

Abstracts

Panel 1:

The Grotesque and the Ethereal: "Orinoco Flow" in David Fincher's *The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo*

Incorporating pre-existing music within a film has been a common practice since the earliest motion pictures. More recent films such as *American Graffiti* (1973) and *Forrest Gump* (1994) utilize popular songs to position the audience within the period of the film's story. However, filmmakers such as Stanley Kubrick or David Lynch, utilize pre existing music within their work as a narrative means. More specifically, Stanley Kubrick's classical selections in *The Shining* (1980) highlight the avant-garde aspects of the film and serve to amplify the insanity with the main character. David Lynch's pairing of Roy Orbison's "In Dreams" with two violent scenes highlight the grotesque within *Blue Velvet* (1986) create a new dialogue between the audience and visual.

This paper will examine the relationship between audio, visual, and audience using David Fincher's 2011 film *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* and the inclusion of Enya's "Orinoco Flow" at the story's climax. The application of this popular song humanizes the action on screen and reflects the narrative relationship that both Kubrick and Lynch explored. Building on scholarship by Katherine Reed, who analyzes narrative within the work of David Lynch, I apply her framework to Fincher's film to evaluate why this unlikely pairing of the ethereal Enya within a murder thriller is so impactful.

"Vision of Now:" Head Over Heels and the Queerness of Jukebox Musicals

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The jukebox musical's process of covering pre-existing music not only creates a space of familiarity, but it also aids in the confrontation with difference. As Jack Halberstam explains, the act of covering a song can queer it through the change in relationship between the original and the cover. I argue that the surrounding narrative of the musical works in a similar way. Through the additional context added by the musical itself, the meaning of the song becomes shifted, thus allowing for a queer space. This paper uses *Head Over Heels* (2018) cultivation of a queer utopia to demonstrate how the show's storyline alters the sense of the songs. Based on a sixteenth century novel and using the music of The Go-Go's, the show accomplishes its creation of queer space through the reinterpretation of its source materials which provides for both sexual- and genderfluidity. Through their reperformance, songs in non-biographical jukebox musicals can provide a space where recontextualizing the meaning allows for new queer understandings. Building off Halberstam's discussions of queerness in cover songs, I not

only seek to show how *Head Over Heels* creates its queer utopia but how non-biographical jukebox musicals can create spaces for queerness through covering pre-existing music.

“Witness to a Spectacle:” the Afro-futurist, Western Soundscape of *Nope*

During the 94th Oscars ceremony on March 27, 2023, several horror and science-fiction fans were shocked when Jordan Peele’s *Nope* was not nominated for any academy awards.¹ Considering *Get Out* won “Best Original Screenplay” in 2018, audiences and critics alike were interested in viewing Peele’s unique twist on science-fiction alien movies. Far from a cheap gory blockbuster, *Nope* masterfully interweaves elements of the Old Hollywood Western with horror and sci-fi. In addition to this genre-bending and critical-race examination of Hollywood, the most unique and unexamined aspect of the movie is its soundscape. Though there is ample material written on Jordan Peele by black film critics, there are no peer-reviewed articles written about Michael Abels—the composer for *Get Out*, *Us*, and *Nope*. Jordan Peele’s directing, Johnnie Burn’s sound design, and Michael Abels’ impeccable score form the foundation of *Nope*’s soundscape, and they deserve an analysis together as a unit. Drawing from film theory, music theory, and musicology, this paper explores African American influences in Hollywood Westerns, examines the hauntingly ambiguous Foley art in *Nope*, and analyzes three pieces from the soundtrack itself: “Jupiter’s Claim,” “Arena Attack,” and “Run.” With Abels’ Western inspired original score, Burn’s ambiguous sound design, and the masterful use of diegetic music, *Nope*’s soundscape is a multi-genre, Afro-futurist reclamation of Old Hollywood Westerns.

Panel 2:

How Calypso became the Pioneer for Colonial Emancipation in Trinidad

To the outsider, Calypso music may be the indispensable musical representative that the great awaited beach vacation has arrived. However, upon political, social, and cultural analysis, one would find that Calypso is actually steeped in historical parameters that would serve to be a pioneer for the colonial emancipation of Trinidad. Calypso would spread throughout the Caribbean as a major musical element for Trinidad and serve to shape its political, cultural, religious, social, racial, and historical components. The goal of this research was to discover how Calypso became the outcome of decolonization within the country. This research explored various aspects of Calypso including its extensive origins rooted in parallel African traditions. Furthermore, this research exposed that the Westernized concept of colonization would bring about monumental setbacks for Trinidadians, thereby giving rise to an environment facilitating the creation of Calypso, steelpan, and Carnival as a means to preserve traditions that originated from their heritage. The popularity of Calypso would drive the musical art-form beyond its borders so much so that it would be picked up and further popularized by performers external to its homeland. The rise of Calypso as an original musical genre in Trinidad's culture is a result of fulfilling emancipation from Westernized ties.

Drumming in the Breaks of Samba-Afro: Bloco Afro Ilê Aiyê and Resistência Negra in Salvador, Brazil

This paper explores how Ilê Aiyê's percussion breaks reflect themes and facets of black resistance in contemporary Salvador. Since the early 2000s, master percussionists of Ilê Aiyê transformed samba-afro music by adding eclectic rhythms and innovative breaks into the repertoire. Instead of samba-afro signifying one specific rhythm from the 1970s, it now represents a vast series of rhythms and breaks in the music of Ilê Aiyê. Based on ethnographic fieldwork from 2022-2023 in Salvador, the paper integrates original audiovisual excerpts of performances and interviews with musicians and members of this community percussion ensemble. As the first bloco afro established in 1974, Ilê Aiyê ("House of Life" in Yoruba) has persevered and become renowned for their proactive role in the "reAfricanization" of Bahian Carnival by promoting Afro-descendant pride, power, consciousness, identity, and citizenship (Risério 1981; Dunn 1992; Crook 1993). A bloco afro literally translates as "Afro block," referring to community ensembles of percussionists, dancers, singers, residents, and fans who parade together during Carnival to support the same Afrocentric theme. Ilê Aiyê's 2023 Carnival theme, for example, featured Angola's first president António Agostinho da Silva Neto who led the country to independence from Portugal in 1976. Several of Ilê Aiyê's performances leading up to this Carnival parade reveal a profound emphasis on the

artistry of percussion breaks—a manifestation, I contend, of a black radical tradition (Robinson 1981; Moten 2003) and musical resistance against ongoing antiblackness, violence, and structural racism in modern-day Brazil.

Incorporating Native Music and Instructional Methods in the Kenyan Music Curriculum

Formal music education in many parts of the world has long been inclined towards the study of Western European music traditions and history. In Kenya, a seemingly long-term effect of colonialism is the perpetuated bias toward Western music in the education system. Not only is this culturally disparate from the music Kenyan children are exposed to in the society, but it also propagates the perception that Kenyan music is inferior to Western music. Curriculum reforms since independence have sought to remedy the situation, with limited success thus far.

Since 2018, Kenya has been going through a period of momentous change in education, which presents a notable opportunity to finally incorporate the music of Kenya into formal music instruction. This project explores the rationale for using native music and provides detailed lesson plans that are intended to serve as a framework for music teachers in the country to integrate native Kenyan music into their classrooms.

“No, Mama Cass Did Not Choke to Death on a Ham Sandwich”: Fatphobia in Sensational Posthumous Narratives of US Popular Musicians

“Mama” Cass Elliot, born Ellen Naomi Cohen, was a celebrated member of the 1970s singing group the Mamas & the Papas and a talented solo artist before her premature death in 1974. Frequently bullied by the media and bandmates for her size, Elliot cycled through diets that caused extreme bodily stress as she gained, lost, and regained weight. After her death, a rumor of her asphyxiating on a ham sandwich spread widely and rapidly. While this rumor is cited less often in the present, the narrative surrounding Elliot’s death is that it was to be expected—a narrative that exists in stark contrast to those of other musicians who passed away at young ages but were not so closely tied to fatness.

In this presentation, I investigate sensationalized posthumous narratives of US popular musicians whose legacies have been complicated by their connections to fatness, therefore activating the purposely cultivated anti-fat bias of media and audiences in the United States. Elliot’s death is one example within this paper. However, thin musicians such as Karen Carpenter were also the victims of widespread, socially accepted fatphobia and violence against fatness. I argue that such sensationalized posthumous narratives exist to reinforce and perpetuate fatphobia. I employ Fat Musicology—which recognizes the gendered, raced, and classed histories of fatness and their effects on audience listening practices—as a methodology for questioning widely accepted myths regarding fatness, health, and mortality.

Keynote Address:

Spotify Thy Name; or, Worshipping in the Age of Playlists

As with all forms of popular music, contemporary Christian worship music has undergone a format revolution in the past 50 years. Originally sold in physical records and paper songbooks directly to congregations and gradually integrated into the broader Christian recording and publishing industries, most listeners now access worship music through one of a few popular streaming services. Platforms like Spotify even provide spotlighted playlists like “Rhythm & Praise” or “Women of Worship” for listeners to discover targeted new worship tracks. And Spotify maintains a current “WorshipNow” list for nearly a million subscribers that promises to provide access to “the pulse of today’s modern worship music.” Obviously, these tools provide new opportunities for fan-worshippers to expand and customize their audio-worship experiences, but they also provide new pathways for worship music to circulate outside of the institutional church and interact with broader popular music ecosystems. Through corporate incentive, user direction, and algorithmic recommendation, explicitly liturgical music is being placed in shuffles, playlists, stations, and mixes with other popular music as never before. In this talk, I begin to sketch the outlines for these new patterns of worship music circulation brought about by this celestial jukebox (pun FULLY intended) and examine the increasing power of “worship” as a shared affect in our popular music vocabulary.

Dr. Joshua Busman (University of North Carolina):

Joshua Kalin Busman is Assistant Dean of the Esther G. Maynor Honors College and an Associate Professor of Music at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. He completed his Ph.D. in Musicology in 2015 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and his research focuses on music contemporary evangelical Christianity with particular attention to questions of worship, affect, and mass media. Over the past several years, Joshua has presented his research at a host of regional, national, and international conferences and published work in journals such as *Religions*, *Liturgy*, *Ethnomusicology Review*, *Journal of the Society for American Music*, *The Avid Listener*, and *The Other Journal*, as well as in multiple edited collections from Oxford University Press, Routledge, Rowman & Littlefield, and Bloomsbury Academic. He is a past president of the Society for Ethnomusicology’s Southeast and Caribbean Chapter as well as the SEM Religion, Music, and Sound study group. Currently, he serves as co-chair for the Music and Religion Unit in the American Academy of Religion and as a member of the Executive Board of the North Carolina Honors Association.

Panel 3:

***Requiem for the Enslaved* by Carlos Simon**

Requiem for the Enslaved, composed by Carlos Simon, was a commission from Georgetown University to commemorate the 1838 sale of over 200 African American slaves that saved the university from financial ruin. The tradition of the requiem, as it is recognized in classical music, dates back to the time of Gregorian chant. As centuries have progressed, requiems have evolved from monophonic chants to large scale works involving a full symphony orchestra, full choir, and three or four solo vocalists. And so, when one first listens to Simon's requiem, one might notice the significant downsizing of the instrumentation and the absence of any vocalists, save a rapper serving as a narrator, and wonder why it should be considered a requiem at all. In this study, *Requiem for the Enslaved* will be compared to past requiems that are well established, revered, and respected in the classical music community and will show that by breaking tradition, Simon was in fact keeping tradition with the likes of Britten, Brahms, and even Mozart. This study will also investigate how Simon's calculated use of intertextuality seamlessly intersects the traditions of Catholic liturgy, West African cultural practices, and Black American spiritualism to depict the memories of the departed while simultaneously provoking the listener to reckon with the injustices of the present day. Moreover, the elements of what constitutes a requiem will be called into question, challenging the idea that a requiem's legitimacy should depend on how closely it follows the format of Mozart's K.626.

Spirituality and Postmodernism: An Exploration of Kunstreligion in Arvo Pärt's Symphony No. 4: Los Angeles

The available scholarly literature on the Estonian composer Arvo Pärt reflects a multitude of philosophical, theological, and academic dispositions that, on the surface, dismiss his work as being part of the culture industry. This paper seeks to illuminate those dispositions and their inherent values and show that something more complex and sincere is occurring with his music. Dubbed a "holy-minimalist," Pärt's compositional process and the experience of his listeners more closely resembles the 19th-century phenomenon of art as religion or Kunstreligion, in which spirituality acts as a stand-in for religion. Through a brief examination of Pärt's vocal music, this paper will argue that the reception of Pärt's work is infused with spiritual connotations that invoke the feelings of religion without the dogmas and problems commonly associated with organized faith practices. As a result, Pärt's *Symphony No. 4: Los Angeles* is imbued not just with Pärt's stylistic tintinnabuli idiom but is also part of a larger phenomenon of Kunstreligion in the symphonic concert hall in which instrumental music is sacralized. The impetus to decry Pärt and other holy minimalists as merely responding to marketized forces and demands does a disservice to the experiences of his listeners and scholars who wish to become

more familiar with his music. In future research, 19th-century ideas of Kunstreligion could help account for the success of Pärt's instrumental works and illuminate what it means to be spiritual but not religious for concertgoers and consumers of his music.