a jumping-off point to “demonstrate the often-overlooked connections between rock, country and western, rhythm and blues, easy listening, and more.”

The committee found both projects to be compelling, clearly presented, and important; we were especially struck by the fact that both projects, focused as they are not on genre but on musical instruments, promise to counteract assumptions about musical hierarchy and canonicity; as Wright pointed out in his letter to the committee, Hamm himself regularly “reiterated the need for broadly inclusive popular music histories that do not retroactively exalt rock culture above other genres and communities.” We believe both awardees are doing work to that end, and congratulate them on their awards.



Brian F. Wright

Hampson Education Fellowship in American Song

The winner of the 2021 Hampson Education Fellowship in American Song is [Basil Considine](#) for a video lecture-recital called “The Female Harpist in America during the Era of Good Feelings (1817–1825).” This project, planned in partnership with the Hampton National Historic Site, utilizes primary sources associated with the Hampton Manor House in Towson, Virginia to recreate the musical practices of upper- and middle-class white women in early nineteenth-century America. Participants in the lecture-recital will re-create a typical salon, wearing period costumes and, along with performing music, will also demonstrate some of the social dances popular at the time. The musical program includes a number of songs from a music manuscript associated with Hampton, including “Vous me grondez” by Joseph Boulogne (one of the few extant copies of the song) and other works such as “The Cottager’s Daughter,” “My Henry is Gone,” and Samuel Arnold’s “Come Let Us Dance and Sing.” Aiming to educate the public on an oft-neglected period in the cultural history of the United States, this example of public musicology will be promoted by the National Park Service and the Hampton National Historic Site, allowing it to reach a large and diverse audience.

Wiley Housewright Dissertation Award



Lucy Caplan

The winner of the 2020 Wiley Housewright Dissertation Award is [Lucy Caplan](#) for her dissertation, “High Culture on the Lower Frequencies: African Americans and Opera, 1900–1933” (Yale University, 2019). Caplan’s dissertation provides a rich history of “black operatic counterculture” (1900–33), challenging the history of opera in the U.S. as a cultural form primarily aligned with whiteness within a racially heterogeneous soundscape. Through a discussion of blackness in opera as mediated through the work of performers, composers, pedagogues, the press, and opera companies, Caplan honors the multiple ways that black artists have long been a part of U.S. opera culture, challenging the historiographical narrative that African Americans only began to engage with opera in the context of desegregation in the mid-

twentieth century. In doing so, Caplan reveals an important and overlooked history of black musical culture, aesthetic innovation, and antiracist activism in the early twentieth century.

Honorable mention for the 2020 Wiley Housewright Dissertation Award goes to [Nadia Chana](#) for her dissertation, “To Listen on Indigenous Land: Method, Context, Crisis” (University of Chicago, 2019). Through experimental storytelling and ethnography, performance, and multi-site fieldwork, Chana’s dissertation presents an innovative model for reconsidering the sounded frameworks of ecological crisis. Her work models an Indigenized understanding of sound studies within the context of settler and Indigenous communities sited on Indigenous lands throughout North America. Chana’s richly detailed ethnography both sounds and responds to the acoustic ecologies of climate crisis through new forms of critical self-reflexivity and relational listening, exploring multiple pathways of “listening on Indigenous lands.”



Nadia Chana

Judith McCulloh Fellowship

The winner of the 2021 Judith McCulloh Fellowship is [Victoria Mogollón Montagne](#) for her research project, “The Vehemence of Sound: Affect and Violence in Venezuelan Espiritismo Marialoncero.” This project uses ethnographic fieldwork to explore the use of music by working-class residents of Caracas, arguing for a reframing of violence and its connection to music for practitioners of *espiritismo*. In so doing, Mogollón Montagne creates alternative lenses for understanding the complex relationship between spiritual practice and violence. Mogollón Montagne will put her McCulloh Fellowship funds toward a year of field research in Caracas, allowing time for interviews and in-depth study with practitioners from three different social groups.



Victoria Mogollón Montagne

Wayne Shirley Research Fellowship



Mariana Whitmer

[Mariana Whitmer](#) is the winner of the Wayne Shirley Research Fellowship for *Saga of the West: Musical Representations of the West during the Silent Film Era*. The turn of the twentieth century witnessed an increasing interest in the western frontier, embracing the visual arts and literature, as well as tourism and politics. The establishment of national parks and attention to conservation stimulated public interest in the West, its history and lore. The emerging film industry capitalized on this attention and set the first narrative film, *The Great Train Robbery* (1903), in the West. Over time, music secured a central role in the Western film, situating the narrative historically and geographically, as well as lending excitement to the abundant action. In his important study of the Western, *Six Guns and Society*, Will Wright highlights the

importance of music: “Music adds depth and significance to a story, and in myth it makes the imagined meanings clearer and more immediately felt. The mythical significance of the Western is reinforced in film by music” (12). This statement, made in reference to classic Hollywood Westerns, is just as applicable to silent Westerns, in which the musical accompaniment helped to shape the national perception of America’s westward expansion during the period nearly coinciding with the renowned closure of the frontier and, thus, with the creation of the myth of the American West.

Virgil Thomson Fellowship

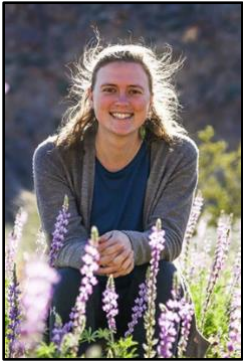


Jingyi Zhang

[Jingyi Zhang’s](#) fellowship award will support ethnographic research, forming part of her dissertation, into how the creative teams of two leading indie opera companies are pushing the boundaries of what is possible in contemporary opera creation. She intends to travel to Los Angeles and New York City where during extended residencies she will attend production rehearsals, interview the artistic teams, and closely observe the ongoing work of The Industry (Yuval Sharon, artistic director) and On Site Opera (Eric Einhorn, artistic director). Her research is both timely and relevant as she seeks to examine possible paths forward for opera in a post-COVID future, taking into account an array of crucial issues including commissioning, fund raising, casting, multimedia, technological mediation, non-traditional performance venues, and the inherent tension between creative idealism and logistical practicalities. As Zhang explains, “venues directly impact the ways operas are conceived and experienced,” and thus her research will serve “to reconceive place as a

theatrical event in itself, harboring significant narrative and dramaturgical potential.” The committee congratulates Ms. Zhang on her strongly written and convincingly argued project proposal and its potential for significant impact on our understanding of contemporary experimental American opera.

Judith Tick Fellowship



Hannah Snavelly

The Judith Tick Fellowship will support archival and ethnographic research in the cities of Valparaíso and Santagio, Chile for [Hannah Snavelly's](#) dissertation project, “Margot Loyola and the Canonization of Women’s Folk Music in Chile.” Snavelly’s critical biographical study of Loyola (1918–2015), a notable performer, researcher and pedagogue, will explore her influence on the ways Chilean women folk musicians and educators transmitted cultural heritage during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Snavelly will consider how Loyola’s agentive folklorization strategies canonize understandings of patrimony beyond ethnic nationalism; and conversely, how Chilean media constructed Loyola as a national figure to essentialize gender ideals in music and dance. Snavelly’s work will highlight the pedagogical legacies that Loyola passed on to her students, particularly the professional strategies, expressive cultures, musical aesthetics, and gendered ideologies of *chilenidad*.

Walser-McClary Fellowship

The recipient of the 2021 Robert Walser and Susan McClary Fellowship is [Diana Wu](#) of the University of Western Ontario for her dissertation-in-progress, “Ghosts of Madwomen Past: Historical and Psychiatric Madness on the Late Twentieth-Century Operatic Stage.” Wu explores the impact of twentieth-century medical perspectives on performances of madness in nine English-language operas by Igor Stravinsky, Benjamin Britten, Peter Maxwell Davies, Gian Carlo Menotti, Dominick Argento, Phillip Glass, and Michael Tippett. Though scholars have continuously scrutinized the theme of madness in operas spanning the seventeenth and early twentieth centuries—particularly “mad scenes” involving nineteenth-century women characters—Wu’s work stands out, not only in posing longstanding questions about underexamined post-World War II repertoire, but also in its ambitious interrogation of the intersectional and linguistic construction of sanity itself. The committee was deeply impressed by the clarity and sophistication of Wu’s research questions, her persuasive articulation of their broader stakes, her command of the voluminous literature, the lucid structure of her project, and the mature voice of her writing.



Diana Wu

The runner up for the 2021 Robert Walser and Susan McClary Fellowship is [Clifton Boyd](#) of Yale University for his dissertation-in-progress, “The Role of Vernacular Music Theory in the American Barbershop Community.” Boyd’s fascinating study of barbershop quartet singing considers how the concept of vernacular music theory illuminates the complex and ongoing reconciliation of institutional identity, racial ideology, and the iconicity of musical style within the Barbershop Harmony Society. But the committee admired equally, if not more, how Boyd, thinking about stubborn hierarchies of power in the field from his position as an African American music theorist, seeks to model a new and more racially equitable relationship among music theory, musicology, and cultural studies.



Clifton Boyd

H. Earle Johnson Book Subvention



Kimberly Teal

(1) The H. Earle Johnson Book Subvention Committee is pleased to award a subvention of \$2000 to [Kimberly Teal's](#) *Jazz Places: How Performance Spaces Shape Jazz History*, forthcoming from University of California Press. Using venues such as the Village Vanguard and Preservation Hall as case studies, Teal draws welcome attention to the multidimensional role played in jazz history by particular performance spaces. For example, referring to the many “live at the Village Vanguard” albums, Teal argues that even as the Vanguard built its jazz following in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the room’s very sound was “mediatized” and woven into an international audience’s understanding of archetypal jazz performance. With its ethnographically informed concern with context, as well as its resonance with literature on music economies and heritage production, *Jazz Places* promises to reshape our understanding of jazz performance in the popular imagination.



Panayotis League

(2) Affirming SAM’s mission statement to support the study of all musics in the Americas, the H. Earle Johnson Book Subvention Committee awards a subvention of \$1500 to Panayotis League’s *Echoes of the Great Catastrophe: Re-Sounding Anatolian Greekness in Diaspora*, forthcoming from University of Michigan Press. The committee was impressed with the author’s nuanced examination of the music of a diasporic group in the United States that is under-represented in the scholarly literature. Drawing on rich ethnographic research, *Echoes of the Great Catastrophe* illuminates the way in which diasporic Greek musicians living in New England cope with the legacy of trauma. The transnational focus of this study offers a compelling framework for investigating how diasporic groups use music to memorialize the upheavals of forced relocation.

(3) The H. Earle Johnson Book Subvention Committee is pleased to award a subvention of \$1500 to John Howland’s *Hearing Luxe Pop: Glorification, Glamour, and the Middlebrow in American Popular Music*. Howland’s innovative monograph spans a wide range of case studies, from symphonic jazz to progressive and symphonic soul to indie rock. In each case, he takes an original approach that eschews discourses of purity and authenticity. Instead, Howland considers how notions of heterogeneity, associations of class and glamour, and “middlebrow” aesthetics have underlain the making, consumption, and marketing of popular music. In wide-ranging chapters, Howland brings disparate genres into dialogue, developing rich and expansive discussions that collectively present an alternative history of American popular music.



John Howland

Sight & Sound Subvention

William Robin’s *Sound Expertise* podcast provides an accessible entry to some of the most important issues in the contemporary study of music. The use of the podcast platform for these discussions extends their reach, bringing critical discussions about race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and disability in music to the foreground. We particularly appreciate the way the podcast highlights the work of scholars across our society, helping the ideas of musicologists, ethnomusicologists, and music theorists find wider audiences to advance discussions on such topics ranging from gospel vamps to music in d/Deaf cultures to Cold War patronage and the American avant-garde.



William Robin

Celebrating Eileen Southern and *The Music of Black Americans*

Katie Callam

Eileen Southern’s landmark work, *The Music of Black Americans: A History (MOBA)*, celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year. Upon its publication by W. W. Norton in 1971, MOBA stood out as the first survey of Black music since 1936 (the year of Maud Cuney Hare’s *Negro Musicians and Their Music* and Alain Locke’s *The Negro and His Music*) and the first such work published by a musicologist. Though subject to some harsh criticism, *MOBA* received praise from many of its trade and academic reviewers: “gracefully written and...enormously exciting,” exclaimed one.¹ Dominique-René de Lerma mused in *Notes* that “perhaps [Southern’s work] indicates the subject [Black music] may soon be musicologically above ground and seriously treated in the curricular, research, and performance programs of America’s musical establishments.”² Indeed, Southern’s book went on to mark a significant shift in the study of American music and helped to launch the field of Black music studies.

Before its large-scale and long-term impact would become apparent, however, *The Music of Black Americans* touched the lives of individual readers around the world. Not long after the book was published, Southern wrote to one fan:

Thank you for your letter of November 26, 1972 and please excuse my delayed reply. The publication of my book has brought me such a deluge of mail that I despair of ever catching up with the correspondence. But I deeply

¹ Review of *The Music of Black Americans: A History*, by Eileen Southern, *Publisher’s Weekly* (December 14, 1970): 38.

² Dominique-René de Lerma, review of *The Music of Black Americans: A History*, by Eileen Southern, *Notes* 28 no. 1 (September 1, 1971): 43.

appreciate the interest that has been shown in the book all over the country and am trying as best I can to cope with the many suggestions and requests that I have received.³

At the time of this letter, Southern (1920–2002) was serving as full professor at York College (City University of New York). In 1974, she began teaching at Harvard University, where, in 1976, she became the first African American woman tenured in Harvard’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences. New research even suggests that Southern was the first Black woman tenured across all units of Harvard. The year before, she and her husband, Joseph Southern, launched *The Black Perspective in Music* (1973–1990), an academic journal that was produced from their home in St. Albans, Queens. At Harvard, Southern held a joint appointment with the Department of Music, where she taught courses on Renaissance music and Black music, and the Afro-American Studies Department (now African and African American Studies), where she served as the department’s second chair.

To celebrate Eileen Southern’s life, explore her legacy, and honor the fiftieth anniversary of *The Music of Black Americans*, the Harvard University Department of Music, together with the Harvard Library and the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, will host a series of public events beginning in November 2021 as part of the Eileen Southern Initiative. A webinar, “Black Women and the American University: Eileen Southern’s Story,” will take place on Monday, November 15, 2021, 4:00–5:00 p.m. via Zoom. Speakers include Naomi André, Professor of Arts and Ideas in the Humanities Program, Department of Afroamerican and African Studies, and Women’s Studies, University of Michigan; Betty Hillmon, Founder/Director of the Boston City-Wide String Orchestra; and Tammy Kernodle, Professor of Musicology at Miami University of Ohio and Past-President of SAM. The event will also feature the premiere of a short documentary, *Light the Way Home: Eileen Southern’s Story*, by Harvard College students Daniel Huang (’22) and Uzo Ngwu (’23) with music by Devon Gates (’23). Registration for this event is open at <https://www.radcliffe.harvard.edu/event/2021-black-women-the-american-university-eileen-southern-one-virtual>.



Eileen Southern in 1986. Radcliffe College Archives PC 479-1-2. Courtesy Lilian Kemp Photography.

November will also mark the opening of *Eileen Southern and the Music of Black Americans*, a digital exhibit highlighting moments from Southern’s life, scholarship, and teaching through archival documents and recorded oral history interviews. COVID restrictions permitting, a parallel, in-person exhibit will be held in Harvard’s Loeb Music Library from January to April 2022. A second webinar, “Black Music and the American University: Eileen Southern’s Story,” will take place on Thursday, April 7, 2022, 4:00–5:00 p.m. The speakers are Marva Griffin Carter, Associate Professor of African American Studies and Music, Georgia State University; Guthrie P. Ramsey, Jr., Professor of Music at the University of Pennsylvania; Braxton D. Shelley, Associate Professor of Music, of Sacred Music, and of Divinity, Yale Divinity School; and Katie Callam and Christina Linklater from the Eileen Southern Initiative.

A concert and collaboration with the Harvard University Choirs (Andrew Clark, conductor) and the Aeolians (Jason Max Ferdinand, conductor), an award-winning choir from Oakwood University, a historically Black institution in Huntsville, Alabama, is planned for that same weekend. Newly commissioned works by Marques L. A. Garrett (University of Nebraska-Lincoln) and Rosephanye Powell (Auburn University) will be premiered at the concert.

The Harvard/Radcliffe Eileen Southern Initiative project team includes Katie Callam (Postdoctoral Fellow, Harvard GSAS Fellowships & Writing Center), Andrew Clark (Director of Choral Activities and Senior Lecturer on Music at Harvard), Christina Linklater (Keeper of the Isham Collection, Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library), Carol J. Oja (William Powell Mason Professor of Music and American Studies at Harvard and Director of Humanities at the Radcliffe Institute), and Braxton D. Shelley (Associate Professor of Music, of Sacred Music, and of Divinity, Yale University).

³ Eileen Southern to William B. Garcia, January 17, 1972 [sic]. Eileen Southern personal archive, HUM 253, Box 1, Folder 5, Harvard University Archives.

While Southern has received some recognition from the musicological community—including a SAM Lifetime Achievement award in 2000—this acknowledgement has yet to reflect the magnitude of her contributions to the field and to the academy. This is especially true at Harvard, where Southern taught for twelve years but remains largely absent from the histories of her home departments. And yet, Southern continues to impact individuals on a personal level, just as *The Music of Black Americans* did when it was first published fifty years ago. [Ganavya Doraiswamy](#), a vocalist, improviser, dancer, and multi-instrumentalist who is currently a Harvard graduate student, wrote a seminar paper a few years ago that was centered on Southern’s archive and helped spark the Eileen Southern Initiative. She reflects on Southern’s legacy:

There is something to be said of the wisdom of mothers, wisdom of aunts. When I first walked into the Davison Seminar Room [where a photograph of Southern hangs], I found the eyes of the Aunt I’d been told by a senior graduate student to find—that in Eileen Southern’s picture, living between two windows. I can’t remember how I ended up in the archive with her papers for Prof. Oja’s class, because the nature of this exercise—to fall into her life, the past that still somehow holds the keys to a healthy future—is one that defied time. Something about digitizing each letter, seeing the drafts of her letters, seeing how many things she wrote but did not send—a legacy of care. Prof. Eileen Southern’s presence at Harvard was and is a saving grace, one I hope we always remember to orient towards.⁴

Dissertation Roundup: 2020–2021

Editor’s note: The editors of the *Bulletin* are pleased to present our newest feature—the (annual) dissertation roundup! We are excited to showcase and celebrate the hard work of SAM’s student members as they mark the completion of their terminal degrees. The deadline for submissions each year is 15 August.

Kale, Sunaina Keonaona. “*Music is Here to Stay*”: Hawaiian, Local, and Global in Reggae in Hawai’i.” PhD dissertation., University of California at Santa Barbara, 2021.

Through ethnography, archival research, and analysis of musical recordings, I consider the ways in which identity operates in reggae in Hawai’i. Although Native Hawaiian worldviews are often obscured, they are the basis of engagement with identity in the music. Simultaneously, the categories of Local and global build on top of and yet are interrelated with the Native Hawaiian. This study joins work on Indigenous popular music that centers the messiness of everyday Indigenous life while privileging Indigenous agency and worldviews.

Morris, April. “*Music of Peace and Protest: U.S. Composers and Musical Activism during the Vietnam War (1965-1971)*.” PhD dissertation, Western University, 2021.

This dissertation explores the involvement of U.S. composers in Vietnam War protest by considering U.S. composers and their works in the context of the antiwar movement, changing understandings of American national identity, and the cultural connotations of art music. Through a selection of case studies addressing specific composers, musical works, and protest events, I explore the nuances of different types of art music protest as well as their role within the antiwar movement.

Pickett, Sarah. “*Tradition and Innovation in American Violin-Making*.” PhD dissertation, Florida State University, 2021.

This dissertation takes an organological, historical, and ethnographic approach to the study of innovative violin making in the twenty-first century. In this dissertation I explore the mythology surrounding the violin, especially its early history in Cremona, research innovation and experimentation in modern violin making, cover the history of American violin-making along with my own experience in the field, and interview American makers who are currently working to innovate and modernize the craft to adapt to the twenty-first century.

⁴ Ganavya Doraiswamy, email correspondence with author, August 16, 2021.

Career Connections: New Mentors

Carolyn Bryant and Susan Key, co-chairs; Committee on Career Diversity and Advocacy

The Committee on Career Diversity and Advocacy (CCDA) is excited to introduce five new mentors for our Career Connections initiatives, which matches SAM members with mentors from a variety of backgrounds and careers who can assist with short-term information about a skill, possible career path, research area, or other query you may have.

Christie Finn (Manhattan School of Music's Contemporary Performance Program) is an American singer and poet active in the world of contemporary music and interdisciplinary performance. Finn also serves as the Managing Director of the Hampsong Foundation.

Bobby Giglio (MA in musicology, McGill) is Assistant Curator for Musical Instruments at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston. He works with the more than 1,300 musical instruments in the MFA's collection and engages in extensive public interaction.

Elyse Marrero (PhD candidate, Florida State University) serves as Director of Musician Advancement at the New World Symphony. A member of the second cohort of Sphinx LEAD, a professional empowerment program for arts leaders of color, Elyse is interested in creating more accessible arts and culture spaces for people of all abilities and backgrounds and mentoring young creatives.

Bonnie Miller (PhD, Washington University, St. Louis) is an independent scholar who has published a biography of composer Augusta Browne as well as numerous articles and essays. She has taught piano and music history at several universities and is keen to advise others on incorporating writing as part of their career path or continuing lifestyle.

Joe Weed is a producer, composer and tunesmith, fiddler/multi-instrumentalist, and recording engineer who produces artists ranging from solo singer-songwriters to 25-piece folk orchestras, and has created soundtracks for movies and TV, including Ken Burns' documentaries.

For more information on Career Connections and to see a complete list of mentors, [please visit our web page](#).

Student Forum

Erin Fulton and Natalia Alexis Perez, co-chairs

The SAM Student Forum convened its biennial meeting at the Tacoma conference on the topic "So You Want to Do Public Musicology?" Panelists Randye Jones, Gabriel Kastle, Sharon Mirchandani, Colleen Phelps, William Robin, and Richard Walter graciously shared their experiences in public-facing scholarship via journalism, performance, curation, podcasting, and more. Dr. Robin agreed to have the substance of his presentation printed here. He recommends beginning a steady practice of writing "for oneself" (such as through journaling, essays, or a blog) prior to seeking out local, professional opportunities. Although public musicology is often demanding of one's time and attention, Dr. Robin recommends that students consider it for several reasons: improving your writing style and facility, contributing knowledge to the world, expanding your professional connections and opportunities, enjoying an audience besides your dissertation advisor, and helping your family understand your weird life decisions. Others in attendance—both current students and established scholars—lent their experience to the conversation and shared helpful resources. (Contact the Student Forum officers for a chat transcript!) For example, Emily Abrams-Ansari wrote, "Being forced to explain my work simply in accessible writing helps me see where I still don't really understand or know what it is I want to say in my scholarly work—places where academic verbiage is actually disguising an ongoing struggle to find out what I really mean." We hope that all in attendance found mental fodder for their own intellectual and social development. Thanks are due to outgoing co-chair McKenna Milici for her part in assembling, promoting, and moderating this panel. Students are welcome to propose potential panel topics to the officers at any time! We will next convene at the 2023 conference.

Journal of the Society for American Music

Volume 15, Number 4 (November 2021)

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In Praise of Mark Davidson

As editor of the *Journal of the Society for American Music*, I am sure I speak for my predecessors dating back to 2008—Leta Miller, Mark Katz, Karen Ahlquist, and Loren Kajikawa—in expressing my sincerest gratitude to Mark Davidson for his thirteen years of serving as the journal’s associate editor (2008–2010) and copyeditor (2011–2021). In 2015 Mark completed his Ph.D. in musicology and ethnomusicology at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He continued his position as *JSAM*’s copy editor after becoming the Archives Director of the Bob Dylan Archive and Woody Guthrie Archive.

Mark’s dedication to the journal has never wavered even during these difficult times due to the pandemic. As production schedules shifted, Mark carried out his duties, returning entire issues without delay and with content as well as formatting corrections duly noted. Indeed, the journal’s authors, editors, and readers were fortunate to work with a copyeditor who

also read with a keen musicologist's eye. More than this, the friendships he forged as a scholar in our community of ethnomusicologists, musicologists, and music theorists surely shaped the care he took in copyediting our work.

As *JSAM* 15.4 ushers in a new era with the journal's addition of colloquies, it is also Mark Davidson's final issue as copyeditor. Although Mark's resignation signals the end of his appointment, he will remain a member of the Society for American Music community, and for that we are also grateful. Thank you, Mark, for all you gave to help make *JSAM* the society's wonderful flagship journal that it is.

David Garcia, Editor

Emily Abrams Ansari, Associate Editor

***Bulletin* Seeking New Editorial Team**

Are you a great communicator?

The *Bulletin of the Society for American Music* is searching for a new editorial team! The team comprises the general editor, book review editor, media editor, and layout editor, with terms commencing in spring 2022. The *Bulletin* is published three times yearly and provides a timely and informal means by which members communicate with each other.

The general editor is primarily responsible for soliciting, collecting, curating, and editing the content of the *Bulletin*, which is published online at the society's website. The book review editor is responsible for soliciting and commissioning reviews for all books submitted to the society that are not selected for inclusion in *JSAM*, with an average of 5 reviews per issue. The media editor is responsible for soliciting and commissioning reviews of recorded sound and multimedia products that are not selected for inclusion in *JSAM*, and the layout editor is responsible for the formatting and visual layout of each issue of the *Bulletin*. The general editor and book review editor positions generally entail 15-20 hours of work per issue; the media and layout editor positions entail approximately 10-12 hours per issue. Each term lasts three years, plus a one-issue shadowing period at the beginning of the term.

All editors must be active members of the Society in good standing. Interested members should notify SAM [President Daniel Goldmark](#) of their interest by October 22.

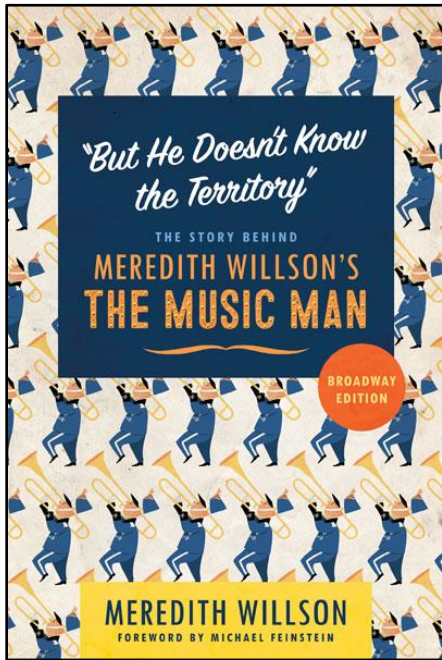
Call for *Bulletin* Contributions

The *Bulletin* editorial board invites members to contribute feature articles, reviews, and news, as well as ideas for future *Bulletin* segments or series. We welcome essays and opinion pieces on current issues in American music (broadly conceived) and music scholarship; reports on concerts and conferences of interest to our membership; transcriptions of interviews with prominent persons in American musical life; reviews of recent books, online resources, media (including albums and documentaries) pertaining to American music; and updates on our members' scholarly, creative, and professional activities. You can contact members of the editorial board via the [SAM website](#) or via the email addresses listed at the bottom of the *Bulletin* issue.

Book Reviews

[“But He Doesn’t Know the Territory”](#): The Story Behind *Meredith Willson’s The Music Man*; *Broadway Edition*. Meredith Willson. University of Minnesota Press, 2020. 190pp. ISBN: 9781517910471. Paperback.

Daniel Carsello, Temple University



In 1957, composer and playwright Meredith Willson wrote one of the most enduring pieces of Americana: *The Music Man*. Two years later, he published “*But He Doesn’t Know the Territory*”—part autobiography, part how-to guide. The Broadway edition of “*But He Doesn’t Know the Territory*,” published in 2020 to coincide with the Broadway revival of *The Music Man* (slated to open in early 2022 after a nearly two-year delay due to the coronavirus pandemic), is a fascinating firsthand look at the often *nonlinear* path a Broadway musical will take from original concept to opening night. The book’s title references a line the character Charlie Conwell, a con salesman, shouts in response to the difficulties traveling salespeople face in swindling their customers. However, the title is also a reference to Willson’s relative naïveté creating a Broadway musical. As he notes, “...I wrote Act One, Scene One on the empty paper, not of course, to show these people that I could write a musical comedy but to show them I could not” (16).

The Broadway edition begins with a foreword by Michael Feinstein, founder of the Great American Songbook Foundation. This foundation received some of Willson’s original papers after the death of his third wife, Rosemary Sullivan. In the foreword, Feinstein ponders how a man who had never written for Broadway managed to create “...one of the most enduring classics of all time...” (vii). He provides a brief historical background on Willson and praises the book for being “...one of the best

documented chronicles illustrating the collaborative process of birthing a musical” (viii).

Telling a story that spans six years, “*But He Doesn’t Know the Territory*” comprises twenty-two chapters of varying length; the shortest chapter is fewer than five sentences. The book can be divided into three sections. In the first five chapters, Willson decides to write a Broadway musical about his home state of Iowa and immediately experiences writer’s block. Inspired by a picture of his high school band, he begins writing what would eventually be called *The Silver Triangle*. Willson and his second wife, Ralina “Rini” Zarova, travel from California to New York to perform the show for Broadway producers Cy Feuer and Ernest “Ernie” Martin, who suggest a name change to *The Music Man* and agree to produce it. Eventually, Feuer and Martin recommend *The Music Man* be made into a television special, but the plans fall through, and the producing duo pull out of working with Willson. He then works with Franklin Lacey, a United States playwright, to hone the libretto for *The Music Man*. Around the same time, Willson realizes that the lengthy dialogue about the ills facing River City (based on his hometown Mason City) he was hoping to cut would work well as a patter song, and the popular “Ya Got Trouble” was born. Willson then decided to perform the show with Rini for Broadway producer Kermit Bloomgarden.

Chapters 6 through 13 begin with Willson’s successful performance for both Bloomgarden, who agrees to produce, and Morton Da Costa, who signs on to direct. Some of Willson’s most significant quandaries with the show also get worked out during this time. The first involves the character that would eventually become Winthrop Paroo, Marian’s younger brother. Willson acknowledges, despite how difficult it was to work the character into the show, “how glued [he] was to the spastic-boy subplot...” (58). Eventually, he and Lacey realize that a relatively minor character with a lisp could replace the original boy, leading to Winthrop’s creation. Willson struggles with Marian’s motivations, constantly rewriting her songs. He also comments on his affinity for barbershop quartets in writing music for the Buffalo Bills, the 1950 Barbershop Harmony

Society international champions.¹ In this section, Willson also describes the casting process for the leads—Robert Preston won the role of Harold Hill after successfully performing “Ya Got Trouble”—and ensemble.

Chapters 14 through 22 describe the early rehearsal process and note the continuing rewrites to songs and the script: “the final script. Draft # Forty some-odd” (135). Willson also endeavors to get the cast album recorded, ultimately working with Capitol Records. Willson finally realizes Marian Paroo’s motivations and remarks that she has been a stand-in for his mother the whole time; as early as 1951, Willson notes he was thinking, “Got to get Mama into this show” (21). After a few performances with audiences and seeing what is and is not working, Willson also changes the opening number, “Rock Island,” to ensure that audiences are seated and ready for his novel opening number. He also adds a second number for the Buffalo Bills, to be sung in Act Two with Marian: “Lida Rose,” named after his aunt and mother, which would then become a barbershop quartet standard. After performing the show at the Shubert (now Merriam) Theatre in Philadelphia, the show moves to New York for its Broadway debut. Willson reprints his article for the *Herald Tribune*, where he acknowledges the truth of other Iowans’ assertion that *The Music Man* is “an Iowan’s attempt to pay tribute to his home state” (184).

Throughout “*But He Doesn’t Know the Territory*,” Willson speaks in a conversational tone, with anecdotes and digressions occasionally detouring the narrative. He also attributes the colloquialisms present throughout the book—“overt” for “over,” for instance—to his being “Iowa stubborn.” This phrase would lend its name to the first sung number in *The Music Man*. Although Willson chronicles the number and frequency of his edits to the show over six years, with some forty revisions to the libretto and twenty-two different songs composed, he never explains *how* these revisions differ from each other, keeping the reader from having a full picture of “...the creative process as if it were spontaneously happening...,” as Feinstein argues (ix).

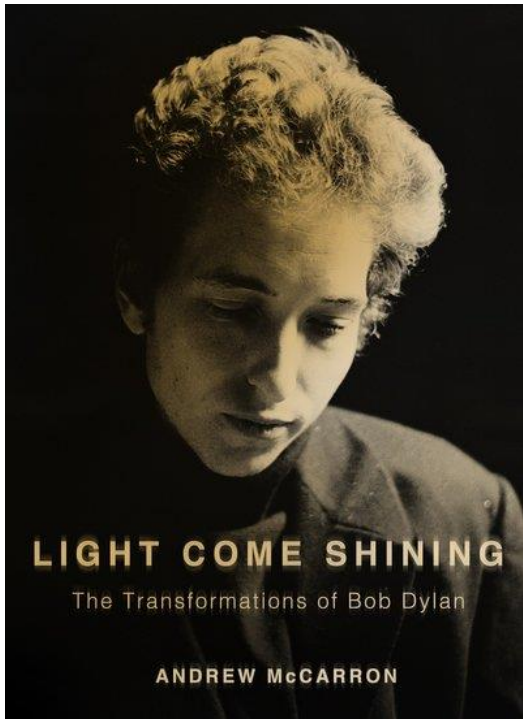
Additionally, while it is not wholly unsurprising that these subjects are left unaddressed, it is unfortunate that Feinstein does not engage with some of the more problematic parts of *The Music Man* in his foreword. The furthest he goes in critiquing the show is more of a compliment, in which he notes that reading the book “...will make you long for the ‘old days,’ even if you’re twelve; even if you hate the ‘old days’; even if the ‘old days’ never existed” (vii). Willson’s decision to substitute Winthrop’s upper motor neuron syndrome for a lisp speaks to the interchangeability of differently-abled bodies in the Broadway musical and general entertainment.² “*But He Doesn’t Know the Territory*” also acknowledges Willson’s use of nostalgia—the entirety of Chapter 10 is Willson’s love letter to barbershop harmony and the novelty of an actual barbershop quartet in a Broadway show—but does not delve much further into the historical context of the time. *West Side Story* opened on Broadway only three months before *The Music Man*, and Carol J. Oja notes that the latter “became an antidote to *West Side Story*—at once a wistful escape from the social and political perils of the present and a comforting reassertion of old-fashioned musical comedy.”³ Harold Hill’s assertion that “ragtime, shameless music that will grab your son, your daughter with the arms of a jungle animal instinct” is just as potent a threat to the folks who awarded *The Music Man* the Tony Award for Best Musical in 1958—over *West Side Story*—as it is to the parents in the fictitious River City in 1912.

“*But He Doesn’t Know the Territory*” is a flawed but interesting read about the work it takes to produce a Broadway musical and the many players that make that work happen. While the book can be digressive, it is written in an engaging matter and will be of interest to scholars, musical theater fans, barbershop singers, and anyone interested in mid-twentieth-century Americana and the nostalgia that characterized the era and continues to hold sway today, if the buzz surrounding the upcoming Broadway revival is any indication.

¹ For more about the history of the Barbershop Harmony Society (legally, the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America), readers may wish to consult Lynn Abbott’s “‘Play that Barber Shop Chord’: A Case for the African-American Origin of Barbershop Harmony” (*American Music* 10, no. 3 [Autumn 1992]: 289–325) and Gage Averill’s *Four Parts, No Waiting: A Social History of American Barbershop Harmony* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); the latter especially discusses the Buffalo Bills, *The Music Man*, and the element of nostalgia coursing through the musical.

² For more about Broadway musicals and disability studies, readers may wish to consult Raymond Knapp’s “‘Waitin’ for the Light to Shine’: Musicals and Disability” in *The Oxford Handbook of Music and Disability Studies*, edited by Blake Howe, Stephanie Jensen-Moulton, Neil Lerner, and Joseph Straus (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015) and Daniel Goldmark’s “Stuttering in American Popular Song, 1890–1930,” in *Sounding Off: Theorizing Disability in Music*, edited by Neil Lerner and Joseph N. Straus (London and New York: Routledge, 2006).

³ Carol J. Oja, “*West Side Story* and *The Music Man*: Whiteness, Immigration, and Race in the US During the Late 1950s,” *Studies in Musical Theatre* 3, no. 1 (2009): 16.



[Light Come Shining: The Transformations of Bob Dylan.](#)

Andrew McCarron. Oxford University Press, 2017. 214 pp. ISBN: 9780199313471. Hardcover.

Hannah Porter Denecke, Florida State University

Writing about iconic musicians of American popular culture requires an interdisciplinary approach spanning a variety of literature and methodologies, and one might imagine this task would be all the more difficult when considering a figure as convoluted as Bob Dylan. In *Light Come Shining*, Andrew McCarron responds to the variety of mythologized portraits of Dylan by turning instead to the musician's own words and lyrics to capture through "psychobiography" his "unique psychological 'fingerprint'" (xi). The author makes no attempt to fit the prolific songwriter into one of the categories assigned to him by "the folkies of Greenwich Village, the student movement of the Sixties and Seventies, Born Again Christians, the Chabad Lubavitch community, or English department postmodernists" (ix). Rather, McCarron argues that Dylan is best understood "within the twists and turns of his changes," and interprets the musician through the variety of masks he has worn over his long career (5).

McCarron's introduction includes a summary of the biographical narrative that has emerged about Dylan over the years, including both the factual and legendary details that have been brought to the table by the artist himself as well as many of his admirers. McCarron frames even the incoherencies of this narrative as useful to the psychobiographical task of understanding him better, describing the multiple "masks" that Dylan has donned and performed throughout his career. The author refers to Ruthellen Josselson's hermeneutics of faith and hermeneutics of suspicion as important to his method. This hermeneutical structure allows McCarron to find meaning in Dylan's life while also being skeptical of some of his questionable claims and decisions. McCarron also employs psychological script theory to understand and even find coherence in the musician's life. The author considers the many behavioral patterns Dylan has revisited, the most prominent pattern being the "destiny script," in which the singer seeks redemption and purpose in the "songs and artists of [his] youth for guidance" (35).

The book itself is small, physically attractive, and neatly organized into six chapters. The prologue and first chapter lay out background, methods, and theory. The second through fourth chapters explore three significant events in Dylan's life alongside songs which correspond with them in chronology and topic. In the fifth and sixth chapters, the author explores scholarship about American culture during Dylan's coming-of-age. Each chapter features a brief conclusion that ties together its own themes, as well as connecting with earlier material.

Altogether, the greatest strength of this book is in its clear and organized narrative paired with McCarron's engaging writing. In many ways, the structure speaks to one of the author's most compelling arguments: that Dylan's is "a life characterized by more unity than disunity, more coherence than fragmentation" (xvi). Indeed, like many Dylan scholars, McCarron looks carefully at the songwriter's religious explorations and transformations for clues about what tied together the different aspects of the artist, arguing that "at the heart of [his] coherence is a repetitive story of spiritual death and rebirth grounded in a sonic mystery religion that Bob Dylan first heard as a kid in the Forties by turning the dial of the family radio" (xvi). Contrasting the sonic lucidity Dylan experienced in music with the sonic disturbance of the Cold War, the author paints the songwriter as experiencing religion and spirituality distinctively through sound.

In Dylan's case, song is intrinsically tied to words. McCarron considers biographical statements, writings, and lyrics as the ideal sources for interpreting Dylan from a psychological perspective. In addition to these primary sources, the author also integrates psychological literature to aid in understanding Dylan's personality, theological and exegetical perspectives to interpret the religious and spiritual aspects of his lyricism and conversion experience, as well as excerpts from a variety of poetic works alongside Judeo-Christian scriptures to reinforce salient ideas. Although McCarron continues to return to psychological aspects of Dylan's biography for the reader to consider, his references to interesting literature and source material make the book entirely interdisciplinary in nature.

As I was reading, I did wonder whether or not McCarron would touch on the issue of racial implications and influences in Dylan's music more directly. It is well known that Dylan was influenced by a variety of artists in American traditional and folk music genres, and the author made the point to discuss the direct influence of Black musicians and the Mississippi Delta blues. I was not surprised that McCarron would describe Dylan's "greatest artistic ability" as being able to "appropriate and synthesize American traditions—folk, bluegrass, rock, gospel, etc." It troubled me, though, that McCarron states just a paragraph later that "these musical and lyrical quotations aren't only a form of postmodern blackface," but provides no further discussion on this statement within the chapter (25). McCarron does touch on Dylan's blues influences throughout the text, stating in the final chapter that the "cultural traditions of African Americans were and are the most influential and consistent sources behind Dylan's musical traditions" (180). Even so, he often includes important details about these influences with very little synthesis. One especially surprising example is when McCarron argues that "the blues are everywhere one cares to look in Dylan's life" by pointing out the artist's choice of naming the 2001 album *Love and Theft* "after Eric Lott's 1993 academic study of black-face minstrelsy" (181). This final discussion of the racialized influences of Dylan's work concludes with a quote from Sean Wilentz's *Dylan in America* (2010), who describes the musician as "neither black nor white, up nor down—and that had reference to everybody" (183). I couldn't help but wonder what this meant, since Dylan is certainly white, and his music is not exempt from that racial status. Overall, McCarron writes articulately about the musical content and style of Dylan's songs, but chooses not to engage directly with some of the unsettling aspects of the songwriter's wide use of source material.

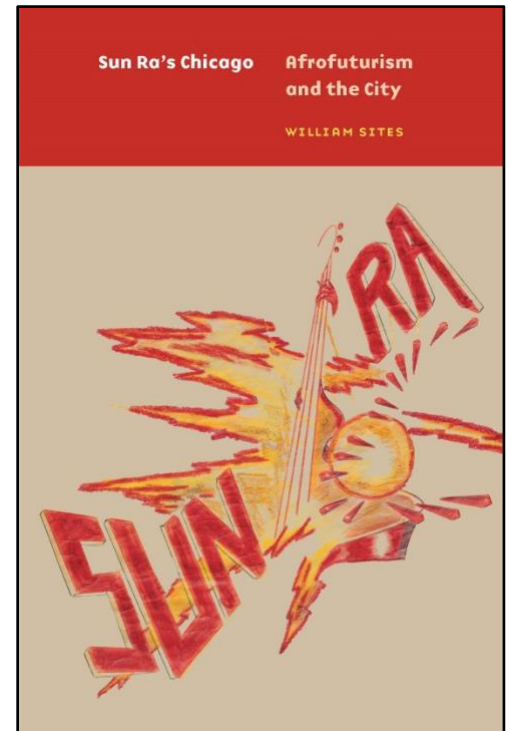
Nevertheless, McCarron's book sheds light on a largely enigmatic figure in an organized yet creative and thoughtful way. One of the author's earliest stated goals was to interpret Dylan's life as "generative" in his ability to write prolifically and to create "*something shining*" with his work (xiv). McCarron's scrupulous analyses of Dylan's lyrics and writings reveal the complex person behind the art, while also allowing the songwriter narrative and structure in his life. This author allows Dylan to be complex, even as he discovers order within his life and music. Such treatment of an iconic artist that has captured the attention of so many could give any reader reason to better interrogate the nuances and consistencies of their own life, as well as their musical subjects of research.

[*Sun Ra's Chicago: Afrofuturism and the City*](#). William Sites. University of Chicago Press, 2020. 328 pp. ISBN: 9780226732107. Paperback.

Solomon Gwerevende, Dublin City University

Many books have been written about Afrofuturist pioneer Sun Ra and his Arkestra, but William Sites' *Sun Ra's Chicago: Afrofuturism and the City* is the first to make Chicago his co-protagonist. Sites provides a natural context for how Chicago's Afrocentrist philosophy, jazz scenes, and religion helped Sonny Blount become Sun Ra. During his time in Chicago, Ra was a pianist, composer, bandleader, a significant arranger of music for other ensembles, and a session instrumentalist for local rhythm and blues labels.

Sun Ra's Chicago is an interdisciplinary study that combines musicology, social history, hermeneutics, urban studies, cultural reclamation, and a revelation of the relationship between cities and popular music production. It is a comprehensive and provocative account of countercultural ferment in post-war Chicago that parallels the musician's formative years, exploring the urban networks and spaces that moulded and influenced Blount's transformation from an itinerant musician into the otherworldly philosophical leader of the Arkestra. Sites brings this creative and visionary musician back to earth—particularly to the city's South Side, where from 1946 to 1961, he lived and relaunched his career. The post-war South Side was a melting pot of heterodox religious and cultural activism. The book reveals the unruly musical crossroads where Blount pulled from a collection of musical and intellectual sources—from revisionist Christianity, radical nationalism, and science fiction to jazz, blues, Latin dance music, and pop exotica—to construct a philosophy and performance style that imagined a new identity and future for African Americans. *Sun Ra's Chicago* illustrates that late-twentieth-century Afrofuturism originated from a deep, ideological engagement and interaction with the city, and that by unearthing the post-war black experience of Ra's South



Side setting, we can witness and realize the prospects of urban life in fresh ways. The book addresses two fundamental questions: How did Sun Ra's music and cosmology emerge? And why did they flourish in Chicago?

Structurally, *Sun Ra's Chicago* is divided in two. Part I: Birmingham (three chapters) introduces early twentieth-century Birmingham as home to Blount in his first two years and as a critical site in the evolution of African American urban ideals. These initial chapters examine the early development of Ra's utopian sensibility by investigating his urban life experience in a diversity of cultural contexts, such as black Birmingham's intersecting commercial and spiritual ambitions. Part II: Chicago (five chapters) examines everyday sites and venues within the South Side as cultural spaces where black consciousness extended well beyond the postwar moment.

Chapter 1, "Downtown Sounds," centers on "Birmingham, the Magic City" (14), in which Ra and the Arkestra performed an extended piece of music called "The Magic City." The musical culture was one of the many ways in which a reimagined Birmingham, an invented city, impressed itself upon the composer who grew up there. "... Birmingham in the earliest decades of the twentieth century," Sites writes, "was a centre not only for ragtime, jazz, spirituals, and the blues but for work songs jug bands, church music, yodelling, popular vaudeville song, and society dance bands" (15). Chapter 2 examines how formal educational training shaped Blount's understanding of African American cultural history and a sense of community leadership. Although public education for African Americans was highly restricted, "schools were invaluable training sites for several of the new music's innovators" (27). Chapter 3 focuses on Blount's dream as a call to leadership, connecting his longtime sense of being different with the promise and obligation of a unique destiny. The calling demanded a special kind of leadership, and as a leader, he championed the cultural sensibilities, both musical and philosophical, of his Birmingham experiences (49).

The fourth chapter focuses on Blount's early years in Chicago, particularly on neglected insights into the musical origins of certain South Side cultural ideals that flourished later. It traces his activities across various settings and venues and reveals in particular how he had established himself as a critical figure in the varied South Side and how racial and spatial conditions affected different centers of musical production. The following chapter, "Sound So Loud: It will Wake up the Dead," focuses on Thmei Research, a center established by Blount and Alton Abraham that was devoted to studying the origins and identity of black Americans. Thmei broadsheet writings repositioned African Americans as transhistorical moral protagonists, responsible for catastrophic evil but ripe for redemption. Chapter 6 reconstructs the making of a "critical utopia" sensibility—one that not only rejects the world as it is but envisions a transformed future through music created by Ra and Abraham in the 1950s. Chapter 7, "African Space," demonstrates how Ra and his colleagues used music as a space for African utopianism. Song titles such as "Space Aura," "Saturn," and "Interplanetary Music," along with futuristic stage props and performance attire (167), signalled an embrace of outer space as a utopian realm. The following chapter reflects the relationship between place, space, and the musical imagination on the South Side, circa 1960. Wonder Inn is seen as a space for engagement between the musicians and the audience. The audience members engage in various ways with the Arkestra's performance, sometimes vocally—"play it, Sun Ray, play it"—and other times distractedly, sustaining the thread of their conversations (205). The book ends with a section titled "Lineages/Legacies" that synthesizes the significant points from the text as a whole and provides a detailed accounting of Ra's history, and in particular the contributions of his earliest cities, to the development of his music and his mythology.

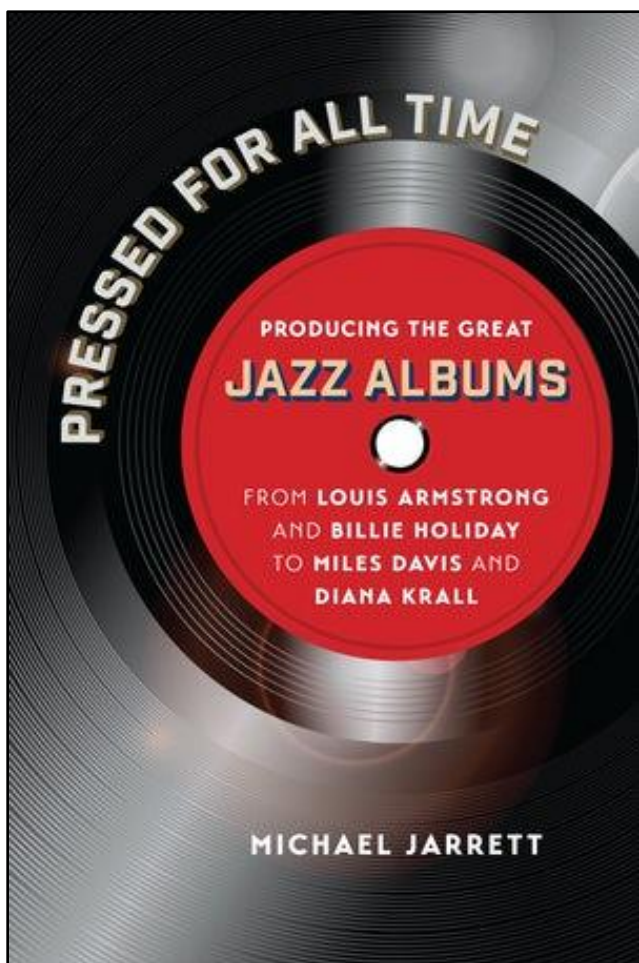
Befitting its interdisciplinary approach, each chapter features photos, for example, of Ra and his colleagues, musicians, musical instruments, sites and venues, and the author also follows a broader program to practically, theoretically, and methodologically apply music as a space for African utopianism concerning cities. *Sun Ra's Chicago* explores the material circumstances in which creative thought occurs by situating Ra and urban spaces within the spatial conditions shaping African American urban life, borrowing from human geography multidimensional views of city spaces. An essential contribution is that Sites combines an impressive number of methods, disciplines, and theories to ground Ra's space-bound theatrics in material history, urban studies, African American studies, theology, and literary theory. His interdisciplinary approach helps to examine how urban scenes of religious and cultural expression presented sonic resources and mythologies of manhood that inspired Ra's creative reinvention of African American musical traditions and freedom dreams. Sites adopts the utopian imagination earnestly from a historical account premised on urban sites and engages with the idea of the city as an African American ideal (3).

Sites locates Ra in the middle of urban life characterized by different spaces such as music clubs, neighbourhood bookstores, parks, and storefront churches. "These sites," the author argues, "afforded [Ra] disparate opportunities to discover surprising powers and purposes in music and to explore related philosophical questions about historical myth, racial

identity, and the future” (51). Sites regards urban spaces as pathways for African American utopianism. His critical utopianism generates insight into urban settings of the 1940s and 1950s that became important for developing Afrofuturism currents in subsequent decades. Sites indicates that urban studies and various subfields of history recognize the significance of the urban imagination in shaping the human experience. He advances an understanding of Ra’s life and music-making during the Chicago years. However, efforts by urban residents to reimagine their city as something radically different too often escape a historical retrospective gaze.

Influenced by geographical elements such as scale, territory, place and space, *Sun Ra’s Chicago* explains how twentieth-century urban spatial conditions’ cultural activities and creative processes were reimaged. Material circumstances play a philosophical role in influencing the urban cultural practices of a given moment in time. Motivated by recent scholarship in African American and religious studies, Sites situates the broadsheets within a rich history and post-war renewal of theologically inspired critique of white supremacy. The book uses musical expression as a tool to understand city life and other possible worlds. Understanding urban music-making requires paying attention to the urban factors that influenced it and what this music might say, in turn, about life and livelihood in post-war Chicago. Music production is a historically embedded process: its meanings are shaped by diverse factors such as gender, class, race, and other socio-political factors in a specific context, and thus serves as a key factor in understanding utopianism. Music, created and performed, illuminates the social and urban conditions from which it emerges. Situating music-making within overlapping social contexts provides a foundation for understanding the music’s proximity to South Side scenes and Sun Ra’s effort to reimagine the city itself as a springboard to another world. In the process, Sites explore a type of musical utopianism as it evolved in concert with the early postwar city.

If there is a weakness to be found in *Sun Ra’s Chicago* from a musicological standpoint, it is the lack of a solid musical theoretical foundation. Although Sites presents one or two notations of Sun Ra’s music, he could have offered more examples for his readers from music studies. Weaknesses aside, this book is a much-needed contribution to a wide range of academic disciplines. It is not only essential for Sun Ra listeners but for general readers, scholars, and students with interest in the crosscurrents of black intellectual thought and the utopian possibilities, past and present, of America’s cities.



[Pressed for All Time: Producing Jazz Albums from Louis Armstrong and Billie Holiday to Miles Davis and Diana Krall.](#) Michael Jarrett. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016. 336 pp. ISBN: 9781469630595. Hardcover.

Elizabeth Uchimura, Florida State University

Michael Jarrett’s *Pressed for All Time: Producing Jazz Albums from Louis Armstrong and Billie Holiday to Miles Davis and Diana Krall* is an impressive collection of interviews with producers, engineers, and performers of major jazz albums from the late 1930s to 2009. This book complements Jarrett’s previous work, both monographs and articles, by compiling extensive interview materials from fifty-seven people steeped in the jazz recording business, including George Avakian, Don Schlitten, Milt Gabler, Teo Macero, and Bob Weinstock. *Pressed* reads like your grandfather regaling you with exciting stories of his youth. Jarrett creates an intimate and comfortable space in which to read these little-known stories that capture the elusive jazz idiom within the grooves of a recorded album.

Chapters correspond to developments in recording technology, from 78s to magnetic tape to multitracking to digital. Jarrett arranges each chapter according to major recordings of each period. He creates vignettes of the recordings using their cover art, album titles, and performer names to head each new segment of

interviews. Jarrett explains that this organizational scheme is intended to anchor readers in the same time period the landmark recordings were produced. However, since his interviewees are not always specifically addressing these recordings, it is easy for readers to become confused as to how the vignettes fit with the interviews. Nonetheless, the vignettes break up the text and provide visual (and aural) examples of many of the recordings that the interviewees worked on.

Jarrett argues that although jazz continues to develop and evolve, the jazz album production process generally stabilized in the 2000s in response to the vast possibilities of digital capture and editing. He reflects holistically on the changes in the jazz recording industry since its inception. Producers of jazz recordings have generally functioned differently from those focused on classical or popular music because of the importance of improvisation to the style. Whereas classical and popular music could be rehearsed to fit a specific length of recording time, jazz was more restricted on recordings than in typical live performance. The early 10-inch 78-rpm records provided a maximum of three minutes to a side which constricted the style until the standard use of 12-inch long-playing records in the 1950s. Interviewees consistently mentioned how recording technology uniquely affected jazz recordings, because players were unable to “stretch out” until LPs and later digital media came around.

Jarrett’s interviewees described themselves less often as producers, and more as facilitators and stage managers, diplomats, and therapists. They gathered performers, brainstormed tunes and set lists, meticulously arranged microphones, and had to “recognize when the magic is ready to happen, and then, obviously, when it does happen” (269). Jarrett describes them as “a distinct group of highly sophisticated listeners” who are part of the “connoisseur culture devoted to jazz” (xxi). These were ultra-fans who wanted to make sure the music was heard and had the means to do so.

Beyond the interviews, *Pressed* contains a latent metanarrative that touches on the question of authorship. In his introduction, Jarrett clarifies that he is not theorizing that the jazz producer is the author of jazz albums, but rather claiming that “the self-effacing producer...eliminates any possibility of an author except the musician” (xxi). Interviewees similarly emphasize that they produced in a way that made their work invisible. Jarrett goes a step further to suggest that *Pressed* is modeled similarly: he has foregrounded the voices of his interviewees, shifting the focus away from his own voice. But in his well-intentioned effort to demonstrate the distinct processes of the jazz record producer, Jarrett inhibits a critical assessment of the biases inherent in any recording. He heralds the almost entirely white male cohort of producers as champions of jazz who want to bring out what they considered the “best sound” in their overwhelmingly black male musicians. But by doing so, Jarrett avoids confronting issues of race, gender, and class that are essential to understanding the dynamics at play in the American recording industry.

Pressed for All Time is an enjoyable chronicle that provides a rare glimpse into the recording and reissuing process for major American jazz albums. Jarrett has included stories along with digestible explanations of the different recording technologies that were used over time. Although this book avoids explicit critical discussions, it certainly achieves Jarrett’s goal of illuminating how the work of jazz producers differs from other music producers. In this way, it is a fine resource to include in broader studies of the recording industry, jazz history, and music production.

Member News

[James Deaville](#) has received two years of full funding for his project “Colonizing the Coronavirus through Sound and Music: Media Representation, Neoliberal Biopolitics and Race in Pandemic News Coverage” through an Insight Development Grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

[Larry Starr’s](#) new book *Listening to Bob Dylan* has just been published as a volume in the University of Illinois Press series *Music in American Life*. The book is a straightforward listening guide to Dylan’s recorded work as a performing songwriter. Starr also wrote an article on Dylan and the Great American Songbook for the recently published anthology *The World of Bob Dylan*, edited by Sean Latham (Cambridge University Press).

Ralph P. Locke writes: “First, please note a typo in my ‘*Bulletin Board*’ entry in the Winter 2021 issue: Bonny H. Miller is the author of a wonderful book in a series that I edit for University of Rochester Press. That book is [Augusta Browne: Composer and Woman of Letters in Nineteenth-Century America](#). In the process of rearranging items in my entry, I mistakenly attached her name to a book about Aaron Copland.

“*Musical Quarterly* has now published a [translation \(with commentary\)](#) that my longtime Eastman School of Music colleague Jürgen Thym and I did of a wide-ranging 2001 interview given (in German) by Harvard musicology professor Reinhold Brinkmann. In it, Brinkmann reflects in insightful detail about changing trends and methods in musicological scholarship and pedagogy, drawing on his experiences in Germany and in the U.S.

“I contributed three chapters to Hervé Lacombe’s award-winning *Histoire de l’opéra français*, published toward the end of 2020. My chapters explore nineteenth-century French operas set in foreign lands (including North America and the Caribbean).

“I continue to write essays and reviews of opera recordings. I’m particularly delighted to have the chance to write about American operas, by such composers as [Gunther Schuller](#), [Carlisle Floyd](#), and [Scott Wheeler](#).”



Reinhold Brinkmann (1934–2021).
Photo by Jane Reed.

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