

EM Abstracts for 63.1 (in order of publication)

My Music

Ellen Koskoff

Abstract. In this time of political, social, and disciplinary contention and competition, I wish to explore an important link that can bind us together--no matter our gender, race, age, musical tastes, or political leanings. That link is music, and the magical feeling of becoming the music as we listen and experience the musics we love. In this article, I examine certain pieces of music that have been important to me over the course of my life, musics that have led me into meaningful personal and professional directions, with the hope that it will trigger memories of "your music" and the enchantment this gift brings to our lives.

On the Politics of Folksong Theory in Edwardian England

Ross Cole

Abstract. This article explores how and why a particular vision of folksong became widely popular during the early twentieth century. Focusing on Cecil J. Sharp, I show that despite severe criticism from contemporaries his beliefs won out as the dominant paradigm for the understanding of folk music. Interrogating the politics of his theorizing, moreover, I draw out the hitherto neglected imbrications between folk revivalism and fascist ideology. Seen as dialectical tools capable of reforming citizens through the expressive contours of their racial birthright, I argue, collected songs and dances were repurposed in the service of forging a national socialist consciousness.

Haiti's Drums and Trees: Facing Loss of the Sacred

Rebecca Dirksen

Abstract. The tanbou (drums) are routinely imagined at the center of Haitian experience and provide necessary access to the spiritual forces of the universe. Yet deforestation and climate change have seriously threatened the trees from which these instruments are made. The life story of octogenarian drummer Charles Charlesine presents an opportunity to explore how shifts in the environment are triggering shifts that irrevocably alter a form of cultural heritage that many regard as crucial to Haitian society. This study presents an opportunity to ask, how are Haitians confronting apparent loss of the Sacred, with particular regard to the tanbou and trees?

Martyrdom and Mapuche Metal: Defying Cultural and Territorial Reductions in twenty-First Century Wallmapu

Jacob Rekedal

Abstract: Seventeen-year-old Alex Lemún was shot in 2002 while retaking ancestral lands for his people, the Mapuche, on the eastern side of the Andes in the Southern Cone. The song "Weichafe Alex Lemún" by the band Pewmayén memorialized Lemún as a weichafe (warrior), and helped spark a new musical movement. Pewmayén's fusion of ritual sounds with heavy metal both valorized traditional expressions and opened sociocultural boundaries

that historically isolated those expressions from non-Mapuche society. Musical analysis and ethnographic description demonstrate how Mapuche music is opening new territories of sound and meaning, with serious implications for indigenous empowerment and cultural continuity.

Resumen. Alex Lemún fue disparado en 2002, con diecisiete años de edad, mientras participaba en una toma de tierras ancestrales por parte de su pueblo, los Mapuche, al lado este de los Andes en el Cono Sur. La canción “Weichafe Alex Lemún” del grupo Pewmayén recordó a Lemún como un weichafe (guerrero), y ayudó a iniciar un nuevo movimiento musical. La fusión llevada a cabo por Pewmayén, de los sonidos rituales con la música metal, valorizó las expresiones tradicionales y abrió los bordes socioculturales que históricamente aislaban tales expresiones de la sociedad mestiza adyacente. Análisis musical y descripción etnográfica demuestran cómo la música mapuche está abriendo nuevos territorios de sonido y significado, con implicaciones serias para el empoderamiento indígena y la continuidad cultural.

Timbeando en Nueva York: Cuban Timba Takes Root Abroad

Sarah Town

Abstract. Timba came of age during Cuba’s 1990s economic crisis and soon traveled further afield. In New York City today, diverse musicians reproduce, experiment with, and transform its sound with cover songs, new compositions, and reconfigured formats. This article examines three musical examples in ethnographic context, revealing tensions and overlap between local and cosmopolitan music practices, and sheds light on a popular dance culture that serves as the meeting ground for oral traditions and conservatory training. Through grounded and detailed investigation, it highlights blurred boundaries between musical practices, social spaces, and disciplinary approaches, and explores their methodological and narrative implications.