



SEM Newsletter

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I am an American, living in the
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the music of the Zhuang people in
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I have been here approximately four
months and am roughly half-way
through my stay. While culture shock
has been part of my experience here,
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Sights to see in Philadelphia during the upcoming Annual Meeting of SEM and CORD include the National Constitution Center (photo: Jeffrey M. Vinocur [Wiki Commons]) ...

Internet Resources

The SEM Website

<http://www.ethnomusicology.org>

The SEM Discussion List: SEM-L

To subscribe, send email message to: LISTSERV@LISTSERV.INDIANA.EDU. Leave subject line blank. Type the following message: SUBSCRIBE SEM-L *yourfirstname yourlastname*.

SEM Applied Ethnomusicology Section

<http://www.appliedethnomusicology.org>

SEM Chapter Websites

Mid Atlantic Chapter

<http://www.macsem.org>

Mid-West Chapter

<http://sem-midwest.osu.edu/>

Niagara Chapter

<http://www.people.iup.edu/rahkonen/NiagaraSEM/NiagaraSEM.htm>

Northeast Chapter

<http://www.necsem.org>

Northwest Chapter (SEM-NW)

<http://www.music.washington.edu/ethno/semnw.html>

Southeast-Caribbean Chapter

<http://otto.cmr.fsu.edu/~cma/SEM/SEMSEC02.htm/>

Southern California & Hawai'i Chapter (SEMSCHC)

<http://ethnomus.ucr.edu/semscc.html>

Southern Plains Chapter

<http://katchie.com/semsouthernplains/Pages/SEMsouthernplains.html>

Southwest Chapter

<http://www.u.arizona.edu/~sturman/SEMSW/SEMSWhome.html>

Ethnomusicology Sites

American Folklife Center

<http://www.loc.gov/folklife/>

British Forum for Ethnomusicology

<http://www.bfe.org.uk>

The British Library, World and Traditional Music

<http://www.bl.uk/wtm>

Christian Musicological Society of India

<http://www.thecmsindia.org>

Ethnomusicology OnLine (EOL)

<http://umbc.edu/eol> (home site)

International Council for Traditional Music

<http://www.ictmusic.org/ICTM>

Iranian Musicology Group

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/iranian_musicology

Music & Anthropology

<http://www.muspe.unibo.it/period/MA>

<http://research.umbc.edu/eol/MA/index.htm>

Smithsonian Institution Websites

<http://www.folkways.si.edu>

<http://www.festival.si.edu>

<http://www.folklife.si.edu>

Society for American Music

<http://www.American-Music.org>

UCLA Ethnomusicology Archive

<http://www.ethnomusic.ucla.edu/archive>

University of Washington Ethnomusicology Archive

<http://www.music.washington.edu/ethno/index.php?page=archives>

The Society for Ethnomusicology and the SEM Newsletter

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The SEM Newsletter

The *SEM Newsletter* is a vehicle for exchange of ideas, news, and information among the Society's members. Readers' contributions are welcome and should be sent to the editor. See the guidelines for contributions on this page.

The *SEM Newsletter* is published four times annually, in January, March, May, and September, by the Society for Ethnomusicology, Inc., and is distributed free to members of the Society.

Back issues, 1981-present [Vols. 14-18 (1981-84), 3 times a year; Vols. 19-32 (1985-1998), 4 times a year] are available and may be ordered at \$2 each. Add \$2.50/order for postage.

Address changes, orders for back issues of the *SEM Newsletter*, and all other non-editorial inquiries should be sent to the Business Office, Society for Ethnomusicology, Indiana University, Morrison Hall 005, 1165 East 3rd Street, Bloomington, IN, 47405-3700; (Tel) 812.855.6672; (Fax) 812.855.6673; (Email) sem@indiana.edu.

SEM Membership

The object of the Society for Ethnomusicology is the advancement of research and study in the field of ethnomusicology, for which purpose all interested persons, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or physical ability are encouraged to become members. Its aims include serving the membership and society at large through the dissemination of knowledge concerning the music of the world's peoples. The Society, incorporated in the United States, has an international membership.

Members receive free copies of the journal and the newsletter and have the right to vote and participate in the activities of the Society. Life members receive free copies of all publications of the Society. Institutional members receive the journal and the newsletter.

Student (full-time only) (one year)	\$40
Individual/Emeritus (one year)	
income \$25,000 or less	\$60
income \$25,000-\$40,000	\$75
income \$40,000-\$60,000	\$85
income \$60,000-\$80,000	\$95
income \$80,000 and above	\$105
Spouse/Partner Individual (one year)	\$35
Life membership	\$1200
Spouse/Partner Life	\$1400
Sponsored* (one year).....	\$57
Institutional membership (one year)	\$115
Overseas postage (one year)	\$22

*Donated membership for individuals and institutions in soft-currency countries. Send sponsorship letter with dues (\$35) and postage (either \$10 Surface rate or \$25 airmail) to the SEM Business Office.

Ethnomusicology: Back Issues

The Society's journal, *Ethnomusicology*, is currently published three times a year. Back issues are available through the SEM Business Office, Indiana University, Morrison Hall 005, 1165 East 3rd Street, Bloomington, IN 47405-3700; (Tel) 812.855.6672; (Fax) 812.855.6673; (Email) sem@indiana.edu.

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Guidelines for Contributors

- Send articles to the editor by email
- Please send faxes, disks, or paper copies only as a last resort.
- As of January, 2011, the Newsletter no longer accepts advertisements.

Copy Deadlines

March issue February 15
May issue April 15
September issue August 15
January issue December 15

People and Places

For those interested in Cuban music and dance, **Christian M. Weaver** has produced two full-length, high-quality DVDs with the regional performance company of Matanzas, AfroCuba de Matanzas. For more information, purchasing and to view clips please see (website) <http://www.latimbala.com>.

Alex Lubet's Music, Disability, and Society (Temple UP) was published in December 2010.

Double Edge Theatre (<http://doubleedgetheatre.org/>), which creates original theatrical performances informed by musicological research, was recently included in UNESCO's International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures. SEM member

Scott Halligan is the group's musical director.

Brent Buhler is completing his Master's thesis on comparison and contrast of "Dr. Watts" in the Memphis area against the Southeast coast and mountains of Appalachia.

Zoe Sherinian (chair of ethnomusicology, University of Oklahoma) has a book contract with Indiana University Press in their Ethnomusicology Media Series for her book, *Songs of Dalit Transformation: Tamil Folk Music as Liberation Theology*. She has also completed her ethnographic film titled *This is a Music! Reclaiming an Untouchable Drum*. It is being screened at the 2011 AAS conference and other film festivals.

Osaka University has published **Sayuri Inoue's** PhD dissertation,

"The Formation of Genre in Burmese Classical Song" in Japanese (ビルマ古典歌謡におけるジャンル形成, ISBN978-4-87259-380-8).

Among the recipients of 2011 fellowships from the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress (AFC) is SEM member **James Leary**, who received an Archie Green Fellowship, jointly with Bucky Halker, for their study of the cultural traditions of ironworkers in America's Upper Midwest. They plan to create a variety of end products, including several documentary films. Leary is professor of folklore and Scandinavian studies and director of the folklore program at the University of Wisconsin. For more information on AFC's fellowships and awards, please see (website) <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/grants.html>.

Conference Report: In the Mix: Asian Popular Music Conference

by **Noriko Manabe, Princeton University**

"In the Mix: Asian Popular Music Conference" was held on March 25-26, 2011, at Princeton University, organized by Richard Okada (East Asian Studies), Noriko Manabe (Music), and Cameron Moore (East Asian Studies). The goal of the conference was to explore the processes involved in the creation of Asian popular music and the meanings embedded in its performance from an interdisciplinary perspective. Solicited through a call for papers, 31 speakers from eight different countries and a variety of disciplines (including ethnomusicology, music theory, sociology, linguistics, anthropology, literary studies, media studies, and cultural studies) gave papers. Issues discussed included the interaction of language and music; transnational flows of communication in musical genres or songs; the marketing and reception of popular music; hybridity and exoticism; identity as expressed in Asian hip-hop; and the reception of music and visual media.

In addition, the organizers sought to mix theoretical debate with input from performing artists. DJ Krush, internationally-known producer and



DJ Krush at Commodore Ballroom in Vancouver (Source: Wiki Commons)

a pioneer of Japanese hip-hop, was invited to discuss his personal experiences and aesthetics in a Q&A session with Noriko Manabe. The talk was followed by a sold-out performance by DJ Krush. The conference also featured two documentaries on indie rock scenes in China and Japan, a performance and workshop on Japanese *taiko* by Princeton Tora Taiko and Kaoru Watanabe, and a performance by the Asian vintage-rock band Dzian! The conference

and its activities drew over 170 participants. Sponsors included the Department of Music, the Program in East Asian Studies, the Council of the Humanities, PIIRS, the Lewis Center for the Arts, the Program in American Studies, and the Program in African American Studies at Princeton University. Details about the program and the conference can be seen at <http://www.princeton.edu/asianpop/index.xml>.

Weapons of Mass Instruction

“The Casualization of Ethnomusical Labor”

by Gage Averill, SEM President

In a Garry Trudeau *Doonesbury* comic strip from some years ago, a man on a flatbed truck is speaking to a group of migrant day-laborers. As he announces an opening for a professor of something like Renaissance English literature, a host of PhDs with their diplomas in their hands rush the truck, pushing and shoving to be first in line. Have you, or have any ethnomusicologists you know, ever felt like that?

Why is the casualization of academic labor an ethnomusicological issue? In part, it's because ethnomusicologists were the last to arrive at the party of the various music disciplines one finds arrayed in the academy, and so they tended to be more thinly represented in the ranks of tenured and tenure-track faculty members. The escalating requirements for universities to teach ethnomusicology and world music—requirements that arose in a period of some decline in funding for universities—were therefore often addressed with flexible contract instructors. Many departments and schools considered these courses equivalent to service courses and balked at the idea of hiring research ethnomusicologists. And so over time, the ranks of the casually employed ethnomusicologists grew like topsy.

In regions with more than one sizeable music school or music department, sessional or contract instructors (as they're called in Canada where I teach and administer) might find themselves traveling between two or three or more universities, cobbling together a career as itinerant laborers while thinning out the treads of their tires on Interstate 5 or 95. It's safe to say that is not the life most had in mind as they slogged home from the library at 2 am or carried water for the family of their *mrdangam* teacher.

Sessional instructors are defined by the contract they have with their employer, typically a “piece work”



SEM President Gage Averill playing hydraulophone (Source: Wiki Commons)

contract (e.g., \$6,000 per semester course). They typically have few if any benefits and little predictability from semester to semester or year to year. Their contracts don't provide time off to study or research, but of course they have no research budgets anyway. They may share offices or not have offices at all, and at best they participate only marginally in the life of the department. Sessionals aren't expected to advise, attend meetings, mentor graduate students, or do anything other than show up for

classes and office hours.

They have proliferated in universities because of a simple equation: the cost of postsecondary education is high and outpaces inflation (and revenues). In addition, support of higher education is in steep decline on the part of governments, which have retreated from the notion of education as a public good.

A tenure-track research scholar is an expensive proposition for a university with strained finances (i.e., just about all universities). Tenure-

track research faculty don't teach enough (typically about two courses per semester) to make the equation work, and many of them have buy-outs for research leaves and spend some time teaching small graduate classes. A fix is needed, and that fix is often to try to balance a diminishing tenure-track research professoriate (which brings a university its renown and research profile) with an army of underpaid contract instructors. Given the pressures from state legislatures trying to balance their books and also from corporate members of university boards of trustees, universities are pressed to justify their costs and show efficiencies. The distance education universities feel no pressure to provide research faculty or to get researchers in front of a class. Instead they can segment the labor force to an unprecedented degree, hiring classroom instructors, pedagogical developers, advisors, and digital technicians to get the product out. No great research university can remain great if it pursues this model, but it is indeed creeping into the consciousness of university administrators and university governors.

From the standpoint of a student who is taught by many such sessional instructors, the student may be able to graduate without knowing any permanent faculty members at all and may have no one around who can write reference letters for him or her when the time comes. So, from the perspective of students and from the perspective of most sessionals, this is not a very good deal.

Having said that, let me state why I love the category of sessional instructors! There are a lot of reasons why we would want universities to employ sessionals. First, research faculty go away on sabbatical, and they have to be replaced with flexible instructors. And when new programs are developed, it is helpful to have some flexibility in assignments so that a university doesn't take on too much long-term risk. And it's great to have jobs into which to hire newly minted PhDs for a year or two after their doctorates. Finally, students benefit from having professionals who have other jobs teach in the classroom, and for these kinds of professionals, the part-time job and the lack of a long-

term contract is an advantage. For example, from year to year a music school may not know how many oboe players will want instruction in oboe, so why not have a contract oboist with the local symphony available to teach three, or five, or seven students as enrolments dictate?

However, it's when we hire sessionals for other reasons, when universities continue to employ sessionals for predictable classes (classes that are required for the curriculum) just to save money that we run into problems. I have compared sessionals to a university version of crack cocaine—once an institution becomes addicted to the flow of cheap labor, it is hugely difficult to kick the habit. This is how we develop “lif-ers”—contract instructors who teach the same introductory course to 300 students semester in and semester out. Imagine “Introduction to World Music” two semesters a year for thirty years. And this is where we develop alienated, under-employed instructors without benefits and security who, understandably, constitute a reserve labor force ready to unionize. I was never a fan of what unionization of the professoriate produces in higher education, but I have always understood why faculty who are treated as most sessionals are treated would want to organize.

So, what to do? On an advocacy level, we all have to remind universities that it is not in their interest to exploit sessional instructor pools and that student dissatisfaction will begin to affect the university's global rankings. In addition, the likelihood that sessionals will organize will eventually help to erase the differentials in pay and benefits that made sessionals attractive to university administrators in the first place.

There are alternatives, although they force us to be creative. Many universities now have some kind of tenure-track teaching stream that requires more teaching and doesn't provide research support, but that carries with it the possibility of long-term security. A balance of these teaching-intensive and research-intensive positions in a department allows for more classes to be taught and also increases the teaching expertise and dedication to pedagogical

development. At my own institution, this stream has three ranks, comparable to assistant, associate and full professor of teaching. We also have a 12-month lectureship that can be full or partial time and that provides more in terms of benefits and predictability than do sessional instructorships. But converting sessional positions into teaching lines requires a top-up of additional funds, scarce to come by in today's university climate. Universities would have to commit to directing any surpluses generated by student enrolment growth or out-of-state and international tuition to help solve the problem of over-reliance on contract labor.

What happens when contract laborers instead achieve a valued position in departments with benefits and security? They become better departmental citizens, spend more time with students, commit more, volunteer for service roles and lighten the load on the entire department. I know of one university that had over 60% of its courses offered by sessionals and TAs. Can you imagine how difficult it was for students during a protracted strike of both bargaining units? Breaking the addiction to cheap sessional labor is better for sessionals, better for students, and, in the long haul, better for universities and university administrators. It will require that we continue to try to make the delivery of courses and the curriculum more efficient (I know, a hated word in academia), that we use some distance and blended-distance methods, and that we try to move close to the maxima for class sizes, in other words that we carefully plan to bring down costs in ways that are less harmful to the educational mission. It can be done however.

So let's continue to advocate for universities that are about learning, mentoring, transformative education, the mobilization of knowledge, and improving the world, all of which means we have to turn away from a purely corporate view of the university, a view that sees students as consumers and education as a product, and that delivers education in the cheapest way possible, regardless of the ways that it is undermining the “brand” of higher education.

Calls for Participation

National Humanities Center Fellowships 2012-2013

Deadline: October 15, 2011

The National Humanities Center offers 40 residential fellowships for advanced study in the humanities during the academic year, September 2012 through May 2013. Applicants must hold doctorate or equivalent scholarly credentials. Young scholars as well as senior scholars are encouraged to apply, but they must have a record of publica-

tion, and new PhDs should be aware that the Center does not normally support the revision of a doctoral dissertation. In addition to scholars from all fields of the humanities, the Center accepts individuals from the natural

and social sciences, the arts, the professions, and public life who are engaged in humanistic projects. The Center is also international and gladly accepts applications from scholars outside the United States.

Most of the Center's fellowships are unrestricted. Several, however, are designated for particular areas of research. These include one fellowship for a young woman in philosophy and fellowships for Scandinavian studies, environmental studies, English literature, art history, Asian Studies, and theology.

Fellowships are individually determined, according to the needs of the Fellow and the Center's ability to meet them. The Center seeks to provide at least half salary and also covers travel expenses to and from North Carolina for Fellows and dependents.

Located in the Research Triangle Park of North Carolina, near Chapel Hill, Durham, and Raleigh, the Center provides an environment for individual research and the exchange of ideas. Its building includes private studies for Fellows, conference rooms, a central commons for dining, lounges,

reading areas, a reference library, and a Fellows' workshop.

The Center's noted library service delivers books and research materials to Fellows, and support for information technology and editorial

assistance are also provided. The Center locates housing for Fellows in the neighboring communities.

Fellowships are supported by the Center's own endowment, private foundation grants, alumni contributions, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Applicants submit the Center's form, supported by a curriculum vitae, a 1000-word project proposal, and three letters of recommendation. You may request application material from Fellowship Program, National Humanities Center, Post Office Box

12256, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina 27709-2256, or obtain the form and instructions from the Center's website (<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org>). Applications and letters of recommendation must be postmarked by October 15, 2011.

The National Humanities Center does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national or ethnic origin, handicap, sexual orientation, or age.

Cultural Counterpoints: Examining the Musical Interactions between the US and Latin America

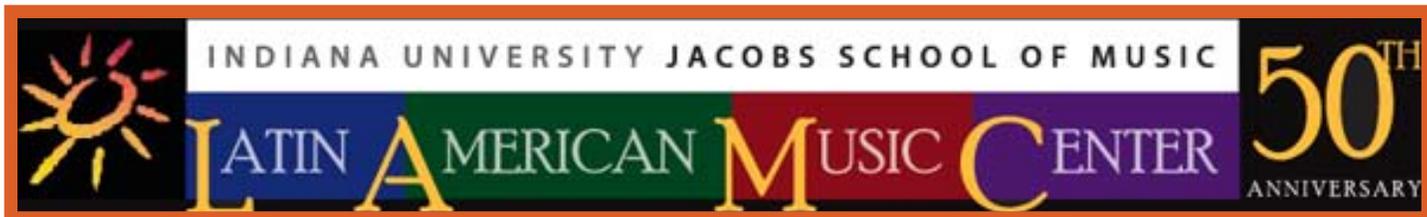
October 19-23, 2011, Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University, Bloomington

Deadline: June 1, 2011

The Latin American Music Center invites scholars and music professionals to propose papers and presentations for the Conference Cultural Counterpoints, to take place October 19-23, 2011. The conference Celebrates the 50th Anniversary of the Indiana University Latin American Music Center. Proposals must address the effects and impact of musical exchanges between the US and Latin America.

As long as the central issue of cross-cultural impact is engaged, papers and presentations can address any historical period and repertoire stream (such as art, urban, popular, or traditional music; film and commercial music), as well as any aspect of the musical phenomenon (such as compositional style, specific works, aesthetics, analysis, documentation, reception, migration, and performance practice).

Application materials must include a 250-word abstract, a one-page double-spaced biography, and a completed contact information form, which can be found at the conference website or by request at lamc@indiana.edu. Applicants must submit all



application materials by 5:00 pm EST, June 1, 2011 to lamc@indiana.edu.

For the purpose of engaging the wide population in Bloomington and at Indiana University, the conference will prefer papers written and presented in English. The program committee will consider papers in Spanish and Portuguese, but accepted non-English papers will amount to a maximum of 25% of all accepted papers. Presenters speaking in Spanish or Portuguese should allow time for translation within their allotted 20 minutes.

For further details, please see (website) <http://music.indiana.edu/lamc/conference>.

Conference on Interdisciplinary Musicology

September 4-5, 2012, University of Göttingen, Germany

Deadline: September 30, 2011

In 2012, the Conference on Interdisciplinary Musicology (CIM) will tackle the subject of history. Hosted by the University of Göttingen, whose one-time music director, Johann Nikolaus Forkel, is widely regarded as one of the founders of modern music historiography, CIM12 aims to promote collaborations that provoke and explore new methods and methodologies for establishing, evaluating, preserving, and communicating knowledge of music and musical practices of past societies and the factors implicated in both the preservation and transformation of such practices over time. The focus will be the particular potential offered by interdisciplinary contributions to extending our understanding of music of the past, of its role in other social, cultural and political processes, and of processes of transformation of musical cultures and practices. Issues to be raised at the conference may include, but are not limited to:

- Possibilities and challenges for researching past musical practices, cultures and repertoires outside the traditional remit of music histories, including such practices, cultures and repertoires where knowledge transfer and knowl-



Universität Göttingen

edge preservation takes other forms than “standard” media such as writing/print

- Uses and possibilities of newer technologies for uncovering, evaluating and preserving documents on music and musical practice from past societies
- Perspectives offered by the empirical sciences and the natural sciences for understanding the music of past societies and the establishment, transformation and decline of musical practices
- Perspectives offered by research into music history for general and political history, for the history of ideas, of the sciences, and for all other scientific disciplines concerned with past societies and cultures.

CIM exists to promote interdisciplinary research in music. As a result all submissions must have at least two authors. The first two authors must represent distinct academic disciplines. Normally, this means disciplines whose methodological and epistemological bases are

quite different (for example, humanities with empirical or experimental sciences; academics and practical musicians). For CIM12, we are extending this requirement in order to enable submissions from researchers whose disciplinary backgrounds technically lie within one general field (for example, humanities) but who still represent disciplines that do not have a tradition of collaboration with each other. Please note, however, that abstract reviewers will be asked to evaluate the extent to which the collaboration suggests represents a truly innovative and interdisciplinary approach. All abstracts must address the conference theme, with the focus on research outcomes rather than discourse. Abstract submissions will be evaluated on the basis of general academic quality and the degree to which they offer new perspectives and outcomes through interdisciplinary exchange.

Submissions for papers (25 minutes) or poster presentations should be structured as follows:

A. General information: title, authors’ names and affiliations, email address and telephone number of first author, submission date, desired presentation format (talk or poster), main text with bold section headings (see below), and biographies of (first) two authors

B. Main text: background/state of research with regard to the first main discipline; background/state of research with regard to the second main discipline; detailed discussion of the subject, methodology, (projected) results and implications; references

The whole file should not exceed 1000 words, including all headings, names of authors, their affiliations, email addresses, and biographies. The text must be in English. Submissions will be reviewed anonymously by a panel of international experts. Authors may wish to use the template available to download to help structure their submissions. Abstracts should be submitted electronically as a PDF file to (email) cim12@uni-goettingen.de by September 30, 2011.

For more information, see (website) <http://gfm2012.uni-goettingen.de/cim12>.

from the field, in the field, to the field, of
the field, about the field, against the field,
betwixt the field, concerning the field, to-
ward the field, out of the field, beyond the
field, through the field, via the field, up to
the field, despite the field, for the field,
due to the field, of the field, (un)-
like the field, after the field, into the

“Culture shock” is cognitive estrangement on three levels. First, we encounter words that, like “radio shack,” sound like lexical hold-overs from an era of simpler technologies and quaint anxieties; second (in order of cognitive processes), the metaphor itself, colorful hyperbole for the phenomenon that got us into this trade. While we having nothing to fear from encounters with foreign peoples, according to some, others may: “Culture shock operates with dire effect when the ... sensitive musician [is forced to work] in a greasy restaurant”,¹ or “As LaVerne Morse points out in his study of ‘ethnomusicology’, ‘people suffer culture-shock when they are subjected to long periods of unfamiliar musical systems.’”² (An argument in favor of the quarter system?)

Third, the concept points to a profound estrangement, a shock of more than momentary effect: world views with philosophically and empirically distinct bases, that of those who live inside identities predicated on demarcated differences and incommensurable perspectives and hold the nation-state to be the most expansive expression of the ontological and political self, and those who recognize the effects on self and society of already-existing supernatural interdependencies, envision identity in non-essentialist terms, and promote regimes of norms that are inclusivist and pluralist. This issue’s contributor shows how the metaphor may, in fact, be a result of one’s (pre-)disposition when faced with the novum.³

— Jesse Samba Wheeler

1. Elliot, Mabel Agnes, et al. 1935. *Our Dynamic Society*. New York: Harper & Bros., p. 102.
2. Wroe, Martin. 1985. “Ancient and Modern: Church Music and the Culture Gap,” *Third Way* (August), p. 23.
3. See, for example: Suvin, Darko. 1972. “On the Poetics of the Science Fiction Genre,” *College English* 34(3): 372-382.

« **Fieldwork and Firefighting: A Unique Perspective on Culture Shock** »

by John Widman

February 2011, Baise City, Guangxi Province, China

I am an American, living in the Guangxi province in China studying the music of the Zhuang people in conjunction with the local university. I have been here approximately four months and am roughly half-way through my stay. While culture shock has been part of my experience here, it is nothing new to me. My first encounter with culture shock was not in fieldwork; it was becoming a wildland firefighter in the state of Alaska.

I became attracted to firefighting as an undergraduate student in Chicago trying to pay for school. I didn’t comprehend until much later how much this occupation would prepare me for my current fieldwork. Although I have much more to learn about navigating and studying new cultures, transitioning to a different world so close to home has made it easier abroad. So far, moving from America to Southern China has a similar flavor to experiencing the disparate identities of a firefighter in Alaska and a college student in Chicago.

Sleeping on plywood or hard mattresses typical of my life in China isn’t a problem after spending several nights on gravel pads or becoming adept at finding a place of respite between tree roots. Spending weeks consuming military rations at least twice per day has made it easier to adjust to eating pig fat, bird’s feet, horse knees, eyes, blood, and chewing around chopped fragments of bone. Using porcelain toilets with no place to sit takes a certain amount of adaptation, but so

does digging your own latrine in the woods. New perspectives and worldviews aren't as bizarre after living in a small, remote camp with 18 people for weeks at a time. Riding a bicycle in the unpredictable climate of Chinese traffic is almost as fun as lighting grass on fire to control an inferno.

I am fortunate that the work flow of my current field and on the fireline are somewhat analogous. I have trained myself to keep a cell phone on me at all times because both availability for recording folk music and fire suppression are often heavily dependent on communication. When my teacher gives me twenty or thirty minutes notice for an observation, I can take it in stride because being uprooted is normal. I have learned to take assignments when every inclination towards places of comfort scream for me to remain where I am. Additionally, I've discovered that organizing and operating pumps, hose-lays, and nozzles is strangely comparable to using field recorders, cables, and microphones. The "butterfly" technique I use for packing hose drastically shortens the time it takes to coil audio cable.

Firefighting prepared me for the onslaught of long-term stress associated with culture shock. I have been to the precipice of my physical and mental limits and can smile now when I feel the familiar build-up of cumulative stress. I am entertained because I know how swiftly I will forget the physical strain of firefighting or the mental challenge of academics when I switch fields again. If I am on my third day straight of sifting through lukewarm ash, trying to find hot coals with my fingertips, I will yearn for the thrill of first steps inside an unfamiliar music culture. When I find I am stuck on a paragraph at 2:00 A.M., or my teacher tells me I am free to use more of a vocabulary that doesn't exist because it is still under construction, I wish for the stimulating effect of putting out several acres of burning spruce trees.

Like many other ethnomusicologists venturing out for the first time, I am grappling with the finer points of asking the right question, arranging interviews, and recording. Studying Chinese for only four months has forced my awareness of the degree our field depends on language. Still, when the food is "interesting," the temperature is too hot to use a blanket at night, and my brain feels like a blank mound of gray spaghetti, it's comforting to know that, to some extent, I've been here before.

 (xièxie) to John Widman, who for the past year has been researching the maguhu (horsebone spiked fiddle) and Zhuang Minority song fairs in Guangxi, China. He has a BA in Music with an emphasis in ethnomusicology from the Moody Bible Institute and is currently studying Zhuang Music and Mandarin at Baise University.



has for four years been the column by graduate students engaged in fieldwork proposing to explore all aspects of the "field." At this time it faces a future of new possibilities: opening up to any and all contributors, remaining as it is (but in the hands of another curator), or putting the plume to rest. Remarks on this issue may be sent to Jesse S Wheeler (gnumen@gmail.com) and Henry Spiller (hjspiller@ucdavis.edu).

Fieldworkers of the World. Write!

Conferences Calendar 2011

May 18 - 22

40th Annual Meeting of American Musical Instrument Society, The Musical Instrument Museum, Phoenix, AZ. For more information, see (website) <http://www.amis.org>

May 19 - 21

PERFORMA'11, Department of Communication and Art, University of Aveiro, Portugal. For more information, see (website) <http://performa.web.ua.pt/>

May 20 - 22

Music and the Moving Image VI, NYU Steinhardt, NY. For more information, see (website) <http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/music/scoring/conference/>

Jun 27-Jul 1

Smithsonian Folkways Certification Workshop in World Music Pedagogy, University of Washington School of Music, Seattle, WA. For registration information, contact (email) michikos@u.washington.edu

Jun 6-10

Crossroads: Greece as an Inter-Cultural Pole of Musical Thought and Creativity, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece. For more information, see (website) <http://info.mus.auth.gr>

Jul 13-19

ICTM 41st World Congress, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada. For more information, see (website) <http://www.mun.ca/ictm2011/>

Sep 8 - 10

Second Biennial Euro-Mediterranean Music Conference, University of Cyprus, Nicosia. For more information, contact (email) smith.k@unic.ac.cy

Sep 15 -17

The Soundtrack of Conflict: The Role of Music in Radio Broadcasting in Wartime and in Conflict Situations, University of Göttingen, Germany. For more information, see (website) <http://www.uni-goettingen.de/en/195842.html>

Sep 22-25

Feminist Theory and Music 11 (Eleven): Looking Backward and Forward (20th Anniversary), School of Music, Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ. For more information, contact (email) Jill.Sullivan@asu.edu or (email) Sabine.Feisst@asu.edu; for more information, see (website) <http://music.asu.edu/ftm11/>

Oct 19-23, 2011

Cultural Counterpoints: Examining the Musical Interactions between the U.S. and Latin America. Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN. For more information, see (website) <http://music.indiana.edu/lamc/conference>. For more information, see (website) <http://www.music.uwa.edu.au/research/power-of-music/icme>

Oct 27-30, 2011

Joint Special Session, Society for Music Theory: "Your Old-Fashioned Music, Your Old Ideas": Popular Music, Minneapolis, and the Sounds of Diversity, Minneapolis, MN. For more information,

contact (email) dollchristopher@yahoo.com

Nov 17-20

Joint Annual Meeting of SEM and CORD, Philadelphia, PA. For more information see (website) <http://www.indiana.edu/~semhome/2011/>

Nov 30-Dec 3

'Power of Music': 34th National Conference of the Musicological Society of Australia and the 2nd International Conference on Music and Emotion, University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia. For more information, see (website) <http://www.music.uwa.edu.au/research/power-of-music/icme>

2012

Jan 12-15 2012

25th international student symposium of the Dachverband der Studierenden der Musikwissenschaft e.V.: On the Courses of Research: Reflections on Methods and Epistemologies of the Music Studies. University of Music and Performing Arts, Graz, Austria. For more information, contact (email) symposium2012@dvsdm.de

Sep 4 - 5

Conference on Interdisciplinary Musicology (CIM12), University of Göttingen, Germany. For more information, see (website) <http://gfm2012.uni-goettingen.de/cim12/CIM12/Home.html>

Nov 1-4

57th Annual Meeting of SEM; New Orleans, LA. Joint Meeting with the American Musicological Society and the Society for Music Theory.



Philadelphia, PA, is the site of the Joint Annual Meeting of SEM and CORD, November 17-21, 2011