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Institute News

Jeffrey Taylor, Director

This term, the Institute's Music in Polycultural America series continued with talks that explored diverse locations and time periods. **Evan Rapport** of The New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music presented material related to his new book *Greeted With Smiles: Bukharian Jewish Music and Musicians in New York* (Oxford, 2014). **Jacob Cohen** introduced a packed house of Brooklyn College students, most of whom had never heard of the Talking Heads, to the seminal group in "Performing Race, Place, and Hybridity in the Music of the Talking Heads." And moving back to American music of the 19th century, **Jennifer CHJ Wilson** presented on the New Orleans French Opera Company's tours to New York from 1827 to 1833. Once again, a highlight of our spring was a jazz concert with a global theme, with our colleague **Arturo O'Farrill** and alto saxophonist and composer **Rudresh Mahanthappa** performing with the Brooklyn College Big Band to a large and enthusiastic crowd. As in past years, the concert was filmed by members of Brooklyn College's TV and Radio department, and will be shown on CUNY's cable station. In addition, excerpts will be available on our website.

Speaking of HISAM Research Associate **Arturo O'Farrill**, he began this year by winning a GRAMMY for *The Offense of the Drum* as Best Latin Jazz Album. Felix Contreras of NPR described the album as "one of those moments when the course of music with a long tradition is altered slightly — when music moves forward in a subtle and graceful way that's likely to have a lasting impact" (First Listen, 27 April 2014). During the term he headlined at several clubs in the US and abroad, gave master classes, premiered a commissioned ballet at the Joyce with Malpasso, a Cuban dance company, and participated in a panel discussion at the Smithsonian entitled "What Does It Mean To Be American?" O'Farrill has been awarded a Doris Duke "Explorations in Jazz" grant, and is currently performing and collaborating with artists in the Bronx. He also recently received an Outstanding Achievement in the Arts award from The City College Center for the Arts. Graduate Assistant **Whitney George** was chosen as a composer-in-residence for The Black House Collective in Kansas City, Missouri in March. She has been selected as a composer fellow for the 2015 Atlantic Music Festival and was a finalist for the Morton Gould Young Composers Award (for "Night, like velvet: in twelve letters"). Among her many musical activities she has been directing her ensemble The Curiosity Cabinet in a concert series examining the idea of correspondence through music, with support from the Baisley Powell Elebash Fund at the CUNY Graduate Center; she continues to be a prominent guest conductor of contemporary music in New York.



Arturo O'Farrill at the Grammys

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