

# AMERICAN MUSIC REVIEW

The H. Wiley Hitchcock Institute for Studies in American Music

*Conservatory of Music, Brooklyn College of the City University of New York*

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## Institute News

By Jeff Taylor

With this issue *American Music Review* makes the plunge into cyberspace. It is an exciting time for both the Institute and our now forty-one-year-old publication. Naturally, kinks remain to be worked out, but the possibilities are remarkable: links to musical examples, embedded videos, various means of response by our readers, and much more. We aim to maintain a lively journal that joins scholarly weight with a style accessible to musicologists and enthusiasts alike, while taking full advantage of the century's almost daily advances in technology. And we remain committed to all our readers, whether iPad carriers or fans of pen and ink, and have made printout easy for those who prefer hard copy. We also welcome feedback at any time, whether posted on our Facebook page or sent through the USPS. Finally, we will maintain a small number of printed copies that, for a fee, we will be happy to send via snail-mail.

In addition to moving *AMR* online, we have continued to sponsor events here at Brooklyn College that fulfill our mission of promoting music-making in New York and the U.S. at large. Most important, we co-sponsored, with the Grammy Museum and the Woody Guthrie Archives, a centenary celebration of Guthrie's legacy and potent influence on American music. With **Will Kaufman's** 20 September performance-lecture on Guthrie's freedom songs as a preview, **A Woody Guthrie Centennial Celebration** on 22 September proved an unqualified hit. An enthusiastic standing-room only crowd took part in our day-long conference on Guthrie's life and music, with offerings by a variety of Guthrie scholars (including Sean Wilentz, whose keynote talk is included in this issue) and musicians-activists Judy Collins, Lorin Sklamberg and Billy Bragg. The music of the evening's "This Land Is Your Land" concert, sponsored by the Grammy Museum, ranged from old-time country music to blues to klezmer, with a ninety-three-year-old Pete Seeger leading the near-capacity crowd in spirited renditions of some of Guthrie's best-known songs.

Our Music in Polycultural America fall speaker series began on 9 October with a presentation by jazz scholar **Francesco Martinelli** who spoke of guitar genius Django Reinhardt, demonstrating how his musicianship inspired much of the European jazz scene in the 1930s and 40s. On 13 November, a concert by Brooklyn College's own **Conservatory Singers**, conducted by **James Bowyer**, presented spiritual and folk-song arrangements by a variety of American composers; both Bowyer and HISAM Director **Jeffrey Taylor** offered commentary on the works. On 19 November Brooklyn College faculty member **David Grubbs** discussed his interdisciplinary collaborations with visual artists Anthony McCall and Angela Bullock, focusing on recent installations that also double as single start-to-finish presentations. Look for video clips of some of our talks on our website, hopefully by the end of spring!

Finally, we welcome **Whitney George** as the Institute's new Graduate Assistant. An emerging composer and conductor, Whitney is pursuing a doctorate at the CUNY Graduate Center while quickly making a name for herself on New York's new music scene. We are fortunate to have found a talented artist and American music enthusiast who is also computer-savvy, and are delighted she will help guide us through the technological challenges of HISAM's next chapter.

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