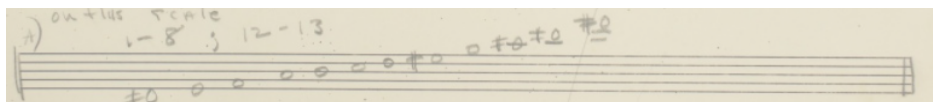




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the 6th biennial
yale graduate music symposium
2-3 march 2018, stoeckel hall





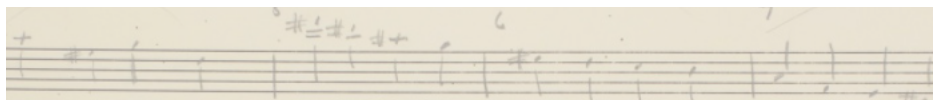
schedule of events

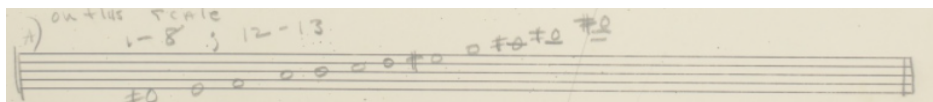
all events in Stoeckel 106 and 107

abstracts and other information
available at <http://ygms.yale.edu>

friday, march 2

- 1:00 – 2:00 registration
- 2:00 – 2:15 welcome and opening remarks
- 2:15 – 3:15 session 1 — chair: Peter Selinksy**
- Clay Downham (University of Colorado Boulder): “Conceiving the Concept: Style and Practice in Eric Dolphy’s Applications of George Russell’s *Lydian Chromatic Concept*”
- Nathan Smith (University of Chicago): “Formalizing the Fretboard’s Phantasmic Fingers”
- 3:15 – 3:30 break
- 3:30 – 4:30 session 2 — chair: Laura Brown**
- Dylan Hillyer (York University): “‘Your Tells Are So Obvious’: Vocal Range and Timbre as a Vector of Transgender Meaning in *Transgender Dysphoria Blues*”
- Steven Moon (University of Pittsburgh): “Trans/Queer Epistemologies, Multivocality, and the Ethnographic Problem”
- 4:30 – 5:00 break
- 5:00 – 6:30 keynote lecture: Alexander Rehding (Harvard University)**
- “Transcending the Final Frontier: the Golden Record and Listening in Outer Space”
- 6:30 – 7:30 reception





saturday, march 3

8:45–9:15

breakfast

9:15–10:45

session 3 — chair: Nick Curry

Stefan Greenfield-Casas (Northwestern University): “‘Gotta catch ‘em all’: Towards a Theory of the *Transmediagesamtkunstwerk*”

Erik Broess (University of Pennsylvania): “Dying to be Heard: Technology and Voice in the Modern Séance”

Benjamin Safran (Temple University): “‘A Kinder World than Ours’: Music, Narrative, and ‘Camp’ in *Steven Universe*”

10:45–11:00

break

11:00–12:30

workshop: Patrick McCreless (Yale University)

12:30–2:00

lunch

2:00–3:30

session 4 — chair: Marissa Glynnias Moore

Sonja Wermager (Columbia University): “‘That Hart May Sing in Corde’: Translation and Transformation of the Psalms as Defense of Church Music in Matthew Parker’s *The Whole Psalter Translated into English Metre* (1567)”

Katelyn Hearfield (University of Pennsylvania): “Lip-Syncing Along to a Singing Mermaid: Various Gendered Voices in Lady Gaga’s ‘You and I’”

Stefanie Bilidas (Michigan State University): “Crafting the Consonance: An Investigation of Metrical Dissonance in Tap Improvisation”

3:30–3:45

break

3:45–5:15

session 5 — chair: John Klaess

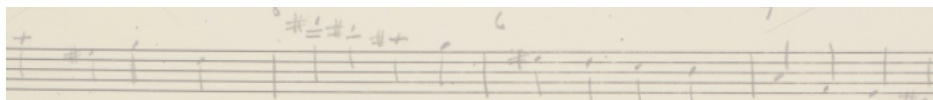
Woodrow Steinken (University of Pittsburgh): “Black Metal’s Transgressions, Self-Abjection, and the Horrors of Being”

Subash Giri (University of Alberta): “‘Folk-Rock’ Music-Scene of Kathmandu: The Issues of Transculturation and Youth Identity”

Katrice Kemble (Wesleyan University): “‘I Can Be Your Whore’: Maria Brink’s Performance of Post-Feminism with In This Moment”

5:15–5:30

closing remarks



abstracts

friday, march 2

session 1 — chair: Peter Selinsky

Clay Downham (University of Colorado Boulder)

*Conceiving the Concept: Style and Practice in
Eric Dolphy's Applications of George Russell's Lydian Chromatic Concept*

George Russell's *Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organization*, the most influential music-theoretical treatise to arise from African American communities, establishes a universe of tonal possibilities for composers and improvisers to explore. Russell, an iconoclastic autodidact hardly recognized by academia, advanced his theory in part as a reaction to "oppressive" Western music theories and their concomitant ethics for how music ought to be composed, improvised, or listened to. Rejecting prescriptive music theories, Russell's *Concept* offers instead a generative vocabulary for musicians to draw from and thereby develop their own musical systems. Since it refuses to promulgate a musical syntax, the *Concept* provides musicians with a theoretical infrastructure for relating seemingly disparate musical styles and integrating them in innovative ways. In effect, networks of practicing musicians collectively build upon previous styles *through* the *Concept* in order to furnish idiosyncratic musical dialects that transgress Western musical ethics.

Eric Dolphy, multi-instrumentalist, composer, and improviser, writes to Russell in 1961, "Trying to play the new concept with an outward bound feeling." Dolphy's omnivorous musical taste and voracious practice habits lead to him to realize a musical idiolect with virtuosic command that drew from twentieth-century Western modernists, Western classical icons, "world musics," Charlie Parker, Thelonious Monk, Art Tatum, bird calls, and urban sounds. For example, Dolphy synthesized Monk's system of tritone substitutions and Stravinsky's polytonal techniques in his polytonal blues composition "Les," as well as in his flute solo on "April Fool." Dolphy and his music thus provide a rich case study of how Russell's experimentalist and integrationist music theory can be applied. In this presentation, I demonstrate—based on my archival research with the Eric Dolphy Collection housed in the Library of Congress—how Dolphy extended and transformed knowledge embedded in jazz practice and diverse stylistic influences through the theoretical conduit of Russell's *Lydian Chromatic Concept*.

Nathan Smith (University of Chicago)

Formalizing the Fretboard's Phantasmic Fingers

The past decade bore witness to a number of compelling theorizations of the instrument/performer interface that draw upon transformational methodologies. The transformational arrow, therefore, delineates the kinesthetic sensations of enacting a motion on/with an instrument. Although fretted instruments have received much attention, these theorizations either neglect to adequately capture the relation between body and instrument (Rockwell 2009), or reduce the body a mere shadow of the fretboard (De Souza 2017). This paper explicates how the symmetric group S_4 can be used to analyze the manifold ways fingers connect with fretted instruments. S_4 , visualized as the symmetrical manipulations of a cube, consists of all possible permutations of four elements; therefore, the operations act on the fingers of both hands equally. Flattening the cube into dihedral subgroups (D_8 and D_6) provides transformations that metaphorically map the experience of isolating a particular finger cycle and letting it “spin.” These dihedral subgroups contain the cyclic subgroups (Z_4 and Z_3) that supply transformations for singular motions through a finger ordering. This formalistic redundancy of transformations affords analytical differentiation between isolated and grouped conceptions of finger action. In addition to finger transformations, I define two contextual operations ($\text{PlcF}(r, s, f)$ and $\text{Arp}(s, f)$) that function componentwise on ordered n -tuples containing representatives of both fretboard and finger spaces—thus, attending to the nexus of instrument and performer. I illustrate the applicability of these transformations with musical examples ranging from Villa-Lobos to Opeth, culminating in an extended analysis of Ben Monder’s “Windowpanes.” These explorations show how the diversity of transformations afford analytical plasticity in modeling the conceptualizations of the body that underwrite performance.

session 2 — chair: Laura Brown

Dylan Hillyer (York University)

“Your Tells Are So Obvious”: Vocal Range and Timbre as a
Vector of Transgender Meaning in Transgender Dysphoria Blues

Laura Jane Grace’s public coming out as a trans woman in the December 2012 Rolling Stone was a landmark event for transgender visibility in popular music. The band’s subsequent album *Transgender Dysphoria Blues* (2014) explicitly centres transgender issues, serving as another milestone. This paper briefly reviews the dearth of material at the intersection of trans studies and musicology. It clarifies working definitions of “transgender” and “transgender meaning” centred on the experience of trans people themselves, and locates punk music genre tropes and scenes as a ripe place for development of transgender meaning in this sense.

The main focus of this paper is a three-pronged analysis of *Transgender Dysphoria Blues* in order to discover how this album communicates transgender meaning. The album's cover artwork, titles, and lyric themes are analyzed to show the reinforcement of the relevance of transgender to all aspects of the album. Second, Laura Jane Grace's vocal timbre is used as an analytic criterion to show change across three albums (*New Wave*, 2007; *White Crosses*, 2010; *Transgender Dysphoria Blues*, 2014), with reference to tables of other data including vocal range, backup harmonies, harmonic form, and structure. Change and stability over these albums are discussed as methods of Grace locating herself as both "still the same" and asserting a newly gendered identity. Finally, the first and last song from *Transgender Dysphoria Blues* are analyzed as start- and end-points to the album, communicating a hopeful, idealized transgender journey from fearful conformity to a "new" gender to confident self-acceptance.

Steven Moon (University of Pittsburgh)

Trans/Queer Epistemologies, Multivocality, and the Ethnographic Problem

This paper asks how trans/queer approaches to ethnographic fieldwork and representation alter notions of voice and subjectivity. 'Trans' and 'queer' resist epistemic boundaries by nature, but have nonetheless been taken up as identitarian tools for the excavation of sexuality, the body, and sound. In fact, it is precisely the tension between trans/queer and intellectual determinacy that provides the categories with their unique efficacies as embodied forms of knowledge. Understanding 'trans' as movement across (gendered) boundaries from an unchosen starting place (Stryker 2008) and 'queer' as the ongoing occupation of space irreverent of the heterosexual binary, this paper asks how both positions demand a multi-vocal approach to the representation of the self through ethnographic practice. Placing trans/queer in dialogue, separated only by [/] foregrounds the precarity of both the 'gender apparatus' and those subsumed by it. In an effort to practice a trans/queer approach, the paper will be delivered both in-person and through pre-recorded media that demonstrates my conceptualization of a trans/queer ethnography.

Current approaches to ethnography, gender/sexuality, and erotics remain firmly rooted in biological determinism, compulsory heterosexuality, and violent masculinity. Both sexual dimorphism and biologized racism have led to the exclusion of trans/queer/of-color subjects, scholars, and methods in addition to enacting violence upon those represented by such inquiry. By reframing ethnographic methods within an approach of multivocality, the researcher's orientation towards subjects, musical objects, and written representation distinctly changes. Rather than comfortably inhabiting an a priori heterosexual position, the ethnographer has the potential of the boundary-crosser, of one who performs a multiplicity of subject positions. Understood in this way, the masculinist penetration of colonial ethnography might be reconfigured as a practice which allows multiple voices to be heard at once, shifts the ethnographer-interlocutor dynamic, and pushes the self-reflexive trend beyond autoeroticism towards a polyvalent methodology.

session 3 — chair: Nick Curry

Stefan Greenfield-Casas (Northwestern University)

“Gotta catch ‘em all”: Towards a Theory of the Transmediagesamtkunstwerk

As seductive and enticing as Richard Wagner’s conceptual *Gesamtkunstwerk* may be, the term is oft misunderstood and misapplied in discourses surrounding media and popular culture. In particular, film scholars since the early twentieth-century have questioned whether the *Gesamtkunstwerk* applies to the cinematic medium and, indeed, the appropriateness of applying the concept to a medium anachronistic to Wagner’s time. More recently in ludological studies, Jane McGonigal declared that “today’s avant game is already approaching the *Gesamtkunstwerk*” (2005). As Scott Paulin (2000) notes, the main cause for this exploitation of the term and the resultant schism in scholarship is an unclear and amorphous definition of the term as set by Wagner. Recent musicological essays have tackled these issues, most notably Paulin’s aforementioned work and Peter Franklin’s response essay (2010).

Following the problematization of a cinematic *Gesamtkunstwerk*, I expand Ana Matilde Sousa’s (2014) assertion that the media franchise is the true *Gesamtkunstwerk* of our time: what she calls the *Transmediagesamtkunstwerk*. I argue that, while not the *Werk* Wagner would have imagined, the franchise and/as its components achieve(s) a closer realization of this total *Werk* than can any individual medium on its own. I demonstrate this by first identifying how Wagner and others have defined the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, particularly with respect to cinema. Following the writings of Carolyn Abbate (2006), Theodor Adorno (1952/2009), and Henry Jenkins (2006), I then show how the *Transmediagesamtkunstwerk* is related to the operatic *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Finally, I draw on James Buhler’s (2017) discussion of musically “branding the franchise” to situate music’s critical role in the franchise. I employ the Pokémon franchise as my case study, due not only to its place among the highest-grossing (trans) media franchises of all time, but also its significance in being (as I argue) the most successful franchise in musically branding its constitutive components.

Erik Broess (University of Pennsylvania)

Dying to be Heard: Technology and Voice in the Modern Séance

A voicemail; an unopened email; a Facebook ‘like’ — there are many digital artifacts in which the memories of the dead can be interred. With the expanding presence of cybernetic relationships in Western society, users are accumulating massive traces of their digital selves that will remain accessible long after their deaths. The uncanny potential for both living and deceased users to commingle in a new digital limbo is merely one recent expression of an

enduring desire to communicate with the dead. This paper will locate efforts during the 19th and 20th centuries to traverse boundaries between living and dead within contemporary discourses about subjectivity, technology and voice.

Drawing from the Modern Spiritualist movement in 19th century America, I will show how the interaction of telegraphy and voice disrupted boundaries between sight and sound, life and death. I will situate these transgressions of the boundaries of the afterlife within a historical climate that was broadly anxious about defining borders: between North/South during the Antebellum, human/ape in Darwin, and conscious/unconscious mind in Freud, among others. I will also demonstrate how developments in the digital age have only exacerbated anxiety over borders through a discussion of Charles Dodge's computer-aided posthumous duet, *Any Resemblance is Purely Coincidental*. I will consider how voice is employed to transgress boundaries relevant to composers in the last quarter of the 20th century, including the transition from analog to digital, and even early encounters with the posthuman.

Benjamin Safran (Temple University)

"A Kinder World than Ours": Music, Narrative, and 'Camp' in Steven Universe

Now in its fifth season, Cartoon Network's *Steven Universe* has gained many adult fans, particularly queer and trans adults and those belonging to certain other marginalized identities. Even while presenting an alternate reality that might in some ways be viewed as dystopian, the children's cartoon is largely perceived as offering a "safe space." The show has attracted positive attention for its depiction of queer relationships along with its varied use of music. Although the show promotes choice, love, consent, and leisure while often resisting dominant ideologies in transgressive fashion, the majority of episodes do not include explicitly queer themes. Drawing on discussions with fans and Steven Cohan's (2005) observations on incongruity between music and narrative in "camp" musicals, I argue that part of the show's queer appeal may be understood as camp. The ambiguously diegetic nature of many songs along with the "childish" nature of individual episodes' narratives heightens the sense of camp. However, compared to the camp of 20th century musicals—and other children's cartoons—the show overall is both more overtly queer and less sexualized.

The narrative structure offered by the medium of the children's television cartoon may offer new possibilities for camp aesthetic within 21st century musical work. While the show's format of short [-11'] episodes with a self-contained story is common among children's TV shows, less common is the simultaneous existence of an overarching narrative that unfolds across the course of the entire series. This existence of multiple levels of narrative arc enables queer themes to be encoded differently at each level. I consider that certain songs may function as "camp" within the context of the "foreground" (episode) narrative, while the same songs are poignant, serious, and romantic [concerning an overtly queer relationship] within the context of the "background" (series) narrative.

session 4 — chair: Marissa Glynias Moore

Stefanie Bilidas (Michigan State University)

Crafting the Consonance: An Investigation of Metrical Dissonance in Tap Improvisation

The tap challenge or “cutting contest” is a public, judged, and improvised battle between skilled dancers. Unstated is the golden rule that each dancer must enter exactly on time when it is their turn or automatically forfeit the contest. As a performer, this rule creates the hidden objective to mislead the other dancer through a conflicting metrical pattern in hopes that the opponent will miss the next entrance. The audible effect heard is not the original meter but an “anti-meter” that Harald Krebs (1999) describes as a subliminal dissonance. I build on Stefan Love’s (2013) perspective of subliminal dissonance: in jazz music, subliminal dissonance does not have to be performed as a conflicting meter, but instead can be performed as a consonant meter. Since many tap traditions stem from interactions with jazz musicians, I explore how subliminal metrical dissonance is articulated as a consonance in improvised tap solos during a “cutting contest” by examining the tappers’ choice of steps and their implied metrical placement. I claim that in their improvised solos, tappers journey through a variety of anti-meters that are only preserved as metrical dissonance due to the set tempo and meter at the start of the “cutting contest”. Looking at a transcription, the anti-meters can be analyzed in relation to the original meter, but in the moment, these anti-meters create conflict for the opponents involved. For this reason, I conclude that tappers use metrical dissonance in their solos to inhibit their opponents’ sense of the original meter.

Sonja Wermager (Columbia University)

“That Hart May Sing in Corde”: Translation and Transformation of the Psalms as Defense of Church Music in Matthew Parker’s The Whole Psalter Translated into English Metre (1567)

Translation of sacred texts is always a dangerous act. In the sixteenth century, Bible translators faced persecution and even execution for their perceived heresy. Nevertheless, when Archbishop of Canterbury Matthew Parker (1504-1575) published his translation of the biblical book of psalms, for which Thomas Tallis wrote the corresponding psalm tunes, he joined a growing number of scholars and clerics risking the translation of scripture under the aegis of the Protestant Reformation. In his paraphrases of the psalms Parker carefully negotiated between strict translation and poetic transformation of the text, particularly in regard to musical topics. In this paper, I argue that Parker in his psalm translations advanced a musico-theological justification for the inclusion of music in liturgy during an era when vocal polyphony and instrumental music in religious settings fomented the suspicion of many proto-Puritan Protestant reformers.

Comparison of the printed 1567 text with Parker's original manuscript held at the Inner Temple Library in London reveals that Parker often chose explicitly musical terms in his translations. In doing so, Parker provided foundational justification for establishing the role of music in Anglican liturgy, harnessing all the tools of his humanist training to advance his conviction that music, far from distracting congregants, enriched and uplifted them spiritually. Scholars have generally regarded Parker's psalter as inconsequential compared to the more popular translations of the time, but the fact that Parker largely shaped the doctrine and practice of the Anglican Church in its formative years requires that the psalter be given greater attention (Ottenhoff 2006). Drawing on the work of Rivkah Zim and Beth Quitslund on the genre of metrical psalmody, I demonstrate how Parker's art of translation facilitated his multifaceted defense of church music in the face of increasingly hostile factions within the English Protestant Church.

Katelyn Hearfield (University of Pennsylvania)

*Lip-Syncing Along to a Singing Mermaid:
Various Gendered Voices in Lady Gaga's "You and I"*

In 2011, Lady Gaga released the official music video for the song "You and I" from *Born This Way*, an album known for its celebratory queer themes, in which Gaga's persona Yūyi the mermaid undergoes a transformation through experimentation (maybe torture) by her scientist-lover. Two weeks later, Gaga's alter ego Jo Calderone attended and performed at the MTV Video Music Awards on her behalf—she did not appear all night. Gaga develops Calderone's voice as much as his image. Recognizing these two performances as the most significant versions of the song, and assuming this reflects on how it is subsequently heard separated from these contexts, I argue that many listeners have never heard Lady Gaga sing "You and I" as Gaga.

I adapt the models of popular music performance suggested by Simon Frith and Philip Auslander in order to better address the complexity of a popular music artist who may also be understood as performance artist. As Gaga's envoicing of her personae construes them as both of her and displaced from her, the categories of performer, persona, and character are too rigid to contain the relationships between Lady Gaga, Stefani Germanotta (Gaga's legal name), Jo Calderone, and Yūyi the mermaid. Drawing from the interdisciplinary areas of voice, queer, and gender theory, I imagine these alter egos as extensions of Gaga as a variously gendered self.

session 5 — chair: John Klaess

Subash Giri (University of Alberta)

*'Folk-Rock' Music Scene of Kathmandu:
The Issues of Transculturation and Youth Identity*

The major aim of this research is to understand the 'Folk-Rock' music scene of Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal. The research examines how the youth of Kathmandu blend, mix, and integrate global rock music genre with their local folk music and create new 'Folk-Rock' music genre. Based on semi-structural interviews, musical, and literature analysis the research explores that the 'Folk-Rock' scene developed among the youths in Kathmandu exhibits the phenomenon of Transculturation. In addition, the popularity of this new genre among the youth of Kathmandu depicts their selfness and foster to create a new identity.

Globalization, modernization, networking, interconnection, and access to digital technology are widespread phenomena that have turned the world into a single realm of cultural production. These phenomena are so common that they have generated different novel terms like transculturation, acculturation, transformation, hybridity, new identities etc. Due to its easy access to media, technology and central location for all cultural productions, the Kathmandu city is considered the most vibrant city for music scenes in Nepal. 'Folk-Rock' is one of the most significant and popular music scenes among the youth of Kathmandu. Its powerful presence on national and private media stations, its influence on young artists, live concerts, and youths, in general, are the reasons why this music genre is readily acceptable in the Kathmandu music scene.

The research foregrounds the acceptance of the global rock music traits and its integration with local music, local language and local cultural elements by the youth of Kathmandu and explores it as a phenomenon of transculturation and youth identity.

Woodrow Steinken (University of Pittsburgh)

Black Metal's Transgressions, Self-Abjection, and the Horrors of Being

In music scholarship, black metal is often tokenized as satanic metal, and criticism is often sensationalist and highlights a string of crimes committed by practitioners in Norway in the early 1990s. Within the past few years, a new movement called "black metal theory" has emerged to recuperate black metal and put it in dialogue with critical and theoretical thinkers. This paper looks to balance those two approaches, and by using Kristeva's *Powers of Horror*, I offer a new interpretation of black metal that simultaneously takes into account the musical/aesthetic features of the scene and how they relate to the transgressive activities perpetrated by the music's practitioners.

Specifically, this paper examines music by the black metal band Emperor, a band whose members found themselves at the center of the Norwegian crime wave. Emperor's 1994 album *In the Nightside Eclipse* was received with critical acclaim, but was followed by the incarceration of three of the band's four members. I put this music, specifically the song "Towards the Pantheon," into dialogue with Kristeva's abjection in order to problematize the scholarship and criticism of black metal thus far, ultimately arriving at a new understanding of the music's praxis.

I argue that, more than a merely satanic cult of musicians creating evil-sounding music, black metal objectifies the self. Its practitioners perform dichotomous identities, marked by physical practices of masking, which allow them as subjects to experience abjection both as musical and societal transgressors. Yet, more than merely debasing themselves through performances of music or identity, black metal reorients Kristeva's theory in relation to the emphasis of the horror of being. Rather than attempt to scare audiences with extreme satanic practices onstage, black metal scares its audience by performing bodily existence and uncanny self-destruction.

Katrice Kemble (Wesleyan University)

"I Can Be Your Whore":

Maria Brink's Performance of Post-Feminism with In This Moment

The metal music genre, from its subcultural origins to its many present-day forms, maintains a distinctly masculine reputation. Beyond simply being masculine, metal tends to be anti-feminine. Lyrics sometimes promote violence towards women, artwork features hyper-sexualized images of women, and female participants face discrimination from the metal community at large. Despite this, women still produce and consume metal music. I explore this phenomenon by focusing on one of the female performers of heavy metal music: Maria Brink.

Brink, lyricist and lead singer of *In This Moment*, presents herself in a way that coincides with the existing narrative of hyper-sexual violence surrounding women in metal. Her case can help us address the question about these women posed succinctly by Heather Savigny and Sam Sleight: "Sexy or Sexist?" On the surface, Brink's provocative costumes, choreography, and lyrics seem to subscribe to the image of women put forward by the male-dominated metal community. In this paper, however, I argue that Brink's performance stylings instead renegotiate, exaggerate, reclaim, and embrace this image in ways that challenge an oversimplified definition of "feminist."

Looking at Brink's role in *In This Moment* and in the wider metal music community provides a case study in what happens when metal is unabashedly female. She defies the masculine codes of the genre, finding her own heavy-metal power through her femininity. I draw on a lifetime of experience as a female metalhead to tease out the complexities of Maria Brink's transgressive em-

powerment through self-sexualization. With this project, I hope to draw attention to the diversity of the ways in which women can feel empowered.

keynote

Alexander Rehding (Harvard University)

Transcending the final frontier: The Golden Record and Listening in Outer Space

The Voyager space mission (1977) shot a Golden Record into outer space, containing a compilation of world music. While at the time it was seen as a largely symbolic gesture, the recent discovery of countless exoplanets has given renewed urgency to the question of intelligent life on other planets. What will actually happen if, hundreds or thousands of years from now, extraterrestrials find the Golden Record? Can we assume that they have ears? What does listening even mean in this exoplanetary context? While much of the answer must remain speculative, we can go some way toward an answer. But what is contained on the Golden Record itself (which is, essentially, a high-quality LP) can tell us a lot about the parameters of listening—human or otherwise.

workshop

Patrick McCreless (Yale University)

TRANS, the theme of our symposium this year, is rich in its possibilities for musical connections. That is, of course, why our organizers chose it in the first place. The topic has inspired Alex Rehding, our Keynote Speaker, to think of music on the grandest scale imaginable: music (whatever that is, or turns out to be), recorded across a huge range of earthbound cultures, on the Voyager Golden Record of 1977, now speeding through interstellar space, in transit to who knows what, when, or where, or to whom.

This simple, but deeply resonant prefix has also stimulated our thirteen presenters to ponder boundaries—boundaries that are social, historical, political, aesthetic—and to ponder ways, especially musical ways, to cross them ... boundaries between jazz theory and jazz improvisation, boundaries between performer and instrument, boundaries across the lines of sex and gender, across historical and contemporary media, across the divide between the living and the dead, across the fuzzy division between child and adult, between meter and anti-meter in tap dancing, across the gulf between Biblical Hebrew and early modern English, between mermaid and human, folk and rock, satanic and non-satanic, and sexy and sexist.

Our Saturday morning workshop provides the opportunity to share ideas about

the notion of TRANS in our musical experience. As a music theorist—someone who spends a lot of time with “the notes”—I initially thought of choosing a music theoretical/analytical topic, a topic centered squarely in the Western Art Music tradition, the tradition I know best. I thought of the *transitus*, the passing tone, in the work of some seventeenth-century theorists. I thought of transitions in sonata form, of Fétis’s *transitonique* era in the history of Western harmony, and of David Lewin’s transformation theory. But those topics would have surely meant concentrating on particular passages of particular pieces in a particular tradition in a particular culture. That activity is honorable, productive, and valuable (I’ve made a living from it for a number of decades now) but it seemed to me to be entirely contrary—even spectacularly contrary—to both the spirit and the content of the symposium.

And so, after much thought, and some helpful conversations with colleagues, I hit upon an idea that I hope will get some traction. How about putting on the table all the pieces (or works, or songs, or albums) that we know that feature the prefix TRANS in their titles, then basing our extended discussion on them? Why do they have the titles that they do? How is the concept of TRANS embodied in the music? What connections we can find between these pieces? How might trying to find such connections be informative and productive? How might it, on the other hand, be arbitrary and pointless? How might the concept of TRANS help us to extend ourselves beyond our own musical and cultural boundaries—across genres, idioms, styles; across political and social divides?

To start the conversation—and in a sense to limit it as well—we’ll begin with a few musical entities that are reasonably well-known, to which we all have access (thanks to the Internet), and which we can all hear, absorb, and think about in the days before we meet.

We’ll start with the Western Art Music tradition:

- Wagner, “Isolde’s Transfiguration” (popularly known as the *Liebestod*, but Wagner himself called it *Isolde’s Verklärung*) from *Tristan und Isolde*, Act III (1859)
- Strauss, *Death and Transfiguration* (*Tod und Verklärung*) (1888-89)
- Schoenberg, *Verklärte Nacht* (1899)
- Messiaen, *La Transfiguration de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ* (1966-69)
- Stockhausen, *Trans* (1971)

From the jazz tradition, two songs/albums by Alice Coltrane:

- *Transfiguration* (1978)
- *Translinear Light* (2004)

From the rock world (but long ago) a song/album by Kraftwerk:

- *Trans Europa Express* (1977)

So here’s the plan:

- 1) Listen to and read about as much of the above music as you can. I don’t want this to be like a graduate seminar, so I’ll leave you on your own as to what to read.

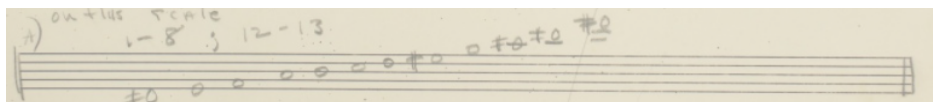
You can get the basics about any of the above from Wikipedia, and you can make your way, as you like, through the New Grove, standard textbooks, reviews, and published scholarship—the last of which, depending on what you're reading about, can range from brief citation to massive measure-by-measure analysis.

2) I invite you to write to me with other music that you think relevant, and I'll add music to the YGMS website. Items from jazz and popular traditions are especially welcome. I reserve the right to limit what I include, should things begin to get out of hand.

3) Some of you will know more about these pieces than I do. I (and probably everyone else) will want to hear what you have to say. My role as workshop leader will be as a facilitator, not as a resident expert.

4) That said, it's my job to make our conversation as productive as possible, so I reserve the right to guide and limit the discussion as I think best.

I look forward to our time together on March 3!



#YGMS2018

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Aaron Jackson
Will Watson

hospitality

Taryn Dubois
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website and program

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