



NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NO. 36

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Doing Music History Where You Are

Olivia Bloechl

Lately I've been writing and speaking on topics related to global music history, and, paradoxically, that has me thinking about musical pasts of places close to home. Global historiographies stress the involvement of past societies' music in larger-scale connective processes, often across long distances. While these approaches vary (and are still emerging in musicology), they share an understanding that musical life in a given place was often affected complexly by projects and processes elsewhere, sometimes to such a degree that they were truly interconnected. Diasporic musics are a classic example, as in the case of the Black banjo player, singer, and freedom seeker Scipio who escaped north from Maryland to Pennsylvania along the Susquehanna River. In 1749, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* printed an ad offering a reward for his re-capture, inadvertently chronicling the passage of Black banjo artistry from its West African origins—via the Caribbean—to the North American slave colonies, where runaways like Scipio brought it as far north as present-day Harrisburg. Researching or teaching “local” music histories like these can take us surprisingly far afield, whether our starting point is Pennsylvania, Jamaica, or Angola. Conversely, starting from where we are can sometimes reveal an unexpected salience of the “here and now” to our histories of eighteenth-century music, even those that occurred very far away.

Starting from where we are, though, is no simple matter. If you or your family migrated long-distance to your region within living memory, your “here” may stretch to encompass places your neighbors, colleagues, or students think of as “there.” Your family’s migration may have been voluntary, or it may have stemmed from political or economic pressures. On the other hand, your people may have been “here” since time immemorial if you are Indigenous or Aboriginal and you live near your ancestral lands. Or your family may trace its distant ancestry to individuals captured and transported as slaves, or to those who profited from slaving, or both.

I am grateful to Bonnie Gordon, Adriana Helbig, and Ben Barson for their feedback on this essay.

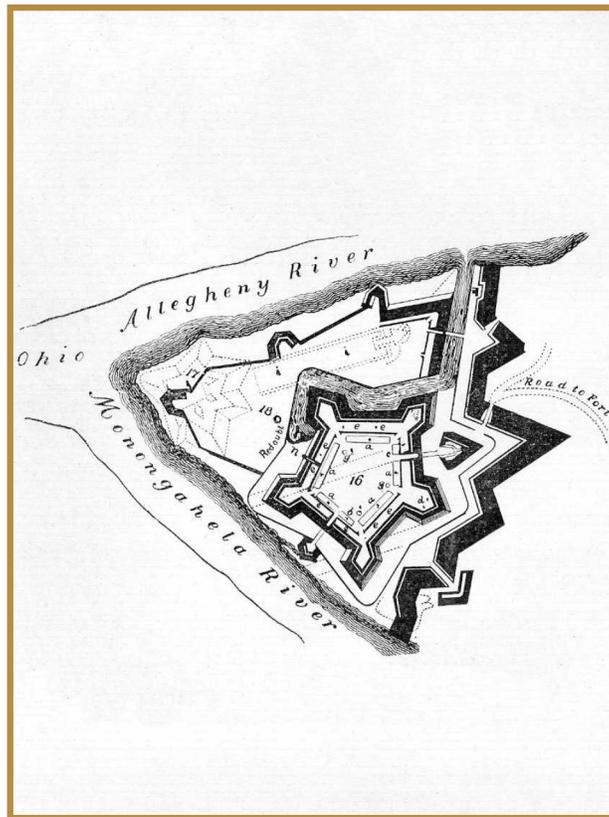
These situations foster distinctive ways of relating to a local place and its past, and distinctive imaginaries of “home.”

Aren't these relationships and imaginaries integral to our scholarly engagement with the eighteenth century and its music? Most of the SECM's members were trained as Europeanists and thus feel most at home with European archives, methods, epistemologies, aesthetics, and performance practices. Beyond this area focus, many or most members likely identify as white, based on representation at meetings. Add to this the presumed whiteness of European music, and the result is a resilient disciplinary imaginary of the “eighteenth century” as essentially European, literate, and white. This resilient imaginary makes doing decolonial and anti-racist work in our field more difficult.

Still, the racialized geography of “eighteenth-century music” is normative, not descriptive, and as such it persists through reiteration, as an assumed “homeland” of our teaching and research. (This is reason for hope, because norms can be changed.) As evidence, take a glance at the contents of the period textbooks and anthologies on your shelf, or at the eighteenth-century section of survey textbooks. Whose people, lands, and creative work are featured? Whose are added on in “diversity” sidebars, in more recent textbooks? If inclusion in core courses and teaching materials is an index of historicity, then whose musicking “had” an eighteenth century, and whose did not?

Local and regional music histories have their own canons, and these are often closely tied to a hegemonic commonsense of which groups truly belong to a place. Public-facing arts organizations, museums, heritage projects, and educational programs can have a strong influence on public awareness of the local musical past, as well as on public expressions of value (whose music and musical lives mattered). These public iterations of the eighteenth century affect our students, and they can affect us our understanding too. Many academics live far from the places whose music we study or perform, and that can place us in an odd relationship to our locales, as experts in distant music histories who are not necessarily aware of the musical past and its legacies *here*.

As an experiment, think about the city or region where you live. What was musical life like there in the eighteenth century? Who



Plan of Fort Pitt (now Pittsburgh, R. Ratzer 1761)

musicking “had” an eighteenth century, and whose did not?

continued on page 9

From the Editor

Kimary Fick

“Towards a Critical Approach to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Scholarship and Pedagogy of Eighteenth-Century Music”

As our nation experienced growing social unrest and widespread demonstrations for social justice over this last six months, I realized that I could no longer ignore the systemic power, privilege, and oppression that lingers at the foundation of our field and, most importantly, from the century in which we work. I have come to believe that issues of power and oppression need to be addressed in the scholarship and pedagogy of eighteenth-century music for the very reason that both our discipline and the musics many of us study are products of and therefore profit from that oppressive system. Exploring how systemic oppression is represented and reinforced by our canon of Western art music can enable a critical discourse in our field and broaden our scope of study.

With these ideas in mind, I decided to dedicate this special issue to articles that address problems of diversity, inclusion, and systemic racism in our scholarship and pedagogy. I thank the contributors for sharing their approaches, which I hope will encourage our Society to continue the conversation through a critical inquiry of our field and the musics we study, teach, and perform. I welcome contributions to future issues of the Newsletter that address these issues through short articles, essays on pedagogy, or reviews of recent books. The SECM Newsletter is published twice yearly, in October and April. Submissions in the following categories are encouraged:

- News of recent accomplishments from members of the society (publications, presentations, awards, performances, promotions, etc.);
- Reviews of performances of eighteenth-century music;
- Reviews of books, editions, or recordings of eighteenth-century music;
- Conference reports;
- Dissertations in progress on eighteenth-century music;
- Upcoming conferences and meetings;
- Calls for papers and manuscripts;
- Research reports and research resources;
- Grant opportunities.

Contributions should be submitted as an attachment to an e-mail message (preferably in Microsoft Word format) to the SECM Newsletter editor (kimary.fick@gmail.com). Submissions must be received by July 1 for the October issue and by January 1 for the April issue. Claims for missing issues of the Newsletter must be requested within six months of publication. Annotated discographies (in the format given in the inaugural issue, October 2002) will also be accepted and will be posted on the SECM web site.

D

New Members

Callum Blackmore, Peter Kohanski,
Joanna Marsden, JoAnn Udovich

President's Message

Guido Olivieri

The crisis we are all experiencing has made us aware of the importance of reflecting on our role as scholars and on the opportunities that our work can offer to the growth of our discipline.

This issue of the Newsletter collects some of these reflections and ideas that have become especially relevant in the climate of these past months. I am very grateful to Kimary Fick, for her outstanding editorial work on this issue and to all the contributors who enriched its content.

I would like to recognize the recently-elected members of the Board of Directors. First, let me extend my gratitude to Rebecca Geoffroy-Schwinden and Michael Ruhling for their exceptional contribution and support in all these years. I am sure they will keep playing a crucial part in the advancement of our Society.

Congratulations to all returning members of the Board, Beverly Wilcox, Bertil van Boer, Dianne Goldman and Laurel Zeiss, to Alison DeSimone, our new VP, and a warm welcome to Kimary Fick and Julia Doe, our new members on the Board.

We have decided to expand the participation of student members and I am delighted to announce the inclusion of Rachel Bani as the second student representative on the board. Together with Ashley Greathouse and Alison De Simone, she will be part of the Student Committee and promote further involvements of students in the life of the Society.

Despite the difficulties we have faced in the past months, SECM has continued working on new initiatives. We have created a new committee, the Diversity Equity Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) committee. Its goals and the new perspectives they bring within our Society are detailed in the statement included below.

Thanks to our fearless organizer, Bertil Van Boer, and to the availability of the Royal Swedish Academy of Music, the Ninth Biennial Conference: Global Intersections in the Music of the 18th Century has been rescheduled for August 4-7, 2021. Plans are well under way and we hope to welcome many of you in Stockholm, Sweden. The conference will be a wonderful way to celebrate the return to in-person meetings and celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Society's foundation.

The SECM and MSA joint conference in Salzburg, hosted by the International Mozarteum Foundation, has been instead postponed to May 2022 to ensure in-person participation.

A wonderful Dissertations-in-progress session took place on Zoom last June, as a make-up for the one originally scheduled at the Stockholm conference. The excellent presentations by Ashley A. Greathouse, Karina Valnumsen Hansen, Nathaniel Mitchell and Joel Schnackel stimulated an enriching exchange of ideas, thanks also to the enlightening perspectives and observations of the respondents, Alan Swanson, Pierpaolo Polzonetti, Bruce Alan Brown, and Rebecca Geoffroy-Schwinden. Our thanks go to all participants and to the generous and patient work of Janet Page who put it together. It was an opportunity to appreciate the robust achievements of a young generation of scholars and to join an event that we certainly need to repeat in the near future.

SECM is continuing the close collaboration with the other 18th-century societies. This year all five 18th-century societies together (ABS, HSNA, MSA, RBI, and SECM) will hold a (virtual) booth at the (virtual) meeting of the AMS. In this most unusual scenario, we have created links to our website and to the most rel-

evant pages on our site and we invite all attendees to “click by” our booth.

I invite all members to like our Facebook page and send news and items of interest. I also encourage you to contact me or any member of the Board if you are interested in serving the Society in one of the numerous opportunities for service. I will be particularly interested in receiving nominations for honorary memberships in the Society for members who have made outstanding and lifelong contributions to the study and teaching of eighteenth-century music. As always, please contact me with ideas, comments or suggestions. Looking forward to seeing you at the AMS or at the general meeting in November!

Stay well!



Fall 2020 Member News

Bruce Alan Brown published his article “Opera in Italy and on the Moon, as Viewed by a Frenchman, Financier, and *Philosophe*,” in *Gluck-Studien*, vol. 8, ed. Daniel Brandenburg (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 2020), 9–33.

Sarah Eyerly published her book *Moravian Soundscapes: A Sonic History of the Moravian Missions in Early Pennsylvania* (Indiana University Press, 2020) (digital companion site: <https://moravian-soundscapes.music.fsu.edu>) and article “Mozart and the Moravians,” *Early Music* 47/2 (May, 2019): 161–82. **Rachel Wheeler** and Eyerly’s article, “Singing Box 331: Mohican Language Hymns from the Moravian Archives,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 76/4 (October, 2019): 649–96 (Digital companion site: <https://oieahc.wm.edu/digital-projects/oi-reader/singing-box-331-rachel-wheeler-sarah-eyerly/>) was recognized by *The William and Mary Quarterly* with the Lester J. Cappon Award for best article: <https://oieahc.wm.edu/publications/wmq/browse/prizes/cappon-winners/>.

Kimary Fick published her article “Feeling the Feminine, Forming the Masculine: Amateur Male Musicians and the Flute Sonatas of Anna Bon di Venezia (1738–?),” *Women and Music* 24 (2020): 130–153. DOI: 10.1353/wam.2020.0002.

Beverly Jerold published, “A 1760 dream for better performance standards,” *The Musical Times* 161/1952 (Autumn 2020): 85–99. An anonymous writer in the *Kritische Briefe* (probably the J.S. Bach student J.F. Agricola) describes in detail a dream in which he visits a city with outstanding music practices and large-scale performances, implying that their own are inferior. In addition, Jerold also published her recent book, *Disinformation in Mass Media: Gluck, Piccinni and the Journal de Paris* (Routledge, 2020).

Joanna Marsden has joined the faculty at McGill University’s Schulich School of Music as Baroque Flute Instructor.

Guido Olivieri has published two newly-discovered *Sinfonie per violoncello* by Giovanni Bononcini. These works, which considerably expand our knowledge of the production of one of the greatest cello players of the 18th century, have been published with the Società Editrice di Musicologia and are now available at <http://www.sedm.it/sedm/en/instrumental-music/157-bononcini-olivieri.html>. An article, titled “Due sonate per violoncello di Giovanni Bononcini in un manoscritto napoletano” and detailing the manuscript source in which Bononcini’s sonatas are preserved, is included in the volume *I Bononcini: da Modena all’Europa*, ed. M. Vanscheeuwijk (Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2020). Another article

continued on page 8

Statement on Behalf of the SECM Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Committee

In recognition of the complicity of eighteenth-century musical life in the colonization and enslavement of peoples across the globe, as well as the discrimination against people perceived as physically, mentally, or otherwise different during the eighteenth century, the Society has founded the DEIA Committee to confront racism and prejudice both in the past and the present. The Committee will promote dialogue around the troubled history of the eighteenth century in both scholarship and pedagogy and will initiate action toward dismantling institutional structures that allow its insidious legacies to continue.

Committee Goals

- To promote the participation of traditionally under-represented or marginalized groups in the activities and leadership of the society by developing programs and policies that foster inclusivity;
- To facilitate dialogue among the Society’s members and the Board on issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Call for Member Participation DEIA Working Groups

The DEIA Committee is seeking participation in working groups devoted to the scholarship and pedagogy of structural power and oppression in eighteenth-century music. For information or to express interest in the working groups, please email the Committee at deia@secm.org. More information is forthcoming on the secm.org website.

DEIA Committee:

Evan Cortens
Alison DeSimone
Kimary Fick
Rebecca Geoffroy-Schwinden

Call for Contributions: Resource Database

In addition to the call for participation in working groups of the DEIA Committee of the SECM, we are also seeking contributions to a database of academic resources that will aid the study and research of 18th-century music as it relates to issues of racism, slavery, and social discrimination. The goal is to compile a list of articles, book chapters, and other resources that will help scholars, performers, and teachers of eighteenth-century music learn more about these aspects of the eighteenth-century legacy. We hope to make this list publicly available on the SECM website.

We are particularly interested in recommendations for articles, book chapters, or essays that have worked well as readings in college-level music courses. Are there essays that proved eye-opening and that prompted good discussions among you and your students? I have found, for example, that the opening chapter of *Music in the Eighteenth Century* by John Rice not only serves as a good introduction to the era as whole, but also to how the slave trade, economic wealth, consumer goods, and music and musicians were interdependent (W. W. Norton, 2013). Janet Schmalfeldt’s article about Beethoven, violinist George Bridgetower, and the Kreutzer sonata raises issues about historiography and analysis – who gets

omitted and who and what get emphasized and why [Janet Schmalfeldt, "Beethoven's 'Bridgetower' Sonata, op. 47," in *New Paths: Aspects of Music Theory and Aesthetics in the Age of Romanticism* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2009), 37-68. Available via JSTOR]. Another resource, more provocative in tone, is Bonnie Gordan's "What Mr. Jefferson Didn't Hear." [In *Rethinking Difference in Music Scholarship*, ed. Olivia Bloechl, Melanie Lowe, and Jeffrey Kallberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 108-132.]

If you are interested in serving on the committee or have resources to recommend, please email DEIA@secm.org. The committee and I look forward to hearing from you.

Laurel E. Zeiss

D

Reflections on Teaching Early Music History in 2020

Alison DeSimone

I am a musicologist at a music conservatory, and for the most part, I teach what the conservatory conserves: the history of Western art music. Most of my students are getting degrees specific to Western art music performance: BMs, BMEs, MMs, and DMAs. Many of our academic classes cater to the repertoire: undergraduates take a two-semester Western music history survey (using the *Norton History of Western Music*), and graduate students have choices between period courses (Music of the Baroque; Music of the Classical Era) and seminars.¹ Yet, since I started in this position in 2015, my students have been clamoring for diversity both within the Western art music tradition, and beyond it. My colleagues and I have been testing new methods for incorporating more diverse perspectives into our courses, from our history survey through our most advanced graduate classes. It has been an exciting challenge to balance our mission as a music conservatory with the necessity to enhance and move beyond the Western music canon. The reflections here contemplate some of the missteps I have made and the pedagogical strategies that have helped me diversify my courses in early music.²

1. The recent seminars I have taught including "Handel and His World," "The History of the Oratorio," and "Gender and Music Before 1800." My colleagues offer classes in musical theater, Latin American music, and minimalism (among other subjects). We also offer a class in music history pedagogy, graduate history review courses, and research and bibliography.

2. These ideas are by no means new. Many wonderful eighteenth-century scholars and pedagogues have been doing this work longer than I. I am grateful to my peers for their continued work in bringing diversity to music of the long eighteenth century. Recently, the *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* has devoted space to articles concerning colonization and the diversification of music history classes. Please see the articles published in vol. 10, no. 1 (2020): <https://www.ams-net.org/ojs/index.php/jmhp/>. See Travis Stimeling and Kayla Tokar, "Narratives of Musical Resilience and the Perpetuation of Whiteness in the Music History Classroom," in that issue for an example of an eighteenth-century case study. Kira Thurman and Kristen Turner's "Six Easy Ways to Immediately Address Racial and Gender Diversity in Your Music History Classroom" (*Musicology Now*, July 17, 2017) was an inspiration for me as I thought about ways to bring more diversity to my individual courses a few years ago.

In Western art music history, we run the risk of tokenism when we have only a handful of examples to teach; this is especially true of music composed before 1800. It is easy to teach a day on the symphonies of the Chevalier de Saint-Georges, or a day on Barbara Strozzi, because these are the underrepresented people who fit conveniently into our historical narrative of Western art music. But doing so offers a reductive narrative of the exceptional Black or Woman composer/performer, who "overcame all odds" to pursue a professional career during a time when most people of color in Western Europe were still servants or enslaved, and when most women could neither perform publicly, nor publish music, nor reap the financial rewards of a professional career. As I see it, two other issues arise from this approach: first, these exceptional Black or Women musicians are almost always discussed in the context of their white male counterparts. An upcoming biopic on the Chevalier de Saint-Georges, for example, advertises a film about the Black Mozart. Famous female musicians are frequently contextualized by their relationships to male composers: Caccini's daughter, Mendelssohn's sister. Second, these narratives continue to privilege the composer—music is only worth studying if it is linked directly to a composer's life and musical style, which ends up leaving out so many people (especially women and people of color) who contributed significantly to music history through performance, consumption, and the dissemination of music around the world.

To find this balance between the history of style and genre, and a history of music that accounts for lived experience, I have attempted (with varying success) to balance my discussion of the genres and styles of Western art music history with cultural history. In my Music of the Renaissance class, for example, I spend the first 6 to 7 weeks giving an overview of the history of musical style in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; the goal is to learn how to recognize aurally the differences between Du Fay, Josquin, Palestrina, and Gesualdo.³ During the final 8 or 9 weeks of the semester, we consider case studies, discussing subjects like convent music, instrumental improvisation, creating a dedication copy for a patron, or colonization and musical dissemination.⁴ My Music of the Baroque course progresses chronologically, but I often break up the march through genres and styles by having my students read articles on cross-cultural exchange and diverse representation, such as David Irving's wonderful *Early Music* article "Lully in Siam" or Arne Spohr's recent *JAMS* article on "Blackness and Social Status in Early Modern Germany."⁵ In my Handel seminar this past spring, I taught a day on "Handel and Slavery"; this was the first time any of my students in the course had thought about how slavery may have funded much of the eighteenth-century music that

3. In part, this is because our DMA students must take a general music history and theory comprehensive exam, and Renaissance music is often a weak spot for them.

4. I look forward to including Miranda Kauffman's chapter on John Blanke, Henry VIII's Black trumpeter this coming fall. See Miranda Kauffman, *Black Tudors: The Untold Story* (London: OneWorld Publications, 2017).

5. David R. M. Irving, "Lully in Siam: Music and Diplomacy in French-Siamese Cultural Exchanges, 1680-1690," *Early Music* 40, no. 3 (2012): 393-420; Arne Spohr, "'Mohr und Trompeter': Blackness and Social Status in Early Modern Germany," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 72, no. 3 (2019): 613-663.

we study and teach.⁶ Our music history survey course for undergraduates at my institution will soon jettison the *Norton History of Western Music*; instead, we are creating a syllabus that will focus on case studies relating to the contributions of people of color and women to Western music history, while still offering a comprehensive introduction to Western musical styles and genres. Finally, my colleagues and I have redesigned our matriculation exam for incoming students, including mostly examples of women and people of color which represent the stylistic characteristics of genres and periods across Western art music.

As I reflect now, I understand that I have often failed to move beyond what I see as tokenism. In spending so little time on these subjects, I have perpetuated the “exceptionalism” narrative myself. In future classes, I will be working on integrating diversity in a way that isn’t special or exceptional, and that focuses even less on composers’ contributions and more on the history of performers; of musical production and consumption through private and public patronage; and of musical circulation.⁷ It is my hope that these new narratives will provide natural space for the inclusion of racial, economic, and gender diversity in my teaching of music before 1800.

6. For studies that discuss the slave trade and the funding and propagation of Western art music, see David Hunter, “Handel and the Royal African Company” (June 2015), <http://www.musicologynow.org/2015/06/handel-and-royal-african-company.html>; Hunter, “Handel Manuscripts and the Profits of Slavery: The ‘Granville’ Collection at the British Library and the First Performing Score of *Messiah* Reconsidered,” *Notes* 76, no. 1 (2019): 27–37. There have been a number of conferences devoted to this subject, and I look forward to future published studies tackling this subject.

7. This fall, I will propose a new period course on the long eighteenth century, which I will organize around themes of the Enlightenment and case studies relating to those themes in music. For example, a discussion of “liberty” will include music surrounding the revolutions in France and America, but also music relating to the Black experience in the Atlantic world, and the contradictions of Enlightenment thought on personal freedom.

D

Teaching “1700–1800” in 2020

Rebecca Dowd Geoffroy-Schwinden

Calls to work toward decolonizing music curricula have grown louder since this spring and could be heard at the many virtual conferences, panels, and lecture series dedicated to diversifying music academia as well as in the recent special issue on decolonization published by the *Journal of Music History Pedagogy*.¹ As in the

1. Special Issue: Decolonization, *Journal of Music History Pedagogy* 10, no. 1 (2020). Decolonization is the dismantling of colonial structures, while decoloniality seeks to further dismantle the power systems left in the wake of colonization. Although decolonization is a separate issue from diversity work—the attempt to increase representation within institutions—calls to decolonize curricula often arise in discussions of diversifying academia because a rethinking of knowledge production is necessary to the project. For a concise explanation of decolonization and decoloniality in music studies, see Tamara Levitz, “Decolonizing the Society for American Music,” *The Bulletin of the Society for American Music* XLIII, no. 3 (Fall 2017): 2.

past five years, this semester I taught a master’s level seminar surveying “Western Music History” from 1700 to 1800, a subject matter at the chronological and ideological heart of these conversations. This disciplinary context offers a profound opportunity to present students with the realities of historiography: regardless of geography or genre, scholars must consider new sources and forge new methods and methodologies to craft new historical narratives. Moreover, it prompts students to think about how we go about listening to colonist music and to apply such listening to reassessments of music in European contexts.

While students bring to my course some familiarity with the sources or historiography relating to Mozart, Haydn, and even lesser known figures (not to this society’s members!) such as Boccherini or Quantz, when they enter my class they have rarely considered the interdependency between musical life in Europe and its colonies. Yet recent scholarship has begun to illuminate the global eighteenth century’s rich and complicated musical exchanges, which can be put into productive conversation with standard narratives of eighteenth-century music. Although a college of music curriculum demands that graduate courses for career musicians and musicologists continue to cover more traditional galant and classical terrain, I share here a few accessible ways that I incorporated decolonial thinking into my own course textbook.²

I created one unit on colonial encounters in secular and sacred music contexts. We began by learning about various types of musical experiences that indigenous, African, and Afro-descended people would have had in French Caribbean colonies—from musical training enforced by missionaries to diasporic religious festivals.³ We inevitably grappled with the problem of sources written from a settler-colonizer or enslaver’s perspective. We next turned to a specific case: The singer known as Minette, a woman who despite her legal designation among Saint-Domingue’s *affranchi* class of free people of color earned notoriety for the roles she portrayed in Port-au-Prince *opéra comique* performances during the 1780s.⁴ The complex legal system that classified race in the French colony demanded a detailed discussion of how constructions of race evolved during the eighteenth century. The ambivalent critical reception of Minette’s performances and the inconsistent compensation she received prompted students to discuss the inequitable conditions that Afro-descended and enslaved musicians faced in colonial musical production even when their talents were ostensibly appreciated. Students connected this mistreatment to the very different challenges faced by European musicians at the time, such as serfs forced to perform music in Russia and the boys confined to brutal

2. John A. Rice, “Galant Music in the New World,” *Music in the Eighteenth Century*. *Western Music in Context* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2013).

3. David M. Powers, *From Plantation to Paradise? Cultural Politics and Musical Theatre in French Slave Colonies, 1764–1789* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2014).

4. Powers, *From Plantation to Paradise?*, and Bernard Camier, “Minette (Elisabeth, Alexandrine, Louise Ferrand dite) / artiste libre de couleur à Port-au-Prince à la fin du XVIIIe siècle,” *Revue de la Société d’Histoire de Géographie et de Géologie d’Haïti* (2018): 223, and “Minette Ferrand: Actualisation des résultats de recherche,” *Généalogie et histoire de la Caraïbe* (2018): <http://www.ghcaraibe.org/articles/2018-art43.pdf>, accessed July 25, 2020; and Julia Prest, “Parisian Palimpsests and Creole Creations: Mme Marsan and Dlle Minette play *Nina* on the Caribbean Stage,” *Early Modern French Studies* (2019): 1–19.

working conditions in Neapolitan conservatories or castrated at a young age.⁵

Another unit explored sacred musical exchanges between indigenous people and settler-colonists in early America.⁶ The intercultural network inscribed into Mohican-language hymnody reveals complicated entanglements between colonization and faith. We studied a recording project initiated by Sarah Eyerly and Rachel Wheeler, which engaged members of today's Mohican community to perform hymns from the Moravian archives.⁷ In class, their project raised productive debates about how we should listen to and perform colonialist music today, and students later connected this issue to the scholarship that we read about listening and class in the eighteenth-century Europe.⁸ Finally, we debated the promises and problems of using the Western musical notation found in eighteenth-century travel narratives as a basis for historical inquiry into African diasporic and indigenous musical practices.⁹ Our engagement with this scholarship, in conjunction with a careful review of Jordi Savall's album and liner notes to *Les routes de l'esclavage* (2017), caused us to conclude that performance might simultaneously enrich and violate historical understanding—a question that can be brought to bear on historical performance practice.¹⁰ The unit concluded with musician-artist Tunde Jegede's historical projects, particularly his multi-media work on eighteenth-century Ghanaian-British musician Joseph Antonia Emidy (c. 1770–1835).¹¹

Students conducted independent research projects on musical life in eighteenth-century Asia, Africa, or the Middle East. From Chinese opera to West African drumming, they realized that secondary sources on the history of music in these regions not only

exist but can illuminate how economic networks fueled by the transatlantic slave trade and colonization brought musical cultures into contact with one another in the global eighteenth century.¹²

As a result of this pedagogical endeavor, I am proposing a complementary master's level course on "Music and Modernity: Music in Global Context, 1500–1900." These units challenged students to evaluate historical sources, to consider appropriate methods and methodologies, and to hone research questions that ethically treat historical subjects who in the past have been left out of music history. They learned quickly that writing new historical narratives poses many challenges to the historian. By turning to music history in-the-making, that is, scholarship working toward the decolonization of music history, students gained an appreciation for the labor as well as the values behind all music historiography. Moreover, by listening to colonial encounters they were able to develop a fresh perspective on cosmopolitan European music.

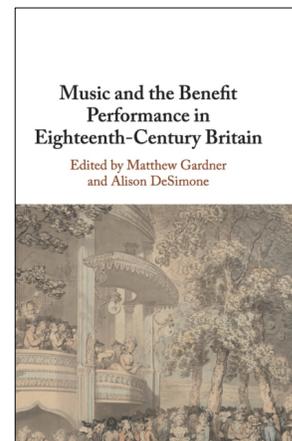
12. This aspect of the course could be legitimately considered tokenistic; however, I decided that it was more important to raise the issue of global music history in a course limited by curricular expectations than not to address it at all.

D

Book Review

Music and the Benefit Performance in Eighteenth-Century Britain, ed. Matthew Gardner and Alison DeSimone. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. 286 pp. \$99.99 ISBN: 9781108492935

Graydon Beeks



According to the editors, "the aim of this book is to offer the first comprehensive study of music and the benefit performance in 18th-century Britain, thereby filling the gap in previous scholarship, which has frequently centred [sic] on the theatre and the spoken play" (10). In all significant ways, the resulting collection of essays has fulfilled their aims.

The custom of benefit performances developed in the spoken theatre in the late 17th century, and the recipient was generally responsible for generating publicity and selling tickets, in return for receiving the money taken in, after paying the expenses of opening the theater. As opera was introduced into London in the first decade of the 18th century, this pattern was taken over and benefit performances of operas were offered, often with newly written scenes or arias featuring the beneficiary as special attractions. The

5. Rice, *Music in the Eighteenth Century*.

6. Glenda Goodman, "But They Differ from Us in Sound: Indian Psalmody and the Soundscape of Colonialism, 1651–75," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 69, no. 4 (October 2012): 793–822; and Sarah Justina Eyerly, *Moravian Soundscapes: A Sonic History of the Moravian Missions in Early Pennsylvania. Music, Nature, Place* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2020).

7. Rachel Wheeler and Sarah Eyerly, "Singing Box 331: Re-sounding Eighteenth-Century Mohican Hymns from the Moravian Archives," digital companion version, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, October 2019, <https://oieahc.wm.edu/digital-projects/oi-reader/singing-box-331-rachel-wheeler-sarah-eyerly/>.

8. Glenda Goodman, "Conditioned Ears: How to Listen to Mohican-Moravian Hymnody," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 77, no. 3 (2020): 380–386; and Melanie Lowe, "Embracing the Fictive to (Re)Define the Listening Subject," in *Pleasure and Meaning in the Classical Symphony* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2007), 78–98.

9. Mary Caton Lingold, "Peculiar Anatomies: Listening to Afro-Atlantic Music in Caribbean Travel Narratives," *Early American Literature* 52, no. 3 (2017): 623–50; and Glenda Goodman, "Sounds Heard, Meaning Deferred: Music Transcription as Imperial Technology," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 52, no. 1 (Fall 2018): 39–45.

10. Rebecca Dowd Geoffroy-Schwinden, "Digital Approaches to Historical Acoustemologies: Replication and Reenactment," in *Digital Sound Studies*, eds. Mary Caton Lingold, Darren Mueller, and Whitney Trettien (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018), 233–4.

11. Tunde Jegede, "Emidy: He Who Dared to Dream," <http://www.tundejegede.org/emidy-he-who-dared-to-dream/>, accessed August 1, 2020.

balance between the familiar and the novel is one of the recurring themes in the book. For singer-actors and –actresses, it was possible to follow pattern employed by those who were primarily or exclusively actors by including more music. However, for specialist singers and for instrumentalists, it was often more efficacious to present a concert, either in the theater itself or in a suitable concert venue. These events inspired the development of benefit concerts presented by musicians with no direct connection to the theater or the opera house, and to others given in aid of various charitable causes. All of these types of benefit performances are covered in these twelve essays, often from several different perspectives.

The book is divided into five sections. The first, “Musical Benefits in the London Theatre: Networks and Repertoires,” is initiated by Kathryn Lowerre’s introduction to how benefit performances were organized during the first third of the 18th century and what their financial risks and rewards were for actors, authors, singers and other musicians. Olive Baldwin and Thelma Wilson then present a survey of the repertoire of music and dance performed at theater benefits during roughly the same time period. Robert Rawson discusses concerts consisting primarily of instrumental music, and especially to those presented as benefits for the soloists. He argues convincingly that these soloists took the place of the virtuoso opera singers, often performing opera arias as well as concertos. When these concerts took place in the opera house, the soloists often physically replaced the singer onstage while the orchestra remained in the pit; in concert venues, the soloist metaphorically took his place “upon the stage.” Vanessa Rogers closes out Part I with a discussion of “Benefits and the Development of Ballad Opera,” in which she points out that nearly a quarter of new ballad operas were premiered as part of a benefit performance. This was presumably because a ballad opera provided an appropriate vehicle for a benefit performance, but only the *Beggar’s Opera* had established itself as an unqualified success. Of course, the *Beggar’s Opera* remained in the repertoire, and Rogers also discusses its use for benefits later in the century when novelty was supplied by, among other things, cross-dressing.

The second section of the book, “Beyond London: Mimicry or Originality,” begins with Roz Southey’s discussion of “Benefit Concerts in the North of England,” where the beneficiaries were primarily individuals – not always musicians – and not charitable societies. Concerts given to benefit individual musicians and/or concert promoters were often connected to concert series. They were primarily given by local musicians, who could also use them to advertise their availability as teachers, but sometimes featured distinguished guest, often from London, who were passing through. Stefanie Acquavella-Rauch then discusses “Benefit Concerts in Edinburgh,” especially those of the Edinburgh Musical Society, an association of primarily amateur musicians that sponsored some of these sorts of concerts to augment the salaries of its select professional musicians and others to support charitable causes. Southey also describes other sorts of musical benefits, including those during which a theatrical work was performed *gratis* within the context of concert in order to circumvent the opposition of the Kirk and restrictions of the 1737 Theatres Licensing Act.

Part 3, “Benefits and Public Image,” opens with Amanda Eubanks Winkler’s discussion of the role of English composers and music in benefit concerts during the years before 1711, focusing especially on the continuing popularity of the music of Henry Purcell. Alison DeSimone then discusses strategies employed by pro-

fessional singers of Italian opera, most of them Italians, in the early part of the century to select repertoire and collaborators for benefit concerts and benefit performances of operas.

Part 4 is devoted to the topic of “Charity Benefits,” beginning with Triona O’Hanlon’s discussion of the church services given regularly from 1736 to benefit Mercer’s Hospital in Dublin. Following the model of annual Festival of the Sons of the Clergy in London, these consisted of services of Morning Prayer featuring a sermon and the musical performance of the canticles and at least one anthem, usually with instrumental accompaniment. Handel’s music dominated, but works by Purcell, Boyce and a few others also appeared. To conclude this section, Matthew Gardner discusses “English Oratorios and Charity Benefits in Mid-Eighteenth-Century London,” noting that although there were a few oratorio performances given for the benefit of the composer – Handel in 1738, De Fesch in 1740 and Arne in 1758 and 1759 – benefit performances of English oratorios were more closely identified with charitable causes, from Maurice Greene’s performance of his *The Song of Deborah and Barak* in 1733 in support of a “Fund for the Widows, &c. of the Gentlemen of the Chapel Royal, who die in his Majesty’s Service” to Handel’s efforts from 1738 on in aid of the “Fund for the Support of Decay’d Musicians” and his annual performances of *Messiah* during his last decade to raise money for the Foundling Hospital.

The last section of the book contains two essays dealing with “The Role of the Audience.” In the first, John Irving considers the young Mozart’s visits to London in 1764–65, the ways in which his unique talents were exhibited in what were not conventional concert settings, and how the audiences might have reacted to them. In the final essay, “Benefits: *cui bono?*”, David Hunter presents a thoughtful but sometimes densely written discussion of the benefit concert as what he terms “a case study in the larger effort to understand the conjunction of philanthropy, performative skill, social togetherness (bonding), recognition, thanksgiving, and emotional response (typically of enjoyment)” (243).

Gardner and DeSimone are to be commended for their conception and execution of this project. The coverage of the subject is appropriately broad. While the lack of discussion of charity benefits given in aid of indigent individuals and/or families is regrettable, it presumably reflects the lack of information available in contrast to what is known about performances given in aid of charitable organizations. Footnotes are helpfully printed at the bottom of the page, and the Bibliography is extensive. The text is commendably free of mistakes, for which Cambridge University Press must also receive a share of the credit. In sum, an enjoyable and informative book and highly recommended.

D

Recording Review

“Beethoven Violin Sonatas No. 4, op. 23, No. 5, op. 24, No. 6, op. 30/31.” Lucy Russell, violin, and Sesi Seskir, fortepiano. ACIS CD APL29582.

Andrew Justice

Beethoven’s violin sonatas occupy a distinctive place in the canon of instrumental chamber music, simultaneously enjoying a substantial number of recordings over the course of several decades and yet also displaying the genre’s oft-misunderstood development



from “violin accompanies piano” to a more conversational aesthetic. As an academic music librarian, my first instinct was to survey the body of extant recordings which could be considered appropriate for comparison. General research led to some of the usual suspects: Arthur Grumiaux and Clara Haskil, Yehudi Menuhin and Wilhelm Kempff, Itzhak Perlman and Vladimir Ashkenazy, Gidon Kremer and Martha Argerich. Since I am also a baroque violist, I found Grumiaux to be recorded more like a violin concerto with piano accompaniment, Menuhin’s quintessential seraphic tone sometimes threatening to derail harmonic rhythm, and the laser accuracy of Perlman’s technical prowess often outshining emotional (dare I say Romantic) drive. I must admit that Kremer is one of my preferred modern violinists for non-contemporary repertoire, but the relative recency of his recordings with Argerich also sets into further relief the contrast between modern and historical piano technologies. Unaware of many (if any) previously recorded performance practice interpretations, I soon realized comparing this one to the “pantheon” was not going to be particularly fruitful.

Perhaps one of the highest forms of praise for Lucy Russell and Sezi Seskir’s performances here is that I was immediately reminded of playing with Malcolm Bilson. Having begun my own career at Cornell University’s Sidney Cox Library of Music and Dance, I count among the top experiences in my life the opportunity to rehearse and perform with Bilson. Seskir studied with him during my time there, and her fluency of execution informed by precocious stylistic understanding strikes me as a clear homage to him. In rehearsal, Bilson once exhorted me to be more comfortable with allowing certain moments to become truly chaotic—“Are you scared?”, coupled with his trademark impish smile—which then made reuniting at the end of the phrase that much more meaningful. Seskir’s playing throughout this album embodies that approach, with Beethoven’s characteristic keyboard flourishes ever threatening to upend the delicate balance of things, especially in Op. 23. Her distribution of voicing between two hands is particularly impressive, shifting attention on an instant’s notice to emphasize that which truly needs to emerge from the overall texture.

Russell, on the other hand, manages to embody both a structural late-Baroque clarity of sound and (as the sonatas “age” over the course of the disc) glimpses of the nineteenth-century virtuoso, which of course reached some sort of apex with the Beethoven Violin Concerto. In Op. 23, her angular interjections sometimes feel like Vivaldi or perhaps even Lully; a refreshing contrast to the *Sturm und Drang* of the overall writing. This logically develops during the relative ease of Op. 24 “Spring,” but she delightfully does not swing into full Romantic mode, instead tempering the longer lyrical lines with a measured respect for the interplay between the two instruments. In Op. 30/1, Russell’s violin appears to

have taken on a new timbre, emphasizing the brighter aspects of its increasingly complex leading lines and variations. Violinists often revel in the knowledge Beethoven actually played the instrument with a fair amount of mastery, but few appear to understand the spectrum of his relationship with it versus the keyboard—Russell is obviously one of those exceptions.

Recorded at Bucknell University’s Weis Center for the Performing Arts, which features a “shoe box” shape (per its website), the resonance is ideal for these works and instruments. There is space for ringing tones, yet the acoustic is dry enough to avoid stereotypical church plangency and instead offer a middle ground between chamber and stage. Loren Stata’s engineering and production is unfussy and direct, suggesting a bare minimum of microphones used and instead more interested in complementing the overall acoustic; this album follows his other projects (Tempesta di Mare Chamber Players, Quicksilver, Sylvia Berry performing Haydn’s London Sonatas) in achieving a crisp egalitarian sound environment. Liner notes by Cornell/Bilson alumnus Nicholas Mathew are eloquent and extensive, but neither a printed lecture on harmonic analysis nor light Music Appreciation commentary. The label Acis has recently built an admirable catalogue of early music recordings, and though they relied on the ubiquitous August von Klobner portrait of Beethoven for the album’s cover art, one hopes this recording will result in a complete cycle of the sonatas.

In discussing the instruments used for this recording, Russell’s portion is notable for describing her choice to use an unwound D string, “because she felt that the palette of color from this particular string enabled her to bring out the contrasted vulnerability and robustness of Beethoven’s sound world.” This attention to detail—especially in light of the fact most people tend to focus on the violin’s upper registers—shows the dedication and creativity that was clearly central to both performers’ preparation for this recording. Living in an age of classical music reconsidering itself, both in terms of overall cultural relevance and now adjusting to challenges presented by a global pandemic, it is refreshing to hear musicians find enlightening and successful ways of celebrating and elevating our appreciation of the standard canon.

D

continued from page 3

Fall 2020 Member News (continued)

on the Neapolitan cello repertory in the 18th century (“Prassi e didattica del violoncello nella Napoli del Settecento: un bilancio degli studi”) appeared in *Gli esordi del violoncello a Napoli e in Europa tra Sei e Settecento*, ed. D. Fabris, published by Cafagna (2020). Olivieri has also collaborated and written the booklet to the first recording of Michele Mascitti’s *Sonatas op. IX*, performed by Quartetto Vanvitelli and distributed by Arcana (A473).

Holly Roberts published her article “Divine Love, Death, and Penance in Giovanni Bononcini’s *La Conversione di Maddalena*” in the volume *I Bononcini: da Modena all’Europa*, ed. M. Vanscheeuwijck (Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2020).

Shaena Weitz won the Society of Dix-Neuviémistes (SDN) 2020 Publication Prize for her article “Propaganda and Reception in Nineteenth-Century Music Criticism: Maurice Schlesinger, Henri Herz, and the *Gazette musicale*,” which appeared in *Nineteenth-Century Music*, 43.1 (2019), 38-60. <https://uksdn.wordpress.com/sdn-publication-prize/>.

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continued from page 1

created music, musical movement, or sound art, and what did it do for them? How and why did it change over time? Who else made music, and how it is remembered? In particular, what were Indigenous peoples', migrants', and women's musical lives like, and how are their descendants' musicking valued? Archives are themselves hegemonic practices that tend to normalize Western and literate memory as "the past." Asking what is missing from local musical archives and public programs and why is hard work, but it's well worth trying.

I'll offer an example from my own teaching. When I moved to Pittsburgh, PA, several years ago I started delving into primary collections on the region's music history, which reaches back to the seventeenth century in colonial documentation and much longer in Indigenous oral knowledge. There is much I still don't know, but teaching is of course one of the best ways to learn. So I developed an undergraduate course, "Experiencing Music History in Pittsburgh," that's based on working with local collections and visiting historical sites. It's now in its second year, although with the COVID-19 pandemic this fall I had to substitute virtual "field trips" featuring digitized exhibits and site tours.

Pittsburgh sits on a point where three rivers meet (the Ohio, Allegheny, and Monongahela Rivers), and its history has been defined by the migration, trade, and transcultural exchange that this confluence makes possible. Knowing this, I wanted the course to feature music illustrating these histories of mobility and exchange. I also wanted to emphasize Indigenous, Black, and women's music histories starting in the later seventeenth century, partly to counter local narratives that emphasize white colonial-era music of the "fife and drum" sort or the songs of Pittsburgh native Stephen Foster (whose output included dialect songs for blackface minstrels). Foster's legacy is especially prominent in the neighborhood of Oakland, where I teach, because it is the site of the Stephen Foster Memorial and the former site of the notoriously racist "Uncle Ned" statue (removed in 2018).

The most daunting part of putting together the course came in planning a unit on "Turtle Island in the Colonial Era," in which I

wanted to offer students case studies of regional Indigenous music and meaningful sound in the 1700s. This is, in some ways, the closest thing in the class to my primary area of research, yet it proved especially challenging. I'd learned that the upper Ohio River valley was home to a number of Indigenous groups (especially Lenape, Seneca, Shawnee, Mingo, and Wyandotte communities), some of whom had arrived fairly recently due to colonial displacement. It was hard to find good information and media for this unit, and this is partly because, as David Minderhout and Andrea Frantz note, "Pennsylvania is one of a handful of US states that neither contains a reservation nor officially recognizes any native group within its borders."¹ This situation doesn't reflect an absence of groups who trace their descent from Pennsylvania's Indigenous peoples; as the website of the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania states, a "large number of Lenape families remained in the homelands and continue the traditions of their ancestors up to our present day."² The patchiness of the archive on Pennsylvania's Indigenous music history is instead a legacy of colonial displacement, assimilation, and historical erasure, perpetuated by official and public indifference today.

As an initial effort to help students grapple with this past and its legacies, I included the following topics in the "Turtle Island" unit: "Legacies of Lenape Displacement: The Skin Dance"; "Song in Seneca Adoption Ceremonies"; and "Wampum Diplomacy in the Seven Years War." Each topic focuses on a form of music or meaningful sound involved in interactions between Indigenous groups or among Indigenous and settler groups. Due to these groups' histories of migration and displacement, teaching this unit necessarily takes us well beyond Western Pennsylvania, and we work with resources from Ontario, upstate New York, the upper Midwest, Oklahoma, Great Britain, and France. Resources I have them use include modern recordings of dance performances, digitized manuscript treaties, Native elders' recorded readings of wampum belts, Indigenous nations' websites, printed settler captivity narratives, historical maps, travelers' narratives, and missionary reports.

A related class topic later in the course is "Moravian Soundscapes and Hymn-Singing," based on Sarah Eyerly's recent study and accompanying website (<https://moraviansoundscapes.music.fsu.edu/>).³ Students read part of the book, which offers a nuanced, accessible account of historical soundscapes and singing in Pennsylvania's multi-ethnic and multi-lingual Moravian communities, and they explore the website. I especially appreciate the companion site's soundmaps and its resources for teaching Mohican Moravian hymn-singing, including recordings by Eyerly's own vocal ensemble. (One of the great things about Eyerly's research is that it includes the primary source materials you need to teach it, which solves the prohibitive problem of having to generate your own archive by collecting materials.) We focus on one of the

1. David J. Minderhout and Andrea T. Frantz, "The Museum of Indian Culture and Lenape Identity," *Museum Management and Curatorship* 23, no. 2 (2008): 120. This remains true as of September, 2020, according to information published by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, at <https://www.bia.gov/bia/ois/tribal-leaders-directory/>.

2. For example, see the website of the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania, <https://www.lenape-nation.org/>.

3. Sarah Justina Eyerly, *Moravian Soundscapes: A Sonic History of the Moravian Missions in Early Pennsylvania* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2020).

recorded Mohican-language hymns, “Lamm, lamm, o lamm,” and look together at part of a Moravian manuscript (reproduced in Eyrly’s book) that translates the hymn into Hebrew, Arabic, Latin, Greenlandic, and many other world languages. That lets us discuss the Moravians’ global missions, their translation and contrafaction practices, and the fascinating phenomenon of polyglot singing in Christian missions.

These units on Indigenous musicking (including migrant Indigenous histories) represent just one layer of the course, which is still a work-in-progress. I mention them here, though, to illustrate my point about how challenging and rewarding it can be to work with local histories of eighteenth-century music, especially when, as in my case, you mostly work with other areas and repertoires. The musical and sonic pasts of Jō:deogē, an Onondaga or Seneca word for Pittsburgh, truly are new to me.

After several years I’m starting to learn, though, partly because my ongoing work on First Nations music histories in Nitassinan and Wendake (Innu and Wendat lands in eastern Canada) offers some continuities and analogies. As a white settler scholar, I’m also grateful for the chance to learn from Indigenous colleagues how important it is to work toward building meaningful relationships with contemporary Indigenous groups, organizations, and intellectuals, as a step toward establishing decolonial ways of researching and teaching. Part of this is working to build structures of settler accountability relative to Indigenous groups whose land this is and was, which includes reckoning with the continuing effects of land seizures, forced relocations, cultural destruction and appropriation, or genocide, as relevant.

If you live in an area that was or is colonized, one step is to inform yourself about (or work with knowledgeable people to develop) a meaningful and accurate land acknowledgment. In North America land acknowledgments are much more common in Canada, but efforts are underway in Pittsburgh to build meaningful relationships between the region’s historically white universities and Native-led organizations like the Council of Three Rivers American Indian Center (COTRAIC).⁴ Land acknowledgments are also slowly becoming more common as part of academic conferences held in the city, such as the one offered by Asao B. Inoue at the opening of his keynote address at the annual meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication in 2019, which I quote in full because it offers a good model:

To open, I humbly make a land acknowledgement. I would like to recognize and acknowledge the indigenous people of this land: the Lenni Lenape, Shawnee, and Hodinöhsöñih (hoe-den-ah-show-nee) -- the six Nations, that is, the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca, Cayuga and Tuscarora (tus-ka-roar-ah). We are gathered today on Jō:deogē (joan-day-o-gan’t), an Onödowa’ga (ono-do-wah-gah) or Seneca word for Pittsburgh or “between two rivers”: the welhik hane (well-ick hah-neh) and Mēnaonkihēla (men-aw-n-gee-ah-uh). These are the Lenape words for the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers, which translate to the “best flowing river of the hills” and “where the banks cave in and erode.”

4. One recent event was a “gathering” convened in 2019 by Canadian musicologist Alexa Woloshyn in conjunction with COTRAIC, at Carnegie Mellon University (see <http://alexawoloshyn.com/index.php/sharing-our-stories-a-gathering-of-local-indigenous-voices/>).

While a land acknowledgement is not enough, it is an important social justice and decolonial practice that promotes indigenous visibility and a reminder that we are on settled indigenous land. Let this land acknowledgement be an opening for all of us to contemplate a way to join in decolonial and indigenous movements for sovereignty and self-determination. Lastly, I am grateful to Melissa Borgia-Askey and Sandy Gajehsoh Dowdy for valuable etymological and pronunciation help. Also, I thank Andrea Riley Mukavetz and the American Indian Caucus for helping me with this land acknowledgement, and providing the convention with similar language for everyone to use in their sessions this year.⁵

This is just one of many possible examples, but it does several important things: it names Indigenous groups whose homelands these are or were; it uses Native-language place names, pronounced correctly; it signals awareness that statements are not enough; it acknowledges others’ contributions; and it challenges the participation of white settler institutions (like academic conferences) in colonial erasure and ongoing colonization.

What if the SECM started making meaningful land acknowledgments part of its conferences, especially when we’re able to return to in-person meetings? How might even symbolic efforts like these start to change the research, pedagogy, and performances that the Society sponsors, including their normative sense of the eighteenth century? And what if we made researching the history of colonization of a place part of the project?

I’m not suggesting we should turn away from what we’re trained to do, in order to study and teach our local music histories. (For me, local history happens to be a passion, in addition to being an important part of what I hope to contribute.) Still, everywhere we find ourselves has a deeply textured past, involving organized sound and music in significant ways, and helping our communities and students understand those complexities can make a difference locally, letting us better connect with our students and aid our institutions in facing their troubled pasts. Local history also offers a space of resistance and a way to make history matter. Can SECM members be a part of truth-telling and, eventually, reconciliation, where these measures are supported by local IBPOC stakeholders?

Of course, there is no guarantee that these or other changes will constitute redress for the centuries of anti-Indigenous (and anti-Brown and -Black) music historical projects that were, after all, part of the Enlightenment’s legacy. In this, it’s best to follow the lead of Indigenous people themselves who have engaged in decolonial struggles for much longer. “Starting somewhere is better than not trying at all,” the website of the Native Governance Center points out, and Dr. Kate Beane (Flandreau Santee Dakota and Muskogee Creek) makes a similar point: “We have to try. Starting out with good intentions and a good heart is what matters most.”⁶ Why not start where we are?

5. Asao B. Inoue, “How Do We Language So People Stop Killing Each Other, Or What Do We Do About White Language Supremacy?,” chair’s address delivered on March 14, 2019, Conference on College Composition and Communication, Annual Convention, Pittsburgh, PA, <https://tinyurl.com/4C19ChairAddress>.

6. “A Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgment,” Native Governance Center, <https://nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment/>.