Presidential campaign music has been a growing topic of interest in both academic and journalistic circles at least since 2008, with the Barack Obama campaign’s unprecedented level of musical engagement.
of musical activity. The emergence of social media, user-generated content, and playlisting platforms has transformed not only the composition of the campaign soundscape, but also the ways in which citizens engage with it, and by extension how they articulate their own relationships to the democratic process. While pundits, politicians, and the public dissect candidate speeches, the visual composition of the advertisements, or gaffes that are played and replayed in the twenty-four-hour news cycle, indeed the sounds we hear bear an equally important role in the constitution of presidential identity, party identity and American identity. The diversity, complexity, and mutability of the twenty-first-century campaign soundscape demands the cultivation of sophisticated research tools, new analytical approaches, and an interdisciplinary methodological framework that allows analyst and listener alike to ponder music’s cultural and political significance as well as its affective power in a media-saturated environment.

Presidential Library (http://www.traxonthetrail.com/teachers), and many other institutions to create resources for educators who wish to introduce the study of music and elections into their music history, political science, cultural studies, or American history classrooms. Additional teaching materials developed by contributors and presented in libraries, conferences, classrooms, and community spaces across the US are also available. The website’s presence on social media, including Twitter (https://twitter.com/traxonthetrail), Tumblr (https://traxonthetrail.tumblr.com/), Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/traxonthetrail/), and Pinterest (https://www.pinterest.com/traxonthetrail/boards/) allows scholars, students, and the public to engage with ongoing conversations on the subject.

Two open-access databases—designed, developed, and maintained by Trax’s student staff—enabled our contributors (as well as journalists and other interested parties) to closely track the 2016 campaign soundscape as the election unfolded. The first, Campaign Music Bibliography (http://traxonthetrail.com/bibliography), is a searchable database containing bibliographic data for over 1,300 mainstream press articles and scholarly writings on campaign-related music activities. The second database, Trail Trax (http://www.traxonthetrail.com/trax-filter), represents the first attempt to document, analyze, and catalogue the soundscape of a single campaign. With over 8,000 entries, this database allows the user to track candidate music strategies, compare local soundscapes, or form a picture of the evolution of the campaign as a whole. At present, the Trax team is developing a new database in anticipation of the 2020 presidential election. Trail Trax 2.020 will include sophisticated mapping and timeline functions, which will open possibilities for the study of spatiality, transmission, and reception, providing a more contextual understanding of how music functions in campaign contexts.

In an age where we are perpetually exposed to images and sounds across multiple media platforms and where political and popular culture become interchangeable, it is perhaps even more vital that we develop a critical ear, attuned to the ways in which sound can be harnessed as a tool of political persuasion. The critical insight, educational materials, and arsenal of resources curated by Trax on the Trail staff and contributors can perhaps play a small role in the cultivation of such an ear and support efforts to build bridges across academic disciplines and liaise with publics adjacent or beyond the walls of academia.
Although Trax on the Trail contributors are at present taking the time between presidential elections to pursue other projects and publish their work on this subject in other scholarly forums (http://www.traxonthetrail.com/sites/default/files/Recent%20Publications%20on%20the%202016), four contributors representing the states of New York (Justin Patch), New Jersey (Paul Christiansen), Ohio (Aaron Manela), and Georgia (Naomi Graber) offer their short takes on music heard during their respective states’ 2018 primary elections.

**Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and the DIY Aesthetic**

*Justin Patch*

On June 26, 2018, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (https://ocasio2018.com/) defeated ten-term incumbent Joe Crowley in the Democratic primary for NY-14, a congressional district that includes parts of Queens and the Bronx. The victory was seen as both a major coup and a sign of deep divisions between the Democratic Party’s progressive/socialist and centrist wings. While Ocasio-Cortez’s brief adult life (she is only 28) has involved social justice work, she learned the campaigning strategies that carried her to victory while volunteering for Bernie Sanders in 2016. Her campaign was outspent nearly 17-1 by Crowley’s and her shoestring budget is clearly reflected in the sounds of her ads. Digital technology makes it increasingly easy to produce a slick product on a budget, but Ocasio-Cortez, like Sanders, adopted a DIY aesthetic that includes ambient noise, simple background music, and multi-lingualism. The deployment of DIY audiovisual aesthetic techniques serves to humanize the candidate and connect them with the viewer, making them appear accessible and relatable, distanced from the high-budget products associated with campaigns. It also harkens back to a period in popular music history when DIY production became an aesthetic that was tethered to oppositional stances (groomed in underground clubs, basement shows, and home recording) and later deployed by recording studios that intentionally replicated the gritty, noisy DIY sound.

The music in the background of “See What’s Possible (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzW4UY1m_yM)” is simple: a slow-paced electric piano with an added string patch that combines ethereal chords with serene, repetitive right-hand melodic figures. The ad opens with...
scenes of (assumed) labor: an older Latina riding the subway, a shop floor, and the lifting of a metal grate from a store front. Interspersed in these images is a close-up of a supporter hand-making an Ocasio-Cortez sign. Each of these brief shots includes diegetic sound—rumbling, shuffling, clattering, and coloring. Following this atmospheric introduction, the people in the ad tell their stories—labor, immigration, family, and connections to NY-14, including portions in Spanish and Arabic (with bilingual subtitles). Through scenes of everyday work and domestic life, the ad portrays the glory and hardships of the American dream for New York’s diverse working-class communities. Ocasio-Cortez is not pictured until two minutes into the two-and-a-half-minute spot. Her voice is not heard until the final ten seconds when she says “This campaign is about what we can accomplish together,” a phrase reminiscent of Bernie Sanders’s “Together (https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=54&v=nyhfJTFJHu8)” ad (which was donated to the campaign by non-profit media company Human).

For observers of the recent progressive populist wave in US politics, the aesthetics of this ad are familiar. Sanders’s ads like “It’s a Revolution,” “Make History,” and “Together” use similar sound-images and editing techniques. These include using ambient diegetic sound to set place, including diverse subjects, and simple musical accompaniment that highlights voices and diegetic sounds. All of these emphasize direct communication and mythic connotations of labor, immigration, community, and diversity. All of this is wrapped in the patina of low-tech production, as opposed to the typical Madison Avenue fare of political campaign ads. Just as DIY mode of music production became an aesthetic that indexed critical political stances, do Bernie Sanders and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez’s advertising aesthetics index a similar opposition that is bubbling below the surface? Or is this just another style of campaigning?

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Planting (Political) Seeds in the Garden State: Nate Kleinman’s “Tractor” Political Ad

Paul Christiansen

Identifying himself with the wave of new candidates following Bernie Sanders’s exhortation that progressives from across the country seek office, Nate Kleinman ran in the 2018 Democratic primary for United States Representative from the 2nd Congressional District of New Jersey. For his campaign, Kleinman ran “Tractor (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYoLmPZwy1U),” an ad in which Kleinman drives a tractor, tilling the soil behind him. Onscreen text for the ad reads: “How many candidates . . . are doing this a few weeks before an election? How many are rock-solid progressive Democrats? On June 5th, choose a different kind of candidate.”

The musical medium itself makes the ad effective. Kleinman whistles “America the Beautiful.” Whistling creates an illusion of naturalness; it seems inspired by his surroundings. This is just the type of music that a busy “hands-not-free” farmer would create. It also taps into American
Disneyesque mythology: “Whistle While You Work.” So he’s not just a busy farmer, but a happy one.

In addition to the obvious patriotic status of the song, the lyrics of “America the Beautiful” reflect on the country’s natural beauty (amber waves of grain, fruited plain), which again highlight Kleinman’s connection to the land as a farmer. Ad creators could have composed an original lush orchestral score, à la “Morning in America” (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_fy-uhxiXcE) (Reagan, 1984), but that would have presented a slick, corporate image antithetical to Kleinman’s homespun style.

Halfway through the ad, a grey map of New Jersey pops up, with the southernmost district shaded in red. Kleinman nods at the camera, never ceasing to whistle. As he passes out of frame, we see in blue “NATE FOR CONGRESS,” with concomitant disclaimers in small, white letters, followed by an arrow showing viewers where they can find more information about him. As his whistling slows approaching the melody’s final cadence, Kleinman appears in close-up in the final five seconds, with grass and trees in the background. He says, “It’s time for a different kind of politics. I’m Nate Kleinman and I approve this message.”

Viewers who consult his website will find reinforcement of Kleinman’s association with the land. His appearance, like his surname, implies “I’m the little guy.” His bearded, bespectacled, flannel-clad persona bespeaks a disinclination to accept money from corporations or the donor class. “Tractor” seems as un-New Jersey as a New Jersey ad can get. Kleinman lost this primary, but he may have sown seeds that will someday bear fruit.

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**Epic White Men in Ohio’s 2018 Senate and Gubernatorial Races**

Aaron Manela

The races for Senator and Governor in Ohio during the 2018 midterm elections give us an opportunity to examine how politicians in this state depict themselves and each other using tropes that establish race, gender, and geography.
In the Senate race, Jim Renacci’s (R) ad (https://twitter.com/jimrenacci/status/984781732338597889?lang=en) situates him a within a white masculine soundscape and cityscape (interspersed with footage of Donald Trump). A gravelly bass voice narrates over a hard rock band of guitar, bass, and drums, which plays a strong plagal progression in D major. The beat alignments, both visual and musical, maintain the viewer’s attention, while switching between masculine coded spaces including a Harley Davidson showroom, a boardroom, a factory, and the candidate on a motorcycle. A final tonic replaces guitar distortion with Renacci’s motorcycle rumble as he drives off.

His opponent Sherrod Brown’s (D) first ad (http://radio.wosu.org/post/sherrod-brown-launches-reelection-push-attack-ad-against-renacci#stream/0) is an attack, defining Renacci in stark contrast with himself. Here the composer defines Renacci with a cinematic celesta and flute over strings and pizzicato bass. Similar to bird cues in John Williams’s score for Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban, these musical tropes represent childishness (celesta) and femininity (flute). The visual mise-en-scène is that of school picture-esque photographs and videos compositied with Schoolhouse Rock!–inspired cartoons of the United States Capitol, a school bus, an apple on books (for the teacher), a tractor, an airplane, and finally Renacci behind a cartoon desk; all of which convey both childishness and femininity, as education is generally coded as a feminine occupation. This video portrait of Renacci as a child contrasts with a brief clip of Sherrod Brown walking with three hard-hat–wearing men in an industrial setting, establishing himself as the adult male.

In the governor’s race, Richard Cordray’s (D) introductory ad (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_qTPrmd74RE) speaks to women through a feminine-coded white rock soundscape. With the exception of President Obama and Cordray himself all other people in the ad are white women (or in one case a girl). Lead guitar, backup guitar, keyboard, and drums repeat a vi–IV–I–V pattern, a progression associated with sensitivity and femininity in popular music and with the epic in cinema.* The underscore pauses once, framing a quote from Elizabeth Warren for
dramatic effect on the word “consumers,” at which point the lead guitar enters. Drum fills serve
to punctuate important talking points such as “that’s why I’m running for governor,” and “regular
folks come first,” while also serving to lead into incremental dramatic rhythmic intensification.

Mike DeWine’s (R) ad “Big Heart” (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0osZSYRylw) harnesses American heartland tropes. With now time-honored pseudo-Coplandian pastoral
pablum (and topic-appropriate shots of the candidate standing in wheat fields), the piano and
synthesized orchestra emulate Ronald Reagan’s 1984 ad “Morning in America (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_fy-uhxIXcE).” Like Renacci’s ad, Reagan’s depends on a
hypermasculine bass narrator; like Cordray’s ad, Reagan’s speaks to women through
testimonials. Both use grand pauses for drama, and terraced rhythmic intensity.

All four ads harness musical tropes of whiteness—through classical music, cinematic music,
and particular commercial flavors of rock. In the Senate race, music codes masculinity as good
and femininity as bad for both candidates. In the gubernatorial race, the candidates address
women’s issues while painting themselves with the musically epic. People of color? Epically
absent from the musical discourse.

* Scott Murphy, “A Pop Music Progression in Recent Popular Movies and Movie Trailers,” Music, Sound, and the
Moving Image 8, no. 2 (2014).

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From Romantic Hero to Superhero

Naomi Graber

The 2016 GOP presidential primary is long over, but its consequences are still playing out at the
state level. In the run-up to 2016, two different Republican strategies emerged: traditional
Republicans emphasized reliability and expertise (like the “wonkish” Paul Ryan), in contrast to
the more flamboyant and passionate Trump branch of the party. These shifting tactics are
playing out in interesting ways in Georgia’s Republican gubernatorial primary. On May 29,
mainstream candidate Casey Cagle emerged as the favorite, but failed to earn a majority of the
vote, forcing a run-off between Cagle and the Trumpian Brian Kemp. The evolution of the Cagle
campaign’s strategies and their response to insurgent Kemp reveal that the GOP is still
struggling to find its identity in the Trump era.

At the start of the campaign, Cagle’s television ads are set against a soundtrack of light pop:
 major mode with light pizzicato sounds (“Difference (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SleTaVSLjME)”) or gentle string pulses (“Conservative Casey Cagle Leads
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=forD_xUyMds)”) and a gentle backbeat. In other contexts,
this music might accompany a trailer for a romantic comedy (https://youtu.be/xhtAyshwDFk?
t=50s). Cagle’s ads are filled with half cadences and prolonged dominant structures, which help
audiences savor the anticipation of the traditionally happy endings of romcoms, and which Cagle likely hopes will help audiences anticipate the bright future he wants to associate with his candidacy. Cagle himself appears affable, capable, and even gentle—like the traditional male romcom lead. These advertisements seem aimed at the suburban women who make up many of the Atlanta-area voters. This is a stark contrast to Kemp, who focused on rural men. One infamous ad (“Jake (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ABrZ_epvic)”) features the candidate holding his daughter’s prospective boyfriend at the wrong end of a shotgun and making the young man recite Kemp’s campaign platform, accompanied by the sounds of a honky-tonk piano.

But since May 29, Cagle’s campaign has adopted a more Trumpian strategy, probably to counter Kemp’s own Trump-inspired politicking. Cagle’s television ads now depict him as a fiery orator (“About (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTYWCYVuxY)”) and equivalent to President Trump (“Cagle Gets Things Done (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1NDxIWEa0nM”). The music is still mostly string-based, but now mostly in minor mode with few cadences at all, which implies an imminent, ever-present threat. Instead of the pop-inspired backbeat, the ads employ brief cymbal rolls that end in sharply articulated attacks, or pounding drums. These are the sounds of an action-adventure film (https://youtu.be/naQr0uTrH_s?t=57s), and Cagle now casts himself as its hero. As I have written elsewhere, this borrowing of the sounds of “epic” film comes from the Trump Campaign’s 2016 playbook, emphasizing the candidate’s power and masculinity.* While the romcom-esque ads court women voters (literally and metaphorically), Cagle likely hopes that this action hero-inspired persona will broaden his appeal among the men who are also the target of Kemp’s ads.

But this strategy comes with risks: by appealing to men, Cagle (or Kemp) may find that winning the primary alienates a constituency that will prove crucial for the general election, particularly given that Democrat Stacey Abrams hopes to become the first woman (and black) governor of Georgia. Moreover, other candidates like Virginia’s Ed Gillespie have found that the Trump playbook falls apart at the state level. Republicans may find that the superhero wins the base, but the romantic hero wins the election.
This summer was a busy one, particularly for Executive Director Mariana Whitmer and Website Committee Chair Paula Bishop, who devoted significant chunks of their lives to bring us the new SAM website (after a long series of training sessions with Your Membership, which powers the site). In addition to an updated look, the website allows us to communicate with each other more easily, set up private sections for committee work, apply for fellowships securely online, donate, renew memberships (automatically if you wish!), and much more. Please thank Mariana and Paula when you see them, or drop them a note of appreciation. Thanks are due as well to the proofreading team, who scoured the pages for typos and formatting issues. I’m sure we’ve missed some, so if you find mistakes, please let Mariana know!

There’s been some confusion on how to reach the Executive Director during this transition. Please make a note of the official email address: SAM@american-music.org (mailto:SAM@american-music.org).

It seems hard to believe that another conference is already on the horizon, but the Local Arrangements and Program Committees have been hard at work planning our March 2019 conference in New Orleans. I’m excited to announce that, with the financial assistance of the Committee on Diversity and Inclusion, there will be a President’s Roundtable on conference Saturday featuring representatives of community organizations who are working on musical activism and sustainability in New Orleans. The moderator will be Matt Sakakeeny, Associate Professor of Ethnomusicology at Tulane University, who has done extensive research on the local brass band scene. The tentative list of participants includes Opera Creole, Musical Arts Society of New Orleans, Roots of Music, New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, Amistad...
Research Center, Music and Culture Coalition of New Orleans, and the Historic New Orleans Collection. This roundtable will be of special interest for those interested in working outside of academia.

Our honorary member in 2019 will be Art “Poppa Funk” Neville—keyboardist, songwriter, singer, and founding member of funk pioneers The Meters, as well as the Grammy Award–winning pop/funk/soul group, The Neville Brothers. Art has made New Orleans his lifelong home. From a young age he completely immersed himself in music. An early job working in a record store introduced him to the great doo-wop groups of the day (Clyde McPhatter’s Drifters, the Orioles, and the Clovers, as well as local piano rockers Professor Longhair and Fats Domino), which inspired him to form his own doo-wop group.

In 1953, Art joined the Hawkettes, who recorded the classic “Mardi Gras Mambo” in 1954—a song that became a New Orleans carnival anthem. When Art was invited to perform at the renowned Ivanhoe bar in the French Quarter, he formed The Meters with fellow musicians George Porter Jr., Leo Nocentelli, and Zigaboo Modeliste. The band developed a funk-inflected R&B sound characterized by subtle shadings and improvisatory interplay among guitar, bass, and Art’s Professor Longhair–inspired keyboard. Producer/writer Allen Toussaint immediately engaged the group for session work with popular music’s reigning artists. In 1969 The Meters brought out their first album, The Meters, which featured their signature songs “Cissy Strut” and “Sophisticated Cissy.” Seven more albums followed.

The group toured until 1977, when they dissolved. The next year Art formed The Neville Brothers with siblings Cyril, Aaron, and Charles. They released several albums in the 1980s and 1990s. Meanwhile, Art reunited occasionally with the Meters and, since 1989, has performed with an offshoot of that band called The Funky Meters. We look forward to honoring Art Neville for the many ways in which he has changed the musical soundscape of New Orleans.

December is the month when the Committee on Committee Governance and I work to repopulate our many committees. If you’re interested in volunteering, please contact Mariana Whitmer with your areas of interest. You can find a complete list of committees here (https://www.american-music.org/page/Committees).

The Board has been relatively quiet over the summer, so I’ll include an update of our news in the next Bulletin.
Finally, the Society for American Music mourns the death of jazz pianist Randy Weston (1926–2018), our 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award winner. Weston’s passing occurred while this issue was in press. An obituary will be printed in the next Bulletin.

Until then,

Sandra Graham
President

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Andrew Fry, Manchester, United Kingdom  Kuyumjian, Urbana, IL  Paul Johnson, El Dorado Hills, CA
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I Got a Song: A History of the Newport Folk Festival

I Got a Song: A History of the Newport Folk Festival

Before writing the first book-length history of the Newport Folk Festival, Rick Massimo covered the event for nine years as a journalist for the Providence Journal. He recalls interviewing the festival’s founding, longtime producer, George Wein, ahead of the fiftieth anniversary event in 2009. That interview, along with Massimo’s sense that he was witnessing an important moment in the festival’s long history, inspired him to write the story of an iconic American music festival. Using Pete Seeger’s famous storytelling style as his inspiration, Massimo weaves together primary sources and interviews in the engaging, informative voice of an experienced journalist. He blends a historian’s desire to educate and inform with a folklorist’s inclination to collect and preserve, mirroring the folk music ideal created, debated, and promoted by the musicians and producers who brought Newport to the center of the American music stage.

Aside from telling a story that scholars, musicians, and general readers are likely to find interesting and thoughtfully researched, this volume constitutes an invaluable scholarly source. Massimo’s work to gather and synthesize stories, quotes, concert line-ups, and attendance data is a great service to anyone studying the Newport Folk Festival or music festivals generally. He charts the course of the festival from its founding in 1959 through its heyday, decline, termination, and eventual revival in the 1980s.

Perhaps not surprisingly, I Got a Song hinges on Pete Seeger and Bob Dylan. Massimo explores their respective roles as revered elder and up-and-coming artist in the early years, their schism in 1965 in the midst of tense arguments over the definition of folk music, and their positions thereafter as two of the most important figures in the broad landscape of American music. This relationship, and the differing perspectives on folk music embodied by each of the two musicians, reflects the broader story Massimo tells as he argues that by consciously gathering performers and audiences, the Newport Folk Festival both asks and answers the question: “What is folk music? And what can it do?” (6).

These questions spiral out into others, many of which do not have clear answers. But for Massimo, Newport represents a conversation that keeps the folk music dialogue alive while both reflecting and informing understandings about what folk music is and what it can do. He prudently avoids directly answering either question himself. Assembling this history, then, is about more than preserving a kind of anthology of who did what when. For Massimo, it is about recording, charting, and uncovering the festival’s tradition of using folk music—however it has been defined and redefined over the years—to bring people together, encourage fellowship and camaraderie, stand up for causes, and emphasize the power of the collective voice, all while preserving and advancing American music.
This book is useful for folklorists, musicologists, and ethnomusicologists whose work engages these themes, especially those interested in American folk music, festival culture, or the careers of the many musicians who have performed on the Newport stage. It also offers an unusual source for ethnomusicologists interested in a different angle on the early development of their field, which emerged from the same well of inspiration that drove the festival organizers to collect, preserve, revive, and celebrate traditional music. While Massimo’s work is light on critical engagement, usually quoting others or reporting what has been documented, he brings together many primary sources in a careful, thorough way that should prove useful to those engaged in their own critical assessments.

The chapters progress largely chronologically. The story begins with producer George Wein, who started both the Newport Jazz Festival and the Folk Festival. To frame this moment musically and historically, Massimo discusses the nineteenth-century folksong collectors, “race” and “hillbilly” records, the rise and fall of the Weavers, the “Red Scare,” and the emergence of the Kingston Trio as the commercially viable musicians who headlined the first festival. This narrative illustrates the internal conflicts that plagued festival organizers, who felt torn between popular folk music and the particular traditions of local performers. But Massimo shows how, even amid these tensions, the festival became a major contributor to the American consciousness of folk and traditional music. He credits Seeger as the guiding force of these “utopian” early festivals, in which folk music was offered as an alternative to machine-made, mainstream American life.

Yet, even during those idealistic years, Massimo shows that the organizers were beset by the perennial challenge of defining authentic folk music. Is folk music identified by its age? Commercial viability, or lack thereof? Race or ethnicity? Economic circumstances? The identity of the performers? The presence or absence of a known songwriter? The mode of performance? The source of the music? Massimo builds the remainder of his narrative on these debates. Most importantly, he describes how, in 1965, opposing forces clashed as Dylan “went electric.” In what is perhaps the most fascinating part of the book, he gathers quotes and stories from all sides of that fateful performance to create an account of what happened that night. He weaves the quotes together in a way that allows the reader to feel present in a conversation with those who witnessed the events. This interesting approach becomes a kind of collage of memories and reactions. It is almost an oral history—not unlike the folk music Dylan may or may not have killed that day.

From the Dylan chapter to the end of the book, Massimo charts the course that led to the festival’s demise after 1969, when conflicts proved overwhelming. He documents the fraught relationship between the city of Newport and the festival. He looks at the life of George Wein, especially his work to revive the festival in the 1980s, when folk music and its place in American culture had changed. The new festival benefitted from a broader definition, whereby singer-
songwriters were unquestionably admitted, and the music was no longer so politically charged. The old conflicts faded as this new fluidity, combined with an openness to corporate sponsorship, kept the festival going as a venue for big name performers, up-and-coming singer-songwriters, and concert-packed weekends. Through his blend of storytelling and historical documentation, Massimo documents a significant facet of American music, whether or not anyone organizing or attending the festival—or, indeed, reading his book—can ever agree upon what folk music is or should be.

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Chris Batterman Cháirez, Emory University

It is hard to discuss the development of Mexican popular music without mention of Agustín Lara (1897–1970), the legendary artist who would start as a humble bordello pianist but end up as one of Latin American music’s most renowned figures. Affectionately nicknamed “el flaco de oro” (“the golden skinny”), the musician-poet made his mark on Mexican popular music with his signature boleros. Andrew Grant Wood argues that Lara’s songs drew on the romantic poeticism of Mexico’s modernista writers, “[seducing] the listener as [they] speak of finding a respite from the ordinary, seemingly loveless modern world through romance and idealized beauty” (xvi).

Agustín Lara: A Cultural Biography provides an extensive and detailed discussion of the musician’s life and music. Specifically, Wood aims to put Lara’s artistic career in dialogue with the cultural and social currents and upheavals that characterized Mexico in its post-revolutionary years. In writing this cultural biography, the author aims to connect Lara with the rhetoric of the post-revolutionary nation-building project that was undertaken by the country’s elite. Framing his discussion within these cosmopolitan modernizing processes, Wood examines the ways through which Lara’s work “critically engaged an emerging modernity in Mexico” and investigates the subsequent popular anxieties wrought by these processes (xiv). Painstakingly researched and objectively written, Wood’s book bases its arguments in a wealth of primary and secondary sources from archives and collections in the United States, Mexico, Cuba, and Spain. The author also makes careful use of Lara’s extensive discography and filmography to provide a clear picture of the musician’s prolific career.

Wood’s first chapter sets the needed foundation for his discussion of Lara’s career. He uses this chapter to describe Mexico’s historical currents in the early twentieth century, as well as to outline the social and cultural developments that would come to influence Lara’s career and the reception of his work in modern Mexico. While this era of Mexican history is one marked by complex political and social changes, Wood’s concise description of modern Mexico is enough for unfamiliar readers to effectively contextualize Lara’s music and engage with the author’s arguments. Despite his background as a cultural historian, Wood engages with the many musical idioms that influenced or presaged Lara’s style—the Cuban danzón and Mexican corrido, for example—in a cogent and compelling manner.

The ensuing chapters present Lara’s life and work in chronological order. Wood begins his narrative with Lara’s early work as a piano player in Mexico City’s brothels and bordellos and carefully details his rise to international stardom. With each chapter, Wood presents a meticulously researched account of Lara’s personal and professional life. Separating the book into chapters that mark different stages of the artist’s career, the author describes the artist’s life and production with respect to the corresponding historical contexts. Wood also includes a brief
discussion of the artist’s legacies after his death. Throughout, however, Wood makes clear Lara’s position within the changing musical tastes of Mexican society, commenting on other musicians and styles that would complement and compete with the musician-poet. Wood also discusses Lara’s transnational reception, including his reception in the United States and other Latin American countries. Regarding his narration of Lara’s life, the musician’s many romantic interests are of particular interest to the author. These women would have an important impact on the composer’s music and professional image and are discussed in relation to his artistic output. Wood also does an impressive job of compiling all of Lara’s correspondents, bandmates, interpreters, managers, and friends (conveniently listed in a “Cast of Characters” at the end of the book).

Wood’s discussion of Lara is more of a careful narration of his life events than a profoundly analytical work. As he declares in the book’s introduction, the artist’s “life and art is here considered in the larger context of twentieth-century Mexico” (xviii). As such, Wood discusses the musician’s life and production with respect to several of the cultural changes that overtook the nation during this period, paying particular attention to the issue of technological innovations and the ways in which they complemented Lara’s career. However, readers may find themselves wishing for a deeper discussion of these issues, as Wood seems to prioritize his discussion of Lara’s personal life and romantic interests. Despite offering a “cultural biography,” Wood’s treatment of the artist’s life and work provides only cursory historical and cultural analyses. However, Wood clearly possesses an extensive knowledge of the Mexican artist and his comprehensive coverage of Lara’s life could hardly be considered hagiographic. On the contrary, the author makes sure to engage with Lara’s failures and shortcomings and discusses the many ways in which the artist’s image has been exaggerated and mythicized, both by himself and by popular culture.

As a backdrop to his narration of the artist’s life story, Wood provides examples and analyses of Lara’s key musical productions, as well as of the films he was involved in. The author’s musical analysis itself is cursory at best, and is limited to the discussion of important rhythmic styles and the occasional major or minor key change. This, however, is understandable, considering that the author is a cultural historian and not a musicologist. However, Wood carefully connects Lara’s music to both the artist’s personal life and larger trends in Mexican society. Where Wood’s analysis falls short, however, is in his treatment of the lyrical material. Rather than provide weighty analysis or engage with Lara’s lyricism in a critical way, Wood limits himself to a rather perfunctory summary of each song’s lyrical content. This is especially surprising considering that issues of gender, sexuality and machismo (masculinity) are especially salient in Lara’s lyrics. Further, Wood makes several mentions of Lara’s music being considered “distinctively Mexican” and “representing something of the Mexican Soul,” but also mentions that the artist’s production stood in rather stark contrast to that of the Mexican nationalist musicians
and that Lara was “not one to concern himself with political matters. . . or linger over patriotic melodies” (93, 129). Readers may find themselves asking why the author did not spend more time unpacking these contradictory elements of the singer’s work and reception.

Wood’s book, however, provides readers with a compelling narration of one of Mexican popular music’s most legendary artists. Those with interest in Mexican music or in the relationship between popular music and society will find the biography to be both interesting and informative. Those with a particular interest in Mexico’s post-revolutionary years, especially historians and cultural theorists, will find Lara’s discussion of cultural production in Mexico’s Golden Age to be essential reading. Further, Wood’s work is accessibly written, making it readily intelligible for the general public. Wood’s book, then, is an important contribution to scholarship on Mexican popular music and provides a definitive biography of one of Mexico’s most important artists.

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Katherine Pukinskis, Harvard University

When considering North American experimental music in the heart of the twentieth century, names like Cage, Lucier, and Ashley rise to the top. However, the field of composers extended far beyond the men whose work tends to dominate classrooms and concert programs. _Cybermonic Arts: Adventures in American New Music_ widens the scope of contributing players and pieces, cataloging a more complete view of experimental music through the writings of composer Gordon Mumma.

Mumma was closely involved in experimental music as a composer, collaborator, and writer, and his work led him to develop the unique term “cybermonic arts.” According to Mumma, “cybersonics is a situation in which the electronic processing of sound activities is determined (or influenced) by the interactions of the sounds with themselves—that interaction itself being ‘collaborative’” (39–40). The contents of each chapter reveal the need for Mumma’s term to name this subset of experimental music.

_Cybermonic Arts_ is appealing to the uninitiated genre enthusiast and offers important information to a specialist scholar. Mumma’s personal, first-person accounts are combined with more scholarly writing to fill in the space around the token faces and pieces in the canon of
cybersonics. Taken as a whole, the contents of the volume offer up a range of detailed accounts concerning how pieces were conceived, set up, and executed in performance.

The book, which is organized and edited by Michelle Fillion, features Mumma’s own writings from the 1950s to 2013. The selections document events, technologies, composers, and compositions. Footnotes explain chapter origins and the editing process. Almost all of the chapters are accompanied by some note on revision, although no in-text corrections are specified.

Fillion organizes Mumma’s writing into seven parts of varying length and focus. In Part I, Mumma’s earliest writings introduce the reader to the field. Chapter one explains which artists were working in early electronic and electroacoustic music, while chapter two explores the then-current work and composers who influenced Mumma at the time. Chapter three describes how to build your own mid-1960s home studio. The latter chapters introduce the ONCE Festival of Music, held in Ann Arbor in the 1960s and organized by Mumma and four other composition students studying at the University of Michigan.

Part II shifts the focus to Manhattan and offers a summative exploration of topics crucial to the development of cybersonic arts. While the individual chapters are interesting, this section is the least cohesive internally. The somewhat problematic chapter “Witchcraft, Cybersonics, and Folkloric Virtuosity” focuses on composers who utilize aspects of the natural world in combination with the electric/onic. Mumma’s engagement with the folkloric (96–97) reads as somewhat reductive and misinformed, and much of the chapter feels tangential to the material in Part II.
Zooming in on cybersonic arts, the editor includes Mumma’s writing on the transition from composing for acoustic instruments to composing electroacoustic and fully electronic pieces (chapter six). In the first composer-centric chapter, Mumma’s account of Alvin Lucier’s *Music for Solo Performer 1965* is vivid and compelling: “The theatrical aspects of the work are simple and dramatic. . . The soloist seats himself comfortably near the differential amplifier, while the assistant begins the procedure of applying the electrodes to the soloist’s head. This operation involves cleaning the scalp with alcohol, applying special conducting electrode paste and gauze pads to secure the electrodes.” (51) Throughout the book, Mumma uniquely pairs composition descriptions with explanations of what it felt like to be present for a performance.

Mumma’s words really begin to cohere when organized around people. Parts III and IV present experimental art titans Merce Cunningham and John Cage in relation to the communities with which they built their work. Fillion’s editorial choice to set these artists at the center of the book communicates how integral Cage and Cunningham were to the development of cybersonic art but it is Mumma’s words and his view of these players that reveal a web of relationships. A high point in Part IV is chapter twenty-one, “Twenty-five minutes with John Cage.” Here, Mumma’s short vignettes parallel Cage’s similarly structured *Indeterminacy* stories. Content ranges from conversations between Cage and Stravinsky to practices of notation to political tensions on a tour with Cunningham in South America. This section highlights not only Cage but also Mumma’s admiration for his colleagues and his commitment to capturing the full person and the entire piece.

For Gordon Mumma, the “music of America” always included the works created in Latin and South America. Mumma taught in Uruguay, toured extensively in South America, and spent time with Conlon Nancarrow in Mexico. In Part V the reader encounters highly analytical and deeply personal accounts of the author’s experiences with music from and in these less-explored and underrepresented areas.

In the introduction to Part VI, Fillion writes, “working friendship is the theme of this series of short vignettes. [It is] a tribute to esteemed colleagues” (233). Here Mumma writes about David Tudor’s creative process (chapter thirty) and playing the bandoneon with Pauline Oliveros (chapter thirty-six). These chapters highlight Richard Nelson, Roger Reynolds, Robert Ashley, and Christian and Holly Wolff, among others, describing how these artists interacted with one another and explored the worlds in which they lived. Part VII functions as a coda. After thirty-six chapters of Mumma writing predominantly about other people, “Notes on My Creative Procedures (2009/2013)” features many of the composer’s own philosophies on music, collaboration, audience, and emotion. Short analyses of some works include score excerpts for reference.
Read from start to finish, *Cybersonic Arts* is broad in scope but varied enough to keep the reader’s attention from chapter to chapter. Taken as a whole, the book offers a deeper understanding of the entire genre. The titles of each chapter are clear enough that a reader could easily identify and consume a part or even an individual chapter if their needs or interests called for it. The language is technical when appropriate but the descriptions and first-hand accounts and histories are easily accessible.

The texts sometimes lack a completeness of investigation. For instance, descriptions of Nancarrow’s piano studies in chapter twenty-three would be further enhanced by the corresponding scores. The reader might want to confirm that Piano Studies Nos. 10 and 11 are really engaging with the blues, or to determine whether or not Nos. 6 and 12 “have a decidedly Spanish flavor” (200) and what—according to Mumma—constitutes such a flavor. The absence of in-text score citation often allows the author to communicate the importance of other elements in the creative process, such as the setup of the electronic machinery and the nature of collaboration between two parties, these elements being the most frequently cited.

Mumma’s writing in this book—as is true of his own creative output—never communicates an elitism or intention to separate the work from the world around him. Rather, Gordon Mumma drew inspiration from his environment and colleagues. His writing, though imbued with a tone that seems to be distinctly his own, does its best to avoid bias. He rarely assigns value, instead reflecting on the process of creation and the relationships involved as measure of success. Most potent is Mumma’s clear admiration of his colleagues, and his tribute to them is in his writing.

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*Jimi Hendrix: Soundscapes*  

Woodrow Steinken, University of Pittsburgh

In *Jimi Hendrix: Soundscapes*, Marie-Paule Macdonald critically examines the virtuosic guitarist Jimi Hendrix’s multifaceted cultural legacy by means of the concept of soundscapes. By investigating Hendrix’s life and career through his years of living in cities and touring internationally, this book illustrates the importance of different urban spaces to his compositional practices. Macdonald’s training—not in musicology or ethnomusicology, but in architecture and urban design—offers a different perspective on Hendrix’s soundscapes than might be expected from a music scholar. Specifically, Macdonald’s notion of soundscape, while environmental and
geographical like R. Murray Shafer’s, is also migratory. That is, as Hendrix’s music was shaped by multiple places, it was also shaped by the act of migrating between and moving within those places (8). Macdonald chooses a particularly useful subject for this approach in Hendrix, as the guitarist was aware of soundscapes and what he called “3D sound,” relating the city’s geography with its noises, ambient or otherwise (10).

The monograph’s chapters are organized by the locations that Hendrix frequented in his lifetime. For example, the first chapter examines his time spent in the North American West: Vancouver, Seattle, Monterey, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. Macdonald begins this chapter with a reading of Shafer’s contributions to sound studies before diving into the particularities of each geographical site.

Macdonald seamlessly includes the bioenvironmental qualities of the space with general music history (usually related to the blues or rock ‘n’ roll) and Hendrix’s biographical and family history. This first chapter, in many ways, also acts as a basic biography of Hendrix’s early childhood, which can be useful to unfamiliar readers. Moreover, Macdonald’s version of Hendrix’s life story highlights the significance of space and place to the formative musical influences on his career. Macdonald’s detailed account of Hendrix’s life and career thus relies on what we might call “historical soundscapes,” wherein Macdonald utilizes personal recollections from musicians and journalists to partially reconstruct moments—such as the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967—in a sensorial way (39). These historical soundscapes include not only the sounds one would have experienced at Monterey, but the soundscape of musical icons that inhabited the same spaces as Hendrix. In fact, Macdonald’s work suggests that the history of rock ‘n’ roll could similarly be treated in terms of space and place, something ostensibly begun in Macdonald’s part-architectural project, part-sci-fi novel Rock Spaces (Art Metropole, 2000).
Chapters two and three are similarly organized. They deal with Hendrix in the American South (Nashville, Memphis, Atlanta, and New Orleans) and East (Harlem, New York, and New Jersey). These chapters essentially continue the biographical work of the first chapter, as Macdonald provides a narrative of Hendrix’s life and career with attention paid to the particulars of location. In some cases, Macdonald expands the historic scope of her work by tangentially referencing broader social and cultural phenomena that are directly or indirectly related to Hendrix’s career. For example, his time spent in Nashville is an interesting period during which he experienced the racial tensions of the 1960s more closely than previously, but also found the motivation to master the guitar at an expert level (73). Similarly, Greenwich Village was a place where Hendrix pushed the boundaries of showmanship, explored folk and Native American musical influences, and was first confronted with hippie communal living and social movements (100).

Chapters four and five are about London and the “New York-London Axis” respectively. Even readers with general knowledge will likely identify these places as the most significant to Hendrix’s development, in that London was where he met Eric Clapton, Pete Townshend, and other famous rock musicians who would shape his mature career. These London musicians and their bands provided Hendrix with a model for his own band, the Experience. London, in hindsight, was ultimately the place where Hendrix’s career flourished most and where his years of wandering and touring the United States really paid off. As such, these chapters will seem most significant to readers interested in how place and space influenced his best-known hits, such as “Hey Joe” and “Purple Haze,” which would later appear on Are You Experienced (1967). Also specific to London was the psychedelia scene. Although Hendrix was no stranger to drug use, it was there that dropping acid became a much more regular occurrence for musicians and audience members.

The monograph’s sixth chapter is about Hendrix’s touring in the late 1960s, especially his time spent in Europe after May 1968 and his trial in Toronto in 1969 for narcotics possession. While this chapter’s scope is broader than the others, in terms of connecting Hendrix to larger social movements it is also emblematic of the book’s shortcomings. While Hendrix’s life is filled with significant events (such as the trial) that relate to broader social crises, the author could do more to explicitly connect these events to Hendrix’s career and music. Hendrix’s life and career seem clearly connected to the current racial tensions and popular perceptions of drug use, and these seem rooted in Hendrix’s alienation from many social and musical subcultures. This is but one reading of the events, though, and the author does not seem to agree or disagree. Rather, the author has much more to say, expectedly, about the venues that the Experience played in the late 1960s and how those venues have changed since, from an architectural perspective. The stronger moments from this chapter include the section on festivals, such as Woodstock and Isle of Wight (220), and on Hendrix’s artist-run Electric Lady Studios (232). The book’s concluding chapter also provides a useful, brief summation of the soundscape framework and how it shapes Macdonald’s reading of Hendrix’s legacy in popular music.
*Jimi Hendrix: Soundscapes* is a solid monograph that will be very valuable to scholars working on Hendrix and rock music of the 1960s. Its strongest feature is its well-researched information, which Macdonald clearly pulled from all of the available sources in her quest to construct accurate biographical narratives. The book’s weakness is that it may occasionally draw on too many different sources, and quotes that should contribute to the book’s authority as an oral history of the time are often seemingly unrelated to the topic being discussed. As a result, the work can appear disorganized at times. One of the book’s more surprising strengths is that it provides a collection of stories that link Hendrix to a number of legendary musicians, ranging from the expected (Eric Clapton, the Beatles, the Who, and Little Richard) to the unexpected (Miles Davis, Karlheinz Stockhausen, and, somehow, George Frideric Handel). The book’s strengths outweigh its weaknesses, and I wholeheartedly recommend this volume to scholars specializing in rock music and sound studies, but also to those who, like myself, grew up listening to Hendrix’s music. Reading this book gave me a newfound appreciation for Hendrix and had me thinking of his life and work in new terms.

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Joanna Zattiero, University of Texas-Austin

Just as the genre of country music continues to thrive worldwide, the field of country music studies similarly continues to flourish as scholars from various disciplines—such as history, musicology, ethnomusicology, folklore, and sociology—investigate the genre from diverse methodological perspectives. Travis Stimeling’s *Country Music Reader* is an exciting addition to this area of study, providing access to fifty-one edited and annotated primary source readings that span approximately one hundred years of country music history. Utilizing a diverse range of resources including trade publications, fan mail, interviews, magazine and newspaper articles, memoirs, biographies, and performance reviews, Stimeling has clearly accomplished his stated goal of “providing access to the voices of people who have created country music culture over the course of the genre’s nine-decade history” (ix).

Organized chronologically, this collection provides a unique look at country music’s history, not only from the perspective of scholars but also that of fans, critics, journalists, music industry executives, and the musicians themselves. This wide variety of sources lends the book a utility that can be hard to find in similarly genre-specific resources, and as country music studies itself
is deeply interdisciplinary, this approach lends itself to broadly interdisciplinary use in a variety of settings.

Stimeling’s thoughtful annotations, footnotes, and suggestions for further reading presented with each entry provide essential background information and context for the reader and also help to develop basic topical and thematic links throughout the collection. With no formal introduction or conclusion to help drive a master narrative, these annotations function as the only signposts within the work. This organizational choice allows the book to work well as an ancillary reference for undergraduate and graduate courses in music and related areas as well as for scholars and deeply engaged country music enthusiasts who are looking for resources to supplement more general narrative histories of the genre.

While this text helps fill a clear void in country music studies, it seems that it would be helpful to the reader if the sources were listed before each entry and were printed in bold or otherwise contrasting text. As it is currently, sources are listed in smaller type at the end of each entry, therefore making it somewhat difficult to fully contextualize (or sometimes to even identify) the given information without having to continually flip to the end of each entry. It would also be nice to see greater consideration of the important role that African Americans, women, and other minorities have played in the development of country music as a whole. The collection would offer greater depth and a more complete accounting of country music’s diverse history and development with further reference to artists such as Patsy Cline, Kitty Wells, Vicki Vann, Cleve Francis, Tammy Wynette, Charley Pride, and Loretta Lynn, just to name a few. Due to the scale of this project, however, it may simply be begging for a second edition.

This anthology definitely serves a diverse range of readers, from country and popular music fans to scholars of American history, folklore, popular culture, and music. While not a definitive treatise on country music (for that, one might consider The Oxford Handbook of Country Music,
also edited by Stimeling, or Jocelyn R. Neal’s *Country Music: A Cultural and Stylistic History*), this collection provides access to a wide variety of important and often overlooked voices that help to clarify and expand our understanding of the history and development of country music from approximately 1910 to 2011. Country music fans, students, and scholars will be well served if Stimeling provides a second edition that continues in the valuable footsteps of the first.

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**NEH Funds Scholarship on American Music**

Two American music critical edition initiatives involving Society for American Music members received funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities (https://www.neh.gov/news/press-release/2018-08-08) through its Scholarly Editions and Translations program in 2018. Sounding Spirit (https://www.soundingspirit.org/) received a $260,000 grant to support the preparation of digital and print editions of five volumes of southern Protestant music from several traditions, including gospel, spirituals, lined-out hymn singing, and shape-note music. Directed by editor-in-chief Jesse P. Karlsberg, a member of SAM, Sounding Spirit is co-published by the Emory Center for Digital Scholarship and the University of North Carolina Press. Planned Sounding Spirit volumes include editions of *Jubilee Songs* (1872), edited by Sandra Jean Graham; *Class, Choir, and Congregation* (1888), edited by Kevin Kehrberg and Stephen Shearon; and *Original Sacred Harp* (1911), edited by Karlsberg.

*Kehrberg and Shearon will edit A. J. Showalter’s Class Choir and Congregation (1888) for Sounding Spirit.*
The NEH also awarded Music of the United States of America (MUSA) (http://ams-net.org/MUSA/) a $251,000 grant, which will enable the publication of five new critical editions of American music in the next three years. Forthcoming MUSA volumes include Eubie Blake and Noble Sissle: Shuffle Along, edited by Lyn Schenbeck and Lawrence Schenbeck; John Cage: Concert for Piano and Orchestra: Solo for Piano, Second Realization by David Tudor, edited by John Holzaepfel; Stephen Sondheim: Follies, Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick, edited by Jon Alan Conrad; Aaron Copland: Appalachian Spring, Original Ballet Version, edited by Jennifer DeLapp-Birkett and Aaron Sherber; and Songs from the British-Irish-American Oral Tradition as Recorded in the Early Twentieth Century, edited by Norm Cohen, Carson Cohen, and Anne Dhu McLucas. Published by A-R Editions, MUSA is a project of the American Musicological Society, is supported by SAM, and is hosted at the University of Michigan. SAM members Mark Clague and Amy Beal serve as editors-in-chief and Andrew Kuster is executive editor. These two awards represent an encouraging level of recognition and support for American music critical editions from one of the largest funders of humanities programs in the United States.

Finally, The Center for Popular Music at Middle Tennessee State University has received a grant of $205,000 from the NEH as part of its Sustaining Cultural Heritage Collections program. The project involves capital improvements to the CPM’s archival storage room to allow for more sustainable, efficient, and accessible housing of its world-class research collection of American vernacular music materials.

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(http://www.press.illinois.edu/giving/)In 2017, the University of Illinois Press launched the Judith McCulloh Fund for American Music honoring the legacy of Judy McCulloh, longtime University of Illinois Press editor. Judy’s academic passions and keen eye as an editor put Illinois on the map as the leading publisher in the field with the cornerstone series Music in American Life. When Judy began the series in 1972 with Archie Green’s book Only a Miner, her dream was to build a series that would be capacious enough to encompass all of the dimensions of music in the American context. “A desert isle” series, she called it, meaning that if one were marooned with only the books in the series, that would be sufficient to tell the story of American music. Forty-five years later, with more than two hundred volumes published, the series

continues to grow into Judy’s vision.

YOU ARE SIGNED IN AS: PAULA BISHOP (SIGN OUT ([general/logout.asp])))
The first beneficiary of the Judith McCulloh Fund, *Dixie Dewdrop: The Uncle Dave Macon Story* by Michael D. Doubler, will be published early this fall. Uncle Dave Macon was one of the early stars of the Grand Ole Opry and an important figuring in bridging nineteenth-century folk and vaudeville and twentieth-century country music. Given Judy’s particular advocacy of vernacular and grassroots musics, this project seems a fitting first recipient.

To find out more, please visit the “Support our Press” section of UI Press’s website (http://www.press.uillinois.edu/giving/).

For the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) **Gillian Anderson** reconstructed the score for the Mary Pickford vehicle *Rosita* (Lubitsch, 1923) and performed it for the opening of the Venice Biennale di Film, at MoMA for the NYU conference Music and the Moving Image XIII, and at the opening of Cinema Ritrovato in Bologna, Italy (https://www.belviveremedia.com/amadeus/amadeus-news/il-cinema-ritrovato-rosita-di-ernst-lubitsch-recupera-le-sue-musiche).

**Michael Accinno** attended “Global Histories of Disability” (http://globalhistoriesofdisability.org/"), a four-week NEH Summer Institute held on the campus of Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. The institute hosted twenty-five scholars from different disciplines and at different stages in their careers, who share a strong interest in the history of disability.

**Sabine Feisst** published *Schoenberg’s Correspondence with American Composers* (https://global.oup.com/academic/product/schoenbergs-correspondence-with-american-composers-9780195383577?lang=en&cc=us) as volume nine of Oxford University Press’s nine-volume set *Schoenberg in Words*. The book is the first edition of all known and available letters between Arnold Schoenberg and over seventy American composers, written between 1915 and 1951 in English and English translation and with commentary. It includes numerous unknown letters and casts new light on Schoenberg’s American years, his American composer colleagues and his life and works in the United States.
The 7th revised edition of a popular film music guide is now available from PineTree Press. Titled “As Time Goes By”: A Guide to Film Music: Songs and Scores, it was written and edited by film music historian and critic Roger L. Hall, who has been Managing Editor of Film Music Review, a web e-zine, for 20 years. This latest edition includes over 350 files including the complete book, CD and book reviews from Film Music Review, and a list of the Sammy Film Music Awards, which have been selected each year since 1988 by Hall. The book discusses how music was incorporated in classic films from the past, and how music can be used in a short film, based on Hall’s video production “The Musical Telephone.” Also on the computer disc are bonus audio selections of film songs and film score themes from several radio programs, plus two video programs from cable television featuring Hall as guest. This DVD-R contains information ideal for classroom study or for individual research. More information about this disc may be found here.

Ralph P. Locke, emeritus professor at the University of Rochester’s Eastman School of Music, has two forthcoming articles on very different topics: “Silence, Circumlocution, Honest Words—with Remarks by Aaron Copland (1972)” (Musica Judaica) and “Anti-Virtuosity and Musical Experimentalism: Liszt, Debussy, Marie Jaëll, and Others” (in Robert Doran, ed., Liszt and Virtuosity, University of Rochester Press). He continues to write CD reviews for American Record Guide and to edit Eastman Studies in Music series (University of Rochester Press). He is currently completing two chapters for a three-volume history of French opera, to be published in France by Fayard.
Michael O’Connor (Palm Beach Atlantic University) edited thirteen selections of late nineteenth-century wind band music, which were recorded by his period-instrument group, Newberry’s Victorian Cornet Band, from July 29–August 2, 2018. The recording will be available on MSR Classics sometime in 2019. The program features a characteristic variety of genres played by American wind bands of the 1880s and early 1890s, including operatic selections, dance selections, and solo features on cornet, clarinets and piccolo. The music used on the recording was obtained mostly from the online offerings of the Library of Congress’s American Memory Collection. For most of the selections, these are the first known recordings. Funding for the project came, in part from the Rinker Faculty Development Fund of Palm Beach Atlantic University.

Trudi Wright recently had her case study “Preparing to Engage the Community with Public Speaking Performance Classes” published in Performing Arts as High-Impact Practice (https://www.palgrave.com/us/book/9783319729435) (Palgrave, 2018). Her work focuses on a performance class approach to public speaking and results in her students delivering pre-concert lectures on American musicals in the community. Wright is an assistant professor at Regis University in Denver, Colorado.

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In Remembrance: Olly Wilson

Josephine R. B. Wright

The Society for American Music sadly records the passing of Honorary Member Olly Woodrow Wilson Jr., an internationally known African American composer who exerted enormous influence on modern music in the United States as a musician, scholar, and educator. A versatile composer, his repertory ranged from electronic music compositions to works for chamber and full orchestral ensembles. His compositional style fused contemporary Western musical concepts with African and African American traditional musics, innovatively exploring them in a vast array of sounds. Born in St. Louis, Missouri, where a strong tradition of black gospel grounded him at an early age in an African American aesthetics in music, his earliest formal music training was in piano and clarinet. Around age fifteen he began performing jazz piano professionally, later expanding those skills to the double bass and playing in the St.
Louis Philharmonic Orchestra and other ensembles. He studied composition with Robert Wykes at Washington University (BM 1959), with Robert Kelly at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (MM 1960), and Philip Bezanson at the University of Iowa (PhD 1964), pursuing additional studies at the Studio for Experimental Music at the University of Illinois (1967). A Guggenheim Fellowship (1971–1972) allowed him to investigate the roots of African American music in West Africa at the University of Ghana.

Olly Wilson’s work as an educator spanned forty-two years, with stints at three different institutions: Florida A&M University (1960–1962), Oberlin College Conservatory of Music (1965–1970), and the University of California, Berkeley (1970–2002). At Oberlin he broke down racial barriers by becoming the conservatory’s first full-time African American instructor. In addition to teaching courses in music theory, composition, and African American music, he laid the ground work for the conservatory’s electronic music program, later christened the Technology in Music and Related Arts Department in 1973. At UC Berkeley he co-founded the Berkeley Contemporary Chamber Players, a professional ensemble devoted to performing avant-garde music. He further served as Assistant Chancellor for International Affairs (1986–1990), leading initiatives to promote international exchanges with China and bring black South African students to study at Berkeley. He also chaired the Music Department (1993–1997). From 1995–1998 he held the Jerry and Evelyn Hemmings Chambers Professor of Music at UC Berkeley. He retired from active teaching at Berkeley in 2002 as a Professor Emeritus of Music.

A prolific composer and scholar, Olly Wilson wrote and lectured extensively on black music. His articles appeared in the *Black Perspective in Music, Black Music Research Journal, Perspectives of New Music, New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (second edition), and *New Perspectives on Music: Essays in Honor of Eileen Southern* (1992), edited by Josephine Wright and Samuel F. Floyd Jr. His composition works list was extensive, commencing with *Cetus* (1967), which won first prize in 1968 at the inaugural International Electronic Music Competition held at Dartmouth College and brought him to national attention. His compositions reflected the influences of black church music and spirituals of his youth, as
well as the blues, jazz, and traditional West African music, which he paired with acoustic and electronically produced sounds—e.g., *In Memoriam Martin Luther King Jr.* (1968), for SATB chorus and electric tape; *Akwan* (1972), composed while in Ghana, for electronic piano, amplified strings, and orchestra; *Sometimes* (1976), which created call-and-response dialogues between solo singer and electric tape; and *Sinfonia* (1983–1984) for full orchestra. Major orchestras in Europe and the United States performed his compositions, including the Royal Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), Moscow, and Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestras, as well as the New York and Rochester Philharmonic Orchestras, the Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Detroit, and St. Louis Symphony Orchestras. Recordings of his compositions have been issued by Albany, Columbia, CRI, Desto, New World, and Turnabout records.


Other awards and honors included: Outstanding Achievement in Music Composition from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the National Institute of Arts and Letters (1974); Visiting Artist at the American Academy at Rome (1978); Resident Fellow at the Rockefeller Foundation Center at Bellagio, Italy (1991); the Elise Stoeger Prize from the Chamber Music Society at Lincoln Center (1992); election to the American Academy of Arts and Letters (1995); vice president for Music of the Academy (2003–2006); and the Fromm Foundation Composer in Residence at the American Academy in Rome (2008).

Olly Wilson touched and influenced many lives over his long and distinguished career. He dedicated a lifetime to advocacy for innovative sonic experimentation in contemporary American music. He will be remembered in the annals of American music as one of the giants who helped break down racial barriers within the academy and promoted performance of music by African American composers.

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