

## “African Music *is* Global Music”: On Teaching Global Music in Nigeria and Making Historical Global Music in Boston

MICHAEL BIRENBAUM QUINTERO AND SAMUEL AJOSE

### Part One: On Positionality

Hedy Law: Sam, can you tell us about yourself and your positionality?

Samuel Ajose: I completed my doctoral studies at the University of Ibadan and currently serve as its Acting Head of the Department of Music. I also coordinate a departmental-based research project: “Ibadan Sustainable Music.” This project aimed at archiving endangered kinds of music in Ibadan—one of Africa’s largest cities. I teach the undergraduate courses Basic Music Appreciation, History of Western Music, Music Education, Music Theatre, and Music in Religion. I also teach the graduate course Transcription and Analysis of African Music. As an ethnomusicologist, I am interested in music in African Christianity or Pentecostalism, community music, and music education. My students are primarily from middle-class families across various ethnic sections in Nigeria, with minimal background in Western classical music. As an African scholar, I employ African music, mainly Nigerian/Yoruba music, to teach global music using narratives from African/Yoruba diaspora experiences. I introduce my students to music from global contexts through musical performances in formal and informal settings.

HL: Can you tell us something about your university?

SA: I teach at the University of Ibadan, the premier university in Nigeria. It was established in 1948 as an institution affiliated with the University College of London and became an independent University in 1962. This history has made musicians essential to the university. I did my doctoral studies at the Institute

of African Studies because there was no music department then. However, the Institute of African Studies was beginning to push for the “African story,” which encourages the discussion of African stories by Africans in the decolonial context. The Department of Music was founded in 2012, but there had been musical activities such as Music Circle and University Choir at the university. The University Choir started in 1973. It offers performances at the university convocation ceremonies with participants from the U.S. and the U.K.<sup>1</sup>

The university became very serious about the value of the music department in a premier university. Since 2012, the department has made clear that the purpose was to produce musicians for Nigeria. However, in line with the vision of the university to be a “world-class institution gearing towards societal needs,” the curriculum we use is based on the curriculum set by the National Universities Commission, a Nigerian governmental body. This Commission designs a highly Europeanized music curriculum and sets the “benchmark” for all universities in Nigeria. Very little in the curriculum—only one or two semesters—is focused on Nigerian or African music. The emphasis is more on Western classical music than African music. This emphasis is beyond our control because the Commission determines the benchmark, which influences our course design. By comparison, instructors in the global north have a lot of flexibility in teaching. An instructor can pick a course, design it, and decide how to teach it.

In my university, we have courses such as the History of Western Art Music (from the Renaissance to the twentieth century), Tonal Harmony, Theory of Music, Analysis of Western Music, Counterpoint, Music Appreciation, Music Education, World Cultures, Musical Theatre, as well as African Music and Nigerian Music. This list shows that our curriculum is highly Westernized. We must help students understand that music does not just consist of Western European music. Students need to know European music and music of world cultures. That is why students need to interact with music beyond their immediate environment.

HL: How do you engage with the idea of globality and global music history in your teaching?

SA: The idea of globality refers to anything non-Western. Recent conversations around decoloniality and decolonizing music education, even when they could only take place informally, have informed us that the music of our people is a kind of global music. African music *is* global music. I should emphasize that African music is a massive field. The same is true for Nigerian music, as there

are over 400 ethnic groups in Nigeria, and each group has its music. I only teach Nigerian music that focuses on the Southwestern part of Nigeria.

We need to talk about traveling musicians in our African communities. These topics shape our students' idea of music beyond the Western model. We have music in Ghana; we have music in South Africa; we have music in Colombia. We invite performers to conduct workshops on folk tunes and indigenous music workshops to introduce our students to different perspectives. Because the curriculum is handicapped by the University Commission that determines the benchmark, which decides the content that instructors need to teach in the classroom and the review process, we bring up—in an informal way—the kinds of music of other communities so that they play the same role as Western classical music. I teach students a global concept using local knowledge, which is not in the curriculum. To introduce this material is to incur extra work for the instructors. In my teaching, the music of other cultures is synonymous with global music history. To my mind, this is the only way to understand the notion of "global music history" in the curriculum of Nigeria.

HL: Thanks, Sam. Michael, how about your positionality?

Michael Birenbaum Quintero: I work at a private research university but in a school of music. Students here experience a conservatory environment within a larger research university. I approach global music history as an ethnomusicologist, that is, by applying historical inquiry to ethnomusicology rather than by extending historical musicology to include the world beyond the North Atlantic. I am also Chair of the Department of Musicology and Ethnomusicology, so I am responsible for curricular issues in both historical musicology and ethnomusicology. I try to work through the curriculum for a doctoral program and a master's program in musicology but also in ways that serve the broader School of Music. We make decisions keeping in mind the different student constituencies—performers, music educators, theorists, and composers.

I should also say that, as far as my research and my outlook are concerned, questioning the reification and taking for granted of ethnic and national categories—which is so fundamental to ethnomusicology and which, in my view, the discipline continues to rely on in rather conservative unhelpful ways—is an essential part of what I do, at the same time as I have both political and analytical commitments to understanding how those categories function within what Cedric Robinson called racial capitalism. In my book on Black music on the Pacific coast of Colombia and the category of Black music, I had to do a historical unearthing of both the construction of Blackness and the construction of music in the context of Blackness. Historical materialism is a crucial part of my method. It's also been critical to my thinking also to apply the historicization of

epistemes in Foucault's *The Order of Things* and the Nietzschean model of the genealogy to Omi and Winant's idea of racial formations and racial projects.

## Part Two: On Syllabus

HL: What kinds of activities have you designed for your teaching that include a global component, and how do you teach global music history in your institutional setting?

MBQ: To address this, let me first talk about our Music Cultures of the World class, one of the classes that undergraduate music majors have to take as part of the music history sequence (See Appendix 1). According to the United States' NASM (National Association of Schools of Music) accreditation system, students have to learn about diverse musical cultures to graduate, and this class is one way to fulfill this requirement. Despite NASM, this requirement was only in place in my institution since 2020, when a student petition started the move toward anti-racist and decolonized programming and education. This class is usually fully enrolled, with about twenty-five students, including some instrumentalists and composers and usually a lot of music education majors.

The course is not designed to cover all parts of the world. Instead, it focuses on particular topics and themes, and I use different specific musical settings as case studies. We begin by discussing ethnomusicology and imagining an ethnomusicology of Western popular music. I use Thomas Turino's *Music as Social Experience* to address this area. In terms of topics, we begin with the idea of organizing sound and the aesthetics of performance in West Africa using Ruth Stone's book, *Music in West Africa*. Then we'll switch to another area, say, Indian music, to describe another system for organizing sound (usually rhythmic cycles, specifically). Then we'll switch to another theme, say, music and sociality, using examples from South India, the Andes, Bali, and Korea. Along the way, of course, I have to make sure students understand that these musical systems are not fungible and that disarticulating, say, scale construction from a larger whole is a totally artificial exercise. And at the same time, as I try to present music and culture as a kind of whole, we also have to problematize non-historical, synchronic analysis of isolated field settings, that privilege an anthropological idea of culture but collapse history. So we do a discussion of a modern political movement's use of music in West Africa to follow up Stone's book.

We go through different themes organizing sound, organizing time, sound structure and social structure, and so on, and the global historical component comes toward the end of the class. It is set up in this way because I feel that students need to have all these issues under their belt to recognize how

contemporary music making can show the thumbprints of history. One of the first case studies comes from Robin Moore's *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*. We listen very closely, for example, to the early Spanish and African influences on Caribbean music. Then we discuss creolization processes, transnational Caribbean music, different contradance forms, and mixed creole forms. Finally, we study the contemporary Hispanophone Caribbean in terms of music from the slave trade, etc., and more recent engagements by Black musicians in the Hispanophone Caribbean with global Black musics. The last time I taught this course, we were able to invite an exciting Cuban musician called Yosvany Terry, a jazz musician initiated into a neo-African religious and musical sodality in Cuba. He incorporates elements of this music and cosmology into his work.

The second example of the historical component is designed around Bulgarian musics, using the content and structure of Tim Rice's *Music in Bulgaria*. Again, the struggle for me as an ethnomusicologist is not to globalize music history but rather to historicize global music, which is so frequently discussed in ahistorical terms.

SA: In our case, instructors must follow a Europeanized pre-designed curriculum that harkens more to Western music, as mandated by the National University Commission. However, Nigerian music scholars are now thinking about how best to let our students see that there are several kinds of music performed in the world, as we cannot just limit ourselves to Western classical music. As far as curriculum is concerned, it has not been easy to make changes. Many of our colleagues still stick to Europeanized pedagogy. Not only until very recently have we started advocating for the inclusion of African art music composers in our curriculum. Except for individual interventions, how do we call our attention and students' attention to this conversation in informal and formal ways?

MBQ: You said, Sam, that this curricular change can happen informally. In countries like Nigeria or Colombia, the informal sphere is sometimes more impactful than the formal. If you think about formal economy versus informal economy, maybe the formal economy moves more capital, but most people act within an informal space. What opportunities does the informal register offer?

SA: Well, my position does not represent a general position. Yes, I feel that, along with colleagues who have been actively participating in this global conversation of decolonizing music education, we are trying to revise the curriculum and bring it up to speed. If we do not have power over curriculum, which requires us to teach within a particular structure, we will go a step further and teach the functional.

MBQ: What do you mean by the "functional"?

SA: When the curriculum reads "teach music education," we must teach the "structural"—meaning learning theories, teaching methods, and all of that. I try to move beyond the "structural" to the "functional" by asking questions: How is music education within traditional African contexts? How do they develop their curriculum? The Commission established the curriculum because the goal is to consolidate knowledge while considering that practitioners have different levels of learning, etc. But the result is that the curriculum tilts toward a Western epistemology. For me, we can still use the same knowledge to look at our contexts. What are the theories of learning implicated in Yoruba? When we ask these questions, we are not dismissing the "structural." Instead, we are still engaging our local knowledge using the framework set by the Commission. So that's what I mean by informality, i.e., functionality.

I relate a topic in the history of Western art music to our African context. I tell my students that *minstrels* were not unique to France. In the Yoruba tradition, we have the *Alarinjo* (traveling) musicians. My point is that the idea of traveling musicians is not unique to the Western domain.

Another example comes from my music appreciation courses, where I bring *fúji* music to my class, a topic much neglected in our curriculum. I bring *fúji* music to my class to teach music fundamentals. I do not have to use western religious compositions to teach the call-and-response structure and performance practice. The informal space I explore is all about survival, i.e., functionality. We decided to use *fúji* because it is vibrant in the sound space of Nigeria, especially in Southwest Nigeria. How do we begin to understand this music as part of global music? What are the ways this music shaped the idea of global music? How does global music shape local music genres? We bring *fúji* to class informally along with other genres such as traditional Nigerian music, Nigerian popular musics, and Nigerian art music.

In the past, our idea of "global music" was Nigerian art music, with compositions imitating Western art music models. Popular music, which is gaining widespread interest in the global space, has also been neglected in the classroom. Our current interest is to return popular music to the classroom by studying the interaction between *fúji* and global practices. For example, we now find hip-hop musicians in Nigeria incorporating *fúji* into their music, which they perform in the U.S., the U.K., Canada, and elsewhere. Some of our students play African instruments for other musicians worldwide using online recording systems. Technology facilitates us to see that our local indigenous and popular music are also part of a global sound. In this way, we allow our students to appreciate how Nigerian music has shaped globality.

In terms of history, *fúji* is a make-up of pre-colonial, colonial, and even post-colonial engagements, which we have begun to historicize, even though we rely on oral history that is not documented in writing, unlike Nigerian art music. It is a big challenge for historians of Nigerian music to research this area within a global music historical context. This challenge prompts us to organize a conference on “*fújicology*” in Ibadan as a way to historicize this music. Is it true that we had already had a model system in *fúji* before the advent of the tonal system in Western music? Along this line of inquiry, we can begin to study what it means that before *fúji*, there was *Jùjú* culture influenced heavily by the oil boom. The economic influence allowed musicians to buy Western musical instruments—the guitar, the bass, and all that. Why was the guitar used in *Jùjú* music? This kind of question raises the influence of colonialism on *fúji*.

MBQ: It seems to me that a place to teach global music history is to explore this relationship between so-called “traditional” and “popular music.” For example, you can talk about *dundun* or *batá* next to the *àpàlà* music that built on it, and you can talk about *àpàlà* next to the *fúji* that built on it, and so on.

SA: Yes, I agree with you. However, we don’t have the liberties to design the curriculum that people in the U.S. and other places have, as I explained a moment ago. If we had such freedom, I’m sure some of us would have introduced the development of Yoruba popular music to the curriculum. One can look at Nigerian music from 1920 to 1970. Yet the question is not just about teaching Nigerian music but also about determining which kinds of Nigerian music to teach. Igbo music from the east? Hausa music from the north? Niger Delta music from the middle belt? Somebody can spend all four years on Yoruba music. You cannot exhaust *Jùjú* music in just three or four classes. Instead, “global” music does not designate one kind of music. African music is part of global music, and you find it in different places.

I engage the idea of global music—that is, African music as a type of global music—by, for example, introducing the students in my music education classes to community music making and community music education. This approach came as a response to the whole idea of decolonization in music education. Because these students, the next generation, want music from their culture. To this end, I incorporate these informal elements in my course and reorganize the formal elements. Of the twelve weeks I would have to teach, I compress the “functional” into a six-week window, leaving the remaining six weeks to teach community music making and music education in our Yoruba communities. We also discuss what we have done in the community.

Since people make music beyond the compositions by Bach and Mozart in our communities, which are part of the global music circuits, we teach globality

to our students, for example, through fieldwork. We go to a particular community and ask our students to play music alongside the participants. We ask the community members how to produce the sounds. We then discovered that our students come back with this material and use it for all kinds of music making, including writing music for orchestra. For instance, one of our students wrote a Big Band composition based on a folk tune he had learned in our community engagement. This music is part of global music.

Similarly, just as they want to hear Handel’s *Messiah* here in Nigeria, somebody in the U.S. wants to listen to this folk tune. We are part of the global music culture. With the help of technology, we can also begin to engage with communities of musicians around the globe. I also started this exchange program to bring community musicians into the classroom so that our students can begin to see the issue of inclusiveness in global knowledge rather than situate it around a particular region.<sup>2</sup>

MBQ: Sam, your experience reminds me of something I have been doing outside the university. I live in a city with a sizable immigrant population. With other members of the community, we are organizing ways for musicians from these different ethnic communities to come in and speak to youth here in the community because they don’t have these programs in their schools.

I don’t consider myself an “activist,” but I do want to be engaged in the world and in what’s happening in my community. I have long been very interested in the possibilities of music and traditional musics as a way of helping people understand history and sociality. Our family histories can be understood through music-making and musical taste, especially, for instance, in the case of children of immigrants or the grandchildren of immigrants. This is a way not only to understand the history of the people who came before us, but also to fit our own family histories into the frame of broader historical movements. This kind of move between the intimate space of musical performance and the broader scale of society or capital-H History is what ethnomusicologists and musicologists do all the time. My hope is that people understanding their personal, intergenerational stories as part of history in a broader sense fosters a kind of political analysis of how we got to our current situation.

There is also an encoding of social models in the way that the music works. In many traditional musical forms in Latin America, the process of learning is built into the structure of the music, so that observation and deep participation of the person next to you playing a more complex part while you learn to play a basic one is as important as formal pedagogy or isolated individual study. This shows not only different kinds of music making but also the ideas of ethical personhood that different systems value. These are aspects of a musical system

that are hard to explore within the university because of the logic that governs the curriculum and the type of students we get, and their goals. But tenure is also part of the university system, and now that I have tenure, I can find ways to work outside the institution to the benefit of my community and the city I live in.

I received a grant (see Appendix 2) with Mijente, a nationwide Latinx activist organization. They have a Boston *asamblea* (chapter). The grant funds what I call traditional music *talleres* (workshops). The project is to work with local youth from an organization called "Prevent the Cycle," which a friend of mine runs here in Lynn, Massachusetts. In this project, we bring in local musicians from different communities—Dominican, Guatemalan, and Cambodian—that live here. We are bringing in a West African drum master as well. What we will do is that the kids, who also come from these communities, will play the instruments and learn about their traditions.

Perhaps most importantly, we want the kids to have a working understanding of what needs these musics satisfied in the past and the present for their communities. This understanding comes from thinking about Afro-descendant religiosity in the Dominican Republic or thinking about the post-genocide landscape in Cambodia as a tool for the youth to understand what their political needs are in the present. These *talleres* help the youth understand their ancestors' and neighbors' political struggles, even if they are not of that particular ethnic group. They can use this understanding to reflect on their political necessities and social and economic conditions. The kids will also do songwriting, which is important as they can experiment with different musical idioms to reflect on their situation. They will learn to play a little bit and dance a little bit. Through these activities, they learn about the history of our community. Maybe they even learn to question some aspects, like perhaps gender dynamics. The project emphasizes the joy of creativity, cultivates the habit of political analysis, engages in intergenerational practices, and even critiques ancestral cultures when necessary.

### Part Three: On the Challenges to the Teaching of Global Music History

HL: What challenges have you encountered in teaching global music history?

MBQ: I teach in Boston, a city known for early music. Our university has a Historical Performance program. We have been trying to expand it by including global themes within it, say Latin American cathedral music, in the programming. I also see it as a value-added initiative within the musicology program. We are considering renaming the program Early Music Studies, to emphasize a focus on things like source studies and notation systems and housing it

within Musicology. I believe very strongly that we can look at European music influenced by global processes—mostly obviously colonialism but also other processes such as the Afro-Iberian string repertory—from its roots. These processes are crucial to the development of Western music after 1600.

The idea of inserting global themes and academic coursework into Historical Performance has been a tough sell because the business model for the School of Music is trying to bring in more students who pay full tuition for popular instruments. Instead of staffing a continuo professor or funding Master's and DMA students partially to study Early Music, the College of Fine Arts is more interested in getting, say, more piano faculty to bring in more piano students, often international students, paying full tuition.

Another challenge, or so I hear from my colleagues in the performance areas, is that many international students, which are a large part of the student body, push back against the ideas of global music diversity, anti-racism, and so on that became a subject of discussion after the 2020 uprisings here in the U.S. These students argue that they came here to study music and that these topics are not what they come to the U.S. to learn. My argument, however, is if they choose to get a certificate in the U.S., they will necessarily be along for the ride for the particularities of this historical moment in the U.S. At this moment that includes a lot of self-questioning about issues of race and power and so on that might not be a part of what's happening in music pedagogy elsewhere in the world. A related challenge involves things like student evaluations for faculty members' tenure and promotion. This kind of pushback can become very dangerous for anyone, especially female professors and professors of color, but it also affects professors who are actively engaged in issues of, say, repertoire diversity, that the School says it supports but that students might not be prepared for. The university needs to put a structure in place to legitimate these topics and state its position explicitly so that faculty are not abandoned when they institute the changes that the institution claims to want.

SA: This issue shows two sides of the coin. Some are interested in opening up the curriculum, but some stay close to the benchmark.

Daniel Castro Pantoja: On this thread of challenges, I think Sam is alluding to a rejection of the global that comes with an institution's "global strategy"—aiming to produce future "global citizens." What do you think about the perils of institutionalizing mobility as an educational goal?

MBQ: I am glad that you bring up this topic; it is a wonderful way of framing the question. For me, the only thing that is maybe more dangerous than ignoring the global is banalizing it. It's great if music education students, for

example, are excited to talk about non-Western music as they prepare to teach music in K-12 classrooms. The challenge is to help them avoid taking a tokenistic approach.

Another challenge is that there are groups of students who have different ways of engaging with issues of musical diversity. The first group is students excited about the quaintness of different musical practices—how interesting or colorful they are—but who don't understand the teeth behind the history that produced all these practices. The second group of students refrains from expressing their points of view because they are fearful of being accused of being insensitive. In a course I just taught on hip hop, some students were uncomfortable saying anything at all about hip hop because they did not feel authorized as white people. This discomfort may be a middle- or upper-class Massachusetts phenomenon. The third group, often international students, may not find these topics relevant. They feel this is not their fight, not their struggle. The pedagogical challenge is that these three groups of students are in the same classroom having the same discussions and listening to the same music. Ideally, we can all have at least some degree of a stake without necessarily having ownership over these issues, but it is challenging in practice.

I teach a course on Latino music in the U.S. It includes both U.S. popular music with Latino participation like punk, disco, hip hop, and jazz, as well as music like salsa, corridos, and reggaetón. I am careful in that class to include examples such as Jewish and Italian-American *mambo* dancers or Filipino and Mexican-American musical cross-fertilization. I try to help students understand that issues of race are everyone's issues and that all of these different musical formations come not only from a particular ethnic group but also from their interactions with the larger multiethnic society around them. The most critical challenge of all is not students' passivity but their fear. I think many students—white students in particular—are fearful about inadvertently saying something stupid or ignorant because they are in a place of exploration, or try to reproduce platitudes about diversity that they think the professor wants to hear without actually reflecting on them.

DCP: On the topic of challenges to teaching global music history, it seems to me that the idea of the "world" is essential to get across the concept of "globality." If we think of the world as something out there, beyond our local boundaries, this framing encourages the feeling of indifference (i.e., the issue is none of my business). But perhaps a way to deal with this challenge is to emphasize the opposite: Maybe the global is within the local and vice versa.

MBQ: This reframing makes a lot of sense. It makes me think about the demographic in a U.S. classroom. Very few of us in the classroom are indigenous

to the place we are teaching and learning. A history of globality is part of the formation of a classroom. However, in the context of Ibadan, a city with a long history of Yoruba ethnic group, most people are indigenous, at least to the area. In this context, the global and the local flip over in a very peculiar way, as Sam explains, in that the "local" is supposed to be Western art music—the Bach and Beethoven stuff—while the "global" music is "local" African or Nigerian music. This reversal is fascinating and ironic.

## APPENDIX 1

Music Cultures of the World  
Prof. Michael Birenbaum Quintero

*Music is more than an art and entertainment, [it] also is or may be an expression of culturally shared ideologies and worldviews, a social behavior that reinforces or challenges social structures and hierarchies, a political tool, a commodity with economic significance, a mode of healing and therapy, and many other things.*

-Timothy Rice, Professor of Music (UCLA)

### Description

If, for the myriad musical cultures around the world, music is not just art and entertainment, what else can it be? What do these musics sound like through other ears? Given the mind-boggling diversity of the musical forms of the world, this course offers a sample, introducing students to selected musical regions: West Africa, South India, the Andes, Bali, Native North America, Pacific Islands, the Hispanic Caribbean, and Bulgaria. Through these musical practices, we will investigate the many ways in which sound is organized musically, the way in which it promotes particular kinds of social organization, its relationship with the natural and spiritual worlds, and the ways in which, over the course of history, it has been subject to long-running intra/intercultural dialogues, struggles, and negotiation processes that continue to produce new hybrid forms. You will also be introduced to basic musical concepts and terminology, and acquire listening skills that will enable you to better encounter and understand music in this course and beyond.

## Objectives

By the end of the semester (assuming you fulfill the expectations below), you are expected to demonstrate the following learning objectives for each of the HUB required components:

### Aesthetic Explorations:

- Identify important musical styles in at least four selected regions of the world for this course (for example, West Africa, Brazil, Bulgaria, and Korea—this could vary from semester to semester)
- Understand a basic history of shifting cultural, economic, political, and social dynamics in these selected regions, and relate these changes to musical practices across the world.
- Develop a basic vocabulary and critical listening skills to describe and discuss these musical practices and their significant features.
- Analyze the effects of political, social, and economic currents on artistic production.
- Evaluate, describe, and contextualize a live performance of a musical culture that is not familiar to you in a concert report.
- Compare, and contrast similarities and differences among musical cultures across the world based on the particularities of the aesthetic, cultural, and historical aspects of each musical culture discussed in class.
- In so doing, distinguish between a variety of terms used to discuss race, culture, social, and artistic interactions.

### Global Citizenship and Intercultural Literacy:

- Based on the knowledge of the historical and cultural context as well as the culturally specific aesthetic norms, preferences, and platforms of the musical cultures across the world, interpret the aesthetic, political, and social meanings within specific geographical and historical contexts of each musical culture chosen from around the world.
- Participate in four workshops of each music and dance from around the world under discussion to gain experiential knowledge into the particular musical culture’s embodied, aesthetic, and cultural meanings.
- Through short-term ethnographic fieldwork in a cultural community in Boston, describe and analyze the role of musical practices within a different culture from your own in relation to the specific cultural,

historical, and political contexts within which these musical practices have emerged.

- Self-reflexively discuss students’ own musical backgrounds, experiences, and production as a manifestation of personal identity and socio-political influences.

## Requirements

Each class meeting will include a *reading and listening* assignment. These assignments should be completed BEFORE class and students should be prepared to discuss and answer questions about the reading. Listening is just as important as reading. The listening assignments will encourage us to approach a musical sound-object with creative, productive questions. If there are extenuating circumstances that keep you from completing them on time, again, let me know beforehand.

A word on *listening assignments*: listen with headphones, and without multi-tasking. *Listen* with attention—don’t just *hear*!

Each student is expected to actively *participate* in class. This includes speaking in class but also basic classroom etiquette: eating and drinking is fine, but being digitally or telephonically distracted or unconscious is not.

## Course Expectations

Each class meeting will include a reading and listening assignment. These assignments should be completed BEFORE class and students should be prepared to discuss and answer questions about the reading.

- Listening is just as important as reading. The listening assignments will encourage us to approach a musical sound-object with creative, productive questions.
- Each student is expected to actively participate in class.
- Each student is expected to come to office hours at least twice during the semester, once in the first two weeks of class. This will be part of your attendance grade.
- At the beginning of every class, each student will hand me a note card assignment.



### Final Paper

For the final paper, students will produce a substantial research paper from the following three options below. Students will submit a proposal in which they specify in as much detail as possible WHAT your subject will be, WHY this subject will be a productive topic for you to apply the knowledge you’ve gained in this course, and HOW you will go about it, including a bibliography that demonstrates students’ ability to ethically and strategically select relevant bibliographic sources or ethnographic data. This proposal will then receive faculty feedback, and students will revise a research plan to ensure substantial, rigorous, and strategic choice of scholarly sources to address research questions. Before producing the final paper, students will develop the research question/hypothesis by submitting paper proposal. In consultation with faculty feedback, students will then produce paper outline/draft to demonstrate data-gathering skills. With the faculty feedback, students will then build an annotated bibliography to critically assess their sources. Finally, students will submit an outline or draft before their in-class presentations. In their in-class presentations, students will present their tentative argument and substantiating sources to receive critique and feedback. Based on these research processes, students will produce final paper in which students crystallize their analyses, interpretations, and investigation of the research question and clearly organize and communicate their argument in writing.

#### *Option #1: Mini-ethnography.*

Identify a musician, a musical group, a musical organization, or musical establishment in Boston where you could conduct fieldwork to write your own mini-ethnography. The musical practice needs to be from a non-Western area/tradition and something that is not familiar to you, so that you could apply the conceptual and technical knowledge you’ve learned in this course to analyze the musical sounds. You have to be able to spend at least 6 hours total conducting fieldwork (eg. interviews, attending concerts, etc.) Describe in detail what kind of resources you have access to, and what kind of fieldwork you’ll conduct, and what particular aspect you’re interested in. Your proposal should include preliminary bibliography of 3–5 items.

#### *Option #2: Research paper on a musical practice/tradition in a particular area that we have not studied in class.*

Identify a musical practice/tradition/area that you’re not familiar with. Then, do some research to get a sense of what aspect of the musical culture interests you in particular, and decide what angle you want to present this musical culture

from (i.e., music and politics? Conception of musical time? Music and religion? Music and gender? etc.). Make sure you have enough resources to draw upon to write your paper; to do so, you must attach a preliminary bibliography of at least 10 sources at the time of proposal submission. 7 of them must be academic resources offline (not from the internet).

#### *Option #3: In-depth research paper on an aspect of one of the five music-areas we will have studied in this course.*

If you came across a topic or an aspect of music cultures in this class that you wanted to do further research, you can choose to focus on it to write a paper. Describe what specific aspect of the musical culture you will want to write about, what additional questions and information you’ll pursue in this paper, and how you will support your analysis and argument. It is important that you present original ideas and information in this paper, going beyond what you’ve learned in this class. Make sure you have enough resources other than the textbook and lecture notes to draw upon to write your paper. To do so, you must attach a preliminary bibliography of at least 10 sources at the time of proposal submission. 7 of them must be academic resources offline (not from the internet).

### Evaluation

Final grades will be based on all of the above requirements, weighted as follows:

- Class participation: 11%
- Written assignments & quizzes: 30%
- Concert report: 5% (extra credit: 5%)
- Exam #1: 17%
- Exam #2: 17%
- Final Research Paper & presentation: 20%

### Materials

You will need access to Blackboard.

Students should also purchase the following texts and their accompanying CDs.

- Gold, Lisa. *Music in Bali*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Moore, Robin. *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Rice, Timothy. *Music in Bulgaria*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Stone, Ruth. *Music in West Africa*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.



Sound and visual excerpts from the following texts will be available on Blackboard, although students are welcome to purchase them as well.

- Kwon, Donna Lee. *Music in Korea*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Turino, Thomas. *Music in the Andes*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Turino, Thomas. *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008.
- Viswanathan, T. and Matthew Harp Allen. *Music in South India*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

### Course Schedule

#### Day 1. Introduction

#### Day 2. An ethnomusicology of here?

Assignment: Sound Log

Reading:

- Read the syllabus.
- Turino, Thomas. "Why Music Matters." In *Music as Social Experience: The Politics of Participation*, 1–22. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Topics:

- Music in our society
- Terminology

#### Topic 1. Organizing sound. Case study 1. West Africa.

#### Day 3. West Africa—Background

Reading: Stone, Ruth. "Traveling to West Africa." In *Music in West Africa*, 1–21. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Methods
- Focuses
- Musical functions and contexts
- History

#### Day 4. West Africa—The aesthetics of performance

Reading: Stone, Ruth. "Performance Facets." In *Music in West Africa*, 22–46. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Contexts
- Aesthetics

#### Day 5. West Africa—Organizing sound, organizing time

Reading:

- Stone, Ruth. "Voices: Layered Tone Colors." In *Music in West Africa*, 47–63. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Stone, Ruth. "Time and Polyrhythm." In *Music in West Africa*, 79–94. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Instruments and timbres
- Rhythm concepts and vocabulary
- Interlocking time scales

#### Day 6. Sound structure and social relations

Reading: Stone, Ruth. "Part-Counterpart: Call and Response." In *Music in West Africa*, 64–78. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics: Social life and musical performance

#### Day 7. West Africa— Cutting the Edge, and Praying the Devil Back to Hell

Reading: Stone, Ruth. "Surveying the Trip: Cutting the Edge." In *Music in West Africa*, 95–98. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

In-class film: *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*

Writing: Do quick research on Charles Taylor and woman's movement in Liberia, write up a summary of what you have found out. Based on your research, assess Ruth Stone's textbook you have just read. How did your findings change the way you understand Liberian music and culture? What are perspectives and information that the author omitted in her writing?

#### Topic 1. Organizing sound. Case study 2. South India

#### Day 8. South India—Rhythmic organization

Reading:

- Viswanathan, T. and Matthew Harp Allen. "Song in South India." In *Music in South India*, 1–14. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Viswanathan, T. and Matthew Harp Allen. "Key Concepts in Karnatic Music." In *Music in South India*, 34–41. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Topics:

- Rhythm
- Terminology

*Day 9. South India—Melodic organization*

Written Assignment:

- Review all the notes and listening material on West Africa and South India
- Make a list of keywords, concepts, instruments, names
- Make a list of questions or concepts/listening assignment for which you need clarifications

Reading:

- Viswanathan, T. and Matthew Harp Allen. "Song in South India." In *Music in South India*, 15–33. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.
- Viswanathan, T. and Matthew Harp Allen. "Key Concepts in Karnatic Music." In *Music in South India*, 24–55. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Topics:

- Scales
- Melody
- Terminology

### *Topic 2. Sociality. Introduction*

*Day 10. Presentational and participatory performance styles*

Written Assignment:

- Review all the notes and listening material on native North America and the Pacific islands
- Make a list of keywords, concepts, instruments, names
- Make a list of questions or concepts/listening assignment for which you need clarifications

Reading: Turino, Thomas. "Participatory and Presentational Performance." In *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*, 23–65. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Presentational and participatory styles
- Social organization
- Sound organization
- Virtuosity

*Day 11. Exam #1*

### *Topic 2. Sociality. Case Study 3. Andean Wind Music*

*Day 12. Andean Music—Indigenous Wind Ensembles*

Start thinking about your final research project & find a partner

Reading: Turino, Thomas. "Indigenous Wind Ensembles and Community."

In *Music in the Andes*, 1–37. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Listening: Examples referred to in text (on Blackboard)

Topics:

- Introduction to the Andes
- Aymara society and social roles
- Aymara sound roles

### *Topic 2. Sociality and society. Case Study 4: Bali*

*Day 13. Bali—Sociality, ritual, and history*

Reading: Gold, Lisa. "The Balinese Ceremonial Soundscape: Simultaneity of Soundings." In *Music in Bali*, 1–27. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Context
- Ritual

*Day 14. Bali—Organizing sound*

Concert Review Due

Reading:

- Gold, Lisa. "Instruments: Materials, Tuning, and Timbre." In *Music in Bali*, 28–51. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014
- Gold, Lisa. "Interlocking and Layering: Musical Roles in the Ensemble." In *Music in Bali*, 52–70. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Organology
- Timbre

*Day 15. Bali—Music, Theater, Dance, Storytelling*

Reading: Gold, Lisa. "The World of Stories: Integration of Music, Dance, and Drama in Traditional Balinese Theater." In *Music in Bali*, 71–92. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Theatrical and dance genres
- Temporal organization

*Day 16. Bali—Sociality, storytelling, and history in the aesthetics of Gong Kebyar*

Reading:

- Gold, Lisa. "Large Scale Form in Gong Kebyar and Its Antecedents." In *Music in Bali*, 126–150. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014
- Gold, Lisa. "Conclusion: Three Themes Revisited at a Cremation Ceremony." In *Music in Bali*, 151–155. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014

Listening: Examples referred to in text

*Topic 2. Sociality and society. Case Study 5: Korea**Day 17. Music in Korea*

Research Proposal / Abstract Due

Reading: Kwon, Donna Lee. "The Court as Cultural Conduit." In *Music in Korea*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2011.

*Day 18. Music in Korea 2*

Reading:

- Kwon, Donna Lee. "Korea from Both Sides of the Border." In *Music in Korea*, 1–21. New York, Oxford University Press, 2011
- Kwon, Donna Lee. "Negotiating Transnational Flows of Culture." In *Music in Korea*, 149–172. New York, Oxford University Press, 2011

*Topic 3: Layered Histories. Case Study 6: The Hispanic Caribbean**Day 19. Hispanic Caribbean—Introduction*

Reading: Moore, Robin. "Introduction." In *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*, 1–29. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

Topics:

- Race

- Colonialism
- Creolization

*Day 20. Hispanic Caribbean—Spanish Colonization*

Written Assignment:

- Review all the notes and listening material on native Andean, Bali, North America
- Make a list of keywords, concepts, instruments, names
- Make a list of questions or concepts/listening assignment for which you need clarifications

Reading: Moore, Robin. "Music and Spanish Colonization." In *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*, 30–51. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

*Day 21. Library Session*

Meet in the library

*Day 22. Hispanic Caribbean—Creolization and transnational musics*

Reading:

- Moore, Robin. "Creolized Dance Music." In *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*, 83–120. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Moore, Robin. "Transnational Caribbean Musics." In *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*, 121–146. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

*Day 23. The Hispanic Caribbean—Africa in the Americas and Racializing Music*

Annotated Bibliography Due

Reading:

Moore, Robin. "Cultural Legacies of the Slave Trade." In *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*, 52–82. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Moore, Robin. "Dialogues with Blackness." In *Music in the Hispanic Caribbean*, 177–206. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

*Day 24. Guest Artist Yosvany Terry*

Read:

- Transnational Dynamics
- Yosvany Terry Materials

Listening: *New-Throned King*

*Topic 4: Layered Histories. Case Study 8: Bulgaria*

Day 25. Bulgaria—The musical traces of history

Assignment: Annotated bibliography – at least 5 sources, at least 4 of which should be from academic publishers or peer-reviewed journals

Reading: Rice, Timothy. “The Past in Present Day.” In *Music in Bulgaria*, 18–27. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Music:

- Rice, Timothy. “A Musical Tour.” In *Music in Bulgaria*, 28–45. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Rice, Timothy. “Making Music Yesterday and Today.” In *Music in Bulgaria*, 46–55. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Listening: Examples referred to in text

*Topic 5: Local and global, hybridization and preservation. Case Study 8: Bulgaria*

Day 26. Bulgaria—National music and world music

Reading:

- Rice, Timothy. “Music and Politics.” In *Music in Bulgaria*, 56–74. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Rice, Timothy. “Bulgarian Music as World Music.” In *Music in Bulgaria*, 75–86. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Rice, Timothy. “A New Music for a New Era.” In *Music in Bulgaria*, 87–102. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Day 27. Class presentations and Exam

Final papers due

**APPENDIX 2****Sin El Estado Incubator Grant**

Traditional Music *Talleres*: Crafting a Shared Future from the Lessons of the Past

Michael Birenbaum Quintero (Boston Asamblea)

Lynn, MA

*The Context*

Lynn is a diverse, working-class, heavily immigrant city in the North Shore of Massachusetts outside Boston. According to the 2020 census, our city’s population of 101,000 is 43% Latinx, 36% White, 14% Black, and 8% Asian. 37% of us were born outside the US, especially in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Haiti, and Cambodia.<sup>3</sup> Slightly more than half of us speak a language besides English at home—the most popular of the 59 languages spoken in Lynn are Spanish, Khmer (Cambodian), Arabic, and Haitian Creole. 17% of us live below the poverty line. Although our city is majority BIPOC and working-class, we remain politically, economically, and socially marginalized. We are under threat from gentrifying housing developers, racism in our schools, and foot-dragging on promised police reforms. We failed in 2021 to make electoral gains against the vested interests of our local government.

*Our Response*

A strictly electoral response to the city’s challenges clearly is not enough. We have to articulate our own vision of the future and construct as much of it as we can ourselves. To do so, we have to have a sense of our own agency to transform our circumstances, a coherent political orientation that allows us to analyze and come up with solutions for those circumstances, a space to engage with other members of different parts of our community to engage in that analysis, and a sense of common cause—that is, a sense that we are a community in the first place. More than that, we have to reverse all of the historically accumulated structures—material, social, and ideological—that make us believe that we are not only incapable of creating a better world but also *undeserving* of one.

Traditional cultural practices like music respond to the conditions of a given society, such as the natural environment that’s used in the construction of instruments. Music also encodes historical experiences, tells stories, and provokes collective emotion. Often music teaches what it means to be an individual in a collective—the balance between individual improvisation and marking the beat that one’s fellow musicians depend on. Finally, music allows for people to take pride in the beauty that their community has created collectively and, therefore, in themselves.

I am proposing Traditional Music *Talleres* as a means of building a sense of identity, community, and power for a group of working-class BIPOC youth leaders from the local Prevent the Cycle organization. The *talleres* (workshops) will be held monthly and will bring musicians and culture bearers from the city’s ethnic communities to give the youth (who belong to many of those communities) an overview of their traditional music and the history and culture

3. U.S. Census Bureau, “Lynn city, Massachusetts,” (accessed August 31, 2023), <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/lynncitymassachusetts>.

that produced it, drawing parallels and contrast with the reality experienced by youth in Lynn. The artists will teach youth the basics of playing an instrument, singing, or dancing in these musical traditions. They will also lead songwriting workshops so that youth can express their own realities and concerns using the traditional idioms. The emphasis will be on joy, creativity, and cultivating the habit of political analysis—learning to appreciate the struggle of a particular society but also not shying away from the ways in which some aspects of traditional culture (gender dynamics, for example) do not measure up to what we see as our plan for liberation. After the first cycle, we hope to reapply next year for *talleres* emphasizing another aspect of culture (maybe cooking).

The workshops will be facilitated by me, a professional ethnomusicologist who has worked with traditional musicians and written on the politics of culture in the Afro-Colombian social movement for more than 20 years.

### *Timeline*

Once we receive the grant (*dedos cruzados*) we will begin to schedule the *talleres*. We anticipate holding them beginning in September—that is, when the youth will be in school. We hope to carry out ongoing assessments of how they feel things are going after the second *taller* and make any adjustments we need to. With this information we plan to seek funding for a second round, either a deep dive on a single tradition that will allow them to get more proficiency or maybe shifting to another cultural expression, maybe cooking, visual arts, or modern non-traditional dance forms like breakdance, salsa, or bachata.

### *Budget*

Culture-bearers:	***	Female-led Dominican traditional <i>palo</i> drummers	\$***
Culture-bearers:	***	Cambodian Traditional Musicians and Dancers	\$***
Culture-bearers:	***	Afro-Boricua drumming ( <i>bomba, plena</i> ) and dance group	\$***
Culture-bearers:	***	Colombian traditional <i>gaita</i> and <i>currulao</i> music	\$***
Culture-bearers:	***	Ghanaian master drummer and his group	\$***
Culture-bearers:	***	Brazilian samba master	\$***

We are requesting \$5,000 from Mijente to cover costs.