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The Musical Instrument as National Archive: A Case Study of the Kazakh Qyl-qobyz

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Abstract. This article examines the Kazakh two-stringed horsehair fiddle qyl-qobyz as a case study for conceptualizing musical instruments as “archives” that contain layers of historical, social, musical, and emotional information. This information is accumulated and maintained as “archival documents” within the musical instrument archive. These documents are then accessed and interpreted by performers, whose performance styles offer differing points of view on the significance of the qyl-qobyz to contemporary understandings of Kazakh national identity. By unpacking the many layers of information and meaning stored in the qyl-qobyz archive, the article explores its numerous musical contributions to Kazakh national identity narratives.

Saga’s Sorrow: Femininities of Despair in the Music of Radical White Nationalism

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Abstract. This article examines the construction of gender roles in contemporary white nationalist music. Grounded in extensive ethnographic fieldwork, the article traces the rise of leading Swedish singer Saga and argues that her music frames women as besieged embodiments of racial and national essence dependent on men for deliverance. The discussion of Saga’s music draws from a review of recent social and ideological shifts in radical white nationalism, insider interviews, performance observations, and structural and textual analyses.
The Hard Work of Screaming: Physical Exertion and Affective Labor Among Mexico City’s Punk Vocalists

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In this article, I consider the screaming and growling vocalizations performed by Mexico City’s punk vocalists. Such extreme vocal productions not only result in harsh, distorted vocal timbres, but also in the display of vocalists’ hard-working bodies. Through physical exertion, punk vocalists also perform affective labor, creating an environment in which fans may “take out the rage,” producing solidarity through collective catharsis. I argue that through the hard work of screaming, participants in Mexico City’s punk scene explore alternative notions of labor and value, attempting to enact their anarchist ideals in the context of the post-industrial, neoliberal metropolis.

El trabajo duro de gritar: esfuerzos físicos y mano de obra afectiva en los vocalistas punk de Ciudad de México

Resumen. Este artículo analiza las vocalizaciones estridentes y guturales de los vocalistas punk de Ciudad de México. Estas intensas vocalizaciones resultan no solo en timbres vocales ásperos y distorsionados, sino también en la exhibición de los cuerpos trabajadores de los vocalistas. A través del esfuerzo físico los vocalistas punk realizan una mano de obra afectiva, creando un ambiente en el cual la audiencia puede “sacar la rabia,” logrando un sentido de solidaridad mediante una catarsis colectiva. Por medio de este trabajo duro de gritar, los participantes de la escena punk de Ciudad de México experimentan con ideas alternativas de mano de obra y valor, mientras intentan promulgar sus convicciones anarquistas en el contexto de la metrópolis postindustrial y neoliberal.
Krishna, Christians, and Colors: The Socially Binding Influence of Kirtan Singing at a Utah Hare Krishna Festival

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Abstract. The Utah Festival of Colors, an incarnation of the Indian festival Holi, is among the largest Hindu celebrations in the United States, yet most who participate are not Hindu. Festivalgoers playfully throw colors at each other while singing kirtan, or sacred chants performed at this event in reggae, rock, and dubstep as well as traditional Indian musical styles. This paper explores the musical and rhetorical techniques performers use to address the practices of their religion to adherents of different faiths, invite participation in their devotional chants, and in doing so use celebratory musicking as a tool for mediating social differences.

Dialect, Diffusion, and Balinese Drumming: Using Sociolinguistic Models for the Analysis of Regional Variation in Kendang Arja

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Abstract. In the early twentieth century, the Balinese village of Singapadu became famous for its distinctive tradition of arja, a sung dance-drama accompanied by paired, improvised, interlocking drumming: kendang arja. At that time, Singapadu arja drum patterns were transmitted to drummers throughout Bali. While some maintained the original patterns without alteration, others varied them or even innovated new ones within the idiom. In this article, I use concepts and terminology borrowed from linguistics--issues of language contact, proficiency, and ideologies of change--to determine the reasons behind these varying levels of innovation among drum masters trained in the Singapadu style.
Listening to the World but Hearing Ourselves: Hybridity and Perceptions of Authenticity in World Music

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Abstract. This essay problematizes the intersection of aesthetic preferences and positions on authenticity held by listeners as they encounter musical hybridity and processes of globalization. Using analytical ideas drawn from hybridity theory and ethnographic data derived from university listeners who respond to two pop songs from Mali, the author suggests that “perceived authenticity” is a primary determinant of the valuation of world musics. Marketers may exploit listeners’ perceptions, but understanding that authenticity is more malleable and cyclic than its definition suggests reveals the complicated nexus of category boundaries, audience expectation, and the hybridizing processes of cultural interaction.