

# 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

Jeffrey Taylor, CUNY Brooklyn College & Graduate Center

We are delighted to welcome **Elizabeth Keenan** as our Guest Editor for this special issue, devoted to women and popular music. Elizabeth completed her doctorate in ethnomusicology at Columbia University in 2008. She is writing her first book, *Popular Music, Cultural Politics, and the Third Wave Feminist Public*, which investigates cultural politics and identity-based movements in US popular music since 1990. She has published in *Women and Music*, the *Journal of Popular Music Studies*, and *Current Musicology*, has presented her research at a variety of conferences, and writes a regular column for the *Chronicle of Higher Education's* Vitae website, and teaches music history at Fordham University. Elizabeth was a guest of the Institute in spring 2011, when she delivered the talk "Riot Grrrl Is Dead. Long Live Riot Grrrl: Political Activism, Nostalgia, and Historiography." It has been a pleasure working with her on this important publication.

A highlight of our spring offerings was a special concert on 15 May, celebrating the Latin/Jewish connection in jazz. Our guests were clarinetist **Anat Cohen**, trombonist and euphonium player **Rafi Malkiel**, and pianist **Arturo O'Farrill**, with the Brooklyn College Big Band. The performance featured compositions and arrangements by O'Farrill, Malkiel, and others, and brought the enthusiastic Whitman Hall audience to its feet. The event was filmed by the College's Department of TV/Radio, to be broadcast on CUNY's cable TV channel. By the way, Professor O'Farrill will be joining the Conservatory of Music as a full-time faculty member and ISAM Associate this fall. More on that in our next issue!



*Rafi Malkiel, Anat Cohen, and Arturo O'Farrill  
in rehearsal with the Brooklyn College Big Band  
Photo by Jeffrey Taylor*

Our May jazz concert was preceded by a series of talks and lecture/performances that covered a wide variety of topics. In February, **Elizabeth Wollman** spoke on "Hair and the Gender Politics of Late-1960s Youth Culture" (see her contribution to the current issue). In April, "Singing the Gods: Songs of Devotion, Praise, and Invocation in Brooklyn" brought together Brooklyn-based artists from Brazil, Morocco, India and the Caribbean in a celebration of both the contrasts and commonalities in world sacred music traditions. And in May composer and saxophonist **Dan Blake** offered some thought-provoking ideas (gleaned largely from personal experience) about the process of improvisation in experimental music.

It was a busy term for the Institute, but our staff still continued to pursue personal research, composition, and performing projects. Graduate Fellow **Whitney George** guest-conducted the Low Brass Connection for a concert series in Germany and Holland titled "Sounds After the Oil War," premiering her new work for trombone choir "Carelessly Open, Something Unsaid, the Phone off the Hook." In May, she conducted her tenth consecutive concert with the Contemporary Music Ensemble of the CUNY Graduate Center titled "Exquisite Corpse" featuring new works by emerging New York women composers, in addition to selections from Gideon's "Sonnets from

## Institute News (cont.)

Shakespeare.” The coming year will see her at work on a variety of new commissions, as well as conducting additional performances of her works.

Besides performing the vocal solo in the Gideon piece mentioned above, Research Associate **Stephanie Jensen-Moulton** continued her work on American opera and disability this spring, with a lecture at Eastman School of Music on *Einstein on the Beach* (“Disability as Postmodernism”) and a presentation of her work on Jake Heggie’s opera *Moby-Dick* at the annual meeting of the Society for Disability Studies. This summer, she will speak on a panel about women composers associated with the Sylvia Milo’s play “The Other Mozart” here in New York City, an event organized by composer/sound designer Nathan Davis.

Director **Jeffrey Taylor** continues his research and writing on player pianos and popular music of the 1920s, as well as the music of Pharoah Sanders, and this past April was joined by HISAM Advisory Board member **Judith Tick** for a talk about Ella Fitzgerald and her arrangers, prior to a concert by the Smithsonian Masterworks Orchestra at the Brooklyn Center for the Performing Arts. Finally, congratulations to Senior Research Associate **Ray Allen**, who will begin a year-long sabbatical this fall during which he will continue work on his current book project tentatively titled *Jump Up: West Indian Carnival Music in Brooklyn*.