MUSIC

Stoeckel Hall, 203.432.2986  
http://yalemusic.yale.edu  
M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair  
Ian Quinn

Director of Graduate Studies  
Brian Kane (Stoeckel, 203.432.2986, dgs.music@yale.edu)

Professors  
Ardis Butterfield, Richard Cohn, Daniel Harrison, Gundula Kreuzer,  
Richard Lalli (Adjunct), Ian Quinn, Markus Rathey (Adjunct), Gary Tomlinson,  
Michael Veal

Associate Professors  
Robert Holzer (Adjunct), Brian Kane, Braxton Shelley, Anna  
Zayaruznaya

Assistant Professor  
Jessica Peritz, Ameera Nimjee, Daniel Walden, Lindsay Wright

FIELDS OF STUDY

Fields include music history, music theory, and ethnomusicology. (Students interested  
in degrees in performance, conducting, or composition should apply to the Yale School  
of Music.)

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

Two years of course work, comprising a minimum of fourteen courses. All students  
must take the proseminars in ethnomusicology, music history, and music theory.  
In addition, students in the theory program must take both of the history of theory  
seminars; students in the music history program must take one history of theory  
seminar; and students in the ethnomusicology program must take at least two but  
no more than five graduate seminars or non-introductory undergraduate courses in  
other departments or schools within the University. In consultation with the director  
of graduate studies (DGS), history and theory students may elect to take up to two  
graduate seminars or non-introductory undergraduate courses outside the department.  
Consult the Music Graduate Student Handbook for further details specific to each  
program.

A student must receive at least four Honors grades in departmental seminars in order  
to proceed to the qualifying examination, administered in August following the second  
year. Reading proficiency in two languages— for historians and theorists, German and  
usually either French or Italian; for ethnomusicologists, two languages relevant to their  
research, one of which must be a European language—is demonstrated by examinations  
(with dictionary access) offered once per term. A style and repertory examination must  
be taken upon entering in August, and retaken every term until passed before the end of  
the third year. Third-year students attend a weekly prospectus/dissertation colloquium.  
Approval of the dissertation prospectus admits a student to candidacy, provided that all  
other requirements are met. Only students admitted to candidacy can continue into the
fourth year of study. Fourth- and fifth-year students attend the dissertation colloquium in the spring terms.

The faculty considers teaching to be essential to the professional preparation of graduate students in Music. Students in Music participate in the Teaching Fellows Program in their third and fourth years.

**COMBINED PH.D. PROGRAMS**

**Music and African American Studies**

The Department of Music offers, in conjunction with the Department of African American Studies, a combined Ph.D. degree in Music and African American Studies. For further details, see African American Studies.

**Music and Early Modern Studies**

The Department of Music offers, in conjunction with the Early Modern Studies Program, a combined Ph.D. in Music and Early Modern Studies. For further details, see Early Modern Studies.

**MASTER’S DEGREES**

**M.Phil.** See Degree Requirements under Policies and Regulations.

**M.A.** Students may apply for a terminal master’s degree in music. For the M.A. degree, students must successfully complete seven courses, at least six of which are seminars given in the department, along with the passing of the style and repertory examination and an examination in one foreign language. Of the six departmental seminars, at least two grades must be Honors; the remaining five grades must average High Pass. Candidates in combined programs will be awarded the M.A. only when the master’s degree requirements for both programs have been met. Doctoral students who withdraw from the Ph.D. program may be eligible to receive the M.A. if they have met the above requirements and have not already received the M.Phil.

**COURSES**

**MUSI 511a, Sounding Contemporary**  Ameera Nimjee

What does it mean to “sound contemporary”? Conversely, what does “contemporary” sound like? Why does this matter? The premise for this seminar is that making sense of contemporary discourse is an avenue into how and why people make performance, which includes music, dance, and spaces that are created from sound and movement. Course texts and material come from theoretical writings, experiential commentaries, performances, and ethnography, inciting topical study on how contemporary performance interacts and is produced by structures of power, including race, gender, class, and caste. Students are expected to create connections between assigned course materials and topics in class discussions, with the goal of constructing larger dialogues on epistemologies and consequences of sounding contemporary.

**MUSI 699a, Proseminar: Musicology**  Jessica Peritz

A historiographical survey of major topics, issues, and techniques of musicological research. We consider the position of musicology in the broader context of historical thought and provide a conceptual foundation for further work in the field.
Since at least the fifteenth century, drug cultures and music cultures in the West have often been imbricated. Not only have the social aspects of drug cultures shaped the ways in which music is consumed, but also the altered perception induced by drugs has offered novel temporalities and subject-positions to composers and performers alike. Music-historical accounts of this topic are relatively rare, however, and few broader theories have been advanced to account for the ways in which pharmacological and musicological accounts can intersect. This seminar explores this relatively uncharted territory through a set of case studies with broad historical scope. Topics to be covered include, among others, Bach’s Coffee Cantata (Schweigt stille, plaudert nicht, BWV 211, of the 1730s); Romantic composers’ opium habits and depictions of intoxication (e.g., Hector Berlioz’s Symphonie fantastique of 1830); Louis Armstrong’s many statements about cannabis; and contemporary dance genres such as EDM, which are often consumed under the influence of drugs such as MDMA.

By arrangement with faculty.

This is a “one book per week” seminar that is structured around book-length studies that use music to examine the post–World War II cultural interactions between cultures of sub-Saharan Africa and the African diaspora.

Several years ago, in an essay positing directions for a musical posthumanism, I wrote that “the posthumanist’s aim must be to destabilize the human enclosure, shaping posthumanist theory as something like a novel type or engine of critique, not another object for it” (“Posthumanism,” The Oxford Handbook of Western Music and Philosophy, 2020). The puzzle of musical posthumanism is a deep one if we are to take seriously this destabilizing move. This seminar investigates from several vantages—transspecies, technological, critical, and philosophical—varieties of musical posthumanism. How has the human organism been technologically and molded to musicking and recorded sound? What might the future of such molding hold, and what role will AI engines play in this? What, conversely, is the posthumanist potential of deep, evolutionary histories of music? What kind of theoretical purchase might enable us to move beyond conventional humanisms in considering music, reaching out to communication systems—putative musics—of nonhuman species? Can we approach in musical posthumanism a universal musicology, parallel to a universal biology? If so, what is the relation of such an approach to a musicology that has been for at least forty years determined to understand human cultural difference and particularity. Readings include, inter alia, work by Abbate, Chua and Rehding, Cox, Kane, Steingo, Tomlinson, Trippett, van der Schyff, and Watkins.

This seminar reexamines techniques of harmonic-contrapuntal analysis first proposed by Heinrich Schenker (1868–1935) and traces them to their sources in historical music theory and pedagogy. In addition, various derivative practices that explicitly addressed limitations in Schenker’s aesthetics are appraised (Felix Salzer, et al.), as are the more strenuous critiques (and suggestions for improvement) of his system-concept
(Matthew Brown) and graphical consistency (Steve Larson). All inform a reengineered technique of music analysis.

**MUSI 909a, Arts of Fugue**  Daniel Harrison
The seminar examines theoretical and analytical issues associated with fugal procedures, ca. 1650–1950, with special focus on the work of J.S. Bach. Harmonic-contrapuntal (e.g., Schenker) and hermeneutical (e.g., rhetorical) explorations of individual works are examined and tested, supported by readings modeling both approaches. Work consists of background reading in analysis and history, structural analysis of individual works, and, optionally, the composition of a fugue à 3 on a given subject.

**MUSI 914a or b, Directed Studies: Theory of Music**  Brian Kane
By arrangement with faculty.

**MUSI 998a, Prospectus Workshop**  Lindsay Wright

**MUSI 999b, Dissertation Colloquium**  Ameera Nimjee