Call for Papers

Music and Antifascism: Reflections on the Past and Possibilities in the Present

July 7, 2022 | McGill University, Montreal

Symposium website: https://musicandantifascism.wordpress.com

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Federico Spinetti, University of Cologne

How have artists resisted the global surge of far-right movements and authoritarian regimes through music and music-making? How has music been mobilized against fascism and fascist tendencies in societies in the 20th and 21st centuries?

The aim of this one-day symposium is to discuss the role of music in antifascist action in response to the recent surge in ultranationalist, xenophobic, discriminatory, and authoritarian regimes throughout the world, which threaten not only democratic governance systems and basic human rights, but also ecological sustainability. Antifascist resistance has long connected people across borders and time periods, yet has also manifested in distinctive ways in specific socio-political settings. Through discussion of historical and contemporary examples, participants will initiate dialogue that analyzes a diversity of musical activity related to antifascism, with the aim of illuminating paths for engaging in anti-oppressive politics through music and sound.

We welcome paper proposals and presentations dealing with any form of musical or sonic expression directly related to antifascist action. We encourage submissions from scholars, artists, activists, curators, journalists, and librarians, among others, and especially proposals from members of underrepresented and marginalized groups.

Paper topics may include but are not limited to the following:
uses of music and sound in historical antifascist movements
production, circulation, preservation, and revival of protest music, union and revolutionary songs
uses of music and sound in contemporary social justice movements (e.g., Black Lives Matter, Idle No More, Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street, LGBTQ2S+ pride events, etc.)
media promotion and censorship of antifascist music and messaging
musicians’ involvement in decolonization and liberation movements
censorship and repression of music by fascist regimes
co-opting of music and forced compliance of musicians by fascist regimes
music as agitprop
weaponization of music and sound; music and sound as defense
role of music and sound in movement-building, union organizing, and other forms of social solidarity
commemorative musical works for victims of oppressive regimes

We are pleased to announce that our keynote speaker will be Dr. Federico Spinetti, Professor of Ethnomusicology at the University of Cologne, Germany. Dr. Spinetti’s primary research interests include music and politics, music and memory, auditory cultures and the built environment. He is currently undertaking research into musical memorializations of the WWII antifascist resistance in contemporary Italy. He served as co-editor (with Monika E. Schoop and Ana Hofman) of a 2020 Special Issue of Popular Music and Society, titled “Music and the Politics of Memory: Resounding Antifascism across Borders.” The volume includes his chapter: “Punk Rock on the Gothic Line: Resounding the World War II Antifascist Resistenza in Contemporary Italy.” An active filmmaker, Dr. Spinetti has also directed several documentaries, including Zurkhaneh – The House of Strength: Music and Martial Arts of Iran (2011) and The Enemy – A Partisan Hymnbook (2015).

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMISSION:

Please send the following MS-Word (or PDF) documents to musicandantifascism@gmail.com by Friday, October 15th, 2021:

• a 250-word abstract and proposed title, without any information identifying the author (followed by specifications of any technical equipment and/or support that may be required).
• a 150-word biographical paragraph, followed by author-contact information and your proposed paper title.

Our program committee will review all submitted proposals by Monday, November 1st, and will reply to all prospective contributors by Monday, November 15th.