The concerts and workshops at SEM 2020 are supported in part by funding from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Other support is provided by Queen’s University and Carleton University.
30-Minute Concerts

- The Angelique Francis Quartet | A journey within the fires of blues music
- Silla and Rise | Inuit throat singing and futuristic dance floor beats
- Le Vent du Nord | The modern sound of Québec

15-Minute Concerts and Workshops

- Judith Cohen | Singing travels from my living room
- Lassana Diabaté | New developments of soundiata keita
- Mei Han and Randy Raine-Reusch | Last moon of summer
- JustJamaal ThePoet | The influence
- Benedictus Mattson | Azonto
- Melody McKiver | viola / electronics / synths
- Golam Rabbani | you fell in with bad company
- Native North American Traveling College | Haudenosaunee social song/dance workshop

BIPOC Chill Out Space

An online co-listening space for BIPOC attendees to gather and “decompress” at any time during the conference. Organized by popular electronic music scholar Luis-Manuel Garcia Mispireta and modeled after the “chillout rooms” of 1990s raves.

Concert and workshop videos are the sole property of the artists and will only be available for viewing by registered conference participants and attendees for the duration of the conference, October 21st-31st, 2020, inclusive, after which time the links will be deactivated. Prerecorded materials are not to be downloaded, recorded or used for any purpose beyond listening/viewing during the conference.

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MANY THANKS TO THE PERFORMERS AND MANAGEMENT TEAMS WHO PROVIDED CRITICAL INPUT FOR THE PREPARATION OF THIS PROGRAM.

The profiles and interviews contained in this program are intended to enhance your virtual concert and workshop experiences at SEM 2020. Throughout the month of September, a team of committed Carleton students surveyed and interviewed willing musicians about their performances, the meanings behind their musics, and their relationships to the Canadian performing scene. We learned a lot. We hope you will too.

Find out more about the performers and pedagogues described in this program by following the links listed in their profiles.

Start streaming by logging into the conference website and visiting the concert and workshop page!

Concert and workshop videos are the sole property of the artists and will only be available for viewing by registered conference participants and attendees for the duration of the conference, October 21st-31st, 2020, inclusive, after which time the links will be deactivated. Prerecorded materials are not to be downloaded, recorded or used for any purpose beyond listening/viewing during the conference.
Program

The Angelique Francis Family Quartet will be taking its audience through a journey forged within the fires of blues music. A thirty-minute performance packed with original songs of varying nature and style; each highlighting a mixture of unique cultural elements and modern exploration. Original compositions will be weaved together with traditional spirituals.

Biography

Angelique Francis is an exceptionally gifted musician. This multi-talented, multi-instrumentalist, multi-genre singer-songwriter and composer has wowed audiences across the globe with her electrifying performances, instrumental abilities and powerful textured vocals. Angelique has shared the stage/opened for a large roster of well-known musicians, such as Gary Clark Jr., Beth Hart, Tom Cochrane, Burton Cummings, Sugar Ray
and the list goes on. Her diversity, passion and love of music can be heard in all of her original compositions.

Born and raised in Ottawa, Canada, Angelique is a naturally gifted musician, who garnered attention at a young age as a piano and vocal prodigy. She first took to the stage at age 7 and, at 13-years-old, she made her American national television debut on the Oprah Network for writing and composing an original theme song for the Gayle King show. By age 13, she was proficient in playing other instruments, including the acoustic guitar, upright bass, electric guitar, and electric bass. By age 14, she was playing at music festivals across North America, opening for a variety of acts such as Beth Hart, Trooper and Shemekia Copeland.

Angelique’s soulful smoky vocals and instrumental techniques are reminiscent of a bygone era, but with a unique and modern sensibility. Within her vocal style, you can hear influences of legends like Big Mama Thornton, Koko Taylor, Aretha Franklin, Bessie Smith, and many more. Her instrumental abilities call to mind Willie Dixon on the bass, Sister Rosetta Thorpe on guitar, Big Mama Thornton on the harmonica and Aretha Franklin on the piano.

In June of 2018, she released her independent album Kissed By The Blues. The CD weaves through a variety of styles from blues, soul to classic R&B. The acclaimed album showcases Angelique’s signature powerhouse soulful vocals, commanding bass and guitar hooks and infectious blues-infused melodies.

This highly sought-after musician was a feature act at the Sighisoara Blues Festival (Romania), Calgary Folk Festival, Massey Hall (Women’s Blues Revue), Montreal Jazz Festival, Mariposa Folk Fest, London folk Festival, Ottawa Jazz festival, Ottawa Blues
Keep going, do not give up, we will make it to the other end. These are some of the hopeful and positive messages that came out of my conversation with the talented Angelique Francis. Despite the current world wide situation, Angelique’s passion and love for music keeps growing. Her capacity to see the shiny side of the coin is projected in her music, giving the audience a buffet of powerful lyrics and messages in the company of blues.

"Music can allow people to feel many different emotions and it has many different purposes, it’s basically life. Music is stories and what are we but a collection of stories of our experiences.”

Having scheduled a Canadian and European tour, Angelique highlights the fact that many of these festivals were able to run in a digital version: “We have the resources now to still be able to connect with people even if it is on a virtual level. It may not have the same kind of intimate feeling but sometimes we are able to connect and reach out to more people than we would have been able to do in person. There are people watching all around the world and, of course, it does not replace live interaction but I think in many ways these connections may have never happened if it weren’t for the virtual environment that we have.”
Program

Honouring and preserving Inuit culture, Silla and Rise delight us with a wide variety of songs and sounds capturing the essence of traditional Inuit throat singing and combining it with futuristic dance floor beats.

Biography

Website
https://sillaandrise.com
facebook.com/sillaandrise
@riseashen
instagram.com/sillaandrise
Silla + Rise - Topic

Silla have been performing together since 2005. Its core members, Charlotte Qamaniq (Iglulik, NU) and Cynthia Pitsiulak (Kimmirut, NU), were joined in 2020 by the amazing Charlotte Carleton (Panniqtuuq, NU). The group writes:

Silla respects, honours and preserves Inuit culture and pays homage to the Inuit land and its strong connection to our spirituality. With our music, we invite you to experience the sounds of traditional and contemporary katajjaq - Inuit throat song.
Rise Ashen (Ottawa, ON) is a global-grooves producer, percussionist, DJ, and dancer. He produces Silla and Rise and performs electronic percussion with the band for their live performances. Rise has spent his life pursuing the intersection of traditional and futuristic music.

"The sound punched through the chest and fanned out through the hands and feet. It tickled the tiny bones in the ears and moved people’s bodies, rocking them in their chairs, coaxing them to the dance floor and transporting them to another world"
- Lisa Gregoire, Nunatsiaq News

Silla + Rise

Silla and Rise was founded in 2016, coming together to blend traditional aspects of Inuit throat singing and futuristic dance floor beats.

Since then they’ve been nominated for a Juno Award for Indigenous Music Album of the Year in 2017 for their self-titled debut Silla + Rise. Their second album, Galactic Gala, was also nominated for a Juno in the World Music Album of the Year category in 2019. They were nominated for the Indigenous Music Award for Best Inuit, Indigenous Language, or Francophone Album in 2017, and won the Stingray Award at Mundial Festival in Montreal in 2018.
Program

1. Pau Regiment
2. Adieu du Village
3. Le Pays de Samuel
4. Louisbourg
5. Lanlaire
6. Le Step à Alexis

Biography

Website leventdunord.com

facebook.com/LeVentduNord
@leventdunord
instagram.com/leventdunordquebec
Le Vent du Nord

The award winning and highly acclaimed quintet Le Vent du Nord is a leading force in Quebec’s progressive francophone folk movement. The group’s vast repertoire draws from both traditional sources and original compositions, while enhancing its hard-driving soulful music (rooted in the Celtic diaspora) with a broad range of global influences. Hands down, this is one of best roots music bands on the planet.
Le Vent du Nord

WRITTEN BY AKASH IYER

French-Canadian folk goes all the way back to the first Irish and French immigrants, whose sounds merged with Inuit and First Nations music, creating the cultural framework for Québécois folk. LVDN continues to embody and reinvent this long tradition. According to band member and co-founder Nicolas Boulerice “Folk music is never fixed, it moves, it adapts and it reflects the old and the new.” Not content with standard approaches to tradition, LVDN creates a symphonic concert that, according to Voir Montreal, “puts all traditional folk naysayers to shame.”

"Folk music is never fixed, it moves, it adapts and it reflects the old and the new."
-Nicolas Boulerice

This is essentially what LVDN aims to achieve. These talented multi-instrumentalists have adopted traditional lyrics to contemporary contexts, featuring themes of love, lust, fear, anger, patriarchy, etc., that exist in almost every culture. They package this lyric sensibility into a powerful sonic landscape that uses not only traditional genres associated with Québécois folk (Celtic, First Nations, Sephardic, etc.), but also musical ideas from jazz, rock, blues and North American country music.

This year SEM is delighted to present to you the essence of Quebec. The orality that has been passed on from generation to generation...Le Vent du Nord!
Our current forced isolation has affected different industries in different ways. My conversation with Nicolas Boulerice - co-founder and songwriter with LVDN - touched on many different aspects of his musical journey: the sound of the band, the importance of stage planning, the simple struggles of a working musician, and the pressing issue of life during and after COVID-19. An astonishingly positive man, Nicolas revealed the varied efforts taken by Le Vent du Nord to counter the absence of live audience-performer interaction.

“Our manager Geneviève is amazing. She immediately started pitching us for virtual concerts, we recorded a handful of shows and sent it across the world to Boston, New York, Quebec, London, etc. We made a little money but in its essence it helped the band stay alive creatively.”

During the last few months LVDN also did a special project at the Place des Arts in Montreal with 64 LED screens projecting a virtual live audience via Zoom. The band recreated their electrifying set for a crowd of over 3000 people that had the ability to respond with applause and cheers at the end of each song.
Program

A program of traditional songs and anecdotes from Judith Cohen’s repertoire - featuring song and stories from French Canada, Sephardic Morocco, Valencia (Spain), Galicia (Spain), Portugal, Sephardic Bulgaria, Extremadura (Spain).

Biography

Website judithcohen.ca

facebook.com/judith.cohen.9
@judithcohen9
instagram.com/judith.cohen.9

“I'm from Montreal and have lived in Toronto for a long time. These are songs I have learned over years of travel during fieldwork, and also from friends and colleagues - I rarely prepare a program for concerts, preferring the comfortable old "folkie" mode, which is still my favourite... I try to treat Zoom as one more coffee-house venue. While I did think about what to sing for this short program, it is partly spontaneous.”
Judith Cohen

Compiled by Akash Iyer

A true musical nomad, Judith Cohen has spent her life steeped in various musical cultures. Village songs of Spain and Portugal, narrative ballads and stories in English and pan-European traditions, Balkan singing, French Canadian and Yiddish songs, and the music of Medieval Europe are among her performance and workshop repertoires. Her work as an ethnomusicologist is closely related to her identity as a performer. She is the consultant for the Spanish Recordings (1952) of the legendary Alan Lomax Collection. Currently, she is preparing an edition of Lomax's Spain diary that includes her own follow-up fieldwork for the University Press of Mississippi.

Cohen’s travels across North America and Europe are reflected in her unique stylings and multi-instrumental talent. She is an important authority on Jewish music, not just its Sephardic aspect, but the countless other appropriations in different cultures and countries around the world.

Over the past few years, she has lectured, performed, and carried out fieldwork in Spain, Portugal, Morocco, Poland, China and Israel, as well as at the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto and medieval studies programs of Fordham University in New York and University of Indiana Bloomington. Her online presentations during the 2020 pandemic have included lectures, concerts and storytelling for programs based in Spain, Hungary, Argentina, Holland and Italy.

This year SEM's LAC is honoured to present to you Judith Cohen Live from Her Living Room.

“I want my research to reflect Jewish heritage 'as is', the people that should read it are those who are truly interested and won't make light of the years of cultural struggle”
-Judith Cohen
"The thing with the Crypto-Jews, and Sephardic music in general, is that people see them in this very romantic light: you hear certain adjectives like spiritual or passionate or divine. But, just like any other culture, if it is for a spiritual occasion than it is, if not than it shares the same emotional spectrum as any other genre. My music aims to dismantle this exoticism that is so inherent in cultural perception."

"... if [Sephardic music] is for a spiritual occasion then it is [spiritual], if not then it shares the same emotional spectrum as any other genre."
- Judith Cohen

This is what Judith had to say about the modern proliferation of Jewish musical content. With the advent of the internet, there is increasing interest in Jewish music. Most recently, attention has focused on songs from the concentration camps of the Second World War, but also including musics that stretch all the way back to 10th Century Spain - commonly known as the Golden Age of Jewish culture. Cohen’s understanding of musical pilgrimage in Judeo culture stands tall.
Program

1 Cape Breton: First site of our presentation of the thirteenth century Mande Emperor
2 Nana Triban: Soundiata’s devoted sister, married by force to the Sosso king, Soumaouro Kanté
3 Soundiata: legendary leader whose name still resonates with the Mande people
4 Sosso Foli: music from Guinea in praise of strong men

Biography

Written by Lucy Durán, Professor of Music, SOAS, University of London

Fodé Lassana Diabaté (better known as Lassana Diabaté) is without doubt one of Africa’s most brilliant and creative contemporary musicians. He is the greatest virtuoso on the Mande balafon (22-key xylophone), one of West Africa’s oldest instruments. A participant on
several Grammy-nominated albums, he has been compared to some of the world's most celebrated musicians. Kronos Quartet director David Harrington likens him to none other than JS Bach (The Times, 9/06/18), and musician/composer David Coulter (musician and composer, artist-in-residence at the San Francisco Jazz Center in 2018), compared Lassana's playing to that of Thelonius Monk.

Lassana was born in 1971 into a well-known griot family of balafon masters in Guinea, and began playing balafon at the age of five, learning from his father, Djelisory Diabaté, a master balafon player who comes from Kindia (Guinea). His early years were spent playing in Conakry at weddings and other rites of passage celebratory parties, and he learned both Susu and Maninka repertoires. Lassana later apprenticed himself to some of the celebrated balafon masters of Guinea such as the late, great El Hadj Djeli Sory Koyaté, also from Kindia, as well as the late Alkali Camara. To this day, Lassana cherishes the now rare recordings of his mentors, whose music continues to be a source of inspiration for him.

At the age of 10, in Conakry, Guinea, Lassana began to accompany his father at the many wedding parties that took place in the house of the bride-to-be, the night before the wedding. The standard group for such wedding parties in Guinea consisted of three balafons, a dundun (cylindrical drum), and a jelimuso (female griot singer). Lassana's father Djelisory would play the lead, while Lassana and his uncle provided the interlocking accompaniment on the other two

"You can instantly spot him as a master – brilliantly engaged and spontaneous, technically impeccable, simply a thrill to behold."

-Banning Eyre, Afropop Worldwide
balafons. They would play for many hours through the night, until sometimes the young Lassana fell asleep over the instrument. At the aged of 13, Lassana started to take the lead role on balafon. His reputation reached Guinea’s dance bands, who began to invite him to play with them. Lassana’s first break came when a singer called Paul Milimolo, who performed around Conakry at weddings, invited Lassana to accompany him at a special concert in honour of Ami Koita, Mali’s most popular female griot singer of the late 80s and early 90s. The year was 1991. The music scene in Guinea was in the doldrums, with no musical infrastructure to replace the state-subsidised orchestras and ensembles of Sekou Touré, Guinea’s first president (who died in 1984, leaving the country in severe economic and political crisis despite his support of music).

By contrast in Mali, there was a thriving local music industry, with new private studios and a busy wedding party circuit, all of which would really take off after the overthrow of the military dictatorship in March 1991 and the introduction of Mali’s first democracy. Ami Koita’s album “Tata Sira”, recorded in Abidjan and released c. 1990, had broken new ground and revealed to Lassana a very different musical style from that of Guinean griots. In Guinea, the bala (balafon) has been a central force in the creation of a contemporary sound, but in Mali this role is occupied by the ngoni (lute). This gives a significantly different timbre to Malian music, which was a revelation to Lassana, partly because, on some level, it gave him more freedom on the balafon - allowing it to break away from the traditional interlocking styles and use the instrument more like a keyboard. And so, in 1991, Ami Koita came to Conakry to take part in the concert held in her honour, in which Lassana Diabaté performed on balafon. Ami was so dazzled by his playing, that she immediately invited him to join her group to Bamako. Only 19 years old, Lassana ended up spending two years in Bamako as part of Ami Koita’s successful ensemble, absorbing the very different local musical styles, and being introduced to the leading young generation of instrumentalists who were pioneering a new musical scene in Bamako, including kora virtuoso Toumani Diabaté.

Lassana’s style of playing balafon is highly dexterous and contrapuntal -
Experience taught him the importance of safeguarding the traditional oral methods of transmitting musical knowledge and skills, which have become a major concern in his professional and personal life.

Lassana’s professional career began as accompanist to Mali’s top divas such as Babani Koné and Ami Koita, but he went on to perform and record with many of Mali’s leading musicians such as Toumani Diabaté, Salif Keita, Tiken Jah Fakoly, Kasse Mady Diabaté and Bassekou Kouyaté. He was a member of the Grammy-nominated collaboration, Afrocubism, a revisit of Buena Vista Social Club by the prestigious UK label World Circuit. He has recorded with leading international artists such as Taj Mahal and most recently the renowned Kronos Quartet, working across a number of genres including jazz, blues and Latin music. He has travelled and performed widely both as a solo artist and as the musical director of Trio Da Kali.

He has done two residencies at the University of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia and has recorded his first solo album there (2020).

In Mali, where he lives with his wife and five children, he has created his own association, Folilakana (in Bamana, the language of southern Mali, means “Safeguarding Music”), aimed at stimulating musical creativity while promoting tradition.

"Experience taught him the importance of safeguarding the traditional oral methods of transmitting musical knowledge and skills, which have become a major concern in his professional and personal life."
Program

Composed and performed by Mei Han & Randy Raine-Reusch on the Chinese zheng, this world premiere of the "Last Moon of Summer" was created for the Society for Ethnomusicology 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting (Han/Raine-Reusch 2020 SOCAN; co-sponsored by the Red Chamber Cultural Society).

Biography

Mei Han and Randy Raine-Reusch have created a radical new repertoire, combining five thousand years of Chinese musical traditions with those of new music, world music, and jazz. These rich innovations result from the collision of two cultures: Chinese virtuoso Mei Han's deep roots in traditional music and the modern innovations of Canadian multi-instrumentalist Randy Raine-Reusch.
Mei Han is a rare blend of virtuoso performer and scholar, specializing in the Chinese zheng (zither), the parent instrument of the Asian long zither family. With a career that has seen her traverse five continents, Mei Han holds a PhD in Ethnomusicology from the University of British Columbia (Canada) and is the founding Director of the Center for Chinese Music and Culture at Middle Tennessee State University. As an internationally touring zheng virtuoso, her performances range from traditional Chinese music to orchestral and chamber works, and from jazz to free improv.

Mei Han’s touring partner is Randy Raine-Reusch, a composer, international concert-artist, and multi-instrumentalist with a collection of over seven hundred world instruments. Specializing in new music for world instruments, he has worked with some of the world’s most prominent artists in numerous genres, including Pauline Oliveros, Aerosmith, Yes, The Cranberries, Robert Dick, Barry Guy, and Sainkho Namtchylak.

"Mei Han and Randy Raine-Reusch have created a radical new repertoire, combining five thousand years of Chinese musical traditions with those of new music, world music, and jazz."
Program Notes

Taking inspiration from improvisation in both traditional Chinese and western contemporary music, this work uses composed structures as a framework for improvisational expression, grouped in alternating pairs. The tuning was created by the artists using a combination of pentatonic and non-repeating note groupings. Both traditional and contemporary performance techniques by both artists are utilized to blend traditional Chinese and contemporary western aesthetics.
Program

Spoken word poet JustJamaal ThePoet shares his poetic musings on art, humanity, and triumph; capturing the essence of what influences his work as a creative.

Biography

Jamaal Jackson Rogers is a nationally recognized independent artist, creative entrepreneur and arts educator. He was recently appointed Ottawa English Poet Laureate, a position that has not been occupied in the city of Ottawa for the past 27 years, and has been awarded the outstanding Artist Educator Award by the Ontario Arts Foundation.

As an artist he is a poet/writer, spoken word practitioner, recording rap artist, and stage performer, appearing on numerous festival stages with his Hiphop...
Since his early years he has honed his talents, allowing him to bring his performances to audiences across Canada and internationally. His defining moments are when he makes intimate connections with listeners during live performance sets. As a creative entrepreneur he has quickly become known for his ability to take ideas and translate them into action, using art as a way to bring communities together for entertainment and education. He is the mind and management behind such endeavours as Make Spoken Word Go Viral and Fly Poets Society; organizations that support poets and songwriters in their craft and that engineer poetry and music related events in the capital city of Canada. His studio, The Origin Arts & Community Centre, serves as a launch pad for arts related events, where he spends his time developing community programs and events that advocate for the arts.

Other major creative involvements include Urban Legends Poetry Collective, Nationless Nights Music Concert, The Algonquin College Poetry Show, the House of Paint OG500 Poetry Slam, and the National Youth Poetry Festival to name a few. As an arts educator, Rogers has worked with hundreds of young adults nationally and abroad, using unique methods to assist participants in finding their artistic voice. He has taught songwriting, performance, hiphop and poetry workshops and has been recognized by his peers for the creative activities that he uses in order for the learner to be actively engaged. He is considered a mentor and arts coach, working in correctional facilities and finding time to tutor in inclusive settings such as classrooms and community centres to help artists reach their goals within various artistic fields. Teaching, inspiring and leading is what Jamaal believes he does best, and with over 17 years of working with youth, he finds his passion best exemplified as an arts educator. Jamaal hopes that he will be able to share his passion, story, experience and vision with you in the near future.

- text from justjamaalthepoet.com
Melody McKiver presents a selection of instrumental compositions written for unaccompanied viola and electronics, exploring Anishinaabe philosophy and language.

**Melody McKiver's** musical work integrates electronics with western classical music to shape a new genre of Anishinaabe compositions. Their debut EP *Reckoning* was nominated for an Indigenous Music Award, and they were a participant in the Banff Centre for the Arts’ inaugural Indigenous Classical Music Gathering. A frequent performer across Turtle Island, Melody has performed at the National Arts Centre, Luminato Festival, Vancouver’s Western Front, and
the Toronto International Film Festival. They have shared stages with Polaris Prize winners Lido Pimienta, Tanya Tagaq, and Jeremy Dutcher, and performed with acclaimed filmmaker and musician Alanis Obomsawin.

As a composer, Melody was commissioned by Soundstreams and Jumblies Theatre to write a string quartet responding to Steve Reich’s Different Trains, drawing on interviews conducted with local elders. Melody was invited to the Berlinale Talents Sound Studio as a music and composition mentor for the 2020 Berlin International Film Festival. They also re-imagined Stravinsky’s Rite of Spring through an Anishinaabeg lens alongside choreographer Brian Solomon.

Melody is also employed as a youth worker in Sioux Lookout, providing mental health and cultural supports to First Nations students.

Upcoming projects include a song and music video premiering on Amplify, a new APTN show that explores musicians’ creative processes, and a full-length album in 2021.

"The Anishinaabe musician changing the way we think about the viola."

–Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
Program

1. Azonto
2. Afrobeats

Biography

Benedictus Mattson is a Ghanaian first year PhD student in the Cultural Studies program at Queen’s University, Canada. His research focuses on the presence of Ghanaian popular dance in the social media space, specifically the impact of platforms like Instagram and YouTube on the development of Ghanaian popular dance. His investigations also consider the influence of social media on the voice, circulation, the dance cypher, and dancers.

facebook.com/dictus.mawudeka
@dictusp3
instagram.com/artisticvisionsgh
Program Notes

WRITTEN BY BENEDICTUS MATTSON

1 Azonto

“Azonto” is a popular dance from Accra, the capital city of Ghana. Azonto is created and performed mostly by the marginalized youth of Ghana as a way of addressing social, political, and economic issues. An expressive and entertaining dance form, youths use it to register their likes and dislikes in the Ghanaian community.

Azonto literally means “low life” or “anything cheap.” It started as a derogatory word used to describe “cheap girls,” but later was used as a phrase on the street to describe both male and female individuals of low status.

Azonto is created and performed mostly by the marginalized youth of Ghana as a way of addressing social, political, and economic issues.

Azonto is influenced by Ghanaian traditional dances, some francophone dances, locally created pop dances (like highlife), and various pop dances from neighboring countries (especially Nigeria). Additionally, western forms like hip-hop, body pop, etc., are also influences.

Almost all (newly created) Ghanaian popular dances fall in the Azonto category.

2 Afrobeats

Afrobeats - not to be confused with Afrobeat (without the ‘s’) - is an umbrella term for popular dances coming from the African continent and finding their way into the diaspora. The Afrobeats classification includes:

- dances such as Azonto (which in itself subsumes almost all pop dances in Ghana)
- Nigerian pop dances such as Shaku Shaku, Gbese, and Zanku
- South African Gwara-Gwara
- Panstula, Coupé d’calé from Ivory Coast
- and a plethora of popular dances from Africa.

The Afrobeats “movement” started in the UK with a Ghanaian DJ Abrantie, as a way of branding African pop music for broader audiences.
Program

Golam Rabbani, playing a harmonium, performs the Baul song, "you fell in with bad company," composed by Lalon Shah (1774-1890), the most celebrated Baul in Bangladesh.

Biography

Golam Rabbani is a performer, researcher, educator, and amateur writer. He is currently pursuing a PhD, funded by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Doctoral Fellowship Award, in the Cultural Studies Graduate Program at Queen’s University in Kingston, Canada. He teaches courses on music, spirituality, and culture as a Teaching Fellow at Dan School of Drama and Music (Queen’s University). He also taught courses on English literature and language, cultural
theory, and film at the University of Antwerp (Belgium), Jahangirnagar University (Bangladesh), East West University (Bangladesh), and Eastern University (Bangladesh). He studied English (BA Honors and MA) at Jahangirnagar University.

Some of Rabbani’s recently published research articles concentrate on heterogeneity in Baul music. His recent conference papers and projects investigate the ecocritical and cognitive approaches to Bangladeshi folk literature (Baul Literature) and culture. His PhD research at Queen’s focuses on the study of ethnomusicology examining the intersections of Baul literature and music with contemporary consumer culture in Bangladesh.

Rabbani has performed Baul and Bangladeshi folk music on radio, television, and at numerous events in South Asia, Europe, and North America. He was trained in Bangladeshi folk music and Indian classical music from Chhayanaut in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Program Notes

WRITTEN BY GOLAM RABBANI

I grew up learning Baul music from gurus in Baul communities in Bangladesh. The Bengali word Baul, both a noun and an adjective, means ‘mad knowledge seeker’ with connotations of being wise, non-conformist, spiritual, and eco-centric. Bauls are the members of subaltern and itinerant communities in Bangladesh and West Bengal, India, who manifest Baul spirituality through their music, poetry, and meditative practices. The spiritual belief system, also known as shadhana or the quest of self-realization of Bauls, expressed in their music and poetry, has three major elements: the bond with nature or eco-spirituality, the belief in non-materialist and simple living, and the celebration of relationships among human beings beyond all creeds, races, and gender identities. Baul poetic and musical performances represent as well as satirize many kinds of social, philosophical, and religious issues.

"You fell in with bad company" is composed by the most celebrated Baul Lalon Shah or Lalon Sai from the 19th
century. He was from Kushtia, a district of present Bangladesh. Lalón is the most prominent folk spiritualist, philosopher, saint, composer and performer who influenced many authors and thinkers in South Asia. Practitioner Baul guru Shahadat Karim blessed me with this song. Baul Shahadat has many disciples in Lalón Akhra at Cheuria, Kustia, the shrine of Lalón sai and a place of pilgrimage and performance of many practitioner and performer Bauls in Bangladesh.

Bauls, who express their folk spirituality of humanism, anti-materialism, and eco-centrism through their songs and performances, are itinerant and subaltern communities in Bangladesh and West Bengal, India. The song criticizes the materialist lifestyles and toxic individualism / particularism in Bengal under the rule of British empire.

Learn More

Learn more about where Baul music is typically performed and the heterogeneity of the genre.

- A typical space of Lalón Akhra (Kushtia, Bangladesh) where both practitioner and performer Bauls perform: www.youtube.com/watch?v=q74P7AZWy60
- An article that explains the heterogeneity of Baul music: www.sfu.ca/cmajournal/issues/issue-six--aesthetics-of-heterogeneity/golam-rabbani.html
- Or, view another performance and seminar presentation by Golam. He discusses Baul Spirituality (Shadhana) in Consumer Capitalist Contexts of Bangladesh.
The Native North American Travelling College (NNATC) from the Kanienke:h:ka (Mohawk) First Nations of Akwesasne share Haudenosaunee social songs, demonstrate dances, and explain the instruments used.

The Native North American Travelling College has been at the forefront of culture education and revitalization since 1969. This innovative cultural centre produces books, pamphlets and posters, along with workshops such as craft classes, cultural training, and social song/dance. There's a lot going on at Akwesasne's NNATC, with an ever-expanding program that continues to evolve to meet the needs of an ever-changing world. The NNATC workshop at
SEM 2020 is facilitated by Satekaronhiotón Corey Fox, Kaienkwinehtha Ransom, Rasetonkwa Tarbell, Karonhianonha Francis, and features demonstrations of the water drum and horn rattle.

**Location**

Located on the St. Lawrence River, Akwesasne (the home of NNATC) is a unique community that lies on the border of Canada and the United States, at the nexus of New York state and the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. This location means that Akwesasne consists of and works with many different governments, which include Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs (the traditional form of government), St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, two provincial governments, one state government, and two federal governments. Akwesasne is one of the most heavily populated First Nations reserves in Canada with a population of roughly 12,000. Akwesasne is Mohawk for “Land Where the Partridge Drums,” named for the striking mating call of the partridge or the similar pounding noise of ice meeting the rapids among the St. Lawrence River. The territory of Akwesasne has always been hunting and fishing ground for the Mohawks, whose original territory is near present-day Albany County, New York.

Mohawks inhabiting the St. Lawrence River regions have formed a strong understanding of the land’s resources. Fishing, hunting, gardening, medicine picking, and basket making are some of the activities that are intricately tied to the St. Lawrence River system. In order to keep

The people of Akwesasne are commonly referred to as Mohawk, however they call themselves, Rotinnonhsion:ni (People of the Longhouse – more widely known as the Iroquois Confederacy).
We put our words on paper for many reasons. First, because the non-natives have already written it as they understand it and have not always been correct. Secondly, we have recorded these teachings on paper for our children of today who more and more are reawakening to their culture and heritage. They need this knowledge to find their way back home, back to their people’s spiritual way of life.

- NNATC

History

In 1969, the NNATC started out as a van filled with resources. Founded by Dr. Ernest Kaientaronkwen Benedict and Micheal Kanentakeron Mitchell, the NNATC was a group of young and eager Akwesasronon known as The North American Indian Travelling College. They used their van to travel between Native communities, educating people on what it means to be Indigenous. In 1974, NNATC established a building of its own. Little did they know, this idea would blossom into an integral part of all modern Iroquoian society.

The NNATC is one of 71 First Nations Cultural Centres across Canada.

- text from nnatc.org

Learn More

Purchase books and support the work of the NNATC by visiting their shop and website at www.nnatc.org/shop
The Concert & Workshop Promotion Committee

Meet the members of the SEM 2020 Concert & Workshop Promotion Committee!

SONIA CÁCERES, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Sonia Cáceres completed a postgraduate diploma in violin performance in 2019. She is currently a second-year MA student in the Music and Culture program at Carleton University. Her research focuses on the preservation and promotion of traditional Colombian music.

REBECCA DRAISEY-COLLISHAW, LAC - SEM 2020

Rebecca Draisey-Collishaw completed her PhD in ethnomusicology at Memorial University in 2017. She currently holds a SSHRC Post-doctoral Fellowship at the Dan School of Drama and Music at Queen’s University. Her research focuses on public service broadcasting in multicultural contexts.

AKASH IYER, RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Akash Iyer is an MA student in the Music and Culture program at Carleton University. His research focuses on the intersections between popular music and contemporary cinema. He is also an accomplished performer across India, Malaysia, United States and now Canada.

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