

Music Research Fora - Semester 2, 2025-26

Research fora take place on **Thursday afternoons, 16.30-18.00 in G16** most weeks during teaching weeks. All are encouraged to attend, regardless of department, programme level, disciplinary focus or musical taste. Wine and soft drinks will be provided at 6pm and we invite you to stay afterwards and get to know one another (and our guests).

Our speakers represent some of the most exciting practitioners and scholars working in both music research and the music industry. Do please come along, and feed your inspiration.

Semester 2

Week 1: 5th February

No forum

Week 2: 12th February

From Sketch to Sound: One-day Colloquium on Editing and Transcribing Historical Musical Sources, 10am- 5pm (*registration essential via anne.hyland@manchester.ac.uk*)

Join us for an enriching academic exploration into the art of editing and transcribing historical musical sources. The day is structured around three workshops and a roundtable discussion on the relevance of historical sources to the discipline of music analysis.

Roundtable discussion at 4pm - *OPEN TO ALL*

Speakers:

Prof. Barry Cooper (University of Manchester)

Dr Anne Hyland (University of Manchester)

Prof. Nicholas Marston (University of Cambridge)

Prof. Thomas Schmidt (University of Manchester)

Followed by reception at 5pm

Week 3: 19th February

MusM Dissertation Poster Exhibition, Master's Musicology and Ethnomusicology Students

At this Thursday's seminar, G16 will be filled with research project posters created by the Music Department's Master's students in Musicology and Ethnomusicology. Come along to find out what the MusM students are working on for their dissertations and discuss their ideas with them so that they can fine tune their projects. With a wide range of diverse topics, the Dissertation Poster Exhibition promises to provide a good deal of variety and plenty of food for thought and discussion.

The exhibition will be of particular interest to UG students interested in pursuing the MusM pathways in musicology and ethnomusicology. All welcome!

Week 4: 26th February

The Music of the *Mashriq* and the Making of the Western Mediterranean in Colonial Morocco

Samuel Llano (University of Manchester)

This paper will begin by outlining my latest book, titled *The Empire of the Ear: Music, Race, and the Sonic Architecture of Colonial Morocco* (OUP, April 2026). Following this introduction, I will

present and discuss a shortened version of one of the book's chapters, titled "The Music of the *Mashriq* and the Making of the Western Mediterranean":

While Europe's influence in the Maghreb is significant, the study of music in colonial Morocco often overlooks the impact of cultural flows between the East and West, which have been equally influential in shaping the region's history. Historical accounts of Andalusí music, as found in the works of scholars from the Maghreb and Europe, consistently point to ninth-century Baghdad as one of the repertoire's main focal points. Additionally, the debates in colonial Morocco and the Maghreb regarding the modernising and controversial influence of *Sharqí* music (from the eastern Arab world) further highlight the complex dynamics shaped by East-West cultural exchanges. Intersecting with these debates, Spain's longstanding debates about the influence of Arab culture in medieval Iberia through al-Andalus, which permeated music scholarship, and France's utilisation of exotic portrayals of "Spain's" Muslim heritage, resulted in shifting and interconnected representations of the *Mashriq* – the eastern part of the Arab world.

To address scholarship's lack of attention to East-West musical flows in the Maghreb, this paper explores the intersecting and conflicting perceptions of the *Mashriq* that emerge from historical narratives of Andalusí music and discussions about the influence of contemporary *Sharqí* music in colonial Morocco. Further, it investigates whether the process of imagining the *Mashriq* and its music in Morocco, Spain and France fostered any forms of transnational solidarity, even within a context marked by colonial violence. Did these countries imagine the western Mediterranean as a cohesive and unified space? What was music's role in shaping these perceptions? In what ways did imaginations of the western Mediterranean shape the national identities, musical cultures, and relationships between these countries? In this inquiry, the western Mediterranean is not treated as a fixed identity or stable category, but rather serves as an analytical framework.

Week 5: 5th March

MUSICA forum

Week 6: 12th March

Ñandereko: an artistic research response to colonial misappropriation of songs of the Indigenous people of Northern Argentina.

This seminar, introduced and chaired by John Sloboda, Emeritus Professor, Guildhall School of Music & Drama, is directly linked to the premiere taking place earlier that day in the University's lunchtime concert series (<https://events.manchester.ac.uk/event/event:a1ac-misrsmft-ii0wor>). Panelists will respond from their particular perspectives to the performance and the broader issues it raises.

Ñandereko is a new dramatic cantata by Chilean composer Ramon Gorioitia which weaves Indigenous songs from the Ava Guarani people of Northern Argentina into a contemporary sonic landscape, telling the story of the extraction of these songs under conditions of duress by a German anthropologist, Robert Lehmann Nitsche, in 1905. The singers were being held in bonded labour on a sugar plantation, La Esperanza, in the Jujuy province that was owned and managed by British industrialists from Rochdale, the Leach Brothers. Lehmann Nitsche recorded the songs on wax cylinders (an early recording device) and brought them to Berlin, where they remain in the Berliner Phonogramm-Archiv of the Humboldt Forum.

Panellists

Dr Alexandra P. Alberda (federally enrolled member of the Jemez of Pueblo; White), Curator of Indigenous Perspectives & Senior Curator - Humanities, Manchester Museum, The University of Manchester

Caroline Bithell, Professor of Ethnomusicology, University of Manchester.

Ramon Gorigoitia, Composer, Ñandereko, Cologne, Germany.

Jon P Mitchell, Emeritus Professor of Social Anthropology, University of Sussex, and Chair of the Esperanza Trust for Anthropological Research.

Rafael Montero, Project originator and lead singer, Ñandereko, London and Cologne

David Stirrup, Professor of English and related literature, and director of the Centre for Indigenous and Settler Colonial Studies, University of York.

[Panellist presentations will be video-recorded, but not the open Q&A and discussion which follows]

Week 7: 19th March

PhD students' conference-style panel

Week 8: 26th March

The Guitar as a Point of Contact: Composing for the Guitar and Electronics

Marc Estibeiro (Composer and Visiting Fellow at The University of Staffordshire)

As a composer with a long-standing interest in both acousmatic music and traditional acoustic instruments and their performance practices, I have become increasingly drawn to mixed works that bring these two seemingly disparate sound worlds together in ways that are both aesthetically satisfying and artistically coherent. Although I have written for a range of instruments with electronics, in recent years my focus has shifted towards my own instrument, the classical guitar.

For me, the classical guitar is an unusually intimate, fragile, and exposed instrument, and perhaps the most resolutely “acoustic” of the Western classical tradition. Placing it convincingly within an electroacoustic context presents a set of non-trivial artistic and technical challenges. To date, I have written two works for classical guitar and electronics: *Latent* (initially conceived as a lockdown collaboration with David Cotter), performed at the International Computer Music Conference in Shenzhen in 2023, and *A World After Death*, performed at SEAMUS 2025 at Purdue University, USA.

In this talk, I will discuss these works and outline my approach to composing for the guitar in an electroacoustic context. I will explore the boundary between the physical presence of the acoustic instrument and the relative intangibility and abstraction of the electronic part. This will include an overview of my use of the SuperCollider programming language, in which live input from the guitar forms the primary source material for the electronics, as well as a discussion of my experiments with pitch-tracking algorithms that allow the performer a degree of control over the electronic processes.

More broadly, I aim to show how these works attempt to reconcile and unite the contrasting traditions and performance practices associated with note-based instrumental music and texture-based acousmatic music, using the guitar as a point of contact between the two.