

**EM Abstracts for 64.1 (in order of publication)**

**Ethnography as a Way of Life**

Kay Kaufman Shelemay

**Abstract:** While ethnomusicologists have long acknowledged ethnography's problematic intellectual heritage as well as the power asymmetries that arise in the field, they don't always consider the power and longevity of the ethnographic processes they set into motion. This article, the 2018 Charles Seeger Lecture revised for publication, takes into account the impact of the lived experience that reshapes both the ethnographer's and research associate's perceptions over time. The paper charts the challenges of studying individuals and communities in flux, especially those from environments torn by persecution and violence. It focuses on the ethnomusicological life cycle; the oral traditions of fieldwork; and ethnomusicological engagement in the field and after the ethnographic experience concludes.

**“A Weekly Meshrep to Tackle Religious Extremism”: Music, Community, and Intangible Cultural Heritage in China**

Rachel Harris

**Abstract.** This article provides an in-depth study and critique of the nomination and inscription of an item on UNESCO's lists of intangible cultural heritage, and the developments following its acceptance. China is now a major partner in UNESCO's heritage projects, but the application and experience of heritage initiatives across China have been highly uneven. I discuss the particular challenges presented in the contested, predominantly Muslim Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. I focus on the question of community, a term that lies at the heart of the UNESCO literature. What do we mean by community, and why do we think it matters? How does socially embedded music-making facilitate community, and how do heritage initiatives change that?

**“It's Not a Specific Klezmer Thing, it's a Specific Me Thing”: Tradition, Personal Expression and Network Relations in Berlin's Klezmer Accordion Community**

Alexander, Phillip

**Abstract.** Historically an instrument of indeterminate status, the klezmer accordion in today's Berlin is a site within which concepts of style and ensemble communication are performed and creatively negotiated. Through detailed interview material with the disproportionate number of world-class practitioners active in the city, this article traces the role and network relations of the instrument in contemporary klezmer music. In the process it reveals a richly-textured approach that makes creative use of the accordion's cultural ambiguity and musical versatility, whilst at the same time highlighting the tensions surrounding performance aesthetics, personal expression and being “in the tradition.”

**Disobedient: Activist Choirs, Radical Amateurism and the Politics of the Past after Yugoslavia**

Ana Hofman

**Abstract:** From 2000 on, the emergence of the activist choirs has greatly influenced practices of political activism in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. In this article, I analyze how singers, activists, and listeners repurpose antifascist music legacy in order to experiment with new forms of political engagement in the moment of political foreclosure. Locating my theoretical framework within the field of affective politics of sound, I focus on practices of resounding the antifascist musical past as a form of political action that enables people to form new audio-social alliances at a local, regional and global scale. In order to do that, I

address the key themes activist choirs revitalize through their singing: resistance and self-organization. I propose the concept of radical amateurism, a political collective that fuels the politicization of a field of leisure and offers a space for thinking and practicing political agency on a temporal and spatial scale beyond the existent forms of organization. Finally, I scrutinize a romanticizing of affect and discuss the ways affective encounters can enable a new framework for practicing political engagement in a moment of apathy and neoliberal exhaustion.

**A Heuristic Theory of Metrical Transformation and Tune Metamorphosis: Tracking Creativity in Traditional Cantonese Opera**

Bell Yung

**Abstract:** For the kind of pre-existent tunes used in Cantonese Opera Rulan Chao Pian called “aria types” this article shows how the ambiguous nature of their metrical structure allows for multiple interpretations. The flexibility inherent in such metrical ambiguity enables singers to create new musical expressions, leading to new versions and eventually to new aria types that enrich the repertory. In tracking these processes, the article aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the “pre-existent” nature of tunes and to suggest the creativity of the singers.

**Lyric Formulas as Traditional Compositional Processes in the Folk Blues: A Case Study of Furry Lewis**

J. Tyler Fritts

**Abstract.** The spontaneous combination of traditional, borrowed, and original lyric formulas is the central process by which traditional blues lyrics are composed. Building on theories of formulaic composition first developed by Milman Parry (1930) and Albert Lord (1960) and later adapted for the study of the blues by David Evans (1982; 2007; 2010), this article maps and compares blues lyrics by Furry Lewis as a means of better understanding this process. The article also identifies how Lewis’s idiosyncratic approach to this process makes his lyrics simultaneously typical and extraordinary.