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Institute News

As I write this installment of the Hitchcock Institute's News, my social media feeds are bursting with tributes: today is the fourth anniversary of the mass shooting at Pulse Nightclub in Florida; not one, but two memorial services are taking place for Brooklyn College faculty and staff taken too soon by COVID-19; and at the center of it all is the resurgence of antiracist activism following the murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police. As faculty and staff of a research institute that focuses on the ways American music reflects American culture, we have to take this moment to reflect upon our Institute's past complicity in a Euro-American music research agenda, and renew our commitment to work that reflects the complexity and diversity of our city, the students we teach, and the creative artists that surround us in America writ large. In contemplating these ideas, we at HISAM realized that we needed to write a mission statement that articulates the way forward for the Institute. We welcome the feedback of our readers on what follows:

The H. Wiley Hitchcock Institute for Studies in American Music at Brooklyn College (HISAM) supports American music scholarship, pedagogy, and performances. We recognize and seek to connect diverse local, national, and global musical practices across a broad spectrum of oral, popular, and art music traditions. We represent scholars, performers, and creators that reflect the racial, economic, and gender diversity of our students, faculty, community, and the world. Through our biannual publication, American Music Review, the Polycultural America Speaker Series, monographs, collection of oral histories, and forums for public musicology, the faculty and staff of HISAM seek to resist systems of oppression, acknowledge the privileges of whiteness, strive for social justice, and publicly promote antiracism.

In the same spirit of dismantling old narratives, this issue of *American Music Review* re-examines the concept of musical score through the work of six different artists and media, in a group of articles and works we dubbed "Scoring Madly." While European classical music traditions tend to rely heavily on a notated score, here the authors examine compositional and performance practices in American musics that either reimagine the nature of "score" (Lindsey Eckenroth on Sara Landeau; Michelle Yom on Cecil Taylor); utilize a hybrid of oral tradition and other scoring methods (Jeryl Johnston on her own work); or envision the production process that happens in the recording studio as a way of scoring (Will Fulton on First Priority hip hop in Brooklyn). Jordan Stokes' review of *Transmedia Directors* (Bloomsbury 2020) rounds out the issue by examining the connections between media scoring and directors' vision. We also invited composers to publish examples of work that represent music in ways that defy the concept of "score": Dominic Coles' *two places at the level of the voltage* and Dean Rosenthal's *Unconfirmed Report* each create a new system of meaning for performers, breaking out of the bars of traditional western notation.

During this extraordinary academic semester, the faculty and staff of the Hitchcock Institute have invigorated HISAM's social media campaign to reflect the Institute's rich history of scholarship on Black artists and queer artists. Beginning in Fall 2020, our social media will feature a series of video clips from Brooklyn-based musicians and composers, as well as archival audio from the HISAM files. To follow, find us on [Facebook](#), Instagram (@hisam_bc), and [Twitter](#).

Institute News (cont.)

HISAM Director **Jeff Taylor**'s sabbatical year has continued into Spring 2020. Though the pandemic cut short his research trips, he has been working at home on both his book on Earl Hines and Chicago and a study of the musical legacies of the player piano. In February, just before the curtain of COVID fell, he gave a talk at Carleton College on "Revisiting Jazz Biography." He continues to join a chorus of quarantined musical neighbors in frequent practice sessions. Managing Editor **Lindsey Eckenroth** had the pleasure of playing flute in two pieces on the inaugural [Ukrainian Contemporary Music Festival \(UCMF\)](#) back in February, one of which was conducted by Whitney George. Lindsey was all set to give a paper on the MC5 at this year's IASPM-US conference in Ann Arbor, but the world had other ideas. So, she looks

forward to presenting at the rescheduled conference next spring. HISAM Assistant **Whitney George** was commissioned by New Camerata Opera to write music for their film opera, *Julie*, in 2018–19. The opera was recorded in November/December 2019 with instrumental performances by The Curiosity Cabinet. Directed by Chloe Treat, the work was released in June 2020 (just in time to celebrate Pride). You can watch the entire opera [here](#).

Continuing in my role as Interim Director this spring, I brought together HISAM and the Brooklyn College Listening Project in an effort to connect our general education music courses with collecting Brooklyn Oral Histories. HISAMers Ray Allen, Lindsey Eckenroth, and Whitney George, as well as nine additional faculty and staff participated in the project, which resulted in the gathering of hundreds of Brooklyn College students' interviews with family, friends, and neighbors about a breadth of music experiences across the borough. Meanwhile, I managed to squeeze in visits to archives at San Francisco Opera and San Diego Opera before the COVID-19 lockdown in March, and speak at a virtual symposium on Music and Disability at McGill University in April.

I thank all of you for your continued support and readership of *American Music Review*. Please feel free to share your ideas and feedback on our mission statement and/or this Issue of *AMR* at hisam@brooklyn.cuny.edu.

In solidarity,
Stephanie Jensen-Moulton



HISAM meeting, remote style (May 2020)