

Intercultural Musicking: Ensemble Performance, (Inter)Cultural Encounters, and Personal/Professional Transformations

Thursday 15 April, 2.00–6.00pm (on Zoom)

Hosted by the Department of Music, University of Manchester (UK)

We invite you to join us on a journey into the world of intercultural musicking in the company of researcher-practitioners Caroline Bithell, Robert Szymanek, Richard Fay and Dan Mawson, together with student members of the university's gamelan and klezmer ensembles. These ensembles – coached by Robert (Gamelan) and Richard and Dan (Klezmer) – serve as living laboratories for exploring the dynamics of encountering new cultural as well as musical worlds through learning to perform with others in unfamiliar styles and/or on 'new' instruments. Primarily instrumental, with long-established and well-nourished roots in their new institutional and community homes in the Northwest of England, these ensembles have their counterpart in the more mobile transnational Georgian-singing communities that are the focus of Caroline's participatory research. Under the umbrella of the Intercultural Musicking group hosted by the department, we share insights into these particular musical adventures within the broader framework of research into the pedagogy, politics and aesthetics of intercultural music-making.

The event is free and open to all. If you are external to the University of Manchester, please register your intention to attend in advance by emailing Caroline.Bithell@manchester.ac.uk with 'Intercultural Musicking' as the subject and your name (as used on Zoom) in the body of the email. You will then be sent the Zoom links.

Show-and-Tell: Encounters and Transformations – 2.00–4.00pm

Focusing primarily on practice, this session showcases activities featuring our gamelan and klezmer ensembles, brought to life by video clips of the players in action. 'When Gamelan Met Tango' zooms in on the collaboration between our student gamelan players and guest artist Yuiko Asaba as they prepare for a public concert that doubles as the students' end-of-year assessment. Echoing Netsky's seminal chapter about the college-based ensembles of the klezmer revival in the USA, 'Klezmer Zooms to College' features members of our current klezmer ensemble in curated video performances made during lockdown, accompanied by a discussion of the ensemble pedagogy pre- and during the pandemic. 'Georgian Polyphony Goes Viral' offers a complementary glimpse into the thriving world of multicultural Georgian-singing encounters, both in the remote Caucasus mountains and in cyberspace. The presentations will include reflections from ensemble members, followed by time for questions.

Research Forum: Themes, Issues and Explorations – 4.30–6.00pm

This session features short, complementary papers in which we home in on critical issues in the politics and aesthetics of intercultural musicking, again focusing on our three 'special subjects' for the day: our own take on the ever-popular gamelan ensemble, the less common (in the UK) university klezmer ensemble, and the ever-expanding networks of 'foreign' performers of Georgian polyphonic song. What is the research potential for theorising the intercultural ensemble experience in different ways? How can we research the intercultural opportunities the ensembles provide for students/participants and

audiences? What kinds of limitations problematise our teaching and learning of what might be seen as adopted musical languages and how do we seek to rebalance them? What opportunities does intercultural musicking offer for both personal and professional transformation? The presentations will be followed by time for questions and discussion.