Call for Papers

Feminist Theory and Music (FT&M) 17 on the theme of “Urgency”

Conference Dates: June 20-22, 2024

Location: University of Michigan @ Ann Arbor

We acknowledge that the University of Michigan resides on the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary lands of the Anishinaabeg – The Three Fire Confederacy of the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations, as well as the Wyandot Nation.

Abstract Submission Date:

All proposals should be submitted on or before 11:59 p.m. (EDT) on November 30, 2023 to: kjfourni@umich.edu

Conference Theme:

Now in its third decade, the Feminist Theory & Music Conference highlights work at the intersections of gender, sexuality, and music. Building on the previous conference’s theme of “Connections,” the 2024 conference seeks to leverage those relationships and connections to interrogate questions of urgency. “Urgency” here can refer to the immediacy of our contemporary political and historical moment, and our need to respond thoughtfully but without hesitation. We also use “urgency” to evoke the false sense of immediacy often imposed within institutions—such as the neoliberal university—that demands so much of our time and labor. We imagine this gathering as a space to come together to amplify issues of urgency across our various home
disciplines. We hope that this conference theme will offer pathways out of the isolation that many minoritized scholars can feel as we struggle with urgency on our campuses, in our positions, in our daily lives, our communities, and practice and research. The conference will feature a keynote address by Dr. Nancy Rao, author of *Chinatown Opera Theater in North America* (Illinois University Press, 2017), and an afternoon concert with pianist Ellen Rowe drawing on her recent project, “Momentum: Portraits of Women in Motion” (2019). Please find more information about both of these guests and the end of this call for submissions.

The program committee welcomes proposals for presentations that explore topics that include (but are not limited to):

- Music related to the urgency of the current political moment, nationally and globally;
- Increasing anti-LGBTQ, especially anti-trans, legislation and musical responses;
- Threats to bodily autonomy and reproductive justice in a post-Roe v. Wade U.S;
- Antiracism, Black Lives Matter, and accompanying movements
- Recent Supreme Court rulings on Affirmative Action and the future of higher education;
- Employing feminist theories in music in the classroom, research, communities, and institutions;
- Music and expressions of toxic masculinity, Trumpism, and their alternatives;
- Academic and other labor movements as feminist movements;
- Locally-grounded topics of music, activism, and history pertinent to the Ann Arbor or Metro Detroit area; and,
- Reaching across borders, building bridges, finding commonalities, and honoring differences.

**Proposal Guidelines:**

We invite submissions from artists, activists, and scholars at any stage of their careers, including undergraduate and graduate students, and especially encourage submissions from people working outside of the academy. We welcome proposals for a range of presentation formats, including (but not limited to):

- Individual Papers (20 minutes)
  - 250-word abstract
- Themed Panels of Papers (90 to 120 minutes)
Keynote Speaker: Nancy Rao (Rutgers University)

Nancy Yunhwa Rao is a Distinguished Professor at Mason Gross School of the Arts. Her work bridges musicology, music theory, Chinese opera, and Sinophone studies. As a theorist, Rao’s work combines gender studies and music analysis. Her 2007 article “Ruth Crawford’s Imprint on Contemporary Composition” received the Lowens Article Award from the Society for American Music. She is also the author of Chinatown Opera Theater in North America (University of Illinois Press, 2017). The book, which unfolds from an easily neglected piece of lyrics into extraordinary stories of the Chinese community, has been recognized with awards from four scholarly societies (AMS, SAM, AAAS, ARSC). A Chinese translation of the book was published in 2021. She has also published work on the use of musical gestures, singing, and percussion patterns of Beijing opera in contemporary music by composers of Chinese origin. She currently works on the analysis of materiality and timbre in contemporary music. Her new book, Chinese Theater in California and Beyond: 1850-1900, is forthcoming and will be published by the University of Illinois Press. Additionally, Rao is the editor-in-chief of American Music.

Conference Concert: “Momentum - Portraits of Women in Motion” by the Ellen Rowe Octet

“Momentum – Portraits of Women In Motion” is an album project that was released in 2019. Each piece is a tribute to, and musical portrait, of women heroes of Rowe’s in the areas of music, sports, social justice, environmental advocacy, and politics. The pieces are orchestrated for varying sizes of chamber jazz ensemble, ranging from quintet to octet. In addition to having recorded a CD, Rowe tours with her ensemble of nationally

- 250-word abstract plus ~150-word abstracts from each proposed participant
- Performances or Lecture-Demonstrations (45 minutes)
  - 250-word abstract
- Workshops (45 or 90 minutes)
  - 250-word abstracts
- Roundtable Conversations (90 minutes)
  - 250-word roundtable abstract plus ~150-word abstracts from each proposed participant
- Seminars with Pre-Conference Circulation of Materials (90 minutes)
  - 250-word seminar abstract
recognized female jazz artists with the goal of performing the music with younger women jazz students, giving them the opportunity to play with my band and get mentored by the professional musicians. The Ellen Rowe Octet also hosts discussion groups devoted to issues of gender and sexuality in order to foster dialogue and empower young women. Some of the women included in the portraits include Mary Lou Williams and Geri Allen, Billie Jean King and Martina Navratilova, unsung black female heroines of the civil rights movement like Fannie Lou Hamer and Mary McLeod Bethune, singer/songwriters Joni Mitchell, Carly Simon and Carole King, Michelle Obama, animal rights and environmental advocates Dian Fossey and Jane Goodall and long distance runners Joan Benoit Samuelson, Gunhilde Swanson and Meghan Canfield Laws. Musicians involved in the project include trumpeters Ingrid Jensen and Tanya Darby, saxophonists Virginia Mayhew, Kaleigh Wilder, Lisa Parrott and Tia Fuller, trombonists Melissa Gardiner and Jen Krupa, bassist Marion Hayden and drummers Allison Miller and Tina Raymond. Other musicians who have joined the group recently include Regina Carter.

Program Committee:

Lauron Kehrer, Chair (Western Michigan University)

Angelina Gibson, Assistant to the Committee Chair (University of Michigan)

Christopher Cayari (Purdue University)

Leah Claiborne (University of the District of Columbia)

Kate Galloway (Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute)

Vivian Luong (University of Oklahoma)

FT&M on Social Media

Facebook: Feminist Theory and Music
X (formerly Twitter): coming soon!
Conference Website: https://sites.google.com/umich.edu/ftm17