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Documenting Calypso in New York and the Atlantic World by Stephen Stuenkel

In early 2000 I received a telephone call in Miami from Judge Ray Funk of Alaska. Though in his professional life he holds court in Fairbanks and various Arctic villages, Funk is well-known to music researchers for his massive collection of African American gospel audio and visual materials. He has produced and/or written liner notes for numerous gospel reissues and was a major contributor to *Wade in the Water: African American Sacred Music Traditions*, a traveling exhibition organized by the Smithsonian Institution. I first met Funk in 1987, shortly before heading off to Trinidad to research steelbands. At the time, he was beginning to develop a collection of calypso materials that would eventually surpass the scope of his gospel archive. So it came as no real surprise that he would call to propose an exhibition focused on the 1950s "calypso craze" that swept across the United States and influenced many other countries.



Calypso singers Macbeth the Great and Sir Lancelot with Gerald Clark's band in New York, 1940s. From left: Macbeth, Felix Pacheco, Gregory Felix, Rogelio Garcia, Lancelot, unidentified musician, and Gerald Clark
Courtesy of Ray Funk

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Funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities enabled the Historical Museum of Southern Florida to adopt Funk's proposal and develop *Calypso: A World Music*, a project that encompasses a major online exhibition, a traveling exhibition, and related public conferences. At the core of the project is Funk's in-depth calypso research and wide-ranging collection of sound recordings, songbooks and sheet music, movies and television shows, movie posters and lobby cards, photographs, and advertisements. Funk has collaborated with the museum on additional research and collecting, with guidance from an international advisory committee of calypso scholars. In essence, our objective has been to use visual materials to trace the dissemination of calypso from Trinidad across the Americas, Europe, and Africa from the 1930s to the 1960s. It was during this period that mass media, migration, military service, and tourism transformed calypso from a local musical tradition into a "world music."

Calypso, in fact, was one of the first popular music traditions from outside North America and Europe to be commercially recorded. In 1912 a Trinidadian band led by Lovey (George Bailey) traveled to New York to record for both ViPctor and Columbia. Two years later Victor representatives visited Trinidad to record calypso and a variety of other local musical styles. During the 1910s and 1920s, American companies continued to record calypso in New York for distribution to Caribbean and Latin American markets. It was during the 1930s, however, that the recording and international dissemination of calypso intensified. In 1934 top Trinidadian calypsonians Atilla the Hun and the Roaring Lion recorded for the American Record Company in New York. According to Atilla, Rudy Vallee heard them sing and arranged their appearance on his NBC nationwide radio

Documenting Calypso (continued)

broadcast. The pair later wrote a calypso, "Guests of Rudy Vallee," that celebrated this historic occasion. During the following years, Atilla and Lion traveled to New York for more recording sessions, as did Lord Executor, the Growling Tiger, and other leading calypsonians. By 1939 calypsonians were appearing at the Village Vanguard and enchanting New York club-goers. Meanwhile, calypso singers were performing at parties within the anglophone Caribbean community in Harlem. In a 1939 *New Yorker* article, Joseph Mitchell offers a detailed account of a late-night "picnic" thrown by the popular calypsonian Houdini in a hall on Lenox Avenue.¹ Known as the "Calypso King of New York," Houdini chronicled his observations of city life in songs such as those featured in a 1940 Decca album set titled *Harlem Seen Through Calypso Eyes*.

Broader American awareness of calypso developed during World War II. Thousands of U.S. Army and Navy personnel were stationed in Trinidad, where they became enamored of the music. The servicemen's encounter with Trinidadian women was captured by Lord Invader in his calypso "Rum and Coca-Cola." The Andrews Sisters' recording of the song in 1944 became one of the top hits of the war era and, subsequently, sparked a major copyright battle in the courts.² Following the war, U.S. record companies promoted new Trinidadian singers, including Sir Lancelot, the Duke of Iron, and Macbeth the Great. Although these artists had little or no experience in the calypso tents (halls) of Trinidad, they packaged calypso in a form that was more intelligible and appealing to American audiences.

During the postwar years, calypso was embraced by the American folk music revival. Moe Asch recorded calypso singers for both his Disc and Folkways labels, while Alan Lomax produced *Calypso at Midnight* in 1946 at New York's Town Hall as part of People's Songs' *Midnight Special* folk music series. This concert featured performances by calypso singers Lord Invader, the Duke of Iron, and Macbeth the Great, interspersed with commentary by Lomax and the artists. Gerald Clark's band, well-established in New York, provided the accompaniment.³ The following year, calypso reached Broadway in *Caribbean Carnival*, a show produced by Adolph Thenstead and directed by Trinidadian vaudevillian Sam Manning. Billed as the first "calypso musical," it included a mix of drama, song, and dance from Trinidad, Haiti, and other parts of the Caribbean. Haitian American Josephine Premice appeared as one of the vocalists, while Trinidadian Pearl Primus's dancing was a

highlight of the production. Pan-Caribbean shows, featuring a variety of art forms, became a standard stage format in New York in the following years.

During the 1950s, fast and affordable airline travel contributed to a sharp increase in American tourism to the Caribbean. By this point, Trinidad-style calypso had spread across the anglophone Caribbean and was providing a soundtrack for American tropical fantasies. Tourists enjoyed calypso in hotels and nightclubs and wanted to hear more on their return home. This general American interest in calypso paved the way for the "calypso craze" of 1956-1957, which was sparked by the release of Caribbean American Harry Belafonte's *Calypso* (RCA Victor, 1956), the first single-artist album to sell over one million copies in entertainment history. Only two of the selections on the record were actually calypsos, but the entertainment industry frequently used the term "calypso" to refer to any type of anglophone Caribbean song. Meanwhile, record companies quickly released dozens of calypso singles and albums by artists ranging from the Duke of Iron and the Jamaican mento singer Lord Flea to Nat "King" Cole, Ella Fitzgerald, the Tarriers, and Stan Wilson. Record sales were so strong that the entertainment industry initially believed that the music would lead to the demise of rock and roll. New York publishers churned out calypso songbooks and sheet music, while Hollywood released three calypso-themed movies, including *Bop Girl Goes Calypso* (United Artists, 1957) with a plot that revolved around a contest between calypso and rock and roll.

During the calypso craze, numerous nightclubs in cities across the U.S. shifted to an all-calypso format. Among the best-known venues were the Calypso Room and Le Cupidon in New York, the Blue Angel in Chicago, and the Malayan Lounge in Miami. Typically, calypso clubs created an imaginary Caribbean atmosphere with fishnets, palm fronds, and other trappings. Performers often wore straw hats and striped and floral outfits, unlike the dress suits worn by calypsonians in Trinidad. Among the many artists who worked the clubs were Lord Flea, Calypso Eddie, the dance team of Scoogie Brown and Leo Ryers, and the singer Maya Angelou, before embarking on a literary career. In spring 1957 Angelou and Flea appeared in *Caribbean Calypso Festival*, a short-lived revue produced by Trinidadian dancer/painter Geoffrey Holder at Loew's Metropolitan Theatre in Brooklyn. The show also featured Latin bandleader/percussionist Tito Puente and Lord Kitchener, a top Trinidadian calypsonian based in England.

By the 1950s, England had developed its own vibrant calypso scene.⁴ In 1948 Lord Kitchener and his compatriot Lord Beginner arrived on the MV *Empire Windrush*, a ship that marked the advent of large-scale Caribbean migration to Britain. Kitchener and Beginner began recording in London in 1950. In 1951 the Trinidad All Steel Percussion Orchestra traveled to the Festival of Britain, a major cultural showcase, and appeared at various other prestigious venues. In the course of the decade, other Caribbean migrants continued to record calypsos in England, and the music gained a presence at London nightclubs and private parties. During the late 1950s, Cy Grant, a Guyanese RAF veteran and actor,

Continued on page 12

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ISAM Matters

We are grateful to the many people who responded to our recent appeal for donations. If you would like to make a contribution to support the Institute for Studies in American Music, we can still use your help. Since 1993, New York state appropriations for higher education have declined by 5%, adjusted for inflation. Your support will make it possible to continue publishing this *Newsletter*, to organize conferences, and to bring guest speakers and performers to campus. Thank you for your generosity!

* * *

Stephen Stuempfle's lead article focuses on the migration of Trinidadian calypso to New York and eventually around the globe. This theme will be thoroughly explored in our upcoming conference, **Calypso in New York and the Atlantic World**, to be held on 30 October 2004 at Brooklyn College. The conference will feature leading Caribbean scholars including **Gordon Rohlehr**, **Keith Warner**, and **Jocelyne Guilbault**, as well as an evening concert with Trinidadian historian and 2004 Calypso Monarch **Hollis "Chalkdust" Liverpool**. See the preliminary schedule on p. 13.

ISAM's colloquium series, **Music in Polycultural America**, continued this spring with a talk by **Henry Frank** on the secularization of Haitian Vodou ritual, a performance by the **Ibo Dancers of Haiti**, and a performance by pianist/singer/songwriter **Magdalen Hsu-Li**. We also hosted **Mark Katz**, who delivered a paper on Paul Lansky, Fatboy Slim, and Public Enemy; **Martha Mockus**, who shared her research on bassist/singer/songwriter MeShell Ndegéocello; and **Carl Stone**, who talked about his work in sampling and computer music.

This year the **Ph.D./D.M.A. Program in Music at the CUNY Graduate Center** received a remarkably high number of applications from students interested in American music topics, particularly in twentieth-century composers, jazz, and popular music. We are delighted to welcome an exciting new crop of students to our doctoral programs in musicology, ethnomusicology, music theory, composition, and performance.

Congratulations to **Adrienne Fried Block**, who received the Society for American Music's 2004 Lifetime Achievement Award at its meeting last March in Cleveland, and to **John Graziano**, who received SAM's 2004 Distinguished Service Award. We look forward to their upcoming conference, **A Century of Composing in America: 1820-1920**, to be held on 17-19 November 2004 at the CUNY Graduate Center. Please see the announcement on p. 12.

On 7-9 October 2004, the American Music Research Center at the University of Colorado will host the symposium **Nadia Boulanger and American Music**. For more information, please visit www-libraries.colorado.edu/amrc/conferences.htm.

Lastly, our thanks to **Ben Bierman** for his outstanding work as managing editor of the *Newsletter*. We welcome **Carl Clements**, a Ph.D. student in ethnomusicology at the CUNY Graduate Center, as our new managing editor starting in Fall 2004.

—Ellie M. Hisama

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Behind the Beat *Jazz Criticism by Mark Tucker*

A 48-page collection of Mark Tucker's *Behind the Beat* columns is available for purchase. Please make check or money order for \$12 (\$10 plus \$2 for shipping/handling) payable to **Brooklyn College Member Organization (memo: ISAM)** and send to the address above.

Brooklyn's Jazz Renaissance

In March 2003, Jazz at Lincoln Center hosted a forum titled “Jazz and Social Protest” that drew a predominantly black, standing-room only crowd. Moderated by Robert O’Meally, director of the Center for Jazz Studies at Columbia University, the panel consisted of poets Sonia Sanchez and Amiri Baraka, and trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater. All three artists made explicit statements against the war in Iraq. Coincidentally, three days later the *Los Angeles Times* ran an article by critic Don Heckman arguing that there were few jazz musicians out front against the war.¹ From this, he concluded that despite some historic exceptions, the jazz world simply is not that political.

Of course, critics like Heckman who look for “politics” in song titles, explicit references to world events, or musicians’ commentary, invariably reduce politics to *protest*. But during the forum, Baraka insisted that the language of “social protest” obscures the real political meaning of the music. Indeed, the entire panel discussed jazz in terms of building community and sustaining African American culture, mentoring new generations in the tradition, recognizing the democratic, communal, even spiritual nature of jazz performance, and reclaiming and preserving this great African American art form.

If these issues really lie at the heart of the politics of jazz, then a revolution is taking place in Brooklyn. While predominantly white “downtown” audiences squeeze into the Blue Note or the Vanguard to be entertained by the hip, across the bridge Brooklyn’s black activists and artists are reclaiming the music’s roots and employing it for the political, social and spiritual uplift of the community. Jazz is everywhere in Central Brooklyn—at intimate nightclubs like Up Over Jazz Cafe, Pumpkins, and The Jazz Spot; at local coffeehouses like Sistas’ Place; in community centers; even in the house of the Lord. Brooklyn has its own black-oriented jazz magazine, *Pure Jazz*, edited by the tireless JoAnn Cheatham. And as anyone who has attended the annual Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival can tell you, the audiences for the music are predominantly black, representing all classes and ages. Quiet as it seems, reaffirming the music’s links to black community struggles and social transformation marks a radical challenge to jazz’s current trajectory, which has become deeply commercialized, rendered colorblind and apolitical, and promoted as American high culture.

The key force behind the Brooklyn revolution is the Central Brooklyn Jazz Consortium. Founded about five years ago by a group of black artists, activists, and entrepreneurs, including the late singer Torrie McCartney, trumpeter and composer Ahmed Abdullah, and veteran black community activists Viola Plummer and Jitu Weusi, the CBJC set out to promote “African American classical music” as a collective, community project. The CBJC is made up of several club owners, nearly half a dozen churches, and a variety of community centers. More than a business venture, the CBJC was created to spread positive cultural values through the music. Bob Myers, owner of Up Over Jazz Cafe and original CBJC member, explained, “This is the African way, to promote the culture through the music and arts, and to do so not in competition but in cooperation.”²

What the CBJC is attempting to do has deep roots in Brooklyn’s history and its rich jazz heritage. Back in the day, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Thelonious Monk, Lee Morgan, and others played at Brooklyn venues like Putnam Central, the Blue Coronet, the Baby Grand, Club La Marchal, or Tony’s Club Grandean. Trumpeters Freddie Hubbard and Lee Morgan helped put Brooklyn on the global jazz map in 1965 with the release of *Night of the Cookers*, vols. 1 and 2, recorded live at the Club La Marchal on Nostrand Avenue and President Street. Brooklynites enjoyed occasional concerts at the Paramount Theater, and many danced to big bands at the Elks or Sonia ballrooms. But this barely scratches the surface, for as long-time Brooklyn resident and former musician Freddie Robinson told me, “The music was everywhere. Every little corner bar had jazz.” Some of the better known joints were the Pleasant Lounge, Club 78, Kingston Lounge, and Club Continental.³

Brooklyn jazz musicians have also been working cooperatively for at least a half-century. Indeed, one of Myers’s models for the CBJC was Club Jest Us, a group of jazz musicians’ wives living in Brooklyn during the 1960s who worked collectively in order to secure gigs for their husbands. A decade earlier, Brooklyn-born pianist and composer Randy Weston recalled working with his neighborhood pals, including drummer Max Roach, to organize musicians’ collectives. Weston and other musicians learned a great deal about cooperation and self-reliance from his father, Frank Weston, who inspired young musicians at his restaurant with stories of Marcus Garvey, Africa, and the continuing struggle to uplift the black community.⁴

During the 1960s and early 1970s, the late Cal Massey, an extraordinary composer and trumpeter, turned his Brooklyn home into a veritable community center. Besides writing explicitly revolutionary pieces like “The Black Liberation Suite,” Massey organized benefit concerts for the Black Panther Party that encouraged the full participation of the community, especially youth, by banning alcohol and providing free childcare. Around the same time, Jitu Weusi, founder and current chairman of the CBJC, promoted jazz as a cultural and political force to mobilize Brooklyn’s black community when he founded The East in 1969. Located in the heart of Bedford-Stuyvesant, The East was a black cultural center where artists such as bassist Reggie Workman performed and held workshops for youth.⁵

During the 1970s and 1980s, in the wake of the borough’s decline due to high unemployment, federal cutbacks, and drugs, black activists who sought to revitalize Brooklyn once again turned to jazz. The Bed-Stuy Restoration Corporation was one of those institutions that helped pave the way for the current Brooklyn renaissance. The Center for Arts and Culture at Bed-Stuy Restoration Corp, for example, trains young people in the art of jazz and runs the Skylight Gallery where musicians frequently perform. Myers’s Up Over Jazz Cafe is also a space for community building. Neighborhood musicians work out ideas through open jam sessions, and Myers has even hosted several nights of “Hip Hop Meets Jazz,” where singing sensation Bilal jammed with friends, including the equally sensational pianist Jason Moran.

Brooklyn's Jazz Renaissance (continued)

Perhaps the best-known and most politicized community space for jazz is Sistas' Place on Nostrand and Jefferson Avenues. Run by a collective whose members have ties to political organizations such as the December 12th Movement and the Harriet Tubman/Fannie Lou Hamer Collective, Sistas' Place hosts a wide range of cultural activities. Any given week one might hear the Sun Ra Arkestra or saxophonist René McLean, or check out a Sunday afternoon panel discussion on reparations for slavery or police brutality.⁶

The jazz revolution in Brooklyn has not led to a distinctive "Brooklyn aesthetic," largely because virtually all genres are represented—from bebop to avant-garde. Nevertheless, some general characteristics of the music and artists deserve comment.

The CBJC encourages young artists by hosting frequent open jam sessions and promoting conversations between jazz and other musical genres. During the 2003 festival, for example, BRIC Studio on Rockwell Place hosted DJ Logic performing with jazz musicians, and The Jazz Spot committed its entire March calendar to young women instrumentalists. The most important characteristic of the CBJC's artistic vision is its reverence for black music and musicians throughout the African Diaspora and on the continent. Following in the footsteps of native son Randy Weston, a pioneer in the movement to reconnect Africa with African American musical traditions, several of the festival performers incorporate African instruments, Afro-Latin and Caribbean rhythms, as well as various forms of black sacred music. Ultimately, if there is any essential principle behind the movement, it is to celebrate and reclaim black music for Brooklyn's black community.

For CBJC co-founder Ahmed Abdullah, the very existence of black, community-based spaces for jazz is "regenerating."⁷ Abdullah himself has helped to create these spaces by working closely with schools and churches. In February 2003, Concord Baptist Church held a well-attended tribute to Gigi Gryce and Randy Weston, at which elementary school kids sang Gryce's "Social Call" and a teenaged band known as Friends and Strangers struggled valiantly with Weston's best-known compositions. The predominantly black crowd embraced this music with the enthusiasm of a Sunday morning revival. For the last two springs, Con-

cord hosted "100 Golden Fingers in Praise," a concert of sacred music led by pianist Barry Harris and at least nine other pianists, including Bertha Hope, Gil Coggins, and Valerie Capers. Besides Concord Baptist Church, several other religious institutions including St. Philips Episcopal Church, Our Lady of Victory Roman Catholic Church, Jane's United Methodist, First Presbyterian Church, and Hanson Place Central United Methodist Church have hosted performances as part of the Central Brooklyn Jazz Festival. Last year, Brooklyn's 651 ARTS and musical director Akua Dixon brought together a jazz ensemble featuring trombonist Craig Harris with the Total Praise Choir and rocked Emmanuel Baptist Church.



*A Great Day in Brooklyn (organized by Ahmed Abdullah and Bob Myers)
Photo by Lem Peterkin/Courtesy of the Central Brooklyn Jazz Consortium*

For many of the ministers involved with the CBJC, as well as for activists like Abdullah, bringing the music back to its roots in black communities is necessary, both for the music's survival as well as for the community's resurrection. No one is saying jazz ought to be the exclusive property of black folk; it never was. Instead, the music needs to be "allowed to grow in the atmosphere that nurtures its creative juices," Abdullah explained. This is not a tale of protest but a story of social and spiritual liberation. And for Abdullah, and presumably most of the folks behind the Brooklyn revolution, thinking of jazz as a spiritually liberating force for a community in struggle can serve as a model for the rest of the world: "That's what the music is about anyway. That's why it's loved around the world. That's why I say in its true essence Jazz is a music of the spirit."⁸

—Robin D. G. Kelley
Columbia University

Notes

¹ Don Heckman, "Music (and Musicians) as a Force for Change," *Los Angeles Times* (21 March 2003): E19.

² Bob Myers, interview with author, 21 February 2003.

³ K. Leander Williams, "Brooklyn, New York," in *Lost Jazz Shrines (The Lost Shrines Project, 1998)*, 12-16; Bilal Abdurahman, *In the Key of Me: The Bedford Stuyvesant Renaissance, 1940s-60s Revisited* (Contemporary Visions, 1993); Randy Weston, interview with author, 20 August 2001; Bob Meyers, interview with author, 21 February 2003.

⁴ Myers, interview with author; Weston, interview with author; Ira Gitler, "Randy Weston," *Down Beat* (February 1964): 16-17; Arthur Taylor, *Notes and Tones: Musician-to-Musician Interviews* (Da Capo Press, 1993), 20-21; Valerie Wilmer, *Jazz People* (Da Capo Press, 1977), 79.

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Bolly'hood Re-mix

When I first heard it, I was driving in the car with my mom in the passenger seat, the radio tuned to Jammin' 94.5 and blaring out upbeat hip hop tunes. Suddenly, I hear the words "Kaliyon ka chaman tab bantha hai..." and I can only stare at my mother in shock. This was the first, but certainly not the last I heard of the chart-topping song "Addictive" by Truth Hurts.

—Manasi Singhal, a young man of Indian descent¹

With its striking combination of R&B, hip hop, and Indian film music, the track "Addictive," produced by DJ Quik with vocals by Truth Hurts, has distinguished itself as the boldest example yet to emerge of the "Bollywood" trend in mainstream hip hop and R&B. Bollywood is the popular name given to the Mumbai film industry, which has for decades been the source of popular music in India and the majority of South Asia and its diaspora. The sudden appearance of these vintage songs—together with other South Asian musical sounds and genres—as decontextualized samples in the sonic structure of mainstream hip hop tracks on the radio and MTV has been received by Indian American listeners as a mixed blessing. Like the hip hop fan quoted above, many members of this community have reacted to this cross-cultural sampling with a sense of excitement and pride, although this pride is tempered by a degree of trepidation over issues of musical integrity and cultural representation. At the same time, this adoptive relationship between hip hop and South Asian music is further revealed as reciprocal when we consider the growing importance of hip hop in South Asian communities and the emergence of "South Asian hip hop" crews in many North American cities. The Bollywood trend in mainstream hip hop offers a critical opportunity for a greater understanding among these different groups across lines of ethnicity and class.

While the introduction of South Asian sounds into Western popular music can be traced back at least to the Beatles' "Norwegian Wood," the current flurry of Indian samples and sounds in hip hop can be traced back to Missy Elliott's "Get Ur Freak On," which features producer Timbaland's innovative use of the tabla and other South Asian instrumental and vocal snippets. Subsequent examples include Bollywood samples in Lil' Kim's "Get in Touch With Us;" sitar sounds in Tweet's "Call Me" and Beyoncé's "Baby Boy;" and Bhangra re-mixes of SNAP's "The Power," and Craig David's "Rise & Fall."² And, in case there was any doubt that South Asian sounds have reached the mainstream, Britney Spears includes a "Desi Kulcha" remix of "Me Against the Music" on her latest album with the help of British Asian producer Rishi Rich. Two songs that exemplify the Bolly'hood re-mix are Truth Hurts' "Addictive" and Erick Sermon's "React," both of which sample Bollywood soundtracks.

These sonic borrowings in hip hop must be further contextualized as a part of the larger phenomenon of Western popular culture's fascination with the Indian aesthetic (manifest, for example, in films and fashion) often described as "Indo-chic," the quintessential example here being Madonna's use of *mehndi* (henna) and the *bindhi* (forehead ornamentation). Sunaina Maira and other cultural theorists have begun to refer to such cross-cultural appropriations of commodities as the "new Orientalism."³ The entry of hip hop and R&B artists into this arena deepens with significance due to the timing of these releases in a post September 11 world. Indeed, the sustenance of the Bollywood trend in mainstream music can be partly explained by a curiosity about a region of the world stirred up by the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, and the resignification of brown-skinned peoples in the United States.



Sammy Chand (l), Nimesh Patel (r)
Photo by Kevin Miller

Truth Hurts's 2002 hit song "Addictive" features an uncredited Bollywood song, sampled throughout the track, titled "Thoda Resham Lagta Hai" ("It Looks Silky") sung in Hindi by the well-known Indian singer Lata Mangeshkar. The distinctly "othered" sonic texture of the Indian sample inspired the setting and choreography for the "Addictive" video, which features a lavish haremlike nightclub populated by dancers—mostly African American—in a variety of Middle East/South Asian-inspired dress. Other Indian elements—such as henna hand designs and head movements characteristically used in Indian dance—are freely mixed with Middle Eastern elements—most apparent in the profusion of belly dancing. An indulgent fantasy space is thus created through the collapsing of two or more distinct cultures—an action that denies an accurate reference to the geopolitical origins of the Mangeshkar sample, yet at the same time pays homage to the eclectic fantasy sequences so common to the Bollywood cinema.

In addition to the socio-political climate, another explanation for the recent proliferation of Indian sounds in hip hop may simply be that DJs are digging deeper into the crates—looking for original sounds to expand the palette of their art. DJ Quik first heard the Lata Mangeshkar song while watching the Hindi film *Jyoti* on Z-TV, and subsequently looped large sections into a framework over which the R&B lyrics were laid. "Addictive" became a top ten hit, and its video went into heavy rotation on the major video channels. Fans of the track included Indian Americans who were surprised and thrilled to hear "their" Bollywood music in the mainstream media. However, many of those listeners familiar with the Indian system of raag and taal, the melodic mode and rhythmic cycle employed in the original Bollywood song, hear the interplay of Mangeshkar and Truth Hurts as insurmountably dissonant. Said one listener, "When I listen to this, I cringe the whole way through...I love the idea, but I'm not necessarily thrilled with how

Bolly'hood Re-mix (continued)

they did it and how it sounds.”⁴ Such listeners are responding partly to the tension between the new R&B vocals and the lengthy raag-based singing of the original Bollywood track preserved in the sample. There is also a subtle but troubling rhythmic tension created between the component parts of “Addictive” as they slip slowly out of sync only to return together at the top of the loop.

It was not long, however, until “Addictive” was transformed from a symbol of cultural fusion into the latest poster child warning the dangers of copyright infringement in digital sampling. Bappi Lahiri, the composer of “Thoda Resham Lagta Hai,” filed a lawsuit in October 2002 against executive producer Dr. Dre, Aftermath Records, and its parent company, Interscope/Universal Music Group, claiming that the song was used without permission. Lahiri successfully won an injunction, halting the sales of the album and single, and is further seeking damages up to one million dollars, charging the defendants with “cultural imperialism.”⁵ Dr. Dre has stated that an attempt was made to locate the copyright holders, but it remains that their decision to go ahead with the track demonstrates an ignorance regarding the size and importance of the Indian film industry and the significance of Lata Mangeshkar, perhaps the most recorded voice in the world. What’s more, a second suit was brought by Saregama India Limited, the record company claiming rights to the original recording, against Dr. Dre et al., demanding the astounding sum of 500 million dollars.⁶

A few months after “Addictive” hit the charts, Erick Sermon, Redman, and producer Just Blaze released their single “React.” In addition to a short excerpt from a Bollywood soundtrack, “React” features the repeating, originally composed motive as shown above that appears alternately voiced as synthesized strings and a sitar. This motive achieves a certain kind of sonic Orientalism, referencing a musical stereotype about the Middle East, in part, through the augmented second sound suggested here between the C and the D#. It could be argued that the snippet of Bollywood soundtrack employed in this example works better musically than the Mangeshkar track used in “Addictive,” but the real schism in this case occurs between the lyrics issued by Sermon and the meaning of the original sample sung in Hindi as shown below. A translation of the Hindi passage reveals that the singer is making a fatalistic comment about suicide.

First Verse and Chorus from “React” (Erick Sermon)

Hey yo, I’m immaculate, come through masculine
Wide-body frame, E-dub’s the name, whoa
In the field of rap, I’m superb, I’m fly
I should be in the sky with birds
I ride 20 inch rims when I lean, yo (Hey yo, them tens nigga)
I know, I keep ’em clean though
Come through stormin’ the block like El Niño



*Melodic motive from “React”
(Erick Sermon/Just Blaze)*

Scoop up an Arabic chick before she close
She goes, those my people
Yeah, them broads from Puerto Rico, them Keith’s folks
Yeah, watch how the “E” locs 64
Black rags, black interior, shift on the floor
Burn out, I do it for the kids
They’re hoppin’ the turnstile, the “E” goin’ wild
Yo, like them white chicks on a DVD
Yeah, I’m worldwide, MTV and BET, nigga

Sample: Kisii ko khudkushii kaa shauk ho to kyaa kare vo
[If someone has a fondness for suicide, what can one do?]

Whateva’ she said, then I’m that
If this here rocks to y’all, then react (repeat)

Regarding this juxtaposition of Hindi and English, a listener named Samir remarked: “If you’re not Indian it sounds fine but I understand, and everyone I know thinks it sounds stupid.”⁷ Like “Addictive,” the video for “React” features African American women in a fusion of Middle Eastern and South Asian dress, in this case mouthing the words of the Hindi sample. Sermon refers

to the disembodied voice, now made flesh, as an “Arabic chick.” According to Raj Beri, an Indian American music journalist, “This ignorance of South Asian culture is furthered

through songs like ‘React,’ which, like most media, tend to group anything exotic and strange from the so-called ‘Third World’ into one category. This is especially dangerous after 9/11, and contributes to the public’s lack of knowledge about the regions—evidenced by how South Asian Sikhs and Arabs are all the same in America’s eyes.”⁸ Other critics have taken this a step further, echoing Lahiri’s charge of cultural imperialism.⁹ Chris Fitzpatrick asserts that artists like Truth Hurts and Erick Sermon “set imperialism to a new bass-heavy beat, claiming traditional ‘third world’ art forms as hot commodities.”¹⁰

Of course, the unspoken question remains whether it is really the responsibility of the artist to educate or enlighten the masses. Should we expect to learn lessons in geography and culture from popular music? According to Sammy Chand, the founder of a South Asian music label based in Southern California, the answer is absolutely “yes.” Pointing to the recent collaboration between Jay-Z and the British bhangra star Panjabi MC, Chand notes: “These collaborations have created ambassadors...there’s Indian music that’s going into the African American community—thus the American community at large, and vice versa...it brings [each community] a little bit closer to each other.”¹¹ Chand’s label, Rukus Avenue Records, is one of several regional epicenters of South Asian hip hop in the United States. While these crews

Continued on page 15

Intersection of Gender and Modernism in the Music of Johanna Beyer

The New York Composers' Forum, founded in 1935 under the auspices of the Federal Music Project, was a series of new music concerts showcasing a vast array of composers, among them Aaron Copland, Amy Beach, Virgil Thomson, and Ruth Crawford.¹ The Forum allows us a glimpse of the inner workings of American modernism, by virtue of fully transcribed discussion periods between composers and audiences after the weekly concerts. This treasure trove of archival documents, located at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, is especially important for female composers of the 1930s, who have, for the most part, been overlooked. For Johanna Beyer, German American ultra-modernist, the Forum sessions not only allowed her to test her music in front of live audiences, they also provided her with an opportunity to construct her artistic and gender identities. The discussions show how Beyer engaged in modernist practice, carefully negotiating with colleagues and audience. Beyer's transcripts also give us a rare glimpse of audience reception of modernism, enriching our understanding of this period of music history.

Beyer operated within a modernist musical world dominated by men and ruled by masculinist ideology. Charles Ives was perhaps the most notorious, believing, "Music has always been an emasculated art—at least too much—say 88 2/3%."² Critic Paul Rosenfeld commented that Edward MacDowell, a somewhat traditional composer, "minces and simpers, maidenly and ruffled. He is nothing if not a daughter of the American Revolution."³

Far from being isolated examples, these comments reflect a large-scale masculinist ideology of modernism and creativity. Masculinity had long been viewed as the ultimate and only creative force. Men were defined as creators, while women were procreators, limited to imitating or inspiring. Women who did aspire to artistic creation were perceived as masculine, lesbian, or pseudo-males. With the rise of modernism came a preoccupation with virility; hypermasculinity and male sexuality became equated with modernist creative force. Many modernists perceived a feminization of music and culture, which they believed needed to be attacked and eradicated.⁴

In order to fit into this complicated web of modernism, misogyny, and gender, Beyer struggled with two intersecting, often contradictory identities, negotiating a place for herself within her musical circle as a woman and a modernist. She defined her modernist identity by choices in teachers, associates, and musical style. Around 1928 she began studying with Charles Seeger, Ruth Crawford, and Dane Rudhyar and in 1934 took Henry Cowell's percussion class at the New School for Social Research. Her musical life during these years was intertwined with Seeger, Crawford, Cowell, John Cage, and others in this modernist circle such as Jessie Baetz, a now-forgotten composer and painter who studied

with Beyer. Beyer dedicated pieces to Cage, Cowell, and Ethel Luening, soprano and wife of composer Otto Luening, who performed Beyer's works. Cage promoted Beyer's music as part of his Northwest tour of percussion music in the late 1930s, performing two of her *Three Movements for Percussion* (1939 K5), which she dedicated to him. Her closest relationship was with Cowell, on whose behalf she worked tirelessly during his San Quentin years, corresponding with publishers, conductors, and other composers in an attempt to get his music and writings published.



Johanna Beyer
Courtesy of the National Archives

Beyer's early works (1930–1936), show an affinity to the dissonant counterpoint style of Seeger, Crawford, and Cowell.⁵ Several works in particular appear to have been influenced by Crawford's *String Quartet 1931* and *Piano Study in Mixed Accents*. These include the retrograde first movement of Beyer's *Suite for Clarinet 1* (1932 K7) and the second movement of her *String Quartet No. 2* (July 1936 K21). The latter is reminiscent of the third movement of Crawford's *Quartet*, with a continual crescendo/decrescendo texture emphasizing timbre over melody, harmony, and rhythm, with a kind of "explosion" similar to Crawford's. Her music tends to be more playful than Crawford's. Many of her works reveal a quirkiness, romance, and lyricism she usually kept hidden from colleagues. Her later works, while highly individualized, show a continued commitment

to experimental ideas. Her music, as well as her choices in colleagues, clearly were ways in which Beyer constructed her modernist identity.

Potentially in conflict with her identity as a modernist was her identity as a woman. While her sex put her at an obvious disadvantage as a modernist, her gender, as distinct from her sex, was something she could construct, manipulate, and perform. She negotiated a place for her gendered self through her appearance, language, and behavior. In the photograph used for the Forum program, she presents a stark, severe, what some might call unfeminine physical appearance. She does not look demurely down, as other women in the Forum do in their pictures. Instead, her strong gaze accentuates the sharp lines of her neck and shoulders and the severity of her pulled back hair. Those who knew her, including Cage, Sidney Cowell, Lou Harrison, and Otto Luening, describe her as having been "tall, angular, awkward, and self-conscious."⁶ The language of her responses in the Forum was efficient, cutting, quick, and lacking emotion—characteristics often associated with the rational and masculine.

While these qualities may have helped her to be taken seriously by her modernist male counterparts, she did not rely on a purely masculinized musical identity when interacting with lay audiences. She carefully navigated a path between the genders through which she identified musically as masculine, but retained certain traditionally feminine characteristics and behaviors, such

Johanna Beyer (continued)

as her responses to attacks. After one particularly rude comment, she simply bowed graciously. She never lost her temper or displayed impatience with the audience the way many men did, always maintaining a feminine decorum and politeness.

Anti-modernist reactions involving gender, while overlooked in the scholarship, are wonderfully rendered in the Composers' Forum transcripts. Discussions at Beyer's concerts reveal three basic types of comments from the audience: anti-modernist comments, anti-female modernist comments, and heart versus brain comments. While many modernists in the Forum were criticized for their unpleasant, dissonant style of composing, none was attacked as harshly as Beyer. At her first concert in May of 1936, her music was described as chaotic and weird, containing "pathological sounds and noises." At her second Forum concert in 1937, her use of elbows and fists was considered "very unusual, but not appreciated here."

Of course, male modernists were not exempt from such criticism, either. The audience at Norman Cazden's Forum found his String Quartet "painful to listen to" and "a waste of time."⁷ But none of the men in the Forum had to face attacks based on their gender. Underlying gender tensions rose to the surface in this question: "Miss Beyer, you seem to have gone your male preceptors one better in search for strange and ineffective tonal combinations. Have you consciously adopted Rudyard Kipling's statement, 'The female of the species is deadlier than the male' as a guiding principle in your composition?"

The intersection of gender and modernism can be found most frequently in conversations concerning heart versus brain music. Audiences were fascinated by this idea, and frequently criticized modernist composers for their tendency toward intellectualism. One listener commented on Edwin Gerschefski's "clouds of meaningless dissonances," asking, "are your developments inspired by arithmetical plans or a beauty of spirit?"⁸ At Beyer's 1937 concert, her apparent lack of feeling and emotion disturbed the audience's assumptions about gender. One listener wondered whether Beyer's works were "mere brain children" or whether they "emanate[d] from the heart."⁹ Another audience member questioned whether Beyer had ever been in love, implying that such emotion was impossible for a woman who wrote such unfeeling music.

The heart versus brain concept dominated musical discourse outside the Forum as well. The language in music appreciation textbooks of the 1920s and 1930s is striking in its frequent opposition of heart and brain, depicting modernist music as pure intellect. *New York Times* critic Olin Downes, a regular attendee at Composers' Forum concerts, frequently wrestled with this dichotomy, employing

overtly gendered language. For instance, he associated Schoenberg's music with declining virility, referring to the composer's attempts to "make his music potent and articulate while every day its 'complexes' multiply and its potency declines."¹⁰ For anti-modernists like Downes, this music was somehow emasculating. As music critic Francis Toye stated, modernists were "mandarins who would emasculate the art for service in their own intellectual harems."¹¹

While anti-modernists believed modernist composers had become emasculated, pro-modernists such as Rosenfeld and Adorno felt that modernism was the very masculine force needed to combat feminized musical culture. Rosenfeld harshly denounced American musical culture and its "spiritual destitution," which artists could evade "only at the exorbitant price of self-emasculating and incompleteness."¹² Both pro- and anti-modernists used emasculation, with its obvious anti-female implications, as a tool for criticism and attack.

Beyer's most interesting responses refer to these heart vs. brain comments. While many listeners dichotomized feminine and masculine qualities, Beyer identified as both modernist and woman, seeking a balance between feminine and masculine, heart and brain. Charles Seeger asserted that Crawford had the greatest potential for expressing this perfect balance, an "ideal fusion of intuition and logic that would help usher in the new 'style' of balanced composition."¹³ Beyer and Crawford shared this "ideal fusion." In



Beyer, "Dissonant Counterpoint," mm. 1-9
Courtesy of Frog Peak Music

the program notes for the *Excerpts from Piano Suites*, Beyer dedicates the first piece, "Dissonant Counterpoint" to Crawford and describes the work as "two-part dissonant counterpoint; the first voice feminine, arabesque-like; the second voice strong, masculine." This piece is most likely the first of the group of short works entitled *Dissonant Counterpoint* (K28), shown in the example above. Beyer would have been familiar with Crawford's *Diaphonic Suite for Oboe and Cello*, in which the oboe represented the female voice (Ruth) and the cello the male voice (Charles), according to a radiogram Ruth sent Charles from Berlin.¹⁴

Although modernism emerged in some ways as a reaction against feminism, it simultaneously became a vehicle for feminist thought. Beyer resisted the comments leveled against her, arguing for her right to compose in such a style without abandoning feelings and emotions. In response to the question of whether she had ever been in love, she declared that she had "never been out of it," and she insisted more than once that her works "[were] from both the heart and the brain." That she sought to embrace dual

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Country and Gospel Notes

The first serious center for the academic study of country music was an archive bearing the unlikely name The John Edwards Memorial Foundation. Built around the record collection and written materials of Australian enthusiast John Kenneth Fielder Edwards, the JEMF opened its doors at the University of Southern California at Los Angeles in the fall of 1964. At the time, a number of pioneering country music scholars, including D. K. Wilgus, Ed Kahn, Fred Hoepfner, Norm Cohen, Eugene Earle, and Bob Pinson, happened to be located in the Los Angeles area. With the acquisition of the JEMF collection, the UCLA Library became the first American institution to systematically seek out country music-related materials such as back issues of fan magazines, taped interviews, historic graphics and photography, record company logs, and phonograph records.

In order to help publicize the collection and its value as a resource for music research, the JEMF began publishing a mimeographed newsletter about its activities in October 1965. As the *JEMF Newsletter* grew in scope and substance, it morphed into a full-length journal, the *JEMF Quarterly*, in 1969. It then contained major articles about veteran musicians, occasional song studies, discographies, bibliographies, book reviews, and correspondence. The journal was published four times a year through 1985, and continued to be published occasionally through 1990. By then the John Edwards collection had been purchased by the University of South Carolina, where it became part of the Southern Folklife Collection.

During its twenty years of publication, the *JEMF Quarterly* became the leading outlet for new research in “classic” country music, and, eventually, other types of vernacular music ranging from blues and jazz to Cajun and polka. Its back files continue to serve as an invaluable database for new researchers and students. Unfortunately, many university libraries do not subscribe to it; a current search of OCLC shows that there are only forty-plus academic libraries that carry at least partial runs of the journal on their shelves. Thus, a new book that reprints twenty-seven representative articles from the *JEMF Quarterly* is especially welcomed at this time. Responding to the current fad for the term “roots music,” the compilation is entitled *Exploring Roots Music: Twenty Years of the JEMF Quarterly* (Scarecrow Press, 2004; \$39.95). The volume is compiled by Noland Porterfield, the respected biographer of the early country music star Jimmie Rodgers.

Early in its run, the editors of *JEMF Quarterly* invited “our friends outside the academic institutions” to submit materials—an important move in an era where most of the grassroots research was being done by enthusiasts and collectors. It also had the effect of generating a style that avoided elitist jargon and theoretical paradigms in favor of accessible, readable prose. The fact that many of the 240 articles appearing throughout the *Quarterly*’s history were based on field research, record company documents, and discographies guided the choice of essays for the new book. For instance, the history of country music on radio—a subject

that still has not been covered in a serious book-length study—is well-represented here. Studies of individual stations include WLS and the National Barn Dance (Chicago), WNAX in Yankton, South Dakota, and WNOX in Knoxville, Tennessee. Other pieces deal with the Standard Transcription Company; the saga of Dr. John Brinkley’s involvement with The Carter Family and the “border radio” stations that broadcasted at illegal power levels from the Mexican border; and performers like Wilma Lee and Stony Cooper who forged careers largely on radio.

Individual portraits include Kentucky preacher and balladeer Buell Kazee, Georgia guitarist and hillbilly singer Riley Puckett, western swing pianist John “Knocky” Parker, gospel

singer Alfred Karnes, and others. The role of sheet music in disseminating country music is considered in articles by Archie Green and Gene Wiggins, while individual songs like “Wreck on the Highway,” “Henry Clay Beattie,” and pieces about the Scopes trial receive special attention. More generalized studies include offerings by Norm Cohen on folk and “hillbilly” music, by Ed Kahn on folklore and media studies, and by William Koon on the commercialization of grassroots music.

The volume includes an informative introduction by Porterfield detailing the history of the JEMF and the *Quarterly* itself. Thanks to Porterfield’s superb choice of material, readers are introduced to many of the leading historians of country music whose writings remain fresh today, years after the publication of their original essays. *Exploring Roots Music* emerges as a key reference book and an enjoyable look at the early efforts that helped define the field of country music scholarship.

—Charles K. Wolfe
Middle Tennessee State University



Riley Puckett (seated, right) and string band
Courtesy of Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum

DVDs a la Mode

A classical music video is a predictable affair. One can expect to see wide shots of the performers, with the occasional cuts to the audience and the hall itself to establish the atmosphere. Someone in the control room shows off knowledge of the score as the camera zooms in on a player just about to begin a solo. This annoying practice virtually commands the viewer, “This is what you should be listening to now.”

A different and more rewarding model for how such videos might work is presented in two recent DVDs on Mode featuring films by the Dutch director Frank Scheffer. Focusing on the music of Elliott Carter and John Cage, Scheffer’s works suggest that such films might convey the compositional principles behind the musical works they document. Of course his composer subjects could not be more dissimilar in those principles, and a very different kind of film emerges for each.

The film *Quintet for Piano and Strings* appears on the DVD *Elliott Carter: Quintets and Voices* (Mode 128, 2003). It begins in near obscurity behind pianist Ursula Oppens, and the camera seems intent on revealing as little as possible about the identity of the performers. As the Quintet unfolds, the members of the Arditti Quartet gradually come into view, but rarely is more than one player at a time the focus of a shot. The players are attempting to work together, as furtive glances from one to another show, but the gulf between them is wide. A striking sequence early on confirms this. We see Irving Arditti, the first violinst, in a shot from behind cellist Rohan de Saram, looking up toward him with a serious expression. Immediately following we see de Saram from behind Arditti, and we feel almost as if they looked at each other from the opposite sides of a canyon. We also begin to get the sense that the piano is trying to insert itself into the gap, with Oppens visually in the center, striving to communicate with both sides—or perhaps as the driving force in the wedge between them.

Many of the shots that follow are closeups of the players, some decidedly uncomfortable. It is only within the last two minutes of the film that we begin to see something of the big picture, as the camera pans from one side of the quartet to the other. However, we never see all five players together, but an alternation between the viola and cello on one side, and the violins on the other. Grouped with the latter is the piano, which seems to succeed at last in fracturing the quartet. Here the camera feels most expressive, trying to bring the five performers together at the finale. But in a brilliant stroke Scheffer allows the camera to fail and a final unity is never achieved.

Readers who have spent time with Carter’s music will recognize several of its more prominent themes in the structure of the film. Perhaps most notable is how Scheffer captures the intensity of individuality that is at the heart of Carter’s approach to writing for instruments. The film explores the interaction of those individuals in a variety of ways, some more cooperative, some more antagonistic. In fact, while the main tension is between the piano and the string quartet, the latter is not simply singing with one voice, either in the music or in the film. Thus, in idiomatically cinematic ways, Scheffer has produced a visual analogue of Carter’s compositional practice.

This process is more overt in Scheffer and Andrew Culver’s collaboration titled *From Zero: Four Films on John Cage* (Mode 130, 2004). Of special interest here is a performance of Cage’s work, *Fourteen*, by the Ives Ensemble. Like all of Cage’s late number pieces, the instrumentalists are assigned parts which contain mostly single notes and chance-distributed time brackets indicating the period of time (as measured by a stopwatch) within which the notes are to be played. Perhaps the most distinctive feature of *Fourteen* is the presence of a bowed piano which contributes sounds of extended duration. The piano, alone, plays continuously, as Cage indicates, “an unaccompanied solo... in an anarchic society of sounds.”

In order to film the work, Scheffer and Culver decided on some anarchic principles of their own, providing Cage-like scores for a team of “undirected camera performers,” for lighting, and eventually for editing. The result is a mesmerizing essay in Cagean “anarchic harmony” in multiple dimensions that enhance one another, facilitated by the shimmering sonorities of complex harmonics that the composer draws from the ensemble. In the film’s most arresting sequence a camera slowly pans across a trumpet and its player, mostly out of focus (characteristically, the trumpet is not being sounded at this point). The trumpet seems like three points of light, then several, and only gradually does the actual form emerge. Meanwhile a complex sound grows out of rich but uncertain harmonics that glisten much as the trumpet does as it moves into and out of focus. As for the solo piano, no one feature of the lighting or editing seems to correspond to it—until one remembers that the only constant through the film is the viewer, alone in an anarchic society of images.

The Carter and Cage DVDs contain additional materials of considerable interest. *From Zero* includes three other films by Scheffer and Culver, all of which incorporate chance operations to some extent. In *19 Questions*, Cage speaks on randomly selected topics for periods of time also determined by chance. In *Paying Attention*, Culver and Scheffer work like Cage and Merce Cunningham, with Culver manipulating the audio portions of a Cage interview while Scheffer plays with the visual sequences, without either knowing what the other is doing. The last film, *Overpopulation and Art*, overlays the composition *Ryoanji*, interpreted both in sound and film, with Cage’s reading of a mesostic recorded in the last year of his life. The result is a moving memorial. Valuable interviews with Culver and Scheffer place the films in context.

The Carter DVD contains an interview with Arditti, Oppens, Joshua Cody and the composer. But the most valuable parts of the DVD are the performances in very radiant sound. The Quintet receives a second, tighter, reading, but there is also the more boisterous Quintet for Piano and Winds and the beautifully paced *Syringa* and *Tempo e Tempi* performed by the Ensemble Sospeso. Scheffer’s excellent new Carter documentary, *A Labyrinth of Time*, will be released soon by Mode. Recently premiered at the 2004 Tribeca Film Festival, it is not to be missed.

—Anton Vishio
Brooklyn, NY

Calypso (continued)

performed a calypso every night on BBC's *Tonight*, a television news show. Though the overall popularization of calypso in Britain was less extensive than in the U.S., London nonetheless served as an important center of calypso creativity and international dissemination.

During the postwar era, calypso artists and recordings also reached many other parts of the Atlantic world. In addition to its substantial influence on musical traditions in anglophone Caribbean islands, calypso was performed in Caribbean immigrant communities in Venezuela, Aruba, Curaçao, Panama, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua. At the same time, calypso influenced kaseko music, both in Suriname and in the Netherlands. Calypso singers also appeared in France, Germany, and other European countries. Particularly creative expressions emerged in anglophone West Africa, where artists like Ghanaian E. T. Mensah and Sierra Leonean Ebenezer Calender blended calypso with highlife and other West African musical styles.

The dissemination of calypso in the Atlantic world was a complex process that was shaped by imperial networks, migration patterns, commercial markets, diverse mass media, and international tourism. Though calypso faded during the late 1950s as a mass music in the U.S., it remained a standard component of the repertoire of Caribbean hotel bands. Moreover, it continued to thrive as a popular music in Trinidad, other eastern Caribbean countries, and the Caribbean diaspora. Following the 1965 U.S. immigration reform act, Brooklyn emerged as a major center for calypso, with its own Caribbean recording companies and its massive Labor Day Carnival. Today, calypsonians perform on a Carnival circuit

that extends from the Caribbean to diasporic communities in Brooklyn, Miami, Toronto, London, and other North American and British cities.

Exploration of these international dimensions of calypso is the goal of the exhibitions and conferences that comprise *Calypso: A World Music*. The project will reinvigorate public interest in calypso history and generate new perspectives on how a musical tradition from a small country has had a far-reaching impact on Atlantic popular culture.

—Historical Museum of Southern Florida

Notes

¹ Joseph Mitchell, "A Reporter at Large: Houdini's Picnic," *The New Yorker* (6 May 1939): 61-71. For an overview of calypso in New York during this period, see Donald Hill, "'I Am Happy Just to Be in This Sweet Land of Liberty': The New York City Calypso Craze of the 1930s and 1940s," in *Island Sounds in the Global City: Caribbean Popular Music and Identity in New York*, ed. Ray Allen and Lois Wilcken (University of Illinois Press, 1998), 74-92.

² For an account of this case, see Louis Nizer, *My Life in Court* (Doubleday & Company, 1961), 233-286.

³ A selection of Lord Invader's Disc and Folkways recordings is available through the compilation *Lord Invader: Calypso in New York* (Smithsonian Folkways SFW CD 40454). The 1946 Town Hall concert is available on the CDs *Calypso At Midnight!* and *Calypso After Midnight!* (Rounder 11661-1840-2 and 11661-1841-2).

⁴ For a discussion of calypso in England, see John Cowley, "London is the Place: Caribbean Music in the Context of Empire 1900-60," in *Black Music in Britain: Essays on the Afro-Asian Contribution to Popular Music*, ed. Paul Oliver (Open University Press, 1990), 58-76.

Music in Gotham, Ph.D./D.M.A. Program in Music, Barry S. Brook Center for Music Research and Documentation, The City University of New York present a conference:

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web.gc.cuny.edu/brookcenter/gotham.htm

Calypso in New York and the Atlantic World

30 October 2004, Brooklyn College

Preliminary Conference Schedule

Calypso: Pan-Atlantic Histories

Kenneth Bilby (Center for Black Music Research)
"Pan-Atlantic Music Currents: Interpreting Calypso as World Music"

Gordon Rohlehr (University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad), "America and Americans in Trinidadian Calypsos, 1920-1960"

John Cowley (Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London), "Calypso in the U.K. and West Africa, 1940-1960"

Jocelyne Guilbault (University of California, Berkeley)
"Soca as World Music: Recent Trends in Calypso in the Caribbean and the U.S."

Geraldine Connor (University College of Leeds)
"Contemporary Calypso and Caribbean Diasporic Consciousness in the U.K."

Moderator: **Stephen Stuempfle** (Historical Museum of Southern Florida)

Calypso in New York

Donald Hill (State University of New York, Oneonta)
"Calypso Performance in New York Nightclubs and Concert Halls, 1935-1955"

Ray Funk (Independent calypso researcher, Fairbanks, Alaska), "Harry Belafonte and the Calypso Craze: The Packaging of Calypso as Popular American Entertainment in the 1950s"

Leroy "Conqueror" Paul (Calypsonian, New York)
"Reminiscences of a Transnational Calypsonian"

Les Slater (Trinidad and Tobago Folk Arts Institute, New York), "Calypso in New York Carnival, Fetes, and Tents since 1970"

Moderator: **Ray Allen** (Brooklyn College and the Graduate Center, CUNY)

An Evening With Dr. Hollis Liverpool

Concert and discussion with renowned Trinidadian historian and 2004 Calypso Monarch

Calypso on Film

Keith Warner (George Mason University), "Calypso on Screen: Imagining the Caribbean on Film and Television in the U.S. and the U.K."

Patricia Mohammed (University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad), "Coloured Reflections on the Silver Screen: 'Race' and Gender in Calypso Films"
Moderator: **Ray Funk** (Independent Calypso Researcher, Fairbanks, Alaska)

Related Events

Calypso Music in Postwar America Exhibition

Brooklyn Public Library, Grand Army Plaza

4 August - 26 September 2004

Brooklyn College Library

4 October - 17 December 2004

Historical Museum of Southern Florida, Miami

24 February - 5 June 2005

Calypso: A World Music - Online Exhibition Launch

4 August 2004

Calypso and the Caribbean Literary Imagination Conference

Historical Museum of Southern Florida

and the University of Miami

17 -19 March 2005

Calypso in New York and the Atlantic World is sponsored by the Institute for Studies in American Music and the Conservatory of Music at Brooklyn College, and the Historical Museum of Southern Florida.

Calypso in New York and the Atlantic World is made possible by grant support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the New York Council for the Humanities, and the Cerf Foundation.

The online and traveling exhibitions are organized by the Historical Museum of Southern Florida.



*Hollis "Chalkdust" Liverpool
Photo by David Wears
Courtesy of Trinidad Guardian Photos*

Brooklyn's Jazz Renaissance (continued)

⁵ Fred Ho, "The Damned Don't Cry: The Life and Music of Calvin Massey" (unpublished paper in author's possession); Eric Porter, *What is This Thing Called Jazz?: African American Musicians as Artists, Critics, and Activists* (University of California Press, 2002), 216; Ahmed Abdullah, e-mail message to author, 17 March 2003.

⁶ Abdullah, e-mail message to author; www.millionsforreparations.com

⁷ Abdullah, e-mail message to author.

⁸ *Ibid.*

SELECTED BROOKLYN JAZZ VENUES

Sistas' Place

456 Nostrand Avenue (Jefferson Avenue)
Brooklyn, NY 11216
(718) 398-1766
www.sistasplace.org

Up Over Jazz Cafe

351 Flatbush Ave (Seventh Avenue)
Brooklyn, NY 11238
(718) 398-5413
www.upoverjazz.com/index.htm

Pumpkins

1448 Nostrand Avenue (Church Avenue)
Brooklyn, NY 11226
(718) 284-9086

The Jazz Spot

375 Kosciuszko Street (Marcus Garvey Blvd.)
Brooklyn, NY 11221
(718) 453-7825
thejazz.8m.com/home.html

Skylight Gallery

Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation
1368 Fulton Street (New York Avenue)
Brooklyn, NY 11216
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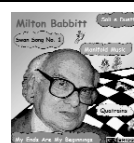


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Bolly'hood Re-mix (continued)

engage the wider hip hop community and form alliances with other peoples of color, many Indian American consumers of hip hop music, especially of the suburban class, may regard other minorities with ambivalence, or worse. Nitasha Sharma recalls meeting Indian American college students who identified Tupac Shakur as their favorite musician, and yet claim to have never “really talked to” a black person in their lives.¹²

Whether or not they are hip hop fans, Indian Americans are paying close attention to the Bollywood trend in mainstream hip hop. Media time for *anything* Indian is scarce in this country, so the issue is loaded with an unnatural gravity. The flow of Indian sounds and samples into hip hop, and the flow of hip hop culture into the Indian American community has thus created a critical crossroads, and increasingly the conduits that carry the flow of music and culture are joined through cross-cultural collaborations. Raje Shwari, an Indian American singer who has collaborated with Slum Village, Jay-Z, and appears most recently on Timbaland’s “Indian Flute,” says of these artists: “They are making it hip and accepted to be Indian...[and]...what they really ended up doing was breaking down the barriers for artists like me that have always tried to do the East meets West thing.”¹³ South Asian sounds have, in other words, gained a certain “street credibility” through the work of artists like Erick Sermon, Jay-Z, and Truth Hurts, setting the stage for outfits like Rukus Avenue to reach a larger audience.

Likewise, African American hip hop artists are becoming more aware of their Indian American fan base. At the height of its popularity, Truth Hurts recreated her video “Addictive” as a live stage show at the 2002 Bollywood Awards before a capacity crowd of South Asians in Long Island’s Nassau Coliseum. Not dissuaded by the lawsuit, Truth Hurts remarked: “I think us just sampling Indian music and trying to make it our own gets cheesy after a while...I’m definitely going to have Indian people in my [next] video and show the culture.”¹⁴ Whether or not South Asian sounds in mainstream hip hop are simply this year’s flavor, the positive direction of these recent “face-to-face” collaborations suggests that the lasting legacy of this trend may yet be a deeper understanding between these previously disparate cultures.

—Kevin Miller
University of California, Los Angeles

Notes

¹ Excerpted from his online article, “Kaliyon ka Chaman [Lata Mangeshkar] Vs. Addictive [Truth Hurts],” <denunge.dk/article/articleview/1235/1/35>; accessed 15 August 2003.

² Bhangra, originally a Punjabi folk music (and dance), was transformed in the South Asian diaspora setting of the U.K. beginning in the 1970s. Traditional percussion instruments were retained as electronic instruments were added, forming a new genre called “Bhangra-pop,” which was itself fused with house and techno electronic dance music styles in the late 1980s and 1990s.

³ Sunaina Maira, “Henna and Hip Hop: The Politics of Cultural Production and the Work of Cultural Studies,” *Journal of Asian American Studies* 3/3 (2000): 329–369.

⁴ Sammy Chand, interview with author, 12 September 2003.

⁵ As quoted in “Federal court lawsuit claims that hit single ‘Addictive’ borrows from Hindi song by B. Lahiri” (Reuters), *News India-Times.com*, online edition (8 November 2002); accessed 15 August 2003.

⁶ In all fairness, it must be remembered that, as Peter Manuel points out in *Cassette Culture: Popular Music and Technology in Northern India* (University of Chicago Press, 1993), the Bollywood film industry has a long history of borrowing and adapting music from the West.

⁷ Tina Chadha, “Mix This: Young South Asians’ Love-Hate Relationship with Hip-Hop’s New Indian Beats,” *The Village Voice* (2–8 July 2003): 48.

⁸ Raj Beri, e-mail interview with author, 8 September 2003.

⁹ In response to this criticism, I find it interesting that those charging cultural imperialism do not seem to consider the fact that those who stand accused do not fit the usual imperialist profile. On the contrary, they are African Americans, an historically oppressed group, “Othered” within the West.

¹⁰ Chris Fitzpatrick, “Boom Go the Bombs, Boom Goes the Bass,” Music Video Review, *Pop Matters* (11 June 2002), <popmatters.com/music/videos/t/truthhurts-addictive.shtml>; accessed 15 August 2003.

¹¹ Chand, interview with author.

¹² Nitasha Sharma, “Rotten Coconuts and Other Strange Fruit: A Slice of Hip Hop from the West Coast,” *SAMAR* 14 (2001): 30–32.

¹³ Quoted in Peta Cooper, “Raje Shwari: Making Waves in Western Music,” *DesiClub.com*, Music Features, n.d. (2003), <www.desiclub.com>; accessed 2 September 2003.

¹⁴ Quoted in Chadha.

Beyer (continued)

aspects of her musical self is evident in her music, in which the independent feminine and masculine lines together achieve the balance that Beyer sought in her own complicated identity.

—Melissa J. de Graaf
Brandeis University

Notes

¹ This project is supported by a grant from the Spencer Foundation for Education Research. The documents of the Composers’ Forum are the foundation for my dissertation *The New York Composers’ Forum, 1935–1940* (Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, in progress) which includes a narrative history as well as discussions of modernism, gender, race, ethnicity/orientalism, and vernacular musics, as expressed and reflected in the Forum.

² Quoted in Judith Tick, “Charles Ives and Gender Ideology,” *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship* (University of California Press, 1993), 85.

³ *ibid.*, 95.

⁴ Christine Battersby explores masculinity as a creative force in *Gender and Genius* (Indiana University Press, 1989). For a discussion of the feminization of mass culture, see Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Indiana University Press, 1986).

⁵ Larry Polansky and John Kennedy, “‘Total Eclipse’: The Music of Johanna Magdalena Beyer: An Introduction and Preliminary Annotated Checklist,” *The Musical Quarterly* 80/4 (1996): 719–798. In this groundbreaking article, Beyer’s music is indexed primarily by Kennedy (K) numbers. Thanks in part to Polansky’s pioneering work on Beyer, Frog Peak Press <www.frogpeak.org> has been actively publishing scores of Beyer’s music.

⁶ Polansky, “Total Eclipse,” 720.

⁷ Composers’ Forum Transcripts, 20 April 1938.

⁸ Composers’ Forum Transcripts, 29 April 1936.

⁹ Composers’ Forum Transcripts, 19 May 1937.

¹⁰ Olin Downes, *Olin Downes on Music: A Selection from His Writings during the Half-Century 1906 to 1955*, ed. Irene Downes (Simon and Schuster, 1957), 165.

¹¹ Francis Toye, *The Well-Tempered Musician: A Musical Point of View* (Methuen, 1925), 48–49.

¹² Herbert A. Leibowitz, “Introduction,” *Musical Impressions: Selections from Paul Rosenfeld’s Criticism* (Hill and Wang, 1969), xix–xx.

¹³ Taylor Aitken Greer, *A Question of Balance: Charles Seeger’s Philosophy of Music* (University of California Press, 1998), 119.

¹⁴ Judith Tick, *Ruth Crawford Seeger: A Composer’s Search for American Music* (Oxford University Press, 1997), 167.

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*John Cage, 1987
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