

Theorizing African American Music  
Emory University  
Conference Program  
June 5–7, 2025

Thursday, June 5, 2025

Registration: 2:00–6:00pm  
Hors d'oeuvres: 4:00–7:00pm  
Opening remarks: 6:00–7:00pm

Concert: 7:30p, featuring Khari Joyner, cello; Amyr Joyner, violin; Lydia Bangura, soprano;  
Cornelius Johnson, tenor; Chris Jenkins, viola; and The Gary Motley Trio

Friday, June 6, 2025

Morning Sessions

Session 1: 8:30–10:30, “Black Women and Cultural Legacy”

Moderator: Karen Painter (University of Minnesota)

- 8:30–9:00: Sasha Doster (Columbia University), “The Language of a Mother’s Prayer: A Timbre Analysis of Signifyin(g) Black Womanhood in H. Lawrence Freeman’s *Opera Voodoo*”
- 9:00–9:30: Monica A. Hershberger (Lehigh University), “Dorothy Maynor at Westminster Choir College, 1933–1935: Recovering the History”
- 9:30–10:00: Christoph’ McFadden (Yale University), “Clark-Sister Fans, Intimacy, and the Remediation of Celebrity”
- 10:00–10:30: Lydia Bangura (University of Michigan), “In Collaboration with Florence Price: A Lecture Recital”

Session 2: 8:30–10:30, “Beyond Bars”

Moderator: Naomi André (UNC Chapel Hill)

- 8:30–9:00: Theo Greer (Michigan State University), “Who is ‘You’?: Intimacy and Mode of Address in Kendrick Lamar’s ‘u’”
- 9:00–9:30: Heidi R. Lewis (Colorado College), “Make Rappers Rap Again: Interrogating the Mumble Rap ‘Crisis’”
- 9:30–10:00: Cedric Preston McCoy (Yale University), “Towards a Music Analytical Methodology for Hip Hop Studies: Tracing Musical and Racial Lineages in Stretch Music and Solar Music”
- 10:00–10:30: Terence Kumpf (TU Dortmund University), “Cold Analytical: How Transculturation Might Inform African Americanist Methodologies”

BREAK: 10:30–11:00am

Session 3: 11:00am–12:30pm, “Historical Echoes”

Moderator: Marvin McNeill (Oxford College of Emory University)

- 11:00–11:30: Sarah Gerk (Binghamton University), “From Saint-Domingue to Congo Square: The Haitian Revolution and Music in New Orleans”
- 11:30–12:00: Alexis Lowder (University of Memphis), “A New Day a-comin' for the Poor and Unemployed: Florence Price’s Monologue for the Working Class”
- 12:00–12:30: Aradhana Arora (Austin, Texas) and Nico Schüler (Texas State University), “Analysis and Reception of Late-19th Century African-American Songs: ‘Shivering and Shaking Out in the Cold’ (1875) and ‘Carve dat Possum’ (1874)”

Session 4: 11:00am–12:30pm, “Sacred Sounds”

Moderator: Xieyi “Abby” Zhang (Georgia State University)

- 11:00–11:30: Kay Norton (Arizona State University), “On the Road with Sallie Martin, Gospel Entrepreneur”
- 11:30–12:00: Richard Desinord (Michigan State University), “Gospel Music Shout Schemata in Secular Music”
- ~~12:00–12:30: DaVaughn L. Miller (Appalachian State University), “Choral Conductors Beware: Stereotypes of Collegiate Choir Members Towards the Concert Spiritual Enthusiast”~~

LUNCH: 12:30–2:00pm

Friday, June 6, 2025  
Afternoon Sessions

Session 5: 2:00–4:00pm, “Radical Learning”

Moderator: Courtney-Savali Andrews (Oberlin Conservatory)

- 2:00–2:30: Elizabeth Frickey (New York University), “Entering the Tone World: Theorizing Collective Improvisation Through Intergenerational Pedagogy”
- 2:30–3:00: Clay Downham (Yale University), “Praying for Eric”
- 3:00–3:30: Mikkel Vad (University of Copenhagen), “Moseholm & Pettiford’s Jazz Bass Facing (1962): Writing Music Theory Across Transatlantic Colorlines”
- 3:30–4:00: Kyra Gaunt (University at Albany SUNY), “Algorithmic Bias in Blacksound: AI, Big Data, and the Future of African American Music Studies”

Session 6: 2:00–4:00pm, “Between the Beats”

Moderator: Guy Capuzzo (UNC Greensboro)

- 2:00–2:30: Winnie W. C. Lai (Dartmouth College), “Theorizing R&B Ad-libs: Intercultural Soul Aesthetics and Racialized Listening in Sinophone Pop”
- 2:30–3:00: Jeremy Orosz (University of Memphis), “Understanding Genre Hybridity in Contemporary R&B Formal Design”
- 3:00–3:30: Audrey Slote (University of Chicago), “Groove Subjectivity and Black Indie Minimalism in Solange’s *A Seat at the Table*”
- 3:30–4:00: Elizabeth Durrant (Yale University), “‘You ain’t nothin’ but a ...’: Black Women Sounding & Honoring Big Mama Thornton in Doja Cat’s ‘Vegas’”

BREAK: 4:00–4:30pm

Panel 1: HBCU Musical Traditions, 4:30–6:00pm  
Fredara Hadley, moderator (Juilliard School)  
Marvin McNeill (Oxford College of Emory University)  
Lisa Beckley-Roberts (Jackson State University)  
Aaron Carter-Enyi (Morehouse College)

BREAK: 6:00–6:30pm

6:30pm: Keynote Address, Horace Maxile (Baylor University)

Saturday, June 7, 2025  
Morning Sessions

Session 7: 9:00–10:30, “Persona and Identity”

Moderator: Daniele Shlomit Sofer (University of Dayton)

- 9:00–9:30: Sarah Tobin (Michigan State University), “‘Let the Vagina Have a Monologue’: Exploring Persona in Janelle Monáe’s Music”
- 9:30–10:00: Jordan Brown (Harvard University), “Centering Blackness at the Margins: Embodying Queerness through Alternative R&B”
- 10:00–10:30: Jordan Ealey (University of Rochester), “Da Art of (Abortion) Storytelling’: Listening for Reproductive Justice in Black Women’s Hip Hop”

Session 8: 9:00–10:30, “Embodying Blackness”

Moderator: Kyra Gaunt (University at Albany SUNY)

- 9:00–9:30: Raylana Ciceron (Case Western Reserve University), “Free At Last, Free At Last: Jon Batiste’s Embodied Liberation”
- 9:30–10:00: Rachel Gain (Yale University), “Interrogating Epistemologies of Academic Tap Dance Transcription”
- 10:00–10:30: Molly Reid (Florida State University), “Choreographing Chaos: A Gestural-Kinesthetic Analysis of Undine Smith Moore’s ‘Before I’d Be a Slave’”

BREAK: 10:30–11:00am

Session 9: 11:00am–12:30pm, “Orchestrating Blackness”

Moderator: Aaron Carter-Enyi (Morehouse College)

- 11:00–11:30: Ryan Dohoney (Northwestern University), “Julia Perry’s Metamodernist Drift”
- 11:30–12:00: Stanley Ralph Fink (Drake University), “The Doppelgänger as Musical Complement in Julia Perry’s *The Cask of Amonillado*”
- 12:00–12:30: Lauren Eldridge Stewart (Washington University), “To Be Young, Gifted, and Black: Envisioning Diversity at the Symphony”

Session 10: 11:00am–12:30pm, “Cityscapes”

Moderator: Fredara Hadley (The Juilliard School)

- 11:00–11:30: Michael Berry (Puyallup School District), “Hip-Hop History in the City of Brotherly Love”
- 11:30–12:00: Kimberly Hannon Teal (University of North Texas), “Labor Day in Detroit: The Detroit Jazz Festival and Urban Space”
- 12:00–12:30: AJ Kluth (Case Western Reserve University), “New Light from the Dark Tree: Tracing Contiguities of ‘Black Aliveness’ in Los Angeles”

LUNCH: 12:30–2:00pm

Saturday, June 7, 2025  
Afternoon Sessions

Session 11: 2:00–4:00pm, “Black Futures, Media, and Memory”

Moderator: Marc Hannaford (University of Michigan)

- 2:00–2:30: Stephen Stacks (North Carolina Central University), “Counter Memory and the Freedom Singing of the Civil Rights Movement”
- 2:30–3:00: Evan Martin-Casler (University of Arizona), “Swallowing Gods and Spitting the World into the Floor: Black Hardcore and the Curation of Abolitionist Lifeworlds”
- 3:00–3:30: Collin Felter (University of California, Irvine), “Baadasssss Songs (An Analysis): Blaxploitation Soundtracks and 1970’s Funk”
- 3:30–4:00: Ashley Martin (University of Arizona), “Swing Low, Sweet Mothership: Afrofuturistic Prophecies of Displacement in Anthony Davis’s *X* and A Tribe Called Quest’s ‘The Space Program’”

Session 12: 2:00–4:00pm, “Jazz Legacies”

Moderator: Kelsey Klotz (University of Maryland)

- 2:00–2:30: Martin Hundley (University of California, Los Angeles), “Free Jazz and Building Community: Horace Tapscott and the Pan Afrikan People’s Arkestra”
- 2:30–3:00: Andrew Berish (University of South Florida), “Racialized Affect and the Public Reception of Jazz in the 1950s”
- 3:00–3:30: Danny Fratina (University of Pittsburgh), “Omnidominance and the Avant-Garde Big Band Compositions of Sam Rivers”
- 3:30–4:00: Hannah Krall (Shaw University), “The Case of Duke Ellington’s ‘The Sheik of Araby’: Complications of Musical Borrowing in Sidney Bechet and Johnny Hodges’ Solos”

BREAK: 4:00–4:30pm

Panel 2: The Black Composer Speaks, 4:30–6:00pm  
Dwight Andrews, moderator (Emory University)  
Joel Thompson (Primo Artists, Houston Grand Opera)  
Lauren McCall (University of Victoria)  
Matthew Evan Taylor (University of California, Berkeley)

Closing Remarks: 6:00pm