

Scholarly Reflection

2020-2021

Explication of Completed Presentations and Publications

In June 2020, I presented a revised version of my work on musicians on the sets of silent film ("It Is the Musician behind the Camera Who Is the Soul of the Picture": Music on the Sets of "Silent" Film") at the conference "Hidden Figures of Screen Music and Sound." The conference was housed at Royal Holloway University, London, England; it was initially meant to take place in person, but switched to a virtual conference due to the pandemic. While the presence of musicians on early film sets is well known, the principles, functions, and economics of this vital practice have received almost no critical attention. In my paper, I drew on periodical sources, memoirs, and archival documents to analyze the use and meaning of on-set music in the 1910s and 1920s, and I argued that analyzing music's unexplored role on silent film sets not only sheds new light on music's relationship to emotion, meaning, and gesture in the early twentieth century, but also offers an essential new contribution to understanding the role of music in early film. I focused specifically on the roles of race and gender in this understudied area, in partnership with this conference's focus on "hidden" or overlooked figures in screen sound.

I was invited to serve as a speaker at a conference on "Bootleg Opera" at the University of the Arts in Bern, Switzerland in September 2020. (<https://www.hkb-interpretation.ch/bootleg-opera>). I gave a presentation entitled "Intimate Collections: Considering Materiality and Identity via Metropolitan Opera Broadcast Bootlegs," a study considering how collection and dissemination of radio broadcasts complicates existent scholarship on operatic listening. Drawing on archival documents, bootleg collections, memoirs, and press coverage, I incorporated theory from voice studies, work on gender, sexuality, and race, and scholarship connecting intimacy and material culture. Ultimately, I demonstrated that studying bootleg copies of Met broadcasts not only offers a new analytical lens on a long-lived media product, but also uniquely illuminates ties between music and identity. Conference organizer Laura Moeckli and I have decided to co-edit a special issue for a journal drawing on selected papers from this conference.

A version of my work on bootleg opera recordings which focuses more specifically on the question of race, listening, and the Metropolitan Opera Broadcasts was accepted as a paper for the American Musicological Society annual meeting in Minneapolis in November 2020. Typically about eight hundred abstracts are submitted for consideration for the annual meeting; after anonymous assessment by members of the AMS Council, about ¼ of abstracts are accepted for inclusion in the meeting. I have been approached by a scholarly press with interest in publishing this work. During this year's AMS meeting I also chaired a session on "Transmedial Politics of the Stage."

I continue to work on research in the area of music, sound, and trauma. As part of a four-person conference committee team, I am organizing an international conference at Indiana University in February 2021 entitled "Music, Sound, and Trauma: Interdisciplinary Perspectives" (<https://musicsoundtraumacnf2021.com>). This conference is funded by an Indiana University Presidential Arts & Humanities Conference Hosting Grant. We have received a massive amount of interest in this conference and the final program schedule features more than 100 papers, workshops, panels, and performances from musicians and trauma scholars around the world. At this moment, several hundred people have signed up to attend. In addition to peer-reviewing and organizing, I will be participating in two roundtables and delivering a paper on a new project; this new work,

entitled “This is a Rhythm I Have Breathed in Since That Day: Polio, Sound, and Traumatic Memory,” studies sound and trauma in polio wards in the mid-century United States.

During the course of the year I published a media review of the *Silent Film Sound & Music Archive*, which appeared in the November 2020 issue of the *Journal of the Society for American Music*. I was also asked to serve as an anonymous expert/peer-reviewer for an article on Germaine Tailleferre for *Women & Music* in February 2021.

Upcoming Presentations and Publications

I have also submitted my work on sound and polio to the fall meeting of the Royal Music Association in Newcastle, as part of a panel entitled “Painful Vibrations: Sounding Medical Contexts.” The paper, “This is a Rhythm I Have Breathed in Since That Day: Polio, Sound, and Traumatic Memory,” is currently under consideration.

A proposal for a colloquy on “Music & Trauma” in the *Journal of the American Musicological Society* — the most selective and high-profile musicological journal—has been unanimously approved by the JAMS Editorial Board. Once the colloquy is complete (summer 2021), it will then follow the usual submission process (it will go out to 2-3 readers who will evaluate and recommend to accept, revise & resubmit, etc.). My submission to the colloquy, “‘When the Echoes of the Last Shots Have Ceased’: Hearing Nineteenth-Century Trauma” consists of a study of historical sound studies and trauma.

There are also two related projects connected to the Indiana trauma conference in the works. The first is an *Oxford Handbook of Music, Sound, and Trauma Studies*; Oxford has expressed interest in this project. I would serve as co-editor, with the proposal to be formally submitted in summer 2021. The second is a special issue on music and trauma-informed pedagogy, which is intended for *The Journal of Music History Pedagogy* in fall 2021.

My chapter contribution—“Sonic Scars in Urban Space: The Parisian Soundscape during the Franco-Prussian War”—as part of a special issue on “Music, War, and Trauma in the Long Nineteenth Century” for *Nineteenth-Century Music Review* is undergoing final peer review. I hope the journal article will be accepted and forthcoming in summer or fall 2021. In other upcoming projects, I plan to submit my article on *Tosca*, Sarah Bernhardt, and performative memory to *Cambridge Opera Journal* in fall 2021.

This year I plan to complete research for a publication analyzing music on silent film sets. I have presented versions of this work at the national meeting of the American Musicological Society (San Antonio, November 2018) and the Music and the Moving Image Conference (New York University, May 2019). In both cases I received excellent support for this scholarship; I hope to conduct additional necessary archival research on this topic and submit the article in fall 2021 to the peer-reviewed journal *Music and the Moving Image*.

Looking further ahead, I have two book manuscripts I am hoping to develop this year and next: one on music, sound, and polio, and another on racialized listening to the Metropolitan Opera Broadcasts.