

Call for Proposals for a New Volume of Essays on Black Music in 21st Century Music Studies

THE BLACK MUSIC IMPERATIVE

The Coming Revolution in Music Studies

Ed Sarath, editor

I hope everyone is faring well and adapting smoothly to this very new time we have entered.

For those who are fortunate to be able to continue their teaching and research during this time, I am happy to invite submissions for a new volume of essays that I believe has the potential to be of considerable significance in the history of music studies.

Abstracts of no more than 750 words and a brief bio (150 words) are due by June 30, 2020, send to sarahara@umich.edu.

PURPOSE OF VOLUME

I envision *The Black Music Imperative* as fulfilling three basic functions:

First is to celebrate the massive achievements and contributions of African American musical culture and practice, with a particular eye to the powerful tools—creative, pedagogical, cultural, aesthetic, spiritual—this legacy offers to 21st century musical navigation and understanding.

Second is to critically interrogate the continued marginalization of black American music—not only in conventional music studies practice, but perhaps even more conspicuously, in the half-century-plus of change conversations in the field. Indeed, the fact that amid no dearth of appeals (dating at least back to the 1967 Tanglewood Declaration) for broadening music curricula's cultural horizons, black American music has factored minimally in reform deliberations suggests that racialized biases (including *white musical privilege*, *white musical fragility*) may constrain even music studies' most seemingly progressive circles to a greater extent than has been recognized. The time has come to identify and rectify these patterns, in so doing opening up new future gateways.

Third is to explore the ramifications of black American music, aesthetics and transformative visioning (eg. Afrofuturism, black experimentalism, Hip Hop in education initiatives, etc) for arts-based approaches to pressing issues in today's world. From social injustice and ecological crises to international tensions and conflict to the need for a spirituality that transcends (yet also includes) denominational boundaries, the creative and transformative dimensions of black American music may contribute significantly to healing and renewal in the world.

The volume, then, will unite artistry, scholarship and activism in attempts to usher in a new era of music studies change visioning with implications for education and society at large.

CONTEXT

The proposed book is inspired by the newly formed Alliance for the Transformation of Musical Academe (ATMA), which convened its inaugural gathering at the University of Dayton in September 2019. Among the outgrowths of the ATMA meeting was a *Declaration on the Foundational Importance of Black American Music* in music studies in America, a preliminary version of which can be found at <https://atma.jazzcosmos.com>

The word “Declaration” is significant in the history of music studies reform deliberations given important precursors—e.g. the 1967 Tanglewood Declaration, the 2000 Wainwright (Vision 2020) Declaration—which strongly advocated for diversification of the music curriculum but stopped notably short of recognizing the seminal place of black American music in this aim.

Here it might be noted that while the widely read 2014 College Music Society “Manifesto” makes modest mention of black American music in this light, this facet of the report typically eludes attention.

The *Black Music Imperative* volume may be thought of as the next stage in all this work, at once advancing a vision of unprecedented scope and also penetrating deep into the patterns that continue to constrain change deliberations;

POTENTIAL THEMES

Prospective authors are invited to consider submitting proposals (750 word maximum) that deal with one or more of the following themes or other topics of interest and relevance to the thrust of the book.

- Black American Music and 21st century artistic, educational and societal leadership
- Improvisation as new organizing principle for an emergent music studies paradigm.
- Race, black-white racial dynamics, and societal and musical ramifications thereof (white musical privilege, white musical fragility, etc).
- Gender and sexual identity dynamics in music studies and practice.
- Critique of the music studies change narrative (e.g. since at least Tanglewood) and why the diversity account that has been advanced by an Ethnomusicology/Music Education nexus (sometimes formal, sometimes not) has generally failed to significantly acknowledge, and may actually further impede, the place of black music in the curriculum and culture of the field.
- Black American music and the new curriculum: Private Instruction, Ensembles, Theory, Aural Skills, Rhythm, Embodiment, History, Critical Thinking, Self-organizing/student-centered pedagogy, aesthetics, cognition.
- Black American Music and global musicianship
- BAM and the future evolution of European classical music
- Critique of prevailing jazz education paradigm
- Black Aesthetics (and denial thereof, e.g. aesthetic-praxial divide in some music education philosophy circles, May Day Group, etc)
- White and black readings of Small’s “musicking”

- Multicultural, transcultural and other diversity paradigms
- Black American music and 21st century music teacher education/certification in America.
- Black American Music and the Incarceration crisis
- Black American music and transdisciplinary education
- Black American music and ecosustainability
- Black American music and peace
- Black American music and spirituality/consciousness. Examination of contemplative studies and consciousness studies movement vis a vis the arts and BAM.
- Absence of black musical voice in the change conversation.
- Raciolinguistics (e.g. headings such as Western art music that exclude BAM)

Again, proposals for chapters on other topics are welcome.

WHO SHOULD SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

The Call for Proposals is directed toward artists/scholars/pedagogues/activists who share the desire for a fundamentally new kind of change discourse that recognizes black American music as a resource for an unprecedented scope of musicianship for 21st century musicians, teachers and thinkers. The importance of uniting artistic and activist perspectives to move the conversation forward cannot be emphasized strongly enough. Among the encouraging aspects of the inaugural ATMA gathering in Dayton was the strong presence of leading real-world musical artists who, with important input from more commonly represented academic areas (pedagogy, scholarship), enabled richly nuanced consideration of entirely new curricular paradigms to take place that integrate conventional and new areas—including improvisation, composition, arranging, orchestration, performance, harmony, rhythm, aurality and embodiment to aesthetics, cognition and spirituality/mysticism. Proposals are welcome from colleagues who skillfully navigate this expanse, as well as those who directly and candidly grapple with issues of race and racism and gender and sexism.

In short, the volume seeks to take discourse on Artistry (and pedagogy and musical understanding) and Activism (including societal transformation) to new levels and invites proposals from individuals who resonate with these aims.

PROPOSALS DUE JUNE 30, 2020

Abstracts of no more than 750 words (please also include 150 words bio) are due by June 30, 2020 (the end of Black Music Month). These will be included as part of a package to be sent to prospective publishers, preliminary dialogues with several of whom are already in progress.

It will be helpful for prospective authors to send an email of intent at their earliest convenience to me at sarahara@umich.edu

SYMPOSIUM

A conference will be scheduled to follow publication. Colleagues who might be interested in hosting such an event at their institution, please also contact me.