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

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Institute News

Jeffrey Taylor, CUNY Graduate Center and Brooklyn College

In his first major policy address since his appointment as CUNY Chancellor, James B. Milliken recently claimed “a Global University” as a primary goal of his tenure. “Every major university must be global in outlook and scope,” he stated, “and few universities are better positioned than CUNY. We have an enormous advantage: a student body with forty percent born outside this country and students who speak almost 200 languages.” Not long ago The Society of American Music voted to include music from *all* the Americas under its purview, and here at the Institute we have considered more far-reaching ways in which HISAM can celebrate American music as a global phenomenon. American music has always had a worldwide scope, enriched by centuries of immigration and, now, almost limitless opportunities for rich cultural exchange across the globe. In the coming months and years we will work in our publications and programming to stress the global nature of the Institute’s mission, relying as we do on the immense diversity of CUNY as our most important resource.

We are particularly excited by the recent hire at Brooklyn College of Grammy-winning pianist, composer, and bandleader **Arturo O’Farrill**, and his new status as Research Associate at HISAM. Professor O’Farrill is perhaps best known for championing the jazz legacy of his father’s native Cuba, and recent easing of relations between that country and the United States promises a new chapter in the cultural interchange between the two nations. Yet, O’Farrill maintains wide interests in the global reach of jazz, as well the infusion of new ideas to the art from cultures throughout the world. These interests, shared by our Institute’s staff, were highlighted in our May 2014 concert devoted to the Latin/Jewish jazz connection, with Israeli-born musicians Anat Cohen and Rafi Malkiel. We look forward to many future events that celebrate the vigor of our “Global University,” as well as an evolving redefinition of American music at large as a truly international phenomenon.

In other news, this past September Institute Director **Jeffrey Taylor** joined a panel on “Rethinking Jazz Piano” at the *Jazz Beyond Borders* conference in Amsterdam, presenting work on the connections between early jazz piano and player piano rolls. Senior Research Associate **Ray Allen** read a paper at the November 2014 annual meeting of the Society for Ethnomusicology on his Brooklyn soca research. An expanded version of the piece appears in this issue. At the November 2014 national meeting of the American Musicological Society, Research Associate **Stephanie Jensen-Moulton** gave a paper entitled “American Opera and Disability: The Case of *Moby-Dick*,” which dealt with Jake Heggie’s 2010 opera. She continues her work on the forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Music and Disability Studies*. Graduate Assistant **Whitney George** pursued a busy schedule of composition and conducting, working with her own group The Curiosity Cabinet as well as a variety of New York ensembles. She was guest conductor at the Outreach Jazz Festival (Germany) for *Sounds After the Oil War* with soloist David Taylor, and in September named new Managing Director of New York’s American Modern Ensemble.