



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF POPULAR MUSIC :: US BRANCH

Births, Stages, Declines, Revivals

2010 Conference for the International Association for the Study of Popular Music – U.S. Branch

New Orleans, Louisiana, April 9-11

New Orleans has long been known as the “birthplace of jazz;” more recently, it has become a signifier for ruin. The chaos wrought by Hurricane Katrina in 2005 signaled a shocking sense of loss in the music world: some musicians lost their lives and many lost their livelihoods; the city’s ubiquitous choirs, marching bands, and parades were disrupted and displaced. Residents of New Orleans, particularly the working poor, were evacuated and have yet to permanently return. And yet, at the same time, both remaining and former residents have fought to hold on to and even revive their cherished culture. Performers, bands, and fans have commuted from their temporary homes, worked to replenish instruments, continued the city’s parades and festivals, and cultivated the spirit of music for which the city is so well-known. These circumstances in New Orleans raise broader issues of birth and death, change and endurance, as music is practiced by people in cities and regions across the world:

- What is the appeal, use, or meaning of thinking about musical origins?
- How can we best understand the various “births” of different genres of music and their relationships to place, culture, or individual agency?
- What are the nature and meanings of “classic” music?
- How have “roots” functioned as a metaphor in American music criticism?
- In what ways can we connect the life cycles of music scenes, genres, and styles to that of individuals, cultures, and places?
- How do musicians and listeners mark life passages and stages--birth, youth, aging, death--through music?
- How do instances of musical sound (a cracking voice, varying rhythms, instrumental textures) signify the aging body or changing environments?
- How can we account for the decline, waning, or even “deaths” of different musics?
- What is the significance of beginnings and endings in songs?
- How can we best talk about alleged phenomena like “gray-out” or “homogenization” in music?
- What is the nature of “unfinished” work in different music genres?
- How, exactly, do remixing, rereleasing, or remastering revive songs and albums?
- What can we learn from efforts to preserve music through grant programs, festivals, “legacy” box sets, and other methods?

We invite proposals that explore these issues in New Orleans or other localities; we are also open to proposals that address other current topics of research and debate in the study of popular music, broadly defined. Proposals for individual papers should consist of a 300-word abstract and a 1-page CV of the author. Panel, roundtable, and other group proposals should consist of a 300-word summary of the panel topic, in addition to abstracts and CVs for each of the participants. For each proposal, please send a cover message, with the components attached as Microsoft Word or Rich Text documents, to <iaspm2010@gmail.com>. The deadline is December 1, 2009. Questions about proposals may be sent to the Program Chair, Daniel Cavicchi, at <dcavicch@risd.edu> or to any of the 2010 Program Committee members: Ken Habib (Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo), Kwame Harrison (Virginia Tech), Diane Pecknold (University of Louisville), Devon Powers (Drexel University), or Eric Weisbard (University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa).

The conference in New Orleans will take place April 9-11, coinciding with the city’s French Quarter Festival. The 2010 Program Committee and the Arrangements Committee hope to take full advantage of the unique opportunities present in the city. All accepted presenters must be IASPM-US members; to join the Association, go to: <<http://www.iaspm-us.net/>>