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RESEARCH CENTER FOR MUSIC ICONOGRAPHY

SOUNDS OF PREHISTORY AND ANTIQUITY

FOURTEENTH CONFERENCE OF
THE RESEARCH CENTER FOR MUSIC ICONOGRAPHY

New York City

24 May 2017

THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, THE GRADUATE CENTER



RESEARCH CENTER FOR MUSIC ICONOGRAPHY

City University of New York, The Graduate Center

Conference organized and program edited by
ZDRAVKO BLAŽEKOVIĆ and RUPERT TILL

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The City University of New York
The Graduate Center
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Barry S. Brook Center for Music Research and Documentation
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zblazekovic@gc.cuny.edu
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SOUNDS OF PREHISTORY AND ANTIQUITY

WEDNESDAY, 24 MAY 2017

Chair: Rupert TILL

10:00–11:00

Stef CONNER (The University of Huddersfield),
*Deciphering the World's Oldest Musical Notation: A
Performer's Perspective*

Heidi KÖPP-JUNK (Universität Trier), *The Earliest Music
in Ancient Egypt (Predynastic and Early Dynastic Period
and the Beginning of the Old Kingdom)*

Break

Chair: Heidi KÖPP-JUNK

11:30–12:30

FANG Xueyang (The University of Huddersfield), *A
Study on Research Methodologies Relating to Lithophones*

Günay KOCHAN-FLOWER (İstanbul Teknik
Üniversitesi), *A Brief Look at the Role of Sound in State
and Local Cult Festivals in Hittite Anatolia*

Chair: Günay KOCHAN-FLOWER

2:30–3:30

Leah STUTTARD (The University of Huddersfield), *The
15th-Century Harp: Approaches to Documents, Scores and
Instrument*

Daniel SÁNCHEZ-MUÑOZ (Universidad de Granada),
*The Sound of Mesopotamian Aerophones through the
Sumerian Texts*

Break

Chair: Zdravko BLAŽEKOVIĆ

4:00–5:00

Jorge BOEHRINGER (The University of Huddersfield),
*The Cup and Ring Marks on Rombalds Moor as Conceptual
Point of Intersection*

Rupert TILL (The University of Huddersfield), *The
Acoustic Ecology of Sculptor's Cave: Musical Responses to
Pictish Iconography in Scotland*

MUSICAL PROGRAM

Jorge BOEHRINGER

Two Bowls

electronic tones, percussion

The silent heritage of the music of prehistory is the collective property of everyone living. Experimentation within this imaginary “archive” can serve to inform our options for music making in the context of the now. *Two Bowls* (2017) represents a re-imagining of what Stone Age music in Yorkshire might have been, filtered through a contemporary cybernetic ear. *Two Bowls* is part of an ongoing series of pieces for percussion and electronics in which highly repetitive percussive activity is shadowed or foreshadowed by an electronic double whose tuning is related to key resonances within the percussion instruments themselves. The electronic sounds that are used lend an ambiguous ground to the piece, and seem as if they are composed of one, two, or more sounds. Meanwhile, percussive particles both blend and resist one another, articulating slightly individual trajectories time, at rates determined in relation to the electronic tones.

JORGE BOEHRINGER is a composer, sound artist, performer, writer and educator. His work explores interactions between process, form, and perception. Utilizing a protean platform for experimentation and presentation, Boehringer creates works that take the form of installations, performances, recordings, texts, three-dimensional objects, and visual phenomena. Often modeled after environmental processes and structures, Boehringer’s work offers an experience of reality presented as a textural field. “Multiple systems of events, appearing and disappearing, and evolving at their own rates... apprehended from a single point of attention to immersion in the multiplicity, and back.”

Heidi Köpp-Junk
Ancient Egyptian Love Songs

Beginning of the Sayings of Great Happiness

Papyrus Chester Beatty I verso, C 1-5, 20th Dynasty, Thebes, Deir el-Medina

Travel to Memphis

Papyrus Harris 500, recto 1, 1-4, early 19th Dynasty, Thebes, Ramesseum

The Songs of the Birdcatcher's Daughter

Papyrus Harris 500 recto 4, 1-6, 2, early 19th Dynasty, Thebes, Ramesseum

Three Wishes

pChester Beatty I verso, G 2, 20th Dynasty, Thebes, Deir el-Medina

Nakhtsobek's Verses

pChester Beatty I Group C: nos. 41-42 recto 16, 9-17, 3

A compilation of ancient Egypt love songs from the time of Pharaoh Ramesses the Great and Queen Nefertari in translation and in Old Egyptian, accompanied on a replica of an Egyptian lute from the time of Tutankhamun. The love songs represent a special genre within the ancient Egyptian literature. More than fifty of them are known. There is an accumulation of evidence for love poems or songs in the nineteenth and twentieth dynasties. Most of the texts were found in Thebes, particularly in Deir el-Medina.

HEIDI KÖPP-JUNK is Associate Professor of Egyptology, University of Trier, and renowned international opera singer and chanteuse. She writes academic books and articles on various topics and has worked on excavations in Germany and Egypt (Abydos, Elephantine, Sakkara, Buto, Dahshur, Athribis, Qantir) for the German Archaeological Institute Cairo and other organizations. As a classical trained singer (reaching more than three octaves) she has released five CDs as a solo artist with cover songs and own compositions from classic, chanson and pop.

Stef CONNER
Early Words to Late Music

Invocation of the Muse

Words and music: Mesomedes of Crete, second century CE; arr. S Conner
Edition: M L West, *Ancient Greek Music* (Oxford, 1992)

*Áeide Moúsá moi philē
molpēs d'emēs katárchou;
aúre dé sôn ap'alséōn
emás phrénas doneitō.*

Sing to me dear Muse
begin my tuneful melody;
let a breeze come forth from your groves,
to make my soul tremble.

*Kaliópeia sophá, Mousōn
prokathāgēti terpnōn,
kai sophē mystodótā, Lātoús
góne, Délie Paián,
eumeneís párestémoi.*

Oh wise Calliope who directs the gracious
muses
and you whose wisdom initiates the mysteries,
Son of Latona, Delian, Paean,
help me with your favor.

Balbale to Nanshe

Words: Sumerian, late third to early second millennium BCE
Text and translation (adapted) from: *Oxford Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (ETCSL): 4.14.2*
Music: Stef Conner, Andy Lowings

*ku ġidru šu-na na-muun-ġal me
ku e-sir ġiri-na na-muun-sig me
ku izi ab-šag-ga na-muun-zalag-ge me
ku sur-re mu-naab-du-am
ku gud-de gu nun mu-naab-be
ku tug-ba šag-ge nam-miin-la*

*kaš-kaš-e kaš mu-naab-kar-re
gur-gur-e ab mu-naab-gur-gur
ġir-e ab mu-naab-ġir-re
agargara zar-reeš muun-du-du
ku ab-ba mu-naab-mu-mu
ku sim mu-naab-dal-dal-le-ne
ga-šaan-ġen ma-gur-še daan-u mee ġe-še daan-u
ma si-bi daan-u mee ġe-še daan-u
a-sumur-bi kug-sig šim erin-da
ab-ba ša-mu-naab-ġir-ġir-re-dam
ġiš-hum-bi iti giri-zal-am
ab-ba ša-mu-naab-dadag-ge
muud-na-ġu muun-kud ab-ba-ka
u-muun-dar-a muun-kud ab-ba-ka*

A fish is held in her hand as a staff
Fishes are put on her feet as sandals
Fishes light up the interior of the sea like fires
Fishes play music for her like high priests.
Fishes call out loudly for her like oxen.
She has fish wrapped around her body as a regal
garment.
The runner-fish hastens to her.
The surge-fish makes the sea swell up for her.
The flash-fish makes the sea sparkle for her.
She heaps up fish spawn so that
fish will grow for her in the sea.
Fishes fly around for her like swallows.
"I, the lady, will ride on my boat, I will ride home.
I will ride on the prow of the boat, I will ride home."
Its canopy of gold and fragrant cedarwood
sparkles for her on the sea.
Its cabin shines for her
like rejoicing moonlight on the sea.
"My husband is the tax collector of the sea,
Nindara is the tax collector of the sea."

The Flood

Words: Babylonian, first millennium BCE

Text and translation: SOAS Babylonian and Assyrian Poetry and Literature Archive of Recordings, ed. by Martin Worthington

Music: Stef Conner, Andy Lowings

*mimmu šēri ina namāri
īlamma ištu išid šamē urpatum salimtum
adad in libbiša irtammamma*

At the very first light of dawn
A black cloud came up from the horizon
And within it, Adad bellowed continually.

*šullat u haniš illakū ina mahri
illakū guzalū šadū u mātum
tarkullī erragal inassah
illak ninurta mihrī ušardi
anunnaki iššū dipārāti
ina namrirrišu hammatū mātum
ša adad šuharrassu (iba''u šamê)
([mi]mma namru) an etuti uttirru*

Šullat and Haniš were going at the fore,
Throne-bearers travelling mountain and land.
Erragal was ripping out the mooring poles;
Ninurta, as he went, made the weirs overflow.
The Anunnaki bore torches aloft,
Setting the land aglow with their brilliance.
The calm of the storm god passed across the sky
And all that was bright was turned into gloom.

*Rigi mati kim karpati ihpu
Išten umu mehu it bama
hantiš izi qamma
kima qabli eli niši ba u*

The wide land lies like a broken urn.
One whole day the south storm blew
Gathering speed as it went;
Like a battle the cataclysm passed over the people.

*ul immar ahu ahāšu
ul ūtaddā niše ina šamê
illani lahū abūbamma
ittehsū itelū ana šamê ša anim
illani kima kalbi kunnunū
išassi ištar kima ālitti ālitti
unambi bēlet-ili tābat rigma
ūmu ullū ana tittii l'itūrma
anāki in i[lāni] aqbū limutti
kī aqbi in puhur i[lāni] limuttu
ana hulluq nišeya qabla aqbīma
anākumma ulladā nišū'yama
kī māre nūni umallā tāmtamma
illani anunnakī bakū ittiša*

One person could not see,
Nor recognise, another in the destruction.
Even the gods took fright at the Deluge!
They withdrew to the heaven of Anu.
Curled up in fear like dogs,
The goddess Ishtar, screaming like a woman in childbirth,
Bēlet-ili, the sweet-voiced, wailed aloud:
"Indeed the past has truly turned to clay,
Because I spoke evil in the assembly of the gods.
How did I speak evil in the assembly of the gods,
And declare a war to destroy my people?
It is I that gave birth to them - my own people!
Now like so many fish they fill the sea."
The gods, the Anunnaki, were weeping with her

Seikilos Epitaph

Words and music: Anonymous, approximately first century CE

Edition: M L West, *Ancient Greek Music* (Oxford, 1992)

*Hóson zēis phainou
mēdén hólōs sy lypoû
pros olígon estí to zēn
to télos ho chrónos apaiteî.*

While you live, shine
Don't be in the least bit sad
life exists only for an instant
and time demands an ending

Ishtar's Descent to the Netherworld

Words: Babylonian, first millennium BCE

Text and translation: SOAS Babylonian and Assyrian Poetry and Literature Archive of Recordings,
ed. by Martin Worthington

Music: Stef Conner

*ana kurnugi qaqqari lā târi
ištār mārat sîn uzunša iškun*

To the netherworld, land of no return,
Ištar, daughter of Sîn, set her mind.

*iškun-ma mārat sîn uzunša
ana bitī etê šubat irkalla
ana bitī ša ēribūšu lā asū
ana harrāni ša alaktaša lā tayyārat
ana bitī ša āšibūšu zummū nūra*

The daughter of Sîn did set her mind
to the gloomy house, the seat of the netherworld
to the house that none leaves who enters,
to the road whose journey has no return,
to the house whose entrants are bereft of light,

*ašar epru bubūssunu akalšunu tittu
nūra ul immarū ina etūti ašbū
labšū-ma kīma issūri subāt gappi
eli dalti u sikkūri šabuh ... epru*

where dust is their sustenance; clay their food.
They see no light and dwell in darkness,
they are clothed like birds in wings for garments,
and dust has gathered on the door and the bolt.

*ana kurnugi qaqqari lā târi
ištār mārat sîn uzunša iškun*

To the netherworld, land of no return,
Ištar, daughter of Sîn, set her mind.

*ištār ana bāb kurnugi ina kašādīša
ana atu bābi anātum izzakkar
atū mē petā bābka
petā bābka-ma lūruba anāku
šumma lā tapattā bābu lā erruba anāku
amahhas daltum sikkūru ašabbir
amahhas sippū-ma ušbalakkat dalāti
ašabbir gišrinam-ma ašahhat karra
ušellā mītūti ikkalū bal tūti
eli baltūti ima''idū mītūti*

When Ištar reached the gate of the netherworld,
she said these words to the gatekeeper:
"O gatekeeper! Open your gate for me,
open your gate, that I may enter!"
"If you do not open the gate, that I may enter,
I will break down the door, I will smash the bolt,
I will break down the frame,
I will topple the doors.
I will tear off the knob.
I will raise up the dead so that they devour the
living, and the dead will outnumber the living."

*ana kurnugi qaqqari lā târi
ištār mārat sîn uzunša iškun*

To the netherworld, land of no return,
Ištar, daughter of Sîn, set her mind.

Composer and vocalist STEF CONNER conjures an ethereal contemporary vocal sound-world from her exploration of ancient Greek music and Mesopotamian texts. Although rooted in the classical tradition, her musical language is distorted into something utterly different through the vivid palette of sounds that have been absorbed into her style, from medieval chant, English folk song and Anglo-Saxon poetry to Spectralism, experimental music and post-tonal harmony. A former member of the Mercury Prize-nominated folk band the Unthanks and Royal Philharmonic Society Prize-winning composer, she comfortably inhabits the borderlands between the classical and traditional worlds, composing music that is infused with history but still refreshingly imaginative.

SOUNDS OF PREHISTORY AND HISTORY

ABSTRACTS OF PAPERS

Jorge BOEHRINGER (The University of Huddersfield), *The Cup and Ring Marks on Rombalds Moor as Conceptual Point of Intersection*.

Whatever the reason for their existence, the cup and ring marks that dot the landscape bordering the West Yorkshire spa town of Ilkley certainly produced a sound as they were cut into the millstone grit 4,000 years ago during the Neolithic Bronze Age.

This paper surveys some of the existing research into the construction of these markings with an added inquiry into what the sound of their making might have been. Further, it discusses the idea that sounds associated with the construction of these iconic reliefs may have been at least part of the reason for their existence.

Repetitive pulsating sound exists at a nexus between the physical realm, and more ephemeral territories of idea. Mnemonic devices in language, repetition and pulse in music, trance-based spiritual practices, and self-reference within Conceptual Art suggest the use of repetitive sound as aid of access to liminal states of consciousness. That such activity could have characterized the cutting of the sandstone sheets of Ilkley Moor into the distinctively repetitive circular forms found there will be discussed. Further, that the incised cups forming the center of some of these markings could be struck with an open palm to produce a resonant slap is notable: process and finished relief could be imagined as a process interweaving sound production and repetitive action to drive the attainment of trance states.

The cup and saucer marks suggest to be possible tracteries of purposeful artistic sound production. They occupy an intersection between artifact as record of action, linguistic icon, and musical score. This will also be considered in relation to recent works I have developed using percussion instruments to produce repetitive pulse-based music proportional to the natural resonance of the materials involved, to interesting phenomenological effect.

jorge.naught@gmail.com

Stef CONNER (The University of Huddersfield), *Deciphering the World's Oldest Musical Notation: A Performer's Perspective*.

The Hurrian Songs, a collection of cuneiform tablets excavated from the ancient city of Ugarit (approx. 1400 BC), are generally agreed to provide the earliest known example of musical

notation. Most of these tablets are fragmentary, but one specimen, known as h.6 or the "Hymn to Nikkal", is complete enough to have yielded several detailed musical restorations, which differ so substantially that they sound like completely unrelated compositions. These musical differences arise from the difficulty of translating the small number of Akkadian and Sumerian musical terms found not only on h.6 but also in other music-related Mesopotamian texts (most of which either deal with tuning theory or catalogue musical terms and song titles). Musically significant conclusions, such as whether scales referred to in music theory texts ascend or descend and what type of instrument a particular name refers to, are very difficult (in some cases impossible) to draw from the cuneiform texts alone. Observations based on contemporaneous iconography have been illuminating, as have comparisons with ancient Greek music, but in the absence of new evidence, enough discrepancies persist to prevent a definitive musical transcription being made, on the basis historical sources alone. Although some scholars who have translated and transcribed the tablet in question have either performed their work or called on other musicians to do so, no performer has dealt with the corpus of h.6 restorations as a whole.

In this presentation, I will discuss the published restorations, demonstrating through performance the musical manifestations of the authors' subtly divergent translations of particular words and/or interpretations of certain theoretical concepts. I will also propose that singing and playing these conflicting restorations has allowed me, and will thus allow other performers and scholars, to develop an informed practical and experiential perspective on the subject that could yield valuable new insights.

stefconner@googlemail.com

FANG Xueyang (The University of Huddersfield), *A Study on Research Methodologies Relating to Lithophones*.

There is no unique or standard terminology for describing and discussing stone-made instruments. For instance, scholars have used rock gongs, sonorous stones, stone bells, lithophones, chime stones, and so forth. According to Cajsa S. Lund, this sort of instrument should be named "ringing stones" as an overall term.

Research methods and techniques on lithophones include modeling, reconstruction, analysis and fieldwork. There are also

subtle differences between the approaches of Western and Eastern scholars. Some tend to use bar charts, forms, pie charts and histograms which adopt data from tone measurements and other experiments, analyzing their sound properties, acoustics and soundscapes by using sound technology, and exploring statistical distributions. Others conduct their research by using digital models to reconstruct sound spaces in ancient times as well as making replications. In China, researchers focus on depicting shape and typology as well as the statistical approaches that I have mentioned above, and field work has taken an important role in music archaeological research. For example, Li Chunyi contributes a classification system for lithophones (Chinese character *qing*) based on extensive field work and investigation.

In this paper, I will discuss relevant issues of terminology of stone-made idiophone instruments, and focus my study on combining research methodologies and techniques that have been utilized by scholars around the world. Furthermore, I will illustrate this new methodology in relation to a case study focused on Chinese chime stones that have been excavated from sites and tombs dating from the Neolithic age to the Han Dynasty (ca. 2500 BC–CA 220).

xueyang.fang@hud.ac.uk

Günay KOCHAN-FLOWER (İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi), *A Brief Look at the Role of Sound in State and Local Cult Festivals in Hittite Anatolia*.

Drawing upon iconographic and literary sources, which are mainly in official character, an exploration of sonic textures of festivals, daily rituals, and cultic ceremonies in Hittite Anatolia, can be possible. In state festivals, the king, who serves as the main priest, comes to the temple in a procession with the accompaniment of musicians, dancers and acrobats. In some cases, the statue of a god is carried out to special locations like mountains, springs, and rivers. Some festivals include theatrical performances and athletic contests, and music accompanies these performances. Local cult traditions had much in common with the state cult. A typical festival contained animal sacrifice, libation, offering food and drinks to the god being celebrated, a festival meal (“cultic feast”) and entertainment with music, dance and acrobatics. As all of the texts were written by officials, state cult and local cult practices seem very similar in the texts. Though, we may assume that the public attendance of the local festivities and rituals could be more active. Local festivals held in the open air would include acrobats, dancers and musicians. One of the visual examples of a local festival can be seen on a vase found in Hriseyindede, which was a local cultic center in the north of central Anatolia, which is close to Hittite capital city Bofazkoy. On the other hand, a depiction on a libation cup, which is dated to Hittite Imperial Period (1450–1200 BC), can be seen as a representation of the state cult, because, on this depiction the emperor offers a libation to the Storm God as a service and musicians come just after him. I will present my analysis by examining these two music iconographic sources, with the help of Christopher Small’s “musicking” concept.

kochangunay@gmail.com

Heidi KÖPP-JUNK (Universität Trier), *The Earliest Music in Ancient Egypt (Predynastic and Early Dynastic Period and the Beginning of the Old Kingdom)*.

In the Old Kingdom, the time of the pyramids, a great number of textual and iconographic documents refer to music and musicians. The lecture presents the earliest evidence for music in ancient Egypt, dating to the previous periods. While rattles are attested about 5000 BC and clappers in the fourth millennium, other idiophones like the sistrum appear much later. The same applies for membranophones. Referring to aerophones, the oldest flute dates to the fourth millennium BC. Chordophones are not attested in Predynastic and Early Dynastic Times, the earliest iconographic and textual evidence for harps date to about 2600 BC. Hands clapping at different parts of the body or with both hands together were used much earlier, as well as the use of the voice, be it for singing or reciting. In this early periods music is not only restricted to funeral contexts as the royal tombs of the first Dynasty, but appear in religious settings as well.

koep@uni-trier.de

Daniel SÁNCHEZ-MUÑOZ (Universidad de Granada), *The Sound of Mesopotamian Aerophones through the Sumerian Texts*.

Researchers of ancient Mesopotamian music have been interested above all in chordophones and percussions. Certainly, we have few contributions about Mesopotamian aerophones. In this communication, we will try to reflect on one of the most complicated things about Mesopotamian aerophones: their sound. For that objective we will do an overview about the different aspects of Mesopotamian aerophones in the Sumerian texts. Specially, we will examine this sentence from the hymn *Šulgi B*: “I do not make the reed pipe sound like a rustic pipe” (gi-di gi sipad-gin₇ nu-um-me). What was the sound of this “rustic pipe”? The analysis of the term “sipad” offers a very rich debate which places us in the origin, for instance, of the polemic character of the aerophones and their sound in Classical antiquity, therefore, in the beginnings of our culture.

emperadoroldenberguen@gmail.com

Leah STUTTARD (The University of Huddersfield), *The 15th-Century Harp: Approaches to Documents, Scores and Instrument*.

What does a reconstructed instrument tell us about a historic sound world? This paper explores how researchers focused on historically informed musical performance use a range of sources to construct a performance. This involves the conjunction of evidence from archival and iconographic sources, as well as from notated music. It will explore the Robert ap Huw manuscript, which can itself be treated as an iconographic work, and which is a key source for scholars of early harp performance practice. I will explore how my own performance practice is shaped by all these sources through my instrument, using a number of illustrative musical examples.

leah.stuttard@hud.ac.uk

Rupert TILL (The University of Huddersfield), *The Acoustic Ecology of Sculptor's Cave: Musical Responses to Pictish Iconography in Scotland*.

Sculptor's Cave was a significant site both to the Picts of ancient Scotland and in the Roman influenced culture that followed. Positioned close by the sea, archaeologists have found here a dizzying array of human bones, ritual offerings, arrangements of objects, and carvings in the rock face, suggestive iconography that tells us something of the sacred activities that took place here in the past. The acoustic ecology at the entrance of the cave where this engraved art is sited mixes the environmental sounds of waves and seabirds, with the womblike acoustic enve-

lopment of the cave interior. This project eschews the Cartesian duality of Descartes, removing from a focus on objects, archaeological finds and rock art on cave wall surfaces, towards an experience of the space and place. Acoustics are dependent on both a sound stimulus and a listener for their existence, and making these signs would have been a sonic as much as visual activity. In a phenomenological examination, this project uses music and sound art to ecologically afford an experiential exploration of the iconographic meanings of being at the liminal boundaries at the entrance to Sculptor's Cave.

r.till@hud.ac.uk

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THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK, THE GRADUATE CENTER
365 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016-4309
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