

## Transparent Musings

Tomie Hahn

Interim President & President-Elect

I have always thought that listening is exactly what ethnomusicologists have been trained to do. Yet, I am mistaken. There are many different kinds of listening. While it would seem that ethnomusicologists are trained in specialized approaches to listening—playing music, interviewing, and listening during field-work—it has come to my attention that many of our fellow community members do not feel they are being listened to within our Society. The result is an atmosphere of exclusion in our own house. This inhospitable environment needs to stop. Our house needs rearranging. The challenge is that this is a different kind of listening, a different kind of sensing. The challenge demands that we pull back the frames so far that we notice our habitual patterns, relationships, comforts and discomforts, assumptions, and vulnerabilities so that we can dare to open doors to hear what other ethnomusicologists need, dislike, or do not understand.

Witnessing the many upheavals this past year, I have been concerned. The Society experienced a number of crises in 2020 and, at this pivotal time, I want to assure members that many groups within the Society are diligently working towards building a positive, more inviting, and more inclusive space. These groups have taken on an incredible weight, and I am forever grateful. Each crisis in the world pulls us away from our primary focus and slows progress. I ask members to be patient with leadership. Even better, if members are enthusiastic about an idea or take issue with something, let us know how you can help and send in ideas. I look to members to creatively find as many courses of action as possible to strive towards a more equitable community, where all members' voices are included and valued.



Transparency is one of my objectives in the coming years. As many of us know, silence can be off-putting, disturbing, and disruptive. While in some music cultures silence can enable an opening, fullness, and framing, I am very aware that the silence of the Board in the past year has caused confusion. I want to let our community know that the Board and Council are actively working on changes that we hope will make the Society a more inviting and equitable place. In the interest of transparency, I will update you as we roll out new goals, projects, and initiatives.

A few that I am happy to offer at this time...

### A Year of Radical Listening

In November I devoted myself to a year of radical listening as a means of learning about the interests, concerns, and dreams in our house. SEM has nearly 40 groups that I have started meeting with informally via Zoom (Special Interest Groups, Sections, Task Forces, Committees, Board, and Council). So far, I have only met with a third of our groups, but already the insights gleaned are vast. The listening has been profoundly moving. It is in these meetings that I am hearing a sense of confusion and distancing, especially during the magnified chaos of the world and our society in 2020. There is a sense of disconnect and frustration. *Let's do what we are trained to do*, but in our own house... listen, observe, sense, participate, reflect, ask each other questions to understand a different point of view, and be open to hearing perspectives from contrasting views. Can we be *just as focused and aware* of the nuances of sound, movement, spirit, and other modalities within our community as we are in our research and artmaking?

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# The Society for Ethnomusicology, *SEM Newsletter*

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

The Society for Ethnomusicology publishes the *SEM Newsletter* four times annually in January, April, July, and September, and distributes issues free to members of the Society.

Back issues, 1981 to present [volumes 14-18 (1981-1984), 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, 800 East 3rd Street, Bloomington, IN,

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## 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.

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Student (full-time only) (one year) .....	\$40
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• Income \$25,000 or less .....	\$60
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Email articles and shorter entries for consideration to the [SEM Newsletter Editor](#).

*Copy deadlines:*

Winter Issue (15 Dec.)	Summer Issue (15 June)
Spring Issue (15 Mar.)	Fall Issue (1 Sep.)

## Advertising Rates

The *Newsletter* accepts digital files (e.g., jpg) for advertising.

Full page: \$200	1/3 page: \$60
2/3 page: \$145	1/6 page: \$40
1/2 page: \$110	

## Ethnomusicology: Back Issues

*Ethnomusicology*, the Society's journal (ISSN 0036-1291), is currently published three times a year. Back issues are available through the SEM Business Office, Indiana University, 800 East 3rd Street, Bloomington, IN, 47405-3657; 812-855-6672; [sem@indiana.edu](mailto:sem@indiana.edu).

## Transparent musings [\[continued from page 1\]](#)

### Governing Structures

Please stay tuned; SEM's Constitution and by-laws have been under review by an Ad Hoc Committee and the Board. In our May election there will be a vote to accept/decline revisions.

### Anti-Harassment Policy

In March 2021 the Board, in consultation with the Ethics Committee, passed an Anti-Harassment Policy outlining the expectations for all who participate in the SEM meetings, programs, or communication channels. This policy is presented on [page 7](#) of this Newsletter.

### SEM Prize Committees

We aim to populate all committees with a diverse complement of committee members—"diverse" in as many ways as I can imagine for equity (race, gender, orientation, disability, and age, to name a few).

### SEM Board and Council nomination committees

We aim to populate all committees with a balance of diverse committee members, charging them an awareness of diversity, inclusivity, and deeper knowledge of implicit bias.

### SEM Atlanta

As Steve Stuempfle mentions [in this Newsletter](#), one of our primary initiatives for our 2021 fall conference is to engage with Historically Black Colleges and Universities in the Atlanta region. Interested in getting involved? Please contact us!

### Raising funds

We are excited about new projects with racial diversity equity, with inclusion at the forefront, and we will soon have a new fundraising initiative to support them. Stay tuned!

### Mentoring and well-being focused initiatives

Mentoring stands out as a theme I hear many members are calling for. I recently changed how I conceptualize

mentoring. Historically, the practice of mentoring tends to flow from mentor to mentee, where the mentor advises the mentee on the large-to-small scale traditions and professional signposts to prepare for—methodology, research, writing, presenting one's work, considering jobs, preparing a CV and cover letters, balancing work and life demands, and so on. While many of these may remain the same, I would like to emphasize the reciprocity in mentoring. It is always reciprocal. In the current climate of intense challenges to diversity, equity, and inclusion, as well as mind-bending technological advancements, the "mentors" desperately need to listen to *and be mentored* by mentees.

Can we open up the flow of information—the transmission—and really listen to the needs of others across the mentor-mentee spectrum? In a way, I am proposing a mentoring that offers generative, collaborative insights. Often, we need not solve someone else's problems. Listening, without reacting or fixing, can be supportive. I understand that the kind of listening I am hoping for demands patience, demands putting down preconceived notions of mentoring and hierarchical systems. It may open up potentially vulnerable interactions between ethnomusicologists, and thus may not be for everyone. However, I strongly believe it is possible if we truly care about the future of our ever-changing field.

The hate crimes, violence, and harassment around the world in the last year have been deeply troubling. My hope is that in our Society we can land on our feet and be in a much better place. No one should feel unable to peacefully speak their mind or express themselves. Fear will eat us up.

I want to assure members of my commitment to matters of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Healing our community is my primary focus. I have work to do and I am ready... but only with your help. As I understand it, the systems that are holding us back are entrenched in nearly every facet of our lives. We need transparency and clear communication. As I stepped onto the Board in 2020 the uncertainty in our community was palpable. I need everyone to know that I am here to listen. While we do not all need to agree, I want to make space so that we learn from everyone's experiences.

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work in the Society for Ethnomusicology

**Stephen Stuempfle**  
SEM Executive Director

*Note: The following presentation was delivered during a colloquium titled “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work: A Conversation with the Executive Directors of the American Folklore Society and the Society for Ethnomusicology,” held at the Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology, Indiana University, Bloomington, 19 March 2021.*

Principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion are fundamental to the construction of ethnomusicology as an academic field and the Society for Ethnomusicology as an organization. Since the founding of SEM in 1955, ethnomusicologists have advocated the study of all of the world’s musics and have affirmed the inherent worth and significance of all musical traditions. The impressive expansion of ethnomusicology in the academy over the past several decades has been predicated on questioning music education that is focused on the European-derived art music canon and on advocating curricula that enable students to learn about the vast range of music-making in the world, discover what music reveals about the world’s peoples, and reflect on their own assumptions about the constitution of music. So, ethnomusicologists have celebrated their field as a means of promoting understanding across sociocultural boundaries and of developing modes of thought that recognize the creativity, achievements, and dignity of all humanity. Language of this sort can be found in introductory ethnomusicology texts and in the testimonies of SEM members on the Society’s YouTube channel: “[Conversations in Ethnomusicology and World Music.](#)”

This, of course, is the ideal vision of ethnomusicology. Also central to the field’s history is the colonialist project of scholars of primarily European descent studying the musics of other peoples of the world and the general orientation of these studies toward European-derived epistemologies and research protocols. This colonialist legacy and orientation have continued to shape an academic community in which Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and other scholars from underrepresented groups experience discrimination, diminishment, and exclusion. Indeed, these processes have permeated ethnomusicology and SEM for years, in both blatant and subtle ways.

Though colonialist practices within ethnomusicology and SEM have been questioned at least since the early 1990s, this critique intensified during 2020, following serious concerns with several presentations during the SEM 2019 Annual Meeting in Bloomington and in the context of the ongoing killing of Black men and women by police forces, expanded Black Lives Matter protests, the virulent racism promoted by the Trump administration and its allies,

the Covid-19 pandemic, and growing economic disruption and inequality (including financial and employment crises in higher education). While ethnomusicologists voiced concerns through a variety of communication channels, perhaps the most powerful statement was offered by Danielle Brown on the SEM electronic list on June 12, 2020. [In this post](#), Dr. Brown called for understanding that “an organization [i.e., SEM], whose predominantly white members by and large research people of color, is and can be nothing other than a colonialist and imperialist enterprise.” She also stated that “until ethnomusicology as a field is dismantled or significantly restructured, so that epistemic violence against BIPOC is not normalized, Black lives do not matter.”

Dr. Brown and others have presented SEM with a deep challenge. A scholarly society should be a community in which a diverse membership is fully respected, engaged, and empowered. It should be an organization that encourages and embraces a multiplicity of voices and perspectives in its meetings, publications, and prizes. And it should be a space in which everyone feels welcome. Such an environment is indeed central to the advancement of scholarship, education, and professional practice. Thus, the critique offered by Dr. Brown and others highlighted SEM’s shortcomings as a scholarly society and brought us to a moment of reckoning.

Before outlining some of the ways that SEM is currently addressing its challenges, I want to acknowledge that work along these lines has been occurring within the Society for many years. Several of our component groups are devoted to diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, including the Crossroads Section for Difference and Representation, the Section on the Status of Women, the Gender and Sexualities Taskforce, and the Gertrude Robinson Network, which was initiated by Portia Maulsby to support Black ethnomusicology students and professors. In 2012 the SEM Board augmented this work by establishing a Diversity Action Committee, which developed new travel and research awards for members of underrepresented groups, arranged mentoring opportunities, and, in collaboration with the Education Section, instituted a program that brings local high school students to our Annual Meeting. Diversity and inclusion have also been a priority of the SEM Board in its appointment of individuals to Society committees, and this emphasis has continued in appointments by Interim President Tomie Hahn. Moreover, the Board itself and our 42-member advisory Council currently demonstrate substantial diversity.

[\[continued on next page\]](#)

## DEI work in SEM [\[continued from previous page\]](#)

Nonetheless, SEM knows that increasing diversity in its governance and improving existing programs are not sufficient for the transformation of the organization. Thus, we currently are working on various new initiatives. I'll mention a few examples. At present, Eileen Hayes and Katherine Meizel are serving as Co-Convenors of an Ad-Hoc Committee for the Review of the SEM Constitution & By-Laws, with the goal of ensuring that this document provides a firm foundation for a fully inclusive organization. In the area of publications, our Journal Editor, Frank Gunderson, recently implemented the following directive to manuscript readers: "acknowledging the epistemic, ethical, and political quest for dignity and equity of humanity in difference, we ask that journal reviewers identify and consider for publication those submissions which de-center Euro-American ideologies, methodologies, theoretical frameworks, and analytical orientations." And last year, the SEM Board established guidelines for addressing implicit bias in the evaluation of submissions for the Society's prizes.

Meanwhile, SEM continues to conceptualize its annual meeting as an evolving space for convening members and colleagues from around the U.S. and the world. Our goal is to ensure that everyone feels fully recognized and affirmed at this gathering. A special objective of our October 2021 meeting in Atlanta is to engage faculty and students of the city's several Historically Black Colleges and Universities. To this end, the Diversity Action Committee and Gertrude Robinson Network are organizing a pre-conference symposium titled "Celebrating the HBCU Musical Legacy," under the leadership of Mellonee Burnim, Fredara Hadley, and Loneka Battiste. Meanwhile, our Program Committee (chaired by Cheryl Keyes) is planning a conference with wide-ranging content and perspectives, while our Local Arrangements Committee

(chaired by Oliver Greene) is organizing tours and concerts that highlight Atlanta's African Diasporic heritage. We envision this 2021 meeting as a foundation for developing further engagement with HBCUs at a joint meeting with the American Musicological Society and Society for Music Theory in New Orleans in 2022. In addition, we are exploring innovations in conference presentations and virtual technology in order to expand participation in the annual meeting on an ongoing basis.

While SEM will continue to rethink its governance, annual meeting, publications, and other programs, we are also involved in nationwide initiatives concerning diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education. Over the next few months, for example, the American Council of Learned Societies will hold a series of institutes that will bring together society directors, university administrators, and emerging scholars from underrepresented groups for problem-solving conversations aimed at implementing meaningful structural change in the academy. Given the range of participants and major funding from the Mellon Foundation, the impact of these institutes could be substantial.

In conclusion, I'd like to thank all of you for your support in housing SEM here at IU. The Society benefits greatly from its multifaceted ties with the Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology. In addition, I want to acknowledge that department professor Alisha Jones currently serves as the SEM Board Member-at-Large for Prizes and that four members of the department serve on the SEM Council: David McDonald, Fernando Orejuela, Allie Martin, and Jessica Turner. I look forward to ongoing conversations as we continue to build SEM as an inclusive and vibrant forum for scholarship, education, and public activism in ethnomusicology.



Christina Sunardi presents the Resolution of Thanks at the SEM 2020 Annual Meeting. Screenshot courtesy of Adriane Pontecorvo.

# Musicians in America during the COVID-19 Pandemic

## A Documentary Project of the Society for Ethnomusicology

Stephen Stuempfle, SEM Executive Director

Since March 2020, many concert halls, nightclubs, schools, places of worship, and other music settings across the United States have turned silent, due to social distancing directives implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. For the first time in a century, Americans are experiencing what it is like to live in a society largely devoid of music-making in public space. What are the consequences of this sudden transformation for human sociability, communication, inspiration, and well-being?

tion, they co-authored an interpretive essay that highlights several themes in the interviews: the musicians' reexamination of the significance of music in their lives and communities, their loss of employment, illness and death of community members, and new directions in the creation and presentation of music.

SEM is currently collaborating with Indiana University Libraries to archive the video collection. The Society is also



Screenshots (left to right): Shannon Heaton (Medford, MA); Jessica Pacheco (Los Angeles, CA), Alonzo Townsend (St. Louis, MO).

The Society for Ethnomusicology has sought to answer this question by carrying out a documentary survey of musicians throughout the U.S. Thanks to a CARES Act grant received from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Society hired three ethnomusicologists to serve as researchers: Holly Hobbs (New Orleans, LA); Raquel Paraíso (Madison, WI); and Tamar Sella (Cambridge, MA). Between August and November 2020, the researchers completed 240 online video interviews with musicians. The resulting collection features musicians from all 50 states (plus the District of Columbia and 5 U.S. territories) and a wide range of music genres, such as Native American traditions, jazz, blues, gospel, country, zydeco, norteño, mariachi, salsa, rock, hip hop, klezmer, and Western classical, as well as traditions from such countries as Cuba, Nicaragua, Peru, Brazil, Ireland, Poland, Spain, Ghana, Ethiopia, Turkey, Iraq, India, Indonesia, China, and Japan. During the interviews, the researchers asked musicians about the impact of the pandemic on their artistry, careers, and communities, while also gathering information on alternative modes of music-making in outdoor spaces and in virtual concerts through the Internet.

The researchers completed their work by editing the video interviews to approximately six minutes each and writing short background notes about each musician. In addition,

they co-authored an interpretive essay that highlights several themes in the interviews: the musicians' reexamination of the significance of music in their lives and communities, their loss of employment, illness and death of community members, and new directions in the creation and presentation of music.

Project Researchers: Holly Hobbs, Raquel Paraíso, Tamar Sella

Project Advisor: Tomie Hahn, SEM Interim President and President-Elect

SEM Editorial Assistant and Project Website Designer: Adriane Pontecorvo

SEM Program Specialist: Stephanie Sturgis

Project Director: Stephen Stuempfle, SEM Executive Director

*Musicians in America during the COVID-19 Pandemic* has been made possible in part by a major grant from the [National Endowment for the Humanities](#): Democracy demands wisdom. Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this Web resource do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

SEM also gratefully acknowledges support from [Indiana University Libraries](#), Bloomington, Indiana.

# Society for Ethnomusicology Anti-Harassment Policy

Approved by the SEM Board on 8 March 2021

Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) meetings, programs, and communication channels are forums for research, discussion, education, professional development, and advocacy related to the field of ethnomusicology. Harassment of participants in these forums is inconsistent with SEM's strong commitment to academic freedom, equity, and human dignity. Consequently, harassment is considered by SEM to be a serious form of professional misconduct.

The following Anti-Harassment Policy outlines expectations for all who participate in the SEM meetings, programs, or communication channels.

**Purpose.** SEM is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all participants, free from harassment based on age, race, sex, ethnicity, national origin, religion, language, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, disability, health conditions, socioeconomic or employment status, academic rank, marital status, domestic status, parental status, or other categories of identity and material condition. "Participant" in this policy refers to anyone present at an SEM-sponsored meeting or engaged in an SEM-sponsored program or communication channel.

**Expected Behavior.** All participants are expected to abide by this Anti-Harassment Policy in all SEM meetings, programs, and communication channels, including ancillary events and social gatherings. Specifically, participants are expected to abide by the following:

- Follow the norms of professional respect that are necessary to promote the conditions for academic

freedom, equity, and human dignity.

- If you witness potential harm to a participant, be proactive in helping to mitigate or avoid that harm.
- If you see a situation in which someone might be in imminent physical danger, alert venue security personnel or law enforcement.

**Unacceptable Behavior.** Harassment is unwelcome behavior. It may consist of a single act or of multiple persistent or pervasive acts that are demeaning, abusive, or offensive, or create a hostile professional environment. Harassment may include sexual solicitation, physical advance, stalking, or verbal or non-verbal conduct that is sexual in nature. It may also include threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts; circulation of written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility toward an individual or group; or epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping based on group identity.

Participants are encouraged immediately to report instances of harassment during an SEM meeting, program, or communication channel to the SEM Executive Director or an SEM Board member in accordance with the [Society's complaint procedures](#). Reports will be treated as confidential.

Violations of this policy may lead to actions such as removal from the meeting, program, or communication channel.

*Note: This statement is adapted in part from the Anti-Harassment Policy of the National Humanities Alliance.*

## Creating a Culture of Care in SEM

**Samantha Jones (Chair), alongside Board members of the Disability and Deaf Studies Special Interest Group**

As the Disability and Deaf Studies (DDS) SIG celebrated its fifth year at the virtual 2020 Annual Meeting, the conversation around creating equitable, inclusive, and welcoming spaces for all at our annual meetings continued. How can we shift our view of accommodation away from simply being a service that is requested by d/Deaf and disabled individuals to a conception and practice of shared support that is facilitated by all members of our community? How can we create conferences that are accessible from an intersectional perspective—physically, financially, and socially inclusive? How can we cultivate a culture of care within SEM?

We are working hard as a SIG to create resources and act

as advocates for accessibility across the board. Last year, for example, we provided a list of ways that SEM leadership and the program committee could ensure accessibility at our virtual conference. This year, our initiatives include a comprehensive conference access guide (organized in a template format that can be updated with specifics for future conferences as well); an informational video that, in form and content, will express the ethos of inclusivity and accessibility; and an access textline that conference attendees can rely upon for in-the-moment access needs during our annual meetings, such as aid in finding a seat in a crowded room or help navigating an area with poor signage.

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## A Culture of Care in SEM [\[continued from previous page\]](#)

An important mission undergirding our efforts is to embrace accessibility and accommodation as behaviors and institutional processes that serve ALL members of SEM. We aim to create a culture of care within our professional society, but doing this requires effort from the entire membership. As ethnographers, we're trained to be sensitive and open while doing our field research, conducting interviews, and publishing our work. Should we not extend those same considerations to our colleagues?

The COVID-19 pandemic and its subsequent impact on social and professional encounters has resulted in increased consciousness about the access needs of our colleagues, such as the consideration for an inclusion of captioning for pre-recorded videos at the virtual SEM meeting. Nevertheless, inequities in access persist, and there is more we can do to continue to create inclusive and accessible experiences. Access needs are not always obvious or apparent, and should not have to be disclosed by the individual in order to be thoughtfully considered and addressed in our Society. Therefore, we invite our fellow SEM colleagues to actively include considerations of accessibility and accommodation in their professional activities.

We ask you to start with yourself: What access needs have come into relief for you over the past year? What needs do you have that you might not readily classify in terms of accessibility but would make the conference more accessible nonetheless? Whether or not you identify as d/Deaf or disabled, are there ways that the confer-

ence could be more accessible for you? After reflecting on your own access needs, we encourage you to turn these discoveries outward and consider the needs of your colleagues. Ask yourself, "What can I do to make sure that my colleagues have what they need to succeed? How can I create a meeting space that anticipates their needs and ensures that they feel welcome?"

When I first joined the DDS SIG in 2019, I was astounded by the feeling of welcoming, sensitivity, and the acknowledgment and respect of each individual's needs that created a community—not just a special interest group centered on a particular theoretical or regional area, but a group dedicated equally to research, advocacy, and access. The DDS SIG is a space where individual needs are not just respected but anticipated. This is a group where care toward our fellow members shapes our professional behaviors.

As the Society works to meaningfully address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, we must all practice shifts in our behavior and habits that allow for broader participation. Thinking with an access-first mindset shifts responsibility for inclusivity from the individual to the community and, perhaps most importantly, extends belonging to all. It also recognizes that disclosure need not be a prerequisite for access. Access relies on the entire SEM membership and, as our SIG pursues initiatives such as the access guide, video, and textline, we invite you to join us in creating this culture of care.



Ending of the SEM 2020 Annual Meeting. Screenshot courtesy of Adriane Pontecorvo

# Talking About Erasure: An Indian Music Scholar reflects on (Western) Music Analysis

**Karishmeh Felfeli-Crawford**  
**Co-Secretary, SEM Music Analysis SIG**

I was born and schooled in Pune, a busy metropolis on the west coast of India. As a final year PhD student at University College Cork, my training reflects a non-luxury education in Western classical music, on which I've published (Felfeli-Crawford 2019), and a comparable regard for Western popular music—notably the 30-year career of UK synthpop band Erasure, whose members have writ-

ten, recorded, and performed hundreds of songs together. However, since the publication of Philip A. Ewell's groundbreaking *Music Theory Online* article (Ewell 2020), elite music analytical techniques, including and especially Heinrich Schenker's voice-leading graphs, have been widely condemned as being fundamentally racist.



The author with her school leaving class in Pune, ca.1998.

As a minority scholar, I advance a counter-argument that doesn't throw the proverbial baby out with the bathwater. In what follows, I aim to show how voice-leading analysis can be a useful addendum to ethnomusicological work on decolonization, especially when the analyst is BBIPOC (as I am), and the subject matter falls outside the Western classical canon.

This brings me to the culture bearers: Erasure's Vince Clarke and Andy Bell, whose combined musical output and influence in popular culture spans an extraordinary length of time, as my doctoral research aims to show. Erasure's best-known hit is "A Little Respect", which you can watch and listen to here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x34icYC8zA0>.



The author in a 2020 meeting with Erasure's Vince Clarke.

## Talking About Erasure [continued from previous page]

While I agree that there are many reasons to avoid elite music analysis and Western notation entirely, an Indian-born and -educated music scholar such as myself has had to demonstrate competency in this system in order to gain access to advanced academic degrees in music that are unavailable in my native India, where my parents still live, and where access to 24/7 electricity and clean running water are still considered first-world luxuries. As someone

who has had to work harder than most to pass the theory and analysis requirements of advanced music degree programs (though without being taught the loaded Austro-German philosophies that prop them up), I'd like to see if there's anything worth salvaging in voice-leading analysis, before we simply substitute Schenker graphs with spectrograms or soundboxes. This is a song called "Shot the Satellite" taken from Erasure's 2020 album *The Neon*.

**SHOT A SATELLITE**

Clarke and Bell, 2020  
Schenkerian Graph: Felfeli-Crawford

VERSE      PRECHORUS      CHORUS      OUTRO

feel it      and a roundknow it where's web you fall in through      you shot a satellite      the shore you seducing me

I      VI      I      N      III      IV      VI      III      V      A      V      I

ORV/VI      F major perspective      N VI      III      V      A      IAC

Temporary modulation to F major

The voice-leading graph you see, prepared after I transcribed the song by hand at the piano, presents fertile new ground from which to experience an aging popular music creativity steeped in unapologetic tonal expressivity and classical conventions. By dispensing with the fundamental structure or *ursatz* (as nearly all UK Schenkerians have done for many decades), we free up a space from which to connect two disparate structures: the verse motif of 3–2, which, incidentally, makes me also think of the two notes in Hindustani rags, the *vadi* and the *samvadi*, which correspond to "Shot the Satellite's" primary tone and its lower neighbor. The second motif is the upper neighbor note 6 moving down to 5, which is the building block of the "Shot a Satellite" refrain. The main thing to consider is the way in which these surface and middleground motifs delineate formal divisions: verse to pre-chorus, pre-chorus to chorus, and so on, thereby performing a range of inter- and intra-thematic functions. Lastly, we might notice the B flat (flattened second) which, as Neapolitan harmony, forms the scaffolding of a twisted subdominant tonality, which finds full expression in the underlying A minor tonal scheme. There are many more connections to be made between the various levels of structure that don't require rigorous training in (Western) graphic analysis; for example, the bass arrival on the relative major C adds a moment of potent expressivity in the song's otherwise conventional tonal procedures. You can listen to the song here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CzBeL-8ZSRM>.

By avoiding music theoretical terminology like prolongation, elaboration, diminution, and even modulation, I take only what can be readily transferred across from classical music theory to short pop song forms as Erasure's. Hope-

fully, as the saying goes, a picture speaks a thousand words! Of course, the graph above need not be thought of as "Schenkerian" at all—many principles of elite music analysis, notably voice-leading, are known to those of us (including many ethnomusicologists I've met and studied with) who have had Western art music training via the humble piano lesson (listening to, listening for, and bringing out inner voices, for example); as such, Schenker (correctly denounced as racist and elitist) or his followers should not be given credit for my analysis.

### Music Analysis, Ethnomusicology, and Erasure

My concluding comments pertain to analysis of Western music, as conducted by me—an Indian born and educated scholar now based in Ireland. If we consider the literature of decolonization (e.g., Lorde in 1984, Tuck and Yang 2012, Kennedy 2016, Kale 2017), we see how my analysis of "Shot a Satellite" might appear regressive or even irrelevant in the current music academic climate. But as a Western, educated, democratic Indian from a low-income Zoroastrian/non-elite background, I object to the wider assumption that Indian epistemologies or technologically-conceived analytical methods are better for decolonization purposes than Western ones like music theory. Those of us who are the product of a non-luxury music education will know all too well the feeling of being spoken for by white ethnomusicologists in privileged positions, who ensure that *our* Westernness, *our* interest in *their* culture, is always kept under wraps in the academy. Naturally, decolonization needs to take place to ensure *all* marginalized groups (the poor, the disabled, the BBIPOC, and the LGBTQ) can access an advanced degree in music.

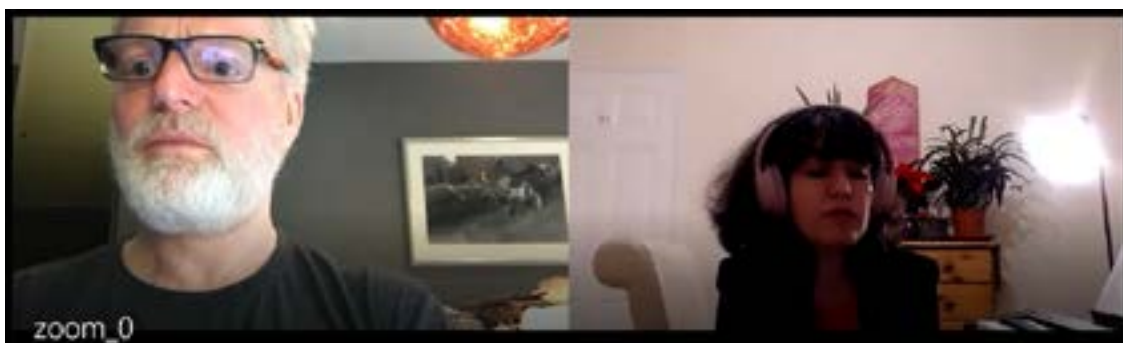
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## Talking About Erasure [continued from previous page]

In this regard, voice-leading analysis can be deployed also to instigate debate and dialogue in mandatory music theory courses. Indeed, any rigorous effort to decolonize should also consider the merits of *recolonization*, a term I've used elsewhere to defend the career aspirations of others like me, for whom studying, performing, creating and analyzing Western music is also a viable way to de-something and re-something—though we don't always know what.

So, to put it another way, analysing Erasure through the lens of elite music analysis offers a lifeline to the person-of-color scholar, who can express the magic of Andy Bell and Vince Clarke's music (and not Schenker's) *in the language of tones alone*. But it goes beyond elite music analysis, and happily into the domain of ethnomusicology (though here, I'm the Indian ethnomusicologist, research-

ing Westerners and their music). When we consider the intersectionality of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation, we see how the band members' own marginalised subject positions come into sharp focus also. Bell and Clarke are both from non-elite backgrounds; Bell has been one of the first openly gay pop icons in Western popular culture, and he is also an inspiration for other HIV+ people; also, Clarke is 60 and Bell is 56, and they continue to write, perform, and release pop records. Having talked extensively to both artists as part of my doctoral research on their music, my Erasure analysis should also be held up as a self-conscious critique, on my part, of the deeply conservative, heteronormative music and cultures of my native India. Writing in 1984, Lorde famously stated "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (Lorde 1984). But maybe given time, and in the right hands, they will.



The author in a 2020 meeting with Erasure's frontman and LGBTQ icon Vince Clarke.

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# Socio-Environmental Justice: Traditional Communities Renewing Musical Cultures in the Bocaina, Brazil

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## Introduction: Musical cultures as resistance and belonging

In Brazil's coastal areas, diverse traditional communities have gained livelihoods from cultivation and fishing activities for several centuries. But in recent decades their resource access has been jeopardized by several changes: faster road access, real estate development, predatory tourism, capital-intensive agriculture, and Conservation Areas meant to protect the remaining "nature." All these threats have arisen from the dominant modernization model of development, as promoted by governments and large companies.

As above, the concept "traditional communities" highlights their communal use and sustainable management of natural resources, especially as a claim to belong on the land. The term "traditional" often denotes a historical continuity, even an economic backwardness obstructing social progress. By contrast, the term "traditional" has been newly signified to incorporate cross-group identities, stimulated by territorial conflicts and regular mobilisations to defend land rights (Almeida, 2004:10). Such mobilizations have revived mutual-aid traditions of reciprocity, which have historically linked agri-food and musical cultures.

As in many traditional cultures, musical performance promotes everyone's participatory experience, social interactions, and belonging. This role contrasts with music as presentation or art for an audience, where performers may represent something other than themselves (Turino, 2008). Eco-ethnomusicology offers insights about how music-as-participation relates to collective action framing issues as socio-environmental. Here are three brief examples.

Haiti: Facing long-term environmental degradation, development initiatives have been a supposed remedy, but they often threaten the country's sovereignty and undermine local solutions. Vodou songs criticise Western models for "using up" nature as if it were separate from society; the lyrics express alternative concepts of nature, as a vision connecting the present to a better future (Dirksen, 2018: 122). Such conflict arises from a human-nature dualism in Western developmentalist interventions, which "carry the weighty history of neocolonializing geopolitical endeavors" (Dirksen, 2021).

South Africa: Conversely, socio-economic inequalities worsen socio-ecological injustices, especially in the mod-

ernist framework of nature/culture binaries. Near South Africa's Mozambique border, Zulu communities have been dispossessed by a conservation policy imagining Nature Reserves as a pristine wilderness, made available only to the affluent few. For nearby residents, high electrical fences separate women's fields from their ancestors' lands, while also confusing people's memories of them (Impey, 2018: 8, 183; cf. Diegues, 1993). Given the drastic landscape changes over several decades and men's migration to seek work elsewhere, women's walking songs lament their loss but also express resistance and assert a group belonging (Impey, 2013).

Brazil: Given the long-time racism and economic precarity in northeastern Brazil, a long drought was turned into a socio-environmental issue, stimulating new links to traditional musical culture. This renewal illustrates a general pattern: By taking up environmental problems, people reshape musical cultures through politics and social-group differences (Silvers, 2018: 6).

In Brazil the neocolonial development model has been theorised by several writers in engagement with subaltern groups (e.g., Santos, 2001; Santos, 2007). For example: "A homogenising colonialist attitude historically erased ethnic cultural diversities, diluting them in classifications which emphasised the subordination of the 'natives,' 'wild' and 'illiterate,' lacking the erudite knowledge of the colonizer" (Almeida, 2004: 23). As a traditional means of resistance and alternatives, mutual aid activities have been known as *mutirão*. From its Tupi Guaraní origin, *motyrõ* means "work in common" (Navarro, 2005). It "facilitates contact among people and tightens social bonds; it facilitates information exchange, love and sometimes marriages" (Diegues, 2005: 296-297).

Nowadays *mutirão* means working cooperatively, whereby everyone offers help in rotation, structured without hierarchy. This tradition serves collective aims of participants in a convivial way: "Mutirão is a form of popular, communitarian self-organization to concretize projects or to resolve public problems which people experience every day" (França Filho, 2011: 98). As non-commercial relationship in economic activities, *mutirão* has great importance for social cohesion and group belonging (Zaoual, 2010). Such reciprocity sustains everyday life while also facilitating resistance against exploitative neocolonial forms of development. This article will show how the above concepts have informed resistance strategies in one locality.

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### Territorial conflicts in the Bocaina: Demanding *justiça socioambiental*

In Brazil's Bocaina coastal sub-region, since 2006 the Fórum de Comunidades Tradicionais (FCT) has built unity among the three traditional communities: indigenous Guaraní, quilombolas (descendants of escaped slaves), and caiçaras (descendants of Portuguese immigrants integrating their customs with other coastal groups). The FCT has promoted intercommunity solidarity through various cooperative initiatives to both use and protect natural resources, especially agroecological agroforestry. These practices help resist the dominant development model and its colonizing role, as seen by the FCT and its civil society support network (Gallo e do Nascimento, 2019: 42).

Through various alternatives, the three communities have been sharing their cultural traditions, defending their territories, and building solidaristic alternatives and thus more effectively resisting neocolonial encroachments. Cooperative forms extend *mutirão* traditions of mutual aid, as a basis to renew collective identities, resource conservation, and artisanal skills. Their musical cultures have been shared at numerous venues, such as their own events, public festivals, education programs, and political protests (FCT, 2014, 2016). Their musical cultures express and extend *mutirão* in activities such as harvests, festivals, and house-building (cf. Diegues, 2005; França Filho, 2011).

Around the turn of the century, as urbanization increasingly degraded nature, this threat stimulated a public policy to create Conservation Areas (*Unidades de Conservação*). Some Areas overlapped with the residential or cultivation areas of traditional communities. Government policy initially excluded such groups, based on the prevalent "myth of untouched Nature" (Diegues, 1993). Under this policy, land encroachments obscured and marginalized traditional conservation practices, thus jeopardizing their ways of life (Ferreira & Carneiro, 2005).

The communities jointly counterposed "socioenvironmental justice" (*justiça socioambiental*), denoting their sustainable use and conservation of natural resources. In this perspective, an ethno-social diversity sustains agri-biodiversity (cf. Leff, 2001). This linkage contests the nature/culture binary, as well as the degradation/conservation binary, of the neocolonial modernization model.

The FCT demanded a community role in territorial management, especially in conservation areas overlapping with their lands. These demands led to a shared management with many bodies (Simões & Ferreira, 2008; Sansolo, 2017). They were now jointly managing projects elaborating strategies of a social movement (Gallo e do Nascimento, 2019: 107). This arrangement facilitated greater agri-productivity in some overlapping areas, alongside a better relationship with the native forest and

natural resources (Lima, 2009: 39).

As a next step, Sistemas Agroflorestais (SAFs, agroforestry systems) were developed in official conservation areas inside the Mata Atlântica (Atlantic forest). In the same area each SAF combined diverse species, both edible and non-edible, maintaining soil fertility without chemical fertilizer. SAFs articulated traditional life-modes with nature conservation for several aims: healthy food, forest recovery, and water conservation (Gallo e do Nascimento, 2019: 222). SAFs were implemented by the three communities.

In 2014 the FCT launched a campaign, "To Conserve is to Resist: in defence of traditional territories" (*Preservar é Resistir: em defesa dos territórios tradicionais*). A campaign motto focused on natural resources: "To know how to use is the art of traditional communities" (*Saber usar é a arte das comunidades tradicionais*). For many years each community has been demanding a culturally differentiated education in the state schools; this was eventually won in some towns.

Alternative development trajectories brought many benefits, initially a Community Nursery for forest plants and distinctive foods. These were showcased by a new Community-Based Tourism, an alternative resisting the dominant predatory model. Such local initiatives formed the regional Rede Nhandereko, a Guaraní concept for sharing "our way of being" with visitors. The network also shared experiences among nearby traditional communities in order to strengthen internal democracy, income generation, and resistance against various threats (Rede Nhandereko, 2017; OTSS, 2020).

As a general pattern, traditional communities gained some victories during the 2003-16 governments led by the Partido de Trabalhadores (PT, Workers' Party). However, subsequent right-wing governments weakened those gains. Government attacks intensified previous conflicts—hence more difficulties, but also more opportunities for joint resistance. This has renewed *mutirão* as a link between agri-food and musical cultures. Let us look at such linkages around each community in turn: the Guaranís' *mborai*, quilombolas' *jongo-cantico*, and caiçaras' *fanfango*.

#### Guaranís: *Mborai*

Brazil's Mbyà language group of indigenous Guaraní has maintained their *mborai*, cultural forms combining music and dance. Youths were traditionally called *xondaro'í* and *xondaria'í*, i.e., male and female warriors, formerly denoting military weapons. Nowadays their struggle needs different weapons, such as paper, pens, legal arguments, etc. (Stein, 2009: 138), along with music-dance cultures and short films featuring them.

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Their mborai feature the Xondará dance, where youths imagine seeking and reaching *Yvy Marãe'y*, a Land without Evils. They learn to be warriors: the steps simulate movements of three different birds, whereby dancers acquire strength, lightness, and agility. More generally, their dances incorporate immaterial qualities of some birds (Stein, 2015: 212, 227). As participatory performance, the mborai express memory, advice, teaching, concentration and reciprocity—*mborayú*, a related word (ibid:215). Here various objects—adornments, pictures, musical instruments, song lyrics—define a belonging to their ethnic group and territory (ibid: 227).

In the Bocaina region, Mbya-Guaraní musical traditions have been promoted by the [Coral Guaraní Tenonderã](#) in the town Angra dos Reis. With the motto “the Guaraní path to follow,” they sing: “Come all you warriors (*os guerreiros e as guerreiras*) to dance, sing, and celebrate our house of prayer. Our ancestors gave us the Guaraní way of life. Live to be Guaraní” (Scapino, 2020). Their mborai have been deployed for political protest, as explained next.

Since 2016 right-wing federal governments have undermined earlier progressive gains and the state agencies responsible for them. Under federal law, indigenous peoples’ lands were protected and were meant to be formally demarcated. Yet relevant agencies delayed decisions about legal title, thus weakening federal protection from profit-driven incursions. Guaraní mborai have been deployed in numerous protests such as these three:

**Territorial demarcation:** Since 1967 FUNAI (Fundação Nacional do Índio) had the main responsibility to protect the interests of indigenous people. In January 2019 President Bolsonaro decided to transfer the agency from the Justice Ministry to the Agriculture Ministry, which favors agribusiness. This shift threatened indigenous peoples’ environment as well as their prospects to gain land titles. Guaraní protests featured the Xondará, where dancers run in a circle and continuously jump over a stick. In Ubatuba this dance-as-protest blocked the main street and square (Ubatuba Sim, 2019).

**Health service:** Early on, the PT-led government had established a special health system for indigenous peoples, called Sistema Único de Saúde (SUS). This mandated a local, holistic provision—encompassing nutrition, housing,

land demarcation, environment, etc.—guaranteeing the right of indigenous participation in decision-making (FNS, 2007: 87). The main responsibility lay with the Secretária Especial da Saúde Indígena (SESAI). In 2019 the Bolsonaro government sought to abolish SESAI, transferring all responsibility to each municipality. Guaraní Choral members explained their opposition:

Many people say that we don’t belong to the municipality; often we face discrimination from simply wanting a service from the municipality. We want our differentiated service, as our elders taught us, with our religion, beliefs, and medicines which our villages know how to make (CGT, 2019).



Coral Guaraní Tenonderã. Photo: Felipe Scapino

To defend the Federal service, Guaranís nationwide held many protests. In the Bocaina they blocked the highway BR101 near Ubatuba. Demonstrators held placards with the slogan “Priority to indigenous health,” and “SESAI is ours.” Guaraní youth continuously danced the Xondará to maintain the blockade,

despite the Federal Highway Police (Mirim, 2019a).

In another attack, the Bolsonaro government attempted to weaken social services and pension payments. This provoked protests throughout the country. In Paraty the Guaranís held a protest with FCT t-shirts and speeches from other community representatives. The Coral Guaraní Tenonderã sang: “We have power when we are all together. We sing this music to be happy “ (translation from their language). Placards said: “The indigenous people are here in Paraty from five villages. Demarcation now for indigenous land! Guaraní people want indigenous health...Take your dirty hands off my retirement“ (Mirim, 2019b). In all those ways, they have renewed musical cultures to assert a communal belonging which could defend their distinctive services and territory.

### Quilombolas: Jongo-cantico

During the Portuguese Empire many slaves escaped captivity, fleeing far from the colonizers in remote forest areas. They established their own communities in refuges called *quilombos*; hence their descendants have been called *quilombolas*. Their communities nationwide continuously face threats of dispossession; they maintain a proud collective memory, helping to confront their present-day oppression.

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Their jongo dance originated from slavery as “songs of protest, repression and resistance.” The *cântico* was often in a code obscure to the slaveowners (Stein, 1990: 246). It is simultaneously a song, divinatory practice, confraternity, etc. (Alcantara, 2008: vii; Justino, 2013: 2). Some lyrics highlight struggles to defend quilombo territories and to withstand the wounds which the community has suffered (Pinheiro, 2015: 73).

Jongo-*cântico* expresses *mutirão* in several contexts including harvests and house building. Quilombolas can take shelter in singing, dialoguing, and discussing the reconquest of territory and freedom. Such themes are illustrated by this point: “At the edge of the sea I saw a warrior who swore on the flag. He sounded the bugle, like his entire army. He struggled for me” (Alcantara, 2008: 44).

In the Bocaina, a community organizer has emphasised that urbanization threatens the quilombos’ culture and territory. Their joint protection needs youth discipline and supportive public policies:

How can we protect our lands? Through jongo the youth maintain their quilombo identity, distant from the wounds that society has inflicted on them. Jongo and capoeira help to discipline the youths... Now their school teaches a differentiated education so that the youth can better absorb this culture, so that people take up the struggle for identity and territory.

As some youths say, jongo helps to strengthen a quilombo conscience, to rescue memories of past struggles and combat racial preconceptions (Mapa de Cultura RJ, 2014; also Lide Uff, 2014).

In the Bocaina region, the quilombo community in Campinho da Independência had been struggling for decades to gain a land title. In 1999 it finally succeeded, becoming the first in the state of Rio de Janeiro. This struggle was led by the Associação de Moradores do Quilombo do Campinho (AMOQC). After its victory, AMOQC more readily gained resources for a community-led development, starting from a shared management of Conservation Areas.

This cooperative model was extended to Community-Based Tourism, aiming to counter the mass tourism which had stimulated environmental damage and real-estate sales. Ethno-Ecological Itineraries (Roteiros Etno-Ecológicos) provide visits to local leaderships, family-based organization, reforestation especially of the Juçara tree, artisanal production, a communitarian restaurant, and jongo. Visitors get to know agri-food heritages, stories, environmental conservation, territorial guides, etc. (QdC, 2014).

TBC has featured the restaurant [Quilombo do Campinho](#)

since 2014. The restaurant is “a self-managed community enterprise guided by solidarity economy principles as a work philosophy.” Quilombo families organized jongo workshops, as well as samba and capoeira (CdQ, 2014). The restaurant became a new host for the annual Encontro da Cultura Negra (Black Culture Meeting), which had begun in 1999. The programme combines jongo-*cântico* (songs), stories, and agri-food heritages, highlighting their inter-linkages (FLIP Preta, 2019).

These living cultures strengthen a common sense of quilombolas belonging on the land to create their own future. Renewing *mutirão* traditions, a solidarity economy based on agroecological agroforestry develops interdependencies among several activities and helps others to replicate them.

### **Caiçaras: fandango**

For several centuries many early Portuguese immigrants lived on the coast, far from metropolitan centers. These *caiçaras* integrated their customs, values, and capacities with other coastal groups, especially for fishing. Since the 1970s the Bocaina’s *caiçaras* have been marginalized by development-as-modernization, especially luxury tourist resorts, condominiums, and real-estate speculation (Caá-*çara*, 2020). They suffered land grabs, expulsions, and struggles to stay on their former lands. Moreover, potential income from tourism provoked competition among *caiçaras*, undermining their communal relations (de Abreu, 2020: 332-35).

*Mutirão* had been central to *caiçara* practices for centuries, especially through their *fandango* music and dance, which have been featured at events such as harvests, religious festivals, baptisms, weddings, etc. (Diegues, 2005). Through *mutirão*, people regularly met each other for chats, joint meals, music-making, instrument-making, etc. (Sabourin, 2009). But modernization marginalized traditional agricultural activities and likewise *mutirão*. As agri-food production lost its traditional forms and rural spaces to a commercial logic, *caiçaras* increasingly felt an estrangement (Costa, 2012: 149, 152).

Hence a *fandango* song sarcastically depicts a famous town as predatory tourism: “A shark lives on Sad Wolf Street in blessed Cananéia. It is a paradise, as the tourists discover...” (Costa, 2012: 152; Magdalena, 2008: 4). Its lyrics express a lament for the community’s loss and hope for its future recovery.

Given the new economic pressures, some *caiçaras* illegally extracted resources from forests. They were cutting down the *juçara* trees, crucial for forest biodiversity, in order to sell the palm hearts (*palmito*). Their bad conscience was made worse by their own exploitation, as expressed in a *fandango* song: “Whoever takes the palm heart

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gains nothing. Whoever buys it has money... This trade is worse than being a prisoner. It would be better to stop it" (Costa, 2012: 149).

Towards a collective solution, in 2012 the FCT helped to initiate Projeto Juçara, named after this endangered palm tree. The fruit is rich in healthful anti-toxins and anti-carcinogens, offering a large potential for products and thus an incentive for conserving the tree. Projeto Juçara has sought to become financially self-sustaining in several ways: selling the fruit pulp in shops and export markets, generating income for owners of protected forests, and likewise for businesses that process the pulp into diverse food products.

As a versatile ingredient, juçara fruit eventually contributed to a new popular drink, a diverse gastronomy, community-based tourism, and regular festivals celebrating these cooperative developments. The festivals have been jointly organized by caiçara and quilombo communities, featuring both their musical traditions (Ubatuba Prefeitura, 2019). Thus the juçara's recovery has helped to build an inter-community territorial identity.

Agroforestry development in turn has inspired a revival of mutirão in several forms. An agenda for differentiated education included agroecology and several art forms including music (de Carvalho, 2010). The project Sementes Caiçaras organises workshops teaching youth how to construct the typical instrument, the rabeca. In Ubatuba the Grupo Fandango Caiçara has been organising similar workshops in schools (Burihan, 2019). They valorise the caiçara culture for the future generation to gain knowledge of its roots.

As a local folklorist-musician explains:

The fandango event is a form of mutirão, which is a form of resistance. Everyone helps the others: one person makes food, another helps to serve it, another brings a dishwasher, another puts up banners, etc. The event ends up happening in this way... In the historical context of this people, doing the fandango reminds you of the solidaristic labor of a collectivity where everyone participated, played, and benefited. Most important is bringing people closer through mutirão (Gato, 2020).

By renewing mutirão, caiçaras can better resist market competition, create a communal sense of belonging, and strengthen claims to the land against neocolonial development.

### **Conclusion: decolonial resistance-conservation**

The Bocaina sub-region exemplifies many coastal areas where traditional communities face threats from develop-

ment-as-modernization. This has colonized their everyday lives, e.g., by treating them as threats to nature, degrading their natural-resource base, expanding real-estate interests, and shifting land use towards the profit-driven economy. Those colonial roles have been theorized by several Brazilian writers in engagement with subaltern groups. Informed by such concepts, the Bocaina's resistance activities have broadened what had been separate traditional identities.

Under the motto of socioenvironmental justice, the Fórum de Comunidades Tradicionais (FCT) has brought together the Bocaina's three traditional communities: indigenous Guaraní, quilombolas, and caiçaras. They opposed the dominant myth of "untouched nature," and they eventually gained a formal role in sharing the management of Conservation Areas, as a basis for both using and conserving natural resources there. They developed agroecological agroforestry systems and extended them to commercialize food products, both traditional and new. Based on workers' cooperatives, they further developed community-based tourism and a juçara-based popular culture, both conserving and harvesting the tree. In those ways, FCT initiatives have linked agrobiodiversity with socio-cultural diversity, contrary to the neocolonial nature/society binary.

They have at once renewed their agri-food and musical cultures, which express mutirão, a communal tradition of mutual aid. Strongly grounded in dance, the songs have metaphorical, ironic, or allusive lyrics, expressing pleasurable, playful, and solidaristic relationships. Recent territorial conflicts have given new meanings to old songs and have stimulated new ones, e.g., about racism, predatory tourism, and resource plunder. Music training helps youths to build individual discipline for acting responsibly towards the wider community. Agri-food and musical cultures have been integrated within a culturally differentiated education of each community.

Through all those activities, inter-community bonds help to create an alternative solidaristic development. Their cultures together strengthen a decolonial resistance-conservation, a communal sense of territorial belonging and thus long-time claims on the land.

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"To conserve is to resist": Seminar with Dr. Les Levidow

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9fZcyx43sUw&t=645s>

## New! SEM and CSTM Publication Collaborations

Tomie Hahn, SEM Interim President and Marcia Ostashewski, CSTM President

We are pleased to announce a new publication exchange between the Society for Ethnomusicology Newsletter and the Canadian Society for Traditional Music Blog! Several times a year an article from the Newsletter and Blog will be selected to be published in the sister society's publication. We hope these cross-border exchanges will encourage positive dialogues and good spirit between our societies. The inaugural article for this collaboration is Daniel Akira Stadnicki's "PS 752: The Sounds of Memorialization," which was originally published in CSTM's Blog [<https://cstm-sctm.ca/ps-752-the-sounds-of-memorialization/>].

### PS 752: The Sounds of Memorialization

Daniel Akira Stadnicki, University of Alberta

Hovering around -40 degrees C, 12 January 2020 was a frigid and typically Edmontonian winter day. Smoke billowed out of car exhausts and chimneys, and hung frozen in the air. Snow squeaked like Styrofoam, and our screen door barely opened as the dog rushed in and out from the backyard. We made pancakes for breakfast—as customary on Sunday mornings—and set up yet another couch fort in the basement to appease the whirling energy of our cooped-up kiddos.

It had been a week of cold and heartache. When we first heard of the PS 752 plane crash, my wife and I thought it was too cynical to consider it a result of heated military tensions in Iran. But that worry never settled, and as details slowly emerged our fears became a bitter reality. Fifty-seven Canadians and a disproportionate number of Edmontonians—thirteen people—lost their lives, including University of Alberta students and faculty. Our thoughts immediately went to our many Iranian friends and colleagues at the University of Alberta, as well as members of our own faith community, the Baha'is—a global religion that emerged in mid-19th century Persia and retains a uniquely hybrid aesthetic, gastronomic, and linguistic legacy from the region. Baha'is are often very active in the broader Iranian communities in which they reside, helping to organize events and participating in cultural gatherings across the city. Given the ongoing religious persecution of Baha'is in Iran, however, it was less likely that an Edmontonian member of our community would be travelling there (I have personally known only a few Baha'is that frequently travelled between Canada and Iran). Still, there was always a chance.

As an internationally renowned hub of music research and activity, the ethnomusicology program at the University of Alberta has long fostered a unique culture of mentorship, an emphasis on sacred music studies, and community-driven projects. The work of my supervisors and committee members like Regula Burckhardt-Qureshi, Michael

Frishkopf, Federico Spinetti (now at the University of Cologne), and Julia Byl highlight the program's strengths in the music of India, Southeast and Central Asia, Iran, North and West Africa, and the Middle East. I had the pleasure of studying with brilliant international student colleagues from Pakistan, India, Lebanon, Kyrgyzstan, Turkey, and—quite notably—Iran.

While news media stories about PS 752 recognized large cohorts of Iranian students in the faculties of Engineering and across the sciences, the music department at the U of A has also been a thriving space for young Iranian scholars. This is also true at other music institutions across Canada: antagonistic travel bans and visa requirements have inhibited Iranian access to higher education in the USA, as well as restricting conference participation to remote Skype and Zoom presentations for annual meetings in the country (including the Society for Ethnomusicology). Following the crash, several of my Iranian friends were posting on social media, appealing for greater public support and attendance at a memorial to be held by the University of Alberta. This post is a reflection on that event and a brief meditation on some of the music and sounds that filled the space. (You can watch a recording of the memorial [here, including some of the speeches.](#))

\*

As I walked towards the Saville Centre from an overflow parking lot, I was met by a young mother with her daughter, who were trying to find the entrance. Like myself, she was also a recent PhD graduate (in political science, if I recall) and worked as a sessional instructor at the U of A. She asked if I knew any of the deceased: "No, but I am friends with people who did." Thankfully, she said, it was the same for her. We entered the building together and were directed up the stairs toward a sports bar. Ushers funneled us through a hallway that overlooked a number of busy tennis courts. It must have seemed very strange to have hundreds of somber eyes quietly watching from

## Sounds of Memorialization [\[continued from previous page\]](#)

above; the sound of sneakers, grunts, and bouncing balls muffled through panes of glass offered a moment of quietude as we waited silently, staring as the players moved in irregular rhythm.

When we finally made it into the event space, I saw many familiar faces: PhD students from the Music Department, staff and administrators across Faculties, greeters from the Edmonton Baha'i community. Pictures of the crash victims lined the entrance hall and ushers handed out tissues. The venue was a large and cacophonous gym—banners of recent championships and tournaments lined the ceiling and media folks were arranging themselves and their cameras on the floor. The subdued hum of conversation was punctuated by phone sounds and fluttering jacket sleeves as people waved to friends and relatives entering the soon-to-be-overflowing hall. I was most struck by the surprising sound of children laughing and screaming: a makeshift daycare was set-up in a room at the top level as dozens of kids and adults played, made crafts, and watched cartoons on a projector. It made me wish I had brought my own children, too.

As the seats continued to fill, a slide show played Max Richter's "On the Nature of Daylight (Entropy)," a popular piece of post-minimalist music that has been featured in several movies, including Denis Villeneuve's cerebral alien film *Arrival* (2016)—a fitting soundscape for collectively bearing witness to a radical and traumatic event. The slow repetition of family photos, flowing in a cyclic dirge, fit well with Richter's groove, rooted in electronic popular music: its undulating melodic sequence repeating the notes of Eb-Ab, later from Db to Gb. The slide show ended and looped again. And again...

Seated with my close friend Roya and her family, I was pleasantly surprised to see her husband [Farhad Khosravi](#) setting up with his santoor on the stage. Earlier in the week I learned that Farhad's Master's thesis supervisor in the Faculty of Engineering, Dr. Pedram Mousavi, was killed in the crash along with his wife, Dr. Mojgan Daneshmand, and daughters Daria and Dorina. Now a PhD Candidate in Electrical and Computer Engineering, Farhad had received early support from Dr. Mousavi, who invited the young applicant to join a research project while he was (at the time) working as an adjunct at the U of A. Not only was Dr. Mousavi a key reason why Farhad chose to study in Canada, but he also attended many of Farhad's concerts with his family, encouraging him to pursue the World Music Residency program at the Banff Centre. It was at Banff that Farhad met Roya. After patiently tuning his instrument, Farhad greeted us in the bleachers and sat back down close to the stage.

The program began with the singing of the national anthem, which rung out in the hall, saturated in natural reverb. Most in my section sang along, myself included.

This all-too-familiar community ritual punctuated a narrative I would find throughout media coverage of the crash: that Iranians are, and have long been, embedded in Canadian culture and society, and that the PS 752 crash was a Canadian tragedy. University of Alberta President Dr. David Turpin opened the speeches and received a warm embrace from Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as he returned to his seat. Trudeau promised justice, accountability, and that "a full and transparent investigation" would be conducted, but he was much more forthright in later interviews:

...if there were no tensions, if there was no escalation recently in the region, those Canadians would be right now home with their families [...] This is something that happens when you have conflict and war. Innocents bear the brunt of it and it is a reminder why all of us need to work so hard on de-escalation, moving forward to reduce tensions and find a pathway that doesn't involve further conflict and killing ([Global News 2020](#)).

While the above statement can be read as a veiled critique of the United States's escalating military tensions with Iran, the memorial's proceedings articulated further underlying political tensions in Alberta, though of a different sort. Following Trudeau was Premier Jason Kenney's very moving and eloquent speech, though it was met with audible groans and tsking in parts of the crowd. Kenney's United Conservative Party budgetary cuts to post-secondary education will lead to hundreds, if not thousands of job losses at the U of A alone, as well as increased K-12 class sizes, layoffs, and strained resources for teachers throughout the province. Here, it seemed that Kenney's participation at the memorial, however genuine and compassionate, was eclipsed by these recent developments. The most resounding speech was delivered by Edmonton Mayor Don Iveson, who shared his personal affections for annual Naw Ruz celebrations in the city and quoted the following poem by Rumi: "Goodbyes are only for those who love with their eyes, because for those who love with heart and soul there is no such thing as separation." However, his concluding lines of support for the Iranian community in Farsi would receive the most uproarious applause of the afternoon: *man-dal dar-do andu-yi shoma shariq hastam* ("I share in your pain and your sadness").

With local singer Mahdi Modirzadeh, Farhad performed "Karevan": a well-known piece made famous by the celebrated Iranian vocalist Gholam-Hossein Banan (1911-86) and often used in funerary settings. Not a stranger to sharing his music for local events and social initiatives, Farhad has been involved in a range of community activities around Edmonton, including raising over \$1,400 at his sophomore album release for victims of child labor, and performing at a memorial for the Baha'i community in honor of Soleil Asdaghi Beattie (2010-18). I have been fortunate to collaborate with Farhad at these events, and



Farhad Kosravi (santoor) performing with Mahdi Modirzadeh (vocals)

continue to work with him as a drummer/percussionist. As the duo performed, tears flowed throughout the crowd. It was a cathartic release unlike any I have experienced, breaking through the formal and ceremonious aura of the event as a kind of emotional invitation for the nearly 2,400 people in attendance. Mahdi's voice remained clear and strong whilst wiping away tears as Farhad stoically performed with uninterrupted focus. An older couple embraced a lone student beside me, who was weeping throughout the song; rows of attendees were shaking in front of me, sobbing and leaning against one another. There were several instrumental breaks in the piece, allowing for the sounds of mourning to share in the delicate melody and timbre of the santoor.

\*

Edmontonians continue to make space for our grief. In addition to a special memorial service held at the Ed-

monton Baha'i Centre, several other initiatives have been organized to help support the local Iranian community. On February 18th, I performed with local band Bardic Form, singer-songwriter Martin Kerr, and Farhad Khosravi at Festival Place theater in Sherwood Park, Alberta. Members of the Iranian Heritage Society of Edmonton were invited, and provided free tickets to the show, which premiered a co-written instrumental piece by Farhad and Bardic Form guitarist Justin Khuong in honor of the PS 752 victims, titled "[Oliver's Tears](#)". Details of the crash and the contents of the black box remain mired in governmental obfuscation by the Islamic Republic of Iran. In the meantime, Edmontonians will keep the victims in our thoughts and gather together with friends to share stories, music, and prayers, remembering: "Be kind to your sleeping heart. Take it out into the vast fields of Light and let it breathe" (Hafez).

## Institutional News

In celebration of International Women's Week, the **Eda Kuhn Loeb Music Library** at Harvard has launched [Singing the Story of Dhrangadhra: Women's Voices in a Hindu Court](#), a virtual exhibit developed by Joseph Kinzer, Senior Curatorial Assistant for the Archive of World Music.



The **Institute of Musical Research at the University of Würzburg** is pleased to announce a new Bachelor of Arts in Ethnomusicology as a minor subject (60 ECTS credits). This new program integrates music studies and sociocultural studies from intercultural and global perspectives. Learning is interdisciplinarity and bridges theory and practice. Students have the opportunity to participate in a broad range of lectures and small discussion seminars, contribute to Applied Ethnomusicology projects, and engage creatively with a variety of local and global traditions (ensemble courses are currently offered in Franconian, US-American, West/Central African, and Arabic musics).

For more information about the program, see <https://www.musikwissenschaft.uni-wuerzburg.de/studium/studium-ethnomusikologie/>

# Tribute to Eduard Alekseyev

Robin Harris, Dallas International University

Widely respected and beloved among Siberian indigenous music scholars and practitioners, ethnomusicologist and folklorist Dr. Eduard Yefimovich Alekseyev (b. December 4, 1937) suffered a stroke and passed away peacefully on March 10, 2021, surrounded by his family. He leaves a legacy of prolific scholarship (over 100 [publications](#)) that stretches over six decades.

Born into a family of “Honored Teachers of the USSR” in Yakutia (now the Republic of Sakha in the Russian Federation), he graduated with honors from the Moscow State Conservatory and then studied ethnomusicology at the Institute of Art History of the USSR Academy of Sciences. His four decades of music and folklore expeditions extended far beyond his native Yakutia to many republics of the former Soviet Union—though he was particularly known for his vast knowledge of Siberian music cultures.

During his years in Moscow, he served as Director of the Department of General Theory of Folklore at the Institute for Art Studies (1963–93) and as Chairman of the All-Union Folklore Commission of the Union of Soviet Composers (1972–92). In his last years in the Russian Federation, he taught at the Institute for Indigenous Studies of the North (1993–96) in Yakutsk and served as vice president of the Academy of Spirituality of the Sakha Republic (1996–97).



Alekseyev in 2018. Photo: Robin Harris

In 1997, Alekseyev immigrated with his family to the Boston area, continuing his work on various publications while developing a website (<http://eduard.alekseyev.org>) to digitally preserve his publications and highlight the work of his friends and colleagues. Always eager to support the next generation of scholars, he continued to mentor and collaborate with ethnomusicologists in several countries. In 2017 the Center for Excellence in World Arts at Dallas International University celebrated his mentoring by establishing an endowed scholarship in his name.

He was especially grateful that Harvard University's Loeb Music Library under-

took the task of digitizing his extensive [field collection](#) and making it available to the public. In October 2019, an exhibition celebrating that collection drew a large group of family, friends, and colleagues.

In his decades in the USA, Alekseyev delighted in having his family nearby, walking the extensive nature trails near his home, welcoming colleagues from the Sakha Republic to Siberian music colloquia at Harvard University, serving nonprofits, and the spiritual home he found at Holy Trinity Orthodox Cathedral. He will be deeply missed by the many people who were privileged to know him, who will remember him as an infallibly kind, generous man with a powerful intellect and an indomitable work ethic: a great soul. His passing leaves a hole in our hearts.

## Member News

*Voices of the Field: Pathways in Public Ethnomusicology*, edited by **León F. García Corona** and **Kathleen Wiens**, was published by Oxford University Press in April 2021. The book provides a reflection on the challenges, opportunities, and often overlooked importance of public ethnomusicology, capturing the authors' years of experience simultaneously navigating the academic world and the world outside academia, and sharing lessons often missing in ethnomusicological training.

**Alejandro L. Madrid** has recently published two books

in Spanish: *En busca de Julián Carrillo y el Sonido 13*, (Ediciones Universidad Alberto Hurtado) and *Danzón. Diálogos de música y baile por la cuenca del Caribe* (co-authored with **Robin Moore**, Ediciones Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León). He also recently started a three-year term as co-editor of the journal *Twentieth-Century Music* and continues to serve as Editor in Chief of Oxford University Press's award-winning series *Currents in Iberian and Latin American Music*. In January 2021 he was appointed chair of Cornell University's Department of Music.

## Conference Calendar

Compiled by Adriane Pontecorvo

Rayson Huang Lecture 2020/21, "Music Pre- & Post-Human," online, 28 and 30 April 2021. <http://www.music.hku.hk/rayson-huang-lecture-2020-21.html>

Symposium "Contesting Border Regimes – Sounds and Images," online, 8 May 2021. <https://www.mdw.ac.at/ive/symposium-2021/>

55th Annual Association for Recorded Sound Collections Conference, online, 13–15 May 2021. <http://www.arsc-audio.org/conference.html>

International Association for the Study of Popular Music – United States 2021 Conference, online, 19–22 May 2021. <https://iaspm-us.net/conferences/2021-conference/>

37th Annual International Country Music Conference, Nashville, Tennessee, 3–5 June 2021. <https://www.internationalcountrymusic.org/>

1st Queer Forum of the LGBTQ+ Music Study Group, online, 25 June 2021. <https://www.lgbtqmusicstudygroup.com/upcoming-events>

"Climates of Popular Music," 21st Biennial Conference of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music, Daegu, South Korea, 6–10 July 2021. <http://www.iaspm2021.org/>

8th Conference of the Royal Musical Association Music & Philosophy Study Group, London, 1–2 July 2021. <https://musicandphilosophy.ac.uk/events/mpsg-2021/>

"Keep it Simple, Make it Fast! DIY Cultures and Global

Challenges," Porto, Portugal, 6–10 July 2021. <https://www.kismifconference.com/>

"Connectivity and Diversity in Music Cognition," 16th International Conference on Music Perception and Cognition and 11th Triennial Conference of the European Society for the Cognitive Sciences of Music, Sheffield, UK, and online, 28–31 July 2021. <https://sites.google.com/sheffield.ac.uk/escom2021/home>

"The Musicological Discipline in East Asia: Practices, Trends, Topics," 2021 International Musicological Society East Asia Regional Association Virtual Conference for Graduate Students and Early Career Scholars, online, 23–24 October 2021. <http://www.imsea-virtual-conference2021.org>

Society for Ethnomusicology 66th Annual Meeting, Atlanta, Georgia, 28–31 October 2021. [https://www.ethnomusicology.org/page/Conf\\_2021](https://www.ethnomusicology.org/page/Conf_2021)

International Conference and Cultural Event of Lampung, Indonesia 2021, Monash University Clayton Campus, Clayton, Australia, 14–16 December 2021. <https://web.cvent.com/event/ff3de79e-70bb-4e6b-9a72-7a9223b38793/summary>

"Baltic Musics After the Post-Soviet," online, 21–23 January 2022. <https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/music/events/baltic-musics-after-post-soviet>

Global Musicology – Global Music History Virtual Conference, online, 25–27 January 2022. <https://globalmusicology.squarespace.com/>

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## SEM Publications

### ***Ethnomusicology***

Editor: [Frank Gunderson](#)

*Ethnomusicology* is the premier publication in the field. Its scholarly articles represent current theoretical perspectives and research in ethnomusicology and related fields, while playing a central role in expanding the discipline in the United States and abroad. As the official journal of the Society for Ethnomusicology, *Ethnomusicology* is aimed at a diverse audience of musicologists, anthropologists, folklorists, cultural studies scholars, musicians, and others. This inclusive journal also features book, recording, film, video, and multimedia reviews. Peer-reviewed by the Society's international membership, *Ethnomusicology* has been published three times a year since the 1950s.

- All *Ethnomusicology* articles can be found electronically at <https://www.jstor.org/journal/ethnomusicology>.
- If your institution currently has JSTOR access to *Ethnomusicology*, please use stable JSTOR links (or your library's proxy links) in your course syllabi for articles, rather than distributing them by other means.
- If your institution does not have a current subscription to *Ethnomusicology*, recommend one to a librarian. Information on institutional subscriptions can be found at <https://www.press.uillinois.edu/journals/ethno.html>.

### ***Ethnomusicology Today: The SEM Podcast***

Editor: [Trevor S. Harvey](#)

*Ethnomusicology Today* is a podcast series that features stories and interviews aimed at engaging a broad audience of educators, scholars, musicians, and a listening public interested in contemporary issues in global music studies.

- Episode 10: [Musical Participation and Global Health in the Gambia with Bonnie McConnell](#)
- SEM 2019 Pre-Conference Interview: [Latin American Brass Bands with Javier León and Ed Wolf](#)
- Episode 11: [Prefiguring and Indigenous Identity in Nigerian Film Music with Emaeyak Sylvanus](#)

### ***Ethnomusicology Translations***

General Editor: [Richard K. Wolf](#)

*Ethnomusicology Translations* is a peer-reviewed, open-access online series for the publication of ethnomusicological literature translated into English. Articles and other literature in any language other than English will be considered for editorial review, translation, and publication. Preference will be given to individual articles published in scholarly journals or books during the past twenty years. As a central online resource, *Ethnomusicology Translations* aims to increase access to the global scope of recent music scholarship and advance ethnomusicology as an international field of research and communication. [Guidelines for submissions](#).

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### ***SEM Student News***

Editor: [Eugenia Siegel Conte](#)

*SEM Student News* is a biannual publication of the Society for Ethnomusicology, created and run by students. In cooperation with the SEM Student Union, we aim to voice current student issues and ideas, and to provide useful, relevant information for students conducting research on musicking. Most of all, we provide a forum for students to communicate with their peers and to address the challenges and opportunities that we face together.

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# The Society for Ethnomusicology

## 2021 Annual Meeting

28–31 October 2021

Atlanta, Georgia

Hosted by Georgia State University,

University of Georgia, and Florida State University

Pre-Conference Symposium on 27 October

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#### The SEM Website

[SEMAnnouncements-L](#) [SEMDiscussions-L](#)

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#### Ethnomusicology Websites

[American Folklife Center](#)  
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