

2023 Conference Abstracts

Saturday, April 1

Session A1: Isochrony (9:30–11:00 am)

Poetic Meter: A View from Music Theory

Joseph Straus (CUNY Graduate Center) and Rebecca Moranis (CUNY Graduate Center)

In classical prosody, still the dominant approach to the study of meter in English poetry, the meter of a poem is defined by the number and quality of its constituent feet—patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables. Classical prosody thus fails to make distinctions that music theorists have learned to make: between rhythm and meter; between metric accent and phenomenal accent; between meter and grouping; between metrical levels. Classical prosodists look for meter in the properties of the English language, whereas music theorists think of meter as a mental construct in the mind of the listener, something inferred from a sound signal produced by a performance.

We offer an approach to meter in English poetry (specifically rhymed verse) that is grounded in music theory. We understand meter as an underlying, multi-level grid, operating independently of and conceptually prior to the vagaries of the rhythmic surface and its groupings. At each metrical level, there are evenly-spaced (isochronous) beats. We demonstrate beat isochrony through an empirical study of recorded performances of poetry, following the music-theoretical literature on meter in recorded music. The performed beats are sufficiently isochronous to permit listeners to infer a robust multi-level metrical grid. We are thus able to produce metrical transcriptions in music notation of poetry performances, including both children’s rhymes and canonical verse (by Frost, Yeats, Dickinson, Hughes, and others). These transcriptions represent our metrical hearings of poetry performances.

Strict and Free Counting as Analytical Concepts

Cheng Wei Lim (Columbia University)

Our theories of meter involve some notion of counting. Whereas chronometric precision is the norm in specific traditions, genres, and styles, others view counting as something to be felt vis-à-vis contextual schemata. Building on Hasty’s (2020 [2009]) and London’s (2012) theories and Murphy’s “framework for levels of engagement with meter” (2022), I argue our accounts of meter and rhythm benefit from distinguishing “strict” and “free(r)” notions of counting. “Free counting” has intriguing analytical implications for Western art music, where meter and rhythm are ostensibly regulated by the score. First, I discuss Fryderyk Chopin’s performance style. Historical listeners report hearing Chopin’s Mazurka in C major, Op. 33 No. 3, in 2/4 or 4/4. Unlike hemiolas and syncopations, however, these interpretations are irreconcilable with notated meter through strict counting. I follow up with the eighth of Franz Liszt’s *Transcendental Etudes (Wilde Jagd)*. Strict counting poorly captures our metrical experience, since visual impressions of syncopations, seemingly on-beat accents, and the avoidance of downbeats clash with our aural

impressions. Instead, I point to cues specifying various kinds of metrical experiences in elastic relationships with clock time. These include the hunt topic and beat-suggestive anticipatory harmonic-melodic gestures. As our familiarity with performance styles heavily influences how we imagine music, I test my observations' ecological validity through a comparative analysis of recordings by Vladimir Ashkenazy, Evgeny Kissin, and Daniil Trifonov. In sum, I contend that free counting, as informed by performance, is analytically productive for some kinds of music within and beyond the Western concert tradition.

Long-Form Non-Isochrony and Implicit Music Theory: Cyclicity and Entrainment in Cantos de Boga

Lina Tabak (CUNY Graduate Center)

Although most scholarship on non-isochronous meters focuses on irregularity at the beat or subdivision levels, *cantos de boga* (rowing songs) from the Pacific region of Colombia often feature non-isochrony at the level immediately slower than the beat. Martin Clayton (2020) has called these metric structures “long-form non-isochronous meters,” which contain isochronous beats, non-isochronous “groups” of beats (i.e., felt measures), and repetitive cycles often longer than the 5-second upper limit for metric perception. Clayton argues that listeners can entrain to the non-isochronous measures only when they have prior theoretical knowledge, fostered by years of academic study and listening experience.

I counter Clayton's assertion by arguing that listeners can entrain to long-form non-isochronous meters in music from implicit music theory traditions (in which there are no explicit theories in the form of verbal or written information), and from structurally flexible traditions (in which, for instance, the number of beats varies greatly among songs from the same genre). In *cantos de boga*, the number of beats per cycle is not prescribed, and rather can vary widely from a metrically regular sixteen beats to prime cycles of thirteen and twenty-three beats. The diversity in number of beats precludes prior experience from informing one's entrainment. Yet, repetition of the long, cyclic melodies found in *cantos de boga* triggers top-down processes of metric entrainment, allowing even naïve listeners increasingly expect the same cycle to continue recurring. This allows them to gradually begin entraining to the series of changing meters—the non-isochronous level—found within the cycle.

Session B1: Semiotics (9:30–11:00 am)

Learnedness as Type and Style in Haydn's Late Masses

Robert Wrigley (CUNY Graduate Center)

Although topic theorists have at times looked to church music as a source for topics applied in secular instrumental music, detailed topical analyses of liturgical music in its own right have been lacking. In this paper, I provide a topical reading of several passages from Joseph Haydn's *Nelsonmesse*, arguing that topics provide analytical insight into functional music like Mass settings. In particular, I claim that the Mass repertoire illustrates a need to rethink the category of “Learned Style,” one of the principal topics first proposed by Ratner (1980), signaled primarily through imitative textures.

Ratner proposed that topics could take the form either of types (“fully worked out pieces”) or styles (“figures and progressions within a piece”). Though learnedness has been considered only as a style, I propose that it may also manifest as a type. The opposition between topical types and styles, moreover, is useful for the analysis of imitative passages in the *Nelsonmesse*, as indeed in Haydn’s Mass settings more generally. Some passages incorporate imitation only as a fleeting, surface-level gesture in the mode of topical styles. Other instances of imitation, however, are maintained at great length, helping to shape complete tonal structures; these may be regarded as topical types. Though the style-type distinction is not an absolute binary, the opposition affords a more nuanced understanding of the extroversive meaning of imitative textures in that the formal obligations characteristic of the topical type add a new layer to the signifying power of learnedness.

Reminiscence in Brahms’s Op. 119, No. 2: Toward a Synthesis of Narrative and Voice Leading Joseph Grunkemeyer (Indiana University)

The music of Brahms is ripe with ambiguity, both in its voice leading and its narrative. Popular narrative theories, such as Hatten (1994) and Almén (2008), focus primarily on music of the first half of the 19th century, leaving out composers like Brahms. In *Music as Discourse* (2009), Agawu explores semiotic interpretations of Romantic music, including Brahms’s Op. 119, No. 2. Agawu’s semiotic analysis of meaning in this piece produces wildly different results from Caldwell et al.’s voice leading analysis in *Analysis of Tonal Music: A Schenkerian Approach* (2020). The former analysis emphasizes the frantic, speech like nature of the A section and the lyrical singing character of the B section whereas the latter analysis does not concern itself with these contrasts and makes a case for reducing out the primary surface motive. Neither analysis confronts the salient issue of structural closure, the only PAC in the piece is found in the B section. Through a synthesized approach combining Schenkerian and narrative methods, I explore more deeply the contrasts between sections, highlighting the shared motive as a narrative link between them, and argue that the structural descent takes place in an inner voice, obscured by the return of B section material at the end of the ternary form. Despite the major mode ending, this piece ends in tragedy, with the return of B material acting as a final reminiscence of the idealized version of the main motif, highlighting the darkness of the A section while allowing it to achieve closure.

Analyzing Displacement Techniques and their Uncanny Effect in Prokofiev's Music Evan Tanovich (University of Toronto)

In nearly every theoretical study of Prokofiev’s music, one encounters descriptions of his style as “idiosyncratic,” “unique” or “one-of-a-kind”. Paradoxically, these same studies analyze his compositions with generic theoretical paradigms such as set theory, Schenkerian theory, or neo-Riemannian theory. While these investigations offer interesting insights into patterns, schemas, and layers of meaning in Prokofiev’s music, they do not provide a theoretical framework as idiosyncratic as his compositional language. By contrast, Richard Bass’s theory of chromatic displacement (1988) makes great strides toward a composer-specific analytical apparatus. Bass argues that Prokofiev systematically displaces diatonic notes and uses

chromatic neighbors which appear “instead of, rather than in addition to, the notes of the chord” (199). While Bass’s efforts are laudable, he only examines one of many forms of musical displacement.

My paper posits a theory of general displacement in Prokofiev’s music that incorporates chromatic displacement (CD) and six other displacement techniques: diatonic (DD), triadic (TD), octave (OD), formal (FD), rhythmic (RD), and motivic (MD). Through this theoretical lens, under-analyzed concepts in Prokofiev’s compositions can be explored, and I focus on uncanniness. Part one of the paper presents my theoretical framework. I introduce a new lexicon of terminology related to displacement techniques of various types. In part two, I demonstrate how these techniques function through an analysis of excerpts from Prokofiev’s sixth thematic notebook, his Fourth Symphony, and his ballets *Romeo and Juliet* and *Cinderella*. In part three I explore the uncanny effect that displacement techniques might be said to engender in these excerpts.

Session A2: Performance As Analysis (11:15 am–12:15 pm)

Hip-Hop Sampling as an Analytic Act

Jeremy Tatar (McGill University)

Sampling is, by now, a ubiquitous feature of our contemporary musical landscape. Of all the songs to chart on the *Billboard Hot 100* throughout 2022, for example, nearly one in five contained sampling of some kind. Drawing on concepts established in the field of performance analysis, this paper explores the potential for sample-based beats in hip-hop to function as a form of musical analysis. I argue that, just as with other analytic acts, sample-based beats are a) products of skilled and repeated close listening informed by expert knowledge (knowledge that is often also intuitive and/or embodied); and b) commentaries with the potential to shape how a body of music is heard and interpreted. In many respects, producers face methodological, aesthetic, and stylistic questions not unlike those encountered by performers, who, as Edward T. Cone (1968, 34) wrote, must always make “a choice: which of the relationships implicit in this piece are to be emphasized, to be made explicit?”

Focusing particularly on issues of meter, I consider issues such as: How do producers interpret a metrically ambiguous or multi-valent source? How do they recontextualize material from one meter into another? And, most importantly, how might attending to these choices inform our interpretations of these source materials? Through close readings of songs by Usher, Nas, Destiny’s Child, and Frank Ocean, I demonstrate how sampling creates a living archive that documents the listening practices of an expert musical community.

Choreographing Musical Form: Tapping into a Performance of J.S. Bach’s Italian Concerto by Sam Weber

Rachel Gain (Yale University)

When dancers choreograph to music, they produce a cross-modal product that supplements the aural with the visual. This paper argues that choreography emphasizing one reading of a functionally ambiguous musical event may sway the audience’s interpretation of it.

I demonstrate this through a close reading of “Bach”—a tap routine by Sam Weber (1950–) choreographed to the final *Presto* movement of J.S. Bach’s “Italian” Concerto BWV 971. My analysis reveals how Weber communicates the composition’s form through movement, guiding the audience’s understanding of musical function in the moment.

In Bach’s *Presto* movement, there are several instances of the *Vordersatz* motive that a first-time listener might not know whether to interpret as *bona fide* ritornello statements or episodic quotations. Through gradated references to ballet steps and a careful manipulation of rhythmic tension and discharge, Weber’s choreography communicates the function and structural importance of these various *Vordersatz* statements by drawing attention to significant structural statements and not acknowledging or actively masking less important ones.

While music and dance scholars often treat choreography as an object for choreomusical analysis, I demonstrate that it can also be a musical analysis in its own right. As in traditional analyses, the choreographer communicates their reading of the music to their audience—including their understanding of its ambiguities. Rather than using prose, diagrams, and annotations, the dancer *performs* their analysis of the music synchronously through movement. This paper thus contends that there is a place for choreography in music theory discourse, alongside more traditional analytic texts.

Session B2: Late Romantic Developments (11:15 am–12:15 pm)

From Lied to Symphony: Evaluating Harmony’s Influence on Mahler’s Symphonic Manipulation of Song Material

Erin Johnston (CUNY Graduate Center)

Mahler’s self-quotation practices have long been recognized as central to his work. Some musicologists have delved into the implications of this practice on his music, focusing primarily on musical narrative and meaning implied by intertextual relationships (Johnson 2009, Revers 2007, Roman 2007, Knapp 2003, Borio 2000). This approach is typical of musicological work on quotation in Romantic repertoire, however, it fails to fully explore all the musical implications of Mahler’s self-quotation practice. My paper seeks to provide fresh analytical insight into this compositional feature by considering Mahler’s borrowing and rearrangement of material from his Lied, “Ging heut’ Morgen übers Feld,” for the opening movement of his First Symphony.

Given Mahler’s choice to quote his earlier vocal work in this symphony, why reorder this quoted material? Some have attempted to justify this rearrangement as a means to reconstruct the affective arch of the first and second strophes’ latter halves, now across the entirety of the exposition (Knapp 2003). One could also argue that narrative meaning motivates Mahler’s reorganization: as the symphony’s original program suggests nature’s post-winter awakening, the exposition should emulate this slow awakening. Without denying the significance of narrative and affect, I argue that *harmony*—more specifically, the harmonic narrative of sonata form—is a more fundamental motivating principle. Discussing several excerpts, my paper draws on typical harmonic and formal patterns of sonata-form movements, considering how the tonal and cadential processes of the song’s strophes fit (or do not fit) into this form’s expectations.

**“Harsh Juncture” (*Die harte Fügung*) as an Organizational Principle
in Mascagni’s *Cavalleria Rusticana***

Ji Yeon Lee (University of Houston)

Pietro Mascagni’s *Cavalleria Rusticana* is a characteristic Italian “verismo” (realism) opera from the turn of the twentieth century. Centering ordinary people and their everyday lives in a Sicilian community, the verismo elements include free verse, crying-out voices, continuous musical flow, and strong emotional intensity. Such surface musical features are readily associated with the genre. Less investigated, however, are the ways in which the formal organization reflects musical principles of verismo. The standard reference point for analysis of Italian Romantic opera is the conventional form (*la solita forma*). Although still highly relevant to later Italian opera composition, the conventional form’s application to verismo is limited. As a result, the formal bases on the genre have long been described only in broad terms, as departure and dissolution from the formal convention.

The present paper aims to address this issue by delving into the concept of “harsh juncture” (*die harte Fügung*), proposed by Hans Joachim Wagner (1999). Wagner defines the term as an abrupt change in or juxtaposition of contrasting musical, emotional, and dramatic action. This is applied in the present paper to in-depth analysis of the duet between Santuzza and Turridu (“Tu qui, Santuzza?”), a circular and unresolving argument over Turridu’s affair with the married Lola. With musical roughness, not character development, pushing the scene forward, harsh juncture functions as both an architectural and dramatic device. In illuminating the opera’s structural and aesthetic peculiarities, applying harsh juncture as an organizational principle consequently broadens the understanding of verismo beyond its narrowly defined, purported realism.

Session A3: Contemporary Vocalities (1:45–3:15 pm)

A Posthuman Voice: Vocal Aesthetic and Identity in 2010s Witch House

Tyler Osborne (Independent Scholar)

Since the 1960s, electronic music artists have technologically manipulated their voices in ways that blur boundaries between organic human and synthetic “other.” In my presentation, I draw from posthumanist and cyborgfeminist philosophies in tandem with theories of timbre and production to highlight the expressive capacity for human-machine musical hybridization and how the influence of technology distorts perceptions of a gendered vocalic body. Using these perspectives, I investigate two ways that drastic vocal effects can compromise the listener’s ability to project a vocalic body when the agent’s natural human traits become difficult to pinpoint and how this can expand conceptions of identity. From a posthumanist evaluation, as the natural voice becomes inextricably fused with the musical machine, the singing persona’s identity is not compromised, per say, but instead is allowed to ascend beyond conventional notions that arise through Western Humanistic systems.

Play, Nonsense, and Illusory Identities in Unsuik Chin’s *Akrostichon-Wortspiel*

Julianna Willson (Eastman School of Music)

In *Akrostichon-Wortspiel* (1991, rev. 1993), Unsuk Chin manipulates excerpts from sources such as Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* (1871) resulting in a text that sometimes retains a semblance of syntax, but where most words are unrecognizable. *Akrostichon-Wortspiel*'s dialogue with Carroll's nonsense tradition leads to questions regarding how techniques from a tradition focused primarily upon text are reflected within a musical context. Drawing upon scholarship on the creation of literary nonsense by Susan Stewart (1978) and the work of play theorists such as Caillois (1961) and Huizinga (1949), I expand Cassidy-Heacock's (2015) conception of *Akrostichon-Wortspiel* as musical games, focusing on Stewart's delineation of "play" as an operation that shifts material from reality to the domain of nonsense and in which a momentary relinquishing of one's real-world identity for an alternate persona can occur. I specifically explore Chin's manipulations of vocal identity in *Akrostichon-Wortspiel*, showing how music and text combine into an entity reflecting Stewart's nonsense operations.

Within my analysis, I investigate Chin's differing constructions of vocal identity including the voice's frequent role as a fluctuating and transforming entity. For instance, in the fourth and fifth movements, the soprano's role transforms, gradually inverting to that of an equal "instrument" within the ensemble and correlating to Stewart's nonsense operations regarding the inversion of classes and "play with infinity." I ultimately demonstrate the soprano's role as an illusory figure within *Akrostichon-Wortspiel*, one which plays with categories of identity and function, contributing to each movement's orientation within the imaginary world of nonsense.

Embodied Liminality: Musical Chimerism in Chaya Czernowin's *Infinite Now*

Richard Drehoff (Peabody Institute / Johns Hopkins University)

Chaya Czernowin describes her six-act opera *Infinite Now* (2017) as "an existential state of nakedness where the ordinary sense of control and reason are stripped away" (Czernowin n.d.). Lasting two and a half hours and designed to be "shown without a break, in spite of [the work's] length" (n.d.), the sheer endurance that one requires to experience the work as intended is itself intense, made further severe by the deliberate, static narrative and the often harsh, unrelenting sonorities. But in what ways might a composer convey such sensations of vulnerability and irrationality to an audience?

I posit that it is Czernowin's exploration of liminal space across compositional continua which provides the listener with the sensation of stasis and timelessness implied by the work's title. Building upon Hila Tamir's (2020) close reading of other large-scale works by Czernowin through the lenses of cross-modal correspondences and of embodied cognition, this paper examines the composer's use of chimeric combinations of vocal techniques (building upon the work of Amanda Weidman on the relationships of voice and identity), of spatialization and amalgamation of orchestral and electroacoustic timbres, and of dramaturgies of psychologies and of narratives in relation to Arnie Cox's mimetic hypothesis (2016).

Session B3: The Tonal and the Modal (1:45–3:15 pm)

Chord-Member Space and Transformations

Alexander Shannon (Indiana University)

In musical settings with high chromaticism, it can be difficult to identify the tonality and, thus, the scale-degree motion among voices. In this paper, I propose a new methodology to describe the motion that occurs when the voices of one chord reposition themselves into different positions of another chord (e.g., root, 3rd). In so doing, I generalize a chord-member space with accompanying intervals that form a “mod-7” group structure, inspired by David Lewin’s definition of a Generalized Interval System, or “GIS” (1987). By combining Richard Bass’s (2007) enharmonic position-finding nomenclature and Steven Ring’s (2011) “heard” scale-degree GIS, my methodology introduces the concept of heard chord members that exist within their own space. I argue that my system illustrates characteristics of chromatic progressions that are not so easily detected by previously established transformational approaches. For example, this system describes types of individual voice motions across chords of different qualities (e.g., major and diminished triads) and cardinalities (e.g., triads and seventh chords). By analyzing a sample of ambiguously chromatic nineteenth-century musical passages (from Frédéric Chopin’s *Etude in A-flat major, Op. 25, No. 1*; and Franz Schubert’s “*Die junge Nonne*,” D. 828), I show that one can hear changes in vertical placement as characteristic linear gestures. This system offers a newly instructive way of thinking about chord progressions and provides a fresh perspective into voice leading. In so doing, this approach closely reflects the transformational attitude.

Modal Cadences in the Tonality of Plainchant

Ruka Shironishi (Mannes School of Music / The New School University)

As part of a reformation that occurred in nineteenth-century France, numerous treatises on plainchant accompaniment were published. The authors of these treatises individually believed that the harmonization of plainchant should be established upon its own set of principles different from that of so-called “modern” tonality. Disagreement among them regarding the nature of the “tonality of plainchant” led to creation of various systems of harmonization.

The discourse on the tonality of plainchant had significant impact on notable composers such as Debussy and Satie, among others. In their works, we find “modal” cadences that appear to be derived from the plainchant-harmonization models, and these cadences often involve dissonances and chromaticism in non-conventional ways. To decipher the ambiguous cadential points and understand their possible origin, a comparative analysis of these works with the plainchant-harmonization models can be fruitful.

In this presentation, I will first introduce the cadential models taken from three representative plainchant-harmonization treatises. Using excerpts from Debussy’s and Satie’s works as examples, I will then demonstrate how a comparison with the models can help parse modal cadences that are elaborated with dissonances and chromaticism. The discussion will focus on harmonizations of two specific melodic cadences: an ascending whole-step motion from scale-degrees 7 to 1 and a descending half-step motion from scale-degrees 2 to 1. Harmonic settings of these melodic cadences can be identified as being characteristically modal because neither of the melodic cadences appear within major-minor tonality.

Theorizing the Modal Double-Tonic Complex with Maurice Duruflé's Works as a Case Study

Lukas Perry (Eastman School of Music)

This paper develops a theory of the modal double-tonic complex (DTC) to explain the tendency of diatonic modal music to exhibit multiple tonal centers (Lam 2020) and applies the construct to Maurice Duruflé's music. I expand upon Nobile's (2020) formulation of the Aeolian–Ionian complex—itsself an extension of Bailey (1985), Pomeroy (2004), and BaileyShea (2007)—to a generalized concept of the modal DTC. Additionally, I propose Ionian–Phrygian and Dorian–Lydian complexes and explore how dual tonal centers are interwoven within these relational structures.

Analyses of Duruflé's *Prélude* (Op.7), "Introit" (Op. 9), and "Pie Jesu" (Op. 9), reveal five characteristics that manifest modal DTCs:

- 1) The final of the plainchant melody defines one of the tonics.
- 2) A tonally ambiguous common-tone chord containing both tonic pitches refers to either tonic based on context.
- 3) Different harmonizations of the same melody occur in both modes and point to either tonic.
- 4) Multivalent points of imitation are transposed to reflect the same scale-degree succession in both modes or, alternatively, are preserved in pitch yet harmonized in both modes.
- 5) Beginning and/or ending tonics have rhetorical-formal significance, even if one tonic is more prominent at various middle points.

These conditions show how a modal DTC represents neither directionality nor tension but, rather, constitutes a mutually reinforcing expression of the music's distinctive modal character. While these particular conditions might be unique to Duruflé's works, future research can explore how the modal DTC emerges in other diatonic modal music by twentieth and twenty-first century composers.

Keynote Presentation (4:15–5:15 pm)

Toward an Intercultural Approach to Music Analysis: Music by Unsuik Chin and Toshio Hosokawa

Yayoi Uno Everett (CUNY Hunter College/the Graduate Center)

In *Musical Composition in the Context of Globalization*, Christian Utz defines interculturality as "an interaction of two or more cultural discourses—a form of interaction that must inevitably question the lines separating cultural entities" (2021, 36). This definition may seem at first puzzling, yet I think it gets right to the heart of the question: in the repertory that has emerged in the last two decades, it is often *unclear* where "the line that separates cultural entity" lies and requires case-specific investigation into the transformative processes that govern an intercultural analysis. Today, I will discuss works by two East Asian composers who have transformed familiar western musical genres into what I call an *imaginary* ritual. First, the Korean composer, Unsuik Chin, and her transformation of a concerto form in *Šu: Concerto for*

sheng and orchestra (2009). The ritualistic quality in Chin's concerto emanates from its circular form, each return beckoning for a new beginning, coexisting in tension with linear and processual development associated with the concept of variation. At the same time, its narrative trajectory centered on strife can be rooted in the Confucian cosmological symbolism of heaven, earth, and mankind and shares its ritualistic features with the structure of samulnori drumming. Second, the Japanese composer, Toshio Hosokawa, who has transformed a Noh drama into a *choreographic* opera called *Matsukaze* (2017) through his collaboration with Sasha Waltz, a Berlin-based dance choreographer. In their intercultural reimagining, nature imagery and ritual catharsis are enacted through dance and music, and the chorus functions not only as narrator, but together with the dancers and singers, become part of Hosokawa's cosmology that blurs the distinction between nature and humanity.

Sunday, April 2

Session A4: Acoustics and Beyond (9:30–11:00 am)

“The Unpsychological Notion That Music is Made Up of Tones”: Comparative Musicology and Gestalt Theory in Berlin, 1906-1913

Henry Burnam (Yale University)

Standard histories of psychology have treated Max Wertheimer's discovery of the phi-phenomenon (Wertheimer 1912) as the event that “launched the Gestalt revolution” (Steinman et al 2000). My presentation identifies a crucial precursor to “Berlin School” Gestalt theory's claim that perceptual wholes are “*fundamentally different* from collections of sensations, parts, or pieces” (Ash 1995). Beginning in 1909, comparative musicologist Erich von Hornbostel rejected the scale-centric approach of Alexander Ellis, Carl Stumpf, and of his own earliest publications. Instead, under the influence of Benjamin Ives Gilman's “Hopi Songs” (1908), in which Gilman claimed to have identified “methods of composition and performance which replace and exclude reliance upon a scale,” Hornbostel argued that the comparative study of pitch structure needed to approach motives and melodies as undivided wholes that are prior to fixed *Tonsysteme* (Hornbostel 1909).

This orientation, which Wertheimer took up in “Musik der Wedda” (1910), his first publication that invoked the Gestalt concept, provided the basis for two parallel polemics against the limits of European thinking that—despite their radical sheen—ultimately reinforced the colonial *Naturvölker/Kulturvölker* binary: Hornbostel's critique of the “unpsychological notion that music is made up of tones” as a contingent and misleading byproduct of the triad of harmony, notation, and keyboard (Hornbostel 1913); and Wertheimer's attack on the “dogmatic-European” view that “reality-abstract” combination of arbitrary objects represented the most effective or highly-developed form of numerical thinking (Wertheimer 1912b). I conclude by linking Wertheimer's 1912 depiction of the “thinking of the so-called *Naturvölker*” to Gestalt theory's mature approach to perception.

Visualizing the relative brightness of concurrent textural layers in Ruth Crawford's *Music for Small Orchestra* (1926)

Stephen Spencer (Hunter College and CUNY Graduate Center)

The relative brightness of simultaneous instrumental sounds plays a crucial role in the perception of texture in polyphonic music. Scholars of musical stratification, however, have converged on a definition of texture that privileges rhythmic coordination. Proponents of “partitional” approaches to texture, for example, understand polyphonic music to be divisible into layers (or “partitions”) primarily on the basis of onset synchrony and shared contour, as represented in the symbolic data of the score. This paper argues that this model is unsatisfactory for characterizing musical texture unless supplemented by empirical assessments of timbre obtained through acoustic measurement and perceptual grouping analysis. The paper focuses on Ruth Crawford's *Music for Small Orchestra* (1926), a piece whose rhythmic organization suggests a straightforward textural layering, but whose timbral dimension problematizes such a layering. Through close analysis of the score and audio data, I demonstrate that the auditory attribute of timbral brightness in particular allows us to assess relationships both within and between rhythmically coordinated layers in the piece. Additionally, these contrast ratios allow us to account for two common situations wherein rhythm-based partitioning is in tension with auditory grouping, namely (a) when uncoordinated layers cohere into a single perceptual unit and (b) when coordinated layers do not. The overall approach emphasizes the distinction between texture-as-coordination and texture-as-grouping, enabling more sensitive readings of post-tonal polyphony as written, performed, and heard.

Finding Meter in Acoustics: Ryoji Ikeda's *matrix*
Noah Kahrs (Eastman School of Music)

Sound art is often taken as a negation of music, relying on its scale and sense of place to encourage an immersive listening opposed to musical norms. Ryoji Ikeda's *matrix* (part 1) at first seems to fit such a description—it consists entirely of sine tones, usually saturating a narrow frequency band so that no musical content is stably recognizable. I claim that, despite its thick surface, *matrix* affords listeners the opportunity to listen conventionally for rhythm. The sine tones' acoustical beating creates audible pulses, which yield meters and polyrhythms with integer ratios.

In *matrix*, the apparent thick microtonal surface in fact affords listeners the opportunity for metric entrainment. Contrary to Ikeda's supposed reliance on acoustics and mathematics, I demonstrate that his installations are in fact rooted in conventions around musical meter. As a case study, this paper presents an analysis of the installation's sixth large section. All tones sound at integer frequencies (in hertz) between A440 and A451. At any given time, there are 2 to 4 sine tones sounding, creating acoustical beating at 1 to 6 frequencies. I focus on a passage a third of the way through, in which we can hear crossfading from a steady pulse to a 3:2 polyrhythm, whose traces we can project onto emerging septuplets. No pulse dominates in *matrix*; rather, the speakers' conflicting streams allow listeners to construct a metric hierarchy by moving their heads, focusing on certain subdivisions, and applying their enculturation into metric convention.

Which Rite Is Right?: On Slonimsky's Re-Barring of the "Danse sacré"

John Lawrence (University of Chicago)

In 1923, Nicolas Slonimsky produced a re-barréd version of the "Danse sacré" from *The Rite of Spring* that minimizes meter changes, to remedy Serge Koussevitzky's rhythmic struggles. This paper asks: do these re-barrings affect listeners as well as performers, and if so, in what ways?

I begin by suggesting that one cannot tell from sound alone whether performers are using Slonimsky's version or the original. This might suggest that the re-barring has no effect on a listener's perception of meter. But what would such a perception be in the first place? Even though a "radical" listener is open to hearing meter changes, there is no reason to think that they will hear the specific changes found in Stravinsky's score. Alternatively, the maximum metric regularity of Slonimsky's version may more accurately simulate a "conservative" listener's hearing.

I reinforce this point by considering the visual elements of a performance. One can entrain to footage of Leonard Bernstein conducting the Slonimsky version. But footage of conductors performing the original version can be too erratic to afford entrainment. In this case, the choice of edition determines not merely *which* metrical interpretation a listener chooses, but *whether* they are capable of forming a metrical interpretation.

Thus, Slonimsky's re-barring may have inadvertently aligned performers' and listeners' perceptions of the meter in ways unlikely to be achieved by the original version. I conclude by affirming the value of producing "wrong" analyses that contradict the score but may better capture the experiences of score-less listeners.

The Parallel-Opening Form in Rachmaninoff

Ellen Bakulina (McGill University)

Commonly known classical theme types contain two statements of a basic idea: either back-to-back (sentential presentation) or at the beginnings of two consecutive phrases (period and periodic hybrid). I introduce a theme type that contains *at least three phrases* that begin with the same basic idea. This type, which I dub the *parallel-opening form*, is particularly prominent in—though not exclusive to—Sergei Rachmaninoff's piano concertos. Common features include phrases of varying length and a reduced number of phrases when the theme is recapitulated.

The beauty and complexity of the parallel-opening form lies in its form-functional malleability and the wealth of compositional possibilities. The parallel-opening principle interacts with a variety of familiar formal types. In simpler cases, three phrases all begin with the same basic idea in the same key, but end with different cadences (or with the same cadence type in different keys). The structure thus resembles a reimagined strophic form, a set of rather free variations, or a "trifold" period with two antecedents. More complex cases include interpolations—which do *not* begin with the central basic idea—between phrases; some cases contain greater number of parallel phrases, and one resembles a rondo. My main

idea is to hierarchize musical units them based on the parallel openings, which mark higher-level groupings.

Parsing Max Reger's "Musical Prose"

David Hier (University of Texas at Austin)

While scholars have paid ample attention to harmony in Reger's music, his innovative approach to phrase structure has gone largely under-theorized. Reger famously described his music as employing "musical prose," presumably distinct from the four-square versification of earlier composers. While Popp (1975) and Danuser (1975) focus on Reger's asymmetrical phrase construction, which departs from idealized eight-bar structures proposed by Riemann, more recent scholars have compared Reger's use of the term to Schoenberg's. I relate Reger's practice to Schoenberg's concept of "developing variation" and its subsequent development by more recent scholars. I continue by distinguishing between two types of prose in Reger's music: thematic units derived from eight-bar classical models and freer constructions. Reger's freer constructions combine "developing variation," with Wagnerian sequential progressions to produce flexible, modular units. I conclude by examining in depth passages from Reger's chamber music and by comparing them to other late romantic and early modern compositions that lack underlying symmetrical foundations.

Session A5: Death and Villainy in Pop (11:15 am–12:15 pm)

"The importance of body language": Musical Topics and Queerness in Disney's *The Little Mermaid*

Hanisha Kulothparan (Eastman School of Music)

In recent decades, Ursula from Disney's *The Little Mermaid* has become a prominent queer icon, due in part to being inspired by the drag queen Divine ([Howard] Hahn 2018). While Disney films are typically categorized within the romantic archetype, her queerness invites a flipping of the script to fit the tragic model (Almén 2008). Ariel and Ursula as hero and villain encapsulate what we might call stereotypical normative and queer characteristics; this distinction is seemingly clear at the surface. However, this opposition may be more complicated than it first appears. In this presentation, I show how the musical characteristics of songs in Disney's *The Little Mermaid* invite and entangle these opposing perspectives in a similar manner to the presentation and development of the main characters in the film itself.

I utilize normative and queer lenses to present the many different points of views within the film. First, I will take on a normative lens and analyze how Ursula's "Poor Unfortunate Souls" signifies villainy while simultaneously opposing Ariel's "Part of Your World." Then, I will take on a queer lens and discuss how the film's musical characteristics complicate this opposition through the similar musical characteristics present in "Under the Sea" and "Kiss the Girl." Ultimately, drawing upon Lee's definition of queer theory (2020), Decker's discussion of topical oppositions (forthcoming), Mirka's framework of topical signification (2014), and Cusick's *Song/Speech* binary (1999), I argue that these musical complexities parallel the intricate concept of physicality in the film.

“Here is where I’ll end it”: Formal Incompleteness and Death in Popular Song

Jacob Eichhorn (Eastman School of Music)

The work is finished. The work is complete. Colloquially, we might not make a distinction between these two statements. In this paper, however, I disambiguate the often-conflated qualities, finishedness and completeness, according to agential attribution: the historical-fictional author and the work-persona, respectively. This distinction will be complicated by the abrupt ending—a special formal and storytelling device that merges authorial finishedness and the work’s incompleteness. Leaning on theories of closure in popular music, I compare marked and unmarked endings in the context of unmet and met expectations within three case studies: Katatonia’s “Omerta,” the series finale of *The Sopranos*, and Dolly Parton’s “The Bridge.” I will interrogate the complex nexus of meanings that emerge when a listener or viewer is faced with an abrupt ending and how these agential attributions can become quite slippery.

Session B5: Gospel Inflections (11:15 am–12:15 pm)

From “Cadences of Sorrow” to “Cadences of Joy” in the Spirituals of Harry T. Burleigh

Samuel Falotico (Hunter College and Hofstra University)

In the foreword to his *Negro Spirituals*, Harry T. Burleigh writes: “... through all these songs there breathes a hope, a faith in that ultimate justice and brotherhood of man. **The cadences of sorrow invariably turn to joy**, and the message is ever manifest that eventually deliverance from all that hinders and oppresses the soul will come, and man—every man— will be free.” [Emphasis mine.]

This notion indeed has particular relevance to Burleigh’s settings of the spirituals. In many of the main themes, there is a notable pause that occurs in the middle of either the consequent (if the theme is a period) or of the continuation (if the theme is a sentence). This mid-phrase pause forms what I shall refer to as a “prefinal cadence.” Significantly, Burleigh frequently underlines the prefinal cadence with a chromatic harmony that seems to pull away from the tonic. Burleigh’s strategy in this regard not only helps set the subsequent final cadence in relief, but it also helps create the expressive sense to which Burleigh refers in his preface, in which a prefinal “cadence of sorrow” is turned around to one of “joy.”

Through the analysis of specific works, my presentation examines the structural and hermeneutic implications of Burleigh’s use of the prefinal cadence in his spirituals. As I shall argue, the harmonic techniques Burleigh employs in transforming cadences of “sorrow” to ones of “joy” enhance the music’s drama in a manner that arguably reflects aspects of the African American experience more deeply.

Plagal and Authentic Conflict as Tonal and Narrative Structure in *Jesus Christ Superstar*

Kyle Hutchinson (University of Toronto)

Outside several recent exceptions, “the products of Broadway have not had much success in the annals of scholarly criticism” (Swain 2002). Such criticisms are nowhere more

apparent than in assessments of Andrew Lloyd Webber, who “has suffered an often-negative critical response, hostility, and neglect in the academy” (Block 2004) often attributable to a “perceived lack of organic unity” (Snelson 2004). Using *Jesus Christ Superstar* as a case study, I demonstrate that contentions regarding lack of structure and unity in Lloyd Webber’s shows do not hold up to analytic scrutiny. In *Superstar*, a dichotomy between authentic domains that affirm tonic-dominant polarity, and plagal domains that diverge from it (Stein 1983, Harrison 1994) underscores musical tensions and dialogues between characters and ideologies in localized individual songs.

These local harmonic conflicts, however, also serve as germinating seeds for large-scale structure. The show is bounded by D minor, which, along with its authentic extensions, F and A, serves as a referential tonality for those in power (Pilate, Herod) and represent the societal status quo. Conversely, the major-mode subdominant key, G, is used exclusively by Jesus’ disciples who are trying to invoke change. Jesus’ own doubt, introduced by his Bf tonality, infuses a minor-mode inflection into the disciples’ major-mode subdominant, undermining the idealized world anticipated by a major-mode subdominant breakthrough. This enlargement of local harmonic processes thus forms an associative tonal network representing the show’s tonal structure, where parallel dramatic/musical narratives project a failed *per aspera ad astra* narrative.